

# Book-Club

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

negotiations, book, people, talking, scientist, personas, matt, read, emily, internal family systems, write, upenn, applies, solutions, turquoise, part, lmc, preacher, politician, conversation

## SPEAKERS

Loyd Willaford, Matt Greer, Emily Martin, Chris Casillas

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Matt Greer 00:11

Hello, hello, hello and Happy New Year from the PERColator Podcast. After a brief hiatus, we are excited to be back with a new book club episode where Emily, Chris and Loyd share out some negotiations related books they've read recently. We hope you enjoy the episode and we look forward to a great year of podcast episodes, lunch zoom get togethers and other projects. If you haven't already, be sure to sign up for the mailing list, so you stay up to date on what's going on with the negotiation project. The signup sheet is located at <https://perc.wa.gov/training-negotiations-project/> and we will include a link in the show notes. Thank you for listening.



Matt Greer 01:04

Hello. Welcome to our book club episode of the PERColator Podcast. I'm Matt Greer one of your co-hosts. Hi Emily, Hi Loyd, Hi Chris.



Loyd Willaford 01:13

Hi Matt



Emily Martin 01:13

Hi Matt!



Chris Casillas 01:15

Hey, Matt, how's it going?

**M** Matt Greer 01:17

Oh, it's going great. As is our tradition for our book club episodes, I have to start off with a confession, and I, yet again did not read a negotiation themed book to prepare to share out, so I'm gonna start off with a sincere apology to my co- hosts on that front. And in recompense I am going to be doing the laboring or on producing this episode and editing and doing that work. So that's my that's what I want to do.

**C** Chris Casillas 01:47

Don't don't forget to apologize to your many fans out there in podcasting universe, there's about 75 of them, approximately. And I think many of them will miss your valuable insights into something. So hopefully third time, when we do this again, Matt, third time will be a charm. Right?

**M** Matt Greer 02:07

That's right, Chris. I think you're right. Third time is always a charm.

**C** Chris Casillas 02:12

All right. All right.

**E** Emily Martin 02:15

Well I appreciate your apology, Matt. And is this our first podcast with all four of us?

**L** Loyd Willaford 02:20

I think so.

**C** Chris Casillas 02:23

I believe it is, I believe it is wow, we should have had a celebration or something.

**M** Matt Greer 02:29

Four co-hosts all together in the same place at the same time.

**E** Emily Martin 02:33

This is exciting. Welcome, Loyd! It's been you've been on the team for quite a while. But it's

This is exciting. Welcome, Lloyd! It's been you've been on the team for quite a while. But it's our first episode with all four of us. We are happy to have you as part of the book club.

**L** Lloyd Willaford 02:43

I'm happy to be here.

**M** Matt Greer 02:46

All right. Well, now we got the other way, I guess. Emily, what did you would you read, that you want to share out?

**E** Emily Martin 02:52

I did read 90ish percent of a book, I started yesterday. So true confession. I was having a hard time figuring out what to read. And honestly, I really just wanted to watch Turquoise Hunter, which I don't know if you're aware of this. It's it's on Amazon. It's a reality show. And I think at least Matt is aware that lately I've been kind of into like rocks. And I think actually quite a few clientele, because I talk about it way too much. I'm into rocks. So Turquoise Hunter is actually a reality show where this family has a turquoise mine. And they go and they have like a client come to town, it needs a whole lot of turquoise. And then they have to go find it. And then they have to negotiate a price. And these negotiations are so staged, and so forced. And so I don't know, it makes me feel really good as a negotiator. This stuff feels basic. And I know it's all fake. But I just want to recommend it to anybody who would like to see some cheesy negotiations, that Turquoise Hunter is super fun. And it does make me want to buy some land in the middle of a beautiful desert and get some dynamite and blow up stuff and use some heavy equipment, which anyone who knows me knows that that is a horrible idea. I should not be trusted with anything explosive or heavy equipment. But that's what I want to do with my life after watching the show and have these cheesy negotiations that seem very straightforward. So Alright.

**M** Matt Greer 04:25

Watch Turquoise Hunters, where was it on again? Amazon?

**E** Emily Martin 04:28

Amazon. I think it's like deep into Amazon, because I don't think it gets a whole lot of views. So you have to dig in. Alright, so the book that I read was called Flourish. And it's written by Martin E.P. Seligman, and I'm showing it to everybody on the screen, which you can't see in a podcast, but I bought this book as I was sitting in the audience at the Northwest LERA conference because our keynote speaker there. Matt, what was his name? The guy that wrote Mind Rules at UW, Professor?



M

Matt Greer 05:00

Medina.

E

Emily Martin 05:01

Yeah, yeah. He said, read this book. I bought it online, sitting there in the audience. And I didn't read it, because I'm very good at buying books and less good at reading books. And it is a visionary, new understanding of happiness and well being. And I'm not the world's happiest person. I know, that's a shock to my co hosts. But this is a professor at UPenn, who writes about positive psychology, applied positive psychology. And I've seen some of the material in other sources, I actually took one of those online courses during the pandemic on happiness that came out from Harvard, one of those massively open online courses. So it's similar to that. The two interesting things that I think well, his first recommendation is when he teaches these classes, he has people write a letter of gratitude, hand write a letter to somebody that means meant something to them. And he suggests you show up at their house, you make an appointment, you don't really tell them what what it's about, and you read the letter, it will make you happier in the long term, and it is a good thing to do. I'm not really good at letters. So I'm not going to do that. The other physical thing that he recommends, is keeping a gratitude journal, where you, every night use you think about three things that you're grateful for, and I think there's a question of like, what did I do to help this happen or something like that, and there's some questions, he gives you, little prompts. So it's, it's not a morning journal. So those people who'd like took the artists way, like morning pages, this is actually the end of the day. And it's supposed to cultivate gratitude. And it's supposed to make you be more happy and fulfilled if you do it as a long term piece. So I'm going to try that I'm not really great at keeping journals, but that's my own goal. And then at the end of the book, I mean, there are some weird little mentions of weight and people's obesity throughout the book, which I was actually like, raise little flags in my head about where's he going with this, but actually, the chapter that I was sort of in the middle of, when I rad out of time, was talking about how we think the research shows that exercise is important. And exercise is important regardless of what you weigh, like that diet and exercise don't necessarily, aren't necessarily great about changing weights, and the diet industry has been selling us stuff to get people to become one of the skinnier and that, that actually the science doesn't isn't necessarily supporting that as much. But it is important to exercise and exercise will lead to happiness and longer lives. So I thought that was an interesting point, considering where I thought he was going and where he ended up going. So that's my, my five minute summary of of the book. Did anybody read anything else? Or does anybody have any questions?

M

Matt Greer 07:43

So I guess, was there a takeaway from that, like those lessons that you think the negotiator might be able to use as part of their negotiation strategy or negotiation philosophy?

E

Emily Martin 07:55

Well, I think the part about negotiations. I mean, I think one of the things he's talking about is it's not just the absence of like, depression, it is actively cultivating happiness, and how those have benefits. And does that make you more effective? Does that does that lead to other

things? The other part of the book that he talks about is the importance of positive remarks, and not necessary catastrophic thinking, and thinking about how to how to turn things into not just like, oh, we ought to do happy speak, but to try to focus on more positive comments than negative comments. And that really struck me, especially when it comes to bargaining tables or LMC meetings where we're often talking about problems. And I think I don't think I could say with a straight face, oh, let's start at LMC talking about how grateful we are for everybody across the table. Like I don't, I don't, that's too much of a leap, but I'm not sure what this is saying about that, that might be helpful because it does seem like some of this positive thinking turns into life is almost toxic positivity. And can suppress other things which is bad and I think sometimes some of these ideas get run off with in pop science to lead to some other things or you know, fulfill other other directions. So I don't know where to go with that. And I don't think there's an easy takeaway solution. He does talk about marriage counseling John Gottman at UW, the the professor who, who's done a lot of work on marriage advice. And there he does give some scripts about like when you're talking to your significant other and they say, Oh, something interesting just happened. You can be like, Oh, that's great, tell me more. You can be like, Okay, that's nice. You could be like, Oh, whatever, let's change the subject, or you could be like Like, Oh, well have you worried about XY and Z? And how the top of that range leads to better relationships. And I do think in the workplace, that might be an interesting idea of when people are sharing successes, celebrating and enjoying and like, tell me more about that success, tell me, you know, could be really useful. And even in a labor relations context, there are moments where I think healthy groups do that really well and celebrate that really well. Versus taking every opportunity to rip each other apart. I felt like that was the closest analogy of something that I saw that would more directly apply to negotiations. When you when you hear somebody's accomplishment, there can be some value in that relationship, to celebrate with them, ask them questions, and be sincere about that. And I still think we have other things to talk about. So I'm gonna be clear on that's not the whole meeting. But I thought that was something that might enhance someone negotiations.

M

Matt Greer 10:58

Yeah, that's good food for thought. And you know, weave some of that in organically into your conversations. I can see how that'd be really helpful. Yeah. Chris or Loyd, what do you have?

C

Chris Casillas 11:07

Well, I can go, maybe this dovetails with Emily's comment, I have another author from UPenn. Maybe this is the day of UPenn discussions, and actually read this a year or two ago when it came out. But the name of the book is Think Again by Adam Grant. And many of you probably have heard of Adam Grant, he does Ted Talks. He's kind of a somewhat famous professor, intellectual. I think he labels himself as an organizational psychologist, for whatever that means. But I followed his work for a while. And on the back of his book, he gets praised by Brene Brown and M Night Shyamalan and Daniel Kahneman, who wrote Thinking Fast and Slow. So it's got to be a good book if you're being praised by Brene Brown, and M Night Shyamalan. Anyway, so yeah, as I said, the book is called Think Again, the premise I think he starts with here, although it doesn't really directly have to do with negotiations, per se, but he's talking about situations in which we kind of confront really complex problems and, you know, in a negotiation and contract labor management relationship is, is inherently has some complexity to it. And I think he starts from the place of saying all of us, pretty much tend to overstate our

abilities to solve those complex problems, particularly on our own, we have, you know, for the most part, on average, very high opinions of our ability to kind of understand the nuances of problems and formulate solutions. One thing I think, I really liked he talks about here called the first instinct fallacy, which is this kind of tendency that we have to kind of go with our gut go with the thing that kind of pops up first, and you hear a lot of like, people kind of talking about, oh, yeah, you know, when you take a multiple choice exam, like go with the first one, right, like the one that pops into your mind first, that's usually the right one. And he actually has data, experiments to show that this is, this is a fallacy, like, our first instinct is often more wrong than it is right. And so that all in he talks about some other biases and kind of mental traps that we can fall into. And all of that is kind of this precursor to talking about what he says is the value of rethinking things, the ability to kind of open yourself up to different points of view and perspectives, challenge your own assumptions, kind of revisit your own solutions, and be willing to go and kind of a different direction than you were originally thinking, this is hard. We don't like to do this as he points out, because it introduces unpredictability in our lives, it creates this like level of dissonance, right? If we start if we think we know something to be true, and then we start to question that that feels uncomfortable, right? It doesn't, it doesn't feel good. And he says that he has this one quote I love where he says, we often favor feeling right over being right, there's a sense of, we just want to feel like we have the the right solution, even though objectively, that's not the best way forward. And so he's got all sorts of like little nuggets in there, of wisdom and kind of approaches to take to kind of get outside of this. But the one thing I'd probably mentioned here, that I really like and it it sticks with me because it's easy to remember, he talks about how in like in challenging conversations or debates, it's easy for us to take on what he calls one of three different personas. And he labels these personas, the preacher mode, the prosecutor mode and the politician mode. And so when he says like for example with the preacher mode, he says, you know, when our when our beliefs are being challenged, or they feel like in jeopardy, we kind of default into this preacher mode where we, you know, are delivering, like this impassioned sermon, you know, to promote our ideals or with prosecutor mode, like, again, when those ideals are being challenged, like we go into this mode of like picking out all the flaws and weaknesses in the other party's reasoning, and develop, you know, these arguments to quote unquote, win our case. In the politician mode, so when we're trying to kind of win win people over and bring them to our side, we kind of become these politicians where we're lobbying, essentially, our constituents. And he says those, those personas or modes are really problematic in terms of achieving that ability to kind of rethink and revisit our assumptions and open ourselves up to new ways of thinking and whatnot. And so he he pivots from that to say, we should really kind of more think like scientists, rather than preachers, prosecutors or politicians. And what he means by that is just scientists don't. What he says is scientists don't start inquiries with particular answers or solutions, right? Like, if you think of like a scientist doing a study on some new kind of particle or something like that, like they don't, they don't begin the scientific study by saying, Well, this is the answer, or this is what I think will happen. They, they instead kind of lead with questions and puzzles, and they they move where the evidence moves them. And sometimes the results of those studies go against kind of what your initial hypothesis was. And that's, that's as equally valuable as proving the thing maybe you were hoping to prove from the outset. So anyway, I kind of liked that, because it's easy to remember, like to get outside of your preacher, politician or prosecutor hat and kind of think about donning your scientist hat. And I think that applies in negotiations as well, because like he, he talks about how, you know, we lead with, we often lead with solutions. And that's what we do in negotiations. Right? That's what a proposal is in negotiations, it's a solution to a particular problem. And and I think he encourages us to not necessarily go there and be open to where the, the evidence may take us and be willing to challenge our own assumptions and kind of revisit some of our initial perspectives on things. Because the end product of that is something that I think, he argues is going to be much, much

stronger in terms of coming up with a more complete, you know, response or proposal. So anyway, that's maybe his book in a nutshell. But really interesting. I think he's a, he's an interesting kind of author to follow. And you should check it out.

E

Emily Martin 18:02

Chris, the book's really interesting, and I think those personas show up at, I know they show up at tables, right? And I know mediators show up with those personas as well, there are, I can think of moments where I have to be the politician and I know moments where I have to be the preacher and the and the prosecutor, I almost want to like, oh, make a little cheat sheet where we just have four photos, you know, and like, we know three of them are gonna show up in you. But, but make space for this fourth identity. You know, what I mean, I know that no one's gonna give up the other three, it is too hard.

C

Chris Casillas 18:38

Yeah, I mean, they're part of us right? They are who we are.

E

Emily Martin 18:42

Yeah, but if we if we can make space for the scientist, who's who has a theory and is willing to test it, and to be open minded that the theory, I forget the science. You know, the theory might be wrong, that that might be useful, I kind of want to I want to add that to sort of our Interest Based Bargaining materials or LMC's, like bring, you know, make space for your inner scientist, even if even if you rather play the other three roles.

C

Chris Casillas 19:11

I can already see your like creative Venngage wheels turning in your head, Emily.

E

Emily Martin 19:19

There's a woman who just got the award, the one that was doing some research that you know what I mean, like, first of all, I'm excited to look up the personas and come up with the art for it but yeah, yeah, you know me.

M

Matt Greer 19:34

Yeah, well interesting. I think that I wish it was the scientist that was some of the word was part of the P. So you have the four P personas there, but maybe.

E

Emily Martin 19:44

Primary Investigator isn't that like for like grants? Isn't there like some more that the P that goes on to the grant form? Loyd, do you know the answer?

**L** Loyd Willaford 19:53

I do. I'm having a little flashbacks to very long hearing, around Principal Investigators.

**E** Emily Martin 20:02

Oh! Principal Investigators!

**L** Loyd Willaford 20:05

Some people listening to this podcast will know what that was about.

**E** Emily Martin 20:09

All right, Principal Investigators.

**C** Chris Casillas 20:12

The 4 P's, that would have been a helpful editorial comment before he published his book, Matt. Well, we'll have to get you on his list of editors.

**E** Emily Martin 20:21

Our graphic could have the four P's.

**C** Chris Casillas 20:23

Important update.

**M** Matt Greer 20:26

Okay, cool. So Loyd, would you read, that you want to share out on?

**L** Loyd Willaford 20:30

So I read, Managing Conflict Mindfully by Leonard Riskin. And it's funny and all this kind of the synergy this book is sort of connects, I think with these other two books, it's essentially it's a three parts sort of talking about? Well the title Managing Conflict Mindfully And the subtitle I

three parts, sort of talking about. Well, the title managing comes primarily. And the subtitle, I think, is probably the best part. And the one, the takeaway, if you take nothing away from this book, it should be the subtitle, don't believe everything you think. And I would add even a subtitle do not act on everything that you think, that's that's the basically the message that I took away and, and a bunch of tools, I also thought it was a great book for the negotiation project, because I think it actually kind of captures kind of what we're trying to do here, which is to bring academic theory and sort of practical application out into the world. And this book does this very explicitly. I mean, Riskin takes examples from his life and he applies lessons that he learned. So the three parts are basically this sort of theory of negotiation, mindfulness, and then internal family system which is sort of a therapeutic model. So he applies the sort of academic insights from those three areas, to some some specific problems in negotiations from his personal life. And I will say, you know, I like that approach. I think it makes some sense. I mean, for those of you who have any background in negotiations, the first part of the book, will most, you know, this, there's lots of stuff about interest based bargaining, you know, a whole section on getting to yes. And then some later stuff that came after that, that starts to get past the, just the mechanics and into we're human beings. And that was the other kind of lesson. I mean, in negotiations, we're human beings. And we're going to have all of the things that come with that. And I think, because when we are talking about being scientist, everybody can just turn off being a scientist, I think Ruskin would say, you probably can't do that. And you probably shouldn't even try, you just want to be aware of when you're doing it. And that awareness may lead you to take different actions. So the first, again the first part is kind of basics in negotiations, kind of, you know, a lot of stuff about cognitive biases, I mean, long riff on Thinking Fast and Slow, that's one of the sort of primary insights is okay, your first reaction is going to be fueled by what you bring to the table. If you're not, you know, particularly mindful. Or you've got, you know, internal stuff going on that you were programmed with, as a child, you know, in different voices in your head that's going to be in there, you're not even aware of it. And that's going to sort of drive your your reactions. And I don't think that's a particular unique insight. And I thought the book was, was great in the sense that it's not, there's nothing new and groundbreaking, there's not a new method here, it's really kind of taking these three different areas and saying, How can we actually apply them in a way that maybe would lead us to behave differently? I will say there's no quick fixes. There's lots of exercises in this book. And you know, and he's pretty explicit about this. This is not a short term thing. It's really about kind of, not unlike, Emily, the Flourish, right? It's about doing self works, self reflection, and develop that over time. It's not a quick fix. One of the things I had a question about, he doesn't really answer is in terms of organization, how would you take this into an organization, you can have those discussions, but you know, there's some sensitive stuff here, like the mindfulness, he gives a bunch of exercises, and then it gets a piece of advice, like you may belong to religious traditions that have mindful routines. But I don't think you should do those, you should do these things, instead. I was a little kind of taken aback by that, because I just don't know that hat's good advice. On the other hand, if you're an organization, how do you some of this stuff, again, it's not anything unique. There's there's lots of different tools, and many of them are in a religious organization, and they can be valuable and encouraging people to do that, and what works for them to get them to this point of mindfulness. And so that it's useful was good, but again, it's mostly going to be one on one, like I said, I think in the workplace, there's some you might have some difficulties implementing some of this stuff, because I think they're also the same thing with the internal family systems kind of a therapeutic model. There's some real sensitive stuff in there that I'm not sure that you're going to want to, as an organization deal with. But the important insight is that just because you're not dealing with it doesn't mean it's not there in your negotiations. And I think is bigger point is to be aware of yourself. And by being aware of yourself, and then aware that the other parties have the same thing going on, not that you're going to and you're not going to

do anything about what they're doing. You can't change their behavior, but you can be aware of that they're coming from a perspective and that perspective is not they're trying to get you that that's your, what you that's what you believe, or think. And it's probably not true. And I would say, I said yes, I've seen that many, many times. And I know how many times I have to give a speech in negotiations, like, or in mediation about, you know, I know, there's some times when people are acting in bad faith, but I don't see that. And I'm honest about and I tell them, hey, if I saw this, I you know, you probably get from my demeanor that, that maybe this is not normal, but it is the people are just trying to bargain the way that the best way they can with the tools that they have available. And you may it may look to you like it's bad faith or manipulative, or they're out to get you or they're holding, whatever, all this other stuff that has nothing to do with the negotiation that you think is going on. But that's not what I see as a third party coming in. And I think that's one of the values of mediation is a third party who's never been here, can say, "Hey, I see this, and I don't see the same thing you see." And that that opens up the possibility that maybe the person say, Oh, well, if Loyd doesn't see it that way, maybe maybe I'm not seeing it quite right. Or they're never going to admit that to Chris's point. People don't, they don't like to admit they're wrong. They don't like to be uncomfortable. They'll change their mind. And then they'll make up a story about why changing their mind was their idea and the right thing all along. And that's okay. I mean, I'm totally okay with that. And I think Riskin would be to, that this, all the, you know, mindfulness training and the internal family system work that you do. It's not about getting the right answer, right? It's about being able to have a conflict that is managed, right? It doesn't spill out and have external consequences, and get you some result that you don't want. Because you're going to have conflict, and it and just like you're going to have, your mind is going to wander, or your internal family systems are going to drive you in a particular direction. But you can manage it. And there are tools to do that. And this book, it's a pretty thin book, 180 pages, but there are lots and lots of tools, there's worksheets, there's exercises, great, great stuff, again, it's going to be a lot of work, if you want to do but I do think it's worth it. I mean, I can say some of this stuff I have some experience with and it certainly resonated with me that when you do some of these, you know, just like anything else, you know if you do the stuff that people suggest that have been around a while Oh, wow, holy cow, if you do this stuff, it actually works. Who would have, who would have thought? It's not a, I would say not for the faint of heart, well worth reading, if for no other reason to get the understanding that other people are driven by the same things and to have maybe developed a little bit of grace and compassion, and say, Hey, maybe what I think is going on is not what's going on, maybe there's something else going along with them doesn't have anything to do with me or the negotiation, and I can give them some grace. And we can maybe shift in a different direction. That's I think it's very useful. And in in that regard, like I said, there's also lots of practical things if you want to dive into them.

C

Chris Casillas 28:43

Well, practical. That's that's a great synopsis, Loyd, practical things, lots of worksheets, and I will say, although this wasn't developed for the book, that your discussion of internal family systems, which is kind of a, was I was like, wow, this is deep stuff, kind of getting into some complex techniques in psychotherapy, and kind of thinking about how we can use that in the conflict management world. But there is a great training movie associated with that, which is mentioned in the book, which is that movie Inside Out that Disney made a few years ago, which I watched again, after I read this, and I really enjoyed it. The first time I saw it was maybe like 10 years ago or something, but there's a whole new perspective on that movie, once I read it,

and what a great training tool to have to kind of think about that model as a way to kind of manage some of our own internal conflict that we bring into spaces like labor management, meetings and negotiations.

M

Matt Greer 29:44

That's a great thought. Inside Out, I haven't thought about moving in a long time, but you're right. I can imagine a lot of parallels there. This has been a great conversation. Maybe we end up with the invitation to our audience, if any of these books, especially that Managing Conflict Mindfully book resonate with you, I think we were thinking as part of our team, we all buy copies of that and we're gonna read through it and maybe have some follow up conversations. So if anybody out there in the listening audience is interested, reach out to us, let us know, and we'd be happy to kind of open this conversation up on any of these books with any of you, or one of our lunch zooms or on a follow up podcast episode, so feel free to email us or reach out to us.

C

Chris Casillas 30:20

I think Matt's just suggesting that so somebody could read it for him, and tell him what it's about. He's having a hard time, let's just be honest.

M

Matt Greer 30:30

Hahaha! There are side benefits. I just want to go on the record and say that I do read, I do read. I don't want to come off like someone who does not read.

C

Chris Casillas 30:40

An important clarification, thank you.

M

Matt Greer 30:41

Lol. Anyway, Thank you for a great conversation. I really really enjoyed learning more. So thanks to all of you for your sharing your your reads with us.