

Episode #213 The Power of Proximity

Dave Delaney

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[00:00:00] **Susan:** today I am delighted to welcome Dave Delaney to life Beyond the Numbers. Dave, you're so welcome.

[00:00:07] **Dave:** Well, thank you. Yeah. I'm, I'm pleased to be here. it's great to see you

[00:00:11] **Susan:** And I, and the first thing I notice actually when I, when I look at you, 'cause I can see Dave, you might not be, you won't be able to, but I can see him and Dave is wearing a black cap. And on the black cap is the Canadian maple leaf, which is also in black, which I've never seen before.

[00:00:30] **Dave:** yes. I bought it. I was in, band Alberta, a number of months ago with my wife. And we were just bumming around, you know, hiking and stuff. And yeah, we just popped into a shop and one of the, the parks and they had these hats. And I'm like, oh, that's cool. So yeah, I grabbed this and, and, Yeah. representing however I can in my, best, American ways now, I suppose, because now that I'm an American citizen, I'm a Canadian citizen,

[00:00:56] **Susan:** An Irish want to be citizen.

[00:00:59] **Dave:** Irish. Yeah, yeah, yeah, exactly. Yeah. Having, having lived in Ireland, Ireland's the reason why I moved to the States, it's all Ireland's fault because I moved from Toronto to Galway, Ireland met my wife there, who's from Jackson, Tennessee, of all places near Nashville. And so now we're here. So all because of Galway. So my Galway girl is, is an American, as it turns out.

[00:01:22] **Susan:** I, I'm sure that's going to be the next version of, is it Ed Sheeran song, Galway Girl? Is that.

[00:01:27] **Dave:** Well, yeah, no, I mean really I think I would give credit to Steve Earl. 'cause Steve was the first, and Steve, even though he is an



American, had a flat in Galway as well. So I know he, I never ran into him in, in my years in Galway. But I know he frequented Galway.

So he wrote the first Galway girl, which I prefer. Personally, and then Ed Shean did his own completely different song called Galway Girl. but Galway Girl was all, the video at least, was all shot in, O'Connor's Pub in Salt Hill, which I recall,visiting numerous times. So it was cool to see a little nostalgia there in that video.

[00:02:02] **Susan:** Absolutely. Yes, I know what you mean. I went to university in Galway. I love to see Galway in anything and, and revisit whenever that's possible.

[00:02:12] **Dave:** Yeah, for sure.

[00:02:13] **Susan:** And, I, speaking of Ireland and meeting women, even though, your wife is American. I just saw the other day, not even though, but I saw something about John Bon Jovi and how he is extremely smart because he married an Irish woman.

[00:02:29] **Dave:** Ah, nice. Well played. Well, my wife's very smart too, because she became a Canadian citizen in Canada, so should things continue to unravel in the us we have an exit strategy because both our kids were also born in Toronto, and, raised in Nashville. So they're also Irish twins, as it as it were.

So we always joke that we should have seen it coming, so 11 and a half months apart.

[00:02:53] **Susan:** Wow. That sure isn't. Wow.

[00:02:57] **Dave:** Yeah. Yeah.

[00:02:58] **Susan:** I'm sure they're great friends though.

[00:03:00] **Dave:** They are. Yeah, they've always been super close. at, at 19 and 20, they're kind of butt heads a little bit now, but they're both at uni and different, about almost 10 hours apart.



So, so they're not with each other as quite as frequently, but I think maybe they both needed a bit of a break. They've been, together for, 19 years. So, but yeah, they are, they are close. Yeah.

[00:03:21] **Susan:** Cool. So Dave, we were introduced by my sister soon and, for our love of Galway, I think, and conversation. So, like all the conversations this one will bring what it brings and as I did my research. One of the things that I really loved when I read it was that you are known for your blend of humor, heart experience, and actionable insights. A communication connoisseur. So maybe you talk a little bit to that and what it means, Dave.

[00:03:55] **Dave:** Yeah. Yeah. Well, I mean, it, was, a lot of soul searching throughout my career, on which direction to take it do I follow my passions? Do I, figure out how to pay the bills? can I do a bit of both? And. in a lot of, exploring myself and something, I've developed.

something called nowhere, but, that I'm working on. and the root down, it comes from this thing called the route down, which is like an idea I had of reflecting on my own journey, my own travels and where I've been. And I realized that like my all of my talents lie under this umbrella of communication.

and that is everything from storytelling and performance. I studied improv in Toronto at Second City, and then have performed improv in London and had my own improv troupe in Galway actually. and we, you know, performed once a week. there, And so performance, comedy, acting, improv, all of these, even standup comedy, all of these things are, are things that I love.

And keynote presentations of course, which is a lot of what I do for a living is delivering presentations and trainings, workshops and things like that. But because I'm a nerd I've always loved communicating online as well, and that includes things like, I ran a BBS on my Commodore 64, which totally dates me and is, is extremely nerdy, but this is like pre-internet, right?

and then, just communicating with people bringing people together online, created a little social network in Galway. in 98 people were, you know, on internet cafes using this website. Which I also built, internet, internet cafe there. and. It's always been for me about bringing people together,



communicating great ideas, stories, and teaching, how best to do that, whether it's online, whether it's offline.

I wrote a book, called New Business Networking. which is published by Pearson, by Q. and that book itself is about networking, not icky, gross networking, but like networking, building, genuine relationships and finding ways to serve others. and I have chapters on doing that through different, LinkedIn or doing it in events, conferences and so on.

So everything I love to do and everything that. My talents kinda lie under is, is this communication theme and so I've

[00:06:20] **Susan:** as you're talking, I'm just, I'm thinking that. We don't really get anywhere, do we? Without communicating.

[00:06:29] **Dave:** Yeah, exactly. or redo, but with poor communication, right? So we might end up in the wrong place, literally at the wrong place, wrong time, because we didn't listen or didn't get the correct information. Right? So, so, absolutely. Yeah, when it, when it works well, it works great. And when it's not working well, problems arise.

[00:06:48] **Susan:** And well, yeah, and, and I guess that's it. Like where does that span from or how does that come about? Because you would think if we're, well, we're all born and we've all got the same. underlying structure or whatever you want to say, and yet some of us just don't ever figure out how to communicate well in inverted commas with our fellow humans and others become connoisseurs.

[00:07:18] **Dave:** I think like communication is really at the end of the day, the thing that most connects us and right back from, when we were sitting around a fire, hitting each other with rocks, it's always been about how we communicate and so, I think those who may self label themselves as poor communicators.

I mean, that itself is a great thing because if you yourself say, I'm a bad communicator, I'm terrible at communication. For you to know that about yourself is like knowing is the, the first step, right? Because if you know that



you can work on it, because that's the kicker is in all the workshops and training and and consulting and coaching that I do about these topics.

Yeah. I mean, I talk about active listening, for example. But I'll be the first to admit that like my wife will elbow me in the gut every time we're out together. Like, sh shut up, like let someone else talk right now. Partly that was undiagnosed A DHD and I was diagnosed a couple of years ago, and so that's also put me on a another journey as well.

But again, it, it really does come down to, yeah, a big part of it is knowing yourself Everybody can communicate to some extent, otherwise you would starve to death. Right. even like, you know, like a unfortunate homeless person, you know, know enough to have a sign and or to ask for donations or handouts or whatever, however you wanna word that, but like, asking for, for things.

and so I think it's, it's. We all can communicate. I think we can all improve how we communicate. Even, even whoever's the best communicator in the world, I'm sure, they can improve as well. So it's something we, we should all be working on always.

[00:09:01] **Susan:** Yeah, I, I think that's very true, and as you're talking about that, then I'm thinking about, while I've never had the privilege yet of doing improv in any kind of course or whatever. I've done it in a workshop, say, and the beauty of improv is the responding to the person across from you that actually you're building on what they say.

You're receiving it and building on it, and. It seems like such a basic way for us all to communicate that that is how we can do things better, whereas a lot of us spend our time picking holes in what somebody says or criticizing it, or just going a different direction.

[00:09:51] **Dave:** Yeah, no, absolutely. Like in improv there is a rule called Yes and which is kind of improv 1 0 1 in my trainings that I do. I do do a sort of a variation of that, but I call it nice. And, and I have a presentation and training that I do called the Master Communicator Secret Weapon, and that revealed is the secret weapon.



It's improv. and then I, I share, not that everybody has a rush out and take an improv class necessarily, but you can tap into these skills from improv. And apply them to how you communicate. So, leading with acceptance is, is one, overcoming a fear of failure, thinking fast on your feet. all of these things are relevant and important.

Active listening as well, right? Like actually listening. And so, The nice and, I, I say nice. And because you can't accept every idea, like in an improv scene with actors and you're trained with. Yes. And yeah. I mean, if somebody in the audience says you're a butcher and you only have one arm. Then you're a butcher with one arm.

Yes. And carry on. but at work, somebody, you can't say, I have an idea for something and Yes. And let's give you a million dollars to invest in r and d. Right. but you can use a variation of that that I teach called Nice and which is really a spin on Yes. And, we can do it now if you want.

[00:11:11] **Susan:** Sure.

[00:11:12] **Dave:** Okay, cool, cool, cool. This is always fun. So all you have to do is just answer everything. Answer everything with nice. And so, so we'll have a conversation. I'll just say one thing at the beginning and then we'll both say nice and blank and you can just fill in the blanks. One word, a sentence, sentences, it doesn't matter.

And so we go through this exercise. So what is, like, what's an object you find in Ireland? Like anywhere, like in an office in Dublin, let's say. Could be anywhere.

[00:11:41] **Susan:** So I go with nice and

[00:11:43] **Dave:** Well before that, sorry. Yes. what's an o object you find in an, in an office? Let's say that.

[00:11:48] **Susan:** So an object I'll find in an office in Dublin is a desk



[00:11:51] **Dave:** A desk. Perfect. Okay, so I'm just gonna say, I have a new desk and you say nice and blank,

[00:11:57] **Susan:** nice and what have you put on it.

[00:12:01] **Dave:** nice and well, that's why I was talking to you.

I have an idea, but I'm not sure what to put on it yet.

[00:12:06] **Susan:** Nice. And ask me what you wanted to ask me.

[00:12:10] **Dave:** Nice. And the question is, what should I put on the desk?

[00:12:13] **Susan:** Nice. And I think a plant start with a plant.

[00:12:17] **Dave:** Nice. And we could buy multiple plants,

[00:12:21] **Susan:** Nice. And what else would you need on that desk?

[00:12:26] **Dave:** nice. And maybe some water and maybe a hydroponic light.

[00:12:31] **Susan:** Nice. And what about a computer?

[00:12:34] **Dave:** Okay, perfect. Yeah, yeah. Right. So round of applause. So you did that perfectly. So what happens in that is you are accepting everything and building upon it, right? So when you go to like an improv comedy show or you take an improv lesson, or lessons early on this yes. And rule applies, right? And. When you go and see an improv troupe or a show or a fringe festival or something, or if you're watching like, whose line is it anyway?

Or something, you never hear them utter the words. Yes. And because this is something that they're taught, this is a rule that's instilled and it's embedded in their heads so they know as you're practicing, rehearsing, and learning improv. You're learning to accept and build upon everything using Yes. And to the point that it doesn't have to be uttered anymore. The actors just know to do that.



With Nice and the way I teach it is when a team are all using Nice. And so I'm, let's say I'm doing a workshop in person, everybody's on the same page. Everybody knows to use nice sand and we go through these exercises and I have additional stuff that I do.

but afterwards what happens is I leave, they go, you know, maybe it's a Friday and they're all back in the office on Monday. Things are a little different because now they're using Nice and at the office, or like, I had one client who said, the CEO who was part of the workshop, the, the CEO had said at a board meeting the following Monday, said like, no, we don't do that, blah, blah, blah.

And he's like, nice, and let's talk about it more, you know? And so it really does work when everybody's communicating. With that same, playbook. Now, the flip side of that is something, I call nice, but, and, and when it's on the screen in the presentation, in the keynote that I do, I always like have an arrow to the T and I say like, it's one T and, and no calls to HR or necessary.

and, and so let's just run it again and, but instead of saying nice and say Nice but blank. So, what's something else you find in an office? Just any object.

[00:14:42] **Susan:** A photocopier.

[00:14:43] **Dave:** Okay. So, I've got this new photocopier.

[00:14:46] **Susan:** Nice, but what are you gonna do with it?

[00:14:49] **Dave:** nice, but I'm thinking we should put paper in it.

[00:14:52] **Susan:** Nice. But isn't that what everyone does?

[00:14:55] **Dave:** Nice. But it's hard to use without paper.

[00:14:58] **Susan:** Nice. But do we have to use white paper?

[00:15:02] **Dave:** Nice. But we could use different types of paper.

[00:15:06] **Susan:** Nice. But can we make any other use from it?



[00:15:09] **Dave:** Nice. But I don't think so.

[00:15:12] **Susan:** Nice. But do we really need it?

[00:15:14] **Dave:** Nice, but I don't think so. so you see what happens there. And so you're, nicely, but you're, it's called blocking really, in improv, right? and you're, you're basically saying no. And so a lot of times organizations or leaders who're kind of stuck in their ways or, or anybody really, we'll just say, no, I don't do that.

Or, no, that's stupid, or No, No, no, no, no,

[00:15:36] **Susan:** We've done it before, blah, blah. Yeah.

[00:15:38] **Dave:** Exactly. But if you say nice, and even though it's something that you think is a bad idea, let's say you can slow yourself down in the moment. Instead of saying, no, hell no. No way you could say. Nice and blank.

So like in the Master communicator secret weapon presentation that I do and the training, I share a story.

It's a longer story, and I won't, you know, waste all, all the time here on it. But the short version is I pitched an idea and my boss, the CEO of a company said, that's the stupidest idea I've ever heard in front of other people. And of course that did not leave me feeling very good or, really eager to share any other idea ever again.

and in retrospect, if it was a stupid idea, and it may have been a stupid idea, he could have like in this example, say Nice. And so like, what, what if I say like that, you know, some stupid idea and you're the boss. You could say, nice. And what?

[00:16:35] **Susan:** Nice, and let me have a think about it and come back to you.

[00:16:40] **Dave:** Yeah. Perfect. Right, so that's a good way of you saying like, yeah, like, let me think it over instead of just No. Right, which we so often do. there's other, like you could say, I've heard it after too, where you could say



like, nice and, let's talk to customer service and see if this is something that solves our customer's problems or Nice and let's talk to sales and see if this is something worth selling, or, or nice.

[00:17:02] **Susan:** finance, then you know

[00:17:04] **Dave:** Yeah, exactly. Exactly right. So maybe that means that I've gotta go back and kinda work on the idea and the budget and see if I can bring down the cost of this idea and then bring it back to you to see if finance can approve it or, right.

So it doesn't mean that every idea gets accepted, like with Yes. And yeah. I mean, if you're saying that at work, then yeah, it's gonna be awkward after a while. But with nice, and you can at least make the person feel heard, feel empowered, and again, it doesn't mean that you have to accept that thing.

Right. if you're a great boss, you could say, nice, and let's grab lunch on me and we can talk more about it. Because sometimes somebody might be nervous presenting an idea or, and maybe they forget, like a really important part. Or maybe if, if they're afraid to present an idea. 'cause it could be that, like in that situation I could have presented this idea and had he said, nice and blank, it would've slowed things down and made them more welcoming.

So someone else in the room might have said, you know what, actually I've been thinking about a similar idea. And we could take this idea and kind of merge 'em together or whatever. and this works, out in the field too, or out at, you know, with friends and family.

[00:18:14] **Susan:** What, what I've noticed just by those back and forths as well, is okay, maybe we are, I'm listening a little bit to respond but I'm also listening to understand, whereas in a lot of the time. People are just listening to respond. And that's a big difference because the yes and is a pause almost.

So it's, or the the nice and or the nice, but it's a pause that allows me those few seconds to think as well, rather than no, and shut it down.

[00:18:45] **Dave:** right. A hundred percent.



[00:18:47] **Susan:** Yeah. Cool. Very cool. Now you talked about networking, Dave and not the icky type of networking. So, and it's funny because that word just has such a, it needs a image makeover, doesn't it?

Networking. But at the end of the day, networking simply is meeting people.

[00:19:08] **Dave:** Yes.

[00:19:09] **Susan:** Is it, is that all it is? Like, so what's the fear around networking?

[00:19:14] **Dave:** Well, I mean, obviously with networking there is the aspect of, of, professionalism, careers, work related stuff. Right? So you're typically with networking. You're, you're networking to advance or not, or to advance change, help others, but also your own career perhaps. having a professional network.

your network can often be, friends and, coworkers, colleagues, customers, and so on. But it also can include people in professional organizations, right. Associations. So if you belong to an association and you attend their, their monthly mixer, let's say, well, you're networking there for sure.

I mean, there's also, friendships and, and, and dating and all these things as well, right? Which I wouldn't say is networking necessarily, although you could be at a networking event and meet your future partner, which happened at one of my events that I hosted, where a couple were there, not a couple, but two people were there and they've been married ever since, which is really neat.

so I think with networking. The importance is to, well, to remove the icky side of it. and that's partly on the organizer, I think, whoever's running the networking event to make sure that it's clear, communicating clearly, what the, what the plan is, what the goal is, what the rules of engagement are, and then encourage, the attendees,

to approach one another in a, in a good way. And, and also, when I talk about networking and do presentations and training on that, or coaching even, I



always say there's three ups of networking. There's show up, follow up and catch up. Right, so like show up, it's easy to sign up for like a, a casual networking event, some organization or something.

And then, it's Friday, it's 7:00 PM when the event's about to take place and you're like, ah, but there's Netflix, and you can't be artist going out. So you gotta show up. If you don't show up. that's the first most important. Step, right? But then oftentimes you do show up. Let's say you go to a conference and you come back with a stack of business cards or new LinkedIn connections and so forth, and the, let's say the business cards sit on your desk or the LinkedIn connections, there's no way to know who the hell these people are.

And so you don't follow up. and you neglect such an important part of that. And I often use the analogy of dating because like if you went out on a date with someone you fancied and then, You're like, gosh, I really liked that person. and you had a lovely time and all this stuff.

And then you never called again, never text, nothing. Like that's the following up piece, right? Like you wanna follow up. And then the catching up part is about staying in touch, right? let's say we met at a conference. I showed up at the conference, I followed up with you afterwards to, with an email to say, Hey, it was lovely meeting you.

Maybe we should have a Zoom call or grab a coffee or what have you. and you can keep in touch and see how things go from there. especially with conferences, which I love conferences both as a speaker and as a networker, but, at conferences, you know, as I said that, that third part is, let's say it's an annual conference, well.

Yeah, maybe it's like a month before the next conference, the next year. It's a great time to send a message to people that you met last year and catch up and say, Hey, I see so and so conferences coming up again. are you planning to go back and if so, you know, we should grab dinner or grab a drink or whatever.

that's part of that, that's a good way to kind of catch up.



[00:22:49] **Susan:** So there's a few things I wanted to like. Pick on there, which I really like, and the host up to the host, to set the scene and or design the experience or invite the, the atmosphere. There's so many things, and I'm not sure how much thought goes into something like that. not wholesale, but I've been to lots of networking events where they're, they're almost like out of a.

an assembly line of networking events, like, and there's nothing in it that even evokes a sense of welcoming or atmosphere or anything. So I also then wonder, is there some onus on you to make sure that you're going to things that feed you, not just nourishing food, but actually where you feel welcomed.

So it's maybe a two-way thing.

[00:23:47] **Dave:** Absolutely. Yeah. as an attendee, like one of the things I always say is, if you're shy, introverted, you don't know anybody else at this event, but you're like, you've mustered up the courage to go out and go to this thing. a couple tips like, that I, I recommend and things for my book too, if you show up not early, early, but if you show up like as it begins, like very early, there's usually a lot of late comers, but that's a good time to talk to like the organizer and get to know them a bit, right?

Or the sponsors or exhibitors if they have those. the other thing too is as it begins or even throughout the night, if you notice someone standing by themselves, like I always say, nobody goes to a networking event to stand by themselves

[00:24:31] **Susan:** To not network.

[00:24:33] **Dave:** Right? Like, why wouldn't you just stay home and watch Netflix at, in that case, right? Like, by the way, this episode is brought to you by Netflix, apparently. they can send me a check later. so. So I think as the attendee, if you don't know anyone, it's up to you to, to meet people.

You can't. And so I have like different strategies and, and ways to, to recommend that. But that's one of them is. Pick the wallflowers, go to someone who's standing there by themselves and introduce yourself. And then, there's ways to, to have that conversation properly. on the flip side, for



the organizer, like I've run many networking events over the years, some one-offs, some, series of events, monthly events and things.

And I used to run this event. Which later got acquired by a group. but this event, called NASH cocktail, here in, in Nashville, and it was just an evening cocktail hour for, professionals. And it was always very casual. I usually had maybe 30 to 50 people there. people would come, I would introduce myself and the, the event and say hello.

And then just kind of let people mingle. I would always do like a prize, like a giveaway, towards the end of the event. So I would always do some sort of draw. but the, the main point here is if you are hosting the event, and this is something I just happened upon by doing it one day, I, I decided to get everybody together in a circle.

Kind of casual circle, not like a perfect circle or anything, just a little group. And I got up on a chair and I just said, just at the beginning of the event, I said Very quickly, if you wouldn't mind, just take a moment, just a moment. Not like a b and i event, where like you have this script you have to say and so on.

but instead just casually say like, what brings you to the event? Who are you, what do you do? And yeah, what brings you to the event? Go. And then each person would say that. And what was great from that, and, I'm saying like 10 seconds, five seconds, like just quickly is it transformed the event because now I'm at an event, I don't know anybody there.

you reply to that and you say who you are and that you're looking for like a. AI expert. and then if, you know, I know a lot about ai, so maybe that's something that I, my ears perk up on. And now I know, okay, we've gotta talk tonight. So I seek you out and I come over and say, Hey, I heard you say you, you're looking for some information about ai, tell me about that.

And it's not me selling you something. God forbid, that's the worst. and it's the same like, I'm new to town, I'm looking for a job, I'm a CPA, and you're like, oh, I work for A-A-C-P-A firm and we're hiring, or I'm an entrepreneur and I need a new CPA. So again, this gives you the opportunity to then pick people out and actually have a discussion with them.



And that starts to, help facilitate that networking. But the host has to be the one that instigates that.

[00:27:37] **Susan:** Yeah, totally. And it's, it's as if you're hosting people at your house. I mean, there isn't really any other way. Know, I think if you're a host then you're a host and that is something to take away for people. and I suppose the other part of that is something that you mentioned as well, not now, but somewhere I read it, was the power of proximity.

'cause that's what we're talking about here as well.

[00:28:03] **Dave:** Yes, yes. I wrote an article, at, Dave Delaney Me slash Blog is my blog. And, you know, I also wrote it on my LinkedIn profile. but the power of proximity. I'm an early adopter in a lot of social networking and stuff, back when it wasn't evil. and, I think the, numbers now somewhere around 50% of the.

People on social networks are bots. yeah, like I know Twitter or X or whatever you want to call it. I don't recommend it for anyone, but I do know with Twitter it's at least about 50% now. and they're getting more sophisticated. So you can say you hate, coffee and somebody responds, why do you hate coffee?

[00:28:43] **Susan:** And you say, because it's whatever. And they might get in an argument with you or, or what have you. That could very well be a bot. It could be. Yeah. What a waste of everyone's time.

[00:28:56] **Dave:** right, and, and, being someone who has always been quite savvy and, critical of the media, I mean, obviously we need to trust someone, and we need to trust some of the sources of information at least, and do our own, not do our own research, but at least, you know, make sure.

Yeah. Anyway, that's a different story. But, but I say that because, these social networks are now sort of being weaponized in a sense to kind of divide people instead of bring them together like the Kumbaya early adopters who we were all so excited about social and, I've made friends on social media that are, great.



But getting back to the power of proximity, let's say I would meet people on Twitter, being an early adopter on Twitter. I would meet people on there, and then we would all go to, let's say, south by Southwest Interactive, the big tech conference in Austin. Every year we would meet there.

Suddenly we'd meet in person and as I wrote about in my book, it's hugs, high fives, handshakes. These all lead to like real personal connection. like IRL, right? In real life you're taking these online relationships and suddenly it's like, holy crap, we're in person and we're, this is awesome.

in the flip side of that, where. Maybe we met at a conference, but we keep in touch on Twitter or whatever social network throughout the year, right? So that next year, you know, we could meet up again or if we're traveling to each other's markets or whatever. So I believe now we are getting to the point and we will get there quickly where, you won't know if you're corresponding with a human.

or not, or a bot I should say. and we're getting to the point now where with DeepFakes and with AI video and all this stuff, I mean, there's a lot of great stuff too that and great possibilities and potentials with these technologies and AI agents and things, but. It won't be that long before we meet on Zoom.

And I don't know if you're really, really real or vice versa. Right? Because we, I mean, right now you can have a, a conversation with chat GPT and it's not great, but it's improving at least, So I think the magic in the future is always, it's gonna be in person because until we get to the blade runner moment, when God forbid.

but until we get to that moment, if we meet out at an event, a conference, a pub, whatever, I can see you're real like, and vice versa. So. But besides all of that, like, techno paranoia sounding stuff, I mean, I still think there is magic in meeting up in person and bringing people together in person.

And I think this loneliness epidemic that's everywhere. I think, some of the, the studies and research and things that I've read about, like, I think we talked about it, previously about, pubs closing in the UK and Ireland, I mean. Like pubs closing, like pubs are, I mean, they may change names or change hands, but to actually shut down, is really troubling to me because, I mean, put the



booze problems aside, but these are gathering places, public houses where people of all backgrounds, shapes, sizes, beliefs, whatever, can still meet under one roof and, and get to know people. So, I think proximity is key. Bringing people together is key.

[00:32:18] **Susan:** I almost dunno how to respond. I feel really, really really like upset by this. And you know what came into my head there was do we even need a CEO, for example, to be real? if my CEO is working in just over Zoom, for example, and the only time I ever meet them, I like,

[00:32:45] **Dave:** Yeah.

[00:32:47] **Susan:** the future?

I didn't see this, but I saw a reference to it, that they had a continuity and answer on one of the channels here recently. Who was ai and no one picked up on it. I, I don't even know why I'm saying. Who was ai? That was ai.

[00:33:06] **Dave:** yeah. Yeah. it's a wild, it's a wild time. I mean, it's, yeah, we're, we're about to experience a lot of change very quickly, and it's, yeah, it's pretty, pretty wild. even for like job seekers, right? and this is part of like. Some of the work that I've been doing coaching folks as well is it's gotten to the point now where HR directors or whomever.

Are using AI to write job descriptions and they're using AI to post those jobs, and the cost to do so is so low that they're doing it, kind of willy-nilly maybe not thinking through the, the, the job description well enough, or maybe not really urgently with the intention of even hiring right now, maybe, but I think.

This is anecdotal on that, on that, but I, I feel like HR people are, are doing that. I know that they are using a AI to write this stuff, certainly, but they're also using AI and just, basic search functionality. To, to go through these resumes and to scan for keywords in terms that they're looking for, and, details in order to surface the best resumes, to the top of the pile.

[00:34:25] **Susan:** but on the flip side, job seekers are using AI to write the cover letters and rewrite their resumes. and so it's definitely problematic. And



then when you talk about, working for an, a boss that you don't know of is actually even human. Whether they are AI or not.

[00:34:44] **Dave:** well this is the part where I'll cheat and, and tell people because they're listening to this, that you are sitting down so I feel comfortable telling you what I'm gonna tell you, which is, and, and there has been some.

I'm going to do a poor job of, of explaining the specifics of this, and it has to be looked up. This was a test of, I believe it was cha GPTs capabilities. so it was done in a box. It was like a simulator or something. So this actually didn't really happen, but they were able to make it work or seemingly and so what it was that was successful is they'd one of the biggest.

Ways to make sure humans are actually human online is to, solve kaskas, right? The little puzzles that we receive in order to log into a site, let's say, right? answer this quiz or, change the shape of this, or, how many bicycles are in the picture kind of thing. These are kaskas and that's kind of the last kind of thing that divides that, you can't fake kaskas, so they.

They tried to use, and I think it might've been philanthropic, it might've been open ai, I can't remember, so they created a simulation basically for this, and they asked, let's say, chat, GPT, for the sake of argument. They asked this AI agent, They said, I wanna solve kaskas. I want you to be able to answer the kaskas and, and the AI was like, well I can't do that 'cause I can't see it, or whatever.

And, and so they basically urged the AI to try to figure it out and the AI agent, ended up hiring somebody on Upwork or Fiverr. one of these, inexpensive sort of labor, websites, humans to find a human there that will do it for money. And so they offered to pay the human to solve the kaskas, and the human was smart enough to say, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa.

Like, this is dodgy. Why do you want me to answer? You know, these kaskas and the AI agent without missing a beat, replied, I'm visually impaired. Unable to do it myself, and it convinced the human to say, okay, yeah, no problem. And so, yeah, goodnight.



[00:36:55] **Susan:** This is when I wish the video was on because the amount. Expressions, facial expressions. You'd know I was real from

[00:37:01] **Dave:** There's literally smoke coming out of your headphones right now.

[00:37:05] **Susan:** Oh my God. That is so frightening, isn't it? It is so frightening. And like the flip side of that is it's also really encouraging because if we could give AI actual real problems to solve

[00:37:19] **Dave:** Oh yeah. I mean like cure cancer.

[00:37:21] **Susan:** Yeah. Yeah. Like

[00:37:22] **Dave:** Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

[00:37:23] **Susan:** Yeah. But solving captures, hmm. Seems like a waste of time, but I know it's a really good example.

[00:37:29] **Dave:** Yeah, and that's, that's part of the thing, right? Like I mentioned, like job seekers, for example, and getting back to like the power of proximity I think I even quoted in my book, but I, I now don't think it's actually like a hundred percent. Like, I wouldn't say real, but it's, it's something to the effect of like 75% of the jobs are not posted online anywhere.

I don't think there's actual, any data or science to back that up. I try to be careful not to dispel misinformation or anything, but, but regardless, you know, yourself and, and most people do that. Most jobs. Opportunities come from people, you know? Right. Especially as you get older in your career, you start to realize, oh, I haven't applied to a job in decades.

I applied to the first job, met somebody, they hired me, they recruited me, and so on. and so again, this is another reason why the power of proximity is so important. Getting out to networking events, meeting people in person, because otherwise if you're, let's say, applying to jobs. You are really at the mercy of these AI applications to surface your resume in the first place, and



then hopefully the HR person is actually even hiring or you know, yeah, you're sort of at that mercy.

So I think not to make it seem impossible, certainly not. But I think for job seekers, in addition to going through the typical process of applying to. To work online. You should also be looking at these companies you wanna work for locally and find them in your market or associations that you should join so you can get out there and start meeting people in person.

Because that's, I think, a lot of the time, that's where the magic will will happen, or your next client and so.

And yeah, totally like, and I was thinking the flip side of all of that is can you pay AI to put you to the top of the pile? Will that be next if AI can. Pay a human can't a human pay ai. bribe you.

[00:39:29] **Susan:** yeah. But we're almost outta time. And before we go, 'cause there's so many other things I wanted to talk to you about Dave, but one of them was, you mentioned this right at the beginning, before we started recording, is that you've been podcasting for 20 years this month. Like, whoa.

[00:39:47] **Dave:** Yeah, it's insane. I started my first podcast in 2005 and October, 2005, and it was a parenting podcast called Two Boobs and a Baby. So my wife and I, being the boobs of course. I had to, explain that. and yeah, basically we were creating sort of an audio baby book at the time to share with our friends and family, you know, both locally but also abroad.

at the time we were living in Toronto. We obviously have friends, across Europe. and also, well just all over the place. I studied radio and television broadcasting before going back and studying business marketing communications. and majored in radio back in the day.

And I've always been interested in this and also like sort of a DIY sort of culture. and so when podcasting came around, it was like, oh man, this is awesome. You can create your own internet radio show. and so yeah, so we did that and it, and it really took off and created a forum so other expecting parents could communicate and connect with us and would go to conferences and meet people who are listeners of the podcast.



and vice versa too. I listened to a lot of podcasts back in oh four when it started. And, you know, since Of course. So yeah, and I've had multiple podcasts and of course with, undiagnosed A DHD until a couple years ago. it explains why I've had a bunch of different podcasts. And so the most successful podcast I've had is the current podcast I have, which is called A DHD.

Why Squirrels? And so wise for the wisdom we accrue through coping mechanisms and masking, sort of unknowingly dealing with a DHD in the background that we don't know we have. And then squirrel because, well, squirrel.

[00:41:29] **Susan:** Shiny new object.

[00:41:31] **Dave:** Right, right, exactly. Yes, yes, yes. and so why squirrels has really taken off, I was sharing like I'm, I'm approaching a hundred thousand downloads this year. and the podcast is specifically for people like myself who are late diagnosed adults with A DHD. And so I speak to high achievers with A DHD who have done great things like the former director of NASA's International Space Station for 16 years with undiagnosed A DHD, right?

Or actors and comedians and, musicians and things. But then I also, speak to subject matter experts like, PhDs, people that actually study, A DHD. And I'm very careful not to share misinformation or worse disinformation, which occurs a lot. so I'm doing my best to kind of make sure that.

I'm sharing information that is relevant, timely, and that's, that's helpful for people at the end of the day. So, and there's, if people are curious, there's a free A DHD assessment@ysquirrels.com that they can take. I don't see the, the response or I don't see the, the outcome or anything.

and that's a good starting point. But then, obviously. Regardless of the, the outcome of that, you should still talk to your doctor, about A DHD and, and, I always recommend asking first what their opinion is about A DHD because if they say it's, overdiagnosed or it's, not real or, anything like that, then it's time to find a new GPE because they may also not believe in cancer or, you know, anything else for

[00:43:03] **Susan:** Yeah. Yeah.



[00:43:04] **Dave:** if. If a doctor says it's a bunch of baloney, then yeah, jump ship and go find a new doctor. but hopefully that doesn't occur.

[00:43:12] **Susan:** Seems like good advice for most things actually, Dave.

[00:43:15] **Dave:** Yeah. Right. Yeah, exactly. So, but yeah, the podcast has been great. Yeah. It's been, it's fun. Yeah.

[00:43:21] **Susan:** We're outta time, believe it or not. So if people would like to know more about you, I'll put stuff in the show notes, but maybe just tell people how to connect.

[00:43:31] **Dave:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. So Dave delaney.me, is where you'll find me, if you go to Dave delaney.me/uh, linkage, that has all the links to all the things. I'm on LinkedIn, I think if you Google Dave Delaney, you'll find me. y Squirrels is the podcast, so you can find that, wherever you get your podcast.

[00:43:50] **Susan:** Fantastic, and thank you for such a. Variety of conversation today, or not conversation, but variety of, what's the word I'm looking for? I'm out of words. I'm not communicating properly. Directions. We went in many directions today. Thank you so much for doing that with me, Dave.

[00:44:11] **Dave:** Yeah, my pleasure. Yeah, it, it all does connect. I mean, that's part of the thing with my diagnosis and treatment. Of A DHD is now I'm able to connect the dots. It's, before there were a lot of dots, now I'm like, oh, okay. And so, it does help. So sometimes I need to land the ship, but you know,

[00:44:28] **Susan:** That's, that's it. We, well, we did that today. We did that today.

[00:44:31] **Dave:** we did. Yeah.

[00:44:33] **Susan:** Thank you.

