

Andy Crissinger: [00:02](#) Hi, everyone. Welcome to the Reboot Podcast. This is Andy Crissinger, director of coaching at Reboot, and I'm here with one of our coaches and facilitators. Jen Cody. Hey Jen.

Jen Cody: [00:12](#) Hey Andy. Great to be here today.

Andy Crissinger: [00:14](#) Yeah, it's great to have you. Um, we are gonna be talking about feedback today and, uh, why feedback? Well, we get inquiries all the time from companies who would like us to support, say a group of managers in, you know, getting better at leading and managing, and, uh, we might ask them will tell us what skills and what capacities did those folks need to get better at.

Andy Crissinger: [00:38](#) And feedback is always at the top of the list. It's one of the most asked for trainings that we get. And so we wanted to talk a little bit about our approach to feedback, which may be a little bit different than how you're thinking about feedback. And in order to do that, I wanna cite an article that came out a couple of years ago in the Harvard Business Review. It's written by, uh, Marcus Buckingham and Ashley Goodall called *The Feedback Fallacy*, a really good article.

Andy Crissinger: [01:05](#) I appreciated a lot about it and what they're trying to communicate in that article, they were bringing to bear some of the research that's been done in this space is that feedback is actually a really bad mechanism for helping people get better at the work that they do. So what they were trying to help us see is telling someone, "Hey, your performance is missing the mark over here." Usually just, you know, puts people in a defensive state of mind, it's triggering. It's not the thing that helps people get better at the work that they're doing.

Andy Crissinger: [01:38](#) Okay. Fair enough. We believe that too. We're coaches because we believe in the power of inquiry as opposed to telling people what to do, but we still need feedback in our organizations and we still need feedback that might be in the constructive or- or even, negative form. And we needed to tell people when they're behaving or performing in ways that are detrimental to other people or parts of the system, including ourselves. So Jen, maybe you can talk a little bit more about if not feedback for performance improvement, why feedback?

Jen Cody: [02:19](#) Yes. Thank you, Andy. And it's such a good question. The way that we see it is feedback is an investment in a relationship. We're nurturing the relationship. And so often in my own personal past experiences, but I'm sure this might be something that others experience as well, is that we're of the mindset that if I, if I follow the structure, if I check this box, if I follow the

rules and the policy that is like set in place, I'm doing feedback right.

- Jen Cody: [02:51](#) And here today, what we're talking about is creating an underlying culture- culture that supports the health and the safety in an organization through feedback. That's the piece that actually gets missed, and, um, most aren't aware of when they think of giving feedback. It's- it's a place to really connect with one another. When we talk about relational dynamics, we're talking about creating this container in a system where feedback is welcomed. Where- where- where the, where how we show up as leaders within an organization really matters. And then the feedback frameworks and the other skill sets can be overlaid on top of that.
- Andy Crissinger: [03:38](#) I love that. And just to kind of, um, build on that. So if you and I are colleagues, if, uh, if I'm doing something, uh, maybe there's a pattern of behavior that I'm exhibiting that's, hurting you in some way or having a negative impact on you, or if I'm not doing my job in a way that is negatively impacting you, even though there might be better ways, that the research tells us to- to, you know, help me get better at my job, that doesn't mean you should withhold the feedback, right? Because if you don't, what's gonna happen? If I, if you're not telling me probably what's gonna happen internally for you.
- Jen Cody: [04:25](#) Right. I'm- I'm gonna, um, feel resentful and it's gonna-
- Andy Crissinger: [04:28](#) Yeah.
- Jen Cody: [04:29](#) ... really impact the relationship over time.
- Andy Crissinger: [04:31](#) Right. Exactly. Yeah. I'm reminded of the Brene Brown quote that we love to restate, uh, in our work, "Clear is kind unclear is unkind." And I think she, if I remember correctly, and I think it's in dare to lead where she shares that. And I'm pretty sure she got that from a 12 step program. And regardless of where it came, I- I love, uh, it came from, I love that quote. And, um, and I think that's what we're talking about here, right? Clear is kind-
- Jen Cody: [05:00](#) Yeah.
- Andy Crissinger: [05:00](#) ... unclear is unkind.
- Jen Cody: [05:02](#) Yes.

Andy Crissinger: [05:02](#) So, um, so yes, it's true. Coaching is better than feedback and helping people get better and up-skill, and catching people doing things well and telling them great job is better than giving performance feedback, but we still have to give feedback when performance or behavior is missing the mark in some way, or maybe it's actually, it's better to think about negative impact than it is missing the mark. And that's maybe part of it as well, if there's negative impact and that's not being communicated, like you said, that's gonna create resentment in the system and there's gonna be a lot that's- that's going unsaid and we're gonna see fraying of relationships, um-

Jen Cody: [05:44](#) Yes.

Andy Crissinger: [05:44](#) ... whi- which will impact performance over time. Right?

Jen Cody: [05:47](#) Exactly. And that's the key-

Andy Crissinger: [05:48](#) Yep.

Jen Cody: [05:49](#) ... that's the key.

Andy Crissinger: [05:50](#) Yep.

Jen Cody: [05:50](#) And it actually, I really begs a question to ask, you know, um, so what happens if performance challenges show up, you know, do- do we just not address them? You know, maybe Andy, you can talk a little bit about how to address that.

Andy Crissinger: [06:08](#) Yeah. So I think, I think you have to address them. And in many cases you have to use feedback and- and the traditional feedback frames that many of us have learned, you know, I think of a very simple one that sometimes we'll share in our trainings situation behavior impact, SBI, where you share this thing happened in space-time and are this, this day in time, you know, the- the product review meeting last week, the behavior that you exhibited was X, and then the impact on me was Y.

Andy Crissinger: [06:43](#) So we have to do that and- and it's valid to have those kinds of frameworks because it, they- they lead to clean, uh, clean communication. I think it's- it's really more about the why, why are you giving that feedback and recognizing that the primary reason to give it is, as you were saying earlier to maintain the- the connection and the relationship, and that person may also need coaching or training or things like that if the, if the issue is about skill or under-performance in some way, but we should

still be giving feedback for the sake of the relational health and the system.

Jen Cody: [07:28](#)

Absolutely.

Andy Crissinger: [07:47](#)

So Jen, say, um, a leader is listening to this podcast and they're with us so far and they think, yeah, that's great. Okay. We still need to be doing feedback and- and I want my team to be better at feedback. What's a practical discussion maybe that a leader could engage their team in, um, to help them move toward this kind of way of seeing feedback and envisioning, you know, the- the benefits that it could have for the team?

Jen Cody: [08:20](#)

Yeah. Again, really good question. And, you know, the thing that comes to mind and actually, as you and I have done feedback trainings together, throughout time, and we've also done them individually, you know, what we have used in these formats is this- this question that we like to ask the folks we're working with. So let's say, let's imagine your team, were world-class at giving and receiving feedback. You're doing this really well, the, including the health and this interconnectedness of the relationship, um, while giving feedback at the, at the same time.

Jen Cody: [08:58](#)

And as we go into some of these questions here, we're- we're operating this from a place of like really getting curious and stepping into that coaching framework of imagining and creating scenarios of this going really well. What does that look like? Right. So what behaviors, uh, might be the norm in a world where this is happening, or what would it look like and feel like to be doing this leading in a culture that supports all of this? And I ask these open-ended questions, so I'm asking, I'm actually answering your question with a question, because it's a way for folks to create what it means to them, right, instead of me giving a very five step answer, which I- I'm not sure that it exists across the board, but each leader in that company or business or wherever, can determine for themselves what this is.

Andy Crissinger: [09:59](#)

So what I hear you saying is even more important than a leader introducing some kind of feedback framework inside the organization, actually engaged the team in thinking about what if we were great at this and what are all the ways it would serve us if we were doing feedback regularly?

Jen Cody: [10:17](#)

Yes.

Andy Crissinger: [10:17](#) If we were, if we were giving each other feedback freely, if it was flowing, how it impact us as people, as leaders and how would it impact the business.

Jen Cody: [10:28](#) Right.

Andy Crissinger: [10:28](#) So, yeah, I think, I think that's brilliant and it's very coach-like (laughing)

Jen Cody: [10:32](#) Yes.

Andy Crissinger: [10:32](#) ... uh, way of engaging this. Now, if you want to introduce feedback frameworks, that's great too and it's helpful to have a common, uh, language in- instead of mental models around, this is how we do feedback at our company-

Jen Cody: [10:45](#) Right.

Andy Crissinger: [10:46](#) ... but even more important than that is trying to create some pull in people toward, uh, a feedback rich way of being.

Jen Cody: [10:57](#) Exactly.

Andy Crissinger: [10:58](#) And more, I don't know if- if you would agree with this, Jen, but one of the things I find is that if teams are not doing feedback, it's usually not because they don't know how to do it, you know, 'cause the frameworks are readily available. You can just do a quick, you know, internet search and find some great ways to here's how to like here construct a feedback message. But even the teams that know what to do often don't do it because there's a lot of risk involved to- to giving this kind of feedback. They're thinking about all the ways that this could damage their relationships, as opposed to thinking about all of the ways that to be, to be giving feedback freely would actually be serving us. So that's why I love that, uh, inquiry that you, that you described, 'cause it's actually asking teams to think about a positive future.

Jen Cody: [11:49](#) Exactly. And- and it's, and it's allowing them to be part of the creation of what would that positive future look like and what's the culture that they wanna be, uh, creating in that setting.

Andy Crissinger: [12:01](#) Right. Yeah.

Jen Cody: [12:06](#) You know, one last question that I'm- I'm holding here, Andy, as we talk through this is what about feedback mechanisms such as 360 and performance reviews?

Andy Crissinger: [12:18](#) Yeah. Well, it's a great question, and that short answer is they're, they're all wonderful and you should do them and, uh, performance reviews done well, done in a way that's more of a two-way conversation, I think are incredibly powerful. Obviously at Reboot, we're big fans of 360s. We do 360s as part of our work. Um, also, you know, things like engagement surveys on a regular basis, I think are really powerful for- for teams to do. Um, the one thing about these frameworks and particularly the ones that- that, um, are anonymous to watch out for is that we don't want anonymous feedback frameworks to sort of be the only way that people are giving and receiving feedback from each other.

Andy Crissinger: [13:04](#) I think that's the one thing to watch out for is if we're, if we're doing 360s with anonymous feedback so that we can keep people from having honest conversations with one another, then that's a problem. So that's the only caveat that I would give for leaders is just when you introduce these frameworks, um, uh, pay attention to what might be beneath the surface and ask yourself, are- are these in any way, enabling honest conversations to not occur? And if that's the case, then, um, you may want to look more deeply into that.

Jen Cody: [13:43](#) So it sounds like what you're saying that the frameworks are important. The 360s are, you know, essential in the performance reviews, but really take into consideration this investment in the relationship that's also happening while using-

Andy Crissinger: [13:57](#) Yes.

Jen Cody: [13:57](#) ... the tools.

Andy Crissinger: [13:58](#) Yeah. And- and I'm glad you mentioned performance reviews again, because the- the thing about performance reviews is they have, um, you're accountable to the timing, right? It's like, okay, we're gonna do these-

Jen Cody: [14:08](#) Right.

Andy Crissinger: [14:08](#) ... once a quarter or we're gonna do these twice a year. And it's great to have that accountability, but if that's the only, the primary way that feedback is happening, then that's problematic too. And of course you never want that to be an occasion where someone's gonna be surprised by feedback. And so if that, if you're gonna not have any surprises in your

performance reviews, well, then that presupposes that feedback's gonna be happening regularly, at regular intervals.

Jen Cody: [14:39](#) Yeah.

Andy Crissinger: [14:43](#) Well, Jen, thanks. I think we've covered a ton of ground in a pretty short amount of time and it was fun to do that together and, hope this was helpful for you all listening.

Andy Crissinger: [15:00](#) Bye everyone.

Jen Cody: [15:03](#) Bye.