

[00:00:00.170] - Matt

Are you struggling to look for work after finishing your education? Or maybe you're in a relationship you're unsure about? Are you having a quarterlife existential crisis? Are you in your twenties and don't know what the heck to do with your life? You've come to the right place. Hi, you're listening to A Cup of Growth, the drink for trying-to-be adults. This podcast is brought to you by Mags and Cass, where the girls talk about how to confidently navigate your twenties. Let's ride the struggle together.

[00:00:25.450] - Cass

Hello! How are you, Mags?

[00:00:31.300] - Mags

I'm good. How are you?

[00:00:33.530] - Cass

Not too bad, thank you very much. Welcome everyone to another episode of A Cup of Growth. We're currently on episode nine!

[00:00:43.870] - Mags

Already so close to finishing this season!

[00:00:48.430] - Cass

I know, it's exciting. It's exciting. How have you felt these last nine episodes, Mags?

[00:00:57.970] - Mags

Great. It's been- it's been great. It's been so nice learning from different people because we've had quite a few guests already, which is so good. But also we've kind of used this first season as our way to navigate what we really want to do with the podcast. And I think- yeah, it's been a learning journey, which I've really enjoyed. I've learned a lot about myself and us and yeah, can't wait for season two.

[00:01:25.950] - Cass

Yeah, I feel like we've improved loads from episode one. And I feel like now we can act like we know what we're doing more so than we used to before. But yeah, we keep saying this podcast is our journey as well. So, I think it kind of shows every episode how much we've gotten used to doing this and how comfortable we are doing it and how much we enjoy creating this content for you guys.

Let's keep it going. This is just the beginning, so we have so much more to bring to the table. Now we're on episode nine and what are we going to be talking about Magali?

[00:02:11.100] - Mags

Struggles with unemployment!

[00:02:14.480] - Cass

Ooh! Oh my God, my God, my God. Well, this episode I've been telling Maga off mic if you will that this is going to be very much her episode because of the two of us, she's the one that's unemployed.

[00:02:36.050] - Mags

Don't remind me.

[00:02:38.130] - Cass

I know. I'm sorry. So basically, currently, Maga, how long have you been unemployed now?

[00:02:49.910] - Mags

I think nine months you know.

[00:02:52.470] - Cass

Yeah.

[00:02:53.130] - Mags

So, nearly a year. It's the longest I've been unemployed in sort of when I started my, I guess, work journey. So, it's been a bit tough. But I think there's been a lot of redirection, reconsideration about what I want to do because I changed my mind quite often. But I think now I'm sort of set on maybe a couple of things that I know maybe I'm good at or I've got experience in that I'm trying to, but I think at the moment, the job market as well is a bit- with the cost of living crisis and stuff everywhere.

[00:03:28.450] - Cass

Yeah. But yeah, like we were saying, Maga has been the one of us that's been unemployed. I've been employed since I was in uni, so at least the second year of uni, that's when I started- from our undergrad because I also had a masters. So I've been in uni load longer, but I've been unemployed as well the longest even though I've changed jobs as well. But yeah, I think we're going to be talking

about how we got to where we are and especially what type of struggles you face when you're unemployed. And then Maga will probably give you her perspective on how to deal with them, what tips she can share with you guys. And then I, as an employment advisor, can also give you some tips. It's very ironic, isn't it, that my best friend is unemployed, but I'm an employment advisor.

[00:04:29.110] - Mags

Yeah help me bitch! You have to be fair.

[00:04:31.430] - Cass

Yeah. On a daily basis, I bombard Magali with different vacancies that I get from my contacts and stuff. I'm like "have you applied already? What interviews do you have?" So yeah, she has, unlike a lot of people where they have an employment advisor on like eight hours, five days a week, if ever, when they have appointments, Maga has me 24/7, and so the pressure never stops. But yeah, I think we're going to move into a bit more about your journey, looking for work, what type of work have you had, and kind of like what we talk about loads in this podcast, which is like trial and error and stuff like that, so how that has reflected on your journey and stuff. The floor is yours darling-

[00:05:28.130] - Mags

Thank you, I really appreciate it. Sorry about my awful American accent. Let's go from uni, okay? Because we've already done an episode on that. So, obviously I started off with uni and when I finished uni, I didn't get a job straight away, maybe for like a few months. I was looking and at that time I wanted to go into teaching. I was like 'yeah, this is my thing'. So, I managed to find a job as a teaching assistant, and then I realised that kids just drain me, I cannot do it. It's too much for me emotionally, which might sound pathetic to some, but it's true to me, so I don't care what you say. Even though I'm probably getting riled up for nothing. But yeah, so then I quit that job after like what a few months I think it was, and then I would look-

[00:06:39.430] - Cass

I think it was three months.

[00:06:40.450] - Mags

Yeah, something like that. And then I was looking over Christmas for a new job and then I found one like within a couple of months. It was like a six month contract thing, which was the whole point of it was that they give you training alongside work experience and it's like a good thing to put on your CV. And so I did that in writing and then that was really good experience. I really enjoyed my time there. The people I worked for were really nice and everything. And then since then, I've had nothing basically because I mean I don't really know why, but I've looked more for other writing jobs and stuff now because obviously that's what we have a degree in. And so, for now, I've just been looking at job, but I've also looked at other things to fill up my time, like I don't know, administrative stuff,

retail, I don't know, anything. Maybe even stuff to do with social media because obviously I do stuff for the podcast and everything, and I'm also social media addict, so I kind of have a lot of knowledge. But anyways, this is not me doing- I feel like I'm doing a job interview. Why am I going in that direction? Anyways, so now I have been employed here for like nine months, and it is tough, my guys, it is though. But I think it's unfortunate when as well, it's not just you yourself that's struggling, it's also the whole- I can see a lot of people are struggling to look for work because I think there is at the moment in the UK a bit of a struggle in the labour market. But anyways, that's me. So technically, after graduating uni, I found a job quite quickly, but then I realised I didn't want to do it and so basically for the past nine months, I've been trying to figure out what it is exactly I want to do. And I think it's been good, but I'm like, come on now, it's lasted a long time, please can we get to something else? I need responsibility, I want something to do. Even though I bet people that do have jobs are like "what do you want about like working sucks", and it's like yeah, maybe, but I need money, I need something to do with my time. That's me. What about you, Cass?

[00:09:20.690] - Cass

My work history or how it was when I was unemployed? Well, to be fair, I'll go even a bit further back than university. I started working as soon as I finished my equivalent of A Levels in Spain. As soon as I finished that, I went into work, and I worked as a hostess and waitress in a restaurant. And I loved the thrill of it. Not a lot of people would think that of like a restaurant type of job, like hospitality and stuff. I absolutely loved it. I'm the type of person that loves just being physical with stuff. I say that now that I work in an office, and I'm mostly in front of a screen and stuff, but I love the fact of being active or whatever. And then that was only temporary because that was only for the summer. And then I was instead of going to uni in Spain, I went into college to do another course that was finances and administration, which we've said a lot of times in this podcast, neither Maga or I are good at Maths, so you can imagine the depressive episodes I would get during this course, which I left. And then when I finished that course, that's when I moved to the UK, and I was unemployed for- April, May, June, five months, more or less. And I knew I needed to find a job, right? But I was like 'I'm new to the country, so I need to find my way around here'. So, I kind of used that time to kind of familiarise with myself in the city that I was. And then I got the job at a warehouse, and it was like an all women warehouse, which I loved. It was amazing. And then I was doing that for like two months, and that's when I started uni. During my first year of uni, I was unemployed and looking for work because I was a student, I was like, I'll just study and just focus myself on my studies and stuff. And then on my second year, I got another job, and that's when I started working in Amazon, and I did that all the way up to when I finished my bachelor's and then I finished my Masters kind of thing. And then when I finished my Masters, I got the chance of- well not even like a couple of months before I finished my Masters, I got another job, and that's the job that I've been at for almost a year now. So, that's kind of been my experience. And kind of similar to Maga, after finishing my degree, I was very focused on getting something about writing or something of the sort. I'm kind of the type of person that likes to be challenged, and I like a busy working environment because I thrive in that. I like being busy. I like having loads of things to do. I like diversity in my job, which I get loads from this job. And just like Maga, I like doing marketing stuff which I do in my job as well, and also, like media and stuff, which obviously after my Masters, I'm doing as well because I'm in a radio station. But I think that's kind of me. But I wanted to ask you, Maga, how has your perspective on employment changed from when you were like maybe 18? That's when you're kind of legally made to go to work already to now that you're in your twenties. How has that, like, five year, six year type of no- am I doing my math correctly? I think I think it's seven. Yeah. Five years. Maths! I am sweating. Yeah. That

five year period been for you like how has your mentality around employment and how you see job searching and all of that, how has that changed for you?

[00:14:00.510] - Mags

Yeah, so obviously, I think since I've been looking, let's say the first time after I finished uni, obviously I was looking on, let's say the obvious things. I was doing the obvious things, things people had taught me to do and things like that. And I found a job pretty well, but it was kind of through Universal Credit, so it's kind of how I had a help really. It wasn't like I found it on like a job searching site or something. So, it's kind of almost handed to me. So, now that I've actually been having to look myself for something because the schemes that I got my first writing job of six months don't exist anymore. I have to find my own work experience basically because for the job I want to do, I don't have a lot of experience, unfortunately, because I think throughout uni, we couldn't really get a lot of experience because- well obviously you're so focused on your first year. And then we got hit with the pandemic, and it's like everything shut down, and there was no point looking for a job basically. And so, coming out of the pandemic afterwards, it was still hard to find a job, but then I did something I didn't like and so to go into something I liked, it got handed to me. But now that I have to do everything myself because these schemes and stuff don't exist anymore, I've had to basically learn the skills to get a job. And so that has been like developing things like networking and taking any job experience that I can and things like that because I think- this is the thing I think I'm quite particular about what I want in terms of maybe hours or whether it's hybrid working or remote working or in-office working, things like that. I've got, let's say non negotiables. But I think sometimes you just have to compromise just to get that first job and that first experience and then when you're ready, you can get more. But I think it's been more about a learning journey for me in terms of actually looking for employment. It's changed a lot because I've had to- I think you just got to get creative when you're getting unemployed- when you're unemployed for that long. You have to start thinking outside the box. You can't just stick with just applying to jobs on job search sites. Job search sites. Oh my God, that's a tongue twister. You also have to try maybe LinkedIn, even though I hate LinkedIn because it's like for me it's like a competition of who's got the biggest dick in terms of work, but also maybe going to job fair events or asking previous employers if they know anyone or they've got any opportunities going. Maybe doing side hustles where you're to get a bit of money, any skill that you have, just offer it on something like Fiverr or whatever. Yeah, I think you start to get basically an expert at job searching. And I think that's really interesting because job searching in itself is a full-time job, and I know people say that all the time. But it really is like you really have to do the work to get what you want. And it does sound stupid because I know the concept is a bit like the company are looking for someone to work. They should be convincing me to work for them because even though we have to work to survive, if I didn't have to work, I wouldn't. So, you have to try, and you should be the one trying to convince me to work for you because I'm giving up my time, but then at the same time you're getting paid anyways. This is going on around about capitalism in general. But definitely job searching is a really interesting thing to go through because I think you learn a lot about yourself, and as well you learn a lot about motivation because job searching burnout is I'm pretty sure is a thing. Like I've experienced, where I've had periods where I'm like 'I don't want to apply to any jobs anymore. I don't want to think about fucking looking for work. I just want to be in bed. I just want the world to leave me alone. And I just want to rest because I am so exhausted and getting rejected all the time and not finding anything to do'. But then, it's all about perspective, and it's like 'well, maybe I have been given this time where I'm not doing any work to reflect on myself and to improve myself and my skills so that then the right opportunity will come along eventually'. I think it's all about

accepting that you are in the situation that you are and then allowing the universe, whatever it is you believe in, to do its thing and to remind yourself as well that every situation is temporary. Things in nature are constantly changing, everything's constantly changing. So, why wouldn't your situation change as well? So, I think it's really about as well changing your mentality and your perspective and job searching really drills that into you.

[00:19:53.390] - Cass

Yeah, I think it's very interesting what you said as well because I think we've touched upon this on our previous episode. But I feel like when you're 18 and when you're getting to that age where you're legally allowed to work, any young person just wants money. Money to go out, money to spend with your friends and stuff. But then I think we've mentioned this as well in other episodes, it's like when you have the pressure to study even if you don't like it because that's how you get a 'good job' you get a good job if you have qualifications. And we've touched upon the fact that now employers look more for experience than actual theoretical knowledge on different concepts and stuff. And I feel like, what Maga said, when we were at university, it wasn't only that you had to focus on your studies, you also had to focus on the fact that there's a pandemic outside your house and you can get sick and something could happen to you or your loved ones or something. And it's added stress that you don't need as a student, right. But also the fact that in our course, for example, or in some courses, at least in the UK, you don't have a module that's work placement experience, and that's something that we lacked you get the option, I think we had the option of having a sandwich year, that's what it's called, and have an extra year. So, you can have what would be your third year be your placement year. But of course with our class we couldn't do that because of the pandemic. There were no employers that would take on work experience students to learn about their industry and their company and stuff because of what was happening. And so, our group of- our class and our generation basically didn't have the chance of branching out until we finished the university. And a lot of people don't like going on work placements and having those sandwich years because they want to graduate with their friends, and so they don't take the opportunities to do it because they would rather graduate with people that they know and finish their course with someone that they know than having to do it with the year below them because they wouldn't know anyone in there. And so that's added pressure as well because you're delaying the job searching or job finding experience of it all. And then when you graduate, there are people that get jobs quite easily and people that are looking for something specific, and that's why they have to wait a little longer. Just like you, Maga. Because for example, I didn't do it. I just went into whatever job I could find just to get an income. And so that's why I was working in a warehouse. I was like 'well, it's weekly pay'. For a student, that's amazing because you can go out and stuff, and every Friday you'll get your salary come in. But it wasn't until I did my Masters and stuff that I was actually like, I cannot be in a warehouse forever. I cannot. But I had the opportunity with my Masters to go into a work placement because it was actually a module, I actually had to do it to pass my course. And so, that gives you an incentive of finding something that you actually want, not only that's related to what you're studying, which is something that you should already be liking to do, but something that's related to that and something that's related to your passion. And so for me, that was easy and that's how I got the job that I got. I got my work placement. As soon as I finished that, they were like 'there's a job opening coming up, why don't you apply for it?' Because I didn't want to leave. I was like, thank God I got it at this point. But I know that, for example, on the other side of the spectrum, Maga didn't get to do that. And Maga is where she is now because she didn't get the opportunities like that. And that just shows you as well how choosing to do different things and people having different paths lead

them to something different. And like I said, it's very funny now, the fact that I'm an employment advisor, and I have to help people find their jobs as well. But very related to what Maga said, my job when I'm helping young people that are around my age, literally around my age in their twenties help them to find work, the first thing that we do is looking at their goals is map out an initial action plan to know what we're going to do in this month, in six months down the line, in a year. Do you know what I mean? So planning out, what is it that they want to do, what's the end goal and how we're going to get there. And so, like Maga said, you find yourself analysing yourself and what you like to do and your passions and stuff. And for some people, they want to get into university because they didn't get the chance to do it before. And so, it's seeing like, if they have the right qualifications, if they're getting into a course that they actually want, or some people want to do apprenticeships because at the end of it, they get the job. Or some people want to go into employability courses to know how to job search better and how to have interview skills and all of these things. And so what Maga said is very important in the sense of it's a full-time job. My clients come to me every other day of the week, right? And so it's a full-time job in the sense that you have to psychoanalyse yourself constantly to know, do you have the right qualifications, do you have the right experience? What other things do you need to get to the job or to where you want to be, basically? And it's such pressure to know, because some people don't like, and we've touched upon this so much on this podcast, but a lot of people our age in their twenties don't know what they want to do. They don't know where they want to go. And so to make them think, right "what are your passions, what is it that you like to do on your free time? What are your hobbies? What are you good at? What do you see yourself doing?" It's so hard if you don't have an end goal. And I think for most people, some people have their own plan, especially like Maga said previously, if you want to go into medicine, you have a path drawn for you. But it's very difficult if, for example, like Maga, you wanted to do one thing and then you experienced it and then your whole perspective on it changes, and you decide you don't want to do it anymore. So, what's your fallback position after that? And how do you recover all that time that you 'lost'? Because you didn't lose it. You didn't lose it because of the fact that if you hadn't spent your time doing that thing that you now don't like, you wouldn't have found out that you don't like it, right? So, that still is experience, but that time that you were doing that something else has deteriorated the rest of your time to find what you actually want to do. And especially if you don't have a safety blanket or if you don't have a plan B, plan C, plan D, you have to make up those plans now of what is my backup now? And so, that adds to the layer of pressure of your job searching because you need to find all of these answers for the questions that you keep having. And if you don't have a guidance to do it, then you don't get relieved of that pressure and share it with someone else because it's yours alone.

[00:28:18.030] - Mags

Yeah, I agree. I highly agree. There was one thing I wanted to bounce upon that you mentioned, which was like saying about I think it was along the lines of like saying I didn't have certain opportunities to gain work experience and stuff. But I think it's also important to note that there's a balance between not getting enough opportunities but also not creating enough opportunities for yourself. So, for example, not taking opportunities that you can. So, maybe I should have taken the sandwich year to gain some sort of experience at uni. Or maybe while I was at uni, I should have looked for a job while I was still in my last year of uni in preparation for when I finished uni. Or I don't know, maybe I should have sought help while I was at uni, where I had all the resources on the careers advisor- advisors there and saying "where can I go? Is there any placement you can put me in?" Anything like that. And I think it's important to create those opportunities for yourself and if

they're given to you, to take them, because that's something I wish I would have done. And that I've learned now is that, if you go to uni or even at school or whatever, take the opportunities for the resources that are there to get the work experience you need. Because I think, as we said- I think we said in last episode, we said something about like we commented on how now with work, they're looking more at work experience rather than qualifications, which is a complete shift from what it was, like maybe like, I don't know, 5-10 years ago. And if you can get any experience you can, do it, because I think that's something that I lack and I wish I would have done. And that's something I've noticed now, looking back, that I wish I would have done that.

[00:30:24.150] - Cass

Also to add to that about like opportunities and stuff. It's not like I'm criticising the system, although in a way I am. But we lack so many resources for young people on how to find work while they're studying. And we see this all the time on social media, right? Like, why do we have certain subjects, but we're not taught finances? Why are we not taught like self-care or health related concepts? Why are we not taught how to prepare to get a mortgage or something? Why are we not prepared to look for work? Right? We get all the qualifications, fair enough, but if I don't get the qualifications that I need for the job that I want to do, I'll still have to find somewhere else to get the qualifications. But you still haven't taught me how to get that job. And we see this a lot in like, again criticising here, but when you apply to go to a university and you're applying for a course, and you're looking at the profile of the course and you see different sections, you see fees right, overview of the course, modules in the course. And then there's one bit at the end that says employability, right? And on there it says "oh, all of our students, after they finish the course have gone into this, this and this and that", right? That is like a clickbait, it's like a catfish because it's making you enticing you to choose that course, choose those qualifications, because by the end of it, you should have a job like those other students. But they don't explain to you how these students got that job, they don't explain to you what the journey was, they don't tell you that those are like one or two students from that course and the other 15 are still job searching. Do you know what I mean? And so for young people, it's very easy for anyone really to go into education and be like, I need these qualifications to look for work. Even mature students, they want to change their career, they go to university, get another degree. Or some people that have finished their degree have decided that what they've studied is not for them, they want to change their path and so they study another degree. It's so embedded into us that we have to get qualifications for a career. And this is what we've been saying loads now, where it's like people employers now are looking for experience and not qualifications. But the way that the education system is wired at the moment, it's still in the old way of you need qualifications to get a job.

[00:33:38.620] - Mags

Yeah.

[00:33:39.320] - Cass

But they don't give you the experience to go and find the job, to show this employer that you have experience in this industry, you know how to do task A-B-C and D and what your process is to make this task work and meet these tasks. They don't show you that. They only show you what each

concept means. But how do you put it into practise? They don't show you that. And so, for most people, and most young people, it's harder to get the experience because they know the theory. But how do you apply it? Where do you apply it? What jobs or what experiences can you go to and sign up to to actually put it into experience, to have hands on experience? You don't get that from just going into a lecture hall, do you know what I mean? And so, it's so difficult for young people to wire themselves into thinking 'I need the experience if I need a job'. And now most- if you look at any job description, in the qualifications they put there for the ideal candidate is like so many years' experience in this, one year experience in that. You don't see qualifications. If you see qualifications, you will see maybe a degree in this, this or that, but it's not necessary. They look for experience now.

[00:35:08.930] - Mags

Yeah.

[00:35:09.780] - Cass

You know what I mean? And so how do you translate your qualifications into experience if no one gives you the chance to gain that experience? And so the education system has its own way, but the employability sector has its own way as well, of we need experience, but we're looking for people with experience, but we're not going to give the people that need the experience to get that chance to learn from hands on day-to-day schedules and stuff. It's more like we need the people with the experience, but the people with the experience are older people that have been in the game for ages, but you're not allowing the young people to get to that stage. And so now, as you know Maga, and as I know, as an employment advisor, it's the young people that have left university that are unemployed, and the rates of unemployment are just growing and growing because they cannot find a job. And they cannot find a job because employers won't give them the experience they need to be where they want to be. And so when you're in this swirl pool, in two swirl pools of 'I need the qualifications, but I also need the experience', that's where you end up where you are now, Maga. I'm sorry to say it, but we all know it's true. You end up in this limbo where it's like 'I'm going into different courses online to see if I can get this qualification, so I can put it in my CV'. And all of these things in your CV, everything looks great, right? It's all about, oh it's for the CV. Oh, I'll do this to add to my CV. But what part in your CV you say that you actually got the experience in it? And so how do you translate that in an interview when they ask you "oh, what's your experience with this?" Most people, like you have said Maga, go to their hobbies of things that they can actually put as an example, like teamwork at university, things they've done in their societies, things they've done in these organisations as their hobbies because they cannot say that in an employment organisation, in a work experience, they've had that situation happen to them because they haven't had that. So, they have to fall back on other experiences. If you go to and interview, and they ask you like "oh, this is one type of situation that can happen at work. Have you had that situation happen to you before?" What are you going to say if you haven't had that at work? You might say "oh, well, something like this happened at university, and this is how I had to manage it". But some employers will take that because experience is experience at the end of the day, and some people won't because some people want in the industry experience. And so, job searching now is not only a full-time job, it's a survival mode game because you have to balance all of these things into it.

[00:38:37.350] - Cass

Yeah. No, I completely agree. And it's like just employers just cannot be bothered to train you anymore. And I thought the whole job again- like again, for example, when they advertised for an entry level job, the whole point is that you're fresh out of uni or you have no other experience and- I feel like I'm going to sneeze. Hay fever season.

[00:39:01.429] - Cass

Bless you!

[00:39:01.510] - Mags

Thank you. And they just can't be bothered because it's like I see all the time. I'm like, I want to apply to entry level jobs. And they ask for like one to two years' experience or even more sometimes. I've seen some of them three years' experience, and I'm like, the whole point of an entry level job is that you have no experience, and they give you the experience to kick start-

[00:39:31.290] - Cass

That's what's called entry level.

[00:39:33.610] - Cass

Quite literally, but these employers just cannot be bothered and label things as entry, maybe to get more candidates applying, but then they'll only select the ones that have like three, four years' experience, and it's unfair to those who want to get started in their career. There's no help for people who want to get started, is what I'm seeing. There is no help for those who want to try something new. Maybe they've had a career change or people that are fresh out of uni. It's like "no, we only want those who already have experience because we can't be bothered to train these people. We want someone who just comes in, does their job, and we don't care". That's what it feels like. There's not this nurturing side to building someone up in their career anymore. It's all about the company, it's all about them, it's all about who's going to make the biggest profits, and we need the people that already know what they're doing because we can't waste time training and levelling people up.

[00:40:40.510] - Cass

Yeah. And all of this pressure Mags, obviously like we've said, all of this is pressure, and in some ways it's going to affect you and how you feel. So, how has looking for work and applying for jobs and having all of these interviews and the rejections and stuff, how has that affected you as an unemployed person?

[00:41:05.750] - Mags

Yeah, obviously, linking kind of back to our last episode, it creates a lot of self-doubt and self-esteem issues because you get rejected so many times. You can only get rejected so many times before you're like 'is it me? Is it a problem with me? Am I not good enough? Do I not present myself well enough? Am I inadequate for working in an office? Am I not good enough? Even though I've got all these qualifications, I've got some sort of experience where, or I've got experience in other jobs where there's transferable skills, where I could and I am willing to learn, and I'm willing to develop'. But it's like employees see none of that. They just see that you have no experience. They're like "yeah okay, next one". And I think that can make you feel like remorse or maybe things you think missed opportunities you could have maybe done, saying like 'oh, I wish I would have done more, I wish I would have done more'. But it's like, when I look back, I'm like 'you already had a lot on your plate. You had full-time uni', which is the whole thing that's supposed to get you a job. And then we had a pandemic on top of that. And I did have a job while I was at uni. It's just because it was in the hospitality sector, unfortunately, with COVID, it had to shut down. And so, and so you just think 'well, is it my fault now? Am I not doing enough? Should I be doing more?' And then, as you said, Cass, it's like pressure. It's constant pressure from the system, from yourself, even from others. I can't speak for myself, but you have maybe pressure from family or friends that are like "come on now, you need to get a job". And maybe they don't understand because they've got a job, they don't understand how difficult or they try and push you. But it's like, for some people who maybe have some who are neurodivergent or that have issues some other maybe mental health issues or whatever, for them, it's maybe harder to look for work as well because the system is not adapted to people like that. And I think as well, when you when you look at other people, as I said before I think as well in last episode, when you look at people on LinkedIn. But the thing is, people expect you to be on LinkedIn because it's good for networking, and it's good to meet people, and it's good to put yourself out there. But then at the same time, you see all these other people that have other jobs. And that rightly so for them boost about it and are like expressing how happy they are with their job, but then it leads to comparison. And then you feel like 'oh my God, I'm like twenty something, I'm embarrassed to be jobless'. 'People must think I'm lazy because I haven't had a job for like a year or two'. But it's like no, it's not laziness, it's just you've tried but unfortunately you've not had your breakthrough yet. And you might even feel guilty being like, oh my God, if you still live at your parents, for example, 'oh my God, I feel like I should be moving out now, so it releases the burden from them, but I'm struggling to'. Or maybe you yourself, you want your independence, but then you're like, it's so hard to do so because you can't just move like that. You have to have some sort of income to afford a place to live. And it's like this constant cycle of you think you're going to get there and then it's like something else comes into play. And this constant sort of inner critic as well of yourself saying, you're not good enough, you need to do more, but it's like even though you yourself know you're doing more, maybe it's just a system that's not working, or there's a problem within the labour market, you're always going to blame yourself, and it's exhausting. And then it leads to things like burnout or even depression because I know some people who already are maybe predisposed, already have depression. Being unemployed makes it worse. It gives you this feeling of like almost you don't deserve to work or you don't deserve to have money or you don't deserve to have the things you want because you're not good enough. It can get really, really dark. And I think a lot of people the reason why a lot of people do get depression is because of external circumstances, like being unemployed, living in poverty and things like that. It really does take a strain on your mental health, and it's sad, it's really sad. But then I don't want to depress you because there is always, as I've said earlier in the episode, the situation is not permanent, it's temporary. Even though it can feel like a long time, take it as an opportunity to just work on yourself. And that's what I've done, that's how I've managed to cope with it. I'm like 'okay, well, I'll do a little bit of job searching every day, but I'm not going to make it my whole life'. I'm going to enjoy the time I have off and the opportunity to

have time off and be able to live at my parents, so that they're generous enough to let me live here for as long as I want to, until I get a job, and having a supportive environment also really helps. But you just say 'well, I'm going to use this time to improve my skills. If I can have some sort of maybe volunteer experience, I'm going to do it, but then I'm also going to take care of myself, I'm going to do exercise, I'm going to go out, maybe play sports, I'm going to go hang out with friends'. And there's also things that can help you, like what the job that Cass does, or Universal Credit where they actually pay you a certain amount a month to help you job search. But obviously you have to be reasonable and honest about the fact that you are job searching, and they're helping you financially. Or as I said, maybe try and find a side job that you can occupy yourself with, that's like freelance that you can do online, and fill in your time with all these different things while also focusing on yourself whilst you've got this time off has really helped me because it helps your self-esteem when you try other things rather than just focusing all your attention on job searching. Because if you keep job searching and then you keep getting rejections, and that's all you do all day, yeah you're not going to feel good. So, it's important to also do other things outside that make you realise that work is not everything, and the opportunity will come when it does, and it will come at the right time. Things are all aligned. That's how I believe it, I believe things. That's like how I see it, is you're not given the opportunity right now because you're supposed to be focusing on yourself and then when the universe thinks you're ready, it will give you the right opportunity at the right time. And so, it's really important to be gentle on yourself as well. Maybe, as we said in last episode, have someone you can talk to both personally about just your feelings and then have maybe a professional, like an employment advisor or someone who works in a job centre who will help you find who have resources available to help you find work or kind of help you with your goals, concerning job searching. And be gentle to yourself and give yourself words of affirmations. Remind yourself that it's temporary, not permanent, that you'll get there eventually because the harder you are on yourself, the less likely you're going to find a job because you're just going to be exhausted, that you're not going to do things to a good quality, and then that's it. And then you'll be burnt out to the point where you don't have energy at all to a job search and then that delays the process even more. So I think keyword here is balance. Like balance everything balance a bit job searching, maybe some skills or additional work you're doing on the side. But then also go out and socialise, exercise. Enjoy your time off if you can.

[00:50:14.150] - Cass

I think with something that you said there as well, Mags, because I think there are two key words here in this episode for everyone, which is pressure and balance and how to manage both of those things. Now, me talking as an employment advisor, I can say that there's something that Maga said there that's around job agencies, job centre and Universal Credit and stuff, right? I work in a charity, in an organisation that helps people look for work. And I can tell you that what my organisation does is very different from Job Centre or Universal Credit, and it's for one particular reason which is key here, and is that I don't pressure my clients. Because one thing with Universal Credit and Job Centre is that, yes, you'll have a coach helping you, right? You'll have a coach track with you the progress that you're doing, but at the end of the day, for them, you're a target. You're a number for their target. And so, with a lot of job work coaches out there, I'm not saying all of them because I've met loads of work coaches who are amazing, but a lot of them, they also have the pressure of having you as an outcome. And so they will pressure you for you to have a result in the looks of a job start, so they can claim you for themselves, for their target. And that's their pressure that they're feeling to achieve that will project onto you. And then, like Maga said, you'll be burnt out because it's not only

that you have pressure on yourself because you need the job. And it's not only the pressure of comparing yourself to the people that you know that already have a job, that you've known them for forever or whatever, but it's also from someone that's supposed to help you that's pressuring you to look for what you need to look for, right? And there's a lot of people, like I've said before, that they either will look for anything, whether they like it or not, they'll look for anything just to get a job, or like Maga, they have their niche. They'll look into that industry, right? When you have a niche, it's so difficult because if you have a niche, you obviously will have had a research of the market and the industry. And nowadays, whatever industry, whatever industry in the employment market is so competitive because, like I said before, there are so many young people that are looking for work fresh out of university, and every single year there's only going to be more and more and more adding to the pile of people that are unemployed that were supposed to find a job right after uni, but they haven't, right? And so, for us, like Maga has been fresh out of uni for two years, but she's still unemployed. But we have two years of new people going into the pile where Maga is where she's unemployed. And so, all of this competition, you're getting competition from peers who you're supposed to be working with, but now it's competing to who can get the job fastest. And so other people will be these people in the pile with you Maga are looking for this niche job. And then there are other people that were in the pile with me where it's like, whatever job, whatever job, as long as I get that money. And with a lot of people as well, depending on their circumstances, they're in that pile of 'I don't care if I get the job that I like because I need income to feed my family, feed myself, have a roof over my head, pay my children's tuition', do you know what I mean? And I found myself working with loads of people around my age that are now homeless because they don't have a job to take care of themselves. Do you know what I mean? And it's people that have finished university, finished their Masters that wanted to do their PhD. They're homeless now, right? They're couch surfing with their friends. And it just makes you think, like, I work with people my age, and they're sitting across the table from me, asking me for help, and I'm like that could have so easily been me.

[00:55:16.120] - Mags

Yeah.

[00:55:16.580] - Cass

But for some reason, I'm not in that position, right? Somewhere in my path, something aligned. And that said, you have to be here now to help these people now, right? And so wherever you look, there's always going to be pressure. It's either going to be pressure from the competition out there in the market, pressure to get a job, and like Maga said, maybe move out from your parents' house, maybe have your own independence. And that's not only pressure from yourself sometimes, but some parents will want you to move out, right, because they don't want the extra expense, especially now with this living- crisis of living, right? And so many people have all of these pressures. And wherever you are in your journey of job searching, or even if you have a job now, if your pressure now is job searching, by the time you get the job, maybe the pressure is the money is not enough. And so even while you're working, you're still looking for something else, right? And whatever you do, there's always going to be a pressure, but you have to find a way to look into yourself and say 'well, these are my circumstances, but I can have one day off from it all. I can have that balance of, right, this day, I'm just going to stay in bed all day because I'm tired, I need the rest, right?' And in terms of side hustling, this is something that you've mentioned before Maga, side hustling hasn't

been a thing until very recently, where now we have things like Fiverr, surveys where they pay you and stuff. But young people have to understand that there are also scams into that. There are apps now where they supposedly pay you for walking, games for your phone, that supposedly if you win, you can get this certain type of jackpot. There are some providers where if you sign up to that, you're supposed to get money from it. There are people that are going into loans with their bank or they're going into all of these different things looking for money because some people's goal is the money, right? And that's something that has been, like I've said before, been put in our head since we first started looking for jobs at 18. It's like when you work, you get money. And that mindset is that greediness of 'I'm going to show off that I have a good job because I have qualifications, I'm going to show off that I have good money because I have this new job, and I'm going to show off getting all of the things that I want'. And that greediness not only emanates from that mindset that you get from when you're starting looking for work, but you only add to that pressure of showing off because of social media, and it's everywhere, not only in LinkedIn, like Maga said which is true, and even if you want to have contacts in LinkedIn, some of them are 'sponsored', and some of them are scams, which doesn't help your job searching experience at all. But it's the seeing other people's Instagram profiles, Facebook profiles, seeing all these people travelling, all your friends are travelling, some of your friends are saving all of this money for their wedding. Some of these people are getting like designer clothes and designer bags, and it's like the only thing going through your head at the moment is like 'where do they get the money to get all of those experiences? What job do they have that I have to target to get all of these things?' And so, with not only the pressure, you also are being greed to the pot, and that's what's keeping you moving. And so, what I'm saying, connected to what Maga has said for her tips is analyse why you want to be where you want to be. Is it because it's your dream, and it's your perfect job, and it's like your dream job, your dream career and stuff? Or is it because you want to prove yourself in some way? And to who do you want to prove yourself? Or is it just greediness to think yourself as an influencer? Because at this point you have to think to yourself that there are so many people out there thinking the same things as you, going through so many different circumstances and situations but that are still feeling the same way as you are now, which is depressed, burnt out and pressured and stressed. And some people go into very bad habits to combat it, right? A lot of people might have given up on the whole idea and they're just going to stay at their parents for their whole lives. Or in worst case scenarios, they go into alcohol or drugs, and that's how they cope, right? And it's so hard being in this age of life where you're in your twenties, fresh out of education, thinking that you're going to get a job when you don't have the experience or a way to get into where you want to go. And something that I've noticed, as well as an employment advisor, and especially in the organisation where I work as now, is that I get loads of work experience students that either from college, or they're either from uni, or they've taken a year off, and they want some experience right? Now, one thing I will say for the young people listening to this episode: are you going into that work placement because you need the experience related to that company's industry, or are you just going there because it's part of your module, or it's just for experience and you're doing whatever job like, what are you gaining from it? Because I see that all the time from the kids that I get from college. They'll either do reception work, they'll help in the library, they'll volunteer in the classes, they'll do some radio stuff, but is it what you want to do, that experience, but is it beneficial for your journey? You know what I mean? And so from all of the things that we've said in this episode it's like yes, get the qualifications and the experience, specifically the experience, but make it meaningful to your journey. Make it worthwhile. Make it so it matters. At the end of the day when you're applying for that job and you get the interview and when they ask you for situations or all of these interview questions about how you would deal with different things in the company make sure that you have the answers because they resonate with you, and you've done them, and you know that they're true to you. Right? That's one, get the qualifications and experience. Second of

all is get your contacts right. Get the help like- something I learned from my journalism course, which is like every journalist should have a contact list to get their stories right, but nobody's journalist contact list is more precious than the people they already know. Your friends, your family, classmates, all of these people are all your contacts. Why don't you ask them for advice? If they're already working in some type of industry that you already like, ask them for advice. How did you get the job? What was the application process? What was the interview process like? Did they ask you to do any jobs or any tasks beforehand? You know what I mean? Ask your contacts, have a networking system. And third of all, like Maga said, have balance, right? Take care of yourself because at the end of the day, you'll have your job, you'll have money, but if you cannot enjoy them because you're not healthy, both mentally and physically, then what is it for if not to just post on your socials like, hang on, I have a job, and I can buy all the things that I want. But if you're not enjoying them, then what's the point? And obviously, don't just spend on designer things and all of these nice gadgets that you find on TikTok. If you want to pay for them, fine. If you have the money to afford it, but spend on experiences. I think that's kind of the key thing in this episode today. Have experiences that are meaningful to you, not only for your job searching, but also for your enjoyment and to bring some type of niceness into your life. Because memories and your life is all about experiences and having new experiences. So, make them meaningful to you. And on the same time, that's also self-care. Doing things for yourself, getting things for yourself, treating yourself in some way. It doesn't even have to be material. Just do like a 50 miles fucking shower, like Maga was saying in the self-care episode, and treat yourself to some nice food and an alcoholic drink to swallow your pains.

[01:05:14.550] - Mags

Contradictory, but yeah.

[01:05:17.590] - Cass

In a nice way. One glass, that's all I'm saying. Don't go alcoholic. But it's all about having balance and knowing that you're doing it for yourself and for your own goals. Because this is one thing I tell Maga all the time. Sometimes Maga will call me, and she'll be like "I've been job searching for a week, and I don't know what I'm doing anymore". And I'll be like "are you taking care of yourself? Are you just in bed? Have you gone out of the house and had a walk? Have you exercised? Are you eating something that's not pizza? I'll be like, what are you doing apart from job searching?" And most of the times, I'll tell you what Maga will be like "I'm just in bed, and I haven't showered in three days". And I'll be like "girl, what does that say about how you treat yourself?" And that's what Maga said. Don't make your job searching experience your life. Because that's how you end up in bed crying at three in the morning without having had a shower and with three Big Macs in your belly because you're eating your feelings. Do you know what I mean? And so, you have to have that balance of, yeah job search whatever you want, if that's what you want to do, whatever you want to do. But also take care of yourself in some way. Because if your body and your mind is not healthy, then how are you going to be productive for everything else? Do you know what I mean?

[01:06:41.430] - Mags

100% agree. Yeah.

[01:06:46.450] - Cass

My jaw is so dry!

[01:06:50.610] - Mags

We're drinking from our emotional support water bottles. No. Yeah, I completely agree. Honestly, I don't have anything to add. Like this is a great way to finish. Like, your little lecture is perfect.

[01:07:10.570] - Cass

I was just going to end with what Maga said. It's a journey.

[01:07:13.990] - Mags

Yes.

[01:07:15.450] - Cass

It's not supposed to finish and end by the beginning and end of the day, you're not going to magically have a job the next day without doing the work. Your efforts will show sooner or later. And I guess that, I mean Maga and I have a very spiritual way of saying things because we're both Catholic and witches, but like-

[01:07:41.010] - Mags

So contradictory!

[01:07:43.350] - Cass

Yeah, I was going to say, but whatever you believe in, whoever you believe in, always believe in yourself first. You have to give yourself that at least. And just believe that if you know you're doing the hard work, if you know that you're giving your 100%, in some way that's going to show because everything you put out there will come back to you in some way.

[01:08:09.520] - Mags

And be patient, but always kind.

[01:08:12.430] - Cass

Be kind and patient.

[01:08:13.750] - Mags

Yeah. I know you see things from other people all the time, but don't compare yourself. Life is not a race, as they often say. Everyone's on their own journey at their own progression, and you take as much time as you need. And don't rush into things just because you want money. Think carefully. Unless obviously you need money to survive. But if you're comfortable enough where you can wait, then don't rush things. Think and be patient because the right thing will always come to you.

[01:08:53.610] - Cass

Yeah.

[01:08:55.210] - Mags

Wow. So wholesome.

[01:09:02.510] - Cass

I know. I feel like I just end up lecturing everyone by the end of the episode.

[01:09:08.090] - Mags

Yeah. But that's fine. People need a little lecture sometimes.

[01:09:13.230] - Cass

Hard love. Hard love. I mean, I'm just going to say this outright: if you guys need any help with job searching tips or whatever, just drop us a DM, and I'll answer you because I can help in some way if you're looking for jobs. But like I said, no better than your friends to help you. I mean, you know Jess who we had on this podcast a couple of episodes ago, Maga and I go to her to have her read our CVs and change them. Do you know what I mean? No one like your friends who you trust and know you best to know how to help you. Rely on your contacts, guys. Rely on them because they're already people you know.

[01:10:08.180] - Mags

Hope you enjoyed this episode anyways, and you could hopefully learn something from this one because I feel like if anything, this could be the one where people take something from it. But you let us know if you've got any additional tips on how to deal with unemployment and job searching. The conversation is ongoing beyond this episode and leave us your feedback, rate us whatever, let us

know how we're doing, and please share your thoughts because we'd love to hear from you guys as well. Yeah. And then what's the other bit we do?

[01:10:48.990] - Mags

If you want to follow the conversation and see what other things we do, Maga just completely forgot our script for our outro-

[01:10:56.150] - Mags

Oh my God.

[01:10:58.690] - Cass

If you want to keep up with us and stuff, you can follow us on our socials. Instagram is @acupofgrowthpodcast and Twitter and TikTok is @acupofgrowth. You can also check out our website acupofgrowth.co.uk to find transcripts for our episodes, additional and related blog posts to the episodes that we do and also sign up to our newsletter to get the good goods and exclusives of what we're doing behind the episodes and behind the podcast for the podcast. But like Maga said, the conversation follows- still continues after every episode, so just let us know your thought. And yeah, we'll see you for end of season one. So, that's going to be very very cool-

[01:11:53.600] - Mags

Exciting!

[01:11:54.440] - Cass

We won't spoil anything as of yet, but yeah, just join us for end of season one in a couple of weeks. And until then, take care of yourselves, be kind. And yeah, we'll see you in the next one guys.

[01:12:09.070] - Both [Mags and Cass]

Bye!