

Forge Podcast with Joy Marsden.mp3

Peter Wooding: [00:00:10] Welcome to the Forge Leadership podcast. Today we're joined by inspirational and motivational speaker Joy Marsden who was interviewed by Simon BARRINGTON.

Simon Barrington: [00:00:19] So today on a Forge Leadership podcast I'm joined by Joy Marsden. Joy describes her mission as to inspire the world's professionals to live a happy and successful life. She's an author and her latest book keep stepping tells people how to lead themselves and others through challenge and change. She works with high level executives and coaching managers and their teams in many businesses around the UK. Joy welcome to the podcast.

Joy Marsden: [00:00:48] Thank you Simon I'm very very very much looking forward to this.

Simon Barrington: [00:00:52] Fantastic it's great to have you with us and Happy New Year to you.

Joy Marsden: [00:00:55] Happy New Year to you too.

Simon Barrington: [00:00:58] Joy you spend your time speaking to and motivating leaders globally through your business tell us about that and what you do.

Joy Marsden: [00:01:06] Well yes Simon I've been doing that for the last 13 years and the way that I work with people takes on kind of I work with people in three different ways. So one of the ways I work with people is if I have clients that are putting on a conference for their for their teams and the wider workforce I would go in and deliver a keynote as they would call it in the industry - which is normally about 60 minutes to 90 minutes from the platform. That's one way I work with people. The second way is to go in and deliver sort of a master class or a workshop training session to really embed the keeps stepping principles. And the third way is to kind of go in and work with some of the leaders on a one to one basis where I do some coaching or it may be for their wider workforce as well where they want to kind of really get into the individual challenges that people have and all of those things are working with people to help them deal more effectively with change but more more leading themselves through the change because if you can lead yourself effectively then you can start to go through the change collaboratively. So really I go through things that involve the individuals self-management, self leadership and you know getting them to up those skills so that they can deal with things more effectively.

Simon Barrington: [00:02:32] Now everybody tells us that workplaces are getting more volatile more uncertain maybe more chaotic more ambiguous and the challenges that are facing leaders and people in the amount of change that is hitting them right now are huge. What do you find. What are the challenges that leaders and businesses are facing every day and why do they call you in really to help them.

Joy Marsden: [00:02:58] The biggest challenge is is on peoples time. When organisations are squeezed, often they have slightly less resources, less people and also less time because the people that are left have to do more with the time that they have. So people feel squeezed. People feel stressed. I find that people don't, don't feel as if they feel as if they're working on an automatic pilot. They're doing the work that needs to be done but they don't they're losing themselves in it and I find that people are wanting to find themselves. Who am I in this business. And of course you have the individual but the individual is always surrounded by people. So working as a part but you're also an individual and how do you reconcile the two. How do you bring that together. How do you be real how do you be authentic. How do you stay on your 'A' game and not let the stress factors really kind of drain you of the person you are the person that you want to become. And people get me in

basically to kind of, it sounds a bit like it's a bit cliché but partly to breathe life into what they're doing. To fill and to find themselves in it to bring that joy to bring back life that vibrancy and be able to cope with the everyday challenges that come their way.

Simon Barrington: [00:04:27] Now you focus on helping leaders to start leading themselves. Often we feel, don't we that we are entrapped by the environment. There is not much we can do. Everything's being loaded on us. We have no place to go. But your focus is really on for leaders or how do they start leading themselves better. Why is that such a challenge and why do you think it's so important.

Joy Marsden: [00:04:51] Well I think it's not just that just for leaders as well but it's for everybody and anybody who is kind of doing anything in any capacity. I think you have to be able to lead yourself before you can lead other people. And the problem and challenge comes if you're not leading yourself effectively but you're trying to lead a team or you're trying to lead other people then you then you will start to fray around the edges and the people that you're trying to lead will spot it. I mean you and I know things that you can spot, you can spot them in everybody else before you spot them in yourself.

Joy Marsden: [00:05:28] You have to know yourself and be fundamentally self-aware. Really the principles that I have are leading yourself are based on on helping the individual to become more aware of who they are, how they work and more importantly the impact that they have on the people that they live with the people that they work with the people they interact with on a daily basis.

Simon Barrington: [00:05:55] And what kind of tools to use to help people become more self-aware of who they are and the impact they're having, because I find that's a huge issue with leaders that I am working with is actually the blind spots are huge and being able to get real feedback for them so that they can start addressing those is a massive issue. What kind of tools do you use with leaders to help them lead themselves.

Joy Marsden: [00:06:22] Yeah well as I said the you know the ways that I deal with people are usually either a platform speaker or interaction an interactive workshop or one to one coaching. And most of what I do is cover is in the area of developing their soft skills and I think soft skills are very very much underrated in that they you cannot having knowledge is wonderful and you really need to study and continue to grow yourself in every way that you possibly can. I really do believe that. But then you know for leaders you know they really need to to think clearly to be able to articulate those thoughts that they have the feelings they have so that people that they deal with feel inspired to go away and act. So I deal with soft areas like looking at what you're doing every day and identifying things that you may need to get to get rid of. May need to what I would call shred. And then being able to tune into situations and tune into situations quickly. And when I say tune in I mean tune in with people because people are you know anything that your any job that you do that involves people will have its complexities. Why, because people are complex and we do things sometimes out of character sometimes you know unexpectedly you know very very knowledgeable very clever people sometimes do very silly things and we do this because we are human. We're none of us perfect. The only perfect person that walked the planet was Jesus Christ. We are none of us perfect. Therefore we get things wrong. So we have to take time to look at what we do on a daily basis and that's what I help people to do. I help people to look at the way they tune into situations that help people to improve the skills that they have. So they can really home in on on being the best they can be in the areas that they were destined to be good at . The way they position themselves as leaders the way they've positioned themselves you know as part of the management as part of the workforce understanding situations clearly and really sort of towards the end we look - at you know so in all of this how are you going to serve your community better. How are you

going to serve the workforce better looking at you know so the skills kind of almost get softer as we get towards the end of the program.

Simon Barrington: [00:08:57] Can you give me an example of maybe a team or a person you've worked with the kind of impact that you working with them has had to help them get in touch with soft skills and apply them in a better way.

Joy Marsden: [00:09:11] Yeah. I had the opportunity to work with towards the end of last year a chief executive of the company obviously I won't say what the company wants and I was working initially with with the workforce with the management team and below and I started to notice some kind of changes there but this CEO was just finding it difficult it's difficult to connect difficult to kind of. He wanted to because one of the things I say is you do need to live your own truth but you do need to people need to know who you are. I very rarely follow people I don't know you know. I have to have some for some kind of relationship with them on some level. And he set up in an office where he had his own office in the building and would walk through and very open plan structure they had with you know their employees walk through and you know possibly say hi but but you know mostly we just walk through and go to his office. he says you know I just don't have that connection. I said well do you speak to anyone. ANd he said, well not really I don't really know what to do and they see me as the CEO and I just feel miles away and miles apart and I understand your dilemma and I'm sure you can see what the dilemma would be. I said well why don't you just start by stopping as you walking through the office and just saying hi. But if you say something like hi how how are you, I said please do wait until the answer which is what most people say that counts because this is what we do.

Joy Marsden: [00:10:51] Yeah. Hi "how are you, how are things going". I don't really want to know. They may not listen and the person that's actually sharing their hearts with you knows that you're not listening. So that's not building relationships that's actually putting people off. I said if you're going to ask a question like you must wait for the answer and I just said just do it gradually. I said you may not it may not feel as if anything is happening it may not seem as if anything is happening. But I said believe me you will start to build something up. Anyway, within six months he'd been doing this and it wasn't easy he had to go against what he would normally do and how he would normally be. I had a phone call from him with absolute excitement. When he walks to the office now they're starting to say how are you. And he I said what what was the trigger point he said I started to find out little things about them and I would just say how's your horse doing how's this doing. Things that weren't necessarily related to work but he was meeting with them and connecting with them on a human level and I think in a world where technology is getting faster technology is getting it's being used more in the world of technology, generally speaking I think the people factor that human factor has got to work even harder. So he basically had that sort of connection and what he's built up very few needs now to implement something, do you think Simon that his employees are going to listen to him and have more respect for that.

Simon Barrington: [00:12:27] Probably. Yes.

Joy Marsden: [00:12:30] I mean that is he's been able to start to change the culture too to kind of bring things in that are making the community more vibrant It's great.

Simon Barrington: [00:12:41] That's fascinating and I really resonate with what you're saying about humanity and bringing that back into a workplace and leaders need to be able to do that because actually generally it's not the way that they've been brought up and it's maybe not the role models that they've had in other leaders as well and I know certainly in my leadership finding the courage to be brave enough to make myself vulnerable at a human level was a massive issue. How do you help leaders come and navigate that for themselves.

Joy Marsden: [00:13:18] Navigating their vulnerability ?

Joy Marsden: [00:13:22] I think the kind of the example with the CEO was in that in that sort of area as well. And I think you know if you're going to be sensitive to the needs of others then I think I as a as a coach as a trainer as a speaker need to be sensitive to the fact that I may I too may have blind spots. So I not only believe in coaching but also have coaches that coach me because because like you said so I totally agree you can't do it on your own and you can't see your own blind spots. And I think I you know I must believe in the thing that I am working on. I don't believe I am perfect so I am continually working to to be able to work with the vulnerabilities that I may have and in doing so I think it enables me to be sensitive to the vulnerabilities of other people as well. Understanding that we are all vulnerable. Not just you know we coaches have got it all. No we haven't. And I have you know a number of coaches for very different things and I would say that everybody it helps it helps everybody to be have somebody that they can be accountable to somebody where they can share their heart. Somebody they trust, somebody that you can open up to where you can just be and you don't have to put on any airs and graces you know somewhere where you can just have you know that confidence that what you're sharing with them won't go where else but you can just off load. I think that's necessary for all people particularly leaders with a lot on their plate. People that you know have have great responsibility. I think it's very necessary in this day and age.

Simon Barrington: [00:15:23] I find lots of leaders who are you know that they need that but really struggle to find someone who they can relate to at that level. How do you help leaders navigate that one.

Joy Marsden: [00:15:39] Well I think you need to find somebody that you feel you can get on with somebody you feel like you trust. Usually for me if I'm working with other people a lot of the people that I coach come from having seen me either speaking on a platform or delivering or facilitating a session. They've gathered some kind of trust seen who I am and there is there has been a connection there somehow. Very rarely do I get somebody who just come onto my website and book a session and usually if that happens, only occasionally has that happened, I would normally just bring them up make sure that you have a conversation. make sure that we are suitable to work together. Certainly for me if I am choosing a coach for myself that's how I would work. I would have to have seen them seen them interact with other people I'd have to know a bit about them I may have I may read a book that they've written that type of thing.

Simon Barrington: [00:16:36] Brilliant. Now you're working in lots of different businesses up and down the country and you're doing that, you're a Christian. So how does your faith influence the messages you give and the way you're delivering them because it's not always Christians in your audience it's anybody, so how is faith influencing that for you.

Joy Marsden: [00:16:59] Yeah I would say mostly the majority 90 percent of the people that I deal with aren't are Christians, although I do deliver some things at church. Mostly it's you know out out outside in organisations and I would say my faith influences what I do massively, hugely. Why. Because it's part of who I am and I don't think we can detach who we are. And I think at the very heart of us, the very root of us has to come with us in everything that we do. And I love that. I believe the principles within scriptures within the Bible are wonderful principles to live by and I want to share that truth with as many people as I can because I believe these are the principles that are not only good to live by that help you through life. So what I've all I've done in putting the book together including my sessions together is I very much use those principles and I make them palatable for the people that I work with on a daily basis. So I use examples of I'm fortunate in that I I've I've been in business now for a long time in very different areas so I've worked as an area sales

manager for Avon cosmetics leading a very large team there I've been a marketing executive for a top brand here in the UK. I was in textile design technical design for 12 years and I have also worked within a management training consultancy. I've done a lot of things that are very varied so within the world of work I have examples that I can pull from to help people in the workplace because I understand firsthand some of the pressures that they may face. So I can actually bring the two together because I had that in me to bring. And I think my faith is very much important in that and I do believe that what you believe - in my case in the Bible - affects who you are so and if somebody else whatever they believe affects who they are and people catch the they catch who you are when you work with them. And I you know me, Simon, we've worked together. You know that I am African Caribbean. I'm a Christian. I also work you know in out across the globe and I also am I'm on the board of the Academy of Music and Worship. I'm on several boards and I but I bring all of that with me. I might break out into Jamaican in the middle of my presentation. It's partly who I am. I am a singer I'm a gospel singer I may sing if I need to do that in order to to deliver something that is that I believe will help you get to the next stage. And I believe in helping people to bring everything they are to the table and me being a Christian is part of who I am. So that's just me living my message.

Simon Barrington: [00:20:27] That's fantastic and I love that because I think in my work one the things I do is help leaders just articulate their core values and their core beliefs yeah and being able to do that and to say proudly this is who I am and this is what I believe helps followers actually helps people who you're working with to know who you are which is what you were saying earlier. So I love that joy and I know from what I've seen you do that you are a great blessing to the people you work with as you do bring all of yourself to it. But for lots of people they're not able to bring all themselves to their workplace because they feel like they're a wrong person in the wrong place. Stuck. Time poor - just a downward spiral. At the beginning of 2018 going back to work is not a happy place for them. How would you advise them to start going about even changing that.

Joy Marsden: [00:21:27] You know that's a great question, Simon. I get people at the end of my sessions coming up and asking me you know how can I. How can I step up how can I step out and the heart of the message.

Joy Marsden: [00:21:39] Keeping things simple it's about stepping up stepping out of standing out and I find that because of the level that they're working they've been working in their positions for a long time they're now bringing in a great salary. They're used to the lifestyle that they have and they want to change things but they're not sure how and it's a scary thing to want to do that and also a lot of people feel they've lost themselves through it they've lost themselves somehow in the middle of all of that. Going to the other side of the spectrum I also worked with students in universities and they they kind of at the start of their career and they're kind of like I'm not really sure what I want to do. I'm not sure who I am. And they're they are very very nervous about kind of showing who they are and I kind of come back to a point on that if I make a little bit later on but I it's a difficult thing to do for individuals to change. Any kind of change is difficult. It's not easy and it's going to take feeling uncomfortable for a season to be able to get to the place where you feel you want to be. And it's like we know we would love to you know pray a prayer for things to land on us and you and I both know you know as Christians that often we pray for things that you know God is saying you can do that yourself you know where we want something to happen to us because we don't want to feel that discomfort and I understand that. But the only way to to you know if you are feeling stuck the only way to become unstuck is to move and do something and to take action. Which is where the heart is to keep stepping message comes from. We've got to do something and it involves doing something that we might not have done before. It often involves us taking steps that we've never taken before or working with somebody to kind of tease that out of us. You know getting coached and helping us to think in different ways or speaking to somebody who is where you would like to be or doing something - a role that you would like to do. Just just going back to the younger

generation. I'm privileged at the beginning of my speaking career to speak to I used to speak to a crowd of thousands of students, younger students in there between 13 and 18 years old and I would generally speak to year groups and this is when I found. It is a very difficult thing for somebody who is younger to actually grasp this idea of standing out and stepping out because at the heart of who they are in this day and age they're trying so much to fit in. That you know every child that's kind of almost looks the same in school uniform. The hairstyles the same way their skirts up to the same length or down to the same length. You know they're wearing their blazers in the same way and they do everything not to stand out. They do everything to blend in and then by the time they get to kind of 16 to 18 we're starting to say to them you know "how are you going to get that interview". How are you going to stand out from the crowd. But they've done everything possible to fit in up to that age and I think it's just too late to be talking about that. And I do work with the students within I do lot within the finance sector. I do work with students who already started their kind of accountancy kind of qualifications and even then it's very very silent very very quiet and nobody wants to ask a question. It's really I find it heartbreaking. I think you're not you know you're not working on finding who you are by not saying anything. You can't. You've got to somehow, step up, step up or stand out or do something. It never leaves us no matter how old we are. And you and I both know you know if you're in the kind of the older generation and you decide it is going to stop and you stop stepping out you stop standing and you stop growing yourself and then really start to go downhill quite quickly.

Simon Barrington: [00:26:09] It's about having that courage isn't it to grasp the moment and be clear about who you are and to step up and be yourself and that message comes out loud and clear from you. Joy, as we come to the end of this podcast you talk about gratitude being really important. Why is that and what shaped that in you and why is that an important message that you have for people.

Joy Marsden: [00:26:37] Well every morning I get up I open my eyes and I just think you know I can actually get up this is this is a wonderful thing I'm breathing and I'm still alive and I try to remember as far as possible I try the first words to come out to be "I thank you God" I am here today to do something sort of in your sight I'm here and it's wonderful thing to be alive. You know some people aren't alive but we are. Gratitude helps you to understand that where you are, what you have, who you are is enough. I think if you forget to be grateful for what you have and what you've become so far. If you're always looking outside of yourself you know one day it will be like this one day I'll get that job, one day get that car, one day I'll get that house and you're not really living in the moment you're not really living for now. It's really important that we grasp just how much we do have. There is always someone with less than you and I think certainly in the Western world we do forget to be grateful. I think if we start with that we know you've just been grateful you know if you're a leader - be grateful for the people that you're leading. Be grateful for people you manage if you're a manager. Be grateful for the people that are working alongside you. And if you've start to be grateful, you start to see people differently and it changes your outlook. I think that's why it's so important Simon.

Simon Barrington: [00:28:15] Fantastic. That's a great way to end and thank you so much for sharing your heart with us today. Love what you're doing in businesses around the UK and globally to encourage leaders to lead themselves be themselves, encourage anyone whose stuck to step out and make the change that they want to see and to grapple with the challenges facing them and have the courage to do that. And that comes from a strong faith and a strong belief and great gratitude. Joy Marsden thank you so much for joining us on a Forge Leadership podcast today.

Joy Marsden: [00:28:47] You're welcome, Simon, It's been a pleasure.

Peter Wooding: [00:28:50] Thanks for listening to the Forge leadership podcast. Don't forget to

leave comments on the podcast by going to iTunes. If you have any questions for Simon or any of our guests you can e-mail us at hello@forge-leadership.com. Next week we're joined by Tim Morfin the founder and CEO of Transforming Lives for Good.