

Transcript - Dorie Clark - What can you learn from others about your personal brand?

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Nathalie 00:07

Hello, you are listening to the Future Talent Learning podcast, developed to help you build your leadership and management skills. I'm Nathalie High.

Ross G 00:16

I'm Ross Garner.

Nathalie 00:18

This week we are asking what is your personal brand and why is it important? And to answer these questions we are speaking to the brilliant consultant, speaker and author, Dorie Clark. Dorie has been named one of the top 50 business thinkers in the world by Thinkers 50 and teaches executive education at Duke's University Fuqua School of Business and Columbia Business School.

Nathalie 00:40

She's also the author of *The Long Game*, *Entrepreneurial You*, *Reinventing You* and *Stand Out*. We're very excited to be in conversation with you today. How are you doing, Dorie?

Dorie 00:49

Thank you so much. I'm doing great. It's wonderful to speak with you.

Nathalie 00:52

Likewise, so let's dive straight into the big question. What is a personal brand and why is it important?

Dorie 01:01

A personal brand is essentially just your reputation. And I think sometimes people get turned around a lot because of the terminology. It's become kind of loaded over time. And sometimes people think, oh, personal brand, that means I have to become an influencer.

Dorie 01:15

That means I have to spend all my time on Instagram, which of course sensible people don't really want to do. But that's not it. That's one branch of it if you want it. But fundamentally, it's what is your reputation, what do people think of you, do they think what you want them to think about you.

Dorie 01:34

And that is something that I imagine, theoretically, we all should be somewhat concerned with.

Nathalie 01:39

And before we go to the next question that I'm eager to ask you, I kind of want to take a little diversion there. So we're talking about brand and many people's thinking will move towards the public social facing side, which is Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, etc.

Nathalie 01:51

I know a lot of people who do extraordinary work, who are not really the active or present across social channels. And I'm always torn how much effort to put into those social channels. Obviously, depends on how much of your audience is in each place and how much to spend it doing what I consider perhaps more worthwhile stuff like researching books and creating high quality content and thinking.

Nathalie 02:12

What's your thought on that?

Dorie 02:15

I think it's both and of course, but ultimately I think that too much attention gets paid to social media partly because it is so visible. It's so quantifiable. It's very easy for the media or for your peers and colleagues to just look you up on social media and oh, you know, how many followers does she have?

Dorie 02:34

How many followers does he have? And so it becomes this thing unto itself when really I think in many ways we have forgotten the purpose that it should serve, which is social media is a good thing to do a little of it is a way to amplify your best ideas.

Dorie 02:52

It's a way to enhance discoverability so that the right people can find out about your work and hopefully connect with you. You know, maybe they're potential clients or potential people who want to hire you.

Dorie 03:02

But ultimately you could spend 24 hours a day on social media. It's this kind of all enveloping black hole. And I think most of us would agree it would be extremely inadvisable to spend 24 hours a day on social media.

Dorie 03:16

So it's good to do a little. It's bad to do a lot.

Ross G 03:20

It's like the Wizard of Oz, isn't it? Like if you spend all that time, then you can end up making that giant face in front of the curtain. And then you're actually like the shriveled old man in the background that all they're doing is just putting forward this face.

Ross G 03:30

I think for me, I think of, I think of personal branding in a work context. I think I've historically thought of it as trying to fit in or shape the mold of what's expected of me within whatever organisation I might be working in.

Ross G 03:44

And maybe not wanting to stand out, but one of the things that really struck me in your book, Reinventing You, is an example that you gave in the preface of someone that got in touch after reading the first edition of your book and had bribed foreign officials and then went to jail for that.

Ross G 04:00

And then rather than try and hide that, which I think would be all of our natural inclination, they then leveraged that experience to then confront corruption. So they had expertise in corruption because they themselves had been corrupt and used that as a selling point.

Ross G 04:13

I thought that was such a radical departure from what I had historically thought of as a personal brand.

Dorie 04:19

It's true. I mean, ultimately, in the world that we're living in where information is so readily accessible, you can try to hide stuff about yourself, but really it doesn't work that well. People are going to find out anyway, and it becomes very toxic and very oppressive for you to constantly be worrying, oh no, what if they see that?

Dorie 04:41

What if they find out? What if I'm discovered? And that's true whether we're talking about someone who has committed a white collar crime and went to jail, or it's true, honestly, if you are anyone in the workforce who has something different about you, you think about research into covering, if you're gay, if you are perhaps someone who has something, maybe you were divorced and now you're a single parent and you have all the responsibility for childcare.

Dorie 05:11

You know, whatever the thing is that you worry that your colleagues might judge you for, one of the things that I really believe strongly when it comes to social media and into personal brand is that we often think about it in terms of the caricatures, oh, how can I fit in?

Dorie 05:33

How can I use branding as a way of molding myself to what other people want? But I actually think that's wrong. I think that what we need to realise is we need to own ourselves, we need to own our identity, and personal brand should ultimately be

about saying, okay, here's who I am, how can I be strategic to make sure that other people get the message and understand why that is valuable, why I am bringing something useful to the table?

Dorie 06:04

So it's very much an inside out thing rather than an outside in.

Nathalie 06:08

And so on that note then, how can you start to figure out what your brand is in an authentic way where you're trying to bring out these qualities that maybe set you apart from other people, takes perhaps a bit of courage in certain contexts?

Nathalie 06:19

And then also at the same time, how can you figure out how that lands with other people, how they perceive you? It's quite a delicate dance, I would imagine, to kind of get right.

Dorie 06:28

Well, you raise an important question, Natalie, because for a lot of us, it's very hard to know what our brand is, because we're too close to it. For all of us, we are our own measure of normal, right?

Dorie 06:41

Like, we're the baseline. Oh, it's everybody else that's weird. And so it's very hard to get perspective on what might be different, what might be unique, what might be special about us. And frankly, we just can't do it on our own.

Dorie 06:55

We don't have the critical discernment. And so what can be helpful is to find out from other people what they think of as most distinctive about us. There's an exercise that I share in my book, *Reinventing You*, which I call the three word exercise.

Dorie 07:13

And it is a super quick kind of back of the envelope exercise to begin to get a pulse on this. Obviously, you can do more intensive things if your company is willing to pay for an executive coach or a 360 interview process or something like that.

Dorie 07:26

But something simple that we all can do ourselves is to go to maybe half a dozen friends and colleagues and ask them, this could be in person, this could be by text message or email, but just ask them, hey, if you had only three words to describe me, what would they be?

Dorie 07:45

And obviously we're not aiming for something super deep or comprehensive. We're aiming for the things that are top of mind for them. But this becomes useful because the part that is almost impossible for us to figure out on our own is understanding what it is from the perspective of other people is most memorable, is most distinctive about us.

Dorie 08:06

And so when you force people like quick, quick, three words, that's what you get. And it's useful intelligence.

Nathalie 08:12

Sounds like a bit of a... scary exercise.

Ross G 08:17

Do you think that's useful even if the responses you get are biased? Because I can imagine two outcomes. So one is everyone tells me how lovely I am. Thank you very much. And the other is that they tell me the opposite and I get incredibly defensive.

Ross G 08:34

So how do you navigate kind of getting an honest answer and then not shutting it down or rejecting it?

Dorie 08:42

That's so British, right? Because in America, like, no, they won't tell you anything bad.

Dorie 08:56

No, it's interesting. So I'll answer the question both ways. So for the Americans who do in fact ask this question because

they're like, yeah, but no one's going to tell me the truth. They're all going to say good things.

Dorie 09:07

What I could tell them is, okay, take all the positive things that you're hearing because you know, they're not going to lie. They're going to tell you true positive things, but it will be, you know, it will be biased in that direction.

Dorie 09:21

But take those things and flip them around and say, well, what is the opposite of this? Because almost always our weaknesses are basically a mirror image of our strengths. So if they say, oh, you're so creative, you're so visionary, you know, ask yourself, gosh, is it possible that I take it too far?

Dorie 09:39

What would it look like if I was too creative? And then maybe you say, huh, well, maybe that means somebody who's not focused. Maybe they're saying I'm like too ethereal and I'm not really logical or something like that.

Dorie 09:52

So you have to do a little bit of detective work. It might not be correct. I mean, maybe you're the perfect blend, but you could ask yourself the question, OK, is it conceivable that at times I take my strength too far such that it becomes a weakness?

Dorie 10:06

And so that's the way to ferret it out if you're only getting positive responses. But if you are getting if you are dealing with British or Irish people and they were telling you things that are hard truths, what I would say is, you know, I Marshall Goldsmith is a friend of mine.

Dorie 10:28

He's a very well known executive coach. And his mantra, which I think is really good, is when people give you, you know, obviously, you don't want, you know, some stranger off the street to tell you negative things, you know, because you didn't ask for it.

Dorie 10:43

But if you are, in fact, asking for feedback and somebody tells you something that, you know, maybe you don't love, maybe you don't want to hear it, the only proper response is thank you. That's it. Just don't go further than that.

Dorie 10:57

You know, this is not about you arguing. You're the one who asked for it. Just say, thank you. Great. I appreciate the feedback. And then you can go off and be mad. You can go off and think about it.

Dorie 11:08

You know, do do whatever, but you don't want to burn the person whom you have invited in for their perspective. So just say thanks. And then you can take the next day, the next week to think about it and, you know, maybe look for is there a grain of truth?

Dorie 11:25

It's possible that they may be overstating it. But it's also likely, if they know you reasonably well, that there's probably something to it. And that can be a learning opportunity.

Ross G 11:36

That's funny, because as I was reading your book, I was starting to have an existential crisis about my own personal brand. Like I'm even thinking about how I look on this call that we're on just now, for example.

Ross G 11:45

And I decided to test my perception of myself with my boss. So we had our year end of review. And basically my job, like when I host podcasts, I have to ask questions of people. And in my day job, I work in digital education.

Ross G 11:58

So I'm always working with people and asking them difficult questions, like this thing that you think is important, everyone knows. Why is that important at all? And all this kind of thing. And so I said to my boss, am I too much of a gobshite?

Ross G 12:08

Because as I started progressing through the organisation and becoming slightly more senior and working with different departments, the incessant asking difficult questions, I think is actually quite annoying for other people.

Ross G 12:21

And it was actually a really useful exercise just to have a chat about how I'm perceived. But invite him to be honest with me. Because otherwise, we would be...

Nathalie 12:38

Also, you have to be able to trust the person's got your best interests at heart. I mean, it depends on the kind of boss, right? So then once you've got that feedback, whether it's Ross and your boss or like, you know, a combination of friends and colleagues and things, how do you then from there identify what you need your brand to be?

Nathalie 12:53

So like, how do you, how do other people expect you to behave to fill a particular role and how do we find that bridge or connection so that we're fulfilling it in a way that feels congruent with who we want to be?

Dorie 13:09

Well, the truth is for most people, if we're honest about it, there usually is somewhat of a gap between where we are now and where we want to be. And there's nothing wrong with that. That's essentially the human condition, right?

Dorie 13:21

And so what we are enabled to do if we are thoughtful about it is it gives us the means to diagnose a path for ourselves. You know, it's not that it's so hard to sail to Spain, but it's really hard to sail to Spain if you don't know where in the world you're starting from.

Dorie 13:43

And so getting that initial information, getting that initial feedback about, oh, okay, here's the things that you seem to do really well. Here's maybe some gaps because you might be looking for your friends, your colleagues to say certain things about you and, you know, oh, she's so strategic.

Dorie 14:01

She's so this, she's so that. And if those are not the words they're using, you can realise like, oh, okay, somehow I'm sending the message over here. I need to, you know, pivot 90 degrees. And so it begins to suggest action steps for you because, you know, basically you can reverse engineering and say, gosh, if I wanted to somehow send the message to people that I am more strategic or I'm more innovative or whatever the thing is you're aiming for, you begin to ask yourself, well, what, what are the activities that a person who is strategic would be doing?

Dorie 14:34

What are the things that a person who is strategic would be talking about? What are the books she would be reading? What are the conferences she would be attending? You know, et cetera. And it creates a punch list basically that you can follow that hopefully over time will reset the balance in terms of how you are perceived.

Ross G 14:54

That sounds a little exhausting because you're almost playing a role that isn't, you know, obviously not true to yourself, it's aspirational. But I think what I like about what you described it there is you didn't set it out as go and pretend it was come up with a step so you can take to close that gap.

Dorie 15:15

Yeah, I mean, you know, there's Amy Cuddy, the former Harvard professor or the author of the book, Presence, in her super famous viral TED Talk that she gave years ago. She talked about a distinction.

Dorie 15:28

You know, everybody remembers the power pose. But I think that for me, probably the most interesting part of her talk was actually something that gets remembered or talked about less. And she talked about the way that she parses the question of fake it until you make it.

Dorie 15:47

You know, if you are somebody who maybe is not as confident as you want to be, you know, whether it's in general or with regard to a certain role or a certain attribute or something like that. I mean, the truth is, it's kind of natural, right?

Dorie 16:01

Like if you're if you're not experienced doing something, of course, you're going to be a little bit janky getting there. And so it's kind of this interesting question. And you know, there's the nice little pat rhyming advice or just fake it till you make it.

Dorie 16:18

And you know, that works up to a point. But also there's plenty of people who say, well, I don't really feel good about faking things. Like that's not what I want to be doing. And it feels it feels weird.

Dorie 16:30

It feels not genuine. And Amy Cuddy had a formulation that I think actually is much nicer, much gentler, much better from my perspective. And she likes to phrase it. It is less rhyming. So it lacks, it lacks that.

Dorie 16:49

But I think it is, I think it is a more useful formulation, which is fake it until you become it. Because the point here is that it's not that you're trying to be some kind of fake person that you're not.

Dorie 17:02

It's not like, Oh, let me let me, you know, pull off pull off this big con on everybody. So they're fooled. The point is that you are striving towards something. You know, for almost all of us, we have a future state that we want to aspire toward.

Dorie 17:17

You want to be a better boyfriend, you want to be a better son, you want to be a better leader, you know, whatever it is. And you might not be there yet. But that doesn't mean it's not genuine. That doesn't mean that it's not something that is within your capacity to do.

Dorie 17:34

It just means that it is evolving. And so thinking about fake it until you become it is really about how do you identify the best future state that you want to be in and then work, you know, sort of work your way toward that.

Nathalie 17:50

It feels a lot more participatory as well, as opposed to just donning someone else's clothes. It's like, well, what were the best version of myself on their best day? Be wearing, thinking, writing, doing, and then kind of inhabiting that as a role until it becomes familiar.

Nathalie 18:05

I know that in certain therapeutic practices as well, if you want to change unhelpful patterns of behaviour, you engage in the behaviour, sorry, unhelpful patterns of thinking. You engage in the behaviours first, and then that changes the thinking.

Nathalie 18:15

There is this kind of sense of it not just being a binary thing, that there has to be a bit of work that goes in in order to allow certain qualities to develop and emerge, which are the ones that you said that you want to cultivate, let's say.

Nathalie 18:30

Ross, you're nodding. I think you're going to say something.

Ross G 18:32

So it reminds me of the Herminia Ibarra's Authenticity Trap. If you were totally authentic all the time and every time you try something new, you told everyone, this is the first time I've done this and I have no idea what I'm doing, then you're just going to destroy your credibility and you're never going to have the confidence to grow because you're not going to have the successes that you need to reinforce the behaviour.

Ross G 18:56

So you're faking it, but really you're kind of trying out different things and seeing what fits and when people respond positively to something, you go, oh, this is actually something I'm good at that I didn't even realise or that strategy didn't work for me, I should try something else next time.

Ross G 19:10

So it's not like you're lying to people, you're just dabbling in different behaviours that take you on that path to whatever it is that you want to get.

Dorie 19:19

Yeah, absolutely. I mean, I think it sort of ties into the Carol Dweck and the growth mindset. I mean, we have to recognize that we do not currently possess all the knowledge that we ever are going to possess.

Dorie 19:33

Like that would be weird. That would be bad. We are continually learning. We're continually getting better. And so it's not that it's inauthentic for us to learn new things, do new things, become different, become better.

Dorie 19:48

That's actually the point.

Ross G 19:50

The authentic part is pretending that you do, isn't it? It's that you're not necessarily telling everyone that you don't know these things.

Dorie 19:58

Well, I think this is more art than science, right? I mean, I think that ultimately we have to make judgments. If you're a leader, for instance, it's like, well, what is the higher good here? In a given situation, is the higher good transparency or is the higher good reassuring your people?

Dorie 20:21

If you're whatever, captaining a ship that's sinking, it's probably better in that moment to telegraph competence and, you know, don't worry, we've got this. We can do this. You do this, you do this.

Dorie 20:34

I'm going to do this other thing. That is what is called for in the moment. At other times, perhaps when it is a time of repose and reflection and when the ship is not in crisis, then you can sit back and you're talking with your employees and they're saying, oh gosh, I worry about this, I worry about that.

Dorie 20:58

You can say, well, don't feel bad. I've had plenty of times where that's happened, blah, blah, blah, blah, and you can tell them about that. I think that, you know, oftentimes it's a question of what is the timing of the transparency?

Dorie 21:17

If you're going to just serve to alarm other people, then maybe that's not the moment. But if you can use the information about your own fallibility or your own self-doubt in a way that lifts others up, then that might be exactly the right moment to share it.

Nathalie 21:37

It also makes me think of this idea about when we're talking about authenticity, often we're thinking about the self as being a coherent set of qualities, traits, characteristics. And of course, you've pointed towards the fact that time and context makes such an important difference in terms of what aspects of self or characteristics we shine a light on.

Nathalie 21:54

And obviously, you're not going to want to show up somewhere like, Tomas Chamorro-Premuzic talks about this in terms of the curse of authenticity. You're not going to want to show up and show all of your authentic emotions as and when they arise.

Nathalie 22:04

Like the weather of the mind is very variable. And if you did that all the time and you didn't filter what comes out, it would be a bit chaotic. And so that's not necessarily helpful. So I'm wondering with the fact that humans are very complex and situations and contexts are monde that we show up in specific ways sometimes.

Nathalie 22:24

How do you reconcile this concept of a managed personal brand and the notion of bringing one's whole self to work?

Dorie 22:33

Yeah, it's a really interesting question that people need to navigate. I think that oftentimes when it comes to thinking through how transparent are we? What do we talk about? It's for me, one of the biggest issues is about what enables us to feel comfortable.

Dorie 23:01

When we talk about bring our whole selves to work, that's not an end in and of itself. It's not some performative end. To me, the end is you want to be able to do your best work. That's what actually matters.

Dorie 23:16

That's what they're paying you for. How can you do your best work? The research is actually really clear. When people feel like they have to spend a disproportionate amount of time, quote unquote, managing their identity and worrying about what are people thinking about me?

Dorie 23:35

Are they judging me? I don't know. It's distracting. It means that it's more stressful for them and they are not able to focus where they need to focus. That's the situation that I would want to prevent.

Dorie 23:52

I think there's been great research into covering by Kenji Yoshino at NYU and the Deloitte Leadership Center for Inclusion talking about this. I actually co-authored a piece with the former head of the Deloitte Leadership Center for Inclusion, Christy Smith, for Harvard Business Review talking about this question.

Dorie 24:13

Ultimately, it's interesting. It's not just people that we would think of as quote unquote minorities. There's actually a huge percentage of people, nearly two-thirds of people in general, say that with regard to some aspects of their life, maybe it's health, mental health, whatever, that they do some form of covering, 45% of straight white men say they engage in some form of covering at work.

Dorie 24:40

For me, I think if we can figure out how to alleviate the psychological stresses of that, people can just, at a really basic level, focus on work, focus on doing what they're there for and being able to enjoy it rather than stressing out about all of the politics or judgments that might be around it, that's what we're aiming for.

Ross G 25:08

So I wonder if I might just test the counter to that because I could think of someone who I know who, they walk with a cane. And one of the things that they like about working from home because of COVID and all that stuff is that that's no longer visible.

Ross G 25:23

So no one knows whether they're able bodied or not. And they felt amounting pressure with the increasing use of gender pronouns on email signatures. They felt very uncomfortable about this because they could see that stepping towards them having to put able bodied or not on their email signature.

Ross G 25:39

And so they, I think their perspective would be that they have a right to their own private life and whatever's going on in the background, how they identify or whatever, doesn't have anything to do with work.

Ross G 25:51

So how do you make it safe to not share aspects of your identity or should we? It feels like you're arguing, no.

Dorie 26:00

No, no, I would actually agree with your friend and I've certainly read and heard many similar things from people with disabilities of various kinds that remote work is actually incredibly liberating because they don't have to deal with a misogynist.

Dorie 26:17

It's not like they have to explain the cane or the wheelchair or whatever the thing is. They can just be themselves. And I think that that is my point. And I think that it is, you know, I would hope or imagine that that would be the goal of almost anybody is like, you know, it's not like work needs to be some kind of performance about, you know, oh, I'm expressing, you know, I'm speaking on behalf of all people who blah, blah, blah.

Dorie 26:51

No, you want to go in, you want to do your thing, you want to, you know, make friends or not make friends. But, you know, you want to be able to make your contribution at work and just have it not be a thing.

Dorie 27:03

And so ultimately, when it comes to your personal brand, I think that really it's just about how can we remove stressors in many ways? Like the situation that's a bad situation is where somebody is constantly having to worry, gosh, you know, what are they saying about me?

Dorie 27:25

What are they thinking about me? Is this okay? What if they found out? That's a terrible way to have to live. That's like a, you know, it's like perennially living in junior high, which no one wants to do.

Dorie 27:37

So I think personal brand is ultimately for all of us being able to be in control where we are the agents. We're not dependent on other people. What I really want for people is to be able to say, you know what, let me tell you, here is how I would like to be seen in the world.

Dorie 27:56

I would like to be seen as a bup, bup, bup, bup. And then ultimately being able to take control to say, you know what, I am going to take the steps such that as, you know, we can't manage everybody. We can't control everything in the universe.

Dorie 28:11

But as best as possible, I would like to take the steps and take the actions so that that vision of myself, how I see myself, I would like as best we can for other people to see me that way too. For me, that empowerment, that's being in control of your personal brand.

Dorie 28:29

And if for your friend, it means like, you know, people aren't freaking asking about this cane all the time, great, good, that's what I want for him or her too.

Ross G 28:38

Yeah, sure. And I think that must also apply if you're in a role that doesn't feel right for you. So it's also true if you're doing a job that you just hate. That, you know, you're always going to be performing because you can't, you know, demonstrate openly that you hate your job all the time.

Ross G 28:52

You just become difficult in the workplace and you certainly hear about it from your manager. So then that's performative as well. So I think it's also relevant if you're looking to change your job. You know, you don't necessarily have to conform to the organisation.

Ross G 29:02

If it doesn't fit, you could go and find another organisation to work for.

Dorie 29:06

Yeah, absolutely. I mean, ultimately, it's really about alignment. The way that we can eliminate stress in our lives is to eliminate a discordance between how we see ourselves and how the rest of the world sees us.

Dorie 29:25

If we can eliminate the daylight between those things, that's living the way that we want to live, ideally. And so, I think working toward that, being thoughtful about how to work toward that, is a powerful thing to do.

Nathalie 29:40

So as well as the three-word exercise that you can do, which sounds brilliant and I'm probably going to try it after we jump off this interview. What can people do if listeners are listening to this and they're thinking, well, I wonder if my personal brand falls far short of where I want it to be or where I need it to be or where the aspirational self sits versus where they feel they are now?

Nathalie 29:58

What are some of the other things that people can do as well as read your fabulous books?

Dorie 30:04

Thank you. Well, you know, I'm a big fan of following the paper trail. And so what that looks like, one thing that's always really interesting is to excavate previous performance reviews.

Dorie 30:19

So if you have things from past years, now it's possible that you might have sort of a random one off. You know, maybe there was a boss you had that just had a really whacked perspective and, you know, if it's an outlier, okay, forget about it.

Dorie 30:31

But what we're looking for is patterns. And so if over the past five or six years, like everybody says the same thing about you, oh, you know, they might be right. And so looking at what your performance reviews, that's helpful.

Dorie 30:44

Another thing that's really interesting to do is to Google yourself. You know, a super low hanging fruit, which a lot of people have not done, is to create a Google alert for your name. And one quick tip is to make sure that you do your name in quotation marks so that it has to have both pieces of your name.

Dorie 31:04

Otherwise, you're going to get notifications about like every Nathalie in the entire world. But like, you know, see what comes up when when there's new things that pop up online and also just periodically do a search to see what are the first things that come up.

Dorie 31:18

Because for a lot of people, I mean, we know this. It's very natural the first time somebody meets you, the first time somebody hears about you or they're going to meet you, they will Google you to try to get a little bit more information.

Dorie 31:29

It's useful to see it through their eyes and to say, all right, if I'm trying to figure out about this Nathalie woman, like what's her deal? And looking at the first two or three pages of results helps paint a picture.

Dorie 31:40

And it enables you to say, huh, is that the picture I would like them to be getting?

Ross G 31:47

I have googled myself and there's another Ross Garner who's, I think he's like a film lecturer at a university specialising, it seems exclusively in Jurassic Park, which is my favourite film. It really feels like this guy's just living my life but better.

Nathalie 32:08

We should invite him on the show. Ross Garner and Ross Garner.

Ross G 32:11

That would be so strange. Talking about Jurassic Park.

Nathalie 32:15

But it is also tricky. I've done that once or twice before to see what comes up. And then you end up with some of the most common search terms in your areas like, Nathalie Nahai is... And then it's like, what age?

Nathalie 32:24

I'm like, why do people give this shit how old I am? You know, like married. I'm like, what? Or like, you know, any, any number of things that people want to find out. And it's, um, yeah.

Nathalie 32:33

So it can be quite illuminating, not always for the best reasons.

Dorie 32:38

Really true. I, whenever I need to bolster my ego, yeah, it always comes up like Dorie Clark, spouse, Dory Clark married and I'm like, oh, do all these people wanna date me? That's so fantastic. Oh, like, yay.

Nathalie 32:50

Because you're right, it probably is whenever you Google someone's partner or like status. It's like yeah.

Nathalie 32:58

Okay, let's wrap up. So, Ross, what will you be taking from this conversation and applying in your life this week?

Ross G 33:11

So I really liked what you said, Dorie, about removing discordant properties from your life. I think you said something like that. So any areas that I feel uncomfortable about or are stressing me out at work and I can remove, I think that's probably quite a practical thing to do.

Ross G 33:27

I think difficult, but something to look at.

Nathalie 33:31

I think for me, the point that you made about the fact that people with a bit more perspective on us can give us insights about maybe the strengths or weaknesses that we might be less aware of, that's super interesting.

Nathalie 33:45

I think sometimes, especially if you're working for yourself, it'd be quite hard to figure out how you fit somehow, relates to other's ecosystems. So that's a super interesting one that I will be taking away.

Nathalie 33:56

How about you, Dorie?

Dorie 33:57

Oh my goodness. Well, I'm interested in the conversation that we had around authenticity. And I'm reading, I'm actually rereading because it was a good book. So I'm reading it now for the second time, a book called Richer, Wiser, Happier by a friend of mine named William Green.

Dorie 34:12

And he is profiling the world's top investors in their investment strategies. And the first person he profiles is this guy named Monish Pabrai, who is a very successful investor. And the way that he's become so successful is basically that he just copies Warren Buffet, he copies Warren Buffett's investing strategy.

Dorie 34:33

And I think it's so interesting because Monish basically says like, look, we get in a lot of trouble by thinking that we have to be so clever ourselves and we've got to come up with everything ourselves.

Dorie 34:43

Sometimes the best thing to do is just find someone you really admire and copy what they're doing and you'll be you'll be in good shape. And I think it's an interesting question for personal brand.

Dorie 34:52

Sometimes, you know, authenticity, it doesn't necessarily have to mean like, oh, it's, you know, coming from the deepest wellsprings of who I am and it's completely unrelated to the world around me. The truth is, authenticity can mean identifying what you want to be in the world, who you would like to be like, and saying, you know what, I'm going to strive to be closer to that.

Dorie 35:19

And even if you are quote unquote copying someone, that actually can be a form of authenticity because it is what you are

choosing to strive toward.

Nathalie 35:29

Modelling. Cutting it on a catwalk? I mean psychologically... Yes!

Nathalie 35:41

So before we go then, apart from checking out that book, which sounds very inspiring, also we have got time for just one more regular feature, which is one thing that we've learned this week. So, Ross, you want to go first?

Ross G 35:53

Yes, I was reading this week about Spoon Theory in a newsletter from author Emma Gannon. Either of you familiar with Spoon Theory? Uh-uh. I hadn't heard of it either. So this was a metaphor. It was developed by Lady Christine Missarandino, who I've said that name right in 2003, and she has lupus.

Ross G 36:12

And her friend was asking her in a restaurant, what does it feel like to have lupus? So she gave her friend a handful of spoons and said that each one represents a unit of energy. And then she asked her friend, what have you done this day?

Ross G 36:22

And as she ticked off various activities, she removed a spoon until eventually she had one left. And then she said to her, what are you going to do next? And she said, well, I'm hungry. And Missarandino said to her, well, eating is a spoon, but so is cooking.

Ross G 36:36

So you've only got one spoon left. So now you have to make a decision about how to spend it. And she said, this is what it's like to have a chronic illness. You only have a certain number of spoons. You probably have fewer spoons than others.

Ross G 36:45

And so you have to be careful about where you use them. But the author that I read...

Dorie 36:53

You use your hands. Yeah, the only other choice is, you know, injira. That works like a charm.

Ross G 37:00

So Emma Gannon, who had written this newsletter, was pointing at this quite useful metaphor for everyone to think about the energy you have throughout your day. If you have a finite number of spoons, you have to think about where you're going to use them because they have to last until you go to bed.

Ross G 37:13

And so I thought that was kind of an interesting way of just thinking about how you feel and how you navigate the world.

Nathalie 37:18

Dorie how about you?

Dorie 37:20

So, it's something that I've learned this week, which actually came in the form of something that I did this week for the very first time, is there is a store in New York called the Drama Bookshop and it's really cool.

Dorie 37:33

It was kind of a historic place because it is a bookstore that specialises in selling scripts of plays and musicals and also books around the entertainment industry. And in the earliest days of Lin-Manuel Miranda's career, they would actually rehearse his Tony Award-winning musical In The Heights in the basement of the Drama Bookshop.

Dorie 38:01

And it was going to close and, you know, this, I mean, like how can these things stay open in modern society? But then Lin-Manuel Miranda, because he's a cajillionaire now, bought it along with his producer and his director and whatever.

Dorie 38:16

And so now they all own this place. And I think they actually moved it to a new location because the new location is super

spiffy, like it looks like the nicest Barnes and Noble or Waterstones you have ever seen.

Dorie 38:29

And they sell coffee and pastries and it's just beautiful. And they have a this piece of art in the bookshop, which is this elaborate winding sculpture made of actual bound plays. And the sculpture was created by David Corins, who's a well-known Broadway set designer for Beetlejuice and for like all of these different really cool Broadway plays and musicals.

Dorie 38:56

So it's it's an amazing place and just a really cool thing. But I especially love that Lin-Manuel and his friends decided to kind of rescue it and give back now that they are super rich. So that was something that I did slash learned this week.

Nathalie 39:16

That was such a beautiful story. It's a shame that it's such an exception these days. You can't do that in places like London and Paris and New York. It's just it's not possible anymore. So I learned, I've been reading one of Michael Pollan's book which came out fairly recently, This Is Your Mind on Plants, and he writes about our response to plants such as opium and caffeine and mescaline.

Nathalie 39:39

It's super, super interesting reading. I was particularly fascinating strangely to read about the impact of caffeine on European civilisation and how essentially it's been credited by some for completely transforming what was previously a very inebriated British culture into a very business savvy, productive, prolific wave of, you know, enlightenment thinkers, etc.

Nathalie 40:08

So it's super, super interesting to read how a tiny little bean can be used by an extraordinary number of people to create what then led to the conditions for various revolutions. Super interesting. And what happens when you come off it, you know, we always think about these hard drugs of as things that we need to avoid, but actually his experiment with caffeine sounded absolutely brutal when he went completely cold turkey.

Nathalie 40:31

So, yeah, This Is Your Mind on Plants by Michael Pollan and the role of caffeine in modern civilisation.

Ross G 40:37

And just so we're clear, the impact of caffeine was that people stopped drinking alcohol, I think. Is that right?

Nathalie 40:43

Yeah, so workers would be drinking from the early hours of the day and you know, beers and such people would have those sorts of breaks. And then eventually, he tells a story about how certain workers, so young men were killed after one of the wars.

Nathalie 40:56

I think it was the first world war and so they had to conscribe, conscribe, conscript other people to come in and work. The older men were less dexterous, so they brought in older women and they were much more dexterous but could go for fewer hours.

Nathalie 41:09

And they found that if they were given coffee breaks, they would be able to work for much longer hours. Productivity went up and so did the sales of the company. There's always little anecdotes and stories about how caffeine can essentially kind of borrow energy from the future to give us extra in the present.

Nathalie 41:26

Yeah, exactly. Borrowing spoons from our future cupboards. Don't borrow too many.

Dorie 41:31

Coffee spoons, it's coming full circle.

Nathalie 41:35

I feel like there's a best-selling book in there somewhere. Well, so thank you so much for this conversation. Dorie, before we close, can you mention where people can find you online or a beautiful area that you've been experiencing or researching

that you want people to look at?

Nathalie 41:52

Any tips on things and places to find that are related to you.

Dorie 41:56

Well, thank you, Natalie. I appreciate it. If folks want to learn more specifically around personal branding and reinvention, how to reinvent our personal brands, which I think in a lot of ways we're all doing all the time, my book about that is Reinventing You.

Dorie 42:12

And I have a free resource, which is a reinventing you self-assessment. And if folks are interested in checking that out for free, they can get it at doryclark.com/reinvent

Nathalie 42:26

And that's it! You've been listening to the Future Talent Learning podcast with me, Nathalie Nahai and Ross Garner. Our guest this week was the wonderful Dorie Clark. Until next time, bye for now!