

Transcript: REAL Girls Actually Listen

[00:00:00] **Trudy Hall:** Imagine this: a world in which our children become so dependent on gadgets and screens that it is challenging for them to speak with other humans. Not likely, right? Yet many educators will tell you that moment has already arrived. They are experiencing the reality that many Gen Z students are so oriented to screens they actually may need to be taught how to have a conversation with real people.

[00:00:23] **Trudy Hall:** I was skeptical about the idea that teachers and parents could and should—and frankly, needed to teach the art of discussion. Couldn't this just be modeled? Isn't it something that happens naturally around a dinner table?

[00:00:43] **Trudy Hall:** Is it really possible to break the skills needed for healthy discussion into teachable, assessable, transferable skills for life? Yet, I see evidence every day that suggests that we are all in need of learning how to relate to each other, to listen more and to ask good questions. So I decided we needed a conversation about conversation, and that is what this episode is about.

[00:01:08] **Trudy Hall:** Hello, my name is Trudy Hall, and I am your host for On Educating Girls, a podcast produced by the International Coalition of Girls Schools. My guests are educators committed to the idea that discussion is the key to learning, well being, inquiry, collaboration, friendship, democracy, civil discourse and almost everything else.

[00:01:33] **Trudy Hall:** Quite simply, they would argue, discussion is the key to humanity. And they have done the research and successfully tested and implemented strategies to teach the critical skills that are needed to engage in conversation. More specifically for this conversation, they have done this work with girls and have lessons to share with both parents and educators.

[00:01:56] **Trudy Hall:** I will be speaking with Liza Garonzik, a former classroom teacher and the founder of R.E.A.L. Discussion, an organization that did the initial research, designed and beta tested the program modules and now trains teachers in this essential work, and Callie Hammond, a girls school educator who spent 18 months as a Global Action Research Fellow, a program hosted by the International Coalition of Girls Schools that gathers girls school educators from around the globe to engage in action research within girls schools.

[00:02:31] **Trudy Hall:** Callie was not only trained by R.E.A.L Discussion, but became a teacher trainer herself after experiencing the results of the program in her discussion based classes. She then took the research opportunity as a Global Action Research Fellow to dive even deeper, exploring why intentionally teaching discussion skills to girls is so important. Let's start "the conversation about conversation" now and learn how to apply what my guests know to benefit the girls in our own lives.

[00:02:51] **Trudy Hall:** Liza and Callie, I am excited about today's topic, as I know you both bring deep wisdom to share. So I'd like to start with you, Liza. REAL discussion is your big idea.

[00:03:12] **Trudy Hall:** What inspires you to want to better understand how to explicitly teach discussion skills?

[00:03:18] **Liza Garonzik:** Thanks Trudy. I'm so excited to be here with you all today and to share more about REAL, um, with Girls Schools champions around the world. REAL started in my own classroom as a teacher. I was teaching middle school humanities and what I saw in my students, and this was about 10 years ago, so I would say that devices were just starting to be used at the middle school level.

[00:03:39] **Liza Garonzik:** Um, and what I saw was that I was asking students to have discussion in my classroom and yet when they would do so, they got really awkward and it felt inauthentic. And the same voices we heard again and again and again, and the introverts kind of withdrew and the class clowns, you know, with larb a one liner [00:04:00] and everyone would laugh, but when discussion quote unquote was over, everyone breathed this sigh of relief.

[00:04:06] **Liza Garonzik:** And what I realized was that kids were bringing so much anxiety and so much kind of performance mentality to discussion and as a teacher, I kind of said, wait a second. What's going on here? Why is this scary? Why is this hard for kids? What I realized is that I never explicitly taught the kids how to have a great face-to-face discussion, and they were growing up in this world where they could communicate how they wanted to when they wanted to over text or through screens, and so suddenly when they were in a group together, The stakes felt high and things felt hard.

[00:04:42] **Liza Garonzik:** And so I said, all right, let's back up. How can I explicitly teach discussion and skills in school? Um, and we'll get into the method that I built later, but I think that kind of at a systemic level, the way I thought about it was when I was growing up in school in the [00:05:00] nineties, we had computer labs, or no, do you remember computer labs?

[00:05:02] **Liza Garonzik:** I do. I do. You'd play Oregon Trail, maybe Typing Tutor, and you'd learn a very specific set of skills, like how to type, you'd be assessed on them and then once you hit a certain level of proficiency, those were skills that you used everywhere, both in school and in your life and computer lab was a dedicated time during the school day where school said, we're gonna teach kids this highly valuable set of skills.

[00:05:27] **Liza Garonzik:** And so what I started thinking about was, okay, today's kids don't need computer lab. They know how to type, like they know how to swipe before they know how to, you know, walk for crying out loud. But they do need conversation lab. And so what I've tried to build is really an infrastructure for schools to say, okay, we know that conversation and in-person communication skills are gonna matter even more in a highly virtual, highly connected world. How can schools get strategic about teaching them? So that's where it started, was in my classroom as a middle school teacher.

[00:05:58] **Trudy Hall:** All right, but now before we [00:06:00] bring Callie in to have her experience added to this richness, I'm wondering if you can help us with some vocabulary. What do we really, really need to be talking about as we talk about REAL discussion?

[00:06:10] **Trudy Hall:** And are there some phrases that we're gonna hear from you and Callie that will help us all better understand this conversation?

[00:06:17] **Liza Garonzik:** Absolutely. REAL is an acronym, first and foremost. So REAL stands for the four Fundamental Skills of Great face-to-Face discussion. R is for Relate, which is really building connections between ideas and people.

[00:06:31] **Liza Garonzik:** E stands for excerpt or using evidence. So this looks different depending on the type of conversation you're having. You know, in Callie's classroom it'll be excerpts from a text in a history classroom, it might be bits of a primary source. If you're doing this in advisory, it might be, you know, specific stories from that summer at camp.

[00:06:49] **Liza Garonzik:** So E is for excerpt, A is for ask, asking questions both about the content and also of each other. That's a big one for girls - learning how to ask questions of each other. And then L is for listen. In some ways I wish that L weren't at the end of the acronym because I think it's the prerequisite for all of the other skills, but there you have it.

[00:07:10] **Liza Garonzik:** So R, E, A, and L are four kind of skill families that are important to keep front of mind throughout the rest of this episode and then in discussions.

[00:07:19] **Trudy Hall:** Relate, Excerpt, Ask and Listen. Thank you. Callie, let's bring you in now as you have some unique perspectives on putting real to work in the discussions with girls. What was your 'why' and how did you discover this distinctive way of engaging with students?

[00:07:37] **Callie Hammond:** So as a middle school English teacher at an all girls school, I am used to very joyful and loud classrooms. And I love when we're having fun and it's interesting, but during Covid, obviously all of that really went away.

[00:07:54] **Callie Hammond:** So we were limited to Zoom rooms and the same girls who were excited and talkative now refuse to show their faces. I mean, all teachers dealt with this during Covid, right? And then even when we returned to the classroom from being away, I still struggled to get my girls to talk and just have that level of joyfulness.

[00:08:16] **Callie Hammond:** Half the class was separated down the hallway. A few were still at home, so we were still tied to our computers, and I was really looking for a way to get the girls talking again, talking to each other, talking about ideas and their books, and getting off computers. So I found REAL I think right around when Liza had just started and was just getting going and I told my principal, I need to get trained in this.

[00:08:42] **Callie Hammond:** I'm really excited about what this could look like in the English classroom and what I really liked was that REAL was explicit about the steps to a discussion. So obviously in my classroom, kind of what Liza described herself, um, I had had discussions but they were hard and the girls really felt like they were performing.

[00:09:04] **Callie Hammond:** I like that word that Liza used. And so I wanted a way to help their lessen their anxiety. Help them understand what do I need to do to prepare to talk about my ideas. So my girls loved the process of learning REAL because it allowed them to clearly

understand the expectations and prepare and one of my eighth grade girls even said to me, this is so fun. Can we do it every week? And I loved that it was a way to get them to understand not only each other, but understand what they wanted to say.

[00:09:41] **Trudy Hall:** Callie, Liza tells me that you were actually involved in training teachers to understand and utilize the real approach in their discussions with students and I know you've done your own research as well.

[00:09:52] **Trudy Hall:** Can you tell me what this process means specifically for girls and for their confidence in using their voices [00:10:00] in critical conversations?

[00:10:02] **Callie Hammond:** So in my research that I did for the International Coalition of Girls Schools, the Garth Fellowship program, I discovered a few different things that are very specific to girls.

[00:10:13] **Callie Hammond:** Uh, one was that middle school girls, as we all know, but is backed up by research, girls are going through a tough period of transition in middle school. They want to be treated like they are older. They want to be learning the skills necessary for high school. They really value being seen as an expert in something.

[00:10:36] **Callie Hammond:** They don't wanna feel like little kids being told what to do. So planning discussion and knowing what their arguments are really helps them to feel like they are experts and they know their opinions. And then two, the other thing I found in my research was that they really do have high levels of anxiety about not knowing exactly what to do.[00:11:00]

[00:11:00] **Callie Hammond:** And so this method of knowing very much the steps to a discussion helps to lessen that idea of a performance. And they understand, I'm going to prepare, I'm going to find evidence, and then I know what I'm going to say in this conversation. And so those explicit skills really helps middle school girls especially.

[00:11:24] **Trudy Hall:** Liza, your vision in developing REAL has taken off, and while a large number of educators are putting these tools and ways into practice, I believe you'd probably say that any adult can utilize these strategies as they prompt girl-centered or student-centered conversation. Are there strategies that translate outside the classroom?

[00:11:45] **Liza Garonzik:** Oh, absolutely Trudy and it's a great question because I think, you know, sometimes when people first hear, hear about the work of REAL, what they say is, isn't this like a life skill? I'm glad you're teaching it in English class, but isn't this a life skill? And the answer is yes, it [00:12:00] is a skill for the discussions that Callie's talking about, but it's also a life skill.

[00:12:04] **Liza Garonzik:** And so some of the real skills that we see transfer immediately beyond the classroom are things like, One, we teach, I know you all can't see me right now, but there's an American sign language symbol that looks like headbanging. It's like you have your thumb and your pinky up and in American sign language, you use it to signal eye to eye.

[00:12:23] **Liza Garonzik:** As in I agree with you, and this is something that in REAL discussion, we teach kids, you know, whether they're 10 or whether they're 16, we teach them

to use this symbol to communicate agreement when somebody is speaking and adults might kind of say, well, can't they just nod? But the reality is, is that nodding is less intuitive to today's kids and they're so used to immediate feedback because of how they communicate socially, that having a symbol for saying, I agree.

[00:12:52] **Liza Garonzik**: Um, and when you're speaking as the speaker, you know, and you're making a point, and you might be a little nervous 'cause you might think it's not a hundred percent [00:13:00] right and suddenly you see a classmate do the I agree symbol. The speaker's voice will get louder, they'll sit up straighter and they'll be more likely to talk again later.

[00:13:10] **Liza Garonzik**: So I would say the, I agree symbol is a funny one, but it is like rabid. It is like spreads like wildfire, uh, through a school. You'll see girls start to use it on the sports field or pitch, you know, you'll see them using it in science class. You'll see them take it home and show their families. I mean, the number of parents who kind of say, what is this thing?

[00:13:33] **Liza Garonzik**: And then they come back and, you know, at a parent's night or parent's event, they say, you know, my daughter taught our whole family this 'I agree' symbol. So that's a very, very concrete one but just talking with kids, if you know, if you're a parent, or if you're an educator or you know an advisor in a school, but you don't have an academic classroom, you could absolutely teach the 'I agree' symbol.

[00:13:56] **Liza Garonzik**: And really you can have kind of broader conversations about [00:14:00] like, what does it look like in a conversation when it's not your turn to talk? What do you do? And you would be surprised how many girls will kind of look at you and be like, I don't have any idea. I look at the ground. Interesting. Um, so just helping things like that I think can be very concrete and helpful, um, in, in giving girls confidence both inside the classroom and beyond.

[00:14:25] **Trudy Hall**: It doesn't surprise me at all that they will answer the question as you suggested. 'cause I think they have a whole rich internal life and conversations with themselves that we as adults sometimes don't hear while all this is going on.

[00:14:38] **Voice Note**: In the discussion I used to be timid and afraid to ask questions. Now I ask a lot of questions because in the beginning I didn't really know when I could talk or if the thing I was going to say was good enough. Now, when I do real discussion, I know that I can be comfortable playing into the discussion whenever and that what I have to say is always worth hearing. I think that I [00:15:00] have learned to listen more to others. I learn more then, and everyone deserves to have their voice heard.

[00:15:07] **Trudy Hall**: So you know, Callie, as Liza talks about these very simple basic strategies that are easy. I know our listeners might like to hear how this lands on the girls. When you first introduce this way of listening and dialoguing, how do you go about explaining the process?

[00:15:25] **Callie Hammond**: Well, when we first started, um, we, I had my girls engage in what I call a before discussion, which essentially is what we had always done. So I would throw out a question and I would say, okay, we're gonna have a discussion. And like Liza was saying, the same girls would kind of throw out their opinions.

[00:15:45] **Callie Hammond:** The girls who felt more introverted would just let their friends talk, or they might get totally off track and start talking about something else. And so when I would, you know, stop the conversation, the discussion, and I would [00:16:00] say, okay, how did that feel? And it's, it's interesting because even, even sixth graders can offer their opinions and say, oh, well, you know, this girl talked a lot, and maybe I didn't say anything because I felt uncomfortable.

[00:16:15] **Callie Hammond:** Or I didn't know what to say, and so they already know those things. And so then I would have the conversation with them, well, how can we make this better? Right? How can we, how can we prepare? How can we get everyone to talk? Maybe, how can we share talking time with each other? And so if you just start that conversation with them, they already know these things that they need, but they don't know how to do it.

[00:16:40] **Callie Hammond:** And so then we start learning how to do REAL. So I give them the question, um, and they learn, okay, I need to find, I need an answer to this question. I need to find an excerpt. Um, I need to have a question. You know, they really need to think it through before they jump right [00:17:00] in and that process of planning and thinking it through.

[00:17:03] **Callie Hammond:** Even the girls who wanna just jump in and get the conversation going, they also like the time to prepare, um, and have an answer going. Um, and even if they change their mind during the discussion, which is also awesome, um, they know that they have found, uh, facts and excerpts from what we're reading or articles that we're using, and they can support what they're saying.

[00:17:30] **Callie Hammond:** And so that really also helps the girls who want to know they have the right answer, and they can say, well, I found it on page 51. And so introducing this concept to the girls was actually a pretty easy sell because they said, oh, you know, this is so easy. I love that I know how to prepare. And when I had a history teacher, uh, in the eighth grade, she also started using REAL.

[00:17:55] **Callie Hammond:** And she said, this is amazing. The girls know exactly what to do. [00:18:00] And I said, that's right. They, they know how to have a real discussion.

[00:18:04] **Trudy Hall:** Well what's so wonderful about that is that life skill can be translated. I can see a parent at home when a daughter is talking about an argument that she wants to make for something that she wants to do in her life.

[00:18:15] **Trudy Hall:** And I can see a parent saying, let's prepare for that. What are the questions you think you're gonna be asked? Um, and why are we, you know, needing to think through the preparation for it? So I love that suggestion. I think it carries well. So this is gonna be a question for both of you. As you both reflect on your work to date with students and teachers and the teaching of conversation, what are you most excited about?

[00:18:41] **Trudy Hall:** What are some of the untapped possibilities for teaching human skills in this tech centered world of ours?

[00:18:49] **Liza Garonzik**: I am so optimistic about the state of discussion in today's world and the in what's ahead for human communication, because what we have done at REAL is prove that [00:19:00] discussion skills are teachable.

[00:19:02] **Liza Garonzik**: And that in and of itself is so critically important and a cause for optimism. Um, now the question is, okay, so we know that the world is tech-centric. We know that the world is polarized. How can we teach these skills at scale to ensure that, you know, students have the communication skills they need to build relationships, explore ideas, you know, be successful both in school but also in their life beyond school.

[00:19:29] **Liza Garonzik**: So I think what I'm most excited about is the fact that, you know, over the last decade of building REAL our research and, and through practitioners like Callie, you have helped us on a ground level really say, oh, when these skills are taught, kids learn them. Let's teach them. So I think that that's my cause for optimism, um, and the reason that I'm excited about where human discourse will be in the next kind of decade.

[00:19:56] **Trudy Hall**: Nice launch. And so, Callie, what excites you? [00:20:00]

[00:20:00] **Callie Hammond**: I love discussion as a human skill in a tech-centered world because it's much like another skill that I hold dear to my heart, which is reading physical books and getting my students to enjoy reading. And I know especially in schools where our girls have computers all day long, they have computers at home.

[00:20:23] **Callie Hammond**: It feels almost impossible as a teacher and a parent to say, Hey, get off your computer. But one of the things I have discovered in my English classroom is putting limits on the computer and saying, Nope, we are not doing that is how easily they adapt to not having the computer, to not having Google tell them the answer to the discussion question I just asked.

[00:20:50] **Callie Hammond**: And if we just give them that space and just limit the amount of time they have on their computers, they can do these very [00:21:00] human skills that seem very difficult when we're all staring at our computers or our phones. To take those away and they, they adapt so well.

[00:21:09] **Trudy Hall**: It sounds like the reality is that the two go hand in hand. That as you take away the computers, they really need to have a skillset they can lean into and practice. And the two really do go hand in hand, which makes a lot of sense to me. Liza, let's get REAL for parents for a moment. What's your advice to them as they contemplate, they're bringing us to the dinner table, they're on vacation and everybody's in the car. What does this, what does this look like for them?

[00:21:34] **Liza Garonzik**: It's a great question, Trudy and parents always ask like, how can I teach these skills to my kid at home? And it, it depends a lot on your family dynamic, right? Um, so I'll, I'll offer a couple of examples kind of for different, different age kids. One of my colleagues has three kids under eight right now, and she has introduced real skills at her dining room table.

[00:21:54] **Liza Garonzik**: Including one of the most fundamental things we teach is in a REAL discussion, it's totally [00:22:00] student led. The teacher is not sitting at the table, the

teacher's outside of the circle and the girls have to call on each other to decide who gets to speak when. And the way that they do that is if somebody wants to speak, she raises her hand, but then she has to hold up a finger for every time that she's already spoken.

[00:22:19] **Liza Garonzik:** And if she hasn't spoken yet, she holds up a fist, which is a zero. And what that does is it makes it the responsibility of somebody whose voice has just been heard to make space for someone whose voice hasn't yet, and this sounds cheesy, and parents are like, that would never work. My colleague, Emily will tell you that with her three boys under eight, she's introduced that at the dining room table.

[00:22:41] **Liza Garonzik:** And she says that the older two now listen to the three-year-old in a way that they never had before. And that the kids really moderate among themselves and that she, as a mom, finds it funny too because she has realized how much she talks and how so often the dinnertime conversation [00:23:00] actually is like one son.

[00:23:01] **Liza Garonzik:** Then she speaks in another son, then she speaks and another son, and so she finds herself with like seven or eight fingers up, you know, while the six year old doesn't feel like his voice is heard and holds up a fist. So that, I mean, it sounds kind of comical, but I think if you're dealing with younger kids, that can be wonderful.

[00:23:18] **Liza Garonzik:** And if your daughter is learning REAL, you know, and she's 12 or 13, it can be such an empowering experience for her to teach the family something. So that's a, that's a super concrete one. Another thing that I always coach parents to do, and this is more for older kids. This is not something that we explicitly teach children during REAL, but I think is honestly a barrier for many adults in terms of engaging in their own REAL discussion with children.

[00:23:43] **Liza Garonzik:** One of the things that we really coach parents to do is to put away the screen or put away the phone. You know, not just have a phone free dinner table, but say, you know, if your child's trying to talk to you and you're on the phone, or you're texting instead of multitasking, if you're able to narrate, just say, [00:24:00] you know, I need to send one more text to arrange for the electrician to come tomorrow, but I wanna hear what you're saying.

[00:24:06] **Liza Garonzik:** Give me 10 seconds and I'll listen. Or ask the question of, is this urgent? Can I finish what I'm doing and then pay attention, you know, and then listen to help the child realize that the parent wants whatever the child is saying to be top priority and that's true with teenagers too, I think that is a really big thing.

[00:24:25] **Liza Garonzik:** I think they sense parents talk all the time that, you know, kids aren't really paying attention to me. They're always looking at their phones. But I think the opposite is also true. And like I can tell you, a 16 year old girl has a very good radar for when you're actually listening and when you're not.

[00:24:40] **Liza Garonzik:** So, show up and be present and narrate your own attention so that you're saying, Callie, I really wanna hear about your day. Tell me about it. You know, and I'm here now to listen. Tell me about it. So those would be like two tips for kind of different ages at different levels of concreteness, but absolutely bits of REAL [00:25:00] can, can work in the household too.

[00:25:02] **Trudy Hall:** Thanks for reminding us that really role modeling this is a good place to start. Yes. You know, that really making sure that we are walking the talk. And so Callie, I'm gonna ask you to give voice to what your students might say would be helpful to parents who are learning this new way to have a real conversation.

[00:25:20] **Callie Hammond:** Yeah, that's a really great question. Um, and I love what Liza said about understanding also what your technology use is but I think that my students would tell their parents, even starting in middle school, that they need to give their daughters, their girls the space and the time to form their own opinions even if they contradict with their own opinions.

[00:25:47] **Callie Hammond:** And as a parent, I know that's hard to do, but after teaching middle school for the past nine years, I know that our girls desperately want [00:26:00] adults, teachers, parents, anyone in their lives to give them that time and space to make their own opinions, to understand their own opinions and again, going back to that research, they wanna feel like an expert on something.

[00:26:15] **Callie Hammond:** So even if your daughter comes to a different conclusion than you, the best thing to do would be to engage her in a conversation and then ask her, you know, how did you come to that conclusion? What did you read? Who did you talk to and why? And that's practicing REAL in real time because she will have to say, you know, I read this, I talked to my friend, I found this source.

[00:26:40] **Callie Hammond:** And that's how you can really engage in a conversation with any girl in your life and help her support her opinions with facts and sources. And then of course, have the conversation about your opinion as well, and just have that back and forth of a REAL conversation.

[00:26:55] **Trudy Hall:** Unfortunately, we're gonna have to end this conversation and I [00:27:00] know that this work is ongoing and you're constantly learning new things to, to try and to do along the way but for now, as we bring this conversation to a close, I'd love to have each of you offer, you know, one to three things that you think are critical as we think about the need to teach conversation to a tech-centered generation.

[00:27:20] **Callie Hammond:** So from a teacher perspective, I think the two most critical things about teaching conversation and discussion is one, what I was just saying about allowing that time and space for students to think deeply and come up with their own opinions, but then also give them time to find the things that support, their opinions, or even push their thinking.

[00:27:43] **Callie Hammond:** Because that is really how they become critical thinkers in our society who can grow up and engage meaningfully even with people that they might disagree with. And then the second thing for me, which I brought up a little bit at the beginning, [00:28:00] is that when we think about our students learning the internet and exploring all of these sources and sites, they really need to know and understand what is valid and what is not, and then also how to support their ideas.

[00:28:16] **Callie Hammond:** And so being able to use the internet and use Google, but then being able to engage in a discussion with other people will really allow them to process

those sites and those sources in a safe place, right? School is a safe place for our students to talk through these things before they go out in the world and have a job.

[00:28:39] **Callie Hammond:** And so it's, it's a good place to say, "Hey, I found this website. Here's what I think." And then be able to assess that in class with their teacher and other students. So I really think that conversation, you know, it's not just something that humans know how to do and I think that's the important thing I have [00:29:00] learned is we kind of assume as humans we know how to talk and we do, but we need to learn those skills of supporting our opinions and being able to talk through it meaningfully with other people.

[00:29:12] **Trudy Hall:** Sounds good. And Liza, what do you wanna end with?

[00:29:17] **Liza Garonzik:** That was a perfect tee up from Callie because where I was thinking, what I was thinking about Trudy was how, what I hope for the world as we figure out how to teach this human skill of conversation amidst all of this tech centricity is really that there can be kind of like a PR campaign, a celebration of the power of conversation.

[00:29:36] **Liza Garonzik:** Because when you really step back and think about it, conversation is what powers society and the more and more tech-centric we become. I mean, it's not hard to imagine that the girls who are in school today may well be, you know, AI, LIM engineers in 10 years who find themselves needing to talk about the ethics behind the code they're [00:30:00] writing.

[00:30:01] **Liza Garonzik:** We need those girls to not just know how to write code but to have the courage to have a conversation when suddenly their spidey senses go up and they're like, oh my gosh, the way I code this might destroy humanity. Who do I talk to and how? Or you know, you think about these girls in government positions similarly, you want them to be able to listen across lines of difference.

[00:30:24] **Liza Garonzik:** One of the things that we do at REAL to help raise awareness about this, and really we think of ourselves as like a celebration machine for the, for the purpose of conversation is we ask girls all the time, part of our surveys we do several times a year, is how are these skills gonna be useful to you in their future?

[00:30:39] **Liza Garonzik:** Like, tell us, and they have such wonderful responses ranging from, you know, when I'm a lawyer, I need to be able to ask good questions and listen to a witness on the stand. Or when I'm a doctor, I know that like demonstrating that I care, even if something is concerning me is part of bedside manner. One wrote recently that they wanna be a [00:31:00] therapist, and so these skills are so critical to building relationships and helping people process emotions, so like these girls have visions for their future and I think helping connect.

[00:31:11] **Liza Garonzik:** The importance of conversation skills to that success is critical and I think that that's my biggest, my biggest hope is like let's celebrate and make visible the ways in which conversation powers the world we live in alongside technology 'cause it absolutely does, but we take it for granted and it's time to get tactical about teaching it.

[00:31:33] **Trudy Hall:** Such a strong note to end on. What I've heard us say if I, if I have to summarize this, is that these girls really want to talk to us. It's our responsibility to create a

space for that. And the way we create that space is by helping them plan and prepare for how that conversation will go, providing some symbols that make it easier for all of us to understand how to do that then make it possible to [00:32:00] really celebrate the power of conversation to accomplish what they want to accomplish in their own lives.

[00:32:06] **Liza Garonzik**: A plus on listening, Trudy, you passed the REAL course. Congratulations.

[00:32:11] **Trudy Hall**: This has been so good, so helpful. I wanna thank you both, uh, for coming together with me this morning and talking about these really essential skills for girls and for human beings.

[00:32:22] **Callie Hammond**: Yes. Thank you so much for this conversation.

[00:32:25] **Liza Garonzik**: Such a pleasure to be here. Thanks treaty, and thanks Callie as always for doing the hard work in the classroom.

[00:32:31] **Trudy Hall**: You have been listening to On Educating Girls, a podcast produced by the International Coalition of Girls Schools to address real issues that impact the lives of girls we know. As always, we welcome your thoughts, so please send comments and questions to podcast@girlsschools.org and join us next time as we share insights and resources. Thanks for listening; it is important to the girls in your lives that you do!