

The Future of Work podcast is a weekly show where Jacob has in-depth conversations with senior level executives, business leaders, and bestselling authors around the world on the future of work and the future in general. Topics cover everything from AI and automation to the gig economy to big data to the future of learning and everything in between. Each episode explores a new topic and features a special guest.

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Jacob: Hello everyone and welcome to another episode of the future of work podcast. My guests today are Dr. Marc Brackett, Founding Director of the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence and Professor in the Child Study Center at Yale University and Dr. Robin Stern, Associate Director of Partnerships for the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence and licensed psychoanalyst, educator, and author. Welcome Marc and Robin and thanks for joining me.

Marc: Thank you.

Robin: Thank you.

Jacob: So to start off, why don't you both give us some background information about who you are and how you became interested in Emotional Intelligence.

Marc: Robin, you want to start?

Robin: Well, how far back do you want us to go? I have always been fascinated since I was little girl with the idea that being kind help people to talk to each other better, and in my looking for what I wanted to do with my life throughout my teenage years and into college, I thought that I would help people talk to each other in a kinder way and have better relationships and I wanted to be a therapist which is what I pursued. I'm a psychoanalyst by training, and I, as a psychoanalyst for the last several decades, of course became aware that the problems that people have in their adult lives, I work with adults mostly women, were started in childhood.

I began to be also aware that insight was not enough and people were not skilled. Once they had an insight into their lives and their relationships, they weren't skilled in how to make changes or how to have kinder conversations or how to manage their emotions. I began to look for people who were doing work in education at the intersection of psychology and I found emotional intelligence, and in pursuing leaders and programs in emotional intelligence, longer story short, I met Marc and have been working with him for the last 12 years at Yale and was one of the founders of the center as well and have been since that time involved in many of the projects and problems that we're building together and it's exciting for now and for the future.

Marc: Well, my career started back when I was a teenager because I was a kid who hated school. I was not a very good student and I thought it was my IQ and realized as I was getting older it really wasn't my intelligence. It was that I had pretty horrific circumstances being a bullied kid and also I didn't have any skills myself to deal with feelings and people around me didn't have those skills, so long story short, I had an uncle who happened to be a hero and a mentor for me, as I get older, I decided to work with him on a curriculum for middle school students. Then that led me to do a lot of reading and writing and get my doctorate in psychology studying emotional intelligence, and then a few years later, here we are at the Center for Emotional Intelligence.

Jacob: Lots of people talk about emotional intelligence today and organizations around the world are offering training around it, but what exactly is emotional intelligence?

Marc: Sure, the way we think about it is as a mental ability, a set of skills that have to do with how we as human being reason with and about our emotion states, and so then the question is, what are the underlying skills that people use to do that? We have an acronym that we use called RULER. The two Rs are recognizing at the frontend and at the backend is regulating. Essentially what we're trying to help people do is read people, read themselves accurately, whether it be facial expression, body language, vocal tone, understand why they're having those feelings, having a language or labeling those feeling with the best words, being more nuance and granular and then the fourth skill is about expressing emotions, knowing how and when to do that with different people, across context and then the final skill is regulating [inaudible] so having the strategies to both manage your own emotions but help other people to manage theirs.

Jacob: I feel like emotional intelligence has traditionally been referred to as a soft skill but now so many organizations are paying attention to it and it's kinda becoming a little bit more like a hard skill. Do you think that's a fair thing to say?

Marc: What I would say is that the term soft skills is not a good term because emotional intelligence is probably a harder skill than what are typically called hard skills like general cognitive ability, but if I have to align myself with the larger field, it would be classified as a soft skill. Yes, but again I will say with a loud voice that probably much harder in terms of developing than some of those soft skills.

Robin: I would add to that I think the soft skills label goes along with people thinking that emotional intelligence means being nice and pleasing other people and always giving people what they want, acquiescing and being soft and kind and it often leads to kindness. Hopefully people who are emotionally intelligent and are skilled are able to be measured inside of themselves or able to be centered in such that they can have an open and warm approach to everyone and to circumstances, but that approach often leads to people saying no and setting boundaries and being very firm and not being the nice guy, the softy.

Jacob: Why is emotional intelligence so important for us to have, especially in the workplace?

Robin: Because humans work in the workplace and emotional intelligence that is about being skilled in relationships and it's all about relationships, the people who you work with, the people who you work for, the people who work for you, the people who you pass in the hallways who you may not work with but you're interacting with. Those, the population of people who you are working with create the climate within which you work and that makes a difference. We know that emotions matter in all of our relationships and in our everyday effectiveness in the way we deal with the feelings that come up every single day.

Marc: Yeah, what I would add to that coming from what we know from our research at the center is that the skills that people have to manage their emotions effectively are related to how people focus in the workplace. If you're bored, if you're enraged, if you're frustrated or overwhelmed, your attentional capacity is going to be limited that your skills influence the decisions you make, so how you're feeling shifts the way you see the world and your choices. The skills influence relationship quality, the skills influence mental health and physical health and finally they influence our performance in terms of having the skills to get out of the bed in the morning and do the work you need to do or manage the feelings that you have about a colleague that may be interfering with getting a project done. From our perspective, emotions always are involved in nearly all aspects of work.

Jacob: Where do you think the business world is in terms of emotional intelligence readiness today? Are organizations doing enough to educate and train employees on this topic? Are we very far ahead? Or is the topic of Emotional Intelligence still in the very early days?

Marc: Robin, you want to take a stab at this or would you like me to do that?

Robin: What I was thinking about and then maybe you'd like to jump in with the specifics of the research, but I was thinking about the fact that in 1995 when Dan Goleman wrote a book called Emotional Intelligence that basically catalyzed the field as we know it today particularly in the workplace, I remember at the time many people were doing workshops on emotional intelligence and talking about emotional intelligence in the workplace, but the adaptation of the skillful implementation and infusion of emotional intelligence in the workplace has not been sticky.

At least in our work, what we're hearing from people is that the training, that the education, that the exposure to emotional intelligence is lacking and what we noticed that we have also seen in the workplace and education is that leadership buy in is incredibly important, so when the leader of the organization or the leader of the unit is himself or herself buying in and adopting emotional intelligence and developing themselves in emotional intelligence, then there's a trickle-down effect and it's not only an effect in terms of the population and people having the training that the leader will then offer to develop themselves, but also the leader starts at the top by creating and infusing emotional intelligence into the climate of the organization.

There's the skill development of the individuals and the shifting climate when there's buy in from the top and when there's a systemic approach to emotional intelligence development that we haven't seen quite in this way before. There are programs and many of them have done some good, but we haven't seen the stickiness that we now believe we can make a difference in.

Jacob: I like the approach of having it start at the top and making sure that leaders are practicing this. But emotional intelligence isn't a new topic or concept; it's been around for many, many years now. So why do you think emotional intelligence is getting some much traction now? And will be it even more important in the future?

Marc: Well, I think you can't really do a research on like why now. You can make inferences from what's happening in the world around us and we are a stressed out world. We're a world where suicide ideation has increased. We're a world where anti-Semitism has increased. We're a world in which people are reporting being tired and bored and stressed at work and at home. We're at a place where I think people are desperate for more pleasant emotions and strategies can manage their emotions more effectively and then you think about where we are in the workplace around how education, what you learn leads to in terms of the skills you learn in college and how they apply in the workplace and most employees are saying, "The skills that people are learning right in college are not the ones that I need in my company."

Academic skills, there's a lot of smart people, but like do they get along well with people? Do they know how to run teams? Do they know how to give an inspiration speech? That's where you start seeing that "the soft skills or the emotional intelligence skills" are what people are becoming more attracted to.

Robin: I think that just to add to that these stress levels because of the things that Marc was talking about are huge, I see it in my private practice and through the years, the last decades an increase in tremendous amount of stressed people going to work and feeling like the pressure to achieve and outperform themselves and other people, social comparison is basically at an all-time high and people don't have the skills they need to manage those levels of stress and as Marc said earlier that stress levels lead to poor attention, challenging relationships, poor decision making and mental and physical health issues.

Jacob: Can technology play a role in helping employees practice and train emotional intelligence? For example using something like augmented and virtual reality? I actually heard that Walmart uses virtual reality to immerse employees in situations where they actually need to practice emotional intelligence.

Marc: Robin, go ahead.

Robin: Yeah, so I think it would be a thing. I think it's already a thing as you're describing in many places, but it's not about the technology. It's about the people who build the technology and the experience as they building that that are so important to use and our thinking about how do we want to use technology to do something that we can't do

in person like go to scale for example, reach people who are working in remote parts of the country. Technology is wonderful for that and technology can be wonderful to create practice spaces in virtual reality for developing skills. We always struggle with the idea of giving up personal one on one, development time or practice time. It's so important.

There is nothing like standing in front of a person and having your feelings, but there are experiences than can be taught online and rehearsed online that then can have some transfer value to the real world and we're allowed to transfer value to the real world. I have always had the fantasy of having real life-sized rehearsal spaces for kids so that they could practice going in and in the virtual reality enter a group and then try it again with a different affect or try it again having to learn a different skill or managing their emotions and trying it again. I think that we do have the opportunity to use technology for social good, and if the people who are building the technology are themselves informed in emotional intelligence, that will be terrific.

Jacob: What impact has social media had on emotional intelligence? People are always trying to make their lives and even their careers seem better than they are and we spend so much time now interacting virtually and via web conference solutions and all these other platforms out there, verses actually in person. So does that have any effect on emotional intelligence?

Marc: The way we think about it is that every platform whether it be Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, Snapchat for kids or adults, it has or it provides opportunity to engage in emotional intelligence or unemotional intelligent behavior. The technology itself is kind of a void of skill, and essentially for children, it's learning how to play in a playground. It's like writing an email. If someone triggers you in an email, you can write back immediately and go say, "Go 'blank' yourself," or you can take a breath and you can think about, "All right, let me think about the best way to say this so as to not escalate the problem."

It's about teaching people how to navigate their emotional lives using technology in part and then I think also when it comes to the use of technology to teach it, I think there's like the knowledge construction that can be built through an online platform, but the truth is that you're not getting skilled in this area until you use it in the real world. That's why it's called a hot intelligence. Like I can talk all I want about how I'm going to manage my anger at Robin, but it's not until we're in a room when I'm activated that I can really be tested on my emotional intelligence.

Jacob: Specifically looking at social media, do you think there are any ways we can improve emotional intelligence in this virtual world?

Robin: Yes, I think that in mentoring many high school students over the last year or so I'm hearing more and more and just in our work in schools in general hearing more and more that kids are using skills of emotional intelligence to understand and manage their use of social media. There's a wonderful young woman I work with who realized as she was tracking her emotions through our signature tool, the Mood Meter, that she was in

the red and the blue, having many feelings of high energy and low pleasantness and low energy and low pleasantness, the red and the blue quadrant, if you know the Mood Meter. Do you know it? Have you use the Mood Meter yet?

Jacob: I've actually never used it and honestly never even heard of it before can you share a bit more information about what it is?

Robin: Yeah, so the Mood Meter is a visual display where you can locate your emotions on that visual display and it's anchored by a horizontal axis and a vertical axis. On the horizontal axis, there's a dimension of pleasantness and on the vertical axis the dimension of energy, so that you are looking at unpleasant feelings to pleasant feelings along the continuum of the X axis if you will and you can imagine the Y axis, up and down energy, low energy to high energy. When you cross those two axes, you imagine a visual plane where there are four quadrants, the red quadrant, the blue quadrant, the green quadrant and the yellow quadrant.

The red on the upper left is high energy, low pleasantness. The blue on the lower left is low energy and low pleasantness. The green on the lower right, the family of feelings of contentment and serenity. The upper right, sorry I'm struggling a little bit because I don't have it in front of me but usually I'm describing it as I'm looking at it, the upper right, high energy, high pleasant, the family of feelings of happiness and excitement and joy. Again, going back to the red and the blue, the family of feelings of anger and anxiety in the red and the blue the family of feelings of for example loneliness and depression and isolation.

This young girl was using the Mood Meter to plot her emotions on a daily basis and she noticed as I was saying that most of her feelings were unpleasant when she was online looking at her Instagram. She began to then feel or decide that she didn't want technology to be controlling her emotional life. She wanted to be in charge of her emotions, not the technology, and so she noticed that when she began to make decisions to stay off her phone to not be posting on Instagram all the time that she was actually feeling a lot better when she was using social media to connect with people rather than to post a picture of her life.

It might or might have not been Facetuned or might or might not have been put through a lens, so that she could look a little bit more perfect. She was feeling a lot better.

Jacob: What are the downsides or the negative impacts of not having emotional intelligence in the workplace?

Robin: It depends. It depends in what way you mean that. If I'm skilled at knowing myself and I'm not skilled at managing my emotions, there are going to be consequences for that. If I'm skilled at managing my emotions, but I'm not skilled at co-regulating with other people helping them manage their emotions, then those have different sets of consequences. Marc, do you want to say a little bit more about that?

Marc: It goes back to those five things that I spoke about earlier, attention and learning and relationships and decision making and etcetera and people who are unskilled in this area, they make more mistakes in terms of how they read people. It's hard to work with people who misread you all the time. It's hard to work with people who don't manage their emotions effectively. I mean we can all think of the colleague or the boss who is not emotionally skilled when it came to managing stress or anger or frustration and it's like you want to stay away. I think the implications are just everywhere when it comes to relationship quality, when it comes to performance in the workplace.

Jacob: One of the aspects of emotional intelligence I keep hearing about is self awareness, and it seems like this is a really big challenge for people. I had Tasha Eurich as a podcast guest a while ago and in her research she found that although most people keep saying they are self aware, only a small percentage of people actually are. So can we talk a little bit about self awareness and what happens when you're not self aware?

Robin: When you're not self-aware or putting it more positively when you are self-aware, you have not only an understanding of what you're feeling but also an understanding of the consequences of what you're feeling and how you then move out into the world. If you for example are stressed out and you understand that the cause of your stress is you're feeling overwhelmed with the amount of work you have to do and the consequence is that it's hard for you to relate to people. If you know that, then you can communicate that to people around you, "Hey, I'm really stressed right now. It's not a good time to have a conversation," but just as an example, if you are not aware of your impact on other people and what happens for you when you have a certain emotion, then your communication and that relationship is in jeopardy and that's one example of the things that Marc was talking about.

Jacob: For people who are listening to this podcast who are managers or leaders inside of their organization--Why is emotional intelligence such an important skill to develop specifically for those types of leadership positions?

Marc: Again, it always go back to those basic principles of emotions matter for decision making, relationships, health and all of us had worked at some point in our lives with a boss who didn't have self-management skills or who didn't have relationship management skills and it makes life tough. In our own research, what we have shown is that people who work for leaders who have lower emotional intelligence tend to want to leave the profession more quickly. They tend to have greater stress, greater burn out, less job satisfaction. They even tend to experience positive emotions like inspiration significantly less.

For example, if you work for someone who is low in emotional intelligence, you might experience inspiration 25% of the time whereas if you work for someone who has higher in these skills at 75% of the time, so a 50% difference. You think about how emotions influence performance at work, think about it. If you knew that you had different managers and some of them were creating environments where the employees only felt positive emotions 25% versus 75% of the time, would you want to know who is high or low in these skills? Probably yes. The implications I think are pretty

dramatic for both the mental health of the people who work in the organization, the organizational culture and climate and importantly the bottom line in performance.

Robin: I think that many people underestimate both the leaders and people who work in organization who have leaders who are not emotional intelligent the impact of those unpleasant interactions or unskillful communications on the person receiving them, and just in plain English, leaders are very big in the minds of the people who work with them. They're just huge and the hierarchy, the power and balance gives the way the leader treats people who work for him or her a tremendous amount of power to lift the person, make them feel great or send them off with a pleasant feeling or squash them and send them off with a feeling that they can't do anything right.

Those are everyday interactions and you don't realize as a leader necessarily that when you're short with somebody that may set their whole afternoon off.

Jacob: When it comes to leadership or managers inside of organizations, what do you think that those types of people need to be doing to develop and to focus and grow their emotional intelligence?

Marc: At the lowest or simplest level I should say, there are these little app tools, the one that Robin and I co-developed that's called the Mood Meter App which is just moodmeter.com and it's a simple tool to help people become more self-aware, build their language skills around emotion, and at a more elaborate level, there is a company that Robin and I are co-founders of which is called Oji Life Lab which is a more elaborate experience for people who work in organizations to develop specific skills, understand the science of emotions, practice the skills, get the opportunity to work with a coach to unpack some of the challenging emotions they're experiencing.

You can go from just building basic awareness using a little Mood Meter app or go into a more intense personalized experience with Oji to develop the skills.

Jacob: Let's say we were to break down emotional intelligence into some practical steps that all of us can use on a regular basis, is there something easy that we can all start off with?

Marc: Sure, there are basics of just building awareness that pausing and some people like to take breaths, some people just like to pause and then there are basic strategies. First, they just build emotion vocabulary, work hard to say something other than, "Okay," "Fine," "Yeah," and force yourself to say, "No, I'm disappointed," or "I'm frustrated," or "I'm not really overwhelmed, I'm anxious," or "I'm not anxious. I'm apprehensive. No, no, no, I'm jittery."

Robin: You can have some fun in family or work with a friend around introducing a new emotion word or an emotion word from each one of the quadrants, red, blue, green or yellow every week or every month. I mean how many times this week have you used the word joyful for example? If it's not right, so if it's not populating your vocabulary, maybe you need to be intentional about that and I mean just in that spirit I think that enlisting a

friend or a buddy or your family member in your journey to becoming emotionally intelligent, doing it together or letting somebody know, "Hey, I'm working on this. I'm working on being better and more consistent about expressing my emotion, so if you see me, if you see my face change, ask me what I'm feeling and I'll tell you."

Letting people know that you want to know that you want to know what they're feeling and letting people know what you are feeling. I would say one of the things that we often encourage people to do when they're working for example on managing emotions is to put themselves in situations where they are going to have to manage their emotions like go to the grocery store at 5:00 in the evening or go on a crowded bus.

Jacob: I've certainly been in both of those situations and they are never easy to deal with. It's very easy to get annoyed and angry and judgmental.

Robin: Right, exactly. If you're on a grocery line, even if you know that you're doing it because you're practicing something, imagine if you use the strategy like taking a deep breath.

Imagine if you use the strategy you like reframing the dawdling of the guy in front of you rather than rolling your eyes to yourself or at him or her and breathing in exasperation. What if you were to say, "You know what? Maybe he had a hard day. Okay, I'm just going to wait a couple of minutes." That's another strategy. Reframing a situation, telling yourself a more positive story about what's going on or one of the other strategies that we teach and we think is credibly important and the research bears this out is shifting negative self-talk to positive self-talk. We often ask people, "Well, how many times a day do you say something wonderful about yourself to yourself?"

Jacob: Self talk is actually a hard one for me. I'm pretty competitive in many aspects of life like racquetball and chess and I know that for me personally whenever I'm playing racquetball and I hit a bad shot or if I'm playing chess and I make a mistake blundering a piece, my default self talk has always been "you're an idiot how can you do that!? That was terrible!" But thankfully now I'm trying to work on that a little bit.

Robin: Yeah, so how are you doing that? How are you getting yourself to do that?

Jacob: Well my wife is actually encouraging me to practice this. She's always telling me to focus on saying positive things to myself and it's actually funny because whenever I do say something negative and she can tell I'm saying something negative her response is always "don't talk to my husband like that!" So it's an ongoing work in progress for me. I'm getting a little bit better at it.

Robin: Yeah, so I would say first of all practicing, actually writing down positive self-statements and imagine that you're talking to a friend because most of the negative things we say to ourselves, we wouldn't say to our friends, and if you talk to yourself with the same kindness and compassion that you talk to your friends, I think it's a good start.

Jacob: Why do you think emotional intelligence such a difficult thing for people to practice and to understand?

Marc: Well, go ahead, Robin.

Robin: I was going to say it depends on whether you're talking about it being a tough thing for someone to grasp because it's a shift in mindset or it's a tough thing for people to do because it's a shift in behavior, those are different things and they're both hard. We've had a lifetime of learning one way of approaching the world or one way of seeing emotions. For example, we hear from many people, "Well, that's just the way I am," or "Emotions should be left at the door," or "Emotions don't belong in the workplace," or "Emotions are not important. What's important is the way you think about something or solving the problem."

A lack of understanding that emotions impact everything and are always present can interfere with the mindset that emotions matter and that we need room for them, we need to account for them and we need to begin to learn how to skillfully manage them in the service of our goals, so that's the mindset piece. Then the behavior piece is it's hard to do it. You just told us. It's hard to do it. Even if you know talking to yourself more positively is a good idea, it's very hard. To do what you've been doing the unhelpful strategies for your whole life and to move to healthful strategies that require self-management, that require intentionality, that often don't feel that good in the moment requires practice and commitment.

Jacob: Yep, that makes sense, Marc did you have anything you wanted to add?

Marc: I think Robin said a lot. What I would just add is that the high emotions are a hot aspect of our being human and so it's a lifelong process to develop these skills. There are days when I went home and I think, "You know, Marc? You're amazing the way you dealt with your anger or frustration or whatever it is," and there are days when I just said like I think of myself that, "I cannot believe you just said that." Here are I am like someone is a so-called expert in the field, who is writing about this and trying to practice it and it's because whenever an intelligence, like emotional intelligence, is set in a relationship context, it makes it much more complicated and so when people say, "Oh, I've gone to that workshops," or, "I've gone through that training," and I say, "That was your opening act. I taught that class for 20 years and I'm still struggling."

I just like to think of it as every day is a new journey with our emotional lives and we do our best to use proactive helpful strategies, but we're going to fail. We've got to give ourselves the permission to fail and we've got to give ... Will I be able to say sorry? We've got to be able to move forward and have some forgiveness for ourselves because it is really hard work.

Jacob: Do you ever get people that say that this emotional intelligence stuff is just crazy and silly and it doesn't make any sense? How do you respond to some of the skeptics out there who are all about leaving emotions at the door and out of the workplace?

Marc: Well, I think the first is that you can acknowledge that emotions are in a workplace or you can deny them, but they're there. You may not want to deal with them. You may

not want to know how people feel. You may not care, but they're going to have feelings and their feelings are going to drive their productivity.

Be blind to that information or you can model that or use that information wisely to help people experience more pleasant emotions at work and help them build better relationships and in turn perform better. I always go back to the science when I have the naysayers. I just go to the science and say, "Guess what? The emotions are there whether you want to look at them or not, whether you want to feel them or not, so it's your choice." Slowly we get people to recognize that. Now, of course, there are going to be certain types of organizations and businesses where it's a dog-eat-dog world and that, "Yes, you may. Who cares about feeling? Just sell that stuff and sell that stuff."

I can't make the argument that emotional intelligence predicts every outcome for a company, but what I would say is that if you care about the people then you should care about emotional intelligence. If you only care about the bottom line, you can keep turning out and burning out people, but in the end, you're going to die very lonely and not have a lot of people around you.

Robin: I think I would add to that that the answer to the question that we started with like why now maybe is somewhere in what Marc was saying that people may come to this more slowly because it's not our job to convince anyone, and if people don't think that emotions matter and we present the science and we give them an experience and we present the data and they still don't get it or they don't buy it, then we believe that eventually it shows up in some way and I think that's what's happening in the world largely that there have been so many companies that have blown up for one reason or another that have to do with dis-regulation of emotion or breakdowns of relationships and respect and people are paying attention to that and saying, "Well something is wrong."

Often when there is something wrong and people are uncomfortable about what's going in their workplace and or inside of themselves, they begin to look for some answers and more and more people are arriving in our doorstep looking for those answers.

Jacob: How do we start practicing emotional intelligence skills? So let's say all these people listening to the podcast now, they decide "I want to become emotionally intelligent" what are some things we can all start doing today? What would be the first step?

Marc: Well, I think first is to be transparent about how you feel. I think as a leader myself here at the center with 50 people working at the center, like people ask me, "What keeps you up at night?" and then I say, "Well, I work at a pretty strong university here at Yale. I don't really worry about people's intellectual capacities, right? Everybody is smart here. Everybody does continue to work. Everybody can analyse the data and write the papers. What I worry about is how they feel about their work. When they walk into the center in the morning, how do they feel about the day, the meetings that they're going to have? When they leave work, are they feeling relieved? Are they feeling stressed? Are they feeling good riddance?"

That's one thing that I would say, be more aware of it and ask people the question and even ask them how much what they like to feel, so be intentional about saying, "What kind of feelings do we want to have here in this environment? Let's work together to create those emotion states." That will take some time because those are tricky conversations and they feel soft, but yet, it can really have a tremendous impact on the culture and climate of the organization, so that's the first stage is like thinking about the role of emotions in the organizational culture and climate.

Then at the second level is the skill-building piece. That's where apps like Robin and I developed and like the more intense Oji training can really help, but even on a regular basis, just check in. Like one example, here at the center, many years ago, I had a student of mine who just had a lot of anxiety, I didn't know it, so issued with the assigned projects and then would disappear for a week or two and then we'd have another meeting and then she'd come into me and say, "You know? I didn't really get it done and I feel really bad about it," and I'd say, "Well, what happened?" "You know? You assigned me with this and it was so complicated and it made me really anxious because I didn't really know what the terms meant and I was embarrassed," and all these emotions about what I had asked her to do.

I said, "Anyhow, why didn't you tell me? If you would have just said, 'Marc, I don't even know what you're talking about,' and not be embarrassed by that, I could have solved this problem in two minutes because I would have clarified it and then told you where to go to look for it," but yet we're not yet comfortable having those conversations around feelings.

Jacob: When it comes to emotional intelligence it sounds like this is a little bit more of a journey, in other words you can't just master everything in a few days or probably even in a few months. So how do we practice these emotional intelligence skills? How long does it actually take before you can say "I am emotionally intelligent"?

Marc: Research shows that we tend to develop these skills slowly over time. Experience does matter with these skills. Think about it as a leader, having one employee, yelling me for something is very different than being a director for 15 years and dealing with different types of personalities.

If you're intentional about it, your skills do develop over time. In terms of the correlation, there's research where it shows that people who are more emotionally intelligent tend to be more effective leaders, but again it would be, we want to look at the specific types of leadership. It's more related to transformational leadership than transactional leadership for example, just as you can imagine for obvious reasons. Again, it depends on the outcome.

Jacob: There's a lot in the field of AI, artificial intelligence that we're starting to see, do you think AI can ever be emotionally intelligent?

Marc: Well, I would say it is a tough question just because they're not the same. Emotional intelligence is something that a person has. Artificial intelligence is in domain of activity, right? Sorry to say it's not really answerable unfortunately.

Robin: Yeah.

Jacob: Robin did you have something you wanted to add?

Robin: No, just that. I agree.

Jacob: We only have a few minutes left but before we wrap up I'm curious if there's anything else you want to add that we haven't talked about as far as emotional intelligence goes and maybe even what the future of this might look like?

Marc: Well, that's a big question.

Robin: Yeah, that's not a one-last-few-minute question.

Marc: I would just say that because research shows for example in the teaching profession that stress and burn out are the leading causes of people leaving the profession. The average teacher stays in his or her job for four or five years max these days just because of stress and burn out that if we don't start taking the emotions that people have at work seriously, we're going to have a shortage of people who go to work and like I'm focused in my work in education settings and I care about having high-quality teachers and so to me a stressed out teacher is not going to provide the best education for kids.

Robin: Also I would add to that to what you're saying that we're now growing up a generation of students who are coming into the workplace with more skills and so we owe to them to build workplace climates and cultures that allow those skills to flourish and to give that education to the leaders who will be on boarding them in the future because we're working very hard to make sure that every students in every school across the nation will have those skills by the time they get to the running their companies down the road, but they have to get there first.

Jacob: Does gender or age have any impact on Emotional Intelligence skills?

Marc: The distribution across both genders, all genders, there's a normal distribution. Older people tend to have slightly higher emotional intelligence. Earlier research, we showed that there is one gender that thinks they have higher emotional intelligence than the other gender and then the other gender actually has higher emotional intelligence. I think you might be guessing what I'm getting out here.

Robin: I think your female listeners will understand that.

Marc: Right, so then in some reports and studies, men say they're higher than women in emotional intelligence, but when we measured their actual skills we found that women tend to score slightly higher on our test of emotional intelligence.

Jacob: This has been a fascinating conversation, but sadly we are coming to the end of our time. Is there anything you want people to check out or ways they can get in touch with you or learn more about what you're doing? Whatever you want to, plug.

Marc: Great, so our center's website is just ei.yale.edu. Our app can be found at www.moodmeterapp.com and Oji Life Lab is exactly that, ojilifelab.com, so from the research they want to download at our center's website to apps to more intense training is available by just going to our website.

Jacob: Great, well thank you both for taking time out of your busy day to speak with me. It was great meeting both of you.

Marc: Nice to meet you. Thank you.

Robin: Thank you.

Jacob: Thanks everyone for tuning in to another episode of the future of work podcast, again my guests have been Dr. Marc Brackett and Dr. Robin Stern from the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence. And I will see you next week.