**Danielle Buckley Interview Transcript – Ep19**

**Matt** [00:00:00] Hello and welcome to this episode of Power Your Business podcast. I'm your host, Matthew Jones. We operate Cube Performance where we coach, mentor and assist tradie business owners, how they can earn more financially from their business, how they can work less in a business and ultimately create a business that can serve themselves and their family and build that lifestyle of choice. This is an awesome episode; a very timely episode, it's an episode around mental wellness. We speak with [00:00:30]Danielle Buckley, [0.6s] a registered psychologist and an expert coach on mental wellness, and how we can turn mental wellness into an intentional investment. Just like physical health, where you need to have habits and be very intentional about making progress well, in this day and age, we need to make mental wellness a priority and put the same habits in place. Now this is a really cool episode where Danielle frames her prescription for mental wellness, so there's going to be a lot of great takeaways. There are a lot of actions that as a business owner, you can take on board. There are a lot of actions you can implement with your team, and essentially it's about opening up that awareness and opening up the conversation and opening up your vulnerability to say it's okay to say that I'm not okay. And it's all about empathy and compassion, especially with the last two years that we've been dealing with and still dealing with on a global sense, on a natural disaster sense and obviously from a COVID sense. So this is a really good episode. Danielle, two decades expertise in implementing mental wellness in the corporate world and also across the construction industry through trades apprentice programmes. So great takeaways, everyone, very timely, much needed prescription, really enjoy, cheers.

**Intro** [00:02:04] [00:02:04]Here to change your life. Because there's too much on the line, you're sacrificing a shit load now and your family, need to benefit, you're going to make learning a passion for yourself. Thing for me, I came to realise that, hey I've got to get better at business. [19.4s]

**Matt** [00:02:31] Danielle, awesome to have you on this episode of the podcast and really focusing on mental wellness, obviously your specialty. I love how you frame it, just for the listeners, bit of background Danielle presented to our community, was it the back of last year, wasn't it Danielle back of 2021? So in the midst of COVID and really as a group and as a community, we really attached to how you frame it that mental wellness is an intentional investment. It's not just something that comes and goes like physical health. You've got to actually have that intentional investment, which we'll dive into. But Danielle, give us a bit of background in terms of what led you to this podcast today.

**Danielle** [00:03:16] Thanks, Matt, it's great to be here talking about something that's obviously very close to my heart. I've been a psychologist for almost 20 years. I started my job as a female psychologist in an all-boys juvenile detention centre, which was fascinating, but also really opened my eyes to the fact that there's a lot that we can do in the intervention space, as well as the prevention space. We don't need to wait until people have a clinical diagnosis. We can actually invest earlier on in our mental health and start to create high levels of well-being for people. But in order to do that, we need to teach people; we need to educate people so they develop these skills because without consulting psychologists, without reading books, we tend to not know what we need to know. So I've spent the last 15 years working in corporate psychology and particularly I've been working very closely with trade apprentices and doing a lot of work within those communities. So hopefully I can bring some not just science, scientific mindset, but also some experience from working with those groups of people.

**Matt** [00:04:25] Well, the great thing is that we really appreciate that community obviously, with the bulk of our community trade based, the bulk of our community and our listeners are business owners who have apprentices. And I like how you talk about it's about the intervention rather than prevention. And I think that I know from my background coming through as an apprentice in the construction industry, you know, in the 80s, it wasn't a [00:04:49]done [0.0s] thing to show your weakness. It wasn't a [00:04:51]done [0.0s] thing to show vulnerability. You know, it was very much a closed book. And if you did sort of show some emotion, you are quickly held down basically where that's changing a lot now and coming back to your experience, how has that sort of and especially in the last two years with COVID, but as an industry itself, how are you seeing some changes within the construction industry and that openness now to have that vulnerability and really allow people to express themselves?

**Danielle** [00:05:21] I think one of the things that's most interesting about apprenticeship pathways and we conducted some research four years ago with the New South Wales Business Chamber, it's called the Youth Census, and we looked at 30,000 thousand youth in Australia and the different pathways that they took after school. And we compared their well-being and actually, when apprenticeships had done well, apprentices amongst all other cohorts had the highest level of [00:05:46]wellbeing [0.0s] and they had the highest level of [00:05:48]wellbeing because [0.0s] when you think about an apprenticeship pathway done at its best, it has everything that we need, right? So we've got good coaching, we've got goal focused behaviour, we've got progression, we've got reward, we've got good teams, we've got all of these things that, as you and I have talked about, are also linked to the prescription of mental health. So what's changed is a business's willingness to shift the way they work, and that has to start at the top. As you would know, we can't, we need the leaders to drive culture change, but we know that when businesses are starting to make that shift, it not only benefits the individual apprentice, but the team, the customers and the business in itself. So we're definitely seeing a shift in the right direction.

**Matt** [00:06:35] So in the back of that, often when you finish an apprenticeship, essentially you're tagged as a tradesman. And for a lot of people, their growth or their goal setting or their progression or their mastery just finishes. It's just been like apprenticeship is done. And I'm just going to be doing this for the next 30 years. So do you find that that because the apprenticeship is done, there is not a logical pathway and this is where a lot of business owners struggle with because they haven't got the experience of putting in a training plan or a competency plan and a growth plan for individuals and coaching development plan for individuals that's where do you find that often individuals stagnate, which then can lead to that depression or that neediness of what's next?

**Danielle** [00:07:16] Absolutely, when you get to the pinnacle of any point in your career and I think, you know, I've done a lot of work with NRL plays, and when people get to the top, you know, there is that kind of what's next? But I think what we've learnt and what we know. And one of the challenges in this industry is just because you have the tools of the trade and you've become a plumber, for example, that doesn't mean you then have the skills to successfully run a business because it's a completely different skill set. And what we're talking about now and what we want is that business is doing is not just teaching the hard, the hard skills and the trade skills, but teaching the psychological skills, teaching the coaching skills because that's going to be the differentiator between somebody that survives and somebody that thrives.

**Matt** [00:08:05] Agree, I think when you presented to our community at the back end of last year to the Cube Performance community, there was a lot of, I suppose, light bulb moments for the group and just that tap into the awareness of what as a business leader, what can I do? And I think this is what I really want to tap into today that the different components of that prescription, because which comes back to that intervention as it were. So the key things which I just talk about, just top line and then we'll go into them in a bit more detail. And this is what I want everyone to take away from our listeners, just think about the prescription of what you can do right now in your business so that the key prescriptions that you are talking about relating to mental wellness is number one community, you know, having that social connection and what we're talking about that safe environment. I think that the framework that we were talking before we got on here was that psychological safety for the individual so that's number one. Number two is autonomy so that the individual can make their own decisions; they don't have to be micromanaged. Number three is around mastery, which comes back to what's my personal development, my growth and my enhancing and progressing forward. Positivity having that positive mindset and then underpinned the final thing, my purpose, knowing that my role has purpose, knowing that I've got meaning to get out of bed today. So each of those key components, so they can really be that prescription for mental wellness for everyone. So just to tap into the first one, which is around that community and the importance of building a community and for business owners, this is what we talk about in the Cube Performance community is that each business you're building your own community, you're building your own safe environment, you're building an environment that people, it's inclusive. Ideally, you're building an inclusive environment. But just how important is making sure for every individual that you are part of safe environments?

**Danielle** [00:10:02] Yes, so when we look at these prescription, I think one of the most important factors and this is research from Professor [00:10:08]Felicia Hubbard [0.5s] on well-being that for us to actually enable change, we need to view these levers with an open heart, an open mind and clear thinking. So when we start to think about what psychological safety looks like or what social connection looks like, we need to also start saying, okay, so how am I in my business creating a sense of belonging? How am I creating that sense of connection? And we know in Australia, loneliness and exclusion is a really significant issue, and we've seen this particularly on the rise during COVID. So if we link back to the initial question you said about apprentices and what happens when they finish. And it's a bit like me studying psychology. I've finished my degree, but I haven't stopped my learning. My learnings are only just really beginning. So when we get to that point and yes, people stagnate. But whether you've just finished your apprenticeship or you're a business owner, the ability to build social connections and build psychological safety, there's no end in sight to that that's something we intentionally invest in every day. Now that can look as really as simple as turning up to work in the morning with a coffee for somebody. It can be as simple as saying, hey mate, how's your weekend? Or you look a bit tired today, how are you going or how do you find working with that client? I wasn't quite feeling it at the moment, you know, being vulnerable and having those conversations. And look, I'm the first to say I know that a lot of men particularly find it hard and we can go down there, you know, and toxic.

**Matt** [00:11:46] We don't want to be vulnerable.

**Danielle** [00:11:47] No, exactly but you know, what we see is when somebody starts that conversation, it creates a ripple effect. And you have to be vulnerable because without being that, without being vulnerable, without putting yourself forward, you're never going to build that level of connection because when you put yourself forward and you're vulnerable and you have the courage to say, you know, today is really a shit day for me, you're actually owning it. And we can't be happy and positive all the time that's not the way that we're wired, actually, we don't want to be. So we build social connections by creating that sense of psychological safety and by creating that sense of inclusion for people and that's why [00:12:29]smoko [0.0s] is important. You know that's why team building and lunch is important because we want to sit down and actually get to know people to have a chat. And we learn from each other during those moments of reflection.

**Matt** [00:12:44] Yes, spot on there and some of the great feedback or the great results that our clients have had is just initiating a Monday morning coffee. And again, it's not as structured, but Monday morning they start the week coffee, bacon, egg roll, have a chat. How's the weekend? Again, it is that getting to know each other, and I think a lot of that comes around that empathy and really compassion as well. And I think that the vulnerability really needs to start with the leader because what we've seen and can credit to you and really appreciate the presentation, the information that you've provided our community because they have shared that with their teams and they're getting great buy-in with their teams. And on the back of that, an openness to vulnerability is that as the owner, hey, I'm vulnerable as well that's really opened up dialogue. And are you okay? And it's just like, I don't have to be the whole, you know, don't always have to be going forward, there is an opportunity to say, you know, I'm not that good today. That's been a real change.

**Danielle** [00:13:50] And with context over COVID as well, right, so, you know, I'm going to put the hat on of a small business owner at the moment, who has got a number of overheads, clients chasing them, mortgage payments due, low cash flow and somebody they rock up on a job site and somebody does something wrong. By instinct, right, they might snap at them. But where the real juice is being able to say, you know, this is what's occurring for me at the moment. I am under pressure because what that does is it doesn't just show the vulnerabilities well, but it teaches the other people around them coping mechanisms because that's the reality. You don't need to sugarcoat that. We're allowed to say life is hard for me. I'm under pressure. And when we say those things, it enables us, enables our team and our community to do, you know, sharing that and do more.

**Matt** [00:14:51] We drop down the barriers, don't you?

**Danielle** [00:14:53] Totally.

**Matt** [00:14:53] Barriers come down because often team members, apprentices, they look at the boss, I think the boss is doing great because I see what's happening and we're busy and there's money in. I think everything's rosy on the business owner side. They don't realise the pressures. And if you do open the door, bring down the barriers and say, listen, I'm struggling here, this is a problem here, and it opens that trust as well that trust that honesty. And then again, the appreciation that the team members have that information they can actually help. And that's what we're finding is that the turnaround and I think a lot of our clients and business owners have been operating business for 10 years and have really struggled with teams over a large period of that. They've really totally surprised by bringing down the barriers, being more vulnerable, letting them in their support they're getting from the team is quite unbelievable. And it's been really empowering for that. And again, as you say, we've come through COVID and even now we've still got issues with isolation and there's weather on the East Coast where there's rain, and that's just been one thing after another. So we're definitely getting tested. And I think for everyone out there, just as a business owner and those listeners just be vulnerable, you know, get to get the team together and discuss how you're going, let them in so that they can actually help you and that's part of you driving that safe environment.

**Danielle** [00:16:15] That's right and as human beings, psychologically, scientifically, we crave that, so we crave that social connection. We crave that inclusion. So while you might view this scenario as being vulnerable, your peers view it as being welcomed into the club of inclusion.

**Matt** [00:16:32] And that's a thing, people don't, we just don't realise that. But yes, now we're definitely seeing firsthand the positive impact of letting the team in and then that just rolls into their productivity and the engagement on site, which is fantastic. Then rolling into that, one of the key things, number one, around that the community and the social connection, number two is around that autonomy in roles. Now what we're seeing again with the team, if you can give your team members autonomy, you can give them clear structure and a framework where they, you know, once they're in that within that fence, they can do whatever they want. How important is it for individuals not to be micromanaged or how important is it for individuals to make sure that they're not having to look over their shoulder and worry about getting in trouble?

**Danielle** [00:17:19] Yes, I can't stress how important this is actually, and I think we all in high school, we learn about Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and while that still stands to some extent. What we now know, according to self-determination theories, that we have three basic psychological needs. One of those, well, it's competence, autonomy and relatedness. So autonomy is that ability to feel in control of their lives, in control of the way we operate. So while we can't control our circumstances, we need to be able to feel like we have a level of control over what we do. So again, that might be setting parameters or, you know, just really basic level, these are the things you need to get done today over to you and how you do them, make your own choice in how you get them done and how you execute it but do it. The other thing that's really important that is we learn more and our business grows more through challenging status quo. So what we can often find is just because something has always been done one way, it doesn't mean it always must continue to be done that way. And when we allow people to have a sense of autonomy, sometimes that's where we can stop creativity and innovation because they're small tweaks in the way somebody approaches a task, which can take the burden off business owners. It's not always correct but that's how a business can also grow.

**Matt** [00:18:44] And then having that, coming back to environment, having that environment where people are okay to come back with suggestions and you're actually listened to, as you mentioned, it may be wrong. But what they say, it might be coming back with their suggestion, it may be wrong, but it gets a dialogue going that might be wrong but you know what, if we tweak it this way, there may be a better outcome. And this is where look what for everyone listening to draw the autonomy within your organisation is improve your planning and preparation so that you can give your team members enough information so they can actually make decisions rather than if you're in that reactive mode, as a business owner, you've got no time to plan and prepare, you just like follow me into the fire type thing, so it comes back to that planning and preparation.

**Danielle** [00:19:27] It does and it also builds on the social connection piece, right, so the more you know your colleagues, then the more you are able to create an environment where they can have autonomy. And it might be really simple stuff like what's most important for someone one day is being able to pick up their child from childcare. So allowing somebody to have that on one day gives them autonomy. It gives them a sense of right, okay, if the wheels are falling off, I know I've got the ability to quickly duck home and do this and do that. You can't ever allow someone to have that autonomy if you don't have an understanding of what's going on in their life.

**Matt** [00:20:07] Which comes back to that compassion and empathy and the context of what they're bringing to work, leading on from there, the autonomy is the next that number three is mastery. And this is a key component that we really we're seeing great traction and we've seen when business owners and leaders start to put a coaching and development head on. Again, it comes down to empathy and compassion and communication because it's actually asking, hey, Danielle as example, okay, you're a tradesman now, as a plumber, what are some of your interests? Where do you see yourself down the track? How can we help facilitate that? So as an example, we've had some great and some of the, our clients have had some great results as an example, transitioning some of their tradesmen into design work. They now own CAD doing design; some of their tradesmen now are driving marketing with active campaigns and other technologies. Some of them, they're even apprentices, are driving their video, doing video recording that they used on social media and training. Some of them are also moving into more supervisory roles and you know, so and admin roles and business development roles. Now, 99% of the time, this would not have happened unless they started having this conversation early around, okay, where do you want to be a master at essentially? Where do you want to grow? How is that personal growth going? So we see mastery is a real key component of building that competency within the individual, which comes back to a time out with the apprentices. So it's a continual progression where you just don't stop.

**Danielle** [00:21:43] Focusing on competence, though, as well is very much about acknowledging when somebody is doing good and acknowledging to your point of mastery, acknowledging where somebody's strengths lie because the more you can focus on competence and development, the less difficult conversations you're going to have. Let's be honest, you know, so if you're going on a job site and you're saying, hey, I really liked how you dealt with that client, you did a good job. Note to self, deal with client in that way, I really like how you approach your day-to-day. This is the way we need to work, you know, note to self, continue this behaviour. So we can use confidence and coaching for so many purposes but it also creates a sense of I'm doing good, I'm doing good, I'm seen, I'm heard, I'm valued. So confidence is critical because it's not just critical in the moment, but that moment creates confidence across the lifespan. We're validated in how we're showing up for work and the brain plays tricks on us and we love to zoom in on the negative. We love to notice when people are doing the wrong thing, so we actually have to work really hard to look for the good. So I think this is a really important tool for everyone listening today to make an effort to notice what people are doing right in their job. Notice when somebody is showing up in a way that is in line with their business values, that is in line with the way they actually want them to work and acknowledge it, let them own it. And then that will encourage them to continue that behaviour. And then we can start spotting the strength of that person and we can start this ongoing coaching plan.

**Matt** [00:23:30] And this is where a lot of our community tapped into and resonated with the presentation to the team where you framed it as intentionally seek out the good. I think everyone should just, everyone listening, just write that down now, put a sticker on your computer, on your dashboard, intentionally seek out the good because too often we might have 9 out of 10 things going really good on the day. We're having a great day and then we have this one thing that goes bad guys, and we focus on the negative. Whereas coming back to what you're saying, really intentionally seek out the good, this is where again, a lot of people and a lot of business owners, real struggle. They really struggle with giving positive feedback. They really struggle with it.

**Danielle** [00:24:11] And you know, let's be honest, this isn't even positive feedback, right, this is just acknowledging when someone's doing the right thing.

**Matt** [00:24:18] Good job, well done.

**Danielle** [00:24:20] I liked how you did that, that was the right thing to do, because again, let's put on your apprentice hat or let's put on anyone in a workplace. We go to work. And I mean, I'm definitely somebody who suffered from imposter syndrome throughout my whole career. Five degrees in psychology and 20 years of work, I still have days where I go, oh, I don't know if I'm doing this right. So imagine I'm not alone in that scenario. I'm confident about that particularly as a psychologist, because everyone tells me they're the same.

**Matt** [00:24:52] Yes, I love that the imposter syndrome and this is where a lot of businesses feel that they're an imposter because a lot of business owners, I'm a tradie, I'm good on the tools and all of a sudden they're running a business. So they're thinking, what right have I got to run a business? What right have I got to run a profitable business? So it's very relevant.

**Danielle** [00:25:10] That's right, it is and so you know what this is doing, and we know from the research that our brain is not wired to do this right, we have to intentionally seek out good or we have a negative bias. And you can, you know, for everyone listening to that, I want you to think about that. Think about what you talk about and reflect on in your day. When you go home, what do you say to your partner, husband and wife, your kids, you mates when you sit in a pub, what do you do? And what we know we can do is zoom in on that positive. So look for when things are going right, look for when things are occurring, the way you want them to be and pull it out and acknowledge it. And that then says to people that, okay, this is the path we need to keep being on. And that creates that validation that, you know, inclusive club. Okay, I'm saying I'm hurt, I'm in, I'm in and we need that. I'm good. I'm going to keep doing this.

**Matt** [00:26:05] And that's at home as well as business, right that's, kids everything, you know, it's just that whole intentional seeking out. And because you mentioned that we got that negative bias, what is that, I just want to touch on a little bit more how we're just wired towards that negative bias?

**Danielle** [00:26:20] Yes, well, I mean, we have a negative bias because it serves as its self-preservation tool

**Matt** [00:26:27] Does it come back to the flight or fight?

**Danielle** [00:26:30] Yes and we look for danger. Our brain is wired to scan for danger, and that was really useful centuries ago. But what can happen now is we have a perceived sense of danger. So we turn on that alarm, that fight or flight response, that's a signal in our brain goes off, you know, some type of...

**Matt** [00:26:48] Negative, negative, negative

**Danielle** [00:26:52] Yes, we see an email from a client and we go, oh, you know, and we turn that on and that's wired that message sends out, you know, access to our brain because, you know, the emotional part of our brain is stronger than the command and control centre, right, so when we perceive danger, the first thing that happens is we have an emotional response. The second thing that happens is then we have a logical response, which is why we say to people when you when you have that oh my God, stop, breathe, take a moment because that first response is the hippocampus, it's the emotional response, it's the alarm bells. Whereas if we can stop and walk away and take a moment, then we can logically respond in a way that's far more cool, calm and collected and appropriate to the danger that we actually see. Otherwise, we can give a misguided, misjudged reaction. We don't need that situation.

**Matt** [00:27:50] A knee-jerk reaction. So if I get those sort of emails and this is like, it gets the steam going, I type it out and then I'll just leave it there and I'll come to it the next day.

**Danielle** [00:27:59] That's right, that's exactly right.

**Matt** [00:28:01] I just sleep on it. It's amazing what can happen when you sleep on it?

**Danielle** [00:28:05] Exactly and that's why, you know, I would, I'd say to a lot of people, unless email is urgent, never send it in the evening. Sleep on it. Send it in the morning or type it out. Don't put the address in. Just wait till the morning comes, talk it over with some but you know, when we're talking about the positive and the negative, and sometimes I'm loathe to use those words right because I think it's almost more pleasant and unpleasant so pleasant emotions versus unpleasant emotions, because that carries less weight. But given what so many people have been through with COVID and then now with the flooding and a lot that's going on in the world, a really simple PPI or positive psychology interventions that people can use is simply three good things exercise. So we know that if you at the end of each day, write down three good things that occurred to you that day three things you are thankful for. We know that after a week that's going to increase your life satisfaction, increase your baseline level of happiness because what that's doing is it's training the brain to look for the good rather than training the brain or continuing the brain to seeking out the bad and not working

**Matt** [00:29:18] To anchor on the negative because that then obviously rolls into positivity, doesn't it? But I think coming back to what you're saying here that it's about gratefulness and gratitude. And I think if you do, if you are grateful and you showed gratitude and then generally, yes, you haven't got room for that negative vibe you because you're pushing out the positivity. And I think that's where a lot of people, if I put a habit in place where I am writing down three things that I'm really grateful for that I've done well, then that habit, then that self-fulfilling prophecy, right, like, where is this positive, positive, positive, right? You just keep on sort of going down that track rather than feeling that the negative. So you, I think I left or right. So it's habit.

**Danielle** [00:29:58] That's right, it is about the habit. And so, you know, I can have a choice, right, I can have a choice where I can say I'm really stressed about COVID and the impact that it's having on my work now. I'm really concerned about flooding. The war in Ukraine is really upsetting me at the moment, and this can occupy a lot of my mind. But then I can say my two kids are really healthy, you are in a loving marriage, and I'm thankful that I have my health right now that is a much more comforting thought than all the worries that are outside of my control.

**Matt** [00:30:30] That's right and other things right now is that we've got a home. We're not wet that my business is still operating. So there is a lot of positivity that we can then we can be grateful for.

**Danielle** [00:30:44] We can be grateful for and as well, you know, when we're talking about this sort of exercise, it's really important for people listening that it's not always going to be about being positive all the time. But part of this methodology is also about being able to say, life sucks for me right now. I'm in a really hard, really, really hard spot that's okay. I've been in hot spots before, and slowly I'm going to work myself out of this because I've done hard and I can do hard. But acknowledging that it's hard is good, too, because we don't want to be unrealistic, unrealistic in actually what's occurring for us. It's not genuine; we're not being authentic. So when things are tough, we want to acknowledge that it's tough and that's when we start leaning on our strengths and that's where the positive mindset comes, we say, okay, this tough, well, what can I do? What's in my circle of control right now?

**Matt** [00:31:40] So what will you recommend as well when you want to have that sense of authenticity? We recommend everyone get off social media because there's not much authenticity when it comes to social media and there's not a lot of reality there because again, I think you do need to look in the mirror and you know, we've all been there when we've had really tough times. And I like how you frame that, though, is that when you're in those tough times, just look back at your history and your story. So I've been here before, I can do this, just small steps, just small steps. We're not going to beat this overnight, but let's just take every day. What can we change and what can we work on? Because we've seen so many of our community and obviously friends as well who have really, really struggled through this COVID period, you know, a lot of them have ended up in hospital, in medication. It's really brought up a lot of trauma with people, so everyone is really dealing with it in a different way. I think this is we're coming back to our talk before about being vulnerable and being open is a good thing because again, it empowers people.

**Danielle** [00:32:42] Well, that's right, Matt and again, to everyone listening today, I see a lot of clients and seeing a lot of clients over this period of time. And as a psychologist, I have a supervisor to talk about how you know what people are experiencing and making sure I'm always at the top of my game as well. And I said to her, I said, you know, no one's doing well. And she said, how could anybody be anything more than surviving when they are constantly beaten down with all of these things? So for people listening today, there is absolutely no shame in having a difficult period when we're faced with all of these uncertainties and complexities. And if anything, I want people to say, right, this is my mission to learn about psychology. This is my mission to say, okay, this is a tough time, but what I can do is learn how to respond to the situation that I'm in; I'm going to learn how to manage my mindset. I'm going to learn how to take control of my thoughts, my feelings and my behaviour, even though right now it's tough for me, even though it's really tough for me. There are things that I can do. And all of this stuff that we're thinking about today, if you embrace this, this isn't like a [00:34:01]nice, airy fairy, [0.7s] maybe I could think about it. Maybe one day I'll get to it. If you don't do this, you will not experience a high level of well-being. It's black and white. You know you want to go out and eat Macca's every day. You're going to have a health problem. If you want to ignore this and you don't want to engage in doing these things, you will not experience a high level of mental health and that's going to impact yourself, your family, your colleagues, business clients. It's really simple.

**Matt** [00:34:28] And one of the I know the charts that you showed and presented was that getting into that flourishing state, which is what we're talking about in that where the intentional investment in mental wellness comes in, as you mentioned, is not just a sometime thing. It's got to be an everyday thing and it's got to be intentional so that we are flourishing more than not, as you mentioned. But there are going to be days where we're not perfect and days where we're really struggling and look and for me, like over 30 plus years of work and with sport and [00:34:59]dealing [0.0s] a lot of different people, like the last two years, it's amazing how challenging it's been. And for me, I really look internally, you know, how can I sort of go through some of these things, feeling I've never had to deal with before as well, and especially getting faced with it as a coach and a guide and a mentor. You know, listening from so many people, you sort of, you take a lot on, so for me, I've had to really step back and work on my habits and processes. You know, what is my intentional investment? And so it's been it's been really empowering for me. It's been great.

**Danielle** [00:35:30] And we've got to walk the talk, right, we've got to walk the talk. And I think that's again for the people listening today. I know that when some of these [00:35:38]slips [0.0s] for me, I feel it. It shows up all the time. You know, I know the way I need to start my week. I know the way I need to live my life, you know, and when we're talking about positive mindset and paying attention to what's going well again, getting off social media. But for me, I know it, so our Sunday, we have family lunch every Sunday. And I know that comes back to me actually having a proper conversation with my kids, a proper conversation with my husband about, hey, you know, how do we feel about this? What's going on with this and that to me, is essential that gives me my meaning. But it also helps me hear what's going on for them. You know, I think making time for those moments for everyone is so important, particularly during COVID, during all of these difficult situations that people are in because connecting with loved ones really at its core makes us feel good.

**Matt** [00:36:39] And you're spot on there and this is where a lot of our clients have had really big wins and big gains about connecting with family, and it could be as simple as we're going to go for a walk, every morning we go for a walk or once a week we're going to go for a walk or the family dinner or pick the kids up from school or be there and to take the soccer team and then also your personal thing as well for me, I like to get up before the families up. I can train and get my thing out of the way. I know that sets me for the day. So that's what I really had to go back to the core over the last couple of years, really get back to what [00:37:17]frames [0.0s] me. What's going to be the best version of me? How am I going to be the best husband, best father, the best at my work, the best coach. And I know if I don't set that up for me, if I'm unintentional around that, I'm not going to be the best version of myself and then I can't help anyone else.

**Danielle** [00:37:34] And that's a good question for listeners today, the question is, what do I need to be the best version of myself? What do I need? And I think sometimes there can be incongruences in the way people set up their week with actually what their authentic self needs to flourish. So maybe a takeaway from this is for people to just take a moment to reflect and say, okay, what do I need to fulfill these things? What's currently occurring for me in my business? And where are the opportunities for change and growth?

**Matt** [00:38:09] What we find in that often gets lost because when you become a business owner, too often business owners become that hamster on the wheel, they're reactive. Then generally at the same time they get a family, they get married, they get children. So what generally happens is after the business, the children, the wife and everything else, their personal needs are pushed right down and they actually forget who they are. And some people say, well, what did you used to like? I used to, like, go in the gym. Well, let's get back into the gym; let's lock it in. I used to like riding the bike or used to like fishing or riding a motorbike. Well, let's lock it in, join the club, can we back that community, join like-minded people who are inclusive, it's a safe environment. Get back to that. You can't be 24/7 just business owner, dad, husband or wife. You just can't be that. And I think that's where you got to connect back to yourself so you can flourish.

**Danielle** [00:39:04] Exactly.

**Matt** [00:39:06] Stephen Covey talks about seven habits of highly effective people, which I love one, it is sharpening the saw. Everyone listening, you know, you've got to be sharp, you've got to go back and replenish and just recover so that you can actually come back in a better version of yourself rather than being blunt day in, day out, it's not just about turning up, you've got to come in sharp. So it's okay...

**Danielle** [00:39:29] [00:39:29]Yeah, sure. [0.3s]

**Matt** [00:39:30] It's okay to say that. It's okay to say I'm going to disconnect, team. Now this comes back to the environment, I'm going to disconnect, I'm out. I've got to go for a walk. I've got to go for surf, I've got whatever and whatever I need to do. It's okay to do that.

**Danielle** [00:39:45] That's right and you know, I'm going to say and build on that,It's not just okay to do it, but it's harder to do it. It's hard to break the status quo. It's harder to have the courage and the bravery to stand up and say, okay, I need to make some changes. And that takes so much courage, particularly when people are already depleted, particularly when they are on their last reserves, which I think a lot of my clients are right now. A lot of your clients would probably identify with that, too. It's like, oh my God, how am I going to?

**Matt** [00:40:18] How am I going to fit this in? Jonesey is now going to try and get to the gym.

**Danielle** [00:40:23] That's right and let's be frank, so that's not exactly what we're saying. What we're saying is and these links [00:40:30]to point four and point five, so [1.6s] we're thinking about, you know, positive mindset, which is playing to your strengths, you are your best when your bucket is full. So what part of you needs to flourish that's not currently flourishing. And a good way to assess that is, you know, if you might think about all the pockets of your life, your family, your relationships, work, self-care, rate them out of five. They should all be four to five because you should know what you need to do to invest in all those areas that make you feel complete. And if they're not, it's time to make a change and again, let's be simple, like a change at home might be all phone away at the white table and make sure you sit there and have a quality conversation with people at least once a week. Read your child's story. Play basketball with your son, whatever it is, but it can just be small micro moments because it's those small micro moments that make the biggest tweaks in our behaviour and how we feel.

**Matt** [00:41:36] Yes, it's a good point there because often you think it's going to be a big thing, but just a small micro moment and then rolling into there, which is totally connected to what we're talking about now, as you mentioned, number five is purpose. Having that purpose, having a purpose in life, having that purpose in a role and especially if, they say, business owners, coming back to business owners, as well with their team members, how do they ensure that each team member is coming to work with a purpose in a simple sense, knowing that each team member when they turn up to work and every task they're doing has meaning and that it's not just sort of going through the motions. How important is that?

**Danielle** [00:42:12] It's so important and this is where, these are all connected. This is where social connection comes back. And one of the great conversations I had with the mechanics a few years ago was the conversations about the cars they are all saving for as apprentices and now working really hard to save for the cars that they wanted to buy. And having that conversation and all knowing each other's goal, the buzz at work was completely different to why am I showing up today again, those small, tiny shifts in conversation as to what are you working for right now? And again, you know, sometimes maybe doesn't need to be this huge, big, massive spiritual goal, but it's just right now, what are you saving for? And now the plumber I spoke to, I remember him talking about just saving for my next ski season that's why I'm showing up every day. I'm showing up so I can get down to the snow and I can buy my board and that's going to top my bucket up. These sort of tiny conversations that make people feel valued part of it. But it also helps them by developing their sense of meaning.

**Matt** [00:43:25] And then that little goal striving and one of the things within our community and in our clients, everyone creates, we frame the way we do it here, which is around their vision, clear promise and the values and really connecting it. And I think also having that value driven behaviour that connects things that gives our purpose and that gives that which comes back to the group and that inclusiveness. But that purpose is, you know, I've got to keep driving today. I've got to turn up today and show up and bring my A-game because everyone else is doing. I don't want to let that team down. This is we're really connected and everyone knows that if I only bring my B-game, then I'm going to be, I'm leaning on someone else or someone else is going to have to step in.

**Danielle** [00:44:06] Absolutely andd again, I encourage business owners here to also have some team goals around meaning. So whether that be a charity day or whether that be something that they all want to support together that builds again, a sense of community. But also we know based on goal research is that the benefit of goals comes and the true reward comes from the goal striving, not the goal attainment. So again, we can create these beautiful communities where there's so much positivity and and by positivity, I mean, there's joy, there's awe, there's love, there's happiness, there's laughter, there are all of these things because we're working towards something. So again, I would encourage people to say, what are we going to work towards as a small community? What's something that we're passionate about and what can we set as a goal for us? And what does that look like? And that again encourages people to bring their A-game to work because they are part of a shared experience.

**Matt** [00:45:07] And they're trying to work towards that higher meaning or that higher purpose. And this comes back to as a business owner under the frame of business for good you, how can you use your business and this is why it's important to have a profitable business, efficient business, because if you've got cash in the bank, yes, you can cover your personal expenses, but you can also help others that are in need as well. And then that's a really key purpose that you can connect, like you mentioned, have social days or community days or charity days, who can you help out there, which again, as a group you can work towards and build towards and give you that excitement. It's not just us, we're actually helping.

**Danielle** [00:45:45] Yes, there's a bigger world out there. And I'm not talking here about making major donations, I'm talking about filling our bucket up and somebody else's bucket at the same time. And actually, that act of kindness towards somebody else does as much if not more for the giver than it does the receiver. We're thinking about business owners being really stressed right now. We want to inject some fun. We want to inject some life and take the weight off people's shoulders by helping them do good and be part of those communities for others. I remember my kids have to donate birthday money to a charity each year. This one year, my son got so much Lego from our family but the joy that he experienced when we said, mate, you've just given as a small village water for six months, you get goose bumps even thinking about it. Lego set comes and goes, and I think it might have been a 50 dollars donation. I'll never forget that moment where I saw his face realised he was actually able to do something like that to affect that kind of social change by such a small donation.

**Matt** [00:46:57] A greater impact.

**Danielle** [00:46:59] Greater impact and that makes you feel good. When we think about the definition of what is flourishing, it's feeling good and functioning well. So we want to feel good and we can feel good by so many ways that relate to meaning, but also being a part, a person in our community.

**Matt** [00:47:16] When you do connect on those levels and look right now with COVID, with floods, you know, with war in Ukraine, you just see that the communities are really coming together. So I think the one thing over the last couple of years, it is bringing people closer. I think definitely bringing people closer. But again, so food for business on it right now is think about the purpose. Obviously, you're turning up and often for a lot of people. It's a Groundhog Day slog. You know, what are you trying to one for your family? What is your purpose of going to work? Are you going to change your family's lifestyle, which will get you motivated as well? And then also that the impact in your in your life community, but also as being a coach and a mentor that you've got an opportunity to. Develop individuals like apprentices coming through. You've got an opportunity to really mentor people to give them confidence and courage, and that often they've never had in their lives, like a lot of them, have an issue where it comes back to empathy and listening, understanding their background. You know, some of them may have never had a father figure in their life, or some have just come from a real background where they've never had any pride. No one's actually put their arm around them showing him any love, which is right. Yeah, build a business around purpose, which is, you know, we want to be known as it is a caring environment where we we want to make people just be their personal best. How can we? It doesn't matter if you stay in this organisation or not, but how can we take someone and when they leave this organisation, they're in a better place.

**Danielle** [00:48:45] That's right, it is a fantastic purpose and I guess as well and it's funny for me, I guess as a psychologist because one of my key purposes is always to make myself redundant in my interaction with a person, I want to develop a person and equip them with enough skills that they no longer need me regularly. And I think business owners can learn a lot from that right, because you almost want to make yourself psychologically redundant with your staff, you want to coach them enough that they don't need constant coaching. They just need a check in every now and then, because the more you invest in developing them as a person from a psychological [00:49:30]plus [0.0s] a skill base level, unless you're actually needed because they can do the thinking for you and that's a mind shift for a lot of people, but it's a weight off people's mind as well.

**Matt** [00:49:40] That's a massive one and businesses owners who get that, it's transformational. It really is transformational. So, you know, they've got, everything we touched on, it's just that prescription. And I'll just finishing up, I'll just go through that. So for everyone, I wrote it down also, I'll write it in on the show notes on our website. But community, it's about building that social connection number one, number two autonomy, number three mastery and competence, number four, positivity and then the final one, number five is really having that purpose in that overall prescription. This is one thing I wanted to tap into in this podcast and talking to you is that I want to have clear actions and guidelines that people can take even little snippets of and start putting it into their their daily lives and change their habits, which is really powerful rather than just talking about mental health and wellness. But I really want to have some action plan, and I think you framed that really well, Danielle, which is fantastic. So is there anything, just to finish up on any sort of one piece of gem of story you'd like to share.

**Danielle** [00:50:48] I just think for everyone listening, the one question I want you to walk away with today for each of those five components is ask yourself, what am I doing to build social connection and where are the opportunities to do more? And ask that question for each of those five capabilities and then come up with an action plan for that because you will only reap the rewards.

**Matt** [00:51:14] It's great advice so if you do that, listeners please share it back on email. We'd love to hear what they are actually that'd be great. And maybe Danielle, we can touch base later in the year, hopefully post-COVID and a few other things. It might be good to tap into because I know you've got some other information, more research that is coming out, which may be great to be able to tap into as well.

**Danielle** [00:51:35] Absolutely.

**Matt** [00:51:36] And hopefully, we'll have some good people whon we can share some stories that people are willing to share with us.

**Danielle** [00:51:42] Yes that'd be great, look forward to hearing it.

**Matt** [00:51:44] Well, thanks, Danielle, it has been great.

**Danielle** [00:51:46] Thanks, Matt.

**Matt** [00:51:51] Cheers.