



Season Three Episode Nine- released April 2023

A conversation hosted by Jeff Dewing, with Celynn Morin - the Wellness Whisperer

Jeff and Celynn discuss the power of staying curious, connecting with ourselves and celebrating life's small things, in maintaining good mental and physical health.

Creating mental margin by listening to our bodies

Jeff Dewing:

Hi, and welcome to Doing the Opposite Business Disruptors, the podcast where you get to meet leaders who have swum against the tide, thrown out the rule book and changed the way their sector does business.

I'm Jeff Dewing and I'm the founder and CEO of Cloudfm, a business where we thrive on taking risk so our clients don't have to.

Today you are going to meet Celynn Morin. Celynn is someone I've known for a few years now and she's certainly made her mark on me when I attended one of her masterclasses back in 2018. Celynn is a wellness coach. She's a mindfulness coach. She's a head, heart, and gut coach. She takes you on a journey that is so unravelling, it knocks you for six.

Celynn not only focuses on wellbeing, focuses on managing and preventing burnout, focuses on you are what you eat. She talks about a number of exercises that are just small changes that become new rituals that truly help you discover yourself. And I'm one of these people that would

normally have said 10, 15 years ago, this is all just fluff. This is nonsense. Until I experienced it, until I learned the curiosity to understand what goes on in my body, what goes on in the way I manage and listen to my body. And Celynn brought that to life and it's been an education and it has certainly influenced the way I live my life.

Celynn also practices epigenetics, which is where she can also study the DNA of your body, of you, and help you align that to how you move forward in what you do, how you behave, your thinking time, your resting time, your diet the, the probiotics within your gut and various other bits and pieces. So it's one of those subjects that's been taboo for years and years and years and years. Mental health, mental ill health, wellbeing is now at the forefront more than ever before as a result of the trauma of COVID the trauma the planet suffered. And this is where people like Celynn can truly help people in that journey with those challenges and those traumas, and even help people that may not have been suffering such trauma, but enables them to really push the boundaries in how they live their life.

So, hi Celynn. Thank you so much for joining me today. I can't wait for our conversation.

Celynn Morin:

I'm really happy to be here. Really delighted.

Jeff Dewing:

So Celynn, for the benefit of the listener can you just give us a whistle stop tour of who Celynn is, what you do, why you do it, and how you've come to be where you are today?

Celynn Morin:

So I sound South African. I was born in South Africa, however, both my parents come from the Champagne region in France. So I was brought up with this approach to life that includes Joie de Vivre and balance and lots of champagne because they're from the champagne region, of course. And I always knew I wanted to be a healer or a doctor of some kind. And in my teenage years I discovered dietetics as a profession. So I decided to study dietetics and it was one of the best decisions I've made. I've never looked back and I now live in the UK no longer in South Africa, running my own business as a workplace wellbeing whisperer.

Jeff Dewing:

Now that conjures up some interesting thoughts, isn't it? You go around whispering to people, what if they can't hear you <laugh>?

Celynn Morin:

Well, the truth is that often our bodies will whisper to us around health and energy and our mental state. And if we don't pay attention to the whispers, then they become screams and shouts and things can go really wrong. So that's where the term comes from, is, you know, I try not to be preachy or tell people what to do. We know what's good for us. I'm just here to nudge and remind people and gently whisper so they don't need to listen to the screams.

Jeff Dewing:

I've known Celynn for a couple of years and I was a beneficiary of, of one of her keynotes and workshops. And it isn't all fluff and stuff that people may suddenly assume through some of the comments that you've heard. This is real stuff and it is about the fact that we underestimate the power of our bodies letting us know something is not quite right. And one of the biggest problems that we tend to face is we don't take responsibility for those whispers. And if we did, we could actually manage it and take care of it.

So coming back to a couple of questions and listen the champagne story I remember you telling us before, and I'm thinking, 'my God, you know, what a fantastic place. Why an earth is she come to the UK' <laugh>. And, and then of course the alternative being in South Africa, which is another wonderful place you think yeah. You know, come to the UK with all the lovely grey skies and rain, but there you go. <Laugh>

Of course we all, some of us know, I think there's, there's a great saying that I love and that is happiness is a choice. And essentially it's about when you take control of your state of mind, then you can be happy anywhere, right? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>.

So Celynn, so the purpose of of the podcast really is about unveiling and, and digging deep into situations where people done something that goes against the grain, that goes against the tide that that is, you know, Doing the Opposite. Can you give us some examples of where you faced that dilemma you faced, that opportunity, that challenge, whichever phrase you wanna place on it,

where you thought, I'm, I'm gonna go the opposite way here. Can you give us a few examples of that and, and what the outcomes were?

Celynn Morin:

I think one of the first examples I can remember was after I qualified as a dietitian, generally what dietitians do is they went into private practice or they went into clinical nutrition and worked in hospitals for instance. And I started doing that, but within the first year I was so not happy because at that time people only went to see a dietitian once they were already sick. And I really always knew that I wanted to be in the proactive health space, not the reactive health space. And for a while I was a bit disillusioned. I was like, 'I don't just want to see people once they have diabetes or gout or irritable bowels and or low energy'. And so I decided to go against the grain. I stopped doing private practice and I explored the concept of workplace wellbeing, which was very new at the time, you know, 2006, 2008 when I started doing that, it wasn't trendy. So it wasn't easy, you know, it would be difficult to get decision makers certainly, you know, financial directors to pay attention to this concept of wellness in the workplace. And so it took time and now of course, fast forward to where we are today. And I guess one of the benefits of COVID and the shift to working from home, you know, mental health and energy and burnout are now topics that everybody's concerned about and we understand how important it is.

Jeff Dewing:

But you had to show grit and determination to stick with it, right? Because it would've been really easy to throw the towel in and say, 'I've just gotta do something different'. But that also means, I guess that because you went through that period of time in 2006, 2008, when you made that decision, you started pushing them and again, pushing against the tide because people were saying, 'what are you talking about? Who, who, who really understand what does wellness even mean? You were then best placed when it did matter i.e. COVID. Yeah. and when people did start sort of going through a journey of perhaps expressing how they feel more openly than, than perhaps they would've done previously.

Celynn Morin:

Yeah. I think my approach to wellbeing is quite different. So as I've mentioned previously, we don't change when we get told what to do. You know, those of us who are listening that have kids, you

know, we understand that it's more 'do as I do' as opposed to 'do as I say'. So my approach has always been about enjoyment and fun. When I look at champagne or if I see people drinking any sparkling drink, I always make an assumption that they are celebrating. And I use that concept of celebration and effervescence in my work of wellbeing. So how can you make changes to your lifestyle that makes you feel good that you almost feel like you are celebrating rather than depriving yourself or cutting things out? Cause there's so much dogma, especially in the diet world and a lot of controversial, contradictory, overwhelming information. And so I try to encourage people to stay curious and playful and have fun and make small changes as opposed to big changes because consistency is always better than intensity. It's much better to implement daily rituals that you end up doing effortlessly without, rather than going on like a six week programme that gets you instant results but then they backfire when you go off the programme.

Jeff Dewing:

Yeah. And again, I remember part of the session that we had a few years ago where we went in, we talked about food and stuff and, and again, these are stuff that I've never really taken notice of, if I'm honest, I've gotta be brutally honest. But the session we had changed my outlook on life materially. And I remember having that session and we talked a lot about multi-coloured salads and stuff like that and you know, making it look pretty and exciting but also being good for you. And I remember, I remember I went to niece a week later and sent you a photograph of my salad, said, 'look at what I'm eating. My wife can't believe that I'm eating this food'. But yeah, I wasn't just eating it for the sake of it, I was actually enjoying it because it was a mental change as opposed to a 'you've been told if you do, this will be the outcome'. And it's about trying new things, isn't it? Life is only ever about trying new things and not being constrained to what you've always done.

Celynn Morin:

Absolutely. One of the principles I teach is about curiosity and keeping a growth mindset. Because if you do that, you'll always be able to improve your energy and enhance your wellbeing in a way that fits your lifestyle. Because there's no one size fits all. I mean, of course the research shows we can see longevity studies and where people are living healthy and well in terms of their mental health, what, you know, there's some common factors. But ultimately we are all so unique and that's why I'm fascinated currently with the field of epigenetics. So how can we look at your genetics and then build a blueprint that really helps you to make lifestyle changes that are gonna serve you?

Jeff Dewing:

Another thing you also talk, you talk about a lot, which was probably the heart of your delivery was about the heart and the gut, wasn't it?

Celynn Morin:

So, the head, the heart and the gut are what we call our three intelligence centers. And they're so deeply connected. You know, this four pound universe that sits on our shoulders is an incredible organ. The heart we now understand has its own neuronal network and it has a memory and our feelings and emotions impact our brain more than the other way around. I mean, it's fascinating! And then we have the gut, which is its own brain, right? And now people are starting to hear things like the vagus nerve and the gut brain and the microbiome. And it's, it's just so beautiful. We're such intelligent creatures and we're so beautifully made. If we support one area, like if you regulate your emotions or your breath, you help your brain. If you feed your guts, you eat like an artist, you know, you have salads even when you're travelling in the south of France, then you help your brain because your gut makes dopamine and serotonin, which are the chemicals that go up to your brain. So it's wonderful when we realise just how intelligently we are made and how much we can do to help ourselves!

Jeff Dewing:

What's fascinating when I get involved in workshops and and keynotes of this type is that every impacting workshop is basically founded on the back of research, which is then qualified and shown. So this is not about, 'I've gotta believe what you believe' this is about setting a scene that says, and I guess the bit I loved about your workshop and many workshops similar to the ones you do, is where people take you on a journey. They're not here to preach, as you quite rightly said at the top the show. It's literally about education. Life's only about education. I'm gonna bring you some information you might not have been aware of that you will choose to take from it what you choose to take from it. And of course, the bit that's fascinating is the quality of the delivery dictates the engagement of the audience, right? Because we were a load of hairy-arsed East London people in that session, <laugh>. And yet you, you broke us down in, in in a matter of moments. And and it really got us to think differently. The power of being curious. I'm really curious about what's going on here. And I think that's the bit that humans you know, and certainly businesses and business leaders, when they show that curiosity you suddenly become a powerhouse, right?

Celynn Morin:

And it's so necessary today! The demands on leaders are extraordinary. And so we need extraordinary approaches to, to our wellbeing. Because wellbeing is more than just a sense of feeling well. I mean it gives us margin, you know? And when you have margin, you have power because you have choices. So we know what it's like if you don't have margin around time or your relationships, it feels like you're running late or walking on eggshells. But if you have margin in your wellbeing, you can create mental margins. So you can think longer, more creatively problem solve quicker in your emotions. You can regulate yourself and show up compassionately with empathy rather than reacting. And if you can create margin in your energy, I mean you can move mountains and we need to move mountains today because we need to work at a pace that is incredible.

Jeff Dewing:

But some of us perhaps underestimate that it's actually a lot easier to move a mountain than we assume because we think it's a mountain, right? It's like when they say, 'hey know how'd you eat an elephant?' And the answer is one bite at a time. And I think, you know, the bit that I've sort of learned and drawn on since we met where you started that sort of momentum, if you like, of thought process was the power of thinking. And I also remember seeing one of your posts on LinkedIn during COVID where you were sitting under a tree and you was just being out with nature and taking that time. Now we all sit and think, 'oh God really? I ain't got time for that.' And then suddenly you actually find yourself in an environment where you do try that and I'm lucky enough to be near the beach and I sit on the beach quite frequently and I just look at the sea and I'll look at them for an hour. I'll have no thoughts. My whole mind is just cleared of any noise. And you get to sit and truly think about stuff and reflect.

Celynn Morin:

That is so powerful. It's so powerful. Cause we don't have enough stillness and solitude. We're so distracted, right? With all the demands of life and social media and the news and everything coming in, sitting in nature and gifting yourself permission to think and feel is very powerful and sometimes difficult, right? Because if you're not used to doing it, it can be very uncomfortable. You know, realising how anxious you are, how tense your muscles are, how your mind races. So also, you know, to anybody listening to this, maybe unlike Jeff, don't start with an hour. Start with 10 minutes and be curious and compassionate about whatever comes up for you.

Jeff Dewing:

Yeah. One of the things that someone suggested to me again during COVID as we were coming out COVID. I like to walk. So I do a lot of walking mainly on the golf course, but I do a lot of walking. And I started doing walking meetings. So when there was a meeting where I didn't have to take notes or do stuff, I would walk and have that meeting. And not only is it good for your health because you are walking, but it actually, you just feel so much more engaged. It's really strange! I'll urge anybody... It's not until you're prepared to try something that you then realise it's power.

Coming back to the thinking time, I love the fact when we are trying to set up a meeting between a group of people and that meeting can't be agreed for 10 o'clock because two people are on thinking time, which is non-negotiable! You cannot interrupt somebody's thinking time. It's set in stone, it's in the diary. You can't touch it. And the feedback that we've had from the business and the people has been, 'I think this has changed my life. I'm now thinking about everything that I've never reflected on' and it becomes a powerhouse mentally and physically.

Celynn Morin:

Yeah, that's wonderful. You know, our bodies were made for some kind of stillness. You know, there's two neuroscientists, David Rock and Dan Siegel who have designed a concept called ***The Healthy Brain Platter***. And there's certain ingredients on the platter that we need for a healthy brain. And one of them is what they call daydreaming downtime. It's where you allow yourself not to problem solve or think or answer emails or read a book or, but just do what you've just said is permission to think and be still. And when we do that, we also feel, right? So we engage and we relax. So we engage what we call the parasympathetic nervous system, which activates our intuition, the gut brain. And that's where you get powerful insights and reflections into what you need for your life personally and professionally.

Jeff Dewing:

And of course, the whole point is sometimes when we are - from a leadership point of view, we are thinking that all the discussions are about work and business and leadership and not, they're about, they're about human beings, right? Whether it's work or personal or family or you know, your local environment, your local community. It has this incredible impact. And also if you can imagine entrepreneurs that go through you know, stressful peaks and troughs of their journey because that's just what it is. One of the things that I've learned over the last probably 5, 6, 7 years, is that

ability to just be calm. Because when you are calm, when you stay, when you learn how to be calm, when you learn to manage your emotions, not suppress them, but just manage them, your decision making is incredible. You create an environment that infects everybody so everybody becomes calm. And then you get to focus on, yeah, as you say, nutrition, understanding what it is that makes us feel the way we feel listening to our inner selves. Something's not quite right. Well, don't ignore it. Do something about it. You know, be curious. Go investigate it. All of those things have been quite transformational. I guess if someone said to me, 'what regrets have you got, Jeff?' I say, 'my regret is not having this understanding 20 years ago, not having this knowledge, this curiosity 20 years ago that could have perhaps enabled me to have the enjoyment that I now have in life to that extent 20 years ago.'

Celynn Morin:

Yeah, that is quite something. And curiosity also keeps us playful, right? I think as adults we forget about our inner child and we need to give ourselves permission to play. And that means maybe not getting things right all the time and being open to adjusting. It's, there's constant need for agility, you know, that's part of resilience. So in the training I do I also speak about that, about how well wellbeing and having a strong foundation, you know, we often forget about the basics too! That's why in the workshop that we did we went through *The Wellculator* together because it's easy to also think, well, I'm just gonna think and spend time in my head. But it's hard to think clearly if you don't have all the nutrients you need or you haven't had a good night's sleep. So also looking at those basic foundations is important

Jeff Dewing:

When you're driven by ego. I'll never forget when we started our business, my business partner used to say to me, 'there's plenty of time for sleep when you're dead'. Which all sounds very bravo and, and so on but in reality people underestimate that sleep is the single most important thing in anybody's existence, right? The ability to truly have deep sleep, which is where you get the repairing going on, you get your brain sort of sorting yourself out. You get the nutrients and the oxygen, all the various bits and pieces. And those that don't take the time for sleep don't realise how they're inhibiting their own growth.

Celynn Morin:

Hmm, absolutely. And a lot of people are struggling with sleep. I mean, I spend a lot of time in my masterclass talking through strategies to help with insomnia or waking up in the middle of the night and not getting back to sleep. We need to be a lot more strategic around how we find rest. So sleep is one of the seven types of rest that we need. You know, we need like that mental rest, like you said, you know, just being able to just think, we also need creative rest. We need social and emotional rest, especially if you're a caregiver potentially, or you're giving out a lot emotionally. And rest can happen like salt and pepper in our food. Small amounts can be really impactful. So taking a mindful minutes between meetings, stopping to breathe once or twice before you eat lunch, those are all moments of recharge. You know, just like we charge our devices, we need to charge ourselves.

Jeff Dewing:

Of course. And I think, again, it's all part of the, the journey. Yeah. And again, through Covid, and again, because of the change of the way we all live now with Zoom meetings as opposed to physical meetings, to the extent they were, no meeting can last more than 30 minutes. The only thing that can last more than 30 minutes is a workshop where you have, you know, functions and actions that you need to take part in, in some way or another. But a meeting cannot last more than 30 minutes. And we do not allow every anyone during a working day that has meetings, they have to have at least a 40 minute break between meetings. They can't go from one meeting to another - it's banned. It's not allowed because you have to reflect on the meeting you've had. You need to think about, you know, what you're gonna do. You might wanna go out and get, you know, into the garden and just have a walk around and reflect on stuff. It's had a material impact on people's mental health and wellbeing, which they are happy to report through our surveys because we mandate it. So we are giving people permission to not have to work every minute of every day because that's what we've always been trained to do.

Celynn Morin:

Yeah, that's, I think it's incredible what you're doing. I mean, you're Doing the Opposite of what's happening and we need that. So thank you.

I understand the physiology and the chemistry that you can't go from meeting to meeting to meeting your brain waves just go from beta to higher beta to higher beta. You cause a sense of

agitation and stress by the end of the day. You're so wired and tired, you're not being productive! So yeah, absolutely. The sense of hustle and bustle that we have to earn every minute of existence needs to change. So I really, I celebrate you and the business for doing that.

Jeff Dewing:

Yeah. Thank you.

But a lot of that was generated by talks and workshops from yourself and from other people like you, which comes in the Vistage community, which is obviously life changing for me.

One of the things when people talk to me about reflection is it, it enabled me to think back, 'why do I now believe reflection is so powerful?' Well, apart from stuff that happened during COVID that helped our business get through it I was approached a couple years ago to write a book. The start of having to write that book was, it was gonna be my life story. It wasn't gonna be a how-to book or what you should or shouldn't do, it was just gonna be my story and the trials and tribulations of that journey.

And to do that, I had to go back to my childhood. Something that is parked in the back of your mind as you grow older and you get older and you know, there's stuff you remember – little bits and pieces now and again. And what I was instructed to do is go back to my parents' house for two or three or four weekends, whatever it took, and pull out every single photograph I ever had of our upbringing, which I did. And the information that came flooding back was off the scale. Stuff that you'd completely forgotten about. You remembered it in a flash as soon as you saw the photograph. And it just helped me totally then reflect on my entire life. I would never have afforded the time to have done. And the reason the book done so well was because when I actually did that, I then realised, which I'd never realised before, why I do what I do. And it was all based around my journey, my experiences, my upbringing was what shaped why I do what I do today. But I could never have pinpointed that until I carried out that reflection. And that's what really showed me the power of reflection, which is why we then mandated in the business, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. It was off the scale.

Celynn Morin:

Yeah, that's powerful. That's, you know, I personally have done that too. I did it a second time recently, going through all my photos. I got my albums from my parents and also from a wellbeing

perspective, one of the exercises I do in one of my masterclass is reflecting on your upbringing and your heritage, how your parents fed you, how exercise was perceived, how it was stress regulated, expressing of emotions. And it's just super interesting the kind of links we can make to how we show up as an adult. So those formative years and going back there and being curious and compassionate while you do that is an exciting, exciting thing to do.

Jeff Dewing:

We're back to curiosity now, aren't we? We're back to the same thing. The most powerful world is curiosity. I'm just curious about why I do what I do, why I am who I am. Yeah, yeah. Rather than just saying, 'well, it is what it is.' Isn't it fantastic when we try to work it out and then suddenly all these dots get joined up and it actually gives you more, more focus, more purpose, more drive, more enthusiasm, more energy. It does all those things because you took the time to reflect.

Okay, Celynn, what I wanna do now is I'm gonna ask you a couple of questions. You can pause and think on it, that's fine. But it needs to be the first thought that comes into your head.

What would you say you were most grateful for?

Celynn Morin:

The mentors that I met along the way. So I met people that believed in me and blew wind into my sails. They didn't pop my bubbles.

Jeff Dewing:

Wow, that's a good one. Blew wind into my sails. That's energising, right? They

Celynn Morin:

Energise me, I guess, very much. Yeah.

Jeff Dewing:

Great. The final question is if there was just one message you could send to the audience what would that one message be?

Celynn Morin:

Stay curious, connect with yourself and celebrate the small things.

Jeff Dewing:

Wow. Wow. With champagne.

Celynn Morin:

Well, you don't need to!

Jeff Dewing:

<Laugh>

Celynn Morin:

Create champagne, free champagne moments all the time.

Jeff Dewing:

<Laugh>. So listen, how can people get in touch with you and, and, and sort of perhaps look at what you do and, and how can I engage with perhaps any of your sessions or masterclass?

Celynn Morin:

The best thing is to go to my website and on the landing page you can get taken through a journey of the Wellculator. So if you haven't done that before or you'd like to get the new revised version, you can get that for free. And then there's all the information you need around my masterclass and speaking and conference work and events on my website.

Jeff Dewing:

Fantastic. And of course, for anyone listening, the website address will be in the show notes, so you'll be able to connect with any of that stuff as well when you take the enjoyment of listening to Celynn's. Great story.

So Celynn, listen, I'd like to thank you so much for today. As always, you never cease to amaze. And again, I thank you for taking the time with me two years ago because you certainly opened my eyes.

*And for those that are not quite sure, you've heard it twice now, the **Wellculator** is a fantastic tool that Celynn's built that just enables you to potentially, you know, answer some questions on the questionnaire and it gives you insight that you might not have thought of. So the Wellculator gives*

you a foundation for the future and of course you'll see more about that on a, a website and I highly, highly recommend it.

So thanks very much Celynn. Can't wait to catch up with you again soon and stay happy and stay really, really healthy!

Celynn Morin:

<Laugh>. Thank you Jeff <laugh>, I will if you do.

Jeff Dewing:

Another great conversation.

A huge thanks to Celynn for taking the time to talk to me today. I've known Celynn for a few years and she always, always energises me despite having such a calm demeanour. She really brings to life the importance of wellbeing, the importance of connecting with yourself, listening to yourself. And I find it quite fascinating. And her masterclass are honestly a different scale. They're a different level. I would urge anybody to, to find out about Celynn's Masterclass. And if you can, you know, take part in one of them, it will really open your eyes.

I love the fact that we are so aligned on one particular element, which is the time to think. Thinking time is so, so important. And most people just do not understand the impact that true thinking time can have on you and your life. The time to reflect, the time to truly sit and clear your mind and your brain of all the noise that we all suffer every day of our lives. People will argue that it's a form of meditation and maybe it is, but I'd just like to refer to it as the simplistic term of thinking and the famous Henry Ford saying that 'thinking is very difficult, which is why so few choose to do it'. But for me and supported by Celynn, thinking time is transformational.

*So do listen back to earlier episodes of *Doing the Opposite*. From season three, the current season, or the previous seasons one and two, where you'll hear from incredible leaders, you'll hear incredible stories of their journeys, how they have faced adversity, how they have overcome the various mountains and valleys that they've had to endure.*

*I'm Jeff Dewing, author of bestselling book, *Doing the Opposite*, CEO of **Cloudfm** and keynote and masterclass speaker. If you are a leader or you have an incredible story and would like to take part in *Doing the Opposite* podcast, please reach out to me on my website, jeffdewing.co.uk. You can also find out more about the podcast and my incredible guests on the same website.*

*I'd now like to have a big thanks as always to my team, Nichola Crawshaw at **Cloudfm**, and of course my production team at **What Goes On Media** and my PR team **Thinking Hat PR**.*

Thanks for listening. Hope to see you soon.