Bonus - Jo Featuring on the You Are Not A Frog Podcast with Rachel Morris Transcript

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Podcast intro and welcome

Welcome to the Startup Support Surgery podcast, where we light the entrepreneurial spark in medics and healthcare professionals. Join me, Dr. Jo Watkins, GP, business coach and co-founder of The How People, on a journey to discover where your medical know-how meets the business world.

This will help you find some clarity on how to balance work, passions and family so that you can gain more freedom and control over your life but also continue to help people, which is actually why most of us went into medicine to start with.

Embarking on this entrepreneurial adventure is not easy. It is a roller coaster of emotions, but it's hugely rewarding and exciting in the process. Drawing in on my 20 years of blending medicine and business as a GP, I am here to share experiences, insights and lessons.

Expect lively chats, expert interviews and real life stories from medics who have taken their own path. Let's break free from traditional healthcare norms and explore more innovative ways of making a real difference to people's health and wellbeing, along with paving the way for a brighter future for us as healthcare professionals.

Oh, don't miss my free PDF called From Stethoscope to Startup, which is an 11-page guide in the show notes full of practical help and advice. This is your roadmap to kick-starting your journey with us.

Enjoy the Show.

Returning episode with Rachel Morris

Well, hello. It's been a little while, but this is the beginning of a series of six special episodes over the summer. I'm not going to spoil it too much because we are going kick off in a couple of weeks.

But I wanted to put this podcast onto my channel. When I recorded this pod cast with the brilliant Rachel Morris from you are not a frog. We agreed that it could go out on both of our channels.

So Here it is. You may well have heard it before, you may have well heard on her channel, but I have had so many DMs and emails about this episode. It was actually two years ago, pretty much to the day that the podcast that I had recorded with Rachel two year ago went out live.

At that time, I didn't really have a system. I don't have really a way to be able to help people. But I knew that wanted to grow what I'd been doing a little bit on the side.

with a couple of clients and I knew I wanted to get out there and help medics and healthcare professionals to, get the confidence and the clarity to be able to go out and start their own thing.

So this feels like a real kind of coming of age recording now, two years later, Rachel and chatting about everything. We cover some really, really important stuff here, not just for people that want to start a business, but people who are wanting to do something else outside of their day job.

Honestly, I love working with Rachel so much. She's fantastic. she's got sooo much knowledge on this subject. So enjoy and I will be back probably in two weeks time with a first episode of six over the summer and then we'll be into series series three proper starting in September.

So I look forward to being in your earbuds wherever you are on your walk, on you commute, out on the school run, going around Tesco's. Wherever you happen to listen to me, I am looking forward getting back into it.

Here we go, Rachel Morris and myself in a recording from the You Are Not a Frog podcast. A career in healthcare doesn't just involve medicine and patient care, but listening, taking the initiative, dealing with difficult personalities and leadership to name just a few things we have to do.

So when we notice things could be improved or we learn that some of our skills might be put to better use elsewhere, The idea of going out on your own, like starting a private coaching practice or creative side hustle, can be pretty appealing.

And I've talked before about how starting Wild Monday has been transformative for me, but it's not as if I just stepped out of my GP surgery and started running events and training programmes.

It took years of making mistakes, learning from them, testing things out, seeing what worked and what didn't, and I am still learning.

Jo Watkins' path from GP to business

This week Dr Jo Watkins is back on the podcast to talk about striking out on your own. Now neither Jo nor I are here to suggest that anybody should leave medicine or should stay in medicine, totally up to you.

But if you've been thinking about what it might look like to have your business, we've got some honest and practical advice to help you make an informed decision.

If you're in a high stress, high stakes job like medicine and you are feeling stressed or overwhelmed, burning out or getting out are not your only options.

I'm Dr Rachel Morris and welcome to You Are Not a Frog. Is your organisation looking for ways to retain and engage your best people? Are you struggling to tackle the burnout crisis among frontline staff facing fewer resources and rising demand?

And wondering what interventions are actually worth the money you spend on them? On the 21st of May, we're holding a one-day live conference in London to take a frank look at what's working and what needs to change for wellbeing in healthcare.

And there are still a few tickets left. With expert speakers on topics like neurodiversity, burnout and leadership, we're taking a human-centered standpoint that's unlike any other approaches.

Find out more and book your place at you'renotafrog.com slash work well live. I'm Jo Watkins and I am a business mentor and coach for medics and healthcare professionals that want to start up their own businesses, personal brands or side hustles.

And I m also co-founder of an organisation called The How People. So, Jo, as well as being a Business Coach, an amazing mentor, et cetera, you're also a GP.

I think it'd be really helpful for people that don't know about you just to hear why on earth you've ended up as a business coach having started off in in medicine because you had an interesting journey haven't you via some granola.

It's a bit of a long story and journey to this point but essentially I was a part-time GP partner, I had two children and I was going back to work after my second maternity leave back in 2009. And it was really around that time, about six months later, that we went over to Canada where I have got lots of family and we spend a lot of time.

I came home making my cousin's granola recipe and talked about this on the first podcast, but it a very accidental journey into business. I didn't really know anything about business, not branding, marketing, nothing.

Had absolutely no clue. Very much created a business that retrospectively was not aligned with my values. Created

a monster that involved me being chained to an oven or needing to employ lots of people in a factory unit where I lived.

which just didn't line up with anything I wanted, but I didn' t know what that problem was. I hadn't worked out that there was this disconnect. And then we had a period of travel, and that basically took me into this world of personal development, of growth, online learning, And that was when The How People was born.

We started out as an in-person supportive network for teenage girls. a house standing for happiness, opportunities and wellbeing. It was all in person, it was local, like a cool version of guides.

We were about to grow down the M4 corridor with our plan to have hubs of the business growing down and COVID happened. So the old adage of COVID pushing us in a different direction, within two weeks we launched an online community and we had 35 teenage girls coming every Thursday onto Zoom to be supported and be inspired by speakers coming in.

And we did all sorts of things. It was amazing. The learning was immense. I learned everything you could possibly learn from anyone around me about how to grow an online business.

We did that for the whole of COVID as a membership. the hoof really. There's no MBA, there's not marketing degree, but I have kind of been there and done that and worn the t-shirt and I think that's what made people start coming to me for support.

So over the last two years through various mean one-to-ones, group programs, different offers, I've helped about 50 medics, predominantly GPs, to be able to start their own thing.

The you-are-not-a-frog analogy is all about being a frog in a pan of boiling water. You know, the fact that the workload is built up, it wasn't like that when we first started.

When I was a registrar, I used to go for a swim in my lunch break when I as a GP registra. Now I tell that to Gps, now they fall off their chair and go, you know that would never ever happen.

So the work load has got really hard. so when you feel like you're in the pan and it's just too hot, there's a few different things you can do. modify the pan you're in, try and turn down the heat some way, shape or form, whether that's working less, having difficult conversations, changing the culture, etc.

You can do that. Stay in your same workplace, but make it better for yourself. Or you can jump into a different pan. It's still a pan, so you are still in the NHS, you still are in a medical world, and you might be in different practice.

Medicine, burnout, and the boiling pot analogy

or you might be like you did, you worked in a minor injuries unit. You were still doing the same sort of thing, but actually for that point in your life, that suited you much better.

So you can go to a different pan, do pretty much the thing. Or you could jump out of the pan totally and go into a completely different environment. That might a lake or a mountain stream and it seems really exciting and fun.

But what you said to me earlier, the lake is really cold, it's not hot at all, and often you've got no work and you have to build that up yourself. your three options.

And I think all of them have their challenges. What we wanted to do was sort of debunk a few of the myths that the lake was an easier option than actually staying in.

Because I don't think it is. I thinks it's different. There are things that you need to consider. Yeah, absolutely, and I think before we get into lakes and streams and boiling water, I want to also say that I am not encouraging anybody to leave the NHS or leave their medical careers.

And it's something that people say, oh, are you part of this exodus of people helping people start their businesses? And I'm absolutely not. We owe it to ourselves as individuals to question what we're doing sometimes.

And if life is really miserable, and if you've got yourself into a situation where you are really unhappy in what you're, then having these conversations and hearing about the possibilities I think is important.

What I'm seeing in a lot of people that I work with, I absolutely encourage people to modify their work. to be able to bring on board a new project if that's what they want.

And generally what I'm seeing is that suddenly life takes a different, you know, a, different tack and actually they start enjoying the job that they've hated for the last five years.

Is there an improvement to your medical life that enables you to have less pressure, less paperwork, you know, is that a possibility? And I think that's the turning down the heat aspect.

So if you're in that pot and you are feeling all of these things, talk to somebody. Is there a way that you can reduce your workload? Is that where you could manage your diary better?

Questioning it. If you've had children, you started your consultant job, if gone on to have a couple of kids, it doesn't need to stay the same. Like, why do we not feel that we can do that?

Have difficult conversations, And you are starting again. And that's okay. It's not okay, it's amazing. But you can't come from a place of feeling, you know, can really come into that from any sort of burnout.

I think you've got to be ready to take on those challenges. You need to have had the coaching or the therapy or whatever you need that that maybe has been missing to get you to a point where you can actually say, right, I'm ready to do this.

It might not earn me lots of money, but it's a passion project or it is something I really want to. And I say to people I use the kind of 80 year old deathbed analogy because I think that's the only one really.

Like, actually, if you get to be 80 years old and you're looking back on your life, would you regret not doing this? And I've asked myself that every single time I have jumped into a different freezing cold lake.

I said, will I regret not giving this a go? And if the answer to that is yes, then you've got to give it a. What do you wish you'd known before you gave it ago?

Because I'm just looking at what are the benefits of being free? because you said I wanted to have my own freedom. But I found, actually, now I do this organization, I'm less free.

Or it feels like you're free, but when you employ people, when do you have responsibility, you've got to keep the cash coming in. And I earned more as a salary GP.

I had more job security. I got less nasty feedback. Well, no, not I don't get nasty feed back now. But you know, people can write some horrible stuff online and it feel a lot more personal because you created something yourself rather than you sort of delivering a service.

So what What have you learned? What fallacies were there? what did you believe that you wish someone had put you right? I think what I've learned in the latter years, the last two years is that family and your life has to come first and you're business needs to be built around it.

And you know the irony is if my husband could hear me say that now, he'd be saying you now I have been saying that for years and he has been that saying for many years.

I did a recent little sort of audit of my time. And at the end of every day, over the last probably a couple of months,

I've managed to sit down and I have managed catch up with the kids, watched traitors together, you know, watch TV, have dinner.

We always used to have a dinner, but I would always be distracted after dinner I'd always been on the phone, on listening to something, sending emails, like no downtime at all.

When I did sit on a sofa I fell asleep. I've made an active decision to change that. And I think I wish somebody had said that to me earlier, that actually it doesn't matter.

There's never going to be an end to the emails. It's not going be the end of the learning. there's always going an offer you can put out there or a conversation you could have.

But you have to switch off. I'm only really learning that now. You know, I look back and I can't remember the last time I didn't do that, which is great.

So my daughter is not gonna remember that last I did that But if there is a change that's required within your work-life balance, if you've started running something and actually it started learning you, I think that when you got to stop and say, well, why am I doing this to start with?

I'm keeping the life that you want to have and your family, If you have got children or a partner, keeping that front of mind. despite the excitement of the shiny new thing and all of this stuff that you could be doing.

And I'm preaching to myself now because that's really, you know, I found that incredibly hard to do. I mean, gosh, are you preaching it to me as well because it's hard.

Warren Buffett famously said, didn't he, that a business is defined by the things it says no to, not the thing to say yes to. and I think as doctors starting businesses, what happens is, well, firstly, there's a little bit of I need to prove that I can do this.

You know, we are used to doing stuff well, so when we do stuff we want to do it frigging well and we can do well. The problem is you can't do anything, but you cannot do everything.

But I do think it is a mistake if we always think that thing has to be outside of medicine because it can be even harder than what you've got now. So it's a question of don't throw the baby out of the bath water unless you're really, really short.

Absolutely. And a friend of mine who is married to a medic, he's a business guy, they live out in New Zealand. He always says to me, I'm just flabbergasted that you guys work in this very linear fashion.

Often you've made these decisions at 14, 15, this is what you want to do. Then you get to this place when you're 30, 31, you become a consultant, you became a GP and then that's it for the rest of your working life.

Whereas in business you generally move position every four to five years once you reach that senior place and you do have that change and that excitement and growth.

I do think that we can get very stale.

Freedom, family, and business boundaries

And like you say, it can be within the medical confines. But this part of us, a lot of medics are very creative. A lot meds have had that squashed right out of them.

The amount of people that have done art, GCSE, grade A, this, you know. I think we're not very good at allowing ourselves to bring that creativity outside of a job.

So we feel, I feel we still aren't very well with that self care piece that means, actually, do you know what? I'm going to go to pottery classes on a Thursday.

I think people tend not to do that. It's just still around life and family and kids, taking the kids to all of their classes and everything that needs to happen.

Your own needs get a little bit quashed, and sometimes those creative juices need to come out. And if you can't do within your NHS confines, you see the next thing, go the the course, see people doing all these amazing things, you know, I'll go and do that because that's bringing my creativity to life, which is why most business owners get lost in Canva for like hours on end.

Oh, Canv-OMG. Notes to anyone watching this, if you haven't yet discovered Canver and you've got any ounce of creativity in you, you don't need to be artistic.

You can create anything in that, even slides. I do all my slides in canva now, not PowerPoint. Birthday invitation slides, everything. Brilliant. Anyway, so yes, we can even get down to rabbit hole and talking about Canvert.

But it does, when I talk about the zone of genius, and I think the ZONE OF GENIUS is really important for people when they're thinking about what they want to do.

So the Zone of Genius is about working within your Zone Of Genius, that's doing what you are good at, but also what your enjoy. And often when we do a career change, we go to what we enjoy, not necessarily what were good or we get to where we're good and not what not necessarily what we enjoy.

Now, there is a quadrant in the zone of genius, which is stuff that you really enjoy, but you're not particularly good at. That needs to be maybe more of a hobby.

And I think sometimes the mistake we make is, you know, if you think about how unconsciously competent we are at, for example, consulting. and talking to people.

And then we think, oh, well, I could just go off and, you know, do flower arranging. That's just the top of my head. I'd be a professional florist, whatever, but not realizing that someone else has had like 20 years of doing that.

They're so unconsciously competent, because we enjoy it. Now, not saying we can't get trained up and do it, But we don't realize how competent we are at the medicine bit, at talking to people bit.

Which is probably why a lot of people who do a career change outside of medicine do that sort of thing. So they become a coach or they might go into being a therapist or teaching or something like that.

But when they do those things on their own terms, they become a business owner. And I think whatever the business is, whether you're a coach, a therapist, or a flower arranger, you know, tutor, whatever it is.

You are in charge of your own diary, your marketing, and whether somebody actually becomes a bum on a seat. We're very, very good as medics. Very bright people generally.

Avid learners. They're good at creating amazing things. like minutes of sitting in a dark room creating this magical thing and then just sort of opening the door and expecting everybody to come and find you and that just doesn't happen so actually irrespective of what you're selling the issues come around.

I've got to start being a good writer. I have to write good content that is persuasive and converts people into understanding what I do. That's a work in progress for everybody.

People just run a mile. This is the sort of thing that that is needed, whatever you're selling, if you are selling a coffee cup or if your selling an hour of coaching.

Those are the things that are required to build a business. I remember being on a Business Course and they were saying that the biggest reason why business fails is not because they don't have a good product, because I can guarantee that probably what you your granola was brilliant and like if a medic retrains to be a coach or retrain some sort of creating your products probably great but what's happened is you haven't got route to market.

How are you even going to price it? How you going negotiate that sort stuff? We're not used to doing as doctors. Luckily we have enough patients in the UK and you don't really need to yourself in any way you like saying, no, don't come, but sales is like, and then you need all that confidence, that mindset stuff.

And I can't really tell them that that's, oh, it's a completely different kettle of fish. Which we need to learn. So I think what I see is people frustrated.

Then I say to them, look, can we go back to the first day that you were a GP registrar or your first working on the wards? How comfortable were you feeling then?

You know, how confident were that were doing a great job? And the answer is always no. I remember that first day vividly trying to go from 20 minutes to 10 minutes thinking, how on earth am I ever going to do that?

And now we don't think twice about that. So we are learning every day and growing every. And I think with the mindset piece around doing something outside of medicine, I we struggle becoming beginners again.

And actually, that's what we're doing. We're experts, and then we are becoming beginners in whatever it is. But don't just invest in the learning of the actual skill.

Invest in getting somebody, whether it's me or anybody else, to help you understand what is required for you to stand on your own two feet. I know that not everybody in your world is going to be interested in or wanting to run their own business, but there are ways of helping people using your expertise without you necessarily being out there doing the thing yourself.

So for example, Caroline and the Joyful Doctor, I was talking to Hexagon Health Limited today, who are a lifestyle medicine company, you can go and work under their umbrella as a clinician.

There are so many different things happening now. I love it when I can say to a patient, look, if you want to put you on the NHS waiting list absolutely what are my other choices well here are your free resources from the nhs these are great websites but also why don't you follow this person on instagram why do you have a look at this persons free masterclass why dont you consider having a one to one just to discuss lifestyle measures with this clinician you've brought up some really helpful stuff there the first one is almost starting your own business i would say like almost say put that at the bottom of the list.

Do it if you have to because you will probably earn more money working as a doctor in your current thing and you can add in private or whatever. But do other stuff because your interested because it gives you the variety.

I think it really diversifying helps with burnout because helps your brain use different bits of bits of it, gives you a different type of team. But yes, joining with someone who's already doing it.

Zone of genius and creative side projects

So we have lots of people who are shapes trainers who can give our shapes toolkit course and they can go and find their clients and deliver it so that is one way you can do it coaches.

You can work with another organization, although I must say there are a lot of coaches around and I would say the best reason to train to be a coach right now is to use it in your current job.

Use it with your team, use in it your department to make you a better leader. Tom covers all of this in his course and we'll put links to his courses.

down there as well. So it will add to what you're already doing. Because it can be quite lonely doing it on your own, doing a business on you own. Having to think of all the ideas, set it up.

And I'm so lucky now I have a team around me. But at the time I was just trial and error. follow the system, follow whatever system. It's wonderful to meet you, Joey, and people like that.

But if it's all possible, I would say stay in your current job and diversify. Do stuff within your work because you've got that base, that security, but you're then using other skills.

And then if you want to go a bit portfolio, That's great. I get really annoyed with those things that come on to social media. They go, don't have a plan B, because then you'll never put your heart and soul into plan A.

And I always think that is so dangerous because actually your business will be, or whatever you're planning to do, will so much better if you are doing it, not because you also desperate for income.

Because then, you will end up saying yes to anything you possibly can just to make ends meet. But if your doing because, if love it and you want to develop something, but you've also got this irregular job over here, that if, I'm sure with you Joey, at any point if anything goes pear shaped, you've got your GP thing, you can increase your sessions, so you got that backup that suddenly the pressure is off.

And I think that's where we do make bad decisions when we are so desperate for the income and the money that we just have to do it. That becomes very, very difficult.

And I think if you're in the world of business, that's palpable when you have a conversation with somebody. You know, I always say to the people I work with, you've got to lead with service.

Your being of value to people, your being helpful. It's not a sales call, it's an interaction with two people that might be able to support and help each other.

And if you're panicked, if your just trying to live hand to mouth and your business is covering everything in your household, that is an incredibly stressful situation.

So I'm also a big advocate for looking at where we're spending, working to not living to work, working out how much you actually do need, you know, do you really need to be working five days a week?

Could you cut down to give yourself some slack or some room or, some, breathing space? But I agree diversification is key here for people that are struggling.

And I realized the NHS is a totally different beast than it was two years ago, three years hearing how much GPs are struggling to find work, I think for those people that are feeling burnout in salaried or partnerships, they must feel very stuck at the moment.

It's very risky to leave your partnership now without a plan A or B. And I that might lead to feeling quite an oppressive feeling. But is there any way you can change that?

Is there slight tweaks that you can do or, you know, like you say, get a hobby, do something that your absolutely love. And not every business, and I need to remind myself of this as well, that, not everything needs to be monetized or made into a thing.

You know I'm terrible at like, oh that's a good business idea. That's good this idea and the how people, for example, I mean, that was the most incredible learning journey.

But I mean, the privilege of helping those girls through a really difficult time. And the now watching them go off to university, some of them the older ones have gone off university keeping in touch with them seeing the mentors that we work with what they've gone on to do.

You know, we didn't pay ourselves a wage from that business, but we have had the Most incredible relationships and being honored to watch watch these girls grow up.

And I would do that again in a heartbeat because of that. So if it's in you and you think about it all the time and think you would regret it if you didn't make it come alive, then I think it is worth giving it a go.

But just be mindful that anything that you do can take over every aspect of your life, particularly if your of a certain character that I that we both are.

That's really tough for people around you. It can be, but I would also challenge that and say, you know, maybe we're saying that because we are both women, Joey.

And I wonder if we were guys, we'd be like, yeah, go get an entrepreneur. But when you've got the mum guilt, well, my business has taken me away. I'm so much more invested in what I do now, just because I really, really enjoy it.

My slight workaholism, if anyone wants to hear about me setting boundaries around my work, I've just released a couple of ones with Alisa Cant, a behavior change coach, where we really dive down deep into, you know, how do we set boundaries around our work and what is it that's stopping me?

Because I love what I do and much more invested in it than I have ever been and I absolutely love it. And so it's not because I'm going, oh, no, I've got to do more work.

I really want to just read that. Want to see that? I am doing courses in my spare time. Doing online courses about how to podcast and how interesting.

And I think that's the thing. Do something that interests you. Don't ever do something because you think it's going to be a money spinner.

Building a business: marketing, sales, and niche

That is like the quickest way to burn out or really, really hate what you do. Absolutely. I'm sitting here today and I am in my parents' flat and came here at nine o'clock this morning.

This is probably the longest I've had working on my business, I've recorded a couple of podcasts, had a few meetings, done emails and newsletters and lots of stuff.

I haven't done the school run either side. That's the first time I have ever done that when it hasn't been going to work as a GP. Stacks of mum guilt from it from my direction for sure and and I love what I do I could sit here all night I get completely lost in it.

I Love nothing more, but I think therefore I I Do sometimes or I have historically struggled to to switch off because I enjoy it so much And you know there was one time where somebody asked me what?

I did for self-care And I said well, I don't need to do much because but basically like businesses self care for me I absolutely love it and she was horrified But I've stopped that now, but I think that was the point where I thought, actually, I really need to not think of it quite that way.

So yeah, there's heaps of mum-girl, heeps of, like you say, definitely a different thing about being a female. And I this drive to want to make it work, when you do do stuff outside of the day job that we've trained to do and that were all quite good at, you're going to have your doubters.

You're gonna have people that are like, well, why are you doing this? What are doing for? Like, what are trying to prove? You know, who are your trying prove this to?

And who knows what that is, and what voice that, but it's there. And I think a lot of people are striving to to proof

something either to themselves, their previous selves, the future selves or a chemistry teacher in my experience.

Yeah. I would also say that if you I had episodes of burnout when you were a doctor. If you do your own thing, your business, you'll probably have episodes a burnout too, because you take yourself with you.

You'll end up working just as hard on the new idea. you will still struggle with setting boundaries. The biggest thing I struggle is giving difficult feedback to people, actually saying what my needs are and when they aren't met and, when things haven't gone quite right, giving that difficult as a GP, which is probably why I'm so obsessed with it.

So that will always still come back to bite you. It's a slightly different environment, but you take yourself with you, unfortunately. We all have the same number of hours in the day, but what if there was a better way to approach those hours so you could get more done, have more energy for the things that are most important and feel very different when you get to the end of your day?

On the 7th of May, we're holding an online event with three workshops to change how you think about time. You'll explore how to manage your energy and not your time with Dr Sarah Koop.

Podcast favourite guest and best-selling author, Graham Olcott, the Productivity Ninja is joining us to talk about how we can unlock a superhuman productivity mindset without wearing ourselves out.

And I'm going to tell you about, how to work smarter, but not harder for a bigger impact using a special tool to be able to workout out of all those important things that you have to get done, which are the ones that should really focus on.

These are practical virtual workshops for people in high-pressure jobs with never enough time to get everything done, especially for you if you've found normal productivity advice just doesn't work in your job.

So join us live or you can catch up on demand with downloadable resources you could use to claim for CPD, including our brand new say no, cut and paste email templates to help you clear your inbox without the stress.

Go to youarenotafrog.com slash time, to book your ticket. just wondering if it would be really helpful to people if we just literally listed all the different things that we have seen doctors go into and do either as part of a portfolio career or as their own business because I do know that people always say they struggle to know what's out there and I think it's hard because i think a lot of the jobs that Okay, well, the three people that I tend to see that coming with the want to start their own businesses tend, to be either they've done some menopause training of some sort, they have done coaching training, of, some, sort or they done the lifestyle medicine diploma or functional medicine.

Those seem to, be the four things that people are doing and then wanting to go alone. I would add a caveat to all four of those things. There has to be an interest level for you, but also you need to think about what you're going to do with it afterwards.

Okay. And my last caveat is if you are going become a coach, then find this intersection between your expertise and that coaching. Don't just go out there and be a generic coach helping everyone with everything.

Where does this fit into your expertise and be as niche as possible? Because there are lots of people out there claiming to do the same thing and help the people.

As our American colleagues would say, the riches are in the niches. The riches ARE in nichers, correct. If anyone's interested in why, because if you are, say, maybe say you're a gardening expert and you really good at growing plants in small gardens, you meet someone at a party and go, do you know anyone who wants to learn how to garden?

They'd be like, not sure. But if he met someone who said, Do you anyone, who's got a really small garden that's facing north and they could really do with getting a few flowers to make it look better?

Oh yeah, my mate Bill, he's got a garden just like that, the more specific you can be. And it's just that with coaching or any sort of therapeutics, if you could actually describe that person rather than, do you know anyone who wants coaching?

Nah. Absolutely. Nobody wants to hear this. No GP wants this at all because everybody loves the fact they can help anybody. But I always say it doesn't need to define you, but it needs to give you that traction to get out there in the world and tell people what you do, and you want to do exactly what Rachel said, be referable.

Be that person that's like, yeah, I know someone that'll help you with that exact problem. And also, we're talking about marketing now. A colleague of mine talks about a bleeding neck problem, yes.

That's Gemma, isn't it? That was awful. Gemmer, shout out to Gemme. But yes, everyone wants to transform their lives and feel better, but what is the thing that is going to kill you?

I cannot sleep at night.

Portfolio careers and alternative paths for medics

I've only got two hours sleep for the last six months. Who's actually going to help me sleep? That's my bleeding neck problem. Absolutely. And lifestyle medicine and bleeding problems don't go well together.

So we have to often dig deep. Often the bleeding problem isn't obvious. It can be relationship breakdowns, shouting at the kids, alcoholism. The bleeding-neck problem is hidden, so it's very difficult.

This is where language comes into it, messaging comes in, and discovery calls, getting on the phone to people and finding out what the problem Anyway, we could actually talk about that.

We could talk of ages, but the one thing, don't make something that no one else wants. So you need to talk to people, go, what would you like? And I've done that a couple of times.

I put out products. No one wanted it. And then I talked to them and said, well, I didn't really want that, and we want this. Anyway I made a whole list here.

There's things that you can do as part of your medical career. Obviously, you could be a trainer, an associate dean, a training program director. You can work with the GMC in investigations.

you Could be medical legal advisor. You can do all sorts of things like menopause, advice, lifestyle medicine, functional medicine. All those sorts things.

You could be a coach, you could a therapist, psychotherapeutics. Obviously you need some training for a lot of that. Do botox like you did there, Jo. So anything into the medical field you can.

But also I've known people that have been professional athletes. become teachers, done some mirror art, then dog breeding, gone into pharma and done drug discovery or even farmer sales or work for NICE, doing research, running clinical trials.

Some people I know have become teaching assistants because they wanted just to go in and help. And someone I knew that was really high up in management, our local hospital, now works as a carer for old people.

She has a few people and she absolutely loves that. I think university is a good one, isn't it? There are so many universities now popping up all over the place, not just medical schools, but working either within teaching or in within the mentoring capacity within university.

You've also got health tech companies and private companies. I'm seeing a lot of people that are going with the flashing lights of, oh, I'll match you with a venture capitalist, and we're going to make this business idea come alive.

And I'd be very, very wary of those sort of promises. A few people have gone, like you say, jumped out of the saucepan straight into a health-tech VC-backed business disaster.

So just be really mindful of that. But yeah, I know I've got a friend who's a travel coach. So she's not, she not a Travel Agent, but she is a tribal coach, using her expertise to support other people that want to travel adventurously.

She's amazing. Somebody that's become a jeweler, learned to be a silversmith. Is this about your passion? Is it a passion and creativity? Is it about your money?

Is about money, is it your mental health? What is the reason? And I guess it comes back, we touched on the banoffee pie thing, which I won't go into that story, but when anyone comes to my free webinars that I run once a week, once month, I talk about the Banoffi pie business model and the biscuit base.

You know, bonoffee pies can look amazing but taste rubbish because the biscuits base is all wrong. digestive, biscuit base. And that is your why. Why are you leaving medicine?

Why you looking for something else? why are wanting to do this thing? Because actually you can go down a path as I did with granola, which creates a bit of a monster.

So whether it's a business or a hobby or whether something outside of medicine, something within medicine. Just consider those things before you launch head first into it.

I think you need to understand you're actually never going to be as good at something as you were at your medical job to start off with. And that is the problem.

Also, you are often jumping into a pond where there's a lot of other fish doing the same as. You might not have the overwhelm of the patients, but you might get the other problem in that you haven't got enough people.

Then you also get a green-eyed monster. So green eyed monsters in a cold lake with lots of other fish, there's our analogy for the day. So they're in, you know, it's cold, It's a new environment.

There are lots other people in there that are used to that environment and maybe it is warmer for them. And the green eye, You know you get a bit jealous and a little bit overwhelmed by other peoples content or how good other peopl seem to be doing things.

You now as soon as somebody comes along and they haven't started They've started after you and actually they're putting things out and making themselves uncomfortable And then you feel like well if they are doing it, I should be doing and then eventually you just think well I'll just I will just give up.

It's not for me. And that's a real shame Yeah, because that actually if someone's doing the same as you that is a good sign I mean there is market for it.

So you should encouraged by that. There are lots of things you can do I think the message we're trying to get out there Joey is that it's it it It is not going to solve all your problems leaving medicine doing something different you need to know what your why is and if If you can make it work where you are, but by maybe diversifying and doing something different, that is also just as good and will really help too.

What do you wish you'd known? I never asked you that before, but looking back, what would your three top tips for people be? – I've never said this out loud, I wish I hadn't left my partnership so soon because I actually had a really great bunch of people behind me and I was able to do things three days a week that would have enabled me to be able grow a business.

But I growing something that was outside of what I really wanted to In summary, what I'm saying is that I wish I'd thought about my why sooner. I wished I had maybe kept a bit more balance for a little bit longer.

And I am not saying for much longer, but I left very early in the process. So, I would like to talk about why. You could look back at what you've done over the last 15 years and say, oh my God, there's a girl that doesn't know what she wants to do.

She's scatty, she goes from one thing to the other. But I look back and I know that I could not be doing what I'm doing now if I hadn't had every experience along the way.

So I wish somebody had said to me, look, this is a journey. This is this one business that you're starting now is not going to be the thing that end up doing in 15 years time.

Because I think along way I felt this sort of almost, I put that on myself, or this hasn't worked. And then I've gone to the next thing, that hasn't worked.

And now I look back and I'm like, it's all worked because it has all been a massive journey of learning. So I think if somebody had said to me, you're going to get where you want to, but it is going take 15 to 20 years, not one to two years.

That would have been more realistic. because it's 15 years since I just since i came up with the name bendy legs for the granola and started doing it properly.

15 Years. That's a long time. So I maybe I wouldn't have done it if somebody had said that to me. But I think it is the journey not the destination is a really cheesy way of putting it but you're learning all the time so opening your curious mind to learning, learning from the right thing from right people at the the time.

I think that's also critical. So, knowing what you need is difficult. Ask people, talk to people.

Lessons learned, tribe, and outsourcing

Get recommendations. Find your tribe of people that you can thrash ideas around with. Be brave, send the email, all of that stuff. You will have heard all that before, but being brave and just asking the question is probably the most important thing you could do.

Yeah, thinking what would I have done differently? I think firstly, I would have tested my assumptions. Like, we just think we know it, but actually getting on the phone, talking to people and trying prototypes of stuff and seeing if anybody actually wants it because there's something called the mum test.

Your mum will always tell you it's brilliant. And other people will tell you, it's brilliant. You don't know if it is brilliant unless anyone actually buys it from you.

I think I would only focus on one thing rather than a million things. And I, I will try something and then rather learning from it and just do it again with a bit better, just start something else and suddenly you've ended up with like a hundred different things and I find finding a tribe.

finding a tribe of people alongside to support you. We talk about, I'm in a mastermind. I've done loads of different courses and I met so many different people from the courses.

In fact, we were connected by a different tribe, completely outside medicine, who went, you two should know each other. And you know, so it's really wonderful when you find different and getting into a Mastermind is really, really helpful.

Either one with a business like you, starting MasterMind later in the year for senior leaders in medicine. Just that peer support, I can't tell you how valuable it is.

Finding your tribe and the who, not how. We're very used to doing stuff on our own as doctors. And we've already joked about Canva, going to Canvah. and we can create nice stuff in Canvan, but it's never the same as getting a

designer who actually knows what they're doing or someone who can just sort out the email marketing or this or that.

Just getting that expert and paying them a bit extra to do that thing that you don't really know how to. is really, really important. We're not quite so used to that in medicine, I think, often, because then there is nobody to delegate to.

But I, think in our business, we always say it's who, not how. Who can I find that doing it? After having struggled with an issue with the mailing list for like 12 hours each, We found an expert who fixed it in half an hour, you know.

It's just… But I think I would, yeah, I totally agree. But, as a business owner, you've got to have some concept of what all of that stuff is first.

And I people go to outsourcing really quickly. You've gotta have done it. you gotta see what it's like. Especially things like social media. Don't just outsource those before you really, really know who you're helping and how you are helping them.

Your clear on what your language is, what you tone of voice is. Like you got people working with you. They've been working for ages. You know, it's seamless because it is not what you enjoy doing, but they know how you communicate.

So I think you're right. Spending, again, is like that right advice at the right time. It's finding what, you find really uncomfortable and spend hours and hours on and go down rabbit holes, get rid of that thing and get somebody else to do it.

And like you say, somebody who knows what they're doing on Canva, Polly, my business partner, she's just amazing on canva. and she will just bring something alive in about five minutes.

And I'm like, oh, that's much better. Yes, I do agree with you. I think when you own your business, you actually need to know enough to what you don't know, to now what that other person you've outsourced it to.

So you say like there's this issue I need you to go in and find out what's going on. Because if you have to get too much, yeah, right. You end up with something that you like.

That's not what I wanted. That's completely wrong, whatever. So anyway, we digress. Joey, it's been wonderful having you with us. If people wanted to find out more about you, more your work, how can they get hold of you?

Oh, It's an absolute pleasure. I love chatting with you Rachel. Like you say, I think we could fill a weekend of discussions just about marketing. But if anyone wants to get in touch with me, my website is www.joewatkins.com.

My email is joe at bendylegs. com because I've got to keep the granola in there somewhere. I've got various different ways that people can work with me but what I'm finding really popular at the moment is what i'm calling a clarity starter kit.

It basically gives you the first three modules of my course and then you have a one-to-one with you so that we can get that kind of niche alignment thing like what is it that you really might want to do and at that point if you think business isn't for you job done.

Otherwise, we can like check in a couple of weeks later after some homework. So that's a sort of a start away because I don't want people to invest in the full program and one to one help unless they're ready to make that move.

cast as well, and I'm going to put this episode on that too. So I'll put your show notes below and all your links aswell, Rachel, because you've got things coming up too, haven't you?

We've go loads of stuff coming out. We have Shapes Academy, we've our Beatstress and Thrive course. we have

also got our Frogfest virtual online events for leaders, We got a Frog Fest face-to-face event in September, And we also have got an online conference for well-being leaders or leaders and managers and organisations.

Just want to think about well being a bit differently. And I really wish I had had someone like Jo when I was first starting this. You know, it would have been really good to have someone with a medical background who knows what it's like.

Because I think when you're not medical, you don't quite know what's it like being a doctor.

Where to find Jo and closing remarks

We don't have, but there's lots of skills we actually do have. For example, you know, coaching actually was quite easy because you've got that consultation skills.

You know what an open or a closed question is, for example. So I think what you're offering would be really, really valuable. And I would also like to say, and you haven't primed me to this, that the one thing doctors don t do very much is invest in themselves when they are doing a career change.

I spent quite a lot of money doing these courses to learn how to do podcasting, how do this and that. It was the best money I had ever spent, but we're not used to investing in our own professional development and I would say that's the one really important thing you do.

You set a budget for this, and you say, I'm going to invest in upskilling myself and getting the help that I need. Absolutely. Great of you to say. And I liken it, if you were going to get a bakery on a high street, you'd have to rent the premises, do it up, get some staff, getting nice coffee machines.

You'd spend a fortune. If you're going start a business, You need money for all the things that you need to start business. Having a coach or a mentor is part of that, as is the website and the logo and all of the shiny things you think you'll need.

So spend wisely, and if it's not me, make sure it is somebody else. I can signpost you if I want advice to some amazing people. And yeah, it's been an absolute pleasure.

Thanks Rachel. I hope this episode has sparked some new ideas or challenged your thinking. Transitioning from medicine to business is not easy. It's about adapting our skills while embracing the unknowns of entrepreneurship.

it can be nerve wracking, but remember you are not alone on this journey. Please feel free to reach out to me via direct message on LinkedIn or Instagram, or just shoot me an email at joe at bendylegs.com for support.

And don't forget to grab the free PDF from the show notes from stethoscope to startup, which is your go-to guide and resource for diving into entrepreneurship.

Many thanks for tuning in. I will see you next time. Thanks for spending your precious time with me. This has been a Monkey Pants Productions Podcast.