

Transcript for Robin Dreeke | The Code of Trust (Episode 653)

Full show notes found here: <https://theartofcharm.com/653/>

ROBIN: You don't even recognize that you're dealing with someone irrational because everyone has moments of irrationality based on emotional hijacking. So in general, I don't do crazy, and basically I don't do crazy in my own head. Other people are never crazy, they're just dealing with their own things.

JORDAN: Welcome to The Art of Charm, I'm Jordan Harbinger, and I'm here with producer Jason DeFillippo. On this episode we'll be talking with my friend Robin Dreeke, author of [*The Code of Trust*](#). He is a counterintelligence professional. We have to sort of tiptoe around that a little bit. I'll let him tell you what he does and who he is.

I am really excited to have Robin on the show. He's been a part of my life for a while, super sharp guy, let's just say our national security depends quite a bit on some of the things that he teaches and that we're going to discuss today in this episode. We're going to discover how professionals whose lives and livelihoods build rapport and trust and how you can do the same, and we'll explore how we can get others to open up and connect with us, spy style, and we'll outline other elements of [*The Code of Trust*](#) and how real trust differs from manipulation and why those differences are crucial if we're going to successfully build relationships that last and bare fruit.

This book is loaded with a lot of what we at AoC call the elusive obvious -- things that people think they know and then when they hear it, they're not surprised. They might even think, "Ah, I'm wasting my time," yet these are things that almost nobody does or things where people think they are the exception to the rule, even though this thought process is the reason they're missing out on relationships and opportunities in their lives. So, don't be that guy or gal, check out this amazing episode with Robin Dreeke. Enjoy.

This day and age am I even allowed to ask what you do? I don't know how we have to tiptoe around this now.

ROBIN: Yeah, never really. Being actually who you are and being honest about it is actually part of [*The Code of Trust*](#). Yeah, so I'm still FBI, I retire in nine months. But what I talk about, what I wrote about, and what I teach and preach all the time is part of a collective of a whole. I'm a naval academy graduate, marine corps officer, an FBI guy, and I ran a behavioral analysis program in the federal government for quite a while, and so what I do on a daily basis is really what I call honoring [*The Code of Trust*](#). It's about developing relationships and trying to inspire people to want to help out and help protect the country.

JORDAN: That makes sense. I was asking because of course the first thing you read on the book is the cover and it says something about an American counterintelligence expert and I thought, "Way to throw a lot of vagueness into your job title," so I wasn't sure what the standing was on that.

ROBIN: Because I can't use title and position for profit at all, that's why I've been counterintelligence for 30 years and so I can say American counterintelligence expert. Meanwhile, if you open up the cover and you look at the bio and everything, yeah you can see exactly what I do. Then in the book is all about my 20 year career as a backdrop for developing and inspiring trust in others.

JORDAN: So if you want to use FBI title and position, you just have to lose money on the book so it's not profitable? Is that how it works?

ROBIN: Pretty much. The publisher probably wouldn't be very happy. Or like I said, I retire in about nine months, then all bets are off. I'm good to go then.

JORDAN: Yeah, you can do a reprint and it's like, "Hey, this is the real deal. The cover is different but the contents are the same."

ROBIN: The next one we're already working on [00:03:15].

JORDAN: Good, we'll have you back for that as well. The first point in the book that I read that I saw that stood right out, which made perfect sense to me running Art of Charm for as long as I have, is that trust underpins everything in society and our relationships. Can you expound on that because I think people go, "Yeah, yeah, trust underpins everything, great," and then they just kind of -- it's like a bumper sticker and then they go on with their life doing everything they were doing before that is not necessarily building trust.

ROBIN: You're so correct. It's kind of like when you take some interviewing class or when you first started teaching, you say, "Well develop rapport and then do this," and it becomes an assumed knowledge that people can do that and they kind of move rapidly on from it. But what I found is people that can inspire trust are really naturally really good leaders. With my background, that hard charging, naval academy, marine corps, FBI guy, the desire was to become a great leader but boy, I am not a natural born leader whatsoever.

Along the path and road, I got better at it, I'm surrounded by experts, and in the book he's called Jesse Thorn, in real life his name is John. As my Jedi masters or the masters of developing and inspiring trust in others -- especially when you work in a line of work like I've worked for 20 years, in counterintelligence where 99.99 percent of the time, the people I'm trying to interact with have not committed any crimes, I'm trying to recruit spies, I'm trying to recruit people around spies, and they are not committing crimes most of the time. They're collecting information, they're sourcing it to people, and once it's sources to an individual, something you read in the newspaper now has value. And so when you're in a line of work where you have to develop relationships with people and they have zero reason why they should talk to you, you're going to get better or you're going to get out.

Again, like I said, I'm surrounded by people that were doing this. I got better at it, I got on a behavioral team, and I then get moved

around from New York City down to Norfolk to headquarters and then down to Quantico. I'd been on a behavioral team quite a number of years. I got out in 2002. One of the last things I did before I went back to the field -- I've been back in the field since 2013 -- is I took over a behavioral team and I ran it. Running our team for a good number of years really exposed me to a lot of assessments I was doing all the time throughout the year, whether it's double agent operations or any recruitment stuff or any hookie-spooky spy stuff.

But the last thing I did was someone asked me to do an article for the law enforcement bulletin on what counterintelligence does and I said to myself, "Oh, let me write an article about my team and what we do," and I'd never actually sat down and thought about what my team actually does when we're strategizing all these different types of operations. And when I sat down and gave myself -- as I've done with everything.

Any time you teach anything you give yourself that paint by number, in other words, you give it what I call the new car effect. The day you buy a new car, all of a sudden you start seeing it everywhere because you gave a label and meaning to something so you see it. So, same thing with behaviors. Once you give behaviors labels and meanings, you start seeing it. And that's how I wrote the first book and that's how I taught -- you know, and Jordan together and our class with Chris. That's how we did all those things. You give labels and meanings to behaviors and you can start recognizing them and using them very proactively. That's what The Art of Charm does.

And so what happened was when I sat down and thought about what my team and what I was actually doing every time I was strategizing, I realized very quickly that the underlying thing I was doing in every single engagement was I was strategizing trust. Because any time you have two individuals or more that are going to engage in anything, you need trust, because without trust you actually have nothing. You can be the most brilliant person on the face of the earth with the most amazing

skills, but if you can't develop relationships and have trust, you're completely worthless.

JORDAN:

Yeah. In [*The Code of Trust: An American Counterintelligence Expert's Five Rules to Lead and Succeed*](#), you mentioned the idea that trust and trustworthy people always rise to the top. I like that idea, that concept, I think a lot of people do but there's a part of me that's asking, "Okay, is this naive, especially in this day and age? We're doing business with people on the Internet, we don't know and trust anybody, there's all kinds of lack of trust in society and in government. Is it really the case that trust and trustworthy people rise to the top or is that just something we wish was the case?"

ROBIN:

All people are going to maneuver, is a good way to put it. The ones that are actually going to start moving upward and creating vast amounts of prosperity are the ones that are inspiring trust. Because human beings, we are exceedingly genetically coded for self-centered self interest. So when you get an individual that actually knows how to communicate in a way with someone else, to figure out what is this other person's priorities? What are their needs, wants, dreams, and aspirations, personally, professionally, long-term, short-term -- understand the context of how they see the world and understand how they see prosperity from their point of view.

Now what's really easy is, as a leader, as somebody who's honoring the code -- if I provide available resources for you to achieve those things that are important to you, I guarantee you're going to do it and I guarantee you're going to want to stay affiliated to me. See what happens, you get the bully leader in there that is constantly looking out for his own welfare, trying to drain you from your resources, what happens is -- can these people be productive? Yeah, it's why they bullied people and got promoted a little bit to begin with. But, they're only going to get about five to ten percent effort out of someone at any good time and they're really doing it because they're feeling coerced or feeling manipulated, they're feeling threatened in some way so that's what they're going to do.

What [*The Code of Trust*](#) talks about is about how do you inspire someone to want to do something and that when you inspire people to do things, they're going to give you 110, 120 percent, guaranteed.

JORDAN: So manipulation is about pushing people, trust is about inspiring them, leading them instead.

ROBIN: I define manipulation really simply as an attempt of control with use of subterfuge or deception. Often times in life, you do have to try to exercise some control if you're in a position of leadership, but if you do so with transparency and clarity and honesty, then it offsets those moments when you actually have to take control. That's why when you put those two things together, the use of subterfuge and deception with attempt of control, that's manipulation, guaranteed. And as soon as you break the code and deception discovered, getting trust back is a far long shot away. There's actually a process to do it but good luck trying to achieve it because you've got to completely put yourself in the hands of the other person in order to achieve it, so I don't even bother with it.

JORDAN: Right, it's kind of -- what's that metaphor? You take a piece of paper, crinkle it up, and then try to smooth it out. Does it look like you did before you crinkled it? And of course it doesn't. The creases are still there. So every time you break trust with somebody, you're really dealing with a problem like that in your relationship. You mentioned that it's easy to lead people when you put their needs first. What does that look like in practice?

ROBIN: People often ask me this too. "Well if you're always putting needs of others first, doesn't that make you a carpet kind to be walked on?" and I go, "Absolutely not because the first step in [*The Code of Trust*](#) is to understand what your priorities are, what your goals are, and what your aspirations are, on both long term and short term. I call them means goals and ends goals. When you're giving labels and meanings to the things that

you're trying to achieve, what you're doing is you're giving yourself that same new car effect.

I own a Toyota Tundra. When I bought my Tundra, poof, 300 people in my town but the same car. So you don't even have to try to see it, you just do. So, the same thing is, when you as a leader are trying to inspire trust, just give the labels and meanings to those things that are important, to the mission statement of the company, to you as an individual, as a father, a husband, whatever it is -- you don't even have to try it anymore because now you've got to reverse it because now if you want to inspire trust in others, now you're going to discover those same things in others. You're going to discover their priorities, you're going to discover their challenges, you're going to discover how they define prosperity, and you're going to make yourself an available resource with the things that you have to offer for them and those things they're trying to achieve.

And when you put their needs first, with no expectations of reciprocity, because that's the real key to this -- they key that makes this non manipulative and makes this about everyone else is, I expect nothing in reciprocity because in earnest, leaders don't keep a scorecard. Leaders are about other people. And when you can actually understand what someone's needs, wants, and aspirations are, and you are a resource for them to achieve them, and you now have clarity on what yours are, when you empower people with choice, you're automatically going to give them choices about how to achieve those things that are actually going to overlap with yours automatically because you gave those labels and meanings to things.

And so by putting others first and expecting nothing in reciprocity, the likelihood of them maybe reciprocating is pretty damn high. But you can't expect it because as soon as you expect it, it becomes about you. Because that's what this is about. How do you consciously make it about everyone else but yourself while still leading, and that's what this does.

JORDAN: We talk about the not keeping score principle in social capital, which is an online course that we have, and we talk about it at boot camp, and the reason -- the way we articulate it, which is exactly pretty much what you've mentioned as well is that, when you keep a scorecard, we actually say you're creating a covert contract because then it becomes, "Well I had Robin on my show and so he has to have me on his show," and then when you don't because I never said that and we never agreed on that, then suddenly I'm mad at you and I'm -- "Robin screwed me over. What a jerk," and you're thinking, "We're good friends, he had me on his show," and I'm sitting here all mad at you because you broke an agreement that only existed in my head.

And it's a bad way to live because it'll poison the well because if you help 100 people, 100 people aren't going to help you back. In fact, you'll be lucky if 10 do, right? So if you keep score and it looks like 90 percent of people are screwing you over and you're getting the short end of the stick, you're going to get bitter about it which is going to affect your ability to enact the code with everyone else.

ROBIN: Jordan, that is perfect. What happens is when you have an expectation of reciprocity and it doesn't happen, you get crazy brain. You get stress, anxiety, resentment, discontentment, anger, and what that does to clarity of thought -- it completely washes it away. And when it washes it away, you no longer see those opportunities for overlap anymore because you're so angry and fixated on this one thing where you feel wronged, meanwhile I had nothing to do with you. So that is perfectly well said. It's because you prevent that crazy brain from taking over and you keep cognitive about [*The Code of Trust*](#) and how to keep making it about them.

The real big anchor here, my ends goals and everything I try to do and everything I do do, regardless of the milestones I'm trying to achieve along the way, I can't achieve any of those means goals without attending to the ends goals first as I call it. And that is, 1.) Happy, healthy relationships, 2) Open honest communication, because if I do not have open, honest

communication, I'm not going to have healthy relationships. And 3.) I make myself an available resource for the prosperity of others with no expectation of reciprocity. Those are my three anchors. If you honor those three anchors with everything you say and do, I guarantee you everything else falls in place because then you have a trusted tribe of relationships that everyone starts overlapping and interacting with being a resource of each other's prosperity. It is pure gold.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

JORDAN: In [*The Code of Trust*](#), you talk a lot about this as well, that it's easier to build trust with rational people, it sort of dovetails on what we were just talking about as well. Why is that the case and how do we build trust with irrational people as well, like kids or teenagers?

ROBIN: You don't even recognize that you're dealing with someone irrational because everyone has moments of irrationality based on emotional hijacking -- you know when you get those stress moments that happen, the fight or flight kicks in. So in general, I don't do crazy. And basically I don't do crazy in my own head, other people are never crazy, they're just dealing with their own things. So what happens is, any time I see someone emotionally hijacked, kind of bouncing off the walls or seeming irrational, first thing I do is, I just ask a simple question, "What are you trying to achieve?" And you've got to do this nonjudgmentally as well because the second judgement leaks in here, you're done because you're judging which makes it about you.

Simply try to understand, what is it they're trying to achieve? What's their goal in this situation, both short term and long term? AND then all I start asking is, "What you're doing now, is it helping you or hindering you from achieving it?" Because as soon as you start asking questions -- I mean, the best mentors in the world don't tell you what they do, they ask questions so you can discover, and that's what this is. This is about helping others through discovery questions.

So, I'm always asking people, "What is it you're trying to do? What are your goals? What are your priorities? And is what you're doing helping or hindering it," and if it's hindering, "What can I offer that might be of resource for you to further it?" Because as soon as you start asking those questions, they start thinking, cognating again, the prefrontal lobe starts getting rid of all the emotional hijacking and you start thinking again. So, that's how I deal with irrational people in general. Now, if you keep throwing irrational at me, I'm going to back away until you're ready to engage again. Again, with no scorecard, no resentment, no anger, because you're just not in a place that you're ready to engage yet.

JORDAN:

Yeah, this reminds me of when I was in law school, I did a law clinic, a legal clinic, and one of my first clients was a guy who robbed a store, like a convenience store. It was an African American guy but we're three, essentially just white kids trying to help him. And we were pro bono lawyers, or free. And he just thought, "You guys are part of the police," and we said, "No, no, no. We're actually representing you. But the problem is you're on camera and it's really clear that you robbed the store," and he's like, "No, I didn't."

And we're like, "Look, you're on camera, so if you plead guilty, you're going to get less time, the judge might go easier on you," and he's like, "No, that's not me." And we were just stuck because we're thinking, "If you say that that's not you, it's an immediate conviction and we should just plead guilty because you're on the video," and he just did not believe us. I've never really felt so helpless trying to help somebody who really didn't trust us at all. So unfortunate.

ROBIN:

Yeah, I've dealt with situations like this before. Very, very similar, where you're looking at a sentencing, and I had someone tell me -- I said, "Well what are you trying to find out? What are you trying to have this guy do?" and he gave me X, Y, and Z. "I did it. I did this, here's how I did it," because if he confessed, he'd look at 10 years of sentencing instead of 15. So the guy said to me, "Well here's what we want to know," and I

said, "Great, so why should he tell you?" just like you in your question, "So why should he confess?" and he said, "Well he should confess because he's looking at more time if he doesn't. And all I said back to him was, "How's that working for you?" and he says, "It's not," and I said, "Well then you haven't figured out why he thinks he should confess. You figured out why you think he should." I said, "What are this guy's priorities? What are his goals? What is he trying to do in this situation? What are his limited options and how can you be a resource for him furthering those options, as limited as they may be?" And then ultimately, it comes down to his choices, because all you're doing as a leader, is you're empowering people with choice, according to whatever options they have. And as long as you have clarity in what those options are and cause and effect of them, it's on them whether they do it or not. You're just there to help them do it.

JORDAN: One thing I really took away from that section of the book especially was the idea that getting people to trust you isn't about how you get them to feel about you, it's how you get them to feel about themselves. And that was eye opening for me, because I'm imagining trust like, "Oh, man, I'm a nice guy," and they think I'm trustworthy and, "All right, good, they trust me now. They feel this way about me," but it's actually the other way around.

ROBIN: Yeah, absolutely it is. I think we did this when we did this first class together too Jordan. Always leave somebody feeling better for having met you. And how do you actually do that? How do demonstrate that through your language and your actions? It's really pretty funny. If you even think about the best relationships you have in the world and in life, how often do you actually make everything that comes out of your mouth and everything you write in an email, about the other person compared to yourself? I dare say you probably talk about your own thoughts, opinions, and priorities probably 90-95 percent of the time and 5-10 percent on them. And those are the ones that are strong relationships. Can you imagine the strength in how you make people feel about themselves when everything

that comes out of your mouth is all about them? And here's four things that you can do. If you include at least one of these four things -- and you can cascade them on top of each other -- in everything you say, do, you're going to demonstrate two things, you're going to demonstrate value that the value that they have and you're demonstrating affiliation. Ancient tribal man or ancient tribal society, if you were not part of the tribe and you were not valued by the tribe or felt valued by the tribe, the likelihood of your genetic code being passed on is slim to none. So, we're genetically coded to want to feel valued and to feel affiliated with meaningful groups and organizations. And here's the four things you can build in consciously to everything you do and here's the great thing too, it's not manipulative, it's full transparency, and it's easy to do with no memorization. The first thing you're going to do, you're going to seek other people's thoughts and opinions. That is the easiest thing in the world to do to demonstrate someone's value is to ask them what they think about things, what they think about X,Y, and Z. What they think about the shoe that you're wearing, what they think about what you bought, what they think about politics -- anything that you're doing. When you ask someone's thoughts and opinions, non judgmentally -- this is the real key on everything we're doing here. You cannot judge if you want to get people's shields down and inspire trust. So you seek those thoughts and opinions.

JORDAN: How does this work then if someone says something like -- I'm going to go an extreme example here, which might not be so extreme for our times here but what if someone says like, "Hey, you know, I really hate Mexicans and Chinese people," you're like, "Oh, crap. I can't judge you now. Because that's a horrible thing to say and makes me not like you at all, but I'm trying to build trust with you." What do you do then? How do you handle that?

ROBIN: I'd say, "Wow, you know that's a really interesting point of view." I'd be curious, "How did you come up with that? Was that something that you were born doing? Where'd you grow up because that's a really interesting point of view and I'd be

interested about when you first realized that you didn't like those types of people." And that's what's called validation as well. Because when you're validating, doesn't mean you're agreeing with them, it means you're seeking to understand their context. For 20 years, I've had to talk to people from all over the world, every kind of nationality with every kind of different philosophy on life, whether it's religion, political, ethnicity, I don't care what it is. And if I started judging, the likelihood of them trusting me and having a meaningful dialogue and conversation goes to zero rapidly. So, I mean it's really a choice. There's such great guarantees in life with dealing with human beings. If you sit there and judge someone either verbally, nonverbally, or both. I can guarantee you they're not going to trust you or their shields are up and they're not going to share. If you want to listen, if you want to inspire them to talk to you, you have to think in terms of, "So why should they want to talk to me?"

JORDAN:

I can't help but think of this conversation I had with my old boss when I worked in Serbia. I was going to go shopping for something and she goes, "Oh, you should go up to block 88 up in the north part of the city. It's all the Chinese people. Just make sure you eat before you go because there's no good food there." And I was like, "Oh, you don't like Chinese food?" and she goes, "No, I just don't like yellow people." My jaw just hit the floor. I had never heard anybody say that in my entire life. I'm just thinking like, "I work for you so I'm not sure how to handle this," and I remember the only thing I could do was say, "Why not?" and her answer was, "I don't know, I just don't" That was it. End of conversation.

ROBIN:

You know, and here's what's great about that Jordan. Now you can make a choice without getting emotionally hijacked. I mean, don't sit and judge it, if you sit and judge it, what happens? You get angry, the emotional hijacking takes place. Now you just make a choice. Is working here and dealing with someone with that point of view worth working here or not? And make a choice. Or you can also seek to discover how does it came about that and if you want to plant seeds to start

changing minds, you start asking questions. If you start asking questions like you just did, "Wow, how did you think of that?" and she doesn't understand it, I guarantee you she's going to start thinking about it. People ruminate on questions. They don't ruminate on what they're told. You start asking discovery questions, they go home -- whether they tell you or not, they're going to keep thinking about, "Well why don't I like yellow people? That's really odd. When did I first start doing that?" So you start them down on the path of self discovery.

JORDAN: She actually -- in case anyone cares, later on I did find out why she felt that way. One, all of the Asian people were from mainland China and they all lived in the same area and Slobodan Milosevic, if you remember that charmer, he brought them over -- the sort of conspiracy theory of the day, true or not, was that he brought them over so that they would all vote for him and swing elections. Of course since they were segregated from there -- now, if I had to have that conversation again, it would be much easier for me to say, "Well don't you think that people who came to your country for a better life -- something should be near and dear to your heart as a country that's been ravaged by civil war in the beginning anyway," She might actually have some sympathy for that. So I thought that was really interesting because of course, I married a Taiwanese gal. Well, she's American but I married -- I married a yellow woman. And I can only imagine what she would have thought of that.

ROBIN: And you can even remove, "Why do you think they did this and this." Just ask, "So why do you think they came here? What would you think was their motivation for coming here?" Because when people start thinking and discovering, man I'll tell you what, tolerance really starts skyrocketing. Because when you start understanding the context, how other people see the world through their particular optic and lens, tolerance sky rockets drastically. Again, you don't have to agree with it but once you understand it, you can understand how to interact and understand how they see you and how they see the world. Then you can communicate much more effectively.

JORDAN: And you've got this idea of validating others and that goes hand in hand with the non judgemental stuff, right? Because nobody trusts somebody who's going to look down on them, nobody trusts anybody who's judging them, and you have to validate others because -- which is what, finding decency in everybody regardless of what their opinion is?

ROBIN: Validation sometimes, when I'm teaching people want to over complicate it. Validation, some people think it's agreeing with someone or giving a surface compliment on something is really the simple act of trying to discover the human being in front of you. What I mean by discover is as you're discovering what the challenges and priorities are in life, start understanding, "Well, how did those priorities come to be? How did those challenges happen? Where did you grow up? What were your favorite family holidays growing up? You believe X,Y, and Z, it's a really unique point of view. I've never met anyone like that before. How did that come to be? If you had to pass things onto your children, what would they be?"

All those kinds of statements where, you're talking about them as the human being, 1.) The entire conversation is about them, and 2.) You're validating, in other words, you're seeking to understand the amazing human being in front of you because every human being is very amazing with their own story. It's like you're surrounded by a reality show everywhere you look and if you take that time to discover what that reality show is, that's validation, and people love it. It makes them feel great about who they are.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

JORDAN: You've got a lot of great examples in [*The Code of Trust*](#), in the book, about building rapport with people. It sounds like a lot of counterintelligence is recruiting people who have special access to information -- of course, that's some spy stuff right there -- but also other people who understand open source info, so stuff that's public, but they understand it really well in a specialized way, and that makes them valuable. So, the nuclear

scientist type of person who understands something that's very complex that -- and maybe in a certain political environment or situation from the inside. And I know a lot of folks -- when I started reading the rapport examples in the book of your conversations that you were having, one stopping block for a lot of folks that I see in my email inbox, are things like, "Well I don't want to have these personal conversations with people. It feels a little invasive," or, "Oh, we don't do that in my culture," you know, if we're talking about northern Europe or something like that.

One interesting takeaway though, was that people love talking about things that they're experts about and that makes the conversation about them. So you don't have to have a personal conversation with somebody in order for the conversation to be about them, and that seemed really helpful for people that maybe feel uneasy getting personal in professional situations especially.

ROBIN:

Yeah, absolutely. The second you start trying to make it personal, well now it's you and your choices and it's no longer about them. Yeah, I get people all the time saying to me, "Well if someone's just an introvert and they don't like to interact with anyone?" and I said, "Well, then that's what you get from them, because it's about them."

One great, most fair open ended question you can ask where you're going to figure out what they're willing to talk about in their expertise as you said, is challenges. "So what kind of challenge do you have this week? What kind of challenge do you have in your line of work? What kind of challenge do you have raising kids today? What kind challenge do you have in this political environment?"

You ask a challenges question, they're going to tell you exactly what is important to them and their priorities and their context. They're either going to share personal anecdotes and stories with you because they have a high personalization side or they're going to tell you about things that are going on in life so

if it means they're more task oriented. And so, either way, it's about them and that's what they're willing to share. Now if you deal with someone that doesn't want to share at all, that's when you let go because it's not about you and you honor their choice about not wanting to share. Because you're going to establish trust by not forcing them to do things that they don't want to do.

JORDAN: I think that you must be an amazing listener. Was that always the case?

ROBIN: No. Horrendous, because again, I wouldn't have been able to write a book about how not to be a moron like me unless I started out a real good moron. And I'm not dumb being a moron, it's a journey, not a destination. But what helped me a lot was in every situation -- I love [*The Code of Trust*](#) because it allows me to think to myself, "How can I make this about them?" Well in order to make it about them, I've got to find out about their priorities, I've got to find out about their challenges, I've got to find out about their contacts, I have to validate them -- and every time I'm asking myself one of those questions, none of those things have to do with me.

The easiest thing to do though to be a great listener, is not shutting up. Shutting up is only half the battle if you're having an interaction with another human being. The second something comes out of their mouth, a story, anecdote, or thought, you immediately have something that pops into your mind that you want to reply with, because what we're trying to do in these situations, we're trying to build affiliation and affiliation is built by commonalities. So we're trying to demonstrate our commonalities to each other constantly.

So what you do is as soon as you get that need, impulse, and desire to share your own anecdote or story, toss it completely out of your mind, because they don't want to hear it. They really don't care, all they want to do is talk about themselves and be validated. So the active part of listening is as simple as having nothing to say and if something pops in your head, totally toss

it, focus back on them, and think to yourself, "Which of these things that they're sharing with me am I going to explore more because they can't wait to talk about it? What kinds of thoughts and opinions can I ask about this? How can I find out how they discovered how to do this? How did they arrive here today in front of me?" I mean, what a great set of things to talk about because it's all about them.

JORDAN:

It took me forever to -- when people talk, actually listening and not just thinking about what I'm going to say next. So far 37 years and counting. And it's easy to say that we need to do this, but in your opinion, how do we build the habit of that? Because it's great to go, "Yeah you know what? You should just listen and not think about what you're going to say next," and then immediately I go, "Okay, great," and then you start talking and I'm thinking about what I'm going to say next. Do you have a practice for this? How did you eventually learn that you have to do this to be successful?

ROBIN:

Well, muscle memory is raw repetition more than anything. But the thing that makes repetition really effective, debriefs. You've got to debrief yourself. After every interaction you have, you've got to ask yourself, "How did that go?" and you analyze. And this is not about self loathing or beating -- "Oh, woe is me, I could have done better." No, no, no. We're all working on something, it's just trying to figure out, all right, during that course of that conversation -- I'm going to do it after this one too, like I'm sure you will too, Jordan -- is, "What could I have done better to downplay myself and downplay my own thoughts and opinions and make it more about them? Did I do it well enough? How did they feel when I stated this? Should I have held that back?"

It's just constant doing a really good self assessment after the act because when you're doing that, you're going back to that green tundra effect again. You're giving labels and meanings to the things that you're recognizing you're doing, because as soon as you give the labels and meanings to it, your ability to be proactive the next time you do it, starts going up even more.

So you start practicing, you do it more and more every time, debrief every time, labels and meanings, reflect, and then put it back into practice. So it's really that active art of giving those labels and meanings to the things that you're working on so that you'll work on them more effectively and more rapidly.

JORDAN:

Yeah, here's the conversation in my head. "Hey, you've got to listen to what people are saying. Don't think about what you're going to say next. Cool." And then you start talking and then I think, "Make sure you're listening. Make sure you're listening. Make sure you're listening. Oh, that's interesting, I should already -- oh, shoot, I wasn't listening. Crap, ugh! I'm not listening anymore. What was he talking about?" That's literally the conversation that happens in my head probably almost every single time I talk to somebody, whether it happens in the beginning of the conversation, the middle, or the end.

That's the question now. It's almost never something that I can focus on 100 percent. Part of it is, you can't have a conversational agenda. Right? If I'm trying to get the next point out of you, like I'm looking at [The Code of Trust](#), we're on number three, I want to go to number four. If I'm focused on that, I just stop listening immediately. You can't have that road map in your head of where you think it's going to go.

ROBIN:

What's really good Jordan -- you actually do already because before the show, you listened to the book, you took notes, you wrote things down, you gave yourself your green tundra effect. Now when you're talking, what you're doing is you're focusing on me and what's important to me. You started out with your opening statement, you heard what I had to say, and you're going to be able to naturally weave the things that are coming out of my mouth into the things you've already looked at on your paper because you don't have to try to recall it. You just will because when you're interacting with another person, how do you build this muscle memory, how do you stop doing it? It's really simple.

Every time I engage someone, the only thing I'm thinking is, "What's important to them? How can I find out what's important to them and what do I have as a resource that I can offer that can help them with what's important and a priority to them? And what are their challenges?" That's all I'm ever thinking. That is absolutely all I'm ever thinking. I'm not thinking about how can I impress them because no one's impressed by you. Titles and positions? No one cares a rat's ass, they just care about how you treat them. This is how you treat someone really well, you make it about them.

JORDAN:

The next facet of [*The Code of Trust*](#) -- at least insofar as I took away from the book -- was honoring reasons. Sticking to facts and being honest. And it sounds great, it sounds like not exaggerating, which is another word for lying, which is a very bad habit that I had for a very long time and I love the idea that it invites people to quibble with your exaggeration and takes the conversation off track. If there's any reason to not exaggerate, that is it.

ROBIN:

For one thing, it's so funny that you talk about exaggeration and things like that, well work in a world of counterintelligence and you think that's what you're supposed to do. So here's how I get around that. I make it my sworn duty if I walk away from a conversation and someone says to himself, "I wonder what he really wanted," I've totally failed. I want you to have a lot of clarity on exactly why I'm having a conversation with you because you have to know. Because if you don't know, you're not going to trust me and I really want you to have a lot of clarity. Honoring reason is partly having that clarity so that you're very reasonable in what you're doing, not arguing context with the other person.

In other words, if they think you're a lying ass, you're not going to convince them otherwise, so I just try to understand why they think that. So again, that's honoring reason because you're just not arguing. Also, honoring reason keeps that brain clear so that none of that emotional hijacking comes in there and makes it difficult for you to actually make good, healthy

decisions to further the process and further trust. And also, it helps them as well because the worst thing in the world is having two people angry or upset because you go nowhere.

What great leaders do, and what inspirational leaders are, being a resource to the prosperity of others -- what that means is that you are an objective third party individual that maintains that objectivity.

If you're honoring reason, you're going to constantly be objective and ask those discovery questions. The best thing you can do always is help people to understand where their path is and where they want to go on it. By asking those discovery questions, they're going to discover how to get there on their own. And the likelihood of them moving further down the path when you're doing that, is just triple fold compared to you telling them what they should do because they're never going to listen.

JORDAN:

This type of trust is completely different from say, persuasion when you're going to buy something, right? Where they try to build this emotional trust and they get you excited, and that lasts until you have another emotion like buyer's remorse. There's a term for this because the emotion up down is so common that we have a term for this, buyer's remorse. The real trust is built on that rational basis, which you can only get by sticking to the facts.

ROBIN:

You know, it's so funny, I used to think of words in terms of words of influence and things like that. I don't even use those words anymore because influence means that I'm trying to get you to do what I want you to do, which dishonors the code. I couldn't be where I'm at today unless I've actually known how to do those things and seen the effect of it and seen how limiting it can be.

That's why I never ever think in terms of trying to influence or convince anyone of anything ever anymore. I think in terms of, "How can I inspire them to want to?" Because inspiring someone is all about, completely about them. And so that's how

I think about everything. So it's a very different way of thinking and that's what makes this really different -- this book different -- is because it's a leadership book that is actually a book about how not to be a jerk out in front, how to make it not about you. But ultimately it does become a great leadership book because you're going to achieve the things that you need to achieve as an organization, as long as you make it about your people. It's the funniest thing ever because I have seen such amazing results from living [*The Code of Trust*](#).

And I remember the first couple of times when I first codified this, I had amazing results and I was like on cloud nine. And then you start dipping into the world of ego and you start saying, "I'm going to wield [*The Code of Trust*](#) to my own benefit now because it's a mastery." Well, the first thing that undoes [*The Code of Trust*](#) is vanity and ego because as soon as you start doing things for yourself, the entire system falls completely apart because people see it.

JORDAN: Man, yeah, good point. Because then they go, "Uh, yeah, that's the real reason. That's the agenda," and then everything you've built just goes down the drain.

ROBIN: Absolutely. It can require great patience too, Jordan. Because some people are ready to give you their trust instantaneously. Some people will take you two years. And honoring the code means you've got to let them do it on their timeline. Some people need a lot of repeated behavior and congruency between actions and words, some people can take you on your face value. There's no high pressure anything with me, I'm going to tell you exactly what is is, and I'm going to talk in terms of what's important to you. I have things that might be a resource for you to achieve those things. If that's good for you, great, if not, let me know and I'll walk away and not bother you anymore. And also please let me know if you don't want me to bother you anymore, and I won't because I've got to empower you with choice, because again, that's all about you.

JORDAN: So this is giving people a real reason to trust you. It's really like the difference between putting gas in the car and driving it versus trying to push the car all the way to your destination.

ROBIN: Yeah, absolutely. When I first started doing this, I came up with the code in 2013 when I wrote that article and that's also when I had a lot of aha moments. I'd written on rapport and we'd done the class social engineering stuff together, but when I discovered the code, it became really a huge transformation about how to totally reverse this entire process and make it about other people. When I first started doing this, I used to say, "Well I can't guarantee you're going to achieve all these means goals you have along the way but the likelihood of it happening is more than it otherwise would have been," because the code is based upon good solid relationships of trust with people, there isn't anything that I feel I can achieve or do because I have such a vast beautiful network of great friends and resources.

Jordan, just you and me is another great example. I mean, we've known each other for so long but we talk like once a year. There's no crazy in the brain because we're a resource for each other's prosperity, you know? Unconditional. I mean, you need something, if I can do it, I'm going to do it. It's a piece of cake. And that's what trust is. Trust is unconditional.

JORDAN: I really appreciate that as well. There's so much in the book, [*The Code of Trust*](#). You've got the CSI system, which is the different types of communicators. I mean, the book is really like a workbook in that it has tests for you to take as well as a way to archetype other people's personalities so that you can read them and use their own communication style to communicate.

By the way, if you're an audiobook guy like me, get a Kindle copy at the discounted price that you get when you buy both Kindle and audio or get paper because you will want to see the book charts and the graphs when it comes to the personality archetypes. I'll admit, I was listening to this on a train and I was like, "Oh, crap, I really need to see this. You're losing me."

Lots of stuff in here, things on delivery, things on types of trust that you can build, ways that you can lose trust that are easier than you think, being judgemental or not being judgemental, brain chemistry of trust was covered in there -- there's so much in there but Robin for now, thank you very much. I hope people go and pick up the book so they can get the rest.

ROBIN: Jordan, I can't thank you enough as well. Being on a journey together with you on interpersonal relationship development has been a great joy in my life and knowing you is a great part of it, so I appreciate your friendship and having me on.

JORDAN: Jason, what did you think of this show? I love Robin Dreeke, obviously. This content was gold.

JASON: Oh, man, I love him so much. I read his first book before we met that I found on The Art of Charm podcast, or maybe it was Pickup Podcast back then.

JORDAN: Oh, geez.

JASON: Who knows? But yeah, no I've been a fan of his forever and his new book is fantastic.

JORDAN: Yeah.

JASON: I really, really enjoy it.

JORDAN: There's so much in that book that we could have had three shows, we wouldn't have covered everything.

JASON: Easily.

JORDAN: There's so much in there. The personality profiling and stuff. [The Code of Trust](#), which we didn't even finish on the show today because we don't want to go for two hours. This is like one of those foundational concepts of human behavior that everybody thinks they kind of have a handle on and totally don't. Great big thank you to Robin Dreeke. The book title is [The](#)

[Code of Trust](#). Of course that'll be linked up in the show notes for this episode and if you enjoyed this one, and I know you did, don't forget to thank Robin on Twitter. We'll have that linked in the show notes as well.

Tweet at me your number one takeaway from Robin Dreeke. I'm @theartofcharm on Twitter. As usual, we'll be replying to your questions and feedback for Robin Dreeke on Fan Mail Friday. You can find the show notes for this episode at theartofcharm.com/podcast. I also want to encourage you to join us in the AoC challenge. If you like applying this stuff and actually getting it to work, go to theartofcharm.com/challenge or text 'Aoc,' that's A-O-C to 38470.

The challenge is about improving your networking and connection skills, it's about applying [The Code of Trust](#), essentially, to help others build personal and professional relationships with you. It's free, a lot of people aren't sure about that. It's free, that's the idea. It's a fun way to get the ball rolling, get a little bit of forward momentum.

We'll also send you our fundamentals Toolbox that I mentioned earlier on the show, which includes some great stuff, practicals, you know, rubber meets the road stuff, ready to apply, right out of the box on persuasion and influence, networking and negotiation, attraction and charisma, body language and nonverbal communication, everything that we teach here at The Art of Charm. It'll make you a better connector, it'll make you a better networker, and it will make you a better thinker. So, go to theartofcharm.com/challenge or text 'AoC' to 38470.

This episode of AoC was produced by Jason DeFillippo. Jason Sanderson, that's our audio engineer and editor and the show notes on the website, those are by Robert Fogarty. Theme music by Little People, transcriptions by TranscriptionOutsourcing.net, and I am your host Jordan Harbinger, so blame me if you didn't like anything.

If you can think of anyone who might benefit from the episode you just heard, please pay AoC the highest compliment and pay

it forward by sharing this episode with that person. It only takes a moment and great ideas are meant to be shared. So, share the show with your friends and your enemies, stay charming, and leave everything and everyone better than you found them.

