Episode #51 - From a Corporate Window Seat to the Adventure of running your own business - with... Transcript

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Podcast Introduction and Series Overview

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. Today's episode is the second in this special March series in 2026, marking 50 episodes of the Startup Support Surgery podcast and celebrating International Women's Day.

This series is about women building businesses in the middle of real life, not in perfect conditions. And this conversation with Lucy really captures that.

Lucy is a lawyer who built a six-figure legal template business and then went on to establish her own law firm, all while becoming a mother and navigating some significant personal challenges along the way.

What I really value about Lucy's perspective is that she's both commercial and honest. We talk about leaving a safe profession. We talked about building revenue deliberately and why visibility is uncomfortable, but necessary.

Lucyu2019s Legal Career and Early Adventures

we talk ambition when life is shifting around you and we talked loss as Lucy experienced a really difficult period of time that ran alongside building and growing a business.

Because loss is something that we don't talk about enough. Loss and grief are a reality of life and are very, very difficult as we all juggle the needs of our businesses and families.

Business, unfortunately, doesn't go away when things like this happen. And we talk that. This episode isn't really about a polished success story. It's about growth, resilience, alignment and building something sustainable for you from a financial and personal perspective.

It's a great chat, it's thoughtful, practical, and quietly powerful. So let's get into it. And Lucy's fact for the day. In fact, there are three or four facts for today, but I didn't realize this about you.

You are a massive adventurer. you've just told me you'd done six marathons in five days across the desert, you

climbed Kilimanjaro and you hiked across The Arctic Circle.

That's mind blowing. When did you do all this? Yeah, I mean I think I just have to add context that it was life before children and I feel a whole lot less adventurous now, although I suppose there's probably a story within that about raising a family and trying to do everything else.

But yeah, amazing, some amazing adventures that have been on absolutely life-changing and, i think, born out of the idea of not wanting to just sit behind a desk for my whole life and getting to a point in my career where I'd made it, I felt, and I had the desk in a room in an office in London and a window seat, that's how much I've made.

I got a coat stand and everything and then looked out the window and thought, is this it? And then thought I'm going to have to do something else apart from just the legal side of my Korea.

And so signed up to Climb Kilimanjaro. And then it sort of started there and then he ended up running six marathons in five days across the desert, which is probably one of the hardest things I've done.

And lots of people say it's childbirth harder or raising a family, and I think that by a long shot, raising the family is harder because it just so relentless, isn't it?

It just goes on and on. It doesn't finish in six days. But excited to be here to chat to you. So thank you so much for inviting me. Even just now, thinking back to those days, Those were the days when I used to sit in an office and purely help medics.

So my main part of my career before I left to start by myself was supporting doctors, nurses, or lots of the medical profession that we have in the UK and being their defence lawyers.

That's how I started out. Amazing right I've got so much I want to talk to you about but I love the concept of you looking out of that window with your beautiful window seat and your lovely water machine and you know your coat stand you're living the dream looking at the window thinking is this.

Is this it? And we're going to come back to that. I know. But before we get started, I just want to go back that Lucy at GCSEA levels, like in the education system, thinking about doing law, take me back there.

Was law always on the agenda? Was it something that was just around you? How did you get into law to start with? This is going to sound really ridiculous, but I was always going be a lawyer because my initials are L-A-W.

And a little known fact, my name is not actually Lucy Legal. I do have a normal name. It's Lucy Anne Wheeler. Um, and that is my, uh, name that I practice under.

That is the name I qualified in. and I think it was just one of those things. From the start, I argued about everything with everybody. Just always had an opinion, always something to say and everybody just said, Oh, you'll be great lawyer.

from an early age so I was never going to do anything different. I lived in a small town outside the Peak District and moved to London with like a big dream and was always just going study law and become a lawyer and that's really boring isn't it?

And I think that it's one of those things that maybe lots of people listening might resonate that they always knew they were going do it and I just did, that was allways.

what I was going to do. And yeah, went out and did it. I think that's what's hard when you're in that space, especially the generation that I Was in, where it was more like education focused, you had to Do it, that was the job.

You were either a doctor, a lawyer or a vet. That's kind of the options. They're the good professions, go into

something like that or banking and things.

and I Think that yeah that Was always what i've been pushed towards doing and so that is where I ended up. So in a way, this window seat was the culmination of that, that beginning goal.

You know, This is what I'm going to do and I going work my way up university, law school, et cetera, to get to that window. See, I mean, at that point, things were relatively linear for you.

Would that be fair to say? Yeah. And I think it's, had a little bit of hardship along the way in the sense that there was a slight not bad. My grades had been marked wrong once for my A level.

So I'd been delayed a year and it was like, Oh, there's an opportunity. I could go and do something. did go to dance school for a year because I think that's secretly what I wanted to do, but realized you can't dance and be successful.

You have to be able to sing and I can sing very well at all. So gave that up after a and took the place that I was meant to have in. But yeah, I had to think followed along that path and ended up doing it.

And just, everything's very set out, isn't it? Sometimes when you are doing, as I say, the tick box, you just follow the route, go straight through, do it, and then you get to the point where you go, Oh, what next?

Yeah. Okay. We're going to come back to that.

Legal Essentials for Medics Starting a Business

What next, but just in case I get it over excited and we talk just about what's next on those people here hanging on your every legal word, we'll come to the fact you worked a lot with medics and people in the healthcare profession.

So you understand, um, meds probably more than most lawyers do. Now I work with, as you know, and I have lots of people listening to this podcast that are maybe venturing out to do other things.

Previously, they've only really had to think about their own medical defence, signing up to MPS or MDU, that's the most sort of legal thing we've had to do.

And now they're entering into this world of running their own business, showing up as a personal brand, doing coaching calls, starting clinics. How important is the legal side of this as we get going on our own?

I think for people who are in this profession and the people that you're helping, it's more important than most people are starting a business. It's important for everybody.

And when I say it is important, It is the law. I know that sounds like really cliché to say, but a lot of the things that I'm encouraging people to do and I share a little on socials and a YouTube channels when they share and tell people do, I am not telling them because I thinks it a good idea.

Telling them it because it the Law. They have to it. There are certain things like looking after client data, that's the law. You have to as a business owner, whether you are a limited company or a sole trader, you have look after your client's personal data.

Now that matters if you're selling something on an online store. it matters even more so if you're in the medical world and the Medical profession because you are probably holding on to people's data that's not just regular personal data but what's known as sensitive personal and therefore it has to be protected and it's a legal requirement.

So you can get into serious trouble, we can be fined, you'd be breaking the law not to do it. where we have got a list as small business owners, because remember, I'm a small-business owner too, and I've got list of all the things

I have to do.

The things that are fun for some people, so not for others, but socials and photoshoots and doing all of the fun stuff, doing the website. All of that is kind of optional, like as to whether you do something, if you show up on social media, you don't have do, whereas the legal stuff actually, it's the law.

And I think also, from a lot of people that you work with, it's really going to help elevate them and jump into the profession and sort of move over from working within a company or working for the NHS, whatever it might be, but working with themselves.

But by ticking all of those boxes and having those terms and conditions and doing everything properly, you really feel like you are set up and do the professional justice as well, because I think people look to medical professionals and say, and trust them to know they want to, they to want know that they're in safe hands.

They want see that you've got terms and conditions and they going to look at you and think, yeah, but they know what they are doing. And almost you possibly thinking, I don't know, what I'm doing, have only just started out in this coaching space, in online space.

I know how to use LinkedIn perhaps. You might be thinking I am actually learning all these things. But you actually, there's this perception from clients and customers already that you do know what you're doing, because they trust you to look after them.

Yeah, absolutely. And I talk about that with my clients, the fact that even if you are starting out, you already an authority in your field and people are looking to you and wanting to learn from you, and are happy to listen to what And actually all of that hard work, all those years of clinical medicine, you know, your networks that you've built along the way in the NHS, the talks that we've done, conferences you attended, like all this stuff matters.

And the legals is a massive part of it, isn't it? People want that peace of mind and that security. So we're talking just for people that kind of, I mean I've just written a little list, but we are talking about things like privacy policies, GDPR, terms and conditions, the ICO thing that you need to have if you've got people's data.

We're talking about this sort of stuff, aren't we, for people that are starting out? Yeah, exactly that. And the list just seems to go on and on, doesn't it?

So there's those kind of things you say, it's website terms. It's your cookies policy. Does that go onto the website? Is that part of the same thing? It is those kinds of questions.

Yeah. Understanding GDPR, which is the data privacy legislation and connected to that, you're so right. Its registration with the ICO and knowing that you have to register.

Do you register? Do not register it. Those kinds questions that are that are really hard to know as a small business owner, which I think is where I've managed to sort of step into the space and share that information in hopefully like a non daunting way.

Um, and to support people who are not just, not to medics, like we support coaches, we could support. People who have, who were starting, have never run a business, people have been doing it for a while, but just haven't got the legal things in place.

Yeah. And we'll obviously be linking everything in the show notes. You've got different ways of working with people. you've Got lots of templates and done.

done with you and done for you services, haven't you? So that, that peace of mind, something's kind of taken off your plate. Cause there are, you do wear an awful lot of hats when you start out in business, don't.

You, and it can be very overwhelming. So this feels like a, a piece that can actually be, You know that you're in

safe hands with. And your team. Anything more to add on that?

Well, I just think that I feel like I'm resonating, as you're saying it, with this expectation piece. Do you know, even for me, like, if I was a lawyer and you were almost being put on this really high pedestal, you are not really being treated as fairly as some people when they start their business, who can just slide in and there's not a lot of expectation.

Because you're a lawyer, or a doctor, a medical, whatever it might be, and any other professionals who are listening as well, I think that when you come in it and you've got all those qualifications, they kind of feel like you would understand, like, well surely you must know all about data protection because you have been looking after patients.

Well surely, you haven't been, how have you not been look after my notes safely for years, kind-of thing. Whilst in the day-to-day you'd have keeping patient notes confidential, of course, It doesn't mean that you know what the reporting requirements are or if you need to register with the national body that protects patient and client data.

Like you just wouldn't know those other things. And I think it's just probably feels like you're not even starting from the bottom of the mountain. You're already halfway up and expected to sort of get going straight away.

So I feeling that way then I totally understand that too because I know when I sort it out there's a real expectation that you're just doing everything perfectly and that's hard to contend with as well.

Yeah okay well we'll link everything up with a note and you've got YouTube channel you talk really openly and share massively on Instagram so people will be able to find you so let's go back to that Lucy sitting in the chair with the window seat living the dream Obviously, we had a period of lots of adventures after that.

I get the feeling that adventures have always been a big part of you. But I guess family, what came next? Family, business? How did things evolve from there for you?

So this is a difficult part, the conversation, I think, for me. So I was building my career, doing really well, just been promoted as senior associate.

Yeah, it was very successful. Just got married. and we're starting to try for a family. And unfortunately we lost our baby. We had what's known as a miscarriage and it came as shock to us and happened right as to a period of COVID where we were meant to have been going on this once in a lifetime trip around Australia for our honeymoon.

Didn't ever imagine that we wouldn't be doing that. I thought they're never going to close the borders. Obviously they did. Um, we went home then, um, also lost our baby, which was very difficult.

And I realized at the time that it was going to be difficult to manage raising a family and being working in London full time in the city as well. I was kind of thinking, how is this going work?

And then we lost another baby. Then we got pregnant again and I just said, I don't want this to happen again. Like I can't go through this a third time.

The common denominator here, the thing that's really stressing me out is work. And I had to make a really difficult decision as to whether I would continue working or potentially put my efforts into this very small side hustle thing I was doing on the side.

I'd started selling legal templates just so that I could pay for my ski pass. So I go skiing every year and I was like, Oh, wouldn't it be fun if I had like a bit of pocket money and they could get my scheme pass and like that was all covered and we could maybe go to some nicer resorts.

Um, so I've been doing that for probably sort of six, nine months, just very much on the side.

Miscarriage, Career Shift, and Leaving London

It was not ready to go full time in and yeah, had to make a very difficult decision in difficult circumstances where I just realized that although I was putting my heart and soul into my work and my business, in that business it perhaps wasn't being reciprocated and that perhaps I wasn t just very much a number on a piece of paper that people didn't really care about and actually this was my life and something that I had t make the decision and so after a vey difficult weekend I decided to have my notice in and that didn't go down very well.

And then I then fell pregnant again and now I've got nearly five year old. So that's kind of how the story went. Goodness me, that is a big story with a lot of emotion tied up in there and some probably really, really torrid and difficult times for both of you.

You made a jump, you made big leap And I guess on the other side of all of these big decisions is that whole new life opening up for you. Maybe if those pregnancies hadn't failed and you'd had two young children living in London, living a very different, possibly not seeing your children, maybe you wouldn't have made those moves.

And it's really hard when those things are happening to see that, isn't it? But now, do you look back on that time you know, is there any bit of you that's sort of like, actually that gave me the impetus I needed to go?

Yeah, and I wonder whether I would ever have done it. Like, I don't think I wouldn't. I think that like looking back now I can see a lot of the signs of where I was being pushed to and didn't jump.

And there were lots of times where I just couldn't do it. I was in a profession where that's the safe job. You've got maternity leave, you've gotta pension, the kudos and the respect.

Like I had worked so hard to get there. Why would you give all of that up to work for yourself? Which is a terrifying thing to do and feels very unsafe.

But actually, I don't think it's unsafe at all. And I've thought about this more and more about about how I was able to take that leap because very much of the time I just kept saying I can't do it, it's not possible, people won't respect me, you're respected when you are part of a law firm and…

I just didn't, I thought I had security. And so I kind of started by like looking at the numbers and I was like, okay, so this security that I think I have, think it's this maternity leave, right?

What they have got a very good maternities package. What does that actually look like on paper? And I worked out the exact numbers that they would have given me over, like if you had a year off.

and was like, oh, it's not actually as much as I thought. It sounds really great, but I was, like it is not as actually much and I would have been very grateful if I'd have ever had it, sure.

But I'm like that's far away to be able to save. So I was like, okay, so I'd already sort of been starting to say this part, as you know, for my ski passes and I had got the money in the business.

I wasn't even taking it out. Just got it there as I'm doing little bits on the side. And I then had that part and it got to the maternity part that when I left, I said, Okay, that's my little bit of the buffer.

And I was able to take the lead, but I just kind of thought, wow, I've been so worried about maternity pay and pension and all of those things. And then in my first year, because I did go back to working quite quickly, and I can talk a little bit about how we adjusted the family dynamics as well to support that.

But in that first, year I paid myself every month the same salary I'd been on in London. And I was like, oh my goodness, I've done it. I didn't pay into my pension straight away, to be completely honest, but after that year I then was matching the pension payments.

And all of these things that I thought were impossible for somebody, for a professional to do that, was giving up all these. It wasn't the reality at all.

Yeah, it was a fear standing in the way. Definitely. So that business that you then went into, so that wasn' just the just that not just, but it wasn't the template business in isolation.

You started your own legal company as well, is that right? So I had the legal templates business and that was running. And then I did that in the September.

By the October, I was bored and I said, oh no, it was pregnant as. Well, and as I, Oh gosh, i've given up a job. I'm selling legal template, which is an amazing thing to do.

When we've now done like over six figures just in template sales, Also, I've had two babies at the same time. So it is, it isn't credible, but an interior thing to have done.

And it's not easy to sell passive products. It's definitely not passive, by the October I was bored and I'm not working with anybody. I am not helping them.

They're buying things from my shop, which is amazing. Like I'll celebrating and still do celebrate every single template sale. That probably sounds a bit sad, But I do, am so grateful for everybody that invests in my small business.

By the october I think I can do something else and by November I had put the wheels in motion and was setting up a law firm. And I don't know why I thought that was going to be, I didn't own it in the favour, thought it was gonna be easy, but it definitely wasn't easy.

It was as hard as you would imagine it would be. There was so much red tape and it took me until the July. to start in the law firm and yeah then I also now have my own lawfirm which is terrifying but something that I really wanted to do and I think again it was a bit a positioning piece because I was just saying to everybody I can't give you legal advice because i'm not insured and they were like oh well what do you mean like I thought you were a qualified lawyer and i was like i am a Qualified lawyer to give legal Advice has to be through a law Firm so then i set up a Law firm Wow.

Okay. So we now got Lucy Legal, left London, building a beautiful family, feeling more in control of your own destiny and left behind some fairly tough, tough things.

You've got a legal firm and you've go a template business. Let's talk about that whole entrepreneurship piece, like trying to run a law firm, and a templates business that we know is not passive, 100%. Anybody that thinks you can sell templates online without investing a huge amount of time and effort and money and resources into it is wrong.

But let's go down that sort of entrepreneurship chat, because it's obviously very different from walking into a law firm, doing your job and walking out of it.

How have you adjusted to becoming an entrepreneur and stepping into those shoes that you now fill? love it. I am obsessed with business, I'm obsessed helping people. I feel like I m in a really great position because what I do facilitates other people's dreams.

So I had this dream when I was sitting there and I said I need to actually tell you the truth about this window seat because remember we're in London so although I s right by the window it was like a high rise flat was right there, not a house flat another building, another office building was there as well.

No, no. And so I was that was still the dream and I think that it was almost even a thing of like the Dream of, like, oh, I didn't just didn' think it would look like this.

I thought I want to get near the window, not the center anyway. Um, i I'd always dreamt of helping people. Almost

really fascinated about business and i was following people that did it online.

It was when Instagram just wasn't really even the thing back there. But there's a few people I said, yeah, love to work for myself. Love to have my own business, but it's just never going to happen because you can't do it in legal.

And then I suppose what I've done is managed to find a route where I can support other people to live their dream, to create a business that gives them freedom.

Building the Template Business and Law Firm

that gives them the opportunity to travel if that's what they want, to work with the people that they wanted to and to really support the causes that want to do.

So even if it's just like they're really passionate about helping a specific group of people, they can do that and I can help them to that. I feel so fortunate that I could be like the catalyst to doing that because I think that is the misconception about legal.

We often think it is just the boring things or it the things you put on the footer of your website and it more about that empowerment piece and that confidence and once you've got the ability to know that you're going to get paid, which happens in illegal terms and conditions, and that people are going treat you in a certain way, they're not going copy your ideas and you just feel safe and secure and professional in what you are doing, then you can go out and do it.

I suppose what I'm doing in the background is giving people that confidence. It has been a journey for me as well, learning all about the legal things, but I've loved it and I have done my time learning about funnels and opt-ins and all of the things which you have to start with.

It feels like a different language, doesn't it? You don't know what all those things mean. Yeah. And you've got to go out there and find the right people to learn from.

Just like you're teaching people the legals, it's going out and finding the people who teach you at the time about the things. I think probably around the same time as you were doing this, I was also immersing myself in this space.

There's a saying that people say you have to You can learn the right information from people at the wrong time. And I think that's really commonplace, isn't it?

You know, the whole like opt-ins and funnels and things you can get very excited about before you've really worked out who you want to help and how you wanna help them and you get super carried away.

But there's just this massive learning around entrepreneurship. Who did it, you know? We've got a few sort of connections in common, but did you learn from any people in particular?

I know you'd been in masterminds and that sort thing. Do you find? you know, you're surrounded by a good group of people that support you? That's such a great question.

And firstly, I love that idea of learning things but not having to know at the right time. I think that I was very much anti-masterminds at first. At the start I'm in one now and I've been really hesitant to do that.

But I had taken courses, there was nothing specific that, no, saying that… I did a launch course that was I thought was really good and did with Jeff Walker and um, Denise Duffield Thomas did bonuses through that.

And I thought that was very good, but yeah, trying to get, I think at the start, it was all bootstrapped, like everybody starts at start learning, getting information, try to find the right people to learn from, not investing too soon.

I saw a different side of that than a lot of people see, because I knew who was good to invest in, who wasn't, and I

know that lots of the people behind the scenes were having refund requests that you might not actually see on the front side of things.

So yeah, I very much was hesitant and cautious to invest a lot, but I just did little bits at a time. And I think what I did was try to learn things so I understood how to outsource.

and I that changed a I spent a lot of time doing things myself on my website before I gave it to a VA. I didn't get a V. A. straight away. And I did keep things that I could do.

So I'd keep like diary management and all of those tasks, which I was able to do, but slow you down. But I would outsource graphics. Graphics was the first thing because I just not very good at it.

then I have just built and built, and got more support as needed. But I just tried to do a lot of it myself. So yeah, so I really had a good understanding.

And even when I got to the stage, like more recently, we only started doing ads about 18 months ago. Before I outsourced that, I wanted to have a really good understand.

I think you can't lead and delegate effectively if you don't understand what the task is. Yeah, absolutely. Absolutely. You've got you've gotta wear those hats and understand it first, haven't you, to be able to give that those clear instructions and to be able to see the outcomes that you're in, you know, your outsourcing, whether it's working on or understanding the metrics.

So we, I think we're, again, we see people telling us to You know, get rid of the $10 jobs and make sure that you were growing a team and all of that stuff.

But, you know sometimes that advice at the wrong time can mean that your, particularly with things like social media, I see a lot of doctors at beginning, they're so frightened and fearful about posting on social that they think by outsourcing that to somebody else, that sort of eliminates that requirement to sort blast through that fear.

There's nothing more disingenuous and inauthentic than outsourcing. Social media to somebody that doesn't, you know, somebody needs to really understand you and be in your head to be able to do your social media as a small solopreneur, I feel.

I think it's one of the hardest things that I've tried a couple of times to outsource it. And I don't know if that's because I am very much the heart of my business, but that also people want to work with you.

So I. It's a very hard thing to out source and especially You know what it's like when you outsource, like, it doesn't go away. The tasks just come back in a different form in the sense that you don't have to review everything.

And I think one of the things I didn't really appreciate I was doing, but might help other people, is that I tried to emulate or follow the instruction of people who were actually delivering a service or doing some, not necessarily the same thing.

I don't know many people that are doing law, but perhaps people who were service providers. So not people, who are trying to tell me, as you say, you know, they're trying help you as a business strategist to say don t do the $10 jobs, do these.

Or they think, is that actually good advice? Or is just someone telling you something because that's the thing they re trying sell to me? So I was almost wanting to look for the people.

Who weren't selling business tips and take tips from them as to how they were being successful in scaling their businesses.

Entrepreneurship, Outsourcing, and Family Life

Yeah, you've got to be pretty on it out there and there's a lot of noise. So be careful where you're getting your information from and who you are learning from.

I think that's the summary, isn't it? What about entrepreneurship and business building and family life? We're going to come to You know, we're going to ask you a few specific questions around that shortly, but just lead me into that, you know how things were going young.

Did you say you've got two children now? I've Got two little girls and we totally changed our family dynamic because my husband took shared parental leave, which I don't want to say we were really lucky to do.

because it was really hard. I think there's a thing that people have said to us, we're really lucky. Actually, a lot of people who have told us they're surprised that it's worked out and at the start when we had the idea, they thought it would fail.

And I was like, oh, thanks for saying that to me now. No, like we didn't think this would work at all. So what happened was when I handed in my notice, We decided that I would earn as much as I could in very little business at that point until we have the baby and then my husband would take, shed, paternity leave and he, well, yeah, shared parental leave.

And he did that after two weeks. Obviously he's legally entitled to do that. He was legally titled to take the whole year. What we kind of hoped and did talk about a tiny little bit at the start was, imagine if you didn't ever have to go back.

Imagine if it got big enough so you don't have do, but it was more like just a joke and you never went back, so that was a pretty big deal and something we're really proud of.

It hasn't been easy. It's been really hard. I had both of my children and I wanted to breastfeed both the children as well. So I fed them both and literally would be on like feeding and then being like, I have to go, which was really.

And to just hand the baby back and get on a meeting and be in a zoom call and they go back in and yeah, it's not been. But it is also probably very hard to leave a child at nursery and and go back to work after six, nine months as well.

That must be awfully hard too. Yeah. There's no easy way of doing this, but you've designed this with the right support. You and your husband have worked out how this is going to, and it has worked.

And like you say, it's not easy. It's, not luck. you have made decisions and each decision that we make shapes us and takes us in a different direction doesn't it so you two have you know he's at home now and able to do a lot of the pickups and drop-offs and that sort of thing is he?

Yeah and so our children are now slightly older and they do go to nursery and I think that's important for their development as well and he actually set up his own business so after the year He set up his business when our oldest daughter started in a nursery a couple of days, and he set it up doing what he'd previously done, but for himself, because he could see the freedom.

And I think that was the problem, that we realized how incredible, what life we could then create if we had the free to do it. We didn't have full freedom if he was still working full time and everybody was back in the offices then and his employers were saying, back him full-time.

thought that's not what we want to do. That's the life we wanna live. We wanna be out in the mountains. And that always been my dream. In 2025, we actually did like a vision board thing for me, which was go out to the Alps.

So I took my family out the alps for three and a half weeks and lived there and worked. It was very much working as well. I mean, all out there. He was just the absolute dream to be mixing skiing and like work and Yeah, an absolute dream come true, but you probably would see the bits on social media where I was showing the incredible

chalet.

And I'm always really tried to show people the 2 a.m. finishes and the 3 a, m finishes. Nobody really sees the pressure of how hard it is to be the breadwinner in a relationship.

Or something I've never really talked about at all is the change in the dynamic of mine and my husband's relationship when he wasn't earning any money anymore.

but was doing the most important job of looking after our family and all of the financial pressure was on me. And that's quite unusual still, I think.

Not many people talk about it because not many do it, but it was only through going through all that pressure that we were able to have this freedom lifestyle that do now have.

And has it ever, have you ever reached a point with it where it's been too much the other way? Is it, you know, I know entrepreneurship's hard, business is hard.

Have you got the balance wrong at all? I mean, we all have, right? But that balance in terms of time, working on the business, 2 a.m. finishes, early starts, breastfeeding, juggling kids, like stick the mountains in there and I'm with you, and know exactly what that involves.

several pairs of salopettes being thrown around and somebody lying on the floor crying because they don't want to go outside. But you know, if you ever we're going to come to talk about this sort of life first business model.

Have you got that sort horribly wrong and had to sort regroup? I don t think so. I mean, who knows how many I've read horrified statistics and probably your listeners will know more than me about the importance of sleep and I know how many years I've probably knocked off my life for not getting that right and there's been many opportunities that we've said no to but I think that I said yes to all the things I needed to and was trying to be in the places I need to as well and it's it has been hard juggling it all but I suppose in a way, I don't really subscribe to the idea of mum guilt in the sense that I have never had it because I've always felt that whatever we were doing was the best for our children at each stage and the better for family.

And whether that probably makes me totally unrelatable and people are like, how can you not have that? It is because we've designed it. I designed my life.

My choice will be different to everybody else's listening. They'll choose, oh, i would want my child to be a nurse where I wouldn't. You can, what I've realized, I suppose, is that I can design it.

Like I got to work with a dream client last year, um, who had been on like the number one person that you'd want to. If you're a UK business owner who supports UK businesses and it just, yeah, absolute dream.

And I, they wanted a meeting and I was meant to be going to a scarecrow's wedding at my daughter's school. She'd not been in reception very long. and they said, Oh, can you do this time?

It would really suit us. And for the first time ever, I actually said something about my family and I said, I can't do that because I've got to go to a scarecrow's wedding." And they laughed, obviously, and they were like, okay, that's funny.

But up until that, I had always just said, like even when I have to be with the children or had to do something for the child, then I'd always said I'm sorry I got another commitment or I cant make that time work.

I never said it was because of my family, but holding it all is a lot and it's a load of pressure and its been really hard. And I don't know, maybe I'll look back in the future and think, you should have done more here.

It's very hard to spin all the balls, isn't it? And be friends with everyone, text people back, have a relationship with

your partner, all of those things.

I find it just as hard as everybody else, but I also try and automate as much as possible, do things on repeat as many as as I possible. Outsource things like the shopping and we have the cleaner.

And even if it's not within my business, because I can't, duplicate me as easily elsewhere. I can't be at pickups. It has to be me or my husband. We wanna be there, but we can give away the tasks that we don't have to do, like cleaning my house, which actually I enjoy doing a miss, But you can do everything.

Yeah, exactly. And that leads us beautifully into this concept. and I think the scarecrow's wedding is the ultimate example of that. Like people, when you decide to to, do something different to spend a time growing a business that you're then going to do potentially instead of going out to work or on the other days, I have lots of people who work two days a week in the NHS.

They don't really want to increase their hours in NHS so they want do something on other three days. You don' want create something in other 3 days that means you cannot do pick up, drop off, go to the assembly, meet the teacher, have to pick in middle of the day if you want Never miss the scarecrow's wedding.

Like these are the reasons why we're starting in business. So I feel those need to be front of mind as we plan what our business looks like. You know, how, do you go about, you know prioritizing your life first?

Do you have any sort of ways that you do that in terms of, You do like weekly planning meetings or look at the year or like, Do you have any ways you prioritize?

Cause family is obviously at the forefront of what you're doing this for, isn't it? Yeah, it is. And I, I think I will just caveat before I say anything, and I do have some really helpful tools that I use now, but I have to be careful to acknowledge that.

I built my business at start when my children were very small and so perhaps they were close to me and it wasn't having to do the pickups. It was hard.

Yes, I would be working and then I put my child to bed and I feed them and get up and do those things. But I think that if I was trying to start my business now I might find it slightly harder than because of how I've set it up.

I just think now, I'm very, very clear on a very boundary. And I think having a family makes you very boundaried and very clearly on what we're doing and what were not doing in terms of timing and available time I have to work.

So a lot of the time last year, I didn't know at the timer whose one was going to get a new contract. He was trying to build his business up. It was now then his turn.

I suddenly had the whole summer of two children. not very much childcare at all and the business, two businesses to run. And that was a challenge. That was very about being conscious of time and how I manage time.

Again, I have a really different perception of times because I'm a lawyer and we used to bill everything by six minutes.

Prioritizing Time, Boundaries, and Life-First Business

So if you don't know, lawyers always record their time every six minute and you either have chargeable time or non-chargeable. I actually very much believe in the concept of understanding the difference of your time and what's chargeable and not chargeble because I think that that really helps you when you're trying to work out your capacity and how much you want to earn because whilst you might charge, let's just say for easy maths, £100 an hour for something, you may spend the hour delivering those services but there's so much that goes around that's non-chargeable as well.

So I think it's for me, it is very much working very tightly on a time block. So, I use a calendar, just in Google calendar and I block out like when I'd have availability for calls or even when i need to fill those call slots.

If I, for example, we offer trademarks and i know that if I'm going to take, i now know how many trademark calls I have to do to make sure that those numbers are filled so that I hit that quota of how much of our revenue needs to come from trademark work.

if that makes sense. So it's about being really clear and working it through as to if you are doing a consultation and you go, okay, I'm going to do eight consultations in a week.

That's not eight hours of work. All the tasks that go around that, not just the admin, but the marketing, the response to the emails, all of that has to factor into.

And I also, sat down a while ago and I think it was the best use of time, I sat down and wrote down all of the tasks that had to be done in the business, like everything that needed to done.

And I categorized it into, into tasks and like groups of tasks. Then I batched it, um, Into blocks and I created myself an A week and a B week so that some weeks I was doing one thing and some week I doing something else because I am very short on time.

but I think in saying that, even hearing myself say that out loud, we all have the same amount of time, don't we? But I have not got as much time to dedicate to my business as some people because I want to get dedicated to family or actually to having a life.

Like this, I feel like we're perhaps speaking to people and they might be thinking, well, i don t have any dependents or I don' t need it. But it's time that you want spend doing the things you love.

It's applicable to that too. And if you are going to say I wanna run my businesses in three days a week, it It's you're just, you just have to make adjustments and you have.

Have really strong boundaries. And I think also, um, not trying to switch task too much as well. So if you were doing creative tasks, he did that in a block.

If you doing emails or batch writing, Um, content for something you do that. In a blog, because we lose, we lost a lot of time just being in our mailbox.

around? Would you agree? Oh, 100%. Before we hit record, I was telling you I've had exactly one of those days today where three hours has just sort of disappeared without anything at all because I firmly expected something to happen and then it didn't.

I didn t take myself off for a walk and readjust in quickly enough to be able to make use of that time. I think the fact that you're not walking out of the door and shutting the doors on your day and, you know, there will always be another email to answer, another social media post to do, and another landing page to tweak.

There will be always something and that's something I've really struggled with over the years in terms of boundaries but I'm much better with now but anyone that is looking to build something In those two or three days a week around other things, what Lucy's just said about that client facing billable hours thing is so important because it's like, Oh, well, I can see six clients during the school run.

I'm like no, you can't. Like even with, if I have three, three one hour power hours in a day, by the time I've uploaded, downloaded, sent reports, 30 day plans, 90 day plan, that's it.

That's the day gone. And then I got to go up to the schools. So we are. We are all going to have different, different pressures on us, and also before we come to that, the fact that we're all different.

It feels like you're on a tightrope sometimes, doesn't it? And something will happen, an ill parent, ill child, something pulling on your time and everything changes and you have to adapt to it.

There's no sick leave, etc. You know, we, I think that this is a really balanced, honest conversation about the challenges of running your own business.

But what would you, you've given us loads of tips already, but to somebody that's kind of sitting on the fence about it, maybe in that seat, where I was 10 years ago, what, would say to someone about sort of the good things about running their own businesses, to sort inspire people as to what is possible?

It's absolutely life-changing, it's the best decision I ever made and I don't believe that I should have done it sooner because I think everything happens for a reason and things happen in the right timing for you when you're ready, but you know if it is something, if its a niggle that doesn't go away I know that it meant for have a plan B.

You're not going to lose your professional qualifications. you have that, that's yours. No matter what happens with the business, you can go back and get another job.

And that is so empowering and makes you feel so confident.

Advice for Taking the Leap and Closing Remarks

What an amazing story it will be to tell people of the incredible year you worked for yourself and what you did and where you work because you had the freedom to do it.

But I bet you'll never get the chance to tell those stories because when you get into it, you will make it work because there's no choice not to. You'll get a taste of how it feels and you want it more than ever.

And you realize how you can help people and your wonder why you hadn't done it sooner. It's honestly, it's the most incredible feeling when in the business.

I do feel lucky. People say creative thing like you've worked hard. Have worked very hard, but I am also very, very lucky and very fortunate. And I think it all comes together, doesn't it?

You put the work in, you do the right things. You focus on the areas that matter. So not faffing about what color something is or where on a website something should go, but like what's going to be chargeable?

What's gonna bring the money in? That's what you need to focus your time on right at the start and doing those things is so important. Amazing. I've loved this chat and I know that my listeners will as well.

We're going to reference everything down below, but I guess the website or Instagram, is that the best place to find you? Yeah, definitely. You mentioned YouTube.

Yeah. I do have a YouTube channel, I'll make sure you have all the links, Instagram is where I spend most of my time. So at Lucy underscore legal is what you'll find me.

Amazing. It's been wonderful. Thank you so much for your precious time and we will keep in touch as we always do. Take care. I hope this episode has sparked some new ideas or challenged your thinking.

Transitioning from medicine to business is not easy. It's about adapting our skills while embracing the unknowns of entrepreneurship. it can be nerve wracking, but remember you are not alone on this journey.

Please feel free to reach out to me via direct message on LinkedIn or Instagram, or just shoot me an email at joe at bendylegs.com for support. And don't forget to grab the free PDF from the show notes from stethoscope to startup, which is your go-to guide and resource for diving into entrepreneurship.

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