

Ep #69: Connection Orientation



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With Your Host

Kori Linn

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This week we're talking about a pet concept of mine called connection orientation. And guess what? You can use it to create connection, as it sounds like you can, but you can also use it to create all kinds of other things and I can't wait to tell you all about it.

You are listening to Love Your Job Before You Leave It, the podcast for ambitious, high-achieving women who are ready to stop feeling stressed about work and kiss burnout goodbye forever. Whether you're starting a business or staying in your day job, this show will give you the coaching and guidance you need to start loving your work today. Here's your host, Career Coach, Kori Linn.

Hey, y'all, Happy Wednesday. I'm actually recording this podcast in the evening, which is really rare for me. I almost never record podcasts outside of work hours. But we're having some electrical work done on our house this week and what I discovered is, it's noisy.

And so I tried to record this podcast earlier – Well, I was going to record it earlier during the day and it was noisy. And then I thought if I waited till the afternoon, then it would be maybe done. Because a lot of the people who come and work on our house get here really early and then leave kind of before what I would call the end of my workday. And I was recording, and I just kept hearing like bang, bang, bang. And I was like, okay, this isn't going to work.

Anyway, so now it's nighttime and I'm here talking to you. And Alex has gone to Home Depot for the second time today because that is like her whole life right now between all the work she's doing on the house and then all the work that all the various people like the electrician are doing on the house. It's a lot of Home Depot runs. So that's what's happening in my world.

I'm pretty excited to talk to you about this concept that I call connection orientation. And it's something that I came up with in relation to my relationship with Alex. But I think it really applies for work and all kinds of other things. So first things first, I Googled connection orientation and it

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turns out that that is a thing, but it's like a technical thing with like networks and computers and stuff. And that's not what we're talking about here.

What we're talking about here is orienting yourself towards connection. What do I mean by that? So I was talking to one of my coaches, Maggie Reyes, and I don't remember what exactly we were talking about, I mean something about my relationship.

And I mentioned that one of the things that I try to do when Alex and I have conflict is to maintain my connection orientation. Which means to me to maintain my internal orientation towards connection as the orientation that is guiding me in that moment.

Sometimes when Alex and I have conflict, my brain momentarily kind of loses its connection orientation. Maybe I become angry, maybe I become sad. I'm having some kind of feeling, something like maybe a big reaction that is pulling me out of my norm.

And so in that moment something I've learned to do over years of being in a relationship with Alex, is to reorient myself internally of like, okay, right now you're feeling this big feeling. And if you let the big feeling be in charge, you maybe are going to say something you regret or do something you wish you hadn't.

And we talked about regret last week, so it's not that I would have to regret it. But just behaving in ways that don't actually align to my values, don't align with who I want to be as a person. And so this concept of connection orientation is sort of like an internal re-self-guidance system. That's a lot of words.

It's like inside my head I reorient myself to what do I actually care about here? What do I care about when I'm not in the feeling state I'm currently in? What do I intentionally want to care about? Not just what does my brain currently care about with wherever I'm at. And what I care about with Alex is connection. And that's something I want over the long haul.

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And so remembering to orient myself to that during conflict is incredibly useful. And it helps me behave in ways that align with my values. It helps me behave in ways that help us maintain our connection, reconnect, be more connected.

And it doesn't mean I'm not also angry, or I'm not also expressing what I want, or I'm not also stating that something isn't working for me. I'm doing all of those things, I'm just doing it from a space of also being oriented towards the desired outcome of connection.

Okay, so, this is a thing in my relationship, but when I was talking to Maggie Reyes about it she was like, that's brilliant and you need to tell everyone. Go on the podcast. So I'm on the podcast. I'm here to tell you all about it.

And I do think it's really relevant for work because work is also an area where things happen and then big feelings come up, right? Where maybe we're angry, maybe we're frustrated, maybe we're sad, maybe we're feeling despondent or feeling hopeless, whatever the thing is. And we may become disoriented.

We may be getting pulled off of where we want to be going by the big feeling we're having. Or we may be wanting to get back to our normal orientation but we're struggling to get back to that from the current head space we're in.

So being able to think about how we're orienting ourselves is really useful. And at the beginning I said this podcast is about connection because that's the orientation I specifically wanted to teach and talk about, is like how do we orient towards connection even when we're having conflict? How do we orient towards connection, even when we're going to have a difficult conversation? But this podcast is also just about the idea that you can orient yourself in a specific direction.

And so for me with Alex, that's connection. But for you in your workplace it could be anything. And so what this really brings us to is this question of

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what do you want your orientation to be? What is your goal? What is the outcome you're looking for? Where is it you want to go?

So I think a lot of times when people – Let's just take a difficult conversation, for example, or a conflict. When people show up to that, a lot of times we're so nervous and uncomfortable and maybe we know that there's something we really want to say and we're really afraid of what the other person is going to think about it.

Maybe we didn't even come to the thing thinking we're having conflict. Maybe we're just talking to someone and then they say something and then suddenly we're having this big flood of emotions. And then we're in it so we haven't even had time to think about what our intentionality is.

Either way that that happens for people, I find that a lot of people aren't thinking about their orientation. They're not thinking about what is my ultimate goal? Where do I want to be going? What matters above everything else? And what kind of framing do I want to have to drive my decision making here? To guide me even while I'm having these big feelings? And to help me kind of think through how I want to show up in this situation?

So for me, the orientation I often choose is connection, right? So if I'm having some kind of conversation with Alex and I feel upset by something, if I don't have my connection orientation, if that has gotten turned off or I've stepped away from it, I'm not connected to that orientation, then I may snap. I may say something kind of snappy back to her that I don't really mean and that I'm probably going to apologize for later.

And there's nothing wrong with that, that's fine. We're all humans, we're all going to do that sometimes. But if I can remember my connection orientation, it's like a compass that can help me navigate that moment. And I don't want to be melodramatic, but actually I'm pretty melodramatic so let's just go there.

If sometimes conflict is like walking through a minefield, and I think, again, that is a little bit melodramatic. But I also think that's how it feels for a lot of

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people. Having something like connection orientation or some other kind of self-selected orientation to guide you through can really help you figure out how to navigate that in a way that I think feels, first of all, more emotionally safe, but also more useful and remembering like, why are you there? What are you doing? What is the point of all of this?

I think for a lot of us, when we get into complex situations, our brain freaks out and we just want out of the situation as fast as we can. And sometimes we get really mad at the other person, and we lash out. Sometimes we are doing the opposite, we're like people pleasing and fawning is the term for that kind of stress response.

But if you're truly being connection-oriented, then it's not like how do I get out of this situation as fast as possible? It's like how do I move through this situation in a way that's connected now and in a way that's going to set me up for connection later? And I just think that's a really different frame than what I see a lot of people doing.

Okay, so to go back to a work example, maybe connection is what you want. Maybe it's like how do I have this conversation with my boss in a way where we maintain a good connection and I'm orienting myself to that connection as I walk through that conversation so that every single thing I say and do in that conversation is oriented towards that connection, being connected in the conversation, setting you and the boss up for connection moving forward and down the line in your relationship.

But maybe sometimes it's a different orientation. Maybe it's being fun-oriented. Maybe it's a question like how can I make this fun? Because I think sometimes, especially with work people are like, well, it's work I guess it's going to feel terrible. And then they just are kind of like white knuckling through it and assuming it has to feel that way.

Versus thinking about like, okay, if the point with work isn't just to do it, if the point is not to get through it as fast as possible, if the point actually is how could I make this fun to do, and set myself up for more fun in the

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future? That's going to be a really different kind of orientation than what you may be used to.

I don't know about you, but I know that for me, sometimes life feels like it just has so many things going on all the time, like so many moving parts. Even tonight, it's like Alex has gone out for errands. I'm here recording a podcast, I had a bunch of clients today, I went to the chiropractor, I took a few long walks. Tomorrow I'm going to get up and go do some personal training and maybe some kickboxing.

And sometimes there's like so many moving parts that I think sometimes we forget how much control we have over our lives and the direction of them. And how much we can influence our experience while we're doing all of those things. I think sometimes people get so caught up in being busy, and I know this happens to me. I get so caught up in being busy, that sometimes I forget that being busy doesn't have to taste the same all the time, right?

If I'm going through a day with 25 to-do items and I'm being connection-oriented, I'm going to have a connected experience. That's going to be what I'm creating for myself. If I go through a day with 25 to-do items and I'm having a fun orientation, then that's what I'm going to experience. And I'm going to be creating that, and looking for that, and optimizing for that, and setting things up to reflect that orientation.

And that brings me to another point, which is another way we can orient ourselves is to satisfaction. And I think this is such a juicy, yummy one because for so many of us satisfaction is this feeling that we really, really want that just seems to elude us and evade us. And we're always trying to earn it by getting more accolades, and getting more accomplishments, and getting more achievements, and making more money, and getting more degrees and all this stuff.

And listen, there's nothing wrong with making more money, and getting degrees, and doing accomplishments. I love accomplishments, you all

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know I do. But as I've said before, satisfaction is a habit. And I think it's potentially a pretty amazing orientation too.

It's interesting, when I started this podcast I was really just going to talk to you all about connection. But then I started thinking about what other kinds of orientation could there be? And I think satisfaction orientation is a really excellent one for us to consider. If I oriented myself in my life towards what I'm trying to create along the way and as my endgame is satisfaction, how would that change the choices we make? How would that impact how we go about things? How would that impact how we show up?

So I've given you some examples here of what this can look like. I think the other concept to just drop in, and I think I've talked about this on the podcast before, is just understanding where you're actually trying to go and letting that be a guiding factor.

And that's like with my relationship with Alex, where I'm trying to go is connection. In my career, in my business where I'm trying to go is usually it is connection, it is fun, and it is satisfaction. Those are like three of the things that I really care about, and I orient my life towards.

But it might be different for you. There might be a different orientation that sounds really delightful to you. And so I want you to think through that and make this something that's not for some future later thing when all your shit is together, because that future later thing is never coming.

Not that you can't make improvements and stuff, but so many people are waiting till later to orient themselves towards what they want their life to be like. Waiting till later to change their life to make it something that's more aligned to what they actually want.

And you're allowed to do whatever you want on whatever fucking timeline you want. But also why wait? Why wait when you could have more connection, more satisfaction, more fun now? And when the journey of getting to where you want to go could feel the way that you want to feel when you get there, right?

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So the journey to wherever you want to go could feel more fun, more connected, more satisfying, more whatever it is that you're craving. So why not build that in now? Why wait? Why put it off? That's just something to think about.

Okay, so what do you want to orient yourself to? And how are you going to do that? And how are you going to employ that shit today? And if this concept seems like it's a little bit hard to apply, first of all, come talk to me on Instagram about it because I want to talk to you. But second of all, come join Satisfied As Fuck, it's going to be an amazing experience. Satisfied As Fuck is my group coaching mastermind that is going to be happening this summer.

It's starting in July, it's going to be fucking phenomenal. And the kind of thing we're going to be doing in it is really digging into what kind of orientation are you looking for your life? And satisfaction is one of the given ones with this program, but you may have others. And then how do we go about creating that? How do we take that from being a concept that you've heard about on the podcast to being something that's like a living breathing part of your life?

And if you want to do that work with us, we want to do it with you. So scoot on over to my website, korilinn.com/learnmore and you can sign up for the Satisfied As Fuck wait list. All right y'all, that's what I have for you this week. Have a lovely day.

Thank you for listening to Love Your Job Before You Leave It. We'll have another episode for you next week. And in the meantime, if you're feeling super fired up, head on over to korilinn.com for more guidance and resources.