

## Ep #10: Getting Out of Other People's Brains



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With Your Host

**Ellie Frey Zagel**

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You are listening to episode 10 where I talk about getting out of other's people's brains.

Welcome to *The Family Business Leader Podcast*. A podcast for multigenerational family business leaders who want to become the leader they were meant to be. If you're ready to learn how to develop your own authentic leadership style, successfully lead your family business and create your own lasting legacy while still honoring theirs this is the podcast for you. I'm your host, Ellie Frey Zagel, family business leadership coach and third-generation family business leader. Let's get to it.

Hello my friends, welcome, welcome. Thank you so much for tuning in today. Today we're going to talk about something we all do which is basically make assumptions about what other people are thinking and feeling about us. So, what I'm titling this episode is getting out of other people's brains. We are not mind readers. So, I'll go into that more but before I do, I just have to tell you something I'm super proud of.

I've been podcasting three years now and loving every minute of it. And I have just crossed over the 100-episode mark. So obviously this is episode 10 but it's episode 10 of the new podcast, The Family Business Leader Podcast. Before this podcast I had Successful Generations Podcast. So, combining the two I have over a hundred episodes recorded. It is not easy producing a podcast every single week. And for about a year and a half, two years, I didn't produce it every single week. Now that I have Pavel and his team we're back on track and producing a podcast every single week.

But I just had to share with you something I'm really super excited about because many of you have been listening since the beginning. So, thank you so much. I know I was really bad when I first started out. And I just really appreciate that you are still with me.

Alright, let's talk about this topic, I have to tell you. I have this conversation with my clients quite often. And usually, they're telling me a story and they're upset, they're angry and they're angry at somebody else, usually it's a family member but not often, not always, excuse me. Sometimes it's their boss. And they're thinking thoughts like the other person thinks I am an

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idiot or they don't trust me. Or they're so disappointed in me. They don't respect my leadership abilities.

These are the thoughts that we have in our heads about other people. We think that these are the thoughts that other people are thinking about us. And oftentimes we think these thoughts like they're facts. We think that no, no, no, it's totally true, they think I'm an idiot. It's totally true they don't trust me. It's totally true they don't think I'm capable. But if you dig a little further, when I ask them if the person in question actually said those words the answer is inevitably, "No, not those exact words. But her tone, she looked at me when she said that so it must be about me."

Trying to be in someone else's brain is an incredibly painful experience because you can't do it. You cannot be in somebody else's brain. They haven't figured that out yet, at least not to my knowledge. So, get out of their brain. It doesn't serve you to try to assume you know what they're thinking and feeling. Instead, you just end up feeling like anger, distrust, resentment, because you think they think things about you that they actually haven't said. You have no proof that's actually what they think about you.

So, in essence you're just making yourself feel bad and losing all of your leadership power and energy to the other person while you do it. So instead, when my client presents this type of scenario and we get them to understand that the other person did not actually say they were disappointed, that they don't trust them etc.

I encourage them to do a thought download any time this happens, any time you get really angry at somebody or want to throw it out at a family meeting or something like that, just do a quick brain dump on all of your thoughts that are spinning in your head because one of the other problems with being in somebody else's brain and making these assumptions is that your brain is spinning in, well, it's clear they don't trust me.

I have all this proof they don't trust me, all these examples, all this evidence. And your mind is just constantly thinking about them and how they don't trust you or how they don't respect you, or whatever it is that

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you're thinking. And it just takes up a lot of your time. So just get it all out on paper, just get it all out, a quick brain dump, just write it all down.

And then I would like you to get into what I call your CFO brain. And I want you to start identifying facts, like coaching circles, there's facts, there's facts and there's drama. Facts can be proven, facts are universal, everybody agreed to them. And I want you to look at what you wrote and identify if there are any facts in this thought download. I want you to write down the words they said specifically and just look at them. They're just words. They said those words. What you took them to mean, that's on you, those are your thoughts about the words that they said.

And I want to share with you that this is actually incredibly, incredibly empowering because people now can say words, those are the facts, these are the words that they said. And then you can choose to think about those words any way you want to. You can choose to think she was actually having a really bad day and that was why her tone was like that when she said those words to me. And maybe even as often what happens with my clients, you can find proof that they were actually having a very bad day.

And that maybe what you assumed she was saying without her saying it, had nothing to do with you at all. Everything to do with something going on completely separately. Because what is the benefit to you to think they don't trust me, they think I'm an idiot? They think I'm not capable, what is the benefit to you to think that? There is none especially since I know you haven't asked them, "What's wrong? Do you think I'm an idiot? Do you not trust me?" You don't ask them. You just make these assumptions. We all do it. I understand.

But I want, for you I want you to kind of step into a more empowering space. You're leading in your family business. I don't want you to be derailed by words that somebody else has said and the assumptions that they therefore make. So, the next part of this exercise, you've just done a brain dump, now you get into your CFO brain. And your CFO brain also feels very calm and grounded. When you're thinking about facts, those are pretty neutral, those are neutral. I don't get all worked up over facts.

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I get worked up over the thoughts that I have about those facts but I don't get worked up about the facts themselves. So, you should feel pretty calm and grounded after going through this exercise. And then if you take a step further, you're going to realize that when we think someone else is thinking something about us, it actually means that we are thinking that thing about us.

So, for instance I am in a mastermind. And something that I could say about my business coach would be something like she's going to be so upset that I've switched my niche again, I transitioned my niche into something else. She's going to be so upset. And I get all scared and I get embarrassed, I don't want to tell her because I'm so scared that she's just going to get upset. When actuality my business coach doesn't care if I switch niches as long as I have really good reasons and I like those reasons why I switched.

It's me that's disappointed in myself, that's upset at myself for switching niches again, maybe without lots of evidence and good reasons to do so. So, if that's true, if what you think other people are thinking about you is actually what you think about you, let's just say it is. Let's just test it out because I like it from a CFO brain just to get curious and ask questions. So how do you think you're an idiot? And call that right out. How don't you trust yourself? How do you think you aren't capable leading?

And what this does is it puts you back into the driver's seat, just thinking this way. Realizing that it has probably very little to do with the other person and everything to do with some of your deepest fears, some of the things that you are scared about, or feel shameful, or disappointed in yourself, that you're just reflecting on others. So as a confident leader I want you to be aware of when you are in other people's brains and get out of them. But not just get out of them. I want you to understand why you're making those assumptions to begin with. I mean that's the deeper work.

It doesn't take very long, it takes a few minutes to do the thought download, to identify the facts. And then just to say, "How is it that I feel this way about myself?"

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Okay, alright my friends, I hope that you enjoyed this episode. If you do this, I hope that the examples that I used and the steps that I shared will help you get out of other people's brains. You're not a mind reader. I just want everything, all the best for you. I want you to be your confident amazing leadership self. Alright my friends, I will talk to you next week.

Well, there you have it. Thank you so much for listening to *The Family Business Leader Podcast*. If you've enjoyed today's episode, be sure to share it with someone who needs it. If you'd like more information about family business leadership development, please visit [successfulgenerations.com](http://successfulgenerations.com). I can't wait to connect with you again next week, until then.