



#9 Jake Jackson | Dealing with Depression: Tips on balancing a new family, startup business, and yourself

[00:00:00] Hello friends. This is David Pasqualone with the remarkable people podcast. Season one episode nine with our friend Jake Jackson!

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the remarkable people podcast. Listen, do repeat for life. Hey Jake, thanks for being here today. Yeah, no worries. David, thank you for inviting me. It's a good to talk to you outside of business. Absolutely. We did a lot of emailing over the last few months and just see you as the listener know Jake and I met because I was doing some consulting work and one of our clients had a really unique solution they needed.

The solutions we were finding were. Quarter million dollars and up. So what we ended up doing was taking several plugins and putting them together to design the solution they needed. And out of all of the vendors and solutions, Jake was by far the most. On top of things, the most friendly, the most customer service oriented.

When I had four other vendors tell me it was impossible, Jake figured out how to make it happen and he didn't just stay in his little world of his product and his company. He helped us bridge the gap between the other. So Jake, I really appreciate that and that kind of led into our friendship. So again, thank you for being here today.

Yeah, yeah, no worries. And, um, so when you say plugins, I just like to clarify, that's WordPress plugins. Yup. Exactly. Jake has a amazing company and he's providing solutions around the world to companies just like the one I was consulting with. But Jake has a bigger story and that's what I'm really excited to talk to you about today and let Jake share.

So just like all of our other shows, Jake's going to take over, he's going to talk about his past and what he had a face and overcome how he got to overcome that. So we can help all of us as well. Then also the exciting part. We'll jump back into that company where you are today and where are you going in the future and how we can help you hit your goals.

Sound good? Sounds good to me, Devin. All right buddy. Then lets you take the mic. It's you tell us your, tell us your story. My story. I think I'd like to talk about when my son was first born. So he's now been over a year and a half old and uh, I was nicely running my businesses. A micro business. I worked on it full time and I had another developer work on it part time, but around the time my son was born, business was starting to blow up and I wasn't keeping up with the demand, so I was working very, very long hours trying to adjust to a newborn baby, and my wife obviously had stopped working too.

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Okay for a new son. And so I had the pressure of a single income household and lack of sleep on top of that. It really became overwhelming for me. I, uh, I didn't adjust well my work life balance just completely, completely off. And so I, I started suffering a lot from depression post postpartum depression.

I think that's the, the term for when mom, new moms get depression. And that is a different term for, for men. But, um, that would be probably the closest. Medical description for it. And yeah, I, uh, I basically had a big breakdown where I basically stressed so much over trying to run the business and make, make money to support my family and at the same time try and bond with this new baby that had come into our lives, that at the time it was for me a really hard, I struggled to bond with this child.

Uh, all I could see was this crying little, little thing that. Took a huge chunk out of my time and I couldn't run the business to support my family. So that was a huge challenge for me to overcome. And it took me about 12 months to get back to a healthy, healthy mindset. And that was through. Medication and talk therapy.

Huge lifestyle change. Actually, I also grew my business in in that year internally. So we now hire five amazing Philippine workers, remote workers, and that's taken huge pressure off me and allow me to get that work life balance that I was sorely, sorely missing prior to my son being born. Uh, now I get to let spend a lot more time with my family.

My wife's back at work now three days a week, so that's taken a pressure off financially as well. I'm not solely responsible. For supporting everyone, which I'm very thankful for my [00:05:00] staff now, I've actually helped the business grow probably by about 25% in the last 12 months, just because we can increase our throughput in terms of the products and services that we offer our clients.

So yeah, I'm, I'm definitely in a lot better position now than I, than I was a year and a half ago. Yeah, no, that's awesome, man. So you, when you are going through this. As a husband and father as well. I understand that overwhelming pressure. We feel sometimes like, man, we've got to work to take care of our family, but then when we're home, we have to take care of our family.

But that balance is really hard to establish and trying to be growing an organization at the same time and managing the affairs of taking care of clients. It can become disproportionately balanced very quick. So when all this was going on, I'm taking it. Did your wife's relationship and yours also deteriorate too as well?

Yeah. Yeah. Uh, the first six months was really hard on our relationship. We actually, um. We got married on Christmas Eve, uh, this time last year in a surprise wedding. Um, so we invited all our friends and family over for a Christmas Eve party, and then when I got there, we told them, Hey, can you guys come down over here?

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And there's a, there's a surprise. And I thought it was like secret Santa. I was standing there with a, with a big sign up saying, welcome to our, our wedding. That's awesome. Yeah, it was, it was, it was really, really great. And, uh, and a lot of fun. And then after Christmas and new years where, you know, the holiday periods I ever, and it sit back into work, that's when, um, yeah, relationship really started getting, getting affected because I was back at work back during those long hours and my son was starting to teach, so he was struggling with these slate patters and my wife was up.

Uh, a lot during the, during the knots and not getting this late. She needed. Uh, to function as an adult. Yeah. We, we grew, we grew up apart quite a lot. It wasn't very nice time for us as a family. Charlie's my, my first son, uh, Fs, their first child to get a say is a major adjustment for everyone. You know, she's going through changes in her body with childbirth as well, and having image problems.

So the intimacy just. Just wasn't, we didn't, we weren't intimate. We were just like two people just trying to keep this baby alive together, but we weren't nurturing our relationship as a couple. Yeah, it's crazy. They write a thousand books a year on what to do before you're expecting and you know how to prepare for the baby.

I didn't see one book on what you do when you take the thing home. It would, it was like, what do I do? How do I even wash this kid? It's crazy. Yeah. The, uh, the, the DAPA changes is when I sit and think something to get used to. Yeah. Man. And the difference I got to you have a daughter yet? Or just not just, just the one boy, it's just the one boy.

Charlotte. Okay. Yeah. No, man. Once you have your first daughter, it's a whole different world to man. The whole process is different. So it's like we need somebody out there and listen to write a book on what to do when you take the baby home. That's the important part. Yeah. Man. Amends, amends, support group posts.

Post child. Yeah. Instructions. Instructions, step by step, right? Yeah. Where's my instruction manual like that give you one for your car. Where's the one for the baby? Exactly. Right. So you and your wife, obviously having a baby's difficult and then growing a business is difficult and being newly married is difficult and you're doing all three of these at once.

So you hit a low and you're really just, you know, everything's out of balance, but you still got to keep paying the bills. So where are you from? They're like, how do you start emerging from this? Uh, well I think it was, it was after I hit rock bottom. Define your rock bottom too. Cause everybody's perception is different.

Yeah. Yeah. So, um, rock bottom for me was probably six, six months after my son was born. I was on my front deck holding him in my arms and he was. Crying. I just, I just didn't know how to, how to make him happy. Uh, emotionally I was drained, exhausted. There was nothing left in the tank. I just didn't, I just felt worthless as a.

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As a husband, a father, a human being. My brain went for looking for an escape. So suicide was a lot on my mind at that time. The, your brain just just looks for that hour. How can I, how can I make this better? And that was the only app I could see at the time. And so that was, that was really rock bottom for me.

I'm glad you didn't listen to those bad thoughts, man. Me too. Yeah, it was, I'm glad I had the support around me that I needed to work [00:10:00] through. Went through those mental challenge issues, uh, that I was facing and um, and come out the other side in a much better, healthier and healthier place. All right, man.

Amen. Yeah. Ken, can you talk about that support? So there's a lot of people, I was just talking to a friend and then another friend, and you know, right now in American, I think it's global. Teenagers are at an all time high for depression and suicide, and that's carrying through every age bracket, but especially the teenagers in America.

Is it like that in Australia as well? Uh. I'm not sure the exact statistics of it. I, I. Anecdotally want to say yes. Uh, that's the impression I get from reading the news and things like that. But, um, I have no specific data to back it up. I'm suffering from depression all my adult life. So I've got treatment in one form or another.

To help me with that. And that's where I was going with that, with the support. So this people of all ages right now that are struggling with depression, there's people of all backgrounds and demographics. It's not rich. It's not poor. It's not fit. It's not fat. It's not, you know what I mean? Anybody can struggle from this.

So what kind of support and help, how did you emerge? How did you get through this and turn that corner. Well, the first thing I did was I'm open up to my struggles to, to my wife and, and my closest family. Uh, my father, uh, and my, my auntie, we all live together on a 22 acre split house property. So that was the, the first step is to acknowledge out loud that I've got an issue to, to verbalize it because you get.

So lost in your head sometimes thinking these negative thoughts, these negative emotions. And you might project that on your friends and family out the people, and it's just warps your perception of the real world. You know, you might think that your colleagues laugh at you behind your back or, or, or some action that you did was an accident that United now you think that they hate you forever kind of thing.

Totally illogical when you, when you actually verbalize it and have a chat with that person and realize, Hey, this is . It's, it's water off a Duck's back. It's, it's fine. They didn't think about it twice and you've obsessed about it for two weeks. We've all been there. Yeah. Yeah. So, um, giving, giving it, uh, voicing

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the problem to, to people that you trust was, was the first big step for me to make them realize that, Hey, there's, I'm really struggling and I need, I need some more support.

So that was, that was the first step and that, that helped reconnect my wife and me, our relationship, because that was a big, big rift between us. Um, you know, like when you saying something's wrong with your partner, but there's no communication there. Um, it just creates that, that rift and that was, that was part of the problem with why we were struggling as well.

Cause we're both both going through a lot of emotion, emotional stuff. Yeah. You're young, you're newly married, you got all this stuff going on and you've got a baby. And man, I love my kids, but when they screamed and you have no break, it can drive anybody insane. Forget waterboarding. We need to just put people in rooms with children.

Oh, yeah. I, I wouldn't wish that on anyone. I know, right. Just Bay. We could change the whole world. Just put them in a nursery and just make them like, listen to it. They'll give us any secrets we need. Yeah. Actually, my wife sent me a video because I'm currently visiting the U S for awake. Uh, I'm visiting the gravity foams office, which is, um, the software.

My plugin is built on top of, so I'm over in Virginia. It's the first time I've been away from my family for an extended period of time. So my son is really not coping with that at all. She sent me a video last night of a him just chucking the biggest tantrum I've ever. No. Uh, like he never, he never screams like that.

Um, it was, it was like, wow. Well, good news is he loves his dad. Yeah. That news is your wife's alone. Yeah. So she's, um, she's going to need a little holiday after I get home. I think that's awesome. All right, man. Well, so step one was. W, uh, voice, your struggles to the people you trust and you trust is huge.

Cause a lot of people will give you really bad advice or they're going to manipulate it or they're going to, you're going to OB vulnerable in love and they're going to exploit it. But what you said is voice at the people you trust. So what was that second step for you? So the next step for me was going back to the doctor and, and saying, Hey, we need to revisit my mental health plan.

Uh, I'm not sure what it's like in the U [00:15:00] S but in Australia we, um. We have a mental health plan, uh, that the TPA does, uh, an assessment of you and then makes appropriate recommendations based off that. When I did that, we, um, we decided to. Changed my medication. I switched to a different SSRI, antidepressant.

And then I got a referral to a psychologist who specialized in talk therapy. So I made an appointment with him and, and basically started a talk therapy about, uh, old, all the problems I've been having. And. Um, to, to get professional advice on how to work through their emotions and the issues and the negative thoughts and the anxiety, the depression.

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And so between that and the, um, the medication change, I just had to persevere. And I think a lot of it is, is comes down to sheer willpower. You've, you've got to try. You got to want to, to change. Um. The, uh, the tools, like, like drugs or therapy. Uh, I just, that, that tools and you have to yourself make the most of them.

Um, you know, there's, there's no quick fixes here. It takes a lot of work to. Take yourself out of that hole. That's why you need that support, you know, from your, from your friends and family as well. So when you're not talking to your therapists, you've got, you've got your loved ones to support you. And when things are getting a bit rough, yeah, I kind of keep you accountable.

They see you drifting. Well actually speak about this, cause you mentioned talk therapy. Some people have no concept of what that is. I've never heard of it. And it sounds like we just sit there and talk. So explain just briefly, what is talk therapy. Yeah, well, basically you do, you sit there and talk.

Eventually you're talking about those inner most thoughts that the demons that are in your head all the time that you, that you won't verbalize to anyone because you know it's, it's, you think it's crazy or it's. It's, it's just something that the thoughts are so negative that it makes you sick to vocalize it.

Shear on a safe place with a professional who's experienced. You feel open to share and you can kind of help be navigated through this. Yes. Yeah, that's right. Um, so you can share all those numbers. We can sit down, we can have a chat. Uh, it took me a long time to build up to sharing those inner most thoughts.

I think it was at least six or seven sessions. Yeah, hour long sessions to build a rapport with my therapist and um, start opening out because, um, you know, that they're not the sort of things that will for me that I talk about with, with anyone. Yeah. No, most of us won't cause we got put in that place of, like you mentioned before, it's almost like a shame or there's something wrong with me or I'm sick and other people aren't thinking these thoughts.

But the truth is. Anybody can have any thought. And it's, are we allowing that to fester and grow in our brain? And the acknowledgement that everybody has thoughts that are good, bad, ugly, and everything in between. Uh, so that's excellent that you were able to, you know, like you said, it takes time. There's no quick fix and it took six or seven sessions, but you found out that that therapist or someone you could trust and open up to.

Yeah. And, uh, I mean, um, it wasn't. I mean, it can be quite stressful going on and talk about these things. Uh, and the, the therapists are with, and actually, so he's really understanding about that. And, and one of the sessions, we didn't even talk about my emotions at all. We talked about music. Um, he plays the saxophone and I played the saxophone.

So we had a common ground to. To share some things and, and the whole session we just talked about music and jazz and find the sex phone and yeah, it was, it was just a really nice, nice session. I came out

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of that just feeling quite good, fuck quite happy. Because what ends up happening is you just focus on these negative emotions so much.

It starts. If you feel like it starts becoming who you are. Um, so it's really nice to enjoy yourself and, and talk about something you love doing and feel that happiness again, to, to break that cycle of negative thought. So yeah, that was, that was quite helpful for me. And would you, if for people out there listening who are thinking, okay, I acknowledge I need help, I can't keep going on like this.

And they're looking for a mental health professional or medical professional. Do you have any tips for, you know, what to look for, what not to look for it? Cause I always think of the joke, uh, you know, what do you call a doctor that graduates first in his class? A doctor, exactly. What do you call it, doctor and the graduates last in his class.

Egg dog. Exactly. So theirs is, there's good and bad in [00:20:00] everybody. So to find a good one who's going to help you, not just take your \$125 an hour. Do you have any tips on that? Um. Well, I talked first, talk to you, the JP, the person who's going to give you the referral and discuss what kind of therapy that you're interested in.

Cause there's all different types of specialties. Um, my wife went and saw someone who specialized in family therapy, women who've just had babies. I went and saw someone who specialized more in anxiety and depression, and then you've got Mao, female and, and different personalities. So my advice would be just make an appointment, go, go see them.

The first session is about seeing if you and your therapist are going to connect, you're going gonna be out to open up and, and don't be afraid to, if, if that session doesn't go well too. Find another one. Try a different therapist because you don't get along with everyone in the world. And the same goes for your doctor.

Yeah. You want to, you want to find someone who you can, you can open up with and talk with, and that's. I mean, they don't have Yelp for doctors that I'm aware of in Australia anyway. Maybe. Maybe they do in in the U S yeah. For me it was, it was just a trial and error thing, and I'm actually in in a country town in Australia, so that is.

Not a huge amount of choice for me anyway, but I, uh, I did actually try therapy when I was a lot younger and it just, it didn't fit well for me. The, my, me and my therapist and I didn't go back and see a different therapist and, and I just continued the fought the good fight, uh, which. Yeah. In retrospect, we're looking back at it now.

It's probably not the way I should have gone about it, but I'm being young and naive and you know, there's a bit of a stigma about mental health, especially with, well for me is that a younger, uh, when I was younger, um, that you just don't talk about these things. You, you put on a brave face and you just get on with life.

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Um, and I tried that for a long time and it, it really just wasn't working for me. So, um, I'm glad I, I went back in and gave him another shot when I was a bit older. And it sounds like that saxophone session really changed things, like it really bonded the two of you and open things up and you felt that wall come down where you could engage with them.

Yes. Yeah, definitely. So, um, you know, the first few sessions, actually, he, he did a lot of the Toki and I didn't, I didn't do so much talking. It was, it was, he understood that that therapy's about, especially when you first starting about creating that bond, it actually worked really well for me because I didn't want to, for the first session, I don't want to go see a therapist and start talking about my inner most thoughts.

Spilling my guts with someone I have no idea about, no clue what they do, what their life is about. Like, uh, for me. Yeah. It was that, that third session where we were just talking about, uh, sex, iPhones and music, and. Building that bond that, that, um, that was a turning point for me, I think. And it was, it was very helpful.

And let's talk also, if you don't mind about the medication because there's a stigma in the States. And I think in most places where if you take a medication to help with an issue, some people look up on it, some people look down on it, some people feel weak if they take medicine. Some people think, no, I need this.

So what's your position on taking the medication? Because. My perspective is we all have to dig to the core of our problems and rip it out by the root and in the process. Sometimes we need that help. If it's an a situation, like you said, you're having suicidal thoughts or things that are life threatening or serious, you could harm yourself or others.

Um, so I'm never going to say medication. You shouldn't be on her, but I'm also not going to say you should live on this the rest of your life. You've experienced it, you've seen it help you. Can you talk to me about the journey? I'm sure there's medic medicine you've tried, it didn't work. There's Mexican medicine that did work.

What's your position on all this? Oh, I think definitely, uh, if you could do it without medicine, you certainly should. And, uh. You know, if you can, if you can do talk therapy and do your exercise and change your diet and whenever you need to do to recover without any medicine and amazing, right, totally do it.

Don't just run straight to. To drugs and things. That's going to be, I think it's going to be a quick fix cause it's, it's not, it's just another tool in, in your arsenal to, to assist you. So I was doing all those other tools. I changed my diet. I, um, I now don't eat dairy. Uh. And I try to stay clear of gluten [00:25:00] because creates inflammation problems for me, which was affecting my health in terms of how much energy I had.

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Uh, so I did the diet change, and now I try and stick to a exercise regime and do meditation and talk to my wife about my feelings and what I've been going through and things like that. So I, I mean, I was doing all that and it, uh, it just wasn't. Wasn't working for me steel, so I needed some extra assistance and that's, that's where the medication came in for me.

And as far as the right medication with these things, it's, it's something you need to talk with your doctor about. Um, but for me, I've been on and two, three, four different kinds now. Um, to try and find the right one at the right dose. And it's just, it's just a journey to, to find the one that's suited for suitable for you.

But yeah, that was, that was kind of what I had to do to find something that's going to work for me. And now you feel like you found something, you found something that helps you. Yes. Yeah. So the, the top of mine now is, is definitely helping along with all those other tools applied together. And for, for you, does your journey look like when you exercise and when you eat right, and when you meditate and when you do those things, it's proven.

It's not opinion that helps 100% is your journey as you heal more and more each day to gradually transition off the medicine? Or is this something that you feel like you'll, you'll have to continue with the medicine in addition to healing? I mean, eventually, longterm, I would love to be off the medicine, but, uh, I'm still not 100% at a, at a stage where I feel that I could transition away from that and, um, and still cope with everything.

Uh, when I, when I get to the stage where I'm, I'm happy that everything's, everything's in the right place with me, that I could transition off that, then that's something. Uh, I definitely like to look at, um, but, um, uh, at this point, I'm not in a, in a rush to do that. I actually tried doing that a few years ago, and it, it just resulted in me being relapsing significantly.

So, um. Yeah. I now listen to my doctor yeah. They kind of know they, they, some of them know what they're talking about. They know what they're talking about usually. Yeah. All right. Well, yeah, and again, that quick fix, there's no such thing as a quick fix in most situations. So that's good. You're looking at the long term, tra a journey.

It's a long term journey, and you're helping yourself and you're having your friends and loved ones help you. Um, and that's good that you and your wife are doing this together. Uh, so today, what's going on in your life today? Like how are you feeling now? Where are you, what's going on with your business?

What's going on there? Yeah, we'll, uh, like I mentioned, I'm in the amine in the U S for a week visiting the gravity phones office. Uh, and. I mean, that's a little bit, a little bit stressful. That's a pick some anxiety for me because, um, it was 30 hours travel from Australia to the East coast and a amount of my comfort zone in a new location.

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New what? 16 hour time zone difference. I'm dealing with fatigue and different culture. Different people. Um, why from my family, so I haven't got my, uh, my support right there when I, when I need it. It's been a little bit more challenging this week for me than it would be when I'm, when I'm back home. I'm using all those tools that I mentioned to, to keep, keep myself healthy.

I think I'm, I'm, and I'm in quite a good position now than, uh, than I was a year ago. Yeah. That's awesome. I'm happy for you, Jake, and if the listeners haven't figured out when we've alluded to, and we've mentioned it, but by that accent, you're from Australia and everybody in America loves it. So you're gonna make friends wherever you go right off the bat.

Well, yeah, I've, um, I've actually been, uh, met a lot of amazing U S people already. Um. We've been Ubering all around the place. Uh, and it's been great to talk with a bunch of different people, uh, that way, uh, cause they're, yeah. 20 minute trips. So we always have a, a good conversation. And we, uh, the other night we're coming back from 10 pin bowling.

One of my other Australian friends was, uh, was joking around with the driver and he, and he asked us where we are and he said, ah. I could tell you, but I'd have to kill you. And I, and I turned around and I said to him. Dude, you can't say that in this country. That's just not cool. That's [00:30:00] awesome. But the driver, he was, uh, he, he understood it was a joke.

And, and we had a good laugh about it. And, and, uh, then he was, he was telling us all about his life, uh, cause he was, he grew up in this area. And, and what, uh, what he did for work, he used to own a trucking company. And. And, uh, then you were tired and then he had to retire again and now he's driving Uber's cause you know, it's, it's a tough economy.

Yeah. You know what's really funny when you were talking about the therapist and you're like, it takes time to build rapport and to build trust. I was going to make a joke that in America, that's exactly the same. Unless you're in a taxi cab or the subway, people just open up and start talking, man. And you can just great if, if that's, if that's what you need for your therapy guy, go get your one hour Uber session.

I know, right? You may not get a qualified listener, but Hey, you'll get, you'll get to vent out. That's right. You'll get, you'll get a listener. Uh, I mean, I don't have to be qualified. It's like when you, when you talk to your wife, if it's. That's what you like to do, do it, you know? Uh, it's a, it's about trying to try and have that balance and strike, do things that you love doing.

And if you want to talk to the Uber driver and like, we're kind of jumping around a bit and that's my fault. I'm, I'm new to podcasting and interviewing, so forgive me, but I want to talk about if you, to your comfort level, your childhood, and this is, and I don't want to be like all Freud and go lay on a couch and talk about your mom and feelings you have with cocaine.

Your nose. Well, what I'm saying is I grew up in a more broken environment, and when all that was going on, man, I didn't have a quote unquote normal child had a lot of pressure, a lot of stress, a lot of

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responsibility. It wasn't like a childhood. It was more like survival in a lot of ways. So I've always struggled with depression.

And not that I've like been to the point of other people, but I have this like sadness that I carried around and through Christ and through God, I found peace and freedom from that. That doesn't mean I'm not problems, and there's been serious problems in my adult life that men have brought me to low places now, thankfully, I've always had God with me and I felt that peace and that joy that I can't explain even at the lowest point.

However, why I'm bringing that all up. A lot of the struggle I have now in doubts, it's like you said, demons. You use that term. That's something I use all the time. I even made a tee shirt that says like, I don't, I don't run. I chase, I chase my fears. I chase my doubts. I taste my demons. I teach my dream. I taste my destiny.

I'm not letting these demons torment me anymore. I'm going after them. Right? So when you're going through your life. And you have all these thoughts. Do you feel like some of that stemmed from your upbringing or do you feel like that shows how you are wired? What's your, your story? Oh, definitely. I think the past certainly defines our future.

And for me, I've got AR like to call it the little black box where, uh, in my earlier years where I didn't know how to. Deal with emotions, uh, for the situation I was in, I would put it in my box and, uh, you know, lock the box, Chuck it away, forget about it. And I'm only now just starting to unpack that box with, uh, and, and trying to deal with those past, um, those past emotions.

Uh, the best way that I can and, and face them head on. You know, like you said with your tee shirt, you're chasing after your demons. So I'm trying to chase after, find a way to accept my past and move forward from that. Uh, realize that that Canada define who I am or I can let it go and, and forge a new path.

So that's what I'm, uh, I'm also working through as well as is trying to handle that. And, uh, I mean, I had a bit of a broken childhood too. Uh, my parents divorced when I was about 12, and then, um, uh, my mother gradually moved further and further away from where we lived. So, uh, I saw her less and less. She became less and less as a figure, a mother figure.

And, and, uh, I mean, today we, we. Touch base maybe once, twice a year. You still alive? Yes. Right. Yeah. Like it's a, uh, I wrote her a letter once and that basically use the analogy that we'll just to observe as in each other's lives. It was like wasn't a family relationship anymore because just you went there for my, the, the formidable years of [00:35:00] my childhood.

And, and, and into adulthood. Um, so yeah, that was, uh, that was a big struggle for me, um, growing up. So yeah, I think that really affected my teen years, uh, in terms of my behavior, the, my ability to

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connect with people, um, and make, make friends. I mean, uh, now as an adult, I've only got a select few. Really, really close friends and that's, that's perfectly fine.

Uh, I'm, uh, I don't like being around huge crowds. I, I much prefer having a smaller, intimate, do you know where you can get to know someone in more depth than, than have a shallow relationship with a heap of different people? So, yeah, it's just, it's just something I. I just try and accept and, and keep moving forward.

Um, looking, looking at taking the next step forward instead of, instead of two steps back as it were. Yeah. And that's huge what you said. Um, I'm probably gonna piss off a bunch of people here, but it needs to be said, and I don't mind saying it. I don't think people take enough. Thought into the effect of divorce.

Now there are obviously situations where divorce is almost necessary because of adultery or some, you know, things that happen in the marriage or break it to us, what would be seemingly non recoverable. But I think there's so many people who flippantly get divorced or they don't. It's tough. It's not easy.

Holy crap. Two humans in a house. Everybody has their own. Well, I mean, that's not easy, but, um, the impact that the last, you know, 50 years in the popularity of divorce and how easy it is and how flipping it is, and even the mental health profession, Oh, children are they, they used to say children are young.

They're, they recover or they, they bounce back. It doesn't affect them the same. That's a lie. We're all products of that. You and I, and how many of the listeners today? Um, so I'm really thankful you shared that, Jake, because I grew up a bastard child. My parents were never married, so I was just with my mom and I had a dad who was very wealthy.

We grew up very poor and we had no relationship. No, I love my dad and I love my mom. And when I was 20, I started talking to him. But that mental impact. Literally altered the course of my life. And there's still struggles. And you're saying the same thing, your, your parents divorce and your 12 and that pain from the distance between you and your mom and sadly, how many millions of stories are just like ours.

So thank you for really sharing that. And then being honest about how you put in a box. You know, the Bible talks about how if you bring things in the light, they can heal. That's essentially what you're saying in your own words is you stuck at an unbox cause you didn't know how to deal with it. You didn't want to face the pain.

And it caused long term issues for you. Now, through your mental health professional, you're taking that out of the box into the light, you're dealing with the issue, you're dealing with the pain, and now you're experiencing the healing and freedom. Is that accurate? Yeah, I would, uh, I would pull that accurate.

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Yeah. Yeah, man. I mean, I know we have different means about it and different things. And you know, some people call it different, different philosophies, but what we're basically talking about the same thing. Yeah. And that's that. And see that's just it. You and I have talked before, we have a different worldview, and that's perfectly fine.

We're both, we're humans. We love each other, we respect each other. Um, but to me, all truth, all truth, truth is truth. It doesn't matter if it's you, me, somebody in Africa and Iceland. Man. Truth is truth. If I jump off a bridge, I'm going to fall at 9.82 meters per second squared, and I'm going to hit the ground.

All right? I don't care who you are, what you believe, you're hitting the ground and you may bounce, but you're going to die. So, uh, when it comes to these life triggers, it's the same. So I really appreciate you sharing that. And if you're listening now, please. There's things that we don't want to face.

There's things we don't want to talk about, but you have to realize that if we don't face in, and sometimes we usually, we need people to help us. Would you agree with that, Jake, at this point in life, if we've carried that baggage around, we need help to deal with it. Yeah. Uh, I mean, if you've accumulated that baggage, usually you don't want to deal with it yourself, uh, or you don't have the skill set to deal with it.

So you're going to need. Some sort of help to, to recover from that. If you're not accumulating the baggage, then obviously, you know, you're capable, uh, as a person to processes, emotions yourself. Uh, that's the way I [00:40:00] look at it. Oh, yeah. I agree. I absolutely agree. But those same people might, um, that, that don't have that baggage that they may be.

Already talking to their friends and family about it. So, you know, they may already be utilizing those skills and it might not be just going alone. So, um, I'm not in that position, so I, I can't really say that's like a grass is always greener on the other side. It's someone, someone over there. I don't, I don't like to look over there and feel MBO or jealousy, you know?

I just like to, to focus on what I'm doing and keep your mind line. So yeah. I can't say either way. No, no, no. I absolutely, yeah. Complete agreement. I'm not seeing be jealous or envious of anybody. When I was just saying, was that. If I might be an expert at something and I'm fantastic what I do, but I am not an expert, which you do.

So if I'm trying to conquer something in the software world, I'm calling you because you're the expert and I need that help. And that guidance. If I was going to climb Mount Everest, I'm going up with a Sherpa, or actually I want a team of five to get my like unexperienced, but to the top of the mountain, and then I can come back later and show somebody else out.

But. I don't want the guy who's poor and living on the street homeless, giving me investing advice. You know what I mean? Yeah, yeah, yeah. So, all right. Right. Well, today you're running your company.

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You're growing. Uh, you said you were outsourcing your, you know, you have employees in the Philippines. That right there.

Let's switch to business for awhile. A lot of people can't give up control. A lot of people can't delegate. And you said you had a hard time doing that, but once you did talk about. The freedom it's brought you. Yes, it was. Um, I mean, I've tried in the past to, to outsource some of the work, but, uh, I didn't have a plan.

It was kind of like, I, I need some help. He had come on board and, and help, but it wasn't defined. There was no structure for. The staff member at the time. So it was, it was destined to, to file this time. Um, I actually went to a WordCamp in Sydney and a wide camps just did a tech conference for people that use WordPress, um, which is, uh, a website platform.

Quite a popular. Content management system. That's an understatement. Yeah. Just, just for the people who aren't aware of what, I'm just teasing you, man. So I went to a WordCamp Sydney and listened to a talk from Stephanie cap vanilla. Um, he's based in Sydney. Um, she runs her own. Uh, business, um, and outsources all her employees to the Philippines.

And she did a talk about, uh, re hiring remote workers. Uh, like you said, you go talk to a professional when you, when you want to do something. So this was a really eyeopening experience to really see the steps that you need to implement. To successfully hire people and help them, will them to help you run your business.

So I basically use that as a blueprint, uh, set up policies and procedures and credit training courses, video series articles on how to do all the things that I needed them to do. And then, uh, I spent about three months. Uh, vetting my first three staff, uh, staff members. Um, so put a, put a few job listings out and accepted resumes, read them, look to them, email them back.

I'll ask some questions, put them in the maybe pile, put them in the no pile. Set up some interviews, you know, basically what you do to tie any staff anywhere. Yes, it was a, it was quite an in depth process and it did take me some time, uh, once they started to. Release that control, you know, not be looking over their shoulder every second of the day, figuratively speaking, of course, since they're working out of the Philippines and I'm working out of Australia.

But yeah, it is really challenging too. Let go and have that trust. But because I built all that training material, when they didn't complete a task to what I expected it to be, I could refer back for, refer them back to the, the course material and go, this is how I'd like it done. Or we could go have a talk about why they did it this way instead of that way and refined those policies and procedures.

So, um. I, I'm really thankful about the people I did select because they really helped me build that coursework, uh, out to something that was gonna work for, for everyone. Because I'd never done it

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[00:45:00] before. I'd never employed people full time before I had zero experience doing that. We ended up changing all our internal.

Uh, tooling to assist with project management. Um, uh, which was quite a process. We changed our fall, uh, cloud management software from self hosted to, to a paid solution, but we didn't have to manage. And while I didn't have to manage, that's important. Yeah, yeah, exactly. It was, it was basically. Uh, how oppressed this to to delegate as much as I could to them.

And so I could focus on, instead of maintaining the business, I could focus on growing the business. And that's so important. Like so many things you said are dead on. Like I'm sure you didn't look forward to all the work of setting up processes and procedures and to, to think through all the scenarios of what ifs couldn't happen.

But by doing that, by putting in that fourth on that vision and setting boundaries and setting parameters, whatever people want to call it, you created a system like, here's a handbook. This is what we do. This is how we do it. And people have that, um, security really, because as an employer, you want to know this is what my people are doing.

And as an employee, people want to know this is what I need to do to keep my employer happy. So you were brilliant to do that. That was exactly on target and on the spot, man. Spot on. So would you agree though, that's an ongoing process? I don't want our listeners to be disillusioned. You're always growing and always changing.

Right? Yes. Yeah, definitely. Um, and, and it's important to keep those policies and procedures updated as well. I mean, in tech where we're constantly changing, like, uh, since since they started, we, we changed how we write some of our software and test it. So I've had to go back and I've had to do another course to explain that and dedicate time to allow the staff to, uh, do the course and ask questions.

And. And basically, uh, I allow time every week for training purposes, couple hours where they can sit down and, and review the policies and procedures. And, and if they're finished doing that, then they can review what's going on in the, in the tech world. Um, because every time you turn around, there's something new.

Oh, it's never going to end just faster and faster. So, uh, I mean, I see that as a hugely important part of the job. Um, so I, we make time during working hours to, to do that. That's awesome. That's good. Strong leadership, buddy. I'm proud of you. So what about in your business? What's one of your proudest moments?

What's something you're like, man, I don't want to brag, but I'm so glad this happened, or I did this. I think, uh, when I first started gravity PDF, the software that we developed, it was a, it was a side project.

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I was actually doing freelance web design and development for clients. So I'd, I'd, I'd build how websites and I'd provide STI services and hosting and things like that.

And one of my clients asked for the ability to, um, send a PDF document of their contact form so they could have it in a, in a nice format and print it out. And at the time, there wasn't any solution for that. So, uh, we, we created something really simple that did the job and just released it to the, to the world to just because it's safe, it would be useful.

And it turns out it was useful because. Users just kept coming back and asking us to make it bigger and better and customize it. And, but originally the tool was developer focused. Um, you had to understand the right code to set it up. So I think my proudest moment was when I redesigned that and made it, here's a focus so you could just install it and set it up yourself.

It was easy. Uh, simple. Um, and we actually released that. I released that as a, as a free product. Um, so I business runs on a freemium business model with an upsell to, um, to custom PDF services. So we pulled that, spoke PDFs, but, um, I spent over a year and a half developing the user interface and, and rewriting the whole software.

So the users could do all these things themselves with no code knowledge required. No. I feel like that's my proudest moment because I worked on a longterm, something longterm with a goal in mind. Uh, quite a quite a lofty goal and I achieved that. Uh, I hit the Mark and, uh, today [00:50:00] we've got 30,000 active installations.

Which is huge for me. Uh, I want to hit, I am Dana a hundred thousand. I'd love to, um, hit 100,000 users and, and grow my, grow my team from, you know, five to 10 and have some real resources behind, behind the software, um, that we can. We can help a heap of heap of our customers, uh, digitize their paperwork and, and auto-generate PDF documents from data they capture on their website.

We basically do a whole heap of different custom projects like your, your project. Do you want to talk a bit more about that? What was, what it was. Absolutely. I definitely want to share with the listeners. If you run a business or a website, or especially if you're a web designer and you're looking for a solution, look at Jake's company, gravity PDF.

Um, the software is truly, like he said, so simple and easy to use. You can, it's simple as an install and then a set up, you're done and then it runs over and over and over again. Fully automated solution taken. What could be even sensitive client data and then presenting it back in a secure, attractive format.

So what we did with the specific client that Jake and I are referring to is we took information that the sales reps were actually entering on the backend, and we converted that into a sales proposal generator system that not only stayed internal, but then printed out an eight page document. Beautiful document.

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Export it with the integration using web hooks. That jet, that was a really the thing that I needed. Jake, Hey man, I don't even know what a web hook is right now. So he took it, we went to the custom paid service level and he made it happen. So now this company, from start to finish, they have a solution they haven't had in 20 years of the organization.

And we did it for literally pennies. Pennies and it was great, wonderful service. So I'm not saying that cause Jake's my friend, I'm saying it's cause it's a truth. So if you're looking for a solution or if you work with clients and they need solutions, I'll put in the show notes, a link to Jake site, check it out and easily worth every penny.

And it's not expensive. Jacob. I don't know if you want to tell pricing cause I know there's a difference in every currency by Australian dollar to U S dollar. For us it was so inexpensive. Yeah, the exchange rate is definitely, uh, very beneficial for us customers at the moment, since it's like 30% of the, the price that we recharge.

Um, but, uh, in terms of how much it costs, uh, our software runs on top of a plugin called gravity foams. So you first need a, a license for that, and they, they charge between, I think it's 60 U S dollars. To 260 U S dollars for their package. And just to define for the listener, some people are like, I don't care about this.

I just want to listen to Jake overcoming depression. But for the business users, this is whether you want one site or multiple sites and interface and user. So this solution, if you have one site, one business, very, very inexpensive. And then if you have, like if you're a web host, I mean a web designer with 15 sites or 50 site, 260 boxes, nothing.

Yeah. And you, you also get access to more extensions for gravity forms with the higher tiers. So you can integrate with PayPal and Stripe and, and add quizzes and surveys and things like that on the higher tier. But, um, our software works off there, the entry level tier, uh, perfectly fine. Um, and also for is completely free to install.

Um, so we have, we have ad-ons that we can upsell you. Um. And paid templates, um, which a template just changes the look and feel of the PDF. So there's some out of the box designs, but the, the project I worked with David on, uh, was what we call a bespoke project, um, where it's fully custom. Our team takes your, your brief and recommends a solution to you and give you a price point for that.

Um, and that can range from. \$150 right up to \$10,000 depending on the, on the project. And that's a strike and say, knock 30% off for ya. Us customers. Yeah, it fluctuates based on the day, but that's roughly accurate. So, yeah. So man, Jake, I really appreciate you and I have a couple more questions if you have the time, but yeah, no worries.

Okay, man, that's so awesome. So before we go forward though, is there anything else, like we jumped around a bit. Is there anything else you want to go. Go back to or clarify or add to or song. We didn't

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even discuss it. You want to throw out there. [00:55:00] I think it's just important to try and set some goals in your life, whether that's in business or or in your personal life, especially with your mental health.

And then I have to be big goals. Like one of mine is once a week just to take an hour. To myself and, and spend some time on me, switch off work, switch our family, do something specifically for me. And usually that's a ply. The saxophone. I like to. At lunchtime, just just break up in the sacks, play some music just for myself.

And I felt so strongly about that goal that I implemented that as a work policy too. So all my staff, they choose an hour once a week and they, uh, they spend some time on themselves. Oh man. That's awesome. That's a great leadership and business model. If you're listening and you're on a business, maybe peripherally consider implementing that in your business.

Well, if there was something, one thing that somebody told you years ago that you're like, man, that would have just helped me skip so much pain in trouble. Is there anything like that that rings a bell that you'd want to share with the audience? Uh, I mean, for me personally, I'm, I'm quite headstrong and stubborn.

So even if I had that device, it when I was younger, I probably wouldn't have listened to it. Mmm. I, uh, it's taken me a long time to, um, to work through that and not listened to that big headedness of abuse. Uh, I think as I got older, um, get a bit wiser, I start, I start listening and taking much more advice from, from others, um, today rather than w, uh, when I was a lot younger.

Um, so yeah, even, even, even if I was told something back then, I, uh, I don't think it would have stuck. The advice was maybe listen, just consider it. Yeah. Just, just consider, uh, other people have, have a lot of, a lot of valuable insight. I think today, if I, today, uh, I would say sit down, um. And value conversation with, with other people.

Um, my uncle just passed away, um, about just for Christmas. He did the good fight for the last couple of years. His health deteriorated significantly and. And, um, I just like to, to sit down with him and, and, and talk about his life. Uh, he loved telling this story when he was younger. Uh, he got up some crazy things.

But one of your stories was there was this river near his house, and, um, what do you use to what, what he did one time? Was he, um, he strapped some rocks. To him, to himself, put them in his pants or something. And he had a really long hose and he wanted to to walk across the river underwater with a big hose.

He's lucky he didn't die to be honest, cause he got, I don't want to interrupt your story, but this sounds like a cartoon. Yeah, yeah. It was, well, we slough better. We didn't like how, why, why would you think

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that? But anyway, this is, this is. 60 years, 70, 65 years ago kind of thing. And uh, yeah, he got, I dunno, 10 meters in and then couldn't suck the air in because of the pressure difference.

Uh, anyways, he was really lucky. He didn't, he didn't drown that day. He's able to get the rocks out and resurface in time, but ply, that was just one of the crazy stories he tell. And so I'd like, I'd like to, uh, I like to go and sit down with them and just talk about the past and, and his life. And so that would, that would be the one piece of advice.

And, you know, go on, go and talk to you, your grandparents, um, and talk about their life. And see, see all the crazy, wonderful things that they've done so you can, you can remember that when they pass. Well, Jake, it's been a true honor and pleasure to have you here today. I think you have a remarkable story and I think you have even brighter future someone going forward to remain in friends and having you back on a year and seeing if you hit that a hundred thousand goal and those 10 plus team members.

Thank you very much, David. It's a, it's been really nice. Oh, absolutely. Now, is that right? How would, if someone wants to get ahold of you, I'm going to put links in the show notes, but what's the best way for whether it's personal or business? How can somebody reach you? Uh, say, uh, if it's business, uh, you can head to [gravity.pdf.com](#) and go to our contact form, uh, and get in touch.

Um, if it's personal, you can reach me on Twitter at . [01:00:00] Jake Jackson, uh, 10 and, uh, just send me a tweet, uh, or, or a direct message. If it's a bit more of a personal nature, they're probably two of the best ways to reach, uh, to reach us. Awesome. All right, Jake will thank you very much for being here to our listeners.

If this has helped you, let us know. Please subscribe to the podcast like it, put some comments in, and if it's something you can't give a five star review to happily shoot me an email and go to our website at [David, pass phone.com](#) and let me know what I'm doing and we'll make it better. Again, we love you all.

Keep listening and I don't just listen, but do and repeat it for life. Thanks again, Jake, where she went with the best of my friend.

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