

Episode 115: Honing Your Conflict Resolution Skills—with Dr. Paul Marciano

Deb Zahn: I want to welcome you to this week's episode of the Craft of Consulting Podcast. So on this podcast we're going to talk about conflict. One of the reasons that is so important is invariably you're going to have conflict either with clients that you're working with or within organizations and companies that you work with. The more you can be skillful in how you manage it, the more you're going to be able to still be valuable to them and help them achieve what they want to achieve. And you're going to be more marketable.

So I brought on an expert in this, Dr. Paul Marciano. He is the author of the recent book *Let's Talk About It*, which is all about how you address conflict. I loved this book! So I was excited to have him on. By the end of this, you are going to have so many golden nuggets that are going to help you better manage conflict so that you can get on the other side of it and do the good work you want to do. So let's get started. I want to welcome my guest today, Dr. Paul Marciano. Paul, welcome to the show.

Dr. Paul Marciano: Deb, thank you for having me.

Deb Zahn: So let's start off. Tell my listeners what you do.

Dr. Paul Marciano: What do I do? I keep trying to explain that to my fiancé. So what do I do? I guess I work with and try to help organizations and individuals, first, be more respectful. So my passions, since my first book came out, *Carrots and Sticks Don't Work*, is how to promote a respectful workplace. And of course, today I think more than ever that's needed. And there's lots of questions that we're not going to go into, I'm sure, but the whole respect of around COVID and getting a vaccination and not. I mean, there's a lot of issues around that. And then more recently, as you know with my new book, *Let's Talk About It*, I feel as though so much of the conflict in the world in terms of relationships, personally and professionally, is because either we avoid having difficult conversations or we aren't skilled at having them. My work is always about putting it on a playing field. So I hope the folks listening to this will take something away that they can put on the playing field of their life.

Deb Zahn: And hopefully right away because one of the reasons I wanted to have you on is anyone who is a consultant is going to have to learn how to skillfully address conflict. Either conflict they're going to have with their clients because that's often unavoidable or conflict that is within the organizations or companies they work with. And they need to help to facilitate change. You don't get changed without there being some conflict. So the more skill and tools that consultants have for this, the more, one, marketable they're going to be but the more effective they're going to be.

Dr. Paul Marciano: Absolutely. And I do view it as a skill deficit and an opportunity to learn. It's not just something you're born with. It is absolutely something you get better at. And one of the things I would say is that people tend to avoid difficult emotionally charged conversations in large part because they don't know how to have them, right? They're scared of them. We don't jump out of airplanes because we don't know how to typically do that. And I'm not saying having a difficult conversation is like jumping out of an airplane, but we do tend to avoid things that we don't feel are going to have a good outcome.

Deb Zahn: And I know that avoidance shows up in a lot of different ways. So what are some of the ways, just because I want people to hear their own version of it. What are some of the ways that people try to avoid even having conversations where there might be conflict?

Dr. Paul Marciano: Well, obviously, they completely ignore them and pretend they don't exist. One of the problems with that is, I think when people don't talk about it, then they act it out in some way. And so I encourage people whenever they see because coming back to respect and engagement, my thesis is that when people feel respected they engage. When people feel disrespected they disengage. And by the way, the consultants out there I think can relate that to working with their own clients as well. So in the context of when we see somebody who is disengaging with us, which can look like there's not being in as regular communication as they were, then we ought to think about, gee, maybe something has occurred. Something has happened that's caused this disconnect.

And so in that particular way, even though we may not be aware of the particular trigger or event, and oftentimes we aren't, we're ignorant to that, we ought to encourage people to approach the other individual and just say, hey Deb, I noticed recently that we're not kind of having those offset conversations we've had before and just wondering what may be going on. So there's the avoidance. There is again the decrease in communication. Sometimes a passive aggressiveness comes up.

Deb Zahn: My favorite. I left California for that reason. But yeah, the passive aggressive version, I see quite a bit. So what does that often look like?

Dr. Paul Marciano: Well, you can say a compliment, but it's kind of two-sided. So you just said you left California. What's a good example for you?

Deb Zahn: Well, it's when there's a conflict, but instead it gets framed as something else like, "Oh, well you're just not available." And I think this happens a lot to consultants. "Well, I wanted to talk to you about this, but I know you're really busy and you don't have time for it." Which is just an avoidance mechanism, but they're putting it on you as opposed to "Let's have a conversation about this."

Dr. Paul Marciano: It reminds me whenever I have a conversation with my mother. She goes, "All right, I'll let you go now." Let me go? I never said I wanted to go.

Deb Zahn: Wait, are we related? My mom says that.

Dr. Paul Marciano: Does she?

Deb Zahn: Yeah, exactly. One of the ways that I see it is to come up with not passive-aggressive but avoidance things with consultants. It just blows my mind. So one thing invariably as a consultant you're always going to deal with at some time or another and probably repeatedly is when clients increase the scope and don't mention the budget. And I have known far too many consultants in the spirit of avoiding conflict that will take a financial loss rather than having a conversation about a scope and this is in a business transaction but they just let it go by.

Dr. Paul Marciano: Yeah. That happened recently to me. I was on a project and I had given an estimated time of a couple of hours, and then that ballooned into several hours. And then you have to really consider. I think obviously I'm one of those people that always looks in the mirror a lot and says, "OK, what's on me, legitimately on me." And I wasn't good about having an upfront conversation saying, "It's not clear how much prep is going to go into this, and we've got a little bit of room here but if it goes beyond that, that was on me." And probably a lot of consultants, I don't think I'm the only one who likes to avoid those kinds of conversations.

And then of course you have to think about how good a client is and have they done it in the past and you learn, right? You learn from that. So I think the other way that you asked about avoidance shows up is the whole kind of sandwich model. So it's, "Hey, things are going great. Oh, this one little, tiny thing is not going so well. Oh, but everything else is great." So that's another way we choose to think we're dealing with it when we're really not dealing with it.

Deb Zahn: That's right. Because then you can't have a direct conversation about it because now you have to chew through the bread that you put on either side.

Dr. Paul Marciano: Exactly.

Deb Zahn: I love that. Now, if there's a consultant who has some conflict that's come up with their client. They've got to figure out how to handle it. What should they do before they try to have that conversation? So before they say, "Oh, we have to have this conversation." Or before they run screaming from it. What gets them ready for it?

Dr. Paul Marciano: I think the most important thing, and there's a chapter in the book on mindset, is how do we approach that in our minds. And here's something that I think everybody will relate to no matter what. I had a wireless phone bill that was crazy, right? It was insane. And I'm going to go into the building and it's like I literally, Deb, imagine putting armor on an abroad sword because it's going to be a battle. That's just how this is going to be. And so when we have these mindsets, whether it's with a horizon or whomever or some such, right? Or it's with a client. If we go in with the mindset that it's going to be a confrontation, then that's what we're going to create and it's going to lead the other person to either becoming aggressive or defensive in some way.

So I think the initial thing is to, and I hope to really believe and certainly with your clients that it should be this way. That it's going to be a collaboration and say, "Deb, our relationship really matters. I've really appreciated the work that we've done together in the past and I want to talk about something in the job scope because I don't want anything to get in between this professional relationship. I really look forward to continuing going forward so I want to deal with this now and hopefully sooner rather than later because that's the other big mistake people make.

Deb Zahn: Yeah. They wait too long and then it festers and simmers either just on your side or on both sides. Then by the time you get into the conversation, it's so charged.

Dr. Paul Marciano: Right. And it's so unfair, I think, to be the other person too because as I said...look, oftentimes we know when there's conflict but not always, right? Not always. We may sense that the other person is disengaged in some way but not be clear exactly why that is. And so while the other person may sit there and let that fester or raise some sense of resentment, which is where often this goes, the other person, they're just not aware of it. So the longer it goes, they say that one of the excuses we make is, we'll take care of it. Well, unlike acne, these things usually don't clear up on their own. They usually get worse. And I also think that when we don't have those conversations, not only do we become resentful of the other person, we also become resentful of ourselves for not having the conversation. It's very disempowering, right?

Deb Zahn: All the way around, yeah. And what I have found is that, and there's an old expression, I have no idea where I heard it the first time, but that intimacy is gained through the resolution of conflict. And

I have found that clients that I've had disagreements with conflict or uncertainty about conflict because nobody checked in with each other. When we were able to resolve it, we actually got closer because they saw good intent. They saw willingness to question my own narratives about what's going on, they saw a willingness to change what I was doing so that I was able to show up in a different way for them and we got closer because of it and I've worked with them longer because of it.

Dr. Paul Marciano: I agree with all of that. I know the lens through which I see the world. But I think there's also often an element of gaining respect and saying, "I have certain value or worth" or "We're not all lawyers you get to charge by every 15 minutes," and that's not the way I would think as consultants we want to necessarily be. But certainly respecting our time and the contributions we make to our clients and saying it's not OK to feel as though those asks just keep coming.

Deb Zahn: That's right. And if you have a client that doesn't respond well to the respect that you put on yourself then they probably aren't the right client for you because you don't want to rack up indignities and disrespect because you can't build a sustainable consulting business off that. Yeah. I love that. So, and I know one of the things that you talk about in the book is also paying attention to what may be the root causes of what the conflict is. So not just what appears on the surface but what the root causes are. So how should people approach trying to think through that or figure out what that is both for themselves and whoever is on the receiving end of that conference?

Dr. Paul Marciano: Yeah. So when it comes to root causes, if I spilled milk and my wife yells and screams at me, it's not about the milk-

Deb Zahn: That's right.

Dr. Paul Marciano: ...Something else is going on here. So getting at what is underlying that. And I think also for me anyway, I think given examples in the book, the situation in which I have an employee who I keep getting angry and upset with and I'm getting emotionally charged. And what I realized was underlying all that was, I felt taken advantage of and I felt like I wasn't being respected and I also began to lose the trust of the other person. So you can build the sort of symptoms that erupt, right? We kind of put band-aids on them but the issue is never going to get resolved unless we actually deal with what's underlying it. And quite frankly, it's not unlike I think a medical disease model, we may be able to maintain things by addressing them as they pop up but we'll never actually be able to just fix them or engage in what I would say is a healthy relationship unless we address what it is that has tended to drive us apart.

Deb Zahn: And I know that sometimes the root causes don't have anything to do with us. And isn't that helpful to know that they have a whole bunch of things going on in their work life and their personal life that's just making it more difficult for them to do the things that we need them to do or we were hoping they could do. So if you see something as a symptom or you think that's what it is, and you think there's something deeper going on, how can you suss that out with the person that you think is disrespecting you or you have some conflict with without being invasive or presumptuous?

Dr. Paul Marciano: Yeah. I mean, that's a great question. Obviously, it varies depending on the kind of relationship that you have with the other person. I think also quite frankly, the level of your own emotional intelligence or empathy. So that you can get a closer approximation maybe of how they're feeling. By the way, I distinguish between what I call empathy one and empathy two. So we all know

what empathy is, feeling sorry for somebody else's misfortunes. And traditionally in empathy, we think of putting ourselves in the other person's shoes. So this event has occurred, we put ourselves in the other person's shoes and we feel, "Oh gosh, I must be very sad about that or angry or upset." However, that actually may not be how the other person feels.

So an empathy two kind of thing is: OK, I'm going to imagine what it's actually like for that person to be in those shoes, and that I think is really important. If you can, it makes the conversations you've mentioned, I think, a little bit easier. And so you can say something like, "I like to put it out there. I've just sort of noticed a change in things and just wondering what's going on and wondering if maybe it's something that I said or did and I'm here for a conversation if that would be helpful."

Deb Zahn: I love the openness of that because it's too easy or empathy-lite or whatever you want to call it, to just use the other person as a projection screen of our own thoughts and feelings and assumptions, as opposed to the way that you just did it, where you're approaching it with opening and letting them fill in the blanks instead of you filling in the blank.

Dr. Paul Marciano: Yeah. And I want to go back to something you said, is I think this is fundamental, human, we're all egocentric and just that's by nature, right? That's how we're built. And I do want to encourage people to kind of give each other a break because all of us have all of it especially during this time, heavy stuff going on in our lives. Of course, our work is important to us but for many people there are lots of other stressors going on from older kids to older parents and younger kids to older parents and such. And I remember one presentation that I gave and there was a woman in the front row who kept sort of nodding off. And I didn't realize maybe I'm not the most engaging or exciting presenter, but you know you can't help but get a little bit irritated or bothered, right? And you always say, well, why are they sitting in the front row if that's what they're doing?

But she came up to me after the first break and she said, "Look, I really want to apologize. I know I'm having a hard time keeping awake," she said, "But my husband is a paranoid schizophrenic, and I was up all night with him, with his delusions," and you're just like, wow. But unfortunately, we judge people all the time. Here's one that I do. Somebody cuts you off in traffic. Unless they're on the run or you're texting then there's no excuse. I think maybe that person is in a rush, they need to get somewhere, they started too late, whatever it is. So the world is much easier Deb, I think, if we give each other a break.

Deb Zahn: Yeah, I would agree. And to recognize that we've all been in a rush, we've all been up late because something happened. We've all had these things occur. And again, I think giving each other a break, grace, whatever you want to call it, is tremendously helpful. And as consultants, we're going to have to do that repeatedly with ourselves, with our colleagues, with clients. We're going to have to help our clients do that internally because I work with a lot of leaders and it's really easy. And actually I'm thinking of before I was a consultant, I was in the work world and there was someone who had worked at the organization for a really long time. She was in a new role. It wasn't going well. And the leader just was enraged about it, almost as if she was being let down by it.

And what inevitably happened is I went in and assessed the situation and I said, so she's a really concrete thinker. And you put her in a role that requires really intense conceptual thinking. The problem is it's the wrong person in the wrong seat. It's not the wrong person who's somehow just vexing you because they decided not to perform today. And it was easily cleared up. It was easily fixed, but the loaded assumptions that went into it were part of what was driving the conflict. And the person who was in the role was like, "I'm doing the best I can. You put me here. I don't know what to do."

Dr. Paul Marciano: Yeah. And one of the things is that nobody wants to fail, nobody. We want to succeed fundamentally. Not only because hopefully that is for the job, for the organization but for ourselves and for our own self-esteem. So people do not intentionally fail. So if you see somebody struggling, and I am absolutely such a firm believer that your job as a manager is to make the people under you successful. And if you don't believe that then you're in the wrong job. By the way, talking about conflict and working with clients, one of the things that I was reminded of is I do a lot of executive coaching and one of the first conversations I'll have with folks is first of all, it is always my intention to treat you with respect. If I ever do or say anything or don't do or say something that would lead you to believe otherwise, my request is you bring it to my attention.

And we're generally, if I ever say anything that you take to offense, you disagree with, I'd ask that you share that with me because it's really important that we have an open dialogue.

And one clear example of that was a gentleman who we had talked to on a Friday afternoon, on Monday morning he literally called and started kind of yelling at me and said how upset I was. And so the first thing I needed to do was, A, to breathe, right? You got to breathe and then I always say this, you got to become really curious...

Deb Zahn: Love that.

Dr. Paul Marciano: Right? Because if you can't become curious and say, OK, I need to understand what Deb is saying, what she's concerned about because I'm not going to be able to address it otherwise, and to shut down that defensiveness, that automatic mode that we go into fight or flight. And you get curious and then you paraphrase so the other person knows that you've been listening and they can sort of relax their shoulders a little bit because they know they've gotten the message to you. And by the way, if you paraphrase and you got it wrong, that's really important. And so as again, I think we have to control ourselves as consultants to be able to deal with that kind of conflict in an extremely level-headed, clear, balanced manner that shows that we're able to control ourselves and always remain professional regardless of the client's reaction.

Deb Zahn: Yeah. And you just described a consulting superpower. So if you want to be successful as a consultant, practice that until you get more comfortable with it because it's often sadly a really rare thing that whomever you're working with is going to experience. And it's going to set you apart and make you more effective and then obviously make you more marketable as well. So I just love that. I'm actually reminded of an example. So I do a lot of facilitation of groups, particularly groups of people who have strong feelings or there's conflict or things like that, and I facilitate them towards some decision-making and there is a technique that actually has a name that's called "join the resistance," which is if you're presenting something and folks just are getting angry about it and they're throwing rocks and then said, dumbest thing I've ever heard, and all of this really charged criticism, one way to handle it is to, and I literally physically will turn and face the same direction as them as if I'm looking at the flip chart with them and we'll start an exploration of what doesn't work together.

Dr. Paul Marciano: I really like that.

Deb Zahn: Yeah, and I will even ask, "So this is the part that I don't like. I don't think this works. Does anybody have any better ideas for this?" And generally what I found happens is it changes the whole dynamic in the room and now it's not conflict. Now it's, we're trying to figure this out, not I'm trying to shove something down your throat and you're mad about it.

Dr. Paul Marciano: Yeah. That's terrific. One of the things I always try to do to frame the beginning of those kinds of workshops is, my second slide is usually the mission of the organization, so it's why are we here? And it's for the mission. So do you remember that great story about John Kennedy going to NASA? Well, even if you have, I know not all your listeners have so I'll share it, it's one of my favorites.

So he goes, and he's walking around where he's made this big hairy audacious goal. We're going to put a man on the moon before the decade is out and he's walking around. He's introducing himself, which I find sort of funny because I think everyone knows who John Kennedy is. And he asked this gentleman what he did there. And he said, "I'm working to put a man on the moon." And it turned out that he was a janitor. And so what he got was that gentleman really got it, he really got it. And so you would hope going into any organization and you asked what folks did, it was really, it's the mission, right? That's why we're here and then of course, we all have our own individual role and responsibilities.

Deb Zahn: So one of the other things you talk about in your book which I really liked is, recognizing that personalities matter. So when you have conflict, it's mostly humans that you have it with...

Dr. Paul Marciano: Mostly.

Deb Zahn: ...occasionally you can venture into other species. But the personalities, both your own personality and the personality of the folks on the other side, definitely matter. So how do you best navigate that? Recognizing that it plays a role, it may not be the whole thing, but it's an important thing to consider.

Dr. Paul Marciano: Yeah, that's great, and none of this is easy to do. I always, always, always go to, what do I want as the end result? What do I want as the outcome? And so if I've got somebody who's got a big ego, quite frankly, you want to appeal to their ego. There is somebody who needs attention, needs to feel as though whatever they're contributing and benefiting, so it's sort of no skin off my back if I look at it, to make the other person feel good. And sometimes when we talk about other examples, I mean, people will call this manipulating others. Well, it's influencing, if you look in the dictionary, it's also influencing others. And quite frankly, Deb, we're always manipulating people in the sense that how we respond to others, how we interact with others, is always influencing their behavior.

So if I'm with somebody who's passive aggressive, how am I going to confront them? How am I going to bring out the issue without leading them to get upset? If I'm dealing with somebody who's simply angry, an angry person, how do I respond in a way to acknowledge that anger and to de-escalate it in some way. And then quite frankly, and I was dealing with one of these this morning and as a clinical psychologist from Yale, I think I can say this, there are some people that are just freaking crazy. They just are. And it's just not healthy to be in those kinds of relationships. For your consultants, we've had some crazy freaking clients, there are some that in your life it's just not worth for whatever reason continuing to be in that relationship.

Deb Zahn: I would agree with that because you only have so many years on the planet. You've got to choose how you want to spend them and how you want to spend your day to day. But I like the idea because I don't think it's manipulation, I think it's, we adjust what we do. And I think as a consultant, we adjust what we do in some selfless manner to achieve the outcome. That doesn't mean that you put yourself in a position where you're going to be disrespected but you don't have a stake in that person's

personality, you have a stake in the outcome and so how can you communicate with them in a way that gets them to where they actually want to be?

Dr. Paul Marciano: Yeah. And mirroring is obviously effective in certain cases, and we've all had clients though, that we know that they just need to vent, that's their style. They just need to put it out there and we've just got to listen and remain calm and acknowledge whatever frustration they've had and then we can continue with the conversation. So I think hopefully as consultants, we do have a real sense of emotional intelligence, awareness, empathy or whatever. We always have to adjust our style just as a manager or a leader needs to adjust their style to get the best out of their people. We need to adjust our style to be able to collaborate most effectively with our clients.

Deb Zahn: That's right. And if you do that, again, you're going to be more valuable to them. You're going to be able to build an amazing business. Now I know, and we're not going to give all of them because people need to read your book, but I know you have your top 12 tips for addressing and managing resolving conflict. Give us a couple of the juicy ones.

Dr. Paul Marciano: Well, I'll give you one of the ones that people have the toughest time with and that is, in any relationship we view things as, I give 50% and you give 50%, right? Of course, that's how this works. But when we're in conflict with somebody and you're wondering how it's going to go, it's like a pair of train tracks. You look behind, it's going to go like it's been going all along unless you're willing to make a difference. Unless you're willing to change things. And one of the things I say is, if it really matters to you, own 100% of the relationship. Just be like, it's on me to make this work regardless of what the other person says or does. So how engaged are you, right? How meaningful is this to you? And I've taken that on, certainly not always, but I've taken that on independent of what the other person says or does that I want to be in that relationship.

And by the way, well, the other thing is, when we're in conflict with people over time. And they do or say these things and we get triggered by them, but yet that's who they are. It's like Lucy holding the football and Charlie Brown saying, "Are you going to pull it away?" "Well, no, no, no." When he goes in, and she pulls it away and he falls on his butt and then he gets frustrated and that's what happens to us all the time. So we have Lucy's in our lives and that's who they are and then we get surprised when they act in that particular manner. So there's got to be, again, some sense of, first of all, you should probably laugh at yourself instead of getting triggered by it. But again, one of the tips I have is, own the relationship. And I think it's very empowering to do that.

Deb Zahn: Yeah. And I like the know thy triggers.

Dr. Paul Marciano: Know thy triggers.

Deb Zahn: So I know mine. Entitlement. I see entitlement, it's blood in the water for me. And I have said and done things, usually rather sarcastic things. That's my trigger, and I know it. Other things like water off a duck's back. I could care less. But that's when I have a hard time walking away, and I know that so I pay attention to it.

Dr. Paul Marciano: I'm with you 100%, I am. So one of the stories it's you get those moments in time, right Deb? Or just this learning moment for yourself and as consultants, of course, hope we are able to offer that to others. I was in a workshop once being conducted by a retired monk. Well, the first thing is

I didn't know monks retired, but apparently they do. So at the end of that, he looked at every single one of us in the room and he said, here's what I know about everyone here. It's that you're each trying to get along in the world the best way you know how, and I think that's so true.

And so, especially if I'm dealing with somebody who's particularly angry and upset, I just think, they're just trying to get along in the world the best way they know how. And I try very far to, and this goes to one of the tips is, really pay attention to you're unconsciously making the other person wrong so you can be right. We each have a view of the world that is as unique as our thumbprint and say that I'm right and you're wrong. I just consider that incredibly arrogant and narrow-minded.

Deb Zahn: And there may be situations where that's true but that's not most situations. There've been some where I'm like, yeah, that's what that is, but don't walk in necessarily with that assumption, there might be other things going on and you have no idea.

Dr. Paul Marciano: I think in terms of another thing that's so key to me is, we have to be careful how we label things in our life, anything. So because our thoughts and our words give us our lives, so if I say or think, this is going to be difficult or this is going to be a confrontation, then that's exactly the way it's going to be because we're never wrong. So if I say, which I believe, it's really difficult to drive in New York City, that's not reality, for me I say that and so that becomes my reality. But it's not true of so many people. So being really cautious again in terms of that mindset and that you want to believe, hopefully sincerely, that this is going to be a collaboration and that will make a world of difference.

Deb Zahn: I love that. Because I resolve a lot of conflicts, I have other consultants who assigned me to go resolve a conflict because they're not comfortable with it. It's something I do quite a bit. And I generally walk in, and I don't think this is going to suck, this is going to be really difficult. I think, all right, we got to find our path here. And it's we have to find our path not I have to figure out a way to get them to shut the heck up or to treat us better. We've got to figure out a way that this is going to work for us.

Dr. Paul Marciano: And by the way, again, I mean, you said, we have to find our own way, and it can look really different. And so I think as consultants, we have a vision and we hope we can navigate things in a respectful, productive conversation. But I mean, I had an example recently with two gentlemen that I was trying to get to collaborate more effectively. And at the end of the day, they just had to have a screaming match and point fingers and that is how they got through it. Now, is that how I had hoped it would go? No, but for them that just ended up what worked.

Deb Zahn: Yeah. That's an amazing example, I just got a few pictures in my head when you said that. But that's also you in the role of the coach and often consultants in the same role, you're not tightly holding it and saying, "Damn it! This is how this is going to be resolved." You're curious. You're on a journey of exploration. You're responding to what occurs within the conversation and things that are difficult to do.

Dr. Paul Marciano: And respecting people's individual ways of dealing with things.

Deb Zahn: Yeah. I love that. So there are so many other really, really just fabulous information that you have in your book and in what you do. So how can folks find you?

Dr. Paul Marciano: They can find me by going on my website, which is paulmarciano.com. I'll certainly encourage them here, I'll hold it up, can I hold up my book?

Deb Zahn: Absolutely.

Dr. Paul Marciano: So I encourage you to go to your favorite bookseller and look up Let's Talk About It. By the way, I sent copies to every US senator because I don't know of another organization in which there is a greater need for trying to have respectful conversations. And I actually did get a couple nice letters back so that was cool. I'm not holding my breath that it'll make a difference.

Deb Zahn: But you know what, even if you chip away at it a little bit-

Dr. Paul Marciano: You never know.

Deb Zahn: Anything helps.

Dr. Paul Marciano: So paulmarciano.com or paul@paulmarciano.com. And I really do appreciate you having me on and I appreciate your listeners and let's just all work to make this a better planet. Unfortunately, a lot of people work to make it harder than it has to be and we can have civil dialogue and that's the only way that progress is done and get made around it and especially the most difficult of issues. We tend not to have conversations, we tend to yell at one another

Deb Zahn: That's right. And so at least start practicing on the easier ones and then work your way up. Well, let me ask you one last thing. We'll have your information in the show notes so folks can easily get to you. But so when you're not out making the world a better place, you have the rest of your life as well. How do you bring balance to your life, however it is you define that?

Dr. Paul Marciano: For me, what's grounding is actually being outside and working. I grew up on a 100-acre farm and so actually building fences and weed whacking and planting a garden and all that kind of good stuff. And I've got to force myself, I literally put it into my calendar and certainly on the weekend but maybe even a couple hours especially now during this wonderful light, this sun coming out. But that's just really important for me to spend some time, first of all, by myself, right? Without the phone or the email around and just literally for me, what I find really grounding and certainly other things, family and-

Deb Zahn: But literally grounding, which is-

Dr. Paul Marciano: Literally grounding.

Deb Zahn: Yeah. I'm the same thing, I have a ridiculously large vegetable garden outside.

Dr. Paul Marciano: So far so good this year.

Deb Zahn: So far. Don't jinx it!

Dr. Paul Marciano: No. Everything looks great, they're loving this weather.

Deb Zahn: I know, I love it. Well Paul, thank you so much for joining me on the show, this has been fantastic. I know we could talk on and on about this topic, but thanks for coming on and sharing with us what you did.

Dr. Paul Marciano: Thanks again Deb, for having me on.

Deb Zahn: Thanks so much for listening to this episode of the Craft of Consulting Podcast. I want to ask you to do actually three things. If you enjoyed this episode or if you've enjoyed any of my other ones, hit subscribe. I got a lot of other great guests that are coming up and a lot of other great content and I don't want you to miss anything. But the other two things that I'm going to ask you to do is, one is, if you have any comments, so if you have any suggestions or any kind of feedback that will help make this podcast more helpful to more listeners, please include those.

And then the last thing is, again, if you've gotten something out of this, share it, share it with somebody you know who's a consultant or thinking about being a consultant, and make sure that they also have access to all this great content and all the other great content that's going to be coming up.

So as always, you can go and get more wonderful information and tools at craftofconsulting.com. Thanks so much. I will talk to you on the next episode. Bye-bye.