



**Dr Ron Ehrlich** [00:00:00] Hello and welcome to Unstress. My name is Doctor Ron Ehrlich. Now, before I start, I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which I'm recording this podcast, the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, and pay my respects to their elders, past, present and emerging. We have so much to learn from a culture that has survived 65,000 years, the longest surviving human culture on, you know, its history. So, you know, we have a lot to learn.

**Dr Ron Ehrlich** [00:00:37] Today we are going to be exploring connection, kindness, loneliness and what to do about it. Connection, as we know, as we learnt, particularly in the pandemic, as though we needed reminding of it, is a basic human needs and the longest [study in human well-being](#) coming out of Harvard University, dating now 80 years, has identified that relationships are the key to predicting well-being more predictive than any other variable. And loneliness, depression, anxiety, suicide, unfortunately, are skyrocketing. And research has shown that loneliness can be as harmful as 15 cigarettes or six alcoholic drinks per day. So there is a huge need out there, and so many volunteering organisations are trying to fulfil that need. And sadly, volunteering rates have been and are plummeting since 2010. Well, my guest today is dedicated to do something about that. My guest is Chris Ingate. Chris is the co-founder of [One Another](#), an online digital platform that connects people who want to express kindness and help other people with charities, who need people, who want to express kindness and help other people, and that want and need are huge and one another is a great idea, I believe, worth supporting. Giving humans the power to unleash kindness in a way that suits them. So it really is almost like a dating app for those that want to do something good, and those that need those people who are wanting to do that. I hope you enjoy this conversation I had with Chris Ingate. Welcome to the show, Chris.

**Chris Ingate** [00:02:45] Thanks for having me, Ron. Glad to be here.

**Dr Ron Ehrlich** [00:02:48] Chris. One another. I'm intrigued by the organisation. When I saw it, it seemed to be addressing an important need. I wondered if you might just tell us a little bit about one another and how it works.

**Chris Ingate** [00:03:00] Sure. So for those listening, I'll just say what it is. So you can get an understanding of how to use it is essentially it's a kindness marketplace. So what that means is there's people on one side who are volunteers who want to offer the help. And on the other side, we have individuals who need help or charities that are looking for volunteers. We connect the two to ideally connect the world over kindness to increase happiness, because all humans on this planet know that if you do good, you feel good mentally. So that is our plan.

**Dr Ron Ehrlich** [00:03:38] Yeah. Now, kindness. It also addressing. I mean, loneliness is a big issue. I think the pandemic kind of highlighted. And in fact, I remember hearing a statistic that, the loneliness is worse than smoking 15 cigarettes a day, you know, in terms of its health. It's a big problem. Have you? Is that another one of the focuses?

**Chris Ingate** [00:04:02] Correct. So that's one of the pillars that we're looking to address. Loneliness is [costing the Australian health economy](#) about \$2.8 billion a year in these challenges. And about 50% of Australians. So that's one every two of your friends, your work colleagues, your family members experience this concept of feeling lonely at least once a week. Which, you know, which is crazy because, you know, that's still very much a big stigma around, you know, feeling lonely and this concept that it's okay to reach out and talk about your mental health and it's okay to not be okay. But I want to take this opportunity for anyone that is listening, is from our point of view there is nothing wrong with loneliness. Whilst it is a challenge, it is just our body and our minds reminding us that we need human connection. So perfect example Ron. What do we do when we're thirsty?

**Dr Ron Ehrlich** [00:05:06] Sure we drink. Yeah.

**Chris Ingate** [00:05:08] What do we do when we're hungry?

**Dr Ron Ehrlich** [00:05:11] We eat.

**Chris Ingate** [00:05:12] Exactly. So what do we do when we're lonely? It is just our body reminding us that we need other human connection. Because human connection is a basic need of life. And unfortunately, we are becoming more and more disconnected than ever.

**Dr Ron Ehrlich** [00:05:27] Yeah, yeah. Now, I know you take this into the workplace, and I'm intrigued to know, you know, how you incorporate this into a workplace. Because we are in on it on our podcast, really focusing a lot now on workplace wellbeing. And yeah. Tell us a bit about how you would approach this within the workplace.

**Chris Ingate** [00:05:49] Yeah. So we have pivoted into the corporate volunteering space. And about 80% of corporates within Australia offer their staff as part of their employee contract, anywhere between 1 and 5 annual volunteering days, which is a great thing, you know, but unfortunately.

**Dr Ron Ehrlich** [00:06:11] That is a great thing. And I don't know that many people are aware of that. That's a really important point to remind that will educate our listener about. Go on. Yeah. That's interesting.

**Chris Ingate** [00:06:22] Correct. You know but it's there. Corporates are just ticking the box and it's in the employment contract. But under 10% of days are actually utilised. So we have this huge pool of kindness hours that corporates are essentially willing to pay for that are not being utilised. Why? Again too difficult, too manual, too human labour intensive. The typical process is you go and find a charity. You reach out based on an email or phone call. You bring it back to the organisation to get it approved. You invite your colleagues. You get your manager's approval to take next Wednesday 4 to 6 p.m. off work. It's all very manual. I had a great quote today from a colleague I was speaking to that was, what was it? It was the process of the manual process is preventing progress, which is exactly the case in this corporate volunteering space, which is where we want to use technology to automate that process. So then as if you click of a button, you know, we enable and we encourage our customers and our corporates to achieve 100% of volunteering utilisation across their organisation.

**Dr Ron Ehrlich** [00:07:41] So it's basically doing the hack work that, well, if I had an HR and a lot of companies don't have H.R., departments or human resources, I think it's called people and culture nowadays. But you guys are doing that for them, sort of connecting the potential with the customer.

**Chris Ingate** [00:08:01] Correct. Which we need.

**Dr Ron Ehrlich** [00:08:02] Correct.

**Chris Ingate** [00:08:03] We're trying to use technology to remove every single roadblock that prevents of volunteering of that. Yeah. Let's talk through what that typically is. Yeah. Have you done much volunteering in your time?

**Dr Ron Ehrlich** [00:08:14] Not as much as I should and not as much as I will. That's why I'm interested in what you're doing.

**Chris Ingate** [00:08:19] Yeah. You know, it's funny. There's a big disconnect between intention and action that we say. Yes. You ask a lot of your friends. Your colleagues. Yeah. Hey, mate, do you understand the power and the benefits of volunteering? And 95% of volunteers understand that if you do what you feel good and it boosts your happiness. So typically you hear. Yes. So then it goes, would you volunteer? Because of course, you know, why wouldn't I? Why wouldn't I want to help my community better, my mental health? And then the question is, well, why don't you? And then you hear, I'm too busy. Yes. Typically I'm too time poor. I don't know where to look. Or very common one is I have actively reached out to many charities and they haven't got back to me, which is no fault of the charity because they are typically under resourced or run by volunteers and, you know, they have a lot of applications. I don't know how to do my police background check. I don't know where to do my work with children. Check. You know, all of these roadblocks, right? We, deem and we believe that tech used for good can remove all of these roadblocks. And this is where we at one another are trying to create this on demand acts of kindness or this on demand volunteering platform where the story and the member workflow now goes. You log on create a profile similar to Airtasker. If you've ever used Airtasker, I then search. Hey, I live in Campbelltown next Friday at 3 p.m. I like animals because I've just lost my dog and I really want another dog in my life. What's available in my area list pops up, you apply, you get approved, you invite your friends, you add it to your calendar, you go and do it. You know how much more of an easier workflow with the help of technology is that than the old manual process? So that's what we're trying to fix.

**Dr Ron Ehrlich** [00:10:21] Fantastic. I mean I love this idea and let's see if I well, I think you may have just described what the individual let's look at the individual and let's say, okay, I'm a business that has got all this untapped resource. How do we go about doing it. Let's start with the individual. So I think you just kind of went through yeah really what an individual would do. Yeah. Yeah. So the and you know yeah. Go on.

**Chris Ingate** [00:10:44] Yeah. So the individual is that workflow. It's on demand. one of our taglines is unleashing kindness in a way that suits you. So how do we sort of create this matching similar to sort

of dating apps? The more we know of your profile, the more relevant and the more skilful way we can become at providing you with relevant opportunities. So, you know, your profile is typically your location, your availability, your values, your interests, your skills, your certificates that you have, your tools, your languages that you speak. You know, the more and more we know about you, which you can do by creating your profile that's completely safe and trusted and up to you about how much, how strong you want to make your profile. And then we can match you with relevant events. Hey, we say you're a social media manager that is using Canva and can speak Spanish. Well, there's actually a Spanish charity who's just launched in Australia who needs help getting that message out in both Spain and English. They're perfect match help with each other. That sort of where we want to create that on demand relevant pace for the individual member.

**Dr Ron Ehrlich** [00:12:01] And for the company or the charity or the individual I'm guessing as well who has the need for help. It's a, it's the same thing in reverse basically.

**Chris Ingate** [00:12:14] Yeah. So for a charity you know or charities typically we are working with your mom and pop sort of smaller charity organisations, you know, the big five or the Big Ten who typically dominate the charity awareness. You know, oz harvest blood bank, Salvation Army, you know, they don't need help finding more volunteers. They've got that element nailed. But there's about 60,000, charity organisations across Australia and about 86% of them all could use more volunteer work. You know, you think about what goes in the back end of a charity that's communicating your message. There's your website and your analytics is actually delivering events or there's updating social media there. So as you would know, there's so many elements to running a business. You try to do that with a handful of humans, you know, it becomes a lot more difficult. So we make it easy for a charity to create that profile, log in and create an event of what they need help with. So that could be a one off. It could be an ongoing project. It could be in person, it could be virtual. You know, whatever it is, they create it. And then ultimately, the stronger our marketplace grows, we then send push notifications to volunteers who meet those criteria. Because if you get alerted of a very specific, relevant thing, again, the higher chances of you converting. So we make it easy for charities to find and on board you volunteers.

**Dr Ron Ehrlich** [00:13:48] And did I hear you right that there is 60,000 registered charities.

**Chris Ingate** [00:13:53] Correct across Australia.

**Dr Ron Ehrlich** [00:13:57] That is extraordinary. I had no idea there were although when I think about it I mean I know that I was president of the Australasian College of Nutritional Environmental

Medicine. It's a registered charity. I think it is, because that's tax deductible donations, I guess. Come on. Under that category, do they not, I suppose.

**Chris Ingate** [00:14:18] Yeah.

**Dr Ron Ehrlich** [00:14:18] What about for businesses wanting to unleash the potential kindness, you know, brownie points for grown up kindness. What how how does a business go? Yeah. Look, I love this idea. Let's let's get going with this.

**Chris Ingate** [00:14:35] Yeah, yeah. And I love it. You said unleash kindness, and that's exactly what we're all about. So, the main value proposition we're delivering corporates is essentially ensuring that they reach 100% of the corporate of the employee volunteering days that they are offering. How do you do that? You can't rely on human manual processes. So our tech is a software as a service and we are a subscription model. And essentially we're automating the process that's involved with helping employees find, match and deliver relevant volunteering events that suit them. But ultimately, the biggest value proposition is the measurement and reporting piece. We offer the heads of HR or the company leadership team, because now they can actually easily, in a dashboard, measure the community volunteering impact they have as a company, which one they can help promote that across all of their stakeholders employees, investors, customers, two they can actually help use that information, those insights to help strategize and dictate future CSR programs or future mental health employee benefit programs. You know, for example, their CSR. Chris CSR that stands for corporate social responsibility.

**Dr Ron Ehrlich** [00:15:59] So okay, good, good.

**Chris Ingate** [00:16:01] Ultimately a company or head of HR or the leadership tank say, hey, last year 80% of our staff engaged with environmentally focused charities or in fact the environment is obviously an important value of our staff. So maybe it would make sense to have environment as one of our corporate values or as part of our social responsibility programs. So let's partner with more environmental, organisations or let's donate to more organisations, or let's bring in more environmentally focussed thought leadership webinars. Essentially you'll be able to actually understand what your staff are engaging with so you can make your responsible programs more relevant to them as well.

**Dr Ron Ehrlich** [00:16:50] You know, I mean, there's two sides to this. One is the person giving and the other is the person getting the help. And you mentioned, police checks that are obviously

important because you're taking on quite a responsibility here, aren't you? And connecting people tell us about some of those checks and balances that work both ways. Yeah.

**Chris Ingate** [00:17:12] You know, again, for those listening who have tried, you know, I've obviously gone through that process myself. Typically you have to get, what is it, 100 points of verification. You then have to go into a New South Wales, service account of what they call service. The government may get you right where you get your license from my service.

**Dr Ron Ehrlich** [00:17:34] New South Wales. Yeah. You know, in New South Wales it's called service New South Wales.

**Chris Ingate** [00:17:39] There you go.

**Dr Ron Ehrlich** [00:17:39] In every state I'm sure there would be that the government service. Correct?

**Chris Ingate** [00:17:43] Correct. Yeah. You have to book. You have to book your appointment which typically, you know, is a couple of weeks in advance. You go in and you wait in line and it's a few hours. You know, it's a manual nightmare of a process. Yeah. We have AI, we are sending people to the moon. We're sending people to Mars. You're telling me that that is the easiest, best way to do a police background check? Yeah, I don't think so. So we're currently in conversations with the governments about ways we can improve that process. Yeah. And making sure it is still safe. And you're still proving and verifying yourself with the necessary licenses and reference checks. But let's use technology to do the heavy lifting. So that's where we want to automate it. And the more certificates, you know, there's food and culinary certificates. So to prove that you're safe handler. If you're working at a food charity, for example, you know, obviously your driver's license is needed if you're driving, you know, the elderly in a minivan to certain events. Ultimately we want to make as many certificates or as many verification checks as automated and as easy as possible. More people get more verified, more high. The chance of connecting a relevant volunteer with a relevant event.

**Dr Ron Ehrlich** [00:19:03] And what about the organisations themselves? I mean, 60,000 charities. That's. How does one do a check on that? You know, like a police check if you like.

**Chris Ingate** [00:19:16] Yeah. So the ACNC, which is the Australian Commission, something for charities. Yeah. They all have a C and C verified numbers. So in our back end when a charity applies

to our program, we double check that they are a verified approved charity based on the work that the Australian government do. And ultimately that tells us that they're a verified, approved charity because the Australian government does all of those, verification checks. So we're not reinventing the wheel. We're obviously trusting what the government, you know, the work they do in approving those charities in the first place.

**Dr Ron Ehrlich** [00:19:55] Wow. Chris, it's certainly an exciting, initiative. I mean, I think dating apps have fulfilled a very important, social function in this day and age. And this is a dating app for kindness, really, isn't it?

**Chris Ingate** [00:20:10] Correct. And that was actually one of our sort of initial ideas early on which we may end up pivoting into is, well, you know, I was listening to this podcast, yesterday, a few days ago, essentially, that dating apps on the internet is the new normal way of meeting people. But what are the typical dating apps? Do their best of photos. They're based off cheesy one liners, and they're based off just, you know, 1 or 2 sentences. You know, how are you supposed to sort of in my personal opinion, I know there's a lot of people listening, you know, who have found their true partners in their love of dating apps. Yeah. So, yeah. Congratulations. But for me. Yeah. How you just, you know, how you are aligned with someone you know? Based off a photo and a one sentence. But back to our initial sort of potential idea. Was you date. And the only way you can meet each other is if you go and complete a volunteering event together. So one of the profiles is, hey, I like volunteering, animals, homelessness, you know, mental health. And then it puts up a relevant volunteering opportunity, which is both based on your availability. And then you go and date and get to know each other over a group volunteering session, which I think would be a very, very cool way to meet your future partner. You know, the first time you met was over a shared value and a shared purpose of volunteering. You know what a positive mindset you're in. If you're both doing that as your first date, let's call it.

**Dr Ron Ehrlich** [00:21:37] Yeah. Yes. And can you give us an example of you going, having gone into a company for example. And, they've embraced the program and what have they done with it.

**Chris Ingate** [00:21:49] Yeah. So last week.

**Dr Ron Ehrlich** [00:21:50] You don't have to mention specific names. Chris will keep the names, protect the, you know, the anonymity.

**Chris Ingate** [00:21:58] No more than happy to you know, these charities. That's why they're working with us is to increase their awareness and to engage volunteers. Last Sunday or the Sunday before



one another, we organised a group of about 12 individuals to go into a wonderful charity organisation called Our Big Kitchen. They are based out of Bondi and they essentially cook and will prepare food and meals for vulnerable people in need. They do about over a thousand meals a week, and they distribute that to all of their different, charity partners and essentially get meals into people who need them. And these range from folks dealing with homelessness who don't have a place to call home. You know, who are living in the streets, were living in their cars, and they get hot meals and well cooked meals delivered to them. That's a game changer. A lot of women dealing with domestic violence, you know, who again, their food is on the low priority list. So they do absolutely amazing work and they deliver all over New South Wales. They take in individual volunteers or group or corporate volunteers and they essentially gamify it, sort of like a cook off. We split up into teams of six with secret ingredients and we have to prepare a meal. We provided 100 meals per each team. And then one of the our big kitchen staff just rates our meals and, you know, dictates who's the winner. But we love the work they do. Another amazing charity we partner with is a program called connected AU. They have an Australian wide traditional pen pal writing program. You as an individual. Write letters to Australians or folks across Australia who are experiencing isolation and loneliness. And one of the sessions, you know, we did a breathwork and a meditation session beforehand, which essentially gave the opportunity for everyone to be grounded and to release from their worries. And then we went into about a half an hour of writing these letters, and about of the 15 people we did it. We had three people who ended up bursting out in tears, you know, joyful tears and happy tears, but just they couldn't couldn't remember the last time they sat distracted, free, no phones, no technology and just wrote out their feelings on paper. You know, a traditional handwritten note is just an amazing way to communicate. So they do fabulous things and, you know, they're just two examples where charity agnostic. We work with about 60 different charities across Australia. Relove is one who distribute furniture and create homes for people in need based out of botany. You know, they are fantastic. Thread together they distribute brand new clothing. So all retailers in Australia know that they sell one third of their product full price, one third of their product discounted price and one third of their brand new products go directly into landfill, which is crazy.

**Dr Ron Ehrlich** [00:25:13] Oh My God.

**Chris Ingate** [00:25:13] One third! And these are brand new items with price tags still on them. So thread together, act as that middleman, stop those brand new clothes going to landfill and just redistribute them. But yeah, there a couple of examples for people listening. You know, if you're another charity, please feel free to reach out. We'd be more than happy to work with you to help you find more volunteers, because, yeah, our entire goal is to help all of those 60,000 charities find more volunteers so they can increase their social impact, do what they're doing more frequently, you know, more charities doing better things, better world in all their different categories.

**Dr Ron Ehrlich** [00:25:53] And. And can you give us an example? And I'm happy that you mentioned the names because of the companies that have given it a go and what they did.

**Chris Ingate** [00:26:04] Yeah. So the corporate platform is we are offering that and launching that in Q1. So that's not ready just yet, but we're in great conversations. Some innovative corporates like Nova, obviously Nova 969, the radio station, they are potentially going to be one of our leading legacy early adopter partners. And click view, which is the educational tech. They are part of the yacht power, which is the e-commerce tech brand, Jcdecaux, which is the global outdoor advertising company ATG construction, which is a construction group. You know, this just proves that we are industry agnostic. And again, human kindness and human volunteering does not discriminate. Every single human on this planet, every single community, every single earliest written Bible or written, you know, Testament has this concept of community connection and kindness in it. So we're not doing anything new. We are just doing what's existed since the dawn of time when humans came to start living in tribes. We're just doing it better and automating it so more people can do it so it's more accessible. So yeah, we're just trying to do what exists, you know, today, but that's promise better.

**Dr Ron Ehrlich** [00:27:28] Well, this is this episode will actually be coming out in Q1. You know, 20, 24. So, you know, this is, an enterprise that I think is just so, so cool. Chris, I love the idea of it, and I love the sentiment of it. And as you say, kindness and compassion, contagious. The good for the person. Good for doing it, good for the people receiving it. And research actually tells us it's good for people observing it as well. So it's a total win win win. We will, of course, have links to your website and will encourage the workplace to get behind it and charities to register for it, and most important, people to give of their time. Thank you so much for joining us today.

**Chris Ingate** [00:28:15] Thank you Ron, it's a pleasure.

**Dr Ron Ehrlich** [00:28:17] Well, I think it's just such a great initiative. And when I heard about it, I really wanted to support it and make you aware of it as well. So many organisations. I was surprised to hear that in many employment contracts, and it may be in your own employment contract, it might be worth going and reading the fine print that written into those employment contracts. The ability for you to donate your time for between one and maybe five days and be paid for it by your own employee, employer, and that's a huge resource that is clearly being under utilised. And so many companies, particularly small companies in Australia, just do not have the bandwidth. They don't or many don't have a HR. I think it's called culture. And people now they don't even have an HR person on their team. So organising and connecting with charities that need it. And how about that? 60,000 charities registered in Australia. I was blown away by that too. So there is a great resource within work contracts. There is a great desire. I mean, companies are recognising that there is a social need to contribute to society, and I applaud businesses. I think the workplaces where some great things are going to happen in the future, wellbeing in the workplace, terrific social enterprise in the workplace, terrific environmental responsibility. Well, that's a subject we'll explore in another podcast. But social impact is something that a lot of companies and a lot of people feel passionate about, but just can't

connect with people easily in a timely way. And that's what one another is about. And we will, of course, have links to that in our show notes, but it's simply one another.io. One another. Okay, I. So it doesn't get much simpler than that. I hope this finds you. Well, until next time. This is doctor Ron Ehrlich.

[00:30:32] This podcast provides general information and discussion about medicine, health, and related subjects. The content is not intended and should not be construed as medical advice, or as a substitute for care by a qualified medical practitioner. If you or any other person has a medical concern, he or she should consult with an appropriately qualified medical practitioner. Guests who speak in this podcast express their own opinions, experiences and conclusions.