

## **Show Notes, Episode 100: Without People, We Have No Purpose**

### **About this show:**

One of the beauties of life is that over time we collect special ideas from cherished people. Through deep connections with friends, colleagues, and mentors, we become better people. Some of us even become referred to as wise. Wisdom is not something mysterious. Wisdom does not come from contemplating life on a mountaintop. Real wisdom comes from a unique combination of thievery and sharing. Wise people are like Robin Hood – they steal ideas from people who are rich in great ideas, and then they share those riches with others. Today we are talking with Dr. Jan Osborn – the person in my life who I have stolen the most from, and who has taught me to give it away.

### **Notable Quotes**

#### **Jan:**

I've made very few decisions in my life. Other people have guided me, led me, and helped me see something in myself that I never saw.

If you want to see how important you are, put your hand in a bucket of water and pull it out. See how quickly the water fills in where your hand just was.

We all grow, that's for sure, but without people, we have no purpose.

Sometimes the situation... is something that looks like a negative situation, but it puts us in a creative area that we figure out how to do something differently.

I've learned some of my greatest life stories from the most modest, humble individuals with the least amount of material things in their life, and a lot of bad experiences, and I see their resiliency and their joy. And I keep saying I want some of that too, you know, how did you get that positivity? How did you get that optimism when I look at you? And most people would judge that they don't have much and they don't have a lot going for them, and the reality is they got a lot going for themselves.

#### **Frederick:**

Everyone is doing the best that they are capable of in that moment, and I remember. One day I'd gone in, I think on a Friday afternoon, and I had a rough week with one of our parents and was complaining and you just stopped me, and you said, Frederick, do you think that person got out of the bed in the morning saying I'm going to be a bad parent or I'm going to be an angry parent? And I just stopped, and you said



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they're doing the best they can. Everybody is doing the best they can in that moment. And the power in that was that I could stop judging people. When you understand that people just deserve respect because they're people and everybody's doing the best they can, now I don't have to judge, which means now I can actually listen and I can be thinking about how I can support those people.

I don't think it's the place of the leader to come into an organization and sell a vision to people, and then turn around and leave in two years. Real leadership is about the vision and is where leaders create space for the people that are there doing the work, we create space for them and they come together and we help surface the values and the things that really are driving people.

While there is a time for outrage, there's a time for strong voices, conflict and even confrontation. There's also the time to invest in relationships on the front end and then to be able to use those relationships to talk to people and to problem solve and to have that influence.

The strategic leadership model has always been purpose, problems, progress and people. And I've known for a long time, or felt for a long time that I needed to shift that because I always begin with purpose... And it really hit me that I think it is people before purpose and when those words came into my head and then I thought about you, I think that's really the big lesson that you've been trying to teach me for 30 years.

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