Episode #30 - Dr David Hindmarsh - Exploring Social Media To Improve Patient Care (Expert) Transcript

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Podcast Introduction and Season Update

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. Welcome to today's podcast, which is very excitingly number 30 podcast number thirty. I said to myself in September when I started out that I was going to do 30 podcasts in the next academic year.

And so this is the end. This is it. It is all wrapped up. Or is that is, the question I've had lots of lovely emails, lots Lots of lovely feedback about this podcast.

And I know that there are people out there that look forward to listening to it every Monday morning, which is just madness. But I'm really delighted with how it's gone.

We've had some amazing guests, amazing case studies, and amazing experts. I use it all the time now in helping me signpost people that are struggling at different aspects of business and being able to sign post them to somebody who either knows what they're talking about or is very relatable in that space.

has been an absolute joy and a pleasure. Every single one of them I have loved doing. But the good news is that it will be back. The third season of the podcast will return.

I think what I am going to do is do two new episodes a month and then I'm going do a deeper dive into one of the previous episodes on social media in the kind of week in between.

So there'll be two new episodes a month and then there will be signposting because there's so much goodness in there and actually re-listening to these podcasts is really important as well.

Don't worry, I'm not going anywhere. It'll take a break for a couple of weeks over Easter and we'll back in May. with more brilliant interviews. And I am excited to finish with this one because he is a lovely chap and I think you will get an awful lot from this episode.

So today I'm chatting with Dr. Dave Hindmarsh. He is portfolio GP at Eagles Cliff Medical Practice in Stockton in the Northeast. he's also got lots of other hats.

Is an associate director of medical education, all sorts of things, but he has also go a small and growing YouTube channel. He has previously run GP templates.

He's going to talk about this a lot in the podcast. for the GP Federation up in Hartlepool and Stockton. Dave loves to explore the role of social media within the primary care space to see how it can be used to improve patient care.

He's previously an army medic, as you will hear, and he has a family, a wife, three children who he loves spending time with, his dog, he's got a train set in the attic.

One of those guys, Dave, has got the train in his attic as we will discuss. He has a lot of fingers and a ton of pies. There's lots of exciting stuff in the pipeline.

So our random fact about Dave is not only does he have a train set in his attic, but I have to choose this one because of an obvious reason. But your grandmother went to Liverpool University and qualified in 1948. And that was why you chose Liverpool on your record form.

Is that right? That is correct. Yeah. So and she was Dr. Lovely as well. And lovely. She was Doctor Lovely, as absolutely fantastic. Um, so she. Was from Barmouth.

Another Welsh connection for you. Her dad was a pharmacist. This was we're talking forties. She went, oh, I want to be a pharmacist. And he went no, go away and do medicine.

Then studied in Liverpool. I've got her graduation photo just behind where my patients sit in my consultation room. So I sort of like, if I'm stuck or thinking, what would Grandma Lovely say?

And yeah, she would sort point me in the right direction from that way. She had, you know, wish she was still alive. she had a fantastic career. Because Liverpool being a big naval dockyard.

She ended up joining the Merchant Navy as the ship's doctor, sailed the world, has got some fantastic stories and photos, and then ended in Harwich. So down in Essex, as their local doctor married the ships captain, he ended being the harbour pilot.

And that was back in the 50s, 60s and set up family planning clinic, this, that and the other. It was just a phenomenal woman. You get this idea of, well, this very stereotypical, no, they were sort of locked away somewhere.

It's like, No, she was out and about doing everything was brilliant.

LinkedIn Connection and Course Launch

She was negative. Yeah. So she sounds like one of these ladies that needs to be in that I'm reading. Good night stories for rebel girls at the moment with my nine year old.

she Sounds like the kind of woman that he needs be. Absolutely. Amazing. And Liverpool was one of the things that brought us together. We can talk a little bit about that.

I'm a passionate ex-Liverpool university, and my reason for going there was slightly more vacuous in that I was a big Liverpool fan. Still am a Liverpool big fan, but back in the day I as a huge Liverpool fans.

So it was just the only option for me. Why don't we go into that? How did that all come about? I literally could talk to you for hours, so I want to make sure we get all the stuff out.

Absolutely. It was via LinkedIn, wasn't it? Absolutely. I've fallen in love with LinkedIn over the past six months or so. Obviously with what I do in terms of the YouTube channel, I try and push it through quite a few of social media platforms.

Facebook, a couple of really good groups that I'd interact with and they're really useful, was on X for a while and then it got all a bit bit nasty. I think for my own sanity I had to step away and then a couple of people said, oh, I've got a LinkedIn account.

With a lot of doctors, we've go one and we put a family photo up. We don't really invest in it. Then I just had a meeting earlier today and someone turned around and said like, so where all the grown-ups hang out?

It was one of the ones where you see like-minded individuals, host about stuff, be open and sharing about what they're doing, thinking, oh, a second, there's some excellent people out there.

And then I think you'd popped up as, you know, we're both Liverpool graduates and I went, I'll give you an ad. Um, and then, um, sort of falling into your LinkedIn automation and like, Dave, have you heard my podcast?

Dave? Have you had my podcasts? And it was one that went. Dave. I really liked this podcast. Listen to this first episode. Oh, for heaven's sake. Right.

Ignore the previous messages, listen to the first podcast and. fell in love. I'm not going to lie, I got to sort of push it out there and say, like, just like I get this personality.

It was like… I really like you., I can see what you're going… I was doing a couple of courses, so I had a few long drives away. And I think you got at the time, it was towards the end of series one, where you sort, of like where I picked you up.

Um, and I just binged it. Absolutely binge the other episodes and like yes. I get you. And I think we'd sort of tried to then I saw the message for your half an hour free chat, which that was back in November.

which, trying not to blow smoke anywhere, but has completely revolutionized how I think, how sort of marketed myself. And as of this morning, I just checked.

Due to your advice, you looked at what I'd done on the content, when Dave you're pushing out educational content. Why aren't you selling of? This is an online course.

I went, well, can't do that. You're like, yes, he can get rid of some of that, put it on Kajabi, see what you do. And I was like, right, okay. You know, left it a month and, you know got Christmas out of the way with three young kids and got to January and thought, what would Joe do?

Joe would get a Kajabi, subscription. So I thought right. Take a deep breath. quietened down the inner chimp and then bought a annual subscription on the very Billy Basic package that gives you one course.

That's back in January. I thought, right, what would Joe say? She'd say, set yourself a stupid target and see if you can hit it. And I was like, The AKT, which was part of, so one of the general practitioners in training, one their key exams, the course that I was delivering targeted that exam specifically.

There's a sitting in April, end of April. So I'm like, right, what's reasonable? Well, if I get it done by the end May, then that should give, you know, whoever's going to buy it, give them a month to sort of do my content, Which would put them in a really good position.

I said, like right. You've got till the End of March, Dave. And as we're recording, That we are at the end of March and it was released two days ago. And I've got three sales and I am so happy.

It is unbelievable. I was on the dog walk last night. So we're filming this on a Monday. Um, I released it on Saturday late at night and got some pre-contacts.

Um, thanks to Kajabi that it allows you to do a, like a pre-signup sheet. And I just hadn't really publicized it, but sort of pushed it out to my known contacts.

It had grown naturally to about 11 people. So, and Kajaabi allows to then automatically send them an email saying, hi, the course is now ready and available.

Would you like to sign up? three people as of today. And I was like, yes, so pleased. There we go. Air punching. So yes. I say that is amazing. Just that feeling of like this was a thing in my head.

This is now a think in real life and somebody else wants this thing. For me, it was the… Because we'd had our chat and you're like, Dave, this is what you should do.

And you think, okay, yeah, I should it. Then the bit for me was to pre-sign up. When I got four people signing up saying, yes, i want to do your course.

I was like… because regardless of what I've pushed out, still have that negative voice. So I think everyone does that says, It's not good enough. no one wants your thing, you're stupid.

And it's the same rhetoric, whereas actually you need to find, and I know there's an internal safety mechanism trying to keep you in the group and whatnot, but it is so, so reassuring to have someone going like, no, I want this, like what you are offering I do actually want.

Then now to actually then follow through with physical cash going, yeah, well I'll pay for it. It's just next level. Absolutely love it. And just enough in that little beginning bit.

There's so much there that I want to pick out. came into my world through my automation pathway, which is the only ads that I'm running at the moment.

So I am not doing meta ads at moment for anyone that's in this world already and listening. I have got a reach out campaign on LinkedIn that i've done with Charlotte Moldari who is in episode 18. If you're interested in how that works, She is the person to talk to about that.

And yes, you get a series of it. If you fall into this group of people that I can talk too, or that might need my help, You get these irritating emails from me until you either tell me to go away or you just ignore it and you are probably my biggest, like just having you in my world as a result of that automation process is enough to be honest.

I'm just delighted to have come across you and be able to share what you do and to work with you. It's just an absolute honor. I want to talk about your inner chin, but before we get lost, can you just tell us in your own words what you do and who you help?

Because you are, I think, a bit of a social media darling. You have YouTube channels. So for somebody just listening who hasn't heard of you before, What do you do that you love the most at the moment?

And what's this course about? Or maybe what are the plans for you? We'll go all the way back. So I'm Dr Dave Highmarsh. I am a portfolio GP, though I've not a particular fan of the term portfolio.

Much prefer the patchwork because it's sort of everything sort of blends into each other. And, you know, we can talk about sort different bits and pieces.

So predominantly, I'm a GP partner. I work six sessions at Eagle Sliff Medical Practice. That's up in the Northeast. Then I am an Associate Director for Primary Care Medical Education with Hollywood Medical School.

And then I run a small but growing channel GP templates, but there may be a name change coming and hopefully we'll get to talk about that because that's really exciting.

And I am also part of our local federation because of, and this is another interesting one, because the work on the channel, I'm now the digital clinical lead for our fedoration, which is just sort of showing the impact that it's had to me where people have gone, Oh yeah, I see you've done this video on this subject.

Are you interested in doing this project or this sort a bit? And I'm like, absolutely. Yeah, just it has been fantastic. So GP templates was created or comes about eight years ago now.

And now I've been, not going to lie, been off and on with it. I am not regularly posting originally. I was one of those annoying GP registrars working on system one, which is one the electronic healthcare records.

I'd created a couple of data entry templates which I thought were pretty nifty and thought, oh, let's try and sell them. Created a small YouTube channel that sort of said like effectively as trying to advertise them and seeing what could happen off the back of it.

very, very young and arrogant and basically hadn't even thought about that this was a medical device that I was trying to sell and hadn t even gone through those processes.

But what was interesting that even though the videos were fairly niche in terms of what I System 1, you've done some recordings, any chance you could do us a how-to guide on how to set out a consultation, how do a prescription, and how you do this.

I tried to charge them initially. What I now realise was a reasonable rate, but I didn't have the subscribers or the backup to really follow through with it.

gave them a quote. They said, no, that's too much. And I thought, hang on a second, I'll just do them and see what happens. Those initial core videos then not exploded the channel, but started to get that growth of it.

I was a military doctor, so I signed up in the army following university. Effectively, there was pause where the military is on a very different electronic healthcare record.

I put the channel to one side and had it left there, but it just grated in the back of my mind. As I was leaving the army, I thought, wouldn't mind trying to pick this up and seeing what I can do with it.

Because I'm one of those, and I've sat on YouTube far too much, you watch a lot of good content. But on the reverse, really poor content. And I don't know, again, probably that in a voice going, you can do this, Dave.

You could probably do it a bit better once we give it ago and see what happens. Then in the past year, trying to help my trainees, I'm a GP trainer as well.

I've got two international medical graduates who both were sitting the written exam needed to pass their GP training, so the AKT applied knowledge test.

They were phenomenal, the pair of them in clinical stuff. didn't bother them whatsoever. They could wrung rings about me in terms of clinical management.

What they really struggled with is the medical statistics and the administration side to how the NHS runs, all these sort of backroom stuff, what a partnership is, et cetera, that I nerded out hard over.

I absolutely nerded out hard. And at the time, the local training scheme wanted the trainers to come and deliver sessions. So I delivered a stat session saying, if you're sitting right, Katie, this is what it was.

A two, three hour lecture, which I got slide deck for, and then the same for the administration delivered it a couple of times. a second. Why don't I just snippet this down into 10 minute videos and then just chuck them up and see what happens.

Some of them hits, some of the not so big hits. And then you came along Joe and said, you're an idiot. Put those behind a paywall and charge. Guess what?

You were right. This course is just for that. What have you called it? So the stats in the admin accounts for 20% of

the AKT. So I've called the other 20%. So you've got the clinical bit and you got 20%, so at the moment, depending on when this goes out, we've the April pass package or April smash package because I'm not going to guarantee a pass.

which basically is you've got 16 dedicated modules, 10 on the statistics, six on The Admin with a couple of intro ones just with me giving my thoughts, which is a video with whole load of waffly text as well.

So if say you're in the middle of clinic and you can't afford to have a videos, you could just read it. Over a hundred questions dedicated to that area aswell, so that hopefully you almost like maximize your revision in those areas.

So then you can spend the rest of your time doing clinical, which is such a huge, huge topic and anything could pop up. It just hopefully just maximize you time with it.

Um, so yeah, I've got a April package for 30 pounds and then sort of like then offering a one month, three month and six month sort package, depending on how you revise and how much time we've left basically.

And this is just like music to my ears because this, as anybody who's listening, who has been unfortunate enough to have a one-to-one with me and has come to me with the idea that they can help anyone with everything.

And I'm afraid I am not a bit of a bubble burst when it comes to this. I just need to clarify. This is a cause. for people doing for GP registrars doing an exam, but it's not about the exam.

It's about 20% of the example. And that's it. So absolutely. The majority of humans on the planet don't want to buy this. That's the best thing about it, so it is super specific.

Dave is now honing down and concentrating on finding And we'll now be, I'm sure, and we won't be able to go into this in huge detail, but I know that you will be thinking, right, how do I get this course in front of the right group of people?

And that's how something works. The online world is super noisy, there's a course for everything, There's somebody, an expert in everything. You want to find the person that can give you the result you want.

These people want a pass and they're struggling with that 20%. This course will help them. Exactly that. Exactly. That I've got, I was having a chat with someone at the weekend and basically we sussed out there about four and a half thousand GPS per year, as in in training.

that's my target audience. Like in the grand scheme of things, that tiny, but actually I know exactly who to target. I'm, because of contacts through social media.

I'm now on a GP trainer's course and I sort of turned around and said, look, I am making this course. If I offer you, if I more than happy to come and present, If i offered you a discount code, could you then publicize it?

And they're like, absolute. And in fairness, this was about a month or so ago, the course this creator or supervisor, Dr. Tara George, where we're checking out her stuff, bedside reading podcast.

She messaged me and said like, Dave, are you still doing your course? Can we, you know, when's it ready?

Dave's Role and GP Templates Background

Basically. And just that, again, that external, like, oh, people do want this. So, yeah. Absolutely. People want what you are offering. And I think as medics, sometimes we sit there thinking, well, who's going to want that?

And the answer is one specific group of people cannot stress this enough. I love it. Now, you've touched on, we know it's not all unicorns and roses. You know, I am super excited that you have had these bookings.

and I know that I'm going get this out as quickly as possible so that we can get more in April. and this will continue. So if you're not listening to this in April or May 2025, just look up Dave and you will find this information.

You mentioned you were in a chimp and I don't know what you call the other one, the one that tells you that you can do things. Let's talk about that a little bit.

Like you know you are a very confident guy, you very extrovert, your out there. you surely don´t have these moments of thinking you´re not good enough.

them all the time, just all of the times. Anyone who's… I love The Chimp Paradox as a book. It has genuinely changed my life. I think it's like, I don't mean to put it on a pedestal.

And I did a review on it and actually had a really good conversation with someone who was like oh yeah, and who also got it was on YouTube. And it's one of the books that I prescribe as a doctor I've had quite a few patients who said I'm just dealing with this certainly when I was in the military and I said like your chimps all out of whack mate, don't read the book and, you know, go and sort yourself out.

So, probably technically speaking, it Inner Chimp is basically trying to, if you rewind back to caveman era, it's trying keep you within the tribe. So what it hates is when you stick your head above the parapet because it thinks you're putting yourself out there, you putting it at risk of the tribes.

It will scream internally for you to tow the party line, keep going, and keep quiet. Just contribute and then take it from there. What the Chimp Paradox does is it then gives you a couple of ways to then recognise when the chimp is taking effect and also then sort of either negotiate with it or other bits and pieces or sort of gamify it a bit.

So I use a couple of tactics. First one is exercise. And I got into the habit and my wife is, it's her fault. We've got a jokey called the High Marsh Running Club.

I even got some sports tops made up for it. where we've got three kids, seven, four, and two. It is very stressful in the mornings. Life is a lot easier once we both been out for a two-mile run.

That's it. We'll both be up and be like, who's turn is it to run first? We got the dog, got retired greyhound, he's quicker than us. take your dog out for a walk, first one goes out, then the second one, goes up and we're like, actually, by the time second person comes back, guess what?

The kids are dressed, you know, or getting dressed fed, and then we are off. Good to go with the day. So that calms the chimp down, the exercise, make sure you get your exercise in at some point.

At least if it's in the morning, it is done. You don't have to worry about it for the rest of the date. I'm on an Apple watch. My rings look amazing. Sorry.

Second bit is negotiation. with it. And you've got to suss out what drives and motivates your chimp. Now, even though there's a podcast, I'm rather a ton gentleman, so guess what?

My chimps motivated by food. So I'd be like, right, something sweet. I'll motivate you that way. Though I am trying to detrain the chump for that. But you can negotiate with the Chimp to be, like I know you're feeling this way and I recognise it, that you are feeling a bit nervous and whatnot.

Can we just try Because what's the worst that actually happened? So for example, like with the Kajabi in the course, the worse that happens is that I've spent quite a bit of money.

That's one thing, you know, it doesn't want to lose money, wants to spend it on the kids. that's understandable, chimp. Second part is time, plowed in a lot of time into this.

What's the worst that happens, Chimp? Okay, the worse that happened is that someone complains and someone,

say, sues you. That's like the extreme, extreme arc.

Okay. How likely is this? So you sort of gamify it. Well, actually it's not that likely. So what's this next worst thing that's happened? No one engages.

They're the most worst things that happen, and it goes, okay, right, fine. But how about we just put it out there If it doesn't work in a month, two months, then we'll just leave it alone.

You know, you're right, we will let you win. And then actually I've used that metric time and time again, video content creation, would be like, well, just put this out there.

We'll see what happens. Okay. What's the worst that happens? Fine. Then actually soon. The thing is though, and the only difference is the repetition.

So if you do it enough, you can, when you come up with these ideas, I think in the book they refer to it as like the computer or the more human element of it.

When you came up these idea, so for your new business and whatnot, your chimp isn't automatically shouting at you that you're stupid and you wrong is a bit like, You can just turn around and say, look, can we just do this something small?

See what happens. If it doesn't work, that's fine. We'll leave it alone. But if it does work. You. Can be quiet and go back in your cage for a. Yeah. Anyway, That's how I know.

And I have read it, but not recent enough to remember any of that. So thank you for that summary, because there's something here about when that inner chimp is happening, I find if that is also then closely followed by somebody within your close friendship group, your family, reiterating the noises of the inner chimp and they're kind of like, well, what would you be doing that for?

Like, surely that's not the right thing to be done. You know, that can lead down a pretty difficult path, can't it? Absolutely. Is that a thing? Yeah, completely.

And I think with, you'll hear a lot of, certainly with like content creation it does and I use that in the broadest stroke in terms of like whether even if it's putting a post on LinkedIn so something fairly banal like the percentage of people putting stuff out on linkedin is tiny and you can manipulate that with effectively you know sort of changing your environment with who you surround yourselves with.

Okay, so who do you follow on LinkedIn? For example, who did you fall on Facebook? What podcasts are you listening to? And if you Surround that sort of the white space and that empty noise with podcasts of so I'll listen to yours, Joe on, you know, had it on the drive in, in this morning on a Monday morning, it's been like, So you're hearing these other people doing stuff.

So like when that reinforces your being able to negotiate with the chimp, like Joe's doing this, Joe said this. Like she knows what she's on about because actually we followed Joe advice before Mr.

Chimp and she was right. So can we do it again? And he's like, okay. Yeah, it is. It is definitely. And this really reminds me of the time leading up to us going away for the year with We sort of had this crazy idea, started dipping our, it's a bit like when you get a dog or anything, you dip your toes into this world that you didn't know existed prior to it.

And we started reading about world schooling and homeschooling and the education system. The big thing for me was listening to Ken Robinson's podcast, Ted Talk.

Not podcast Ted talk about schools killing creativity. As soon as I heard that I was like, oh, okay, I've been thinking this subconsciously for quite some time, and it started me started us surrounding ourselves by listening to different

people.

And that was able to balance out the vast majority of people in our lives that were like, you're going to do what? I'm sorry. And what happens if the children lose their place in school?

What happens, if somebody gets hurt? And it was to counteract. And because we felt so strongly about what we were hearing, it was balancing out the negative.

And in the end, you just don't hear it anymore. So, by the ends of homeschooling a child till he was 10, if somebody at Tesco said to me, is he off because he's unwell?

And I'd be like, no, he is homescored. Then I just walk out of the door because I didn't just hear anymore You're just like, meh, it's fine. And you're at the point you've had so much positive.

Yeah. You've got so experience that that initial step is the hardest, but it does get easier. So I'm hearing a guy that has got like oodles of energy, like massive loads of ideas.

Loads of different things going on with young children. At what point did you see life becoming like this rather than just kind of sticking to a regular GP job or you said you were in the army?

So I joined the Army leaving university one that I've got family members in, always thought would be quite cool. My wife was also military, so wife is a Royal Navy.

So we met at university. She went off to join the Navy, had an amazing, amazing time. When I say sailed the world, literally sailed, the got some brilliant stories, far better than mine.

Whereas I'd sort of ended up in some, you know, if you, If you ever wonder where the army trains, and I was like, oh, you've been out to Canada, that must be great.

It was in a desolate area that they're happy to roll tanks over. So it wasn't the greatest place. Likewise with Kenya, admittedly that was on a national park.

There was somebody who's got some odd photos of me in military uniform with a giraffe in the background. like, well, this is weird.

The Chimp Paradox and Managing Self-Doubt

Anyway, so yeah, did that always thought and the military is very good in terms of, and I think that's where you see where doctors certainly in the NHS get burnt out because they're very giving you a target, giving the next thing to work on, and giving your reward in terms of whether that be a medal, a new rank, regular appraisals, which are very well structured and give you like a, right, this is what you need to do to get to the level.

And then you're surrounded by a very like-minded individual who's all pushing forward for a greater purpose. It is intoxicating to be around. The problem was though that I chucked myself into it and then going back to the Chimp Paradox, the first chapter is like watch your tombstone.

For me, it was always be a good father and husband, give 110% at work, and don't be dick. That's my three core mantras. I was hitting what I thought was putting 110 percent in work but then I failing massively one and two Because whilst my wife was, you know, doing her thing in the Navy, she ended up having child number one.

So it's sort of. And then I ended up missing a load. So I was on Salisbury Plain training area, so down south in the heaving rain when my wife sent me a video of our son taking his first steps.

And you sort of, you normalise it because you're surrounded by it. You're surrounding by other late 20s, early 30 year old blokes who were like, yeah, I missed that too.

It doesn't matter. Buy him a big shiny present when you get home and everything will be okay. And, and, I ended up swallowing and diving into it a bit too hard.

And then unfortunately it came to a head where my family needed me much more than I realized. I would still, if anyone's watching this or listening to this, please, look at a military career.

It's great fun, but I'd caveat and say when family and young family come along, just really think about what you want to achieve. When I realised I wasn't there for my families, so when it Yes, the military were great in terms of giving me the time that I needed, but then it comes to a point where they're like, you need to come back.

And, unfortunately, this was now five years ago when my second son, James, sadly passed away at a week old. I will not insult the army at all. They were excellent in terms of giving me the time, the moral support, and the mental support that I needed.

I got some excellent counselling through the Army mental health services, just what I need. But then I sort of, whether it was a poor coping mechanism, well, no, it wasn't a mechanism.

So I basically went, yeah, I'm fine. Five, six months later, threw myself back into work, At this point, just in this was back in 2020. So we're talking COVID just hit.

We were just about to deploy out to Mali, which is a very small operation at the time that sort of is now wrapped up. But I was proper. It was the first time our regiment was going out there.

First UK force going there, blah blah, or certainly a big chunky extra UK Force and I was getting overexcited, thought this was my time to shine, etc.

etc., and did that to the exclusion of my family and then broke whilst I'm out, which was a horrible, horrible place to be. I ended up getting myself realizing that I wasn't well.

Thankfully my colonel at the time was very understanding and knew exactly what I'd been going through. And then basically I said, like, I just tapped out.

I was like I've got to go. He was, understood. Then within a week, two weeks, was back in the UK. This is ridiculous, Dave. What the hell are you doing?

Put in my papers for early release on welfare grounds, got out there. So that was in Early part that was in the January was out of the military in August, which you can do, but it's not usual.

So if you speak to any military people, there's normally about a year rundown to wind down so that you get it. But you. Can get an exception exceptional circumstances to get shorter.

Thankfully the practice that I'm now a partner at. was advertising. And that was in the February, March, and I was sort of very blunt, open and honest.

I said, you know, I've been in a leadership position. Partnership is really the only logical place for me to sit. Yes, that I will need training. Yeah.

So I appreciate it. Don't know everything about the NHS and have been out of it for a while, but let's give it a go. see what we can do. And then, you know, thankfully the partnership I'd landed into is phenomenal, like absolutely amazing practice to work with.

They've allowed me to be a bit crazy and flesh my ideas out and yeah, fast forward four years, it's amazing. I had two more kids, got two beautiful girls who keep me on my toes.

thankfully realised that, you know, with all the stuff that I haven't missed and then just those stupid moments that

you don't realise. Often my wife would turn around to me and say like, do you miss the army?

When it's sort of like a Sunday afternoon where I'd normally be in the car going down south or somewhere else and I'll be like absolutely not. So yeah, put family first, fit in everything around it and it was like brilliant.

Absolutely brilliant! Sorry, that's a long, long sort of concise bit. No, thanks for sharing that, because this is critical. It's very easy to look at people who are seemingly…

You're doing amazing things out there, and you have now created this course. I have absolutely no doubt this will be a huge success. Some people are listening to this in all sorts of circumstances.

I know that there are medics very much in NHS roles. There are people who don't really know what else they feel they could do. They are feeling burnt out.

People are not spending the time with their children that they want to. It's easy to look at people like you and I and think, oh, they've got it all sorted.

This was four or five years ago, and I'd like you to give me one thing, right, as a promise after this podcast. And I don't know whether you're somebody that journals or writes, I think you probably have done or will do, but this is one of the things I get everybody to do.

Five years is a really good marker, okay? And COVID is an excellent marker because we all know what we were doing five year ago. I just think when you have had a success like coming up with something, making it a thing and three people buying it.

This is a really important day today. So sit down today and write a diary about what's happened today, how you feel, the energy that you've put into something.

You know, everything that You feel around this whole build up and these three People buying this course for you. And then I want you to go back and Write a bit of a Diary about how You felt five years ago, you will remember How you felt Five years.

Emotionally, what was going on? What was Going on with your family, your wife, Everything doesn't need to be long. And then I want you to look at what you want it to like in five years time.

So the kids will be, you know, 12, nine and seven. You know what do you what your life to looks like? What do want your working day to looked like. What else is going on around you?

And write that in the first person as if you're living it. Because I think we don't reflect on how far we've come physically, emotionally and from a learning point of view.

And it then helps you shape where you wanna go with this. Cause I know you've got big plans. Will you do that for me? I will do that. Annoyingly, with my brain, it sounds like a very good YouTube video as well to do.

Yes, there you go. You can do whatever you want. Whatever you do, you just capture today and that story, because that's story is always going to be front of mind for you.

Losing a child like that is something nobody ever gets over. We've talked about this slightly before, and you mentioned a couple of good things that have come out of it.

Yeah. And I think for me, because the whole process is, you can't fathom it. I still can make heads and tails of it and you sort of then, I end up trying to create thinking like, well, okay, it's down to me then to put some positive aspects around this, regardless of the tragic beginning of where this sort of process comes.

So for me, like, so oddly, the relationship with my wife is probably the best it's ever been. And it really sort reset

things, my relationship, with work and how I sort to treat it has reset and there's like right, okay, who I am as a father is a lot better.

Okay, yeah, I can sort see already that you think, yes, that horrendous thing has happened, but actually, right, can we get some positive out of it? And it's sort of, it is a bit sad in a way that you think, I almost look at it as a big, like a train track of this.

If this hadn't happened. I ended up on that path, you know, would have probably stayed in, we'd have stuck with the two children. Will we've had any more, and that's, do you, think you sort look the other track and go, not sure I would've been any happier.

Would I have been a little bit worse off actually down that way, in in horrible, horrible way. But, just trying to actually make something hugely positive out of a horrendous situation.

Amazing. Okay, so before we wrap up, let's think about business, because I know it comes with all sorts of emotions and feelings.

Military Career, Family Loss, and Life Reset

What do you find difficult about running a business or being on your own path? I love this Patchwork GP. So I think actually the the exciting bit, I'm going to sound like a giddy teenager.

So it was sort of off the back of you. I Think you had invited me on to one of your webinars, which is happening in May. Shameless plug. Listen to me.

Yeah, shameless, Shamless plug, what is it? Ninth of May? Yeah. Yeah, shameless plug. Listen to me rant about YouTube for an hour. I'd had an old university friend of mine who I actually played rugby with who was, interestingly, he had messaged me.

He said like, Oh, Dave, I run this. small company called Doc Support. Could we have a chat? I think you'd be great for one of my webinars. Now, interestingly, I used to play rugby with him.

I was a prop, believe it or not from, if you're looking at this video, he was the number nine. We were friendly, but we're never like close, close. One of those teammates like, yeah, would always help him out.

We had a long chat on Zoom, like one night, just trying to prep for the webinar, delivered the Webinar. And then a week later, he's like, Dave, I really enjoyed our chat.

I was chatting away to my wife about him. Me too, actually. Like I couldn't sleep after our chow was that sort of exciting. He went like. This is what I do.

So it's Matthew Wickham, Docsport, he's a GP but doing some private work. He's an ENT surgeon, got so far and then sort of went, no, I'll go and do GP and does a lot of private in Glasgow Ear Clinic.

And then he's coaching other doctors to do getting into private practice. I was like, oh, that sounds interesting. He's also got a portfolio, a property empire.

So he sort of like yeah, I'll coach people in doing that as well. It's like oh that's interesting, he said, haven't really got to handle on the social media stuff.

And I've seen what you do. the short of it. Do you fancy joining forces?" And I sort of mulled it over. And he said, like, we should work on doc support together.

I just went, okay. Then I slept. A sort throwaway comment said I should really roll GP templates into it because I don't like the name. It doesn't make sense anymore.

Whereas actually doc-support makes much more sense. Slept on it, well, I didn't sleep. Just got overexcited. The next day, just texting him, going, Yeah, we need to do this.

Like, yes, I'm all in. And basically emailed him back saying, right, how about we just completely combine forces and see what happens. I think on the background of this, and this is sort of goes back to the core values that as sort like the, as our chat, And I know we've had this chat Joe and said like, well, why are you doing this?

Like what is your why? And it was like right. You know, earn enough money from my GP work for me and to run the family. But you know, I love my children in the school they're in, but the costs are going up for it.

I would love to, my why is I'd love have a business that could fund that. That's your why. And he came out untriggered or unprompted by me with exactly that.

He said, I've got two kids, no school fees, et cetera, etc. I want a business that I can… I'm not trying to swindle the taxman. We'll sort of like whatever it looks like, we'll earn double the amount knowing that 50% is going to go to the Taxman, but at the end in four or five years time, i want it to look like this, that all of the school fee are paid for.

Okay, cool. Then the second bit, which was the deal clincher, a business meeting at Winfell Centre Parks and I was like, oh my word, you had me at Centre Park.

Honestly, I think going back to your point about if you're doing any of this alone, it's really, really soul destroying at times. That the only person is motivating you is you.

I'm just not that… I don't know. I haven't got that internal drive to keep me going to the same degree unless it's for, so for example, the 20% was built around supporting my trainees.

It was nothing to do with me. it was like, right, I'm going get these videos out to help them for their exam. Matthew on board, and we're sort of in the very early stages of GP templates being rolled into and amalgamated into this one bit.

So for example, the course, I text him first thing was like, really sorry for a Sunday text, but I've sold one package. And he was, like that's amazing.

It was just like so all that money is going to go into the new business and then see what happens from that way. Sorry, it's all very exciting. The loneliness is about the loneliness.

Absolutely. And I totally relate to that. But finding like-minded people and building those collaborations and that communication with people. Like you say, it wasn't your best friend in the whole world, but you've got this know, like and trust factor.

You know that you're not going to mess around. And you probably fill each other's gaps, I would imagine, in your silhouettes. Yeah, so already, like we've been texting earlier this morning, finances-wise, I haven't got a clue.

Give me a… It's weird. So this module- wise, the actual creating the course, blitzed it. A week ago I filmed 14 videos back to back. Absolutely insanity.

I edited throughout the week, had some really early starts, but got it done. Knew I could do that. This is my thing to do. having a chat to him one evening and he said like, right, okay, so what do you think about financial wise?

And I was like when he's said, well, we need to register with the company, get a private account set up. We've got 18 months to get the accountant to the first things off to make HMRC happy.

And sounds nice. I haven't got a clue. And he was like, right, shall I run with this? Absolutely. So, and then even we're, I'm going to strong arm you this because we were even flirting with an idea of a podcast, which I want a certain Dr.

Joe Watkins on for one of our episodes. Even that we are like… even just the chatting was like, I think I can take the lead on this. So yeah, we can.

Yeah, yeah. We can work on that. Absolutely. Fabulous. Exciting times. One of my longest episodes and we were going to do it swapsies, but I do that as a second thing.

Yeah, absolutely. We'll set a different time. Sorry. What I want is, before we leave, three pieces of advice to your early entrepreneurial self. Even a couple of years ago, what would be your three piece of advise?

Oh my word. I'm going to flick it to YouTube because I think that's where my biggest lessons are, is consistency. is a superpower. So the biggest growth that I've had this year is because I have been consistent.

That would be sort of my first big trigger. Second point would certainly from if you're looking at YouTube as a business, sort of key nugget is that you are not going to make money from YouTube, i.e.

the YouTube partnership program paying you money for adverts on your video is going, it's very hard to get into just due to the sheer what you have to achieve.

I'm over a hundred videos in, I am nowhere near achieving it. You're not going to get any finances from that way. So think what else, where your money's going come from.

Okay. For example, for me, it's the course, but think about other products that you can create, monetize and do that early. I'm far too late to that game.

And I wish I'd done it a couple of years back, I can forgive myself, But it doesn't matter.

Business Collaboration and Entrepreneurial Advice

doesn't matter. So I've got a beautiful trainee who comes out with some fantastic, she's from Gambia originally, so she gets some phantastic phrasing.

And the one that she said to me when we talk about this is, the morning is whenever you wake up. I was just like, oh, that's amazing! I'll take that! And I think the third bit is that, you know, if you're an avid listener, however you interact with Joe, I'm going to make this directly at you, is act just act you hear some bits of information and act so off the back of the webinar so the January one where I was scribbling taking notes I had one that said like you've got to have a product like have something that you can give them physically as well so as if by magic because my pre-meeting was about video content creation I made a book a short book Examination counts to 5k.

Now, before I met up with Matthew, I said like, yeah, give it away for free. We've got a virtual assistant who is phenomenal, Kayleigh, who's coaching us both in terms of how to grow this.

She's like… I had a one-to-one chat with her before we were going to amalgamate. At the end of it, she said, yeah, you should have monetized that. I was like, oh, damn it.

And then I got it printed out. So I deliberately got to print it out and apologies. There you go. Right at the back, it's who to follow. Joe Watkins has got her own little page there.

Let's have a little live There we go. A lot of people say you should just hand your book out and a book's a bit like YouTube, very difficult to make money out of a books and you just get as many free copies out as possible.

There is another school of thought around books. So I took that school thought. I've got a discussion at Again, sort of like the YouTube creates opportunities, not money.

It's down to you to turn them into money." So I was like, right, I've got this book delivering a talk on at a ICB level. So on sort video content creation in the digital age, basically trying to promote primary care, pushing out videos.

And, you know, we've had some certain successes with our Eagle Sliv Medical Practice channel. We've a huge increase in referral rate to the NHS diabetes prevention program through a targeted text campaign saying, watch this video, respond if you want to sign up to it.

And our referral rates have shot through the roof. I'm delivering that talk along with, I've got a bucket load of these books to hand out to be like, look, if I think it should be probably an ICB level, having an editorial hub that us as GPs can feed in these videos, they can tweak it and make it personalized and feed it back out.

Because I don't have time. But you know what? I have got the skills that I could train up someone else to do it, and take that workload off me. So we've got to be consistent in whatever you do.

Be consistent, sorry. Try and monetize. If you're getting out there, if you are doing a YouTube channel, I had a conversation with somebody before we pressed record about doing podcast.

It's the same thing. What is the end result? I love having a podcast because people send me an email and say, can you tell me a little bit about this?

And I say yeah, here's a bit of this, but you need to listen to episode 12, 6 and 4 and then send me another email. Because there's information in there that I can use instead of having endless discovery calls and repeating myself.

And then if somebody's listened to that and is ready, they can then take the next step to the monetised course or one-to-one work. So you've got to know where people are going if they come to YouTube.

Absolutely. And I think there's sort of to bring on that point, even I've done that with you, Joe, where he said like, Dave, how do I get my Google reviews up?

And as I have done a video on. And so if you're thinking about what content to create your repeated questions, that's all I do on my Facebook channels.

I'm on a GP partner one, I want to system one one. and I just won't take a mental note of that question has come up before I'll do a. Video on the video, on video and then you sort you build that.

Yeah. So when that questions comes up again, you like. Bang, link, watch my video. So yeah. Exactly. And your third one was take action and I love those.

They are brilliant. This has been awesome. I have absolutely loved it. Dr. Lovely would be sitting here so proud of what you've done and you have turned around a very, very awful situation.

And I think you maybe would never have done these things otherwise. So that is an amazing story. Thank you so much for your time, Dave. I'll speak to you soon.

Not at all, Jo. Thanks for having me. 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.