



Co-Hosts: Dr. Daphne Scott and Dr. Katie Hendricks
Episode 040: Would You Like to Enhance Your Relationships at Work?
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Daphne Scott: Welcome to the Super Fantastic Leadership Show podcast with your hosts Daphne Scott and...

Katie Hendricks: Katie Hendricks!

Daphne: This is *the* leadership podcast devoted to supporting you in leading at the highest levels of effectiveness with the greatest levels of fun, and maybe with some friends, Katie!

Katie: Oh, friends are more fun.

Daphne: Friends *are* more fun, and today, the show is all about *relationships*.

Katie: Oh, gosh.

Daphne: I know, Katie. You barely know anything about relationships.

Katie: I'm going to have to scramble around and look through some books here.

Daphne: Now for those of you listening who know Katie very well, you know Katie and Gay Hendricks are the relationship experts. We're going to talk about this within the context of leadership (within the context of everything, actually, but primarily in the context of leadership), but not under the context of relationships in leadership because we need to *gain influence*. Yuck. That is *not* how we're going to talk about it.

Katie: It's not about that. Okay. You're talking about what we're *not* going to talk about. Okay.

Daphne: Yes. I just want to make that explicit, because we're talking about relationships today, Katie, in the way that they're important. Healthy relationships are important to the well-being of our lives.

Katie: Yes. I would say *essential*.

Daphne: Yeah, essential. Absolutely essential, and when I thought about this in the context of leadership, one of the experiences I've had working with leaders is that idea of "it's lonely at the

top," and how they can get so caught up in their work, achieving, all the goals, and so on and so forth, that meaningful relationships, positive relationships, start taking a backseat.

Katie: Yeah.

Daphne: So we're going to talk about it within this context and why they're so important for our lives.

Katie: Okay!

Daphne: Does that sound good?

Katie: That sounds *really* fun.

Daphne: I know you're going to have a wealth of information to contribute, so I'm also excited about that.

Katie: Gosh, I hope so.

Daphne: I think so. I think you will. Don't you think so? I think so. All right, but before we do that, let's do our appreciation. I have a really funny one. Well, it's the kind of strange funny. I want to appreciate daylight. Now this might sound kind of interesting, or it might not, but you know, it's winter here now and so the days are very dark and fairly overcast. You know? It gets dark at like 4:30 in the afternoon. The sun doesn't come up until 7:00. It's resting.

I was recently in Michigan, at my mother's house, and it's even darker there, I feel like, than in the city, because there's just less man-made light. I don't know why I had this thought, Katie: "Man, if it was dark *all day*, I would not like that." I just had this moment of, "I'm so glad that it gets to be a bit daylight outside."

Katie: You are so lucky to live on a planet that has daylight.

Daphne: Yes! I feel like I am too. I'm like, "Wow, if it was dark all the time..." I mean, I'm sure I would adapt and I would get used to it, but I was just so *thankful* in that moment that that is *not* the case for me. So that's what I wanted to appreciate...daylight.

Katie: Well, that's wonderful. Well, in that light, I would like to appreciate gravity.

Daphne: Mmm. Gravity!

Katie: Yes. Well, you know, because without gravity, we would be spinning off into space.

Daphne: Yes, we would.

Katie: Sometimes I argue with gravity. I have this other saying I employ in my advanced years here. "Gravity never sleeps." Gravity is always pulling, but it gives me a choice to use gravity to

rebound from, to stretch and expand. I use it kind of like a trampoline. I'm aware of gravity pulling on me. I use that to really let myself expand and stretch, so I want to appreciate gravity.

Daphne: I like that. So, we're very appreciative of our earth.

Katie: Mm-hmm.

Daphne: Yes, I like it. Well, now that we're done with our appreciation, I guess we'll get on to this whole thing about relationships.

Katie: Yeah. *Relationships*. Okay.

Daphne: Relationships. All right. So I'm continuing this from a perspective, Katie, of this idea of thriving and flourishing in our lives, and we've been really covering a lot of topics lately on the show around that, from stress reduction, we just did one a week ago on meditation, and the perspective that we're coming from here is not running out to fix things, and not running out to fix or correct something that's *wrong* with ourselves or with our teams or with our organizations, but really supporting, "How can we actually support *thriving*?"

Right? So not just *weeding the garden*, but really, how do we support the *thriving* of the garden, if you will? So when I thought about this episode, and by the way, there's a mindfulness episode, which is episode 18, and then we just did one last week that's on meditation, so check those out, too, but really we're talking about this *thriving* idea. So I thought about relationships then, in that. How do the relationships of our lives fit into this thriving? A quote I wanted to bring in was Jean-Paul Sartre's quote, "Hell is other people."

Katie: Yes, well, knowing something about Sartre, I think that's how other people would have thought about him.

Daphne: Yes. So I said, "Not so fast, Jean-Paul. Not so fast." Exactly. But we need relationships to thrive, and that's really what we're talking about. So just some research to bring all this in, way back in the day, there's this guy Harlow and this other guy, Bowlby, and Harlow studied rhesus monkeys. I'm sure you're very familiar with this study, Katie.

Katie: I am.

Daphne: Back in the day, they thought, "Well, all species really need is just to be fed and they'll be fine." You know? Basic needs met. What they found with these monkeys is when they took them away from their mothers, even when they were being well-fed and well-nurtured in that way (they weren't starving them or anything like that), the monkeys got a little crazy.

Katie: They got a *lot* crazy.

Daphne: Yeah, they got a lot crazy. The experiments were actually not very good.

Katie: The experiments are kind of heartbreaking, if you've looked at any of the footage from them.

Daphne: Yeah, it's horrible.

Katie: Because they didn't... You know, it was not that long ago that researchers and the general public didn't really understand very much about what we now call *bonding*, that human beings require attention just as much as they require food and water.

Daphne: Mmm. Yes, and that's what these studies really found out. They got to a point where he created a wire monkey that had a bottle on it, and then another monkey to imitate the mom, and another monkey that he wrapped with a very soft diaper, and the baby monkeys would hang on to the monkey that was wrapped in the soft diaper, and lean over to drink out of the bottle that was attached to the wire monkey.

So they wanted the softness and the nurturing of this fake "mom" monkey that was wrapped in a diaper. He was astute enough to figure out, "Ugh, they need more than just being fed. They really need connection." Then, Bowlby was the guy who got the gift of studying orphans after World War II, I think it was, and really came up with the same results. The two of these researchers collaborated at one point, to really say, "Hey, look, this goes a lot deeper. We actually *need* intimate relationships. We *need* connection." Right?

Katie: I think even, I would go on beyond saying *need*, because need makes it seem like, "Well, you know, you could get over it." You know? So you couldn't *need* that.

Daphne: Right.

Katie: I want to say we *require* them.

Daphne: Yes. We *require* them.

Katie: We *require* them. So you could not live without water.

Daphne: That's a great way to say it. We *require* human connection.

Katie: We require human connection, and of a particular kind.

Daphne: Yeah. Oh, say more about that.

Katie: Well, what we found, and the research is pretty clear about this, is that because we require attention, we'll do whatever we need to do to get it.

Daphne: Yes.

Katie: That accounts for a lot of the problematic human behavior that people get into.

Daphne: Yes.

Katie: What we call in our work *personas*, number-one and number-two personas... Number-one personas would be those ways you get attention that are successful, that give you goodies. But if those don't work... For example, if for whatever reason your parents don't like you, or they prefer your brother or sister, people will develop more problematic ways of getting attention because we require attention. So they'll become the problem child, or the overachiever, or the rebel, or the squeaky wheel so they get some attention.

Daphne: Yeah. Wow, that's such a great point, and the piece here, these patterns we talked about with the monkeys and then when they looked at these orphans too (who, by the way, really came up with very drastic behaviors as well), what I think you're talking about too, Katie, is that those same patterns, though not as extreme, show up in our adult relationships too.

Katie: Yep.

Daphne: Yeah, and I'll give some examples of what I mean, but all those same patterns show up whether we're going to get attention from positive things or we're going to get attention by doing the negative things that will still get us attention, they still show up. This is one of the things I wanted to have you really talk about, Katie, because this is your body of work.

What really happens in our intimate relationships and then what happens... We're going to explore friendships too, which I think are one of the more fascinating aspects of our connection patterns as humans. So these patterns that show up... Now they talked about, in some of this research, these three ideas of *avoidant*, *resistant*, and *secure* relationships, and then *companionate* love, which I thought was really fascinating. It's affection shared by two people whose lives have become intertwined. Right? After you've been with someone...

Katie: We might call those people *friends*.

Daphne: Yeah, or you could call them *friends*. That's another way to go. Friends, yes. Friends. So they talked about these different types of relationships too, and what happens when you're in an avoidant, a resistant, or then a secure one. I think these are the things that are sort of happening under the surface. Right?

Katie: Oh, you can spot them. Once you know what you're looking for, you can spot them in all relationships that are not working smoothly.

Daphne: Yeah. Okay, so can you give some examples of what it is that you spot in relationships that aren't going smoothly? Intimate or otherwise.

Katie: I think actually one of the important things to realize is this applies to *all* relationships, so in the workplace, you're going to find exactly the same kinds of patterns as if you were in your family or you were in a social situation. We will tend to repeat the relationship patterns we learned early in life until we bring conscious awareness to them.

Daphne: Yeah.

Katie: The basic thing people require is loving attention. They require presence. Someone actually giving you their attention is one of the biggest gifts, and the most appreciative state that you can create with another person is to simply give them your presence, to turn toward them and to get interested, to get curious. In relationships between parents and children that really work, you will see that kind of loving attention, but it's not controlling. So it's the things that get added in that create the avoidant, resisting, or secure relationships.

What I was just describing, a *secure* relationship, is a relationship where attention is given freely, it's not controlled, and it doesn't go away. In relationships that turn out being *avoidant*, in any problematic relationship there's a problem of attention, so attention is only given for certain kinds of conditions, so you have to be good, or you have to be quiet, or you have to wait your turn, or you can't eat before your brother does...

There are just all kinds of rules about attention. If the attention is removed for any reason, those people, especially infants and toddlers, get very upset. So the mother goes away... (It's particularly mother, because for most people that's going to be their primary caretaker in the very early days of life. Now that's beginning to change in some places, but we're just going to call them the caretaker, although that is usually mother.)

So if the caretaker goes away and then either doesn't come back or comes back only intermittently, the child will develop one of two styles. One is, "I don't need you. I'm going to take care of myself. I will just not ask for too much. I'll be self-sufficient." Those are the people who become avoidant.

Daphne: Yes.

Katie: They're the squirmers as children. You know? They won't let themselves be held.

Daphne: Mm-hmm.

Katie: They won't look at you. They're usually quieter. They might not develop language as quickly. They're the invisible ones. There's a whole continuum of avoidant. Then the *resistant* ones are like, "I'm going to just fight you. I'm going to get aggressive. I'm going to do whatever I need to do to get attention." Those are the ones who will fight back. They'll become problems in one way or another. Those are the ones who become the rebels.

Daphne: Yeah. Wow.

Katie: If you look at any adult relationship that is not functioning in a happy, flowing way, you're going to see those kinds of patterns showing up.

Daphne: Mm-hmm. Wow. That was an amazing description. So in some of the things, Katie... Let's talk about an avoidant relationship at work, like a boss who only gives attention when things are going well. Right?

Katie: Yeah.

Daphne: I think there are just so many patterns there that get played out, even in the world of leadership, in the world of business that we can see, which is really fascinating. I'm going to leave it to our listeners to start putting a little bit together on those types of relationships.

Katie: Yeah, and just to add to that, one of the greatest gifts you can give is first to yourself, to give curious attention to yourself, to really get present with you, which is what we talked about in our meditation podcast. You know, "How can I just spend time with me? How can I give attention to me? How can I be curious about what I'm experiencing? How's it going? What am I feeling? What are my body sensations? What am I dreaming about these days?"

So to give yourself that attention is really a *daily nutrient* and then to give your curious attention to people you care about. It all comes down to: find people around whom you feel good and hang out with them.

Daphne: There's an idea.

Katie: I mean, it really is not much more complicated than that. You know? People who are life-long friends, they feel better being around the other.

Daphne: Yeah.

Katie: They just feel better, and there's all kinds of research now about, you know, people have longer lives, they have fewer surgeries and fewer broken bones, they're happier and they don't have depression. All of these things are a function of giving and receiving attention with each other.

Daphne: Yes, and in more of a space without strings attached, too. I think that's the other great piece of this. You know? It's just, we can be present.

Katie: Well, the moment you get into control, where you're trying to control the other person or you're making rules, or particularly when you're criticizing and blaming, that's a way of controlling which will have people revert to their unresolved childhood patterns.

Daphne: Right.

Katie: You're much more likely to bring out the disrupter, the fidgeter, the person who always has a different plan, the skeptic, the naysayer, the martyr. All of those are really functions of, "I can't get my attention needs met."

Daphne: Yes. I think this is so important for people, especially if you're a leader or you're in a leadership role. Let me actually back up. I think this is really important because, the truth is, somewhere in your life, especially if you're listening to this show, you are a leader to somebody,

and I think, Katie, this whole thing about our caregivers and relationships and what that means, I think it all shows up in our organizations too.

Katie: I do too.

Daphne: Especially with people, like it or not, because of titles. Right? If you're my boss, I'm going to want your attention.

Katie: Yes. You're the authority and you're my substitute caretaker.

Daphne: Yes, and I think this is just something that... I've read a lot about emotional intelligence. I've never done a survey...

Katie: Not a formal survey.

Daphne: I've never done a survey, but I think people, though they might not be consciously aware of it, I have a feeling these leaders who they say have high emotional intelligence, I think those leaders actually *get* this.

Katie: I do too.

Daphne: Yeah. They actually know that people want their attention. I always think of it as they want your blessing. They want to know that they're being noticed.

Katie: Absolutely. The most powerful thing anybody can do, and what I just had pop up into my mind was when Gay and I were on Oprah, the thing that most impressed me at the end of the show was that first, Oprah took her shoes off, which I thought was quite wonderful, and walked around in her stocking feet. She then went out and shook the hands of every single person in the audience.

Daphne: Wow.

Katie: So she gave her attention to every single person who had come. I watched her, and I could see that she was giving them... It didn't have anything to do with time, because she gave them her *full* attention. I asked one of the crew, "Does she do that? Is that a regular practice?" and he said, "Oh yeah. Every show."

Daphne: Wow. She was connecting with each person.

Katie: To me, that explained more about Oprah's success than anything else I've ever seen.

Daphne: Yeah, well it definitely would seem like it would have an impact, for sure.

Katie: Yeah.

Daphne: Yeah, well that's fantastic. I love hearing that. So how we're connecting, giving people attention. I think the other side of this is, as leaders, not only giving others attention, but also recognizing that you need attention too.

Katie: Yes, and I think so many of us are shy about it. We have this whole mythology about, "I should have gotten over it."

Daphne: Yes.

Katie: We still, I think, are very much at the effect of thinking that attention is an *option*.

Daphne: Yeah.

Katie: "I think I'll have some attention today, but pretty soon I'll be able to get along without it."

Daphne: Yeah.

Katie: It is absolutely not true. The most important thing each of us can do to make our lives more effective and happier is to be asking for attention and to be giving attention richly and freely.

Daphne: Mmm. You just reminded me of a story that occurred. I was with my niece and nephew, and at the time they were 4 and 3. My nephew, the 3-year-old, crawled up on my lap (it was about time for them to get ready to go to bed) and he was just sitting. We were just cuddling and laughing with each other. My niece came in, and she just started to come *unglued*.

I don't know how I caught this, but I was quick enough, and I said to her, "Would you like some attention?" and her entire face lit up. She said, "Yes," and I said, "I want to tell you, whenever you want attention from me, I want you to say, 'I'd like some attention, please.'" We were together three more days. She probably said that to me about a hundred times.

Katie: Yeah.

Daphne: I felt like in that moment it gave her some permission, but it also gave her the words.

Katie: Words, a structure, and I'm sure, it will totally positively influence the rest of her life.

Daphne: I hope so. I hope so.

Katie: It's just such a beautiful story, illustrating how often we don't realize, "Oh, I'm creating this big complication." Just imagine at work, where somebody is just messing up so that you have to go and help them.

Daphne: That's such a great point.

Katie: We even have, in my leadership program, everybody knows at some point someone will say, "Hey, would you like some attention? You know, you can just ask for some attention." I would love that to be just as normal as saying, "Pass the salt."

Daphne: That's so great. I think we can make it just as normal as, "Pass the salt."

Katie: Yes. I would love that, and I'm intending to continue spreading the word about that, because it's actually such a simple and profound choice.

Daphne: Yes, and *easy*. I guess that would fit in with *simple*, right?

Katie: Yeah, simple and easy. They kind of go together.

Daphne: All right, so I want to touch on friends a little bit. So relationships, the value of attention, and then I want to touch on the idea of friends, because it can be easy, if you're in an intimate relationship, to be like "Well, yeah, I want to be in an intimate relationship," and then relationships at work, "Well, I have to be in good relationships at work because it's my boss," and we can make up all these stories. Right?

But the thing I want to say about friends, that I think theoretically, at least in the modern world Katie... Back when we had to live in tribes and we didn't want to get attacked by other tribes and eaten by tigers, it paid to have a lot of friends. But even in the modern world (and I think this just fits right back into what you were saying about attention) theoretically speaking, I really don't need to *have* a bunch of friends. I don't need to have friends around me. I mean, I can *get by*. Right? I'm not going to get eaten by a tiger, necessarily.

Katie: But you're just going to get by.

Daphne: Yeah, but I'm just going to... exactly. I'm just going to get by. So the world of friends is sort of the relationship world that also fascinates me, because you're my friend, I'm not really *getting*... Right? You're not my boss, you're just my friend.

Katie: We don't have a subterranean kind of context.

Daphne: Yeah.

Katie: We basically like to hang out together.

Daphne: Yes. We just like to hang out together. We enjoy each other's company, and I think the world of friends is the place where... I watch leaders, and so much of their lives are intertwined with the work they're doing that the authenticity gets missed in friendships, and that creates more and more of that isolation. I love what you were saying, Katie, about the attention factor, that there's not a genuine exchange of attention then. It's like you only have my attention because I have to get something from you, and you're going to get something from me.

Katie: That's right. It's like there's commerce in it. There's kind of a monetary exchange of one sort or another, but in friendship your attention is freely given.

Daphne: Yes, yes, yes. Freely shared.

Katie: Yes.

Daphne: I'd like to come back to, if you're a leader (or not) and you're listening to the show, I think this is something, in terms of relationships enhancing our lives and increasing our thriving and flourishing, that we all, in our busy, busy days, we can take a moment to just pause and check in to find out, where we are at with our relationships in our life. Are we nurturing them? Again, I think this is an area, Katie, people can skip over very easily.

Katie: Yeah. They think, "Oh well, that's extra."

Daphne: Yeah, right. "That's extra," or, "It'll take care of itself."

Katie: Yeah. "I'll go to the office party and we'll talk shop, and that's enough."

Daphne: Exactly.

Katie: It's *not*.

Daphne: It's not, and on the other side of that is that not only are you taking care of relationships, but are you allowing yourself to be nurtured and taken care of *by* relationships?

Katie: Whoa.

Daphne: Whoa!

Katie: So are you allowing people to like you? Are you letting people in?

Daphne: Yes, yes. I've read more and more about this, too. In our world, more and more people talk about their *loneliness* and how alone they feel and isolated. I think this is the art, if you will, we've lost around relationships, not really understanding the importance.

Katie: Not understanding our constant interrelatedness, That *is* actually all that's going on all day...we're *relating*.

Daphne: Yes! That's all that's actually happening.

Katie: That's really all that's happening.

Daphne: All of life is one big conversation. Right? That's really all it is, whether it's over Skype or whether it's on email, or you know, "What am I doing?" Right? Besides meditating, which we talked about a couple of weeks ago.

Katie: Besides meditating, where we're relating to ourselves.

Daphne: Yes, exactly, so it's all one big relationship. The last point I want to make about this... I want to do our invitations to mastery. I don't think we really called it "invitations to mastery" on our last couple of shows, but we will today. One invitation to mastery is *get some friends*.

Katie: Get some friends.

Daphne: But really.

Katie: One of the ways I was thinking about doing that is by considering, "What is it that I most love to do?" Like, one of the things I love to do is to garden.

Daphne: Yeah!

Katie: So if I were looking for some friends, I would go looking on the local newspaper for clubs that get together that are maybe learning about different ways of gardening or different ways of doing landscaping, and I would go to those because I'm likely to find people who are interested in the same things.

Daphne: Yeah, and they have [meetup.com](https://www.meetup.com). They have all kinds of different groups and people you can connect with. I think this also is the other point too. When you have friends who are not only friends or relationships in work, but based on hobbies or interests you have outside of your work world (which can be really valuable), this can, believe it or not, Katie, *enhance* what you do at work.

Katie: I believe that.

Daphne: Yeah, it's true.

Katie: That's a whole other aspect of how your friendships and being engaged in what you love to do enhances your effectiveness at work.

Daphne: Yes, yes. That's great. Well, anything more you wanted to add on relationships, Katie?

Katie: Oh, well...

Daphne: Because I feel like we're *done*. You know?

Katie: Yeah, I do. I just want to summarize. I think we live right now in a fly-by world, where people do not make contact, and I think that problem has gotten more exacerbated by text messaging. You can be in relationship to a thing in front of you rather than the people around you.

Daphne: Mm-hmm.

Katie: So the big gift I invite you to give yourself, especially this holiday season, is to put down your devices and turn toward the people around you. Let yourself give some attention and receive some attention. Expand your attention reservoir that way.

Daphne: Oh, that's so great, Katie. "Expand your attention reservoir." I really like that. I'm going to have to put that in the show notes.

Katie: Super.

Daphne: That was a beautiful summary, and now I think we can wrap up the show, but I think we can come back to this. I think there's more to be said.

Katie: I do too. I think there's more.

Daphne: I think so too. Nevertheless, we hope you enjoyed this podcast and you remain more inspired than ever. If you dig the show, let us hear about it. Connect with us on social media, check out Katie's websites and the information she has, and let us know if there are things you want to hear us explore. We're always open to that and we love connecting with you. In the meantime, keep living a Super Fantastic Leadership life.