



## 033: Cognitive and Behavioural Changes in the Evolving Workplace with Angie Dairou

**Carolyn:** Angie Dairou is a registered psychotherapist, leadership coach, and organizational development consultant. During her 25 years as a therapist and consultant, she has worked with Fortune 100 organizations in Canada, the United States, Thailand, and Europe. As a systems specialist, she has helped multinational corporations in China adapt and transform from hierarchical and autocratic cultures into more human centered places of innovation.

In her private practice in Toronto, Angie specializes in helping creative entrepreneurs to design businesses that incorporate life work balance as well as market dominance. Angie is the past president of the Satyr Institute of the Pacific and a certified brain spotting consultant.

Angie and I talk about a lot of things. It was really exciting for me to speak to somebody with the background that she has in psychotherapy and also the background that she has an organizational behavior and OD, organizational development. And it's vast. It's from China. into North America, into Canada with large organizations, with family run organizations.

So there's just such an interesting blend of topics that you will hear us discuss. You know, we start in 2005, we go all the way through into 2030, it really is, it's just such a, an action packed episode here. I hope you enjoy it.

Hello, evolved listeners. Welcome to another episode. And our guest today was introduced to me through another guest. And so I'm really excited to introduce everyone to Angie Dairou. Angie,

**Angie:** welcome to the show. Thank you. Pleasure

**Carolyn:** to be here. Now, I know we're going to have a, an interesting discussion on a variety of topics, but at the core, why I wanted to bring you on the show, was you have this amazing combination of work in the corporate world in, you know, working with fortune 100, teams and also being a psychotherapist.



So I think you're going to bring a really unique lens and You know, why don't we, we just started to talk before we pressed record and Angie started telling some interesting, sort of background about, how you, you started off, some of this work in China. So, Angie, why don't we pick up there? Where were you, where were you heading with that introduction?

**Angie:** Sure, well, I mean, let's, we'll give a little bit of context to that. In the beginning of my career, I became very interested in family systems therapy. So, the way family systems looks at our individual experiences is a little bit different than when we're just focusing on an individual. So, for instance, you might have a teenager that's having a tough time, maybe they're not going to school, you know, causing some trouble not doing their homework, that kind of thing, an individualistic lens would say, hey, what's going on with that kid that they're not being responsible.

A family systems lens would say, hey. You know, what's going on with the marriage of the parents or the relationship of the parents? What's going on with the extended family? Maybe grandma's got cancer. Maybe, you know, dad got laid off recently. Maybe they moved and the neighborhood is an adjustment. Maybe the kid has some neurodiversity and has a hard time with new things.

Maybe the parents have some neurodiversity and never knew it, you know. Force themselves into situations that don't fit and the kids picking up on the parents lack of fulfillment. So this systemic lens has been something that's followed me my whole career. And so, the model that I was originally, Not only trained in but passionate about was called this a tier model named after a famous psychotherapist named Virginia's a tier.

Recently, the top 10 psychotherapists of all time were named and she was the only. Woman in the top 10 listed by psychotherapy, networker. And so it was interesting that satiric therapy became very popular in China and that makes sense, right? Because China is a collective culture. Based people work together.

We saw during the pandemic that a hospital was built in 2 to 3 weeks. And so a mentor of mine, Dr. John Banman brought satire therapy to China and became very popular and as. The Chinese social workers and therapists and



psychologists were learning it and being transformed by the power of the way we look at people.

They wanted their friends and colleagues who were in the business world to also learn it. And I had just completed this. Master's degree in organizational psych again, because I'm so interested in teams and was invited to work there. And so that was back in about 2005 was the first time I started working with small companies and big companies, international companies in China.

And basically the work is the same work as family therapy. But it is the work of dividing out the fact that in life we have tasks. And we have experiences of those tasks. So there's tasks, we have our to do list, but how do you want to treat yourself while you're doing the to do list? How do you treat one another while you're engaged in the activity?

These are two different boxes, process and task, and many times You know, business people tend to be task focused and very self sacrificing in terms of how they're approaching, how they're experiencing the pressures and the responsibilities. And what I was bringing into these systems was an awareness, especially in China, that you can treat your workers like a machine, or you can treat your workers as people.

One is more sustainable than the

**Carolyn:** other. And it's going to have a very different experience. Exactly. Oh, wow. And that was like 18 years ago. You were talking about that.

**Angie:** Yeah, and this was just as the economy started rolling there right and just before the Olympics. This is, you know, before we had the westernization that we saw that seemed to peak, maybe about six years ago.

Now in a massive reorganization of its economy and its business, but there was a golden age of business there. And that included just a complete transformation from the previous communist impact on how we look at economics. And so people experienced massive change in their economic situation. And along with



that, when we experienced changes, whether they're good or bad, We experienced chaos because of the lack of predictability.

Right. And that's what you talk a lot about in your book is how do we bring our human selves along for the

**Carolyn:** ride? Yeah, well, Oh, Angie, we could talk about a lot of different things here. So just to let our listeners know, Angie was so gracious enough to, read a copy of my book, we met before it was released.

And so we're going to weave that into the conversation here today. we're not going to focus solely on that, but, if we can circle back for a minute in this shift to, that you saw happening in, in China, this notion of the experience of the worker. And what I find can happen with my clients.

I'm sure you've heard it as well is sometimes, with good intention leaders create this notion of work has to be a family.

Can you talk a little bit around? Cause I think we're both on the same page with this is like, work is not a family and we don't want to be intersecting those two concepts at all.

**Angie:** huh. What do you think?

Yeah. Well, I think that that depends. Largely, in terms of what, what type of a business is it, how many people are involved in the business, you know, that, that becomes a different situation altogether when it's a family business. And I work with a lot of family businesses where we're untangling, you know, old hurts from when I was an adolescent versus you won't let me lead this project.

Now, what I would say is. It gets to be designed by the people involved in terms of how much of your private life do you bring to work? How much do you want to bring to work? And what is the actual impact in reality of how much of yourself you're bringing to work and how much of yourself you aren't? So we all know people who don't bring any of themselves to work.





You know, you don't, you don't even know if they have a partner, you don't even really know where they live. It's all about the technical aspect of their role. Right. In those times, it, it, it's kind of, it would be nicer if you at least knew when they have a hard day, all of a sudden something changes. It wouldn't be nice to know that their father had died last week.

It would have a little bit more information about their private life. And then the pendulum swings. Which is a little bit more common than when you and I were kind of coming up in the corporate world. And that is people share everything, right? Well, I'm having a hard time today because I, I broke up with my boyfriend last week and then I had this urinary tract infection.

Yeah.

**Carolyn:** It's like, oh, okay. And sometimes people can mistake that for being a great leader. And so, you know, I think what we're saying here is like neither end of those spectrum, like of that spectrum is, is going to create a dynamic in the workplace that will work for everybody.

**Angie:** Yeah. Yeah. We don't want to lose the shared task.

The shared task of the, of, you know, American Eagle Outfitters is selling jeans and t shirts. Right. If you're talking about your breakup to the point where we're not talking about jeans anymore, and that easily happens. Yep. You know, when people aren't getting their emotional needs met from appropriate relationships in their private life, then, you know, the role of the family or partnership or marriage gets transferred to the business.

And that's confusing for everybody. You and I both know that a key part of being a good leader is keeping the focus of the vision, the price. And if you don't have any context in terms of what the, the, the business goal is, then all of a sudden people are working to take care of each other's emotions, not rock the boat.

There's a lot more emotional labor going on to make sure people aren't unhappy or upset, and they drop the ball in terms of getting things done. Right.



**Carolyn:** Now, why is it a problem then I just want to make sure because I brought up this question and I just want to make sure that we answer it fully. Why might it be a problem then, then to look at your organization as a family.

We're all one big family here.

**Angie:** Well, because more energy than gets put into, Meeting each other's emotional needs got more of a priority than selling t shirts, right? It needs to be included, but it shouldn't be a priority. I always find you and I opened up our conversation before you press record.

And I had shared that I had just had a vacation. I always find that when I come back from vacation, I am like kicking ass in ways I haven't been in the last three months at work. Yep. And I'm filled up in my private life. I do better in my work life. And, you know, when I'm stimulated intellectually and I'm contributing in a way that really fits who I am at work, then I'm better at home too.

But make no mistake, the, the primary focus of building relationships and meeting emotional needs is. In my opinion, it's a better context to do that in private partnerships and family life than it is to depend on a company. Yeah. Yeah. And

**Carolyn:** I think it's fair to say, it's not that we want to exclude those because those certainly power the purpose of a company, but when that becomes the forefront of why you're going to work, that's where there can be, challenges, let's just say.

That's right. Yeah. Now, can we just, I just want to make this link back to your experience, in 2005 in working with those Chinese companies and the internal family systems model, what kind of shift did you see happen

**Angie:** there?

Okay, so, and, and just for clarification, internal family systems is connected to the, the paradigm and the theory base that I used.



The Satir model is a little bit more about external family.

**Carolyn:** Okay. Thank you. Yeah. So the Satir model, I guess, is more what I was referring to.

**Angie:** Yeah, but I mean, they're connected. So, Virginia used to say, you know, we have peace within, Okay. And then we have peace between, and we have peace among. There is a real trend right now in internal family systems which is focusing on peace within you, peace between your parts.

And that's necessary to have peace with other people, right? So, there, you're picking up on the fact that there's a real connection. And I can take that to answer your question. What I saw when I first got to China was kind of a classic. autocratic, culture. The boss had control. So, When the boss has full control over not just a task, but a person, then that authority, can become a oppressive that authority can go beyond the scope of the job.

We, we would have agreed on. So it wasn't. It wasn't unusual for some of the people that I was working with to also be doing personal favors for bosses, you know, and yeah, we're talking about picking up dry cleaning and that's exactly what I was thinking, picking up dry cleaning, painting homes. Yes. That extends into boundary violations like sexual favors, you know, financial favors, that kind of thing.

There wasn't a good differentiation of, work roles, personal roles, specific work roles from other specific work roles. So some would be overburdened with too much work and the people with power wouldn't be pulling their weight. Right. and so that began to change, especially when you introduce an entrepreneurial opportunity to people without power.

So as things open up economically, now we have entrepreneurs. We have families who never had money and never had power beginning to have it and get really excited about it. But whoa, this is so different. I mean, people getting rich fast can be just as traumatizing as people losing money. Yep. Yep. Agreed.



Yeah. Yeah. So massive, massive change. And that always, you know, you've experienced a change yourself as far as change of roles change losing your husband. It's always going to impact your sense of who am I and what am I responsible for? And so a big part of the work is just looking at that. How has that changed?

Where are you right now? And where do you

**Carolyn:** want it to be? Right. So now you said the T word. So we say the T word around here, trauma and how a lot of money really quickly can be traumatizing. So let's just again, level set. Because, you know, my goal with this podcast in the book is to. really debunk what, myths we might hold about what trauma is.

But can you, can you describe Angie from your lens as a psychotherapist and also, you know, your experience in OD, what is trauma and why is it necessary for us to understand what this word means to make our workplaces better?

**Angie:** Oh, that's a really good question. here's what trauma means to me and I'm going to simplify it tremendously.

it used to be that people saw trauma as something terribly bad happening to me and that thing had to be life threatening. Right. So we connected trauma with being the victim of a crime or a war. And that's kind of where we drew the line, but there's, there's a couple of factors that I want to bring in that make trauma trauma.

So something like moving, you know, for a kid can actually stay with them for years and years and years. Yep. Especially something like bullying where it may not have been life threatening, but it stays with the person and it impacts that sense of self and it impacts that sense of what am I responsible for and what am I not responsible for.

So another couple factors that I would add on to something terrible happening are one. This is shaken my sense of. who I am, and I don't know what that is anymore. You know, that's why age and what is happening in my life when it





happens is so key. And we saw that with the pandemic, there were kids who went through homeschooling, you know, like being, doing work at home, back at school, doing work at home, and then back at school doing it.

And they, they did okay. But there were certain age groups where. It has stuck, you know, if these kids were 1112 going through the pandemic, if these kids were just at the end of high school going through the pandemic, these developmental times had more of a massive impact. So, one category is identity. The other one is attunement.

So let me talk about attunement. Basically what I mean by attunement and trauma is, I can go through something pretty bad. If I know someone has my back and that means solving it, it means they're saying, I know this is hard for you. I'm here to witness your experience and acknowledge your experience and let you know that it's real and let you know that I care.

Yeah, so. People can go through really hard stuff, but if there isn't someone attuning to the experience, they're left with this chaotic experience of what the hell was that, am I making it up? Am I making it worse than it was? Is this, impact that I'm carrying because I'm weak? Without the attunement, something is way worse and ends up in the big T.

**Carolyn:** Wow, I really appreciate how you've described that and brought in identity and attunement to it. Yeah. So now let's take that to the second part of the question, which was, why is this? And maybe I'm not going to, I'm not going to presume you have the same stance as I do. but I'm going to guess maybe you do, why is understanding what trauma is?

Why is it relevant now for us as leaders in the corporate world?

**Angie:** huh. Well, I mean, there's, there's a lot of like sub bullet points to that. But I would say the, the biggest reason is to understand how trauma impacts communication. Right. You and I both understand that you can't get stuff done unless you have good communication around it.



I really believe almost every problem in business is a communication problem. So you and I see this and I've been a leader where I, where I've said to myself, the hell is wrong with that person? I have. Email them. I have emailed them. I have given them a PowerPoint on how to do this. I actually wrote a little manual and sent it to them on how to do it.

I've demonstrated it to them. You know, I've given them a videotape of me doing, doing it. And they're not doing what I asked them to do. But if you understand trauma, you will understand that we are biological beings. And as biological beings, sometimes whatever is happening in the environment triggers us to freeze and we cannot take in information.

And the example I give with my clients is, if you adopt a dog that has been beaten by a guy wearing a red hat, And you put a red hat on the dog's going to growl at you and you can tell that you can speak sweetly to the dog and you can let the dog know that you're not the other guy. And, you know, and you can do with that dog what you've done with the last eight dogs that you've owned.

But that dog's nervous system is going to hijack everything you've done and you can do can penetrate it until the

**Carolyn:** nervous system shifts. And so why now? I mean, you've been at, you've been in the, in the world of, of organizational development OD for, for like, you know, over 20 years. So why is it important now?

Or maybe let me rephrase that. Is it important now any differently than it would have been 2010

**Angie:** years ago?

Trauma is higher right now. I mean, this, this collective trauma of the pandemic is something that we may not be experiencing lockdown, but we're not over it. Yeah, you're over something after you have digested and integrated and make sense of the thing.



So, you know, you see this with people who went through a divorce or lost a family member or had a car accident. They go, well, it's over. Well, is it over because I don't think you have had a chance to experience. The impact of the fear and the shock and how your predictability changed and how your status quo was blown up and all that kind of thing.

So, we were already at a very vulnerable place. As a culture, because we had overextended ourselves. Yes. We're extended our physiology. We were overextended financially. We were overextended as far as too much focus on the outside world, keeping up. I mean, when I was growing up, how many people did I know?

Well, how many people did I, how many women did I know that? worked full time and ran the home and all of that when I was growing up, it was, you know, one car per household. Yep. The person who worked was the dad and came home to a meal made and all that now, you know, that moved into two people working, huge benefits to that, but then that worked into, well, two people may be needed to get a master's degree to keep up with what was going on.

Hmm. Well, if the kid. If the kids in the house want a chance to keep up, then they need to be taking and extra goalie skills on the weekend. My gosh.

**Carolyn:** How did you know my son was a goalie? That's a, that's a little wild that you do that. Cause I didn't put that in the book. Right.

**Angie:** So when overextended is going to hit you harder and yeah.

This is why we're seeing the mental health crisis.

**Carolyn:** and, you know, we talked about that over extension in, in a few terms there, but then, you know, we can also layer on just the social injustice and all of that chaos that was going on around. so it's fair to say then it's more prevalent now. more of us are perhaps thinking that we're fine.

COVID's over, 2020's over, racial injustice, like, we're fine, let's move ahead. Is that kind of a place that a lot of us are in, thinking that it's done and we're fine,



and we're trying to slog through and think that we're fine, but we're actually not, and we're actually potentially still unaware of all the shit around us?

**Angie:** Yeah. Yeah. And, you know, and the way that the truth is coming to the surface, I, you know, I'm, I'm still getting multiple referrals a day. I mean, I was, I was full when this thing started, but I'm getting, emails from potential clients saying, I have always been able to have a busy period at work. And then it's like university when you have.

10 final exams, you're going to get strep throat after it. And then you go home and, you know, you watch TV and you bounce back, but people are not bouncing back. Right. Anxiety is hanging on. The depression is hanging on. And then we're seeing, and of course this is inevitable, the, physical illness and somatic symptoms.

So, you know, you can tell yourself you're fine, but your body's going to tell you the truth. Yeah.

**Carolyn:** Wow. Angie, when are you writing a book?

**Angie:** Girl, thank you so much because I've got a lot to say on it. I've got a lot to say on it because I will also bring in a primary part of my perspective on all of this is that It all comes with a tremendous opportunity.

It's not about just making the trauma symptoms go away. You know, this probably from your own experience that when the shit hits the fan and the cracks in your foundation are revealed, you have a chance to redesign that in your life, make it, you know, stronger and more sustainable in life, giving them before.

And. You know, I have always worked too much, but what do you think it's like for a therapist to be going through a pandemic? And then start to get eight, 10 referrals a day. I had every client I've ever had in, you know, when it hit, it was whatever 22, 23 years come back. And I care about all these people.





And when send me an email saying that their kid is, you know, beginning to cut themselves and what the hell is going on. And I started to work six days a week because I thought. Just, and notice the mindset I'll do this for a while and I'll catch up and I'll be fine.

**Carolyn:** Yeah. So it's, it's right back into that whole

**Angie:** system.

So I, you know, I had found personal congruence and a balance that went. Was just shredded to bits during the pandemic and, for the first time in a long time, I felt my own burnout impact me in ways that began to feel unmanageable. And what I ended up doing is I ended up doing, are you ready for this?

I ended up doing a 40 day silent retreat. 40 days.

**Carolyn:** 40

**Angie:** days. I felt I need to take some time to really experience, you know, all of the, the vulnerability as you write so powerfully about in your book of, you know, our, You know, it's an existential experience this pandemic and it's an emotional experience and it is a spiritual experience.

I need time to make sense of it. And that's what it took for me to, to integrate my experience of the past 2, 3 years.

**Carolyn:** Wow. And that's when you say the opportunity that lies there for us. Is that, is that what you're saying? Like the opportunity can be

**Angie:** percent, you know, opportunities to learn, you know, about, specific emotions.

That you don't feel comfortable with. Some people are comfortable with sadness, but not anger. You know, you can learn about your automatic coping behaviors that you're into. You can learn about how you're ripping yourself off.



You can learn about how you're leaking your energy. And then, you know, you and I, I'm sure, you know, lots of people that go through life threatening things.

It's there where you go, well, what do you want? Yeah. What is life about? If you have a limited time on this planet, what's your priority? That's when life starts to get exciting. And sometimes you don't face that until your life energy is threatened.

**Carolyn:** So the 40 day retreat. What I hear in that is, and I talk about this in the book, around this notion of having our body as a center of intelligence and recognizing that our nervous system and how we are able to interpret what comes into our nervous system is greatly impacted by all the noise, everything going on around us.

So when I heard you say 40 days, silent retreat, what I hear is, Giving my nervous system a chance to almost like recalibrate restart, because it was completely overloaded. You know what we see, what we hear, what we're eating, what we're tasting. I mean, I was eating a hell of a lot more food then too. And I think this is, this is where like, I'm trying to simplify or find a simple message in amongst all of this.

Cause not everybody's going to want to get down into. All of the psychotherapy concepts. Yeah. I think an important message in here that I've really recognized is. Our body, our nervous system in particular is a leadership

**Angie:** tool. Yes. Yeah.

**Carolyn:** And when I think of where our workplaces are right now, leaders included at all levels, we're all trying to keep doing what we've done before because we, it's hard to find that space to even find that little opening of how the hell do I do this differently?

Yeah. Yeah. So. For those of us who don't know if we could survive a 40 day retreat or perhaps 4 day or 4 day or 4 hour, in my case, maybe, and, and, you know, realistically, that's not an option for, for everybody, what, what could be



some things for leaders and we're, we're going to talk specifically about leaders, but.

Again, let's say a leaders, anybody in an organization who wants to try and make things better title aside, what are some things that leaders could do then that aren't as long as a 40 day retreat, but maybe in some small pieces can help us find this little opening. This little way of being might be a bit different.

**Angie:** Yeah, I think that's beautiful. You know, and I like I'm a practical person. So I like what you're saying about drilling down into something that's more simple and practical and helpful. And I just want to say that's what I really felt the gift of your book was, I would have trouble, you know, summarizing what I think is most essential for leaders to know.

Thank you so much. Thank goodness I don't have to because you did it. you know, it's a, it's the perfect, amount of pages and it's the perfect scope of information for leaders to understand that people cannot leave their, their human parts at home, that they're bringing their, heart cells, like you said, and they're bringing their Intellectual selves, and they're bringing all of it to work.

So if I were to bring it down into something, I would say, can you in your mind picture and come back to the word, listen. Just listen. For instance, as a leader, when you come home and you're tired and you're burnt out, can you listen to the part of you that's tired? Can you listen to the part of you that's frustrated, for instance, because the part of you that's frustrated is, is saying this.

The way that I'm going about it is not working, but we want it to work. So what do we do? We push harder. We work longer. We send another email, right? Line per my last email.

**Carolyn:** Yeah. You know what? It's funny. I just sent an email out the other day. I felt a bit of anger and I thought, okay, and express this anger.

And it was a bit of a, like, I could do this. If you would do this for me first, like you said, you would. and afterwards I thought, Oh, and then the reply back I got was a little bit more apologetic. And I thought, was that the right thing to do?



**Angie:** But it

**Carolyn:** was again, just a little bit of listening. I don't think in the past I would have listened and it wasn't a cursed, like, A terse email at all, but in the past, I would have just taken it on and said nothing. And this time I thought, no, I think it's important. They know that, that this isn't optimal, but it wasn't being a jerk about it. huh. Absolutely. But to your point is just listening because when we actually truly do listen, we just create that little bit of space that allows us to be more intentional with a response versus just a knee jerk reaction.

**Angie:** Absolutely. So, you know, you listen to your whole self in order to find where are you in this moment? Why is that important? We know that any good business is looking at the profit and loss. Right. You know, we're looking at the balance sheet. You, you have to know where you are financially to know what needs to happen to get to your goal.

But why don't we do that as a human? Where are you? Yeah. When I trained therapists. I use this little metaphor. I say, you and I have agreed. We're going to have lunch at a restaurant. And I always say it's a restaurant in Aruba because there's this place I really like in Aruba where you eat her in the water while you're having lunch.

So we're in Aruba. We've agreed to have lunch. You know, I get there first, you call me on my cell phone and you say, you know, I'm lost. I can't find the restaurant. There's no GPS in this darn rental car in Aruba. And what's the first thing I'm going to say? Where are you? But we don't. They call and they say, I'm lost and we give them directions.

We have all these assumptions that the person sees the task as we see the task. Yeah. Person has the same strengths towards the task as we do. They have the same amount of experience as we do. Right. They have the same, motivation as we do. But the first question is always, where are you? And I guarantee that if you move into more of a stance of listening, one of two things is going to happen.





Either a, you're going to get information that you never had that you need about that person and what they're struggling with. Or B, the person feels listened to, likes you more, feels more safe, and just performs better because of the psychological impact. Great. So how do we listen more?

Ah, well, what do you think gets in the way of listening for the people that you've worked with?

The fear. Uh huh. Yeah. And, what do you think most people that you've worked with who are not listening in are are afraid, what are they anticipate is going to happen that's bad because this is really important, right? I like to differentiate. Okay. Fear can cause us to do really, destructive giving things, but fear isn't the problem.

The way we're coping with the fear is the problem, right? So, yeah. So what do you think people are afraid of when you've seen them shut down the listening due to fear?

**Carolyn:** they are afraid of being judged. They are afraid of not delivering a product or, a deliverable on time and. They can only they can only see one way of getting it done.

Yeah. Yeah. They've also been in. I'll say a system, but they've been in an environment where just just tell me what needs to be done and I'll go do it.

**Angie:** It's faster.

**Carolyn:** Versus creating a bit of space of allowing, allowing a little bit of unknown, a little bit of trust that we'll be able to figure this out together. But you know what, Angie, if I just tell you what it is right now, you can go do it. Hey, we're done in 10 minutes. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. And not, not trusting, like, Hey, if we just had a seven minute conversation, we could, we probably could get to the same solution.

Obviously that's not for a big juicy topic, but yeah, that's how I



**Angie:** would say it. That's so powerful. So what gets, you know, you and I are co creating the next book right now.

**Carolyn:** I knew that about 10 minutes in.

**Angie:** So what gets in the way of being able to take stock with where I am right now and listen to where you are is my need for certainty.

It's really about me avoiding the experience of fear to create a false Predictability in terms of, you know, now should work the way business work six months ago. So let's just do the same thing that we always do. You know, let's do the same thing we always do when we're low on staff or let's do the same thing we always do when the truck's late, or, you know, when the stock isn't in that kind of thing.

And so that's exactly what happens. We want the predictability. To create, to ease the fear, but that does us in, in, in the long run because the current context is requiring innovation in order. And that's where I think the exciting thing is, this is what I'm saying is I didn't just heal my burnout in my 40 days.

I had insights about places where I was on automatic pilot, but he had a gun to my head to work six days through a pandemic. That was my old strategy to create predictability for myself. When I was a kid, you talked about your childhood in your book. When I was a kid, I brought stability in the family by being a 3 day student and the fair queen of Milton, Ontario in 1988 with my big hair.

And the candy striper that got the award in the hospital. All that kind of stuff. So I reverted to... To pass predictability to create safety for myself, but it wasn't doing the trick anymore.

**Carolyn:** So that's what we're saying is, is it, we're not letting go of, we're having hard, we're looking for more predictability.

Yep.



**Angie:** And you see that, you see that right everywhere

**Carolyn:** at home, at work, in the community,

**Angie:** everywhere. Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Carolyn:** Can I add one other little piece into this that I'm realizing? So I'm just going to take my own business and of one. Yeah, yeah. I am all I love to try new things. It's, it's really, I am, I am, you know, one of my friends says, you know, you, you disrupt yourself.

She, she jokes about that, that I will just start disrupt my own self where I find I'm meeting just a point that I, I just don't know what to do with is the cognitive load to be learning so innovating.

and here's a real experience, right? I made a list of the different apps that I use and software and, you know, be it Debsado or, Calendly or Proposify. And my list was like about 10 different things. and so that I think is another piece as our, I guess, what are we going through? I know they're saying it's the fourth.

I think we're kind of onto like the fifth. and I think that's new industrial revolution with the new AI, but, you know, trying to maintain a sense of calm when things are unpredictable as that, that, cognitive load that we need to, or that that's being dumped upon us as well with all the new tools that we're using.

Yeah. Can you comment on that? Like, what's going on there? Is it just me or, or what's going on in my little end of one.

**Angie:** No, no. So it's such a good question. And how do I keep up? Like how do I keep up? And especially like in any, any business, the change is happening fast and the new tools are emerging fast and the new techniques are emerging fast and the new way to market is emerging fast.

I mean, did you see Instagram launched threads and threads, Twitter? Oh my God. I was having a hard enough time with tick tock and Insta. Yeah. Well, and Facebook, this is where, you know, your book is so helpful. You talk about head



intelligence and you talk about. Heart intelligence, and it's in the integration of the two in the integration of task and process that we begin to open up to a new skill that's needed.

And that's where, you know, you know, you're moving now is the skill of discernment. And so when I have a lot of choices. About the apps and I have a lot of choices about what I have to learn to keep up in my career. So for me, what do I have to keep up with brain science, you know,

**Carolyn:** ecology, moving very fast at all.

Is it,

**Angie:** you know, external business systems and MIT coaching, marketing, all that kind of thing. So, you know, there's this thing that happens when, when you have. Let's say you're looking at all your apps and you're looking at all of these demands on yourself, you stop and you say, well, how is looking at this list of tasks, tasks or possibilities impacting me in this moment, right?

Question, how is it impacting me is going to bring you into your. Physical sensations, your current emotional state, you know, it will also bring you into your beliefs about yourself, but physical sensations are key. You talk about the body so much. Yeah. As you stay with the impact of, especially tension of overload with the body, the body begins to digest.

All of these, ideas, experiences, impacts, and it begins to process it in a way. It's just like digesting a 40 ounce steak. What that you've eaten, it begins to, you know, Process in a way where it was designed to move us towards the experience of homeostasis and calm. And as you do that, as you process the impact of the overload and the demand, you're going to find that you're going to move into a more of a relaxed state, more of a flow state.

I really love the Netflix special on Michael Jordan. Cause he talked about how this was such a big part of his development of bringing the bulls to their winning streaks. And in that state, we all know the flow state where you're looking at the 10 apps. You're looking at the 10 business opportunities.





You're looking at the 10 t shirts that you could sell. I have a friend who was the president of American Eagle, and she's particularly good at this. And you just know. I'm going to start with task number three.

**Carolyn:** Exactly. And that's what's happened recently. It's, and I just let it sit and, and, marinate a little bit.

And now I've done boom, boom, boom, et cetera. And it was like, wow. And I think This is where in the past I would have beat myself up for thinking, why the hell didn't I figure that out faster? I would have saved myself more time that loop right there. Yeah. I think if leaders not if when leaders realize that the push.

There is also an opportunity to pull and when I say push and pull, I mean, like pushing against it and driving out a solution versus allowing a little bit of space. I'm not saying weeks or months or years. I know that that's not the pace at which we work, but sometimes just to sleep. Sometimes it's a few minutes to get up and walk away that I believe is also a piece of how we can make it through it.

The next 5 to 10 years in our workplaces.

**Angie:** The space is the space to digest it. Yeah. Wisdom of what you're saying now, right? Let's talk neuroscience. This is very exciting when you're thinking about the problem and you're analyzing the problem and you're driving the problem. You're in the left brain. Yes.

Your right brain is not integrated the way it could be. And your sense is not integrated the way it could be. And there is a, there's such a fabulous author, psychiatrist, genius who writes about brain dominance. And his name is Ian McGilchrist. And he has a book called the, the master and his emissary. And, you know, no, one's listening to him because he's so Brilliant.

It can be, you know, complicated language, but when you're using only half of your brain, you're not going to be innovative, right? Way to integrate your hemispheres is to digest your experience, which



**Carolyn:** is, which is honoring your nervous system and being able to listen to your body. Listening. Yeah. I just wrote down Ian's name.

**Angie:** Yeah. Yeah. Check him out. He is one of the most innovative, wise, philosophers and scientists we've got right now on the planet.

**Carolyn:** Wow. I don't even know how to summarize this conversation. We started off talking about You know, we were in China in 2005 and now we are, you know, we've moved through 2020 into 2023.

Actually, here's a good way to end it. If you could look at, you know, Angie's crystal ball and just. Give us a sense of where, like, where do you think things will go in the next 10, 20 years? What do you think 2030 is going to look like in our workplaces? What do you hope it looks like?

**Angie:** Where is it going to, what is it going to look like?

I think the real difference between now and then is that we are going to become more responsible for our own agency, which means instead of, You know, just doing what might work. We're going to take responsibility to be designing companies that we want to work in in ways they want to work. you know, do you do you want do you want it to be, A workplace that's freestanding building, or do you want it to be hybrid? Or do you want to? I mean, here's something innovative. Does all the staff want to move somewhere? That is warm and sunny for 2 months out of the year and work on a project and then have 3 months off the really cool thing about people who are younger than you and I, the millennials is they.

Brought in a different experience of agency than we had. We said, you got to work your butt off until you're retired. And then you can go to yoga class on Tuesday. They said, well, I don't want to, I want to go to yoga class now on Tuesday. Yeah. And they started creating industries where they could. Yes. Yep.

And, and I think it will just be more integrated as far as the human experience of work.



**Carolyn:** I just think where Jen, Jen said is going to take it or Jen alpha, the next one. wow. You know, 2030 really isn't that long. No, it's not that far away. I think of my own kids. you know, 27, 27 and 21. No, 22. anyway, in their twenties, And, and I think, you know, between now and then, how can we, I think this would be the parting message.

How can we look after ourselves, you know, the folks like you and I growing up and not in, in those younger generations that have had a different sense of agency. There is a different way we can exist in these systems. I really do believe we can exist in, in a system of profit, but we can do it with heart.

We can do it with a head and we can do it with our body. Yeah,

**Angie:** yeah. and so, I, I think along with the word listen is the word trust. How many of us could have predicted what has happened during the last three years. You know, and how many of us could have predicted how we responded both good and bad. but if you take responsibility for reflecting on how you responded in ways that you're proud of.

And move that forward in terms of what can be built on that and take responsibility for how you responded in ways you're not proud of and begin to design your life consciously to change those things. You can trust your whole process. You don't have to leave out the bad. Yeah, you know, it's the ultimate recycling program life experience.

You can use it all. And so I think that is a principle that is going to be a paradigm shift that we're going to move into. And I see a massive change for the field of mental health. You know, there is this old paradigm of mental health where we have to get rid of the depression or get rid of the anxiety.

But if we listen to it, You know, what is your anxiety telling us about what you need? What is your depression telling us about what is no longer working that you're scared to let go of or ways blaming yourself about things that are your responsibility. We recycle it and we digest it and people come out better.



And I think we can do that with businesses. We can do that with the way we approach our mental health. And then we just become way more resilient. Yeah.

**Carolyn:** Angie, this was, just a wonderful, wonderful conversation. before we head to the last 3 questions, because I always ask, my guests, 3 questions, where can, you know, can people connect with you?

is, is there a way, that they could find out more about what you do? Is that something you want to share?

**Angie:** Yeah, well, I'm, you know, kind of in a process myself right now, as far as, moving my practice into what I call the next generation of really helping my entrepreneurs come out of the pandemic and into creating what they're doing that's new.

And so because of that, at this point in time, I'm not accepting any new referrals, you know, for that, but people can. track of me on the best way is on Instagram. So that's my name, Angie Daru, D A I R O U. Then you can keep up with what's happening and where I am.

**Carolyn:** Wonderful. Thank you so much, Angie. So we're going to close off with, the three elements that you would have read about in, in the book.

that I, I think that. Leaders of, of today, they focus in these three areas and put conscious effort into these three areas. It will help them navigate through, the workplace in a, in a more successful way. So the first one is self awareness. So is there a story, Angie, or an insight that you can recall a moment, an experience that yielded an, like a really incredible amount of information to you about yourself?

**Angie:** I'm going to tell you what, came to me and it w it was recent. I, I saw this and it was an Instagram post. I saw this Venn diagram. So it was three intersecting circles. This was last summer and the intersecting circles, this little, Graphic was, ADHD. And autism and giftedness, and this therapist was sharing about how these circles were overlapping and how these states are so connected.





And as I looked at it, I saw, Oh my God, you know, I've worked with entrepreneurs all these years, and the majority of them have ADHD, you know, and because of that. And because of their tendency to get scattered, they don't see their giftedness. You know, and I've worked with, so many people that were so driven and had such a hard time with, sometimes relationships and sometimes change.

And I saw that autism wasn't just what we think of in terms of profound autism, like you would see on the movie Rain Man, that kind of thing. Yeah. I, you know, just to narrow that down, I realized that I've been specializing in neurodiversity for 30 years and then open the doors to me seeing myself in my own giftedness and my own scatteredness and my own, sensitive nervous system.

And that's really opened the door to me being able to treat myself in terms of having, unique needs. Instead of deficiencies, and I also predict we're going to see a trend in in working with neurodiversity at work as well.

**Carolyn:** Absolutely. Absolutely. Oh, we could have a whole other conversation about that.

Maybe we will. Maybe we will. I'm not going to pursue that because it would be a whole other hour. so second question. And this is around self regulation, understanding our emotions, that sort of thing. is there a practice or ritual that you really rely on to help you return to a state of calm or find your way back to a less escalated state?

**Angie:** Yeah. Body awareness. Bottom line. What does that mean? Yeah. So the, the, the moment that I begin to feel like worried about an issue, I say, what is happening in my chest? What is happening in my hips? What is happening in my legs? Can I feel my feet? Now, a lot of people mistake this to mean that I'm relaxing my body.

I'm not, okay. I noticed that my right shoulder is tight, my left one might be more relaxed and I might notice that I have some tension in my throat, but not in my belly. And that just brings me into the presence, and then my body begins to



respond to my presence by dropping the tension. And if you want like a bonus to that.

You can use bilateral sound. And so that is sound that's engineered music, to go into your right ear and then your left on headphones. And then your right and your left that's going to balance those hemispheres. So you can search bilateral music on Spotify, Apple music, Google play, any platform you want.

You throw on that bilateral sound and pay attention to your body and it'll be two minutes and you're

**Carolyn:** shifted. So it's funny, Steve, when I asked Steve this question, so Steve Hotz, which is, will have been a show a few episodes before this one. he talked about biornal beats. and, and so is that, that is the same thing?

It's going on both sides. Okay. Yeah, that's how I met

**Angie:** Steve. We're both psychotherapists who love cutting edge stuff and it works.

**Carolyn:** Yeah. All right. And then the last, the last question, Angie, what is a song or genre of music that makes you feel connected to something bigger than yourself?

**Angie:** You know, here's the recommendation I would make for people is think of a time in your life where you felt the most alive.

What was the music that was playing on the radio then? You know, so it was really funny. We were just, surfing the Netflix, Al and I, this is my husband, Al and I, and you know, currently there's a little documentary on Wham. We're like, we went to high school in the 80s, we're going to throw that on. Well, the last three nights I've been listening to George Michael and I have felt alive.

Yes. Back to whatever time in your life. He felt alive triggers that sensation. Yeah. I have to go look



**Carolyn:** at that Netflix, episodes. One concert I never got to see was, George Michael or wham, but you just made me think of what made me feel alive. the very first concert I ever went to, I was four years old and I still have this memory and talk about being alive.

I think this is probably. Why I go see concerts all the time, going to see Alicia Keys tonight, is that very first concert was Donnie and Marie in 1976. And that feeling, I mean, I still love Donnie to this day. And yes, I mean, I was a little bit younger then. Most of the folks at that time who were in the Osmond craze.

but I love how you said that. Cause I do, I literally remember, can remember being this little four year old with my little glow stick up in the air. It just like the feeling of that music. Yeah. Oh, thank you so much, Angie. I feel like I kind of met like my sister from another mister here.

Like, I know, we have, we have Steve Hots to thank for bringing, our worlds, together, but I'm really grateful to have you on the show and to hear of your fabulous, insights and perspectives and, and just your really simple, informative way to describe some of these concepts.

**Angie:** It's been great for me too.

And anytime you want to pick it up again, you just give me a call.

**Carolyn:** Well, we're not that far apart. Maybe there's going to be a coffee date that won't have a podcast microphone of all, but who knows, but who knows? All right. Well, to all the listeners out there, thank you for tuning in. And if you enjoyed today's episode, please let us know by liking and subscribing to the show.

We've got lots more guests in store. And until then we see you, we feel you, and we are championing you and cheering you on right here. Take care, everybody.

There's a word that really stood out to me. In my conversation with Angie, and the word is agency, and I did a quick little Google search on it, agency from a social science perspective is the capacity of individuals to have the power and



resources to fulfill their potential. And from a behavioral psychology perspective, agents are goal directed entities that are able to monitor their environment to select and perform efficient means to end actions.

And I think agency, whatever way you want to look at it, from a psychological lens or a sociological lens, Our lens, we need leaders to have this agency and to bring this agency into the teams that they work with. I know this conversation really helped me look at that with more depth and get a little bit more clarity.

And I hope there have been some helpful insights that you've taken away from it as well. A reminder that my book, *Evolve, The Path to Trauma Informed Leadership*, is available online where you get your books, most online platforms. And it's also available in independent bookstores and real live bookstores in the Ontario, Canada area.

Thanks again for tuning in. We'll see you on the next episode.