

TRANSCRIPT – THE WORDWISE COACHING PODCAST

SERIES 2 EPISODE 5: From Career to Creativity: Unleashing Potential After Work WITH JANE MOFFETT

Rachel Goodwin

Hello and welcome to the Wordwise Coaching Podcast. I'm Rachel Goodwin, an executive coach. In this series, I've chosen some of the most common areas I focus on with clients, and I've invited fellow coaches to join me in conversation to explore them. It's really rewarding to see the difference our coaching makes and we're excited about reaching a wider audience, sharing our experience, and advice and hearing your thoughts. So please do subscribe at www.rachelgoodwin.uk where you'll find suggested reading around today's podcast, the top tips summary and all the other episodes.

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Jane Moffett

So you don't know what's next but it's alright, it's a process and it might take a while.

The fastest growing group of entrepreneurs in the UK are women in their 50s.

The over 50s are the biggest consumer group but research shows that 93% of marketing is aimed at the over 50s.

And so that's a lot of time after work and so we need to be considering how we want to live that time well.

How would you describe yourself? How important is a label to you? And if it is important, what is going to be your new label?

00:01:26

Today I'm joined by Jane Moffett, Jane is a coach and director of Kangaroo Coaching. She has spent nearly 30 years working with women as they experience some of life's major transitions, when the personal and professional intersect. She also works with organisations who are committed to creating progressive workplace culture and runs coaching programmes for new parent employees and their line-managers.

Jane is also a researcher, writer, and faculty member of Henley Business School. We're going to be discussing her new book, *What Next The Savvy Woman's Guide to Redefining Retirement*, which is published on September 9th, 2025. And also the courses she runs to support women to thrive at this particular stage of life. Jane and I are also collaborating on a project which will be launching next year, and we'll share more on that later this year. Thanks so much for joining me, Jane. I'm really looking forward to this.

Jane Moffett

00:02:23

Thank you, Rachel, thank you for that lovely introduction and I'm really looking forward to it too.

Rachel Goodwin

00:02:28

Great. So let's start with you maybe telling us a bit about your background and what led you to writing this book.

Jane Moffett

00:02:36

Okay, so I've spent nearly 30 years, as you said, working with expectant and new parents, really supporting them through the transition to parenthood, including the return to work. And then when I was 50, I started an MSC in Coaching and Behavioural Change at Henley Business School, and the topic of my research for my dissertation was the impact and outcomes of coaching mothers around this time before they leave the workplace, before they return to the workplace, and once they return. And in 2016, I set up Kangaroo Coaching, which partners with workplaces to support their new parent employees through 1 to 1 and group coaching and training for line managers and HR professionals. As you said, I'm a researcher doing that research during my MSC. Really whetted my appetite for research. So then I went on to do some research around women returners. So people who'd had a chunk of time out of the workplace. I then did another piece of research with Nikki Seno. She's the author of *Mentoring New Parents at Work*, and we produced a report at the beginning of 2020 that was endorsed by the All-Party parliamentary Group of Women and Work.

Jane Moffett

00:03:49

And then I went on to the latest topic of research, which is around women stopping work or considering stopping and changing work towards the end of their careers, and this was sparked by a conversation with two very close friends when one of them was saying, I

don't know what I'm going to do when I stop, because my work life has been so full on. I don't have any hobbies. I have lots of fun in my free time. But actually, what is it I'm actually going to do with the bulk of my time? When I stopped, and that really got me thinking, I could really see the position she was in. So I started reading around the topic, read several books and research papers around the challenges of retiring and having a sort of real change at that time of your life. And then I started interviewing women because I thought, actually, let's hear it from a woman's perspective. So I interviewed women who hadn't stopped yet and women who had already stopped work. And then I also had lots of other conversations with women at those different stages.

Jane Moffett

00:04:49

And then I thought, actually, I've got such a lot of useful material here. Let me write a book that hopefully will be useful to other people at this stage of their lives.

Rachel Goodwin

00:05:00

Yeah, I should say that I've been lucky enough to read the book already, and I found it really absorbing and so helpful, because I think the point you make about the conversation that you had with your friends, having a growing interest in this area myself, what I've noticed is it's not a topic that I think people talk about a lot. And finding the right space to have those conversations, I think, is I don't think we necessarily have a template for it. And what comes across so well in the book is that there's all of your research and all of the writing that you've drawn on and the knowledge around it, but it's what brings it to life is those interviews that you've incorporated. So it feels very grounded in people's real experience, and all the more helpful for that.

Jane Moffett

00:05:46

Well, I was really lucky to be able to speak to some really inspiring women who were so happy to share their experiences.

Rachel Goodwin

00:05:54

Yeah, I mean, we'll come on to it more. But also what's interesting is there's differing experiences and that comes across really well and is so important.

Jane Moffett

00:06:03

Yeah, I think it's it is different for every person. And as you say, there's not very much talked about it or what is people saying, oh, you're really lucky you're going to be stopping work or I'm really loving it, you know, join our club, this stage of life when you're retired. And actually for some people, they're not looking forward to it and they're not enjoying it. And actually, there seems to be almost a sort of silence around that side of things. So people can feel quite isolated if they're not thinking, oh, this is the best thing I've ever done.

Rachel Goodwin

00:06:32

Yeah. And I was going to say it is a huge transition, you know, psychologically and around identity and everything. And we will come on to that. But it's very significant isn't it.

Jane Moffett

00:06:43

Yeah. Really significant and can take the research shows it can take up to seven years to really go through that transition.

Jane Moffett

00:06:51

And again I think that side of retiring or stopping work isn't talked about.

Rachel Goodwin

00:06:57

No, I suppose these days one thinks everybody talks about everything. You know, everyone's very open. And it seems to me this is an area that really is quite behind in that regard.

Jane Moffett

00:07:07

Yeah, I think presenting the multifaceted side of it is behind. Yeah, certainly.

Rachel Goodwin

00:07:18

So why do you think this topic is particularly relevant now?

Jane Moffett

00:07:23

I think it's relevant because it's the first big cohort of professional women who are approaching that time of stopping work. So, you know, I'm part of that cohort. I'm 61. And if I think about my friends, my peers, my colleagues, there are a lot of us. So and there is no blueprint for it because it's the first time there's been a big group of women stopping work. And so things are very different for us than from previous generations of women at this life stage.

Rachel Goodwin

00:07:53

Yeah, that word just conjures up so many images and we have our own assumptions around it, don't we? And not necessarily that helpful.

Rachel Goodwin

00:08:03

And I really like the fact that, you know, you say that we're kind of the pioneers this generation for that cohort of women stopping work. And I always love it when I hear inspiring stories of people, maybe people starting something new at that stage. And I seek it out wherever I come across it, because I do think it's so exciting. There are an awful lot of opportunities there, but it's daunting as well.

Jane Moffett

00:08:26

Yeah it is. I agree there are opportunities and it can be daunting and actually it's not for everyone. So, you know, I don't want to convey the message that once you stop work, you have to go on and do other things, because I think that there's a pressure there too. So actually, you might want to really just relish in all that time that you've got and that's fine. Why not? It's just that that bit might not be for everyone.

Rachel Goodwin

00:08:51

And the other thing is, I think life moves at such a pace these days. I think a lot of people, especially if you're in a demanding job, you really are very preoccupied with that and you're in a rhythm that is fast paced and okay, you have your holidays, but you are often moving quite quickly and your life is quite full and you're juggling quite a lot.

Rachel Goodwin

00:09:11

So starting to even recognize that it's possible to live at a different pace, I think is something that people need to start thinking about earlier on, because otherwise you are falling off a cliff edge, aren't you?

Jane Moffett

00:09:25

You can be. And there's this sort of dichotomy where it feels like you haven't got enough time to think about what you're going to do when you're not working. But one of the things you're really worried about is having too much time when you stop. So finding a way to carve out some time before you stop well in advance a good couple of years in advance so you can really think, okay, what matters to me? What do I think about this? Is this something that bothers me. Or is it not? And then what about this other thing? Does that bother me? Okay, what thinking do I need to do around that?

Rachel Goodwin

00:09:54

Yeah. And really stopping and allowing yourself the space for that, I think. Because I remember it when I was in career transition at an earlier stage, late 30s probably. And I remember listening to the radio and people talking about, well, I decided that I wanted to live a life that would allow me to spend more time by the sea and to have time to pursue that interest and to be out in the fresh air. And at that time, I was working in a really, really full on sector where it dominated my whole life. And I remember feeling so irritated. Well, you just can't do that. That's just not possible. You know, you can't have a really fulfilling career and decide that you're going to go and live by the sea. and even contemplating that felt a bit ridiculous and impossible. But then when I did transition into a job, because I actually wanted a bit more of a life, I found myself having choices about what I did when, and that had seemed like an impossibility to me earlier on. So it's even allowing yourself to think differently and acknowledge that there are different ways of living that needs to happen sooner rather than later, I'd say.

Jane Moffett

00:11:05

Yeah. It can also feel daunting to have more choice as well. So actually, if you've done that thinking in advance, then you're getting to that stage where you're thinking, actually, I've already thought through this. I've considered that there are choices at the moment. This is the choice that I'm going to make, but you can choose to do something different at

another point or it might not work out. You might think, no, that's not right. Okay, let's try something different.

Rachel Goodwin

00:11:28

Yeah. No, absolutely. And allowing yourself to be a bit creative around it. You have an awful lot of experience about working with women in the workplace. And your research in various areas where that personal and professional context meet. So could you explain the context of this particular transition for women when they're at that point of considering stopping work?

Jane Moffett

00:11:58

Yes. Well, it's useful to think about the historical, psychological, and sociological scene of this life stage. The Sex Discrimination Act was passed in 1975, which had an impact on education and choice within the workplace for women.

So the women were being trailblazers then, and they were sort of forging ahead in areas that hadn't previously been able to. It wasn't necessarily easy for them to do that, but they had the legal right to do that. As I said before, it's a different from previous generations and there's no set retirement age. So that goes for men and women. So that sort of choice can be difficult about when to stop. Women's developmental psychology and career theory shows that often women make choices which are relational, so they're dependent on their wider life context and other relationships that are going on for them within their lives. And so their career shapes are often different to men's. And there's one career theorist that talks about there being three stages for women one of challenge, one of balance, and one of authenticity, often in that order. So in your earlier career, you might be really taking on challenging roles, really building your career. Then, particularly if you have a family, there might be a period of balance where you're taking a step back a little bit so that you can balance those two big areas in your lives.

Jane Moffett

00:13:28

And then often later on, particularly post-menopausal. There's this period of authenticity where when women think, actually, that's my passion and I want to follow that thing and might well do something different. And I think that happens for some women when they stop work, so that although it could be within their career, it might be actually, no, that's

the thing I'm going to do now. And then there's also the impact of being a carer, whether you have older parents, relatives, a partner that needs caring and the majority of carers in the UK are women. So that's also part of the back story of women stopping work. If you've had a family that might well have had an impact on your career, it might not have done, but it will have had a psychological impact on you as a person. A psychological transition to motherhood means that you have a new identity. You tend to be doing more of the household stuff. Research is still showing that even in a partnership where both people are working the same number of hours, women tend to do more of the chores, the drudge, and that if women have a family, quite often they work part time afterwards or they might have a career break.

So all of these things have an impact on women when they approach this life stage of thinking about stopping work.

Rachel Goodwin

00:14:46

It's so interesting to hear you talk about that because it all makes an awful lot of sense. But it's not talked about a lot, really. And I like the idea of a career shape, a different shape, and the fact that, you know, you might be putting your foot on the accelerator at slightly different times, potentially, when someone who's consistently had a very, very full on career is really ready to wind down. I was speaking to a friend at the weekend who has had, you know, she's worked incredibly hard, she's travelled a lot. It's really dominated and she's never really taken a break. And she really is relishing, you know, not having to work at that pace and really looking forward to that, but also interested in what's beyond. But then that might be very different for someone who feels very energised and thinking, I've actually got a lot more and I'm ready to go.

Jane Moffett

00:15:39

Yes. I think how your work life has been has a big impact on this stage. And there were lots of themes, the sort of main themes that came up from my research that were different. If your career life had been different. The whole theme around identity and status for women who had made different decisions once they'd had children, they felt they'd already adjusted their status, and their work identity had already gone through a shift. So actually that was less key for them when they were stopping work than for women where that hadn't been the case.

Rachel Goodwin

00:16:16

Yeah. So, I mean, I think the context is so important. And and that was a bit of the book that it really opened my eyes to certain aspects and made me think differently or in a more comprehensive way about that whole journey in the context of it and just the shock of the legal situation that up until so recently, really, there was such a massive difference. Yeah. I mean, it's astonishing to hear that. And then when they when women get to this stage where they are considering the options around work and their relationship with it, what would you say are the areas that impact women specifically at that stage?

Jane Moffett

00:16:59

So there's the authenticity side stage of careers, which I've already mentioned.

There's that wonderful phrase, post-menopausal zest that Margaret Mead, the anthropologist, coined in the 1950s, you know, meaning that at that stage of your life, for lots of women, they've got more energy. They care less about what other people think. They're not a victim of their hormones. They're ready to go and follow whatever it is they want to follow. And then there's also the phrase coined by the author, Lucy Ryan, called midlife collision. When there's that perfect storm of events menopause, raising teenagers, caring for parents, grieving, experiencing ageism, and experiencing gendered ageism. So all of those things have an impact on women at this life stage.

Rachel Goodwin

00:17:49

So potentially there can be an awful lot going on and not much recognition in the workplace really. Around all of that there isn't doesn't feel like many organisations have much provision. I know that is beginning to change now, but it isn't embedded in the way that parental leave is now. And obviously there's more that could be done on that front as well. But it feels quite new that recognition and the support isn't terribly established.

Jane Moffett

00:18:18

That's right. And the gendered ageism situation is really shocking that actually women, usually over the age of 50 or 55, seem to become invisible in the workplace, in lots of places, and are overlooked for promotion and projects and ways to keep them engaged at a time when they might have more energy, when they're really experienced when they've got a lot of wisdom.

Rachel Goodwin

00:18:39

Yeah. Also, with the demographic shift that's taking place. We need all of the resources, all of the wisdom, the workplace needs that and society needs that. So that feels like such a loss on every front for the individual and for wider society and for the workplace. The interviews, I think, really brought your book to life. Can you give us maybe a summary of some of the key findings that came through from those interviews, some of the themes?

Jane Moffett

00:19:11

Yeah, certainly. I think a really important thing is that there's no one size that fits everybody, that there's a huge variation.

So as we talk before, some people are keen to continue to do stuff and other people aren't. There's also for quite a lot of people, there was a real appetite for work, for doing something new. New work that might be at a different pace or in a different field. This really chimes with the research done by Eleanor Mills by her organisation called Noon, which shows that 70% of women over the age of 50 want to power up their career or make those changes, and that the fastest growing group of entrepreneurs in the UK are women in their 50s. Coach and consultant Aviva Wittenberg Cox has done a lot of work, a lot of research about equality in the workplace and ageism in the workplace, and she has come up with a great description of our lives being made up of four quarters, each one being 25 years long, and the third quarter, which is between age 50 and 75, she has labelled as one of growth. So that's her label for the third quarter. And my research shows that this is the time when people are often doing new things, they're doing new work, or they're becoming a lot more creative, or they're doing new learnings that really fits in with that growth label of the third quarter.

Jane Moffett

00:20:36

And then another thing that came up is that, like I said before, for some people, just being and enjoying what is happening right now is the best thing for them. And being able to acknowledge you've got that choice that you don't have to conform to what everyone else says. You don't have to join that club of, oh, it's all great, or oh, I've got to be doing that next thing that it's fine not to be doing that.

Rachel Goodwin

00:20:58

And what I love about all of that, and I've listened to a view of Wittenberg Cox's podcast, Four Quarter Lives. And I think that's a brilliant resource. And what's so exciting about it is

this idea of growth and people doing new things, and the idea of expanding your world rather than contracting your world, because I think often people feel like they're living smaller lives as they get older, but actually there is the potential to really widen it out and to continue to make new friendships, link into new communities, and the fact that the research shows that people are living longer and they're remaining healthier for longer.

That if you focus on that, if you kind of invest in keeping well, I mean, obviously there is no guarantee one has to accept that, but there is the potential for so much in this stage that wasn't necessarily the case before, and therefore we don't really recognise it for sure.

Jane Moffett

00:22:03

Yeah. And that also chimes with Grattan and Scott's 100 year life, but part of their intangible assets that having that diverse network, people of different ages living in different places, they're continuing to learn throughout your lives, you know, all those things that are really important that are. Yes, absolutely.

Rachel Goodwin

00:22:22

Because people always think about the financial planning, don't they? And often can pay quite a lot of attention to that, but they don't really necessarily do a lot of other planning. And also I should say that in the book there's a great list of resources. And you referred to The Blue Zones, the documentary about the areas of the world where people are living longer and maybe what's going on behind that. And I loved those documentaries, and there's such an emphasis on community isn't there and relationship and connection? And so investing in that I think is so important.

Jane Moffett

00:22:59

And again, lots of research to underpin the fact that loneliness is linked to poor mental and physical health. And obviously the converse of that is true. So the more you can get involved in other things and join other communities, the better. And actually it's one of the things that people were really relishing doing that I spoke to was actually getting to know new people and being involved, and wanted to give back to the community. I heard people say that a lot of times I want to give back to the community now.

Rachel Goodwin

00:23:29

Yeah, because also you could get to this life stage where you've shared common interests with a lot of people that you've travelled through life, maybe through education and through work. And then interests may differ at this stage. So there is scope to not abandon old relationships, but to add to your community, to make sure that your needs are being met in different ways.

Jane Moffett

00:23:53

Definitely. Because actually, the things that you've been interested in at work and that you've enjoyed talking about and then you know about, you don't necessarily want there to be a hard stop to all that you want to carry on having those conversations and showing that interest. So actually finding a different way of doing that could be really key for lots of people.

Rachel Goodwin

00:24:14

Yeah. Because so many of the clients that I work with, they have very demanding roles. And sometimes they describe what they're doing and I can feel like, oh gosh, that sounds rather exhausting and such high pressure, but I would say 90% of the clients I work with really do enjoy their work. They get a huge amount out of it.

Jane Moffett

00:24:36

Yeah, so if that suddenly goes, then actually what is going to give them that satisfaction, that enjoyment, that buzz?

Rachel Goodwin

00:24:51

Can you just tell me about the themes that came through from the research? I think we've talked about some of it already, but I think that you did identify these key themes that came through very strongly.

Jane Moffett

00:25:02

Yeah, there were six key themes. So firstly, there's the manner of leaving. So whose decision is it when to go with there being no mandatory retirement age? Are you able to decide or are you made redundant or that has a big impact? Having that control over that decision.

Jane Moffett

00:25:20

And if you're then deciding if you have got the control, who do you tell and when do you tell them? Because actually there's a real fear around people being treated differently. Once an organisation knows they're going to leave, you know, will you be written off then? The second theme is time and structure. So we mentioned earlier on people being worried about all the time they're going to have on their hands, but also the lack of structure. So they've been in a fast paced work environment or a slower paced work environment, but they've had a structure to their days and their weeks, and suddenly that structure might go. So they might be thinking, okay, I want to feel some time and I want to have some structure, but I also want a lot of flexibility. So there's a real rub there. How do I achieve the two? And a lot of people feel that if they volunteer for something then they're really committed. Whereas actually a lot of volunteering roles give you the option to opt in and opt out to have the flexibility you desire.

Jane Moffett

00:26:17

Then the third theme was around learning, growth and connection. So it's really important to carry on learning. It's important for our brains and our interests and our engagement. And one of the things people were really concerned about was not feeling relevant anymore. So finding ways to be involved in things so that you still feel relevant, because that helps you to have a sense of self-esteem and energy. And then, like we said before, to continue having those conversations with people who are interested in the same area of expertise as you. Then moving on to the fourth theme, which is relationships. So not forgetting that we're social beings and that it's good to have those diverse networks. Thinking about your colleagues, who do you want to stay in contact with and why? If you're losing that contact with that person, who are you going to replace that with? They've known you in your work form. How is that going to be fulfilled in a non-work way? Then friends, friends that we've had, you've had before, and then new friends that you might want to make or that you end up making because of doing new things, who won't have known you for all your past.

Jane Moffett

00:27:27

So that can be really refreshing. It's the new you that you're presenting. When you meet people, there's family, so when you stop working, it has an impact on your wider family relationships. And then if you have a partner, there can be a really big impact on that relationship. They might be stopping work at the same time or they might not. So both of those can come with challenges. Being a lot more together might work well or might not work well. So there's there can be a lot around that side of things. Then the fifth theme is identity, image and status. So there's the concept of juvenile essence, which Grattan and Scott talk about in their book, that that staying younger for longer in a time of increased longevity. So you might be feeling young, but how does society view you, you know, how are you presenting yourself? How are people making assumptions about you, particularly as we live in a society of ageism where older people aren't respected in the way they are in some eastern societies.

Jane Moffett

00:28:28

You know, there's the whole point that the over 50s are the biggest consumer group, but research shows that 93% of marketing is aimed at the under 50. That's just an indication of the slant that we have in our society. Then there's a big issue of identity and the link between identity and work. So who are you now? How would you describe yourself? How important is a label to you? And if it is important, what is going to be your new label? And then what about status? If you're feeling of the way you are at work is very tied up with your status. How are you going to feel when that status is gone? You're going to need to replace it with status somewhere else, or some kind of standing in your community, or is it not relevant to you? And the sixth and final theme is around meaning and purpose. And I was really interested in the Japanese concept of ikigai, where people combine their skills with their passion, with giving something to community, and that gives them meaning and purpose to every day, and is one of the things that was identified in that Blue Zones documentary as a reason why people might live for a lot longer, and everybody's ikigai can be different and it can change.

You could have an Ikegai that's one thing for a little part of your life or a part of your week, and then a different one for other parts. But that's such an interesting thing to sort of find more, more out about. And then some people go on to paid work so they get their meaning and purpose that way. So a new type of work.

Rachel Goodwin

00:30:06

Yeah. I mean, honestly, there's so much in there. And I would say there's so much that isn't widely covered, an awful lot of information and ways of being and planning and thinking that don't currently form a huge part of what we hear about in the media, what we talk about with each other. It does feel like it's an area that hopefully people are going to start to embrace, because the potential in there is so massive. And, you know, one of the things I remember reading and I wrote it down about, you know, the fastest growing set of entrepreneurs is women in their 50s. And, I mean, that's just amazing.

And also, when you talk about the leaving process, and I often think of having conversations with people who would refer to colleagues as if we kind of want them to go, but nobody's going to say anything. I don't think people have those conversations in the workplace in a very effective way. Again, I don't think there's really a structure for it a lot of the time. So there's this slightly awkward. Hopefully, maybe after Christmas he'll come and say he's leaving or she's leaving. And so so I think trying to find mechanisms for making all of this more widely spoken about will be so helpful.

Jane Moffett

00:31:25

Yeah, and it's a hard thing to talk about in the workplace, because if you show any interest in talking about it, you then might be worried that actually the organization will think that you're thinking of leaving it. And actually, everybody should be having these conversations. And then then you wouldn't be singled out.

Rachel Goodwin

00:31:41

Yes. Yeah. And also, I think in some of the podcasts I've listened to and some of the reading I've done, there's organisations that are beginning to realise that the needs that people have from the workplace change over time, which isn't surprising, but that emphasis on people wanting flexibility and purpose later on as very strong drivers.

Rachel Goodwin

00:32:01

And if organisations can meet that, then they can retain those older workers. And all of the wisdom, all of the knowledge that they carry, but give them the flexibility. So if there's a means of ramping down, that's incredibly helpful for them, but for the organization and also potentially for more junior people in the organisation who have that resource to call on if they need it. And that intergenerational mix, which is also so important.

Jane Moffett

00:32:32

Yes, there's so much learning that can go both ways, you know, and if people had a lot of respect for people of other generations, that would be the ideal. And it's interesting what you were saying about retaining older workers, you know, and I think this is a real lesson for learning and development departments within organizations is that younger people want to do trainings so that they can progress, and older people are interested in trainings. But mastery for self-esteem to just know more and be more wise and actually thinking about actually we need different types of training for the different generations within the workforce.

Rachel Goodwin

00:33:09

Yes. Yeah, I'm wanting to stay relevant as well, I think is so important. And the point you make around assumptions, I think we do make a lot of assumptions. It's our way of kind of navigating the world that if we stick people in categories and we also make assumptions about ourselves as well. And because we haven't got this blueprint for how people have navigated this stage, then really digging into kind of what our own assumptions are and maybe thinking about what the family environment has been. Do we have role models who have demonstrated different ways of navigating this stage of life, or even have we lost parents early and not really had that template at all in close family? So there's a lot of variables. The book is incredibly practical as well, so not only does it educate and inform and about areas that we maybe haven't thought about a great deal, but you have a very practical approach to it and guide people through putting together a plan. Can you just give us a. Obviously people need to buy the book to work through that properly.

And I, I really think it's important that people do it thoroughly. But can you just give us a bit of a sense of what that plan is, how it works, what you're trying to do there?

Jane Moffett

00:34:33

Yeah. Of course. So for each of the six themes at the end of the chapter about the theme, there is a set of coaching questions, self-reflective exercises, that sort of thing for people to work through to get a better understanding of themselves. And then one particular exercise or question is asterisk. And that starred question that starred exercise is then taken to the final section of the book so that by working through all those chapters, you've got key answers for one for each theme. So you've then designed your own unique map for your future.

Rachel Goodwin

00:35:11

I really do love that because being able to take something practical away that you can continue to work on, actually. You know, if you start this in good time and potentially even share it with other people. Having that practical take away makes such a difference, and it's very well laid out.

Jane Moffett

00:35:29

Oh thank you.

Rachel Goodwin

00:35:30

Well, people really need to engage with that. And then you also run courses empowered women from retired to redefine. Could you give us a flavour of those courses and how they work?

Jane Moffett

00:35:44

Yeah. So they're online and they're virtual and held fortnightly. So sessions of about 2.5 hours once a fortnight with a group of up to eight women. So the same people attending each course who are at the stage of leaving work or they've already left work. And then I use a group coaching format called action learning, where each participant gets the opportunity to focus on something that's important to them. And the whole group works on it and they leave that session with ideas of moving forward with whatever it is that they've been working on. So the group is getting not only getting ideas from other people, but they're contributing to others, using really good listening and working on a specific skill, personal skill for themselves. And at the end of the course, the participants receive specific feedback from everyone on how they've done with the skill that they've been focusing on.

And then in between the sessions, the exercises from the chapters of the book are set. So the beginning of the next session, there'll be a review of, okay, how did you find that exercise? What came up for you? So a discussion around the sort of homework that people have done before moving into the sort of group coaching.

Rachel Goodwin

00:36:58

I think working in groups in this area is so important that shared experience and support particularly relevant and also action learning, because actually you and I met through action learning because we did our training together.

Jane Moffett

00:37:11

Yeah that's right.

Rachel Goodwin

00:37:12

Yeah. With Shannon. And Shannon has been in another episode of the podcast, The Power of Questions, talking about action learning because it's so powerful and has such great impact. So I think that's a really inspired way of approaching this. Can you tell us maybe about some of the insights and the outcomes that have come out of the workshop so far?

Jane Moffett

00:37:39

Yeah. Of course. And actually, interestingly, the first two courses that I ran, I ran with Shannon because we wanted to see how that approach, that action learning approach, worked outside the workplace because we both used action learning within the workplace.

Jane Moffett

00:37:51

And it was so interesting to see the amount of support, sharing and respect that the women offered each other and how people changed over the course of time, and how effective the actual learning approach was for this cohort of people. And the really big insights were that people realized they weren't alone. Okay. There are other people going through the same thing at the same time. One person likened it to going to an antenatal course. She said. You know, it's just like that where you don't know the people, but you're going through the same major life event, so you really bond and support each other. And that was really interesting for me to hear as I've been involved in antenatal courses for many years. So that feeling of then there not being alone and that this is a stage in a process and there's a lack of clarity and that's okay. So you don't know about what's next, but that's alright because it's a process. It's going to and it might take a while. And again, that feeling of no one size fits all.

So I might not be doing what this other woman is doing, but that's okay because I'm getting a sense of what I need.

Rachel Goodwin

00:38:57

I think that idea of not knowing is okay and being uncertain. It's so interesting when I run the workshops with groups of women around leadership and impact. One of the common themes, and one of the observations that people make is at the beginning, that sense of, oh, it's not just me. Because I think often if we're feeling uncertain or insecure, there is an assumption everyone else has got it sorted. Everyone else knows exactly what they're doing. And just to be in a space where there's an environment that's created that allows people to be honest and open. It immediately bonds people, opens people off, and progress is made for sure.

Jane Moffett

00:39:39

And I find that in the work I do with Kangaroo Coaching, when I do the group coaching workshops for people about to go on parental leave or people who've just come back from parental leave, the biggest feedback theme I have every time is how great it is being with other people, doing the same thing, and hearing their experiences and learning from them.

Rachel Goodwin

00:39:58

Yes, there's nothing that beats it. Also, be interesting to know. Would you say some of the relationships and connections formed in those workshops are sustained beyond the workshops?

Jane Moffett

00:40:17

Yes, it certainly seems to happen because there's been such a deep and stimulating conversations during the courses, and everyone has been very collaborative and focused. It fosters a different type of relationship. You know, we were talking earlier on about how important it is to have new relationships and friendships when you're at this stage. Someone said, actually, because nobody knew me from before. I've had different conversations than with all my other friends because we're not trying to rescue each other. We're just listening. We're really focusing on listening. Taking that step back and really giving support in that way. And because of that deep sharing within the course, the relationships tend to continue once the course is over.

Rachel Goodwin

00:41:00

That's fantastic. And I think we just need more of that. I think it's so interesting, the point you made, but you know about the antenatal classes, because when you think I know a lot of people who have really strong friendships that are born in those groups, and I think when you're going through major transitions, that plays such a huge part in how you experience it and how you navigate it.

So to create those groups is something as a society that we need to be doing. Well, as I say, I just wanted to repeat that the book is out on the 9th of September, 2025, and it's such a fantastic, reassuring and practical resource for people going through this phase. So I would really recommend it's available in all good bookshops, so seek it out. And also there'll be details about the book and also about the workshops in the podcast notes so that you can find Jane and everything she has to offer, and will be coming back to talk about things that we're working on together as well. At some point, we've covered an awful lot.

TOP TIPS

So I'm just going to run through the top tips now. Just as a reminder:

- Recognise and accept that this is a major life transition and so might be tricky.
- Realise that there's no blueprint for our generation and that we're still trailblazers.
- Don't expect your experience to be the same as other peoples. We're all different and there's no one size fits all.
- Work out what matters for you and design your own map for the future. Anything goes. It's a time of creativity.
- Seek out others who are going through the same thing at the same time. For example, enrolling on one of Jane's courses.

Remember, you can find a transcript of this episode and all the support materials at. Goodwin UK. If you've enjoyed this episode, please do spread the word. You could leave a review where you're listening, post on LinkedIn or just recommend to a colleague or friend. I really appreciate your support.

Thank you so much, Jane. I've loved this conversation. I feel like I could have gone on for hours and hours, but I would really encourage people to get the book and to start thinking really as early as possible about the potential for this stage of life, that we don't just take to our armchairs and disappear, and that there's so much for us to engage with and to invest in. So thank you so much for sharing all of your research, all of your wisdom, and wish you all the very best for the book.

Jane Moffett

00:43:58

Thank you so much, Rachel, and thank you for having me on your podcast. It's been an absolute pleasure to talk to you today.