Dr. Jordan Grumet on Reinventing a Life That Lights You Up Transcript

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Podcast Introduction and Guest Background

Welcome to the Doctors Making a Difference podcast, where we help physicians to be empowered with the tools they need to successful in medicine, in finance, and in life.

Join us as we highlight doctors and other professionals around the world who are making a difference. We have the privilege today of having Dr. Jordan Grumit here.

I'm so glad that Jordan's been able to join us today on the Doctors Making a Difference podcast. And Jordan, would you mind introducing yourself to our audience?

Sure, Peter. Thank you for having me. Basically, I am a primary care doctor who burnt out, discovered the personal finance of financial independence world, and eventually used that to start a blog, a podcast, now write books that try to tie finances to a purpose in living a good life.

That's it in a nutshell. I know you've done a whole bunch of work in this realm and probably a lot of our listeners have come across some of your work because you have been doing it for several years to try to get this message out to doctors.

So I appreciate you taking the time to do the podcast though. Tell me, if you think back, I'm a primary care doctor, you're a primarily care. You went into this world of patient care and these high aspirations and hopes, but I want to hear your story.

What made you decide on primary and then. I know that's a lot to ask, but what led to your eventual kind of burnout with it? So when I was seven years old, my father, who was a physician, he was an oncologist, died suddenly of a brain aneurysm.

He was actually rounding at the hospital, got a severe headache, collapsed and died a day or two later. And at that age, at seven, I saw the world through a very selfish lens.

The world was because of me, because I was seven. And so if my father died, it must have been that I wasn't good enough, whole enough. There was something wrong with me and that's why he died.

I eventually came to the conclusion the way to make up for that was to become a doctor like him. to walk in his footsteps to save the world to help people and that was going to cosmically fix everything and That was actually very purposeful for me.

Early Loss, Medical Training, and Burnout

I was very excited about that I didn't care about things like money I Was very set on becoming a doctor and I did just that but something happened I finished residency and by the way before I get to that part you said how did you decide to go into primary care?

I actually was gonna go in a pulmonary critical care at one point And I had an atrocious night in the ICU where a patient died and all sorts of bad things happened.

And at that moment was like, I'm not going into pulmonary critical care. Eventually wanted to become a hospitalist. That led to primary care and I spent most of my time doing primary here.

But the problem was a few things. One is I went into medicine on some level to fix the cosmic tragedy of father dying. Guess what? I got there and it didn't fix that problem.

My father was still gone. The other thing is, I was hoping I could save the world, and as you know, in medicine, we rarely can save world. In fact, there's some people we can help, some we cannot, but we try to make as much of a difference as we could.

And then the stress of the paperwork and electronic medical records and everything came together to help me realize that this thing that I had felt was purpose, Was burning me out, I was getting stressed, was not as happy, not funny as I used to be.

All these things about my personality had shrunk. I walled myself off and tried to protect myself from the onslaught of all the difficult stuff. And at some point the dam broke maybe after my son was born.

So I have two children and when my sun was bored and I looked at him and held him in my hands right after he's born I'm like, I can't keep living like this.

Like I gonna have this child to take care of. I keep on walling off my feelings and the damn kind of broke. And I realized that this thing that I thought was really purposeful probably wasn't filling me up.

Now that didn't mean I was gonna make an immediate change. I didn' even have any idea what that change was going to be. One of the reasons I got into personal finance is the answer was just make enough money so you can stop working.

I never thought I could work at something else. Never even considered this idea that maybe there are parts of medicine I couldn't really love if I was thinking more about what felt purposeful to me.

The answer immediately was, just, make a lot of money. So you. Stop working and that's how I discovered personal, finance, the white coat investor, Jim Dolly, and this whole idea of if you, can build a strong financial framework, maybe you don't have to work with this thing.

That's burning you out. Yeah, I can reflect. I think everybody gets to time episodes of burnout where you say I'm overwhelmed, lost the joy, this isn't fun.

And I know my brain immediately goes to that same stuff. That's honestly what turned me on to the same thing you and I met at a white coat investor. conference earlier this year and we're both engaged in that same work of trying to achieve financial independence and try to be careful with your finances.

But I know that's where that came from is a number of years ago, probably about 12 years when I first came across that in my first three or four years as an attending physician, just realizing I can't do this forever.

Maybe the way out is to make a whole bunch of money, save, live really frugally and get out. I think that was a little bit maybe immature in my first blush at it, but I was so thankful to discover the world of personal finance.

And as time goes on, you realize you still get to live this whole length, purpose-filled life and you have to find where that, where medicine fits into that.

So anyway, I can reflect on that interesting that you found that so what was your next step? How did you proceed after that? Yeah, I just wanted to comment on what you were saying before I go there.

It's interesting because what we're really talking about is no one goes into medicine and thinks I want to make millions of dollars, or at least most people don't.

Yet a lot of us get to that point where we see our life raft, our Lifeboat, is trying to figure out our finances. But what were really talk about his agency, and this is one of the things that's very difficult in medicine, And people get debt ridden and they end up in this job, they don' see a way out, They don feel they have other skills.

And so what we're really looking for, in fact, a lot of us I think are looking, for is not necessarily to quote unquote

leave medicine. I Think we are Looking for more agency in our life and the ability to find what parts of medicine or life feel purposeful and pursue those more fully.

And so I convinced myself the way out was money. And the answer was I need to become financially independent. At the same time, I happened to be lucky enough to read Jim Daly's book, The White Coat Investor.

It defined what financial independence was. I looked at my own finances. My parents had modeled great financial behavior, so they had saved over 50% of their income.

So I naturally did that. They had owned real estate, and I bought real-estate and was a landlord. Invested in the stock market, So, it was actually doing all these smart financial things.

I just had no idea how to put it all into a framework that made sense so that I could use it as a tool to live a better life. When I read Jim Dolly's book, I started to understand that more and I said, wait, i kind of have enough money.

I don't have to do this thing anymore that's burning me out. Now, the interesting part is. That should have made me incredibly happy and excited. But actually I had a major panic attack when I realized that the only thing that ever felt like purpose in my life, I was considering walking away.

And I strongly wanted to walk away, but I have no idea who I would be then. What was my sense of identity once I left this thing, that I'd spent my whole childhood and young adulthood becoming?

So I was unable to throw the baby out with the bath water. I couldn't just step away from medicine. It actually started a prolonged process of years where I slowly got rid of the things I didn't like in medicine, so I had a really busy practice.

was doing hospice work. So I had been consulting with a hospices company, running some of their teams, and I found that I would do that even if someone wasn't paying me for it.

It was like, I've found the jackpot. The thing in medicine that actually did fill me up, it came a little bit later in my career when I was already incredibly burnt out.

Discovering Financial Independence and Agency

I always reflect, what if I'd found this much earlier? I probably would never have burned out, probably never would have left medicine. But in this case, when I subtracted everything I didn't get in my career, I was left with hospice and palliative care.

And because I wasn't in a good economic situation, i could do it 10 or 15 hours a week as a consultant for a hospices company. and then I had all this space and time to start pursuing other things that lit me up.

But in this case, instead of making the mistake I made when I was a kid by choosing what I call big P purpose, this big goal oriented purpose of becoming a doctor and undoing my father's death, I started concentrating on what i call little P-purpose.

So I stopped worrying about goals. I Stopped worrying About impact actually. And I Started thinking about what lights me up. What do I enjoy the process of doing that led to a personal finance blog, which led To a podcast which really became what my life is very much today, which is doing all these things that deeply fulfill me.

Now, the interesting part, and I always laugh about this, as a doctor, being a doctors are kind of impactful employment. It's an impactful job. And when I was a Doctor doing a full board primary care practice, I probably helping 1000 or 2000 people a year being generous, 1000, 2000, people year.

When I started doing something I loved just because it lit me up and I love the process of doing it, I've started writing a blog and then a podcast and writing books.

I have reached millions of people compared to the thousand or two thousand I reached being a doctor. So my impact and legacy multiplied, it became exponential, not because that was my goal.

It was a happy side effect of starting to do the things that really engaged and excited me. And here's the important part. I never would have got there if I didn't have my finances in order.

And so I think money's important. It's not everything, like living a purposeful life, being intentional, that's kind of everything. But money is a great tool.

So if you happen to build a good financial framework, it frees you up to start really spending your time doing those things you wanna do. it gives you agency, gives control.

And that's why I don't think we should live for money, but you better believe I think you should be savvy about it. Because it's one of many tools but it a great tool in building a purposeful life and that what I try to teach people.

No, that's so wise. I think a lot of people, me included, when you're feeling stressed, burned out, frustrated, we use money or income as a surrogate for our happiness, saying, if they would pay me more, then I would be happier.

And really, I've discovered that that is not the case. Usually people are dissatisfied with their job because of lack of respect, lack agency, and lack mobility.

all these things that we really value in our lives. And what you're describing is that because your parents taught you just good financial habits, you were in a better financial spot than you realize.

So then you are able to pivot and say, my life still is very full of those lowercase little p purpose. Purposeful moments, purposeful interactions, and you were able to pivot.

You would have never been able do that if you are still $400,000 in debt and had a $2 million house and a boat payment. Like you never could have done that.

So what a blessing your parents left to you to have that, And then I'm glad you're able take that and actually apply it in your life and then go forward with it.

Yeah. Look, medicine is the perfect setup for burnout. If you listen to Daniel Pink, he talks about autonomy mastery purpose. This is what kind of drives us.

in being internally motivated and what's happened in medicine. A lot of us have lost our autonomy because we work for either medical systems or private equity or venture capital.

Like we no longer run our own businesses. Mastery, we're constantly being questioned by medical malpractice, the fear of being sued. And just the truth of the matter is we don't have as much time and excitement about learning because were so busy in our electronic medical records, et cetera.

So mastery, this ability to learn and grow. feels limited. And so we're left with purpose and a lot of us do feel a sense of purpose in helping other people, but we also feel this limitation that often we know the right thing to do for our patients, but we can't.

We're being thwarted by the system. So we're trying to live out our purpose, But there's this moral injury. There's all these systems that tell us your insurance says you can order that test and your medical system says, you Can't step out of these guidelines.

And so we have everything pushing against our autonomy mastery purpose. and so it's no wonder that people burn out medicine. Now the answer can be leaving medicine, It's actually building more autonomy, mastery and purpose into your life.

And that's where, again, things like money are helpful because it gives you options. Yeah. One other reflection on that, Jordan, a lot of times if you went and started a business, your liability is for your business.

And I think maybe people don't, I know I didn't realize this before becoming a medical student and a doctor, that when you talk about some of those pressures that come from external pressures, the liability in medicine is personal.

If they sue you, they're suing you by name. It's against you. Your medical malpractice might be paid by your employer, But the lawsuits against you. And so I do think we do.

You're less likely to get sued if you're doing things that you really passionate about and can give enough time and attention and devotion toward. What a blessing it is to be able to spend that kind of time.

Big P Purpose vs Little P Purpose

the busy, crazy weekends, nights, holidays, and do something that gave you that day-by-day purpose. And it sounds like even some of your larger purpose, the Big Pete purpose where you're able to continue to be a doctor and continue make an impact on patients and now millions of people who listen to your media around the world.

Yeah. The only thing I'd comment on that is truly in my form of definitions, big P purpose is always negative. There's no good version of big B purpose.

And the reason why is big people purposes goal oriented and reaching the goal becomes the most important thing, not the process of getting there. So I do say that you can have what's called little P purpose, things that light you up and you love the process of doing, and, you could still have some big audacious goals involved in little p purpose.

But the difference is your enjoyment, your sense of purpose doesn't relate to whether you meet the goal or not. So you can be a little bit more goal agnostic.

A perfect example I always tell people is for me, podcasting, being a podcaster for, me is little P purpose. The reason is I love interviewing people.

I loved making the podcast. And even if after my hour of interviewing someone, I accidentally lose the recording, it was still worth that out. On the other hand, if I decided I not only love podcast and I want to do it, but I also want get a million downloads a month, It could turn into Big P Purpose quickly when either I don't get there and I get frustrated and start hating podcasting day to day, or I start doing things I didn't like to do to get those million downloads.

So I hate TikTok. I really don t like Instagram. If I want a million download a month, I better get on TikTok and Instagram and make content. Now, I could also say I love podcasting and I have this big audacious goal of getting a million downloads a month, but I only do things I enjoy the process of doing to try to improve.

So I like interviewing people. I can start listening to Terry Gross on Fresh Air and studying how she interviews people, because she's a great interviewer, and i can learn that way.

i hate Instagram and TikTok, But I don't mind Facebook. Maybe I'll go on Facebook and create some content there because I enjoyed that process. I might hit that goal of a million downloads a month.

I may not, but if I'm enjoying the process and I am goal-agnostic, if i get there great, and if not no big deal, it's still little p-purpose. It's just little P-Purpose with some big audacious goals.

So that's the difference I make between big P purpose and little-p purpose. Big P Purpose is always negative. But goals don't have to be negative, the question is does your whole sense of purpose hinge on that goals and are you not enjoying that process in order to reach that No, those are wise words.

And I've read through, I haven't finished it, but I have this wonderful book that you wrote. It's called The Purpose Code. I'm trying to get it for those who are seeing this on video, But The purpose code is one of your books.

So I originally self-published a number of books that were blog posts from my medical blog. So, I did two of those. I don't actually even count them, and I took them out of circulation.

And so, right now, my first book was called Taking Stock. It's What the Dying Can Teach Us About Money and Life. That actually led me to writing the purpose code, because a big part of that first was about how we should put purpose before our financial framework.

A lot of people said, yeah, you keep on saying find purpose, but I have no idea what that is. to basically answer that question of how do we better define purpose in our life?

I am coming out with a medical book, completely a hobby project about our healthcare system and what's going wrong with it and how we fix it. That's gonna come out in November of this year.

And I just signed a contract for my third traditionally or fourth traditionally published book. that's to be about meaning. It's the next step. So taking stock was the first step, put purpose first.

The purpose code was second. How do we put Purpose first? And the third book is once you get purpose, maybe you don't have a purpose problem, you have meaning problem.

and it's all about meaningfulness and enough. And so that's going to be actually my fourth traditionally published book, but that is not going come out until spring of 2027. Good for you.

I wouldn't say that you've changed to a life from medicine to being easy and doing nothing. It sounds like you're very anxiously engaged, active in podcasting, blogging, writing.

But I gather from your tone of voice, the way you talk about it, these are things that light you up. You have a lot of passion, you speak with a lots of excitement about those things.

I don't think just because you are not in the quote unquote rat race doesn't mean that you're not gonna be busy. In fact, I'm busier than ever. The whole idea was not to create a life of leisure.

It was to a create life that fills me up. And let me tell you, for most of us, especially if you achievement oriented enough to become a physician, A life that fills you up is going to include doing hard things.

Like you want to be in the arena fighting the valiant fight, being knocked down, struggling. All of that actually is part of what I think is our good work.

Our good is not work we necessarily get paid the most for. our Good work is full of little p-purpose, doing things that light us up. I Think we work our whole lives, right?

From the day you're born to the date you die, you are going be engaged in some kind of work, At points you're going to be doing that work to make money.

Are you going be employed by someone? So that you are going say I'm employed or I am in the midst of my career. But even after you quote unquote retire, You're going to build a boat or develop a hobby and play pickleball or write books or whatever you're gonna do in your retirement.

That's also a form of work. It's just a work that fills you up. Maybe a word that energizes you instead of exhaust you. I actually would love people to start doing that work way before they quote unquote retire.

And if you do it right, you can build your finances around doing more and more of that stuff. You can have both work that lights you up as well as work, that makes you money.

I'm not Pollyanna in the sense that I think everyone should go for the most passionate job, but as you go further in your career, you should be continuously getting rid of things you don't like about your job and adding in things that you like.

And so that's our goal for life, right? When you're young and you don't have many resources and don t really know who you are, you may do lots of things you d n't like to make money or to be employed or try to figure it out.

And you do a little bit less of what you love. But as you get older and older, winning the game looks like doing more and more things. You love and doing less and less things, then it behooves us to constantly build and change that over time.

So by the time you re my age 52, I hope you' re doing mostly what yo love, and very little of wha you loathe. But at 22, we all take our hard knocks. At 22 you might be doing a little bit more of what you loathe and a bit less of you love.

But that's something we can change. The only way to change that is A, understand what purpose feels like in your life. It took me years to figure out that just doctoring wasn't purpose, but hospice work was.

Writing was, being an author was exercising was reading for pleasure.

Writing, Publishing, and Building a Creative Career

All of those feel like a deep sense of purpose to me, But once I did start figuring that out, if I had also built a reasonable financial framework, I could start bringing those things into my life sooner and sooner, and using more of my time to do those, as opposed to other things I didn't like as much.

To answer me on this question in my mind, what would you tell a younger Jordan Gromit the month before your son was born? Or what you would tell someone who's on a similar path, but they say they're in their early thirties and they finally are grunting through a whole bunch of training or you're in your first few years and you feel so overwhelmed.

You've already danced and talked a lot about purpose and finding meaning in you work and incorporating that in. But sometimes I think find ourselves. at odds with that in our reality.

Like you said, you can't do it because of insurance. You have so much debt out at the end of medical school, You can see your way past it. Or you work for an employer that gives you so many restrictions and you don't feel like there's a way out of it and I think a lot of our peers find themselves in those situations and then the answer that we all come up with is, I need to just get out.

I needed to earn enough money to get of this. So I'm curious, what would you say to someone who is struggling in that stage who says, I can't be a million download a week person like Jordan Gromit, but what can I do to find that purpose in my life?

Yeah, so first and foremost, there's lots of different ways to answer this. So first of all, let me give some tough love. It's BS. If you're telling yourself you don't have the energy or the time or enough money, That's BS.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics does the American Time Survey every year and finds that your average American has five hours of free time or leisure time a day.

So you can say you don't have time, but if you're your Average American, you have about five to pursue whatever you want. To say that you do not have enough time doesn't make sense.

Money is a tool and it's a very great tool for pursuing a life purpose. If I have a lot of money, I can leave my job and then but fill my time with other things.

If I have enough money, I can hire a house cleaner so I don't have to clean my house and use that time to do other thing. But money is only one tool and we have lots of other tools.

So if you were a 22 year old and you just got out of college and ya had to take a job ya didn't like cause it was the only way you're gonna make money and your struggling just to put food on the table and like, boy it's easy for you.

You are a high earning doctor who realized you are financially independent. Of course you can pursue purpose, but me? I don't have the ability to do that.

I'd say that's BS. Because you're 22 and I'm 52, so you probably don' have a mortgage. You probably have A LOT more energy than me. Ya probably dont have kids yet.

You probably have some free time on the weekends. Even if you're working 50, 60 hours a week, you've got more energy than me because you are 22 and I'm 52. You have your youth.

you could spend a few hours doing something purposeful on a Sunday and you immediately improving your life and building purpose in your live. even if don't get rid of that job you don' like.

If you still struggling to put money on that table, You've already used the joy of addition adding in something in purpose into your lives for few hour.

Boom, you're already on your way. And I see this over and over again. When people start doing that, their life expands. It expands in funny ways. Let's say…

You used to race bikes when you're in high school, right? Your family didn't have a lot of money, so you had to fix the bike, you have to take care of it.

You were totally into bike racing. you were all over the circuit in High School, maybe even a little in college, and then that faded away. And now you are working at 22 and a job you hate that's just making enough money And you say, how do I, Jordan, Dr.

Gromit, How do i build purpose in my life? And I say you used to love bike racing when you were a kid. Can you volunteer at the local circuit on the weekend?

Right? Their bike races every weekend, especially during the summer. So maybe you do that for a few hours and maybe there's some younger kids there and like you, they didn't have a lot of money.

Maybe they could use your help fixing up their bike, right? When they get into an accident, when their bikes stops working. This is something you're pretty good at because you did it all those years on your own.

Maybe you charge them a little for that, maybe you become a coach. Find people who need a help learning how to get better, how improve in the circuit.

Before you know it, that little thing you love, Maybe it's generating some money. Maybe that allows you to work four days instead of five. maybe it doesn't do any of that and yet you've now had three more purposeful hours a week.

Maybe you're working for that nine to five and you hate it, but you've been coaching kids on how to improve the race times for a while. And you realize that you are a good mentor and start mentoring some people at your job because you see that on the course, you can also do it in this job.

And maybe one of your bosses recognizes this and they say, you know what? You don't seem to love your job, but you're a great mentor. Let's put you at 50% doing your current job and let's use that other 50 percent for you to mentor all the new employees.

And what have you done? You've pursued more purpose outside of your job. That's giving you a skill set that you

now brought into your jobs and subtracted out 50% of the time you didn't like about your work and replaced it with 50 percent of things you do.

Here's the thing. This is abundant. So if you start thinking about purpose first, you put your financials aside. That doesn't mean you give up on your finances.

You just stop worrying about them for a moment. Start thinking what purpose looks like in your life. Then you can build a life around that. At minimum, You can do purposeful things outside of work.

Maximum, over time, start bringing those joys, those versions of purpose. into the workplace. You can switch jobs. Maybe you build a new skill and start a New profession.

Who knows? The possibilities are endless. Now you can argue to me that you don't know what purpose looks like in your life and you're struggling on how to find purpose.

That's a great argument. But to say you Don't have enough time to see you. Don' have money doesn't hold up. It's usually a courage thing. Like you're sitting on your couch on Sunday afternoon watching TV, you have to have the courage to get off your coach and go do something.

Now, I agree, originally this idea of what feels like purpose in my life, how do I build a life of purpose around those things, that does feel daunting, but like I talk about in the purpose code, it's actually much more obvious and simple.

You just need a little help on the right steps to take. I think I totally agree with what you're saying, but it is counterintuitive in some ways, because in sometimes you are saying hey, young person who feels stressed and frustrated and doesn't like your job, add more to it.

Add more things to that. But I found this true in my own life too, Jordan. When I add things that fill me up, I come out of it happier. Even if I invested a whole bunch of time, and I could have said I don't have enough time to do this.

Purpose, Work, and Leaving Medicine Better

When I do something that fills me up or I go volunteer with something or go work in some organization that really fills up, I come out of that recharged, ready to go, full of purpose.

And I totally find that true. Let's look at the other side. If you just sit at home on Sunday because you're so exhausted and you sit there and watch TV or scroll through social media, you think that's going to energize you?

No, it's going to drain you, especially when you're going through TikTok and Instagram and you are seeing all these influencers who have their six pack abs and are traveling the world and running their seven figure businesses.

You're gonna actually walk out of that more drain than if you had gotten up off your butt and done something. Yeah. Even in medicine, I've found the parts that fill me up that I enjoy the most.

I certainly don't enjoy billing and coding and prior authorization and documenting. Nobody likes that stuff. But the thing that really fills me is when I'm able to spend a little bit extra time or you make a connection for someone that they couldn't make on their own, and it's that human interaction.

And I am a primary care doctor, so I have the same patients for the more part over and over again. Also, but a lot of them end up being the same patients that come through my doors and it's all about the relationship.

And I think I told you before we hit record, I had this horrible tumor a couple of years ago and I did not know if I would ever get to go back to medicine.

I have no idea of what my health would allow me to do. I feel so blessed to be able to go back to it. But the thing

that drew me back, it wasn't the ability to turn an income.

I was thankful for that. The biggest thing, that really made me say I'm excited about medicine is I felt I wanted to reconnect with those patients, the ones who I've worked with for years and developed those connections and friendships.

And I am truly invested in their outcome. And that has a lot to do with medicine, but it has everything to with relationship and connection. And I would help those people even if I didn't get paid a dime, because you learn to love the people when you serve them like that.

Yeah, and people make the mistake they feel like purpose is supposed to be easy or seamless. I do make that argument that figuring out what feels like a purpose in your life is easy.

But the act of living a purposeful life, it actually isn't easy. Like you have to be in the arena fighting the fight. You've got to get up off your butt and do things.

That part is not easy, but I promise you it's very rewarding and fulfilling. And so you willing sometimes purpose is exceedingly hard like for me I love writing and being an author writing a book is vulnerable and hard and painful and you question yourself and You doubt and all of those things On the other hand, I can't imagine a life where I didn't encounter all that.

That feels full and difficult and exciting and don't we want to do hard things? Like it's yeah this idea of we're gonna find what we connect with and everything's gonna be hunky dory and we'll be smiling every minute and it'll always be sunshine.

Yeah that's not it. Purpose is hard and can be painful. But I think it's enduring and exciting. And I feel if you really want impact and legacy, stop worrying about having impact in legacy and start doing things that fill you up and it will just lead you there.

Another question I wanted to ask you is, so I know I'm pretty good at technical writing. I can do all sorts of stuff with writing about medicine and writing a good detailed report in medical lingo, but I don't have formal training other than my undergraduate degree.

Formal training in being a writer. And I'm curious, how have you done that? You've had this skill set of communicating and discovering purpose, but becoming a writer, becoming an accomplished writer published, like you said, in the classical method multiple times over with your training as a doctor, do that.

So what I always tell people is you don't become the thing you want to become by reaching a goal. So you become a writer or an author by writing a book or being a New York Times bestseller.

You become writer by reading. And so I've spent most of my life writing. I started blogging about medicine like 2003, even before that in high school and elementary school as writing poetry.

If you want to be a writer, you have to write. If want become something, You have do the thing. Now, over time, if you feel like you're in the arena fighting the valiant fight and you are doing things you love the process of doing, You will draw to you other people who are interested in the same things, and that will lead to opportunities.

It'll lead the collaborations. That'll led to someone saying, hey, you love writing. The local college does these community workshops on how to become a better writer or how write fiction or write nonfiction.

And because this thing lights you up, You say hey yeah let's go to do that thing together and then you go do it and maybe you read other people and they have a writers group and you get part of a writer's group.

For me, I knew I had an engaging story and eventually I got an agent and the agent looked at my book proposal and said you need some work on some of this and we want to really make this great so I'm gonna get you a coach,

a writing coach and your gonna work with her on the proposal.

And I worked with her for about three days and my writing just jumped forward quite a bit because there were certain techniques, certain ideas, and certain ways of saying things that I had just never encountered before.

And so when you do things, that let you up, whether it's writing or whatever, you're going to draw other people to you when your fighting the valiant fight, your going have fellow warriors and they're gonna teach you and you are going teach them and your gonna collaborate and grow and build.

And then you decide, do I need formal training? Do I to go get a master's? do i need to apprentice to someone? Or do you need just get into a group with people who are joyful about this thing?

All of that can be decided later. You first have to start with doing the thing. And that's what I did with writing. I wrote a thousand blog posts and I put together some of those blog post in two horrible books.

They're not horrible, they're actually decent books, but they weren't done well because I didn't know what i was doing. And then I started a podcast and I met a bunch of authors and became friends with them and asked them all sorts of questions about how they traditionally published.

And in fact, one of those people pushed me and said, you know what? You really have these great messages. You need to put them out in the world. and he connected me to his agent and that didn't work, but I found another agent.

He helped me do my first book proposal and then we made it better. It's an iterative process. But if you joyfully jump into things that you're interested in, You will improve and get better.

And when you let go of these big audacious goals, like I'm going to be a New York Times bestseller and instead say, I am a writer because I've doing the thing, um, writing, and I want to joyfully connect with other people and learn how to better at this.

You'll improve. Who knows what the end point is. Well, you can't know. You start off life, and you don't what opportunities or challenges you're going to face.

I've had people tell me that same thing. Like, I'm not a runner. Do you run? Runners are people who run. Okay. People will say writers are who write. And you certainly, no matter what skill set is, can improve it with time.

connecting with other people makes a big difference. Oh, that's awesome. I love that. It's a simple answer in some way. You started writing, you write, and then you just get better and better at it and get coaching.

But at the same time, You had some natural aptitude and desire to write. Like you said, we've been writing things for over two decades now and you were able to hone that skill and ongoing process of publishing.

So I think it's pretty cool. People talk about it, but it just big. thing to go from not ever having written a book to actually going through a classically published book process.

And you've done it now multiple times, which is pretty admirable. Yeah. It's been very joyful, but it started with this idea that I wake up in the middle of the night and I'd want to say something.

I dream the words to paint the picture.

Advice for Younger Doctors and Final Takeaways

Like people say a picture speaks of words. And I always said, I want to use as few words as possible to create a thousand pictures in my reader's mind.

And, but that drives me. That's my whispering. Those are part of some of my calling. I believe we all have those beckonings and those whisperings. It's just so few people are actually pursuing them.

Like, why aren't we listening to those things? It took me years to start listening, to them to really listen to. And so the question is, most people know what they think about, what the dream about right before they fall asleep at night, and yet we tell ourselves we don't have the energy or time or skills.

And I think actually it's more, we have no courage to build a life of purpose around those things. It's hard, I admit it, it sucks. I've had more down moments as an author than you can imagine.

But that's the good fight. You're going to have good moments and bad moments. Thank you. I want to hit one more topic. One of the things we talk about in this podcast quite a bit is trying to leave medicine better than we found it.

And there's lots of challenges we've hit on those with financial challenges that doctors face and moral injury and burnout and difficulties that people have encountered.

What do you think we can do? I guess that's a big answer, but what do we think can we do now with your work? What are you doing to make medicine, better, than you found for the upcoming generations?

I think actually this is incredibly easy. Do what lights you up, pursue your little pea purpose, and you can't help but change the world. I'm a perfect example of this.

Hospice is my little pee purpose. But it took me a long time to find it. In fact, I almost left medicine completely. Thank God I did find this piece. If I had thought more about purpose and was more intentional, then I would have found the hospice piece much earlier in my career.

It probably never would've burnt out. I probably would have spent more time in hospice, I would've touched more patients. Do what lights you up. I loved writing.

So I started writing, but what did I write about? The one thing I knew about, medicine. But in the meantime, as creating all this content about what it felt like to be a doctor, and that went out into the world and helped people and connected with people, helped other doctors who were struggling, it helped patients understand how doctors felt.

And so find what lights you up and pursue it both inside and outside of medicine. And I promise you, if you continue being a doctor, whatever is your little P purpose is going to bleed into medicine if continue doing it.

I loved writing. Eventually started writing for websites. Got paid for it even. Take what you love, build a life around it, And it will pervade every part of your life, including doctoring, and you will leave it a better place.

Do what lights you up. And the happy fact is you'll actually have a bigger impact in legacy because when you're doing what, lights, you, up you shine.

When you. You spread that light on people who need it the most. you attract the people, who can collaborate with you? You teach the, people need to learn and, learn from the.

Who can teach you It all stems from doing what lights you up. Stop worrying about Impact Legacy. I hate to say it, but stop worrying making the world a better place than you left it.

Start doing things that light you and you're going to do that by accident. Wise words. I appreciate you sharing that. And I think everybody listening can take some little piece of that, and it's easier to focus.

In some ways, it is hard, but it easier, to have control over those day-by-day goals, like you discussed, rather than saying, I'm going to leave this massive legacy, or the big P-purpose, as you described.

But you can, in your moment by moment, find lots of ways to influence other people and leave an impact. And for

sure, when you show up with that level of passion and interest and care, the people you are talking with or the projects you're involved in are going to be filled with a kind of passionate love because you doing it because love it.

Great words. Thank you so much for sharing with us. I really appreciate it! Any other final thoughts for the audience, Jordan? I just say that a hundred percent proof of what we just talked about is the fact that you and I are having this conversation because you saw me doing what lights me up, which is getting on stage and talking about purpose.

And because of that, you wanted to collaborate with me. You're like, I have this podcast. I want you to be on. That wasn't because I was out looking to make more connections.

I wasn''t outlooking to promote my book. It wasn' outLooking to have a bigger platform. l was just doing something that lit me up. And because you saw me as my best self, you were like, Oh, we have connection here.

Let's collaborate. I think all of life should do that. Be like that, do what you love and you're just going to find yourself building, creating, connecting.

Awesome. Thank you, Dr. Dr Jordan Gromit. Look him up and keep, keep buying the books and doing all the things. Cause I appreciate all of the you're doing and I think this work is influencing, like you said, millions of people.

And I do hope that those who listen can gain something from this. I really enjoyed this conversation. Thank you for having me on the show. Thanks for tuning into the Doctors Making a Difference podcast.

And thank you, for what you do to help your patients and your community. Your work truly helps so many people. We produce this content to hope you have the tools you need to stay in medicine and to highlight the amazing work being done by physicians around the world.

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See you next time.