

eduthink-013-richard-mulholland-ruthless-curiosity-FINAL-ver...

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SPEAKERS

Jax Aitchison, Gersh Aitchison, Gavin Kennedy, Malcolm Gooding, Richard Mulholland

- G** Gavin Kennedy 00:08
Hello, and welcome to another episode of aid you think the podcast that talks about education in South Africa so the parents can make better decisions for their children's future. A couple of weeks ago, we encountered a video by a crazy tattooed guy who's visited us at the school before. And it was all about happiness and hobbies and work and a whole bunch of things that just really caught our attention. Particularly since the children at the school still talk about the time he visited. Mrs. Aitchison couldn't resist calling him back in gave him a shout. And we're really excited to have with us today to do the drum roll. Richard Mulholland and Richard, welcome. Hello. Perhaps tell us why you thought it was so important that you looked Richard up and asked him to come chat to us today.
- J** Jax Aitchison 01:00
Well, Richard's quite prolific on social media. And since he visited us at AEG Inc, I've been following what he does. And he's one of the speakers that they often talk about when we talk about who they want to hear from. And they'll say things like, Hey, can you get tattooed? Go back home. What about me? Sorry, Richard, your name kind of fell by the wayside, and you just became tattoo guy. So I don't know tg

G Gersh Aitchison 01:22
conic. Now.

J Jax Aitchison 01:24
So when I saw one of Rich's posts, that was actually not on what he normally does, which is to do his presentations, you know, he trains CEOs and TED speakers and people like that all over the world, on presentation and how you deliver unforgettable presentations, which is what he spoke to our kids about. I thought, you know, I've got to connect with rich again and delve into this particular YouTube that I had watched of his. So just to give the quick bio rich is the founder of missing link. He's the chief evangelist. That's what he likes to call himself of missing link. And it's all about how to give presentations and really activate your audiences when you're doing that. Richard, my writing, saying I seem to remember you were saying I think he was the first Ted speaker, South African Ted speaker. Is that right?

R Richard Mulholland 02:13
Yeah, I got it in by a bit of a lucky default. When I went to Ted global in 2005. That was the first time Ted had come across the pond. So TEDx hadn't been launched yet. And then they said, they're putting together this program, and they want a bunch of people to submit ideas for a three minute talk. So I was like, Okay, cool. I accept. And I put forward to do a talk called first impressions lie. And they accepted it. And so that was it. That was my, my three minute came to fame. But I look so terrible. I've got the video, I looked so terrible on the DVD, they sent me that I've never watched the whole three minutes, my slides broke halfway through, and I'm a presentation guy. I ended up jumping around on the stage trying to point to things. My highlight was, by this stage, I'd known Seth Gordon, fairly well. And at the end of the talk, he ran up to me because because I had to really make this thing work, considering that nothing was, and he ran up to me. He said, Did you hear me? Oop? Did you hear me? The fact that he said to be twice, did you hear me, like made the whole thing worthwhile?

J Jax Aitchison 03:24
What a great story. I remember when I was looking through your bio earlier, I was looking online at the bio, and I was looking at all the books you've written and all this kind of thing and your bio ends with I think what we might be actually delving more into today, which is that you are a husband, father, son, brother and uncle, that's obviously a really important aspect of your life. And considering that we having a conversation today, that's going out

to a whole lot of our peoples, our learners, our teachers, our parents, I think that's maybe the focal point. And let's go back to that, that YouTube clip, you started by saying that you're often asked why you're always so happy. And you use that as your departure point to discuss your hobbies. And you spoke about hobbies from childhood right through to an adult, and how important that they are in your life. So do you want to just dive into that for us a little bit rich, and talk to us about why your hobbies make you happy, how you balance that, and then let's take it from there.

R

Richard Mulholland 04:27

Alright, so there's a couple of things and a couple of parts to this. The first thing is I think that we've been sold on a river. And the river we've been sold on is the idea that being successful is going to make you happy. And I actually don't think that's the case. In fact, what I say in that video is that you don't get to check the success box until you check the happy box. And I know that because I'm around entrepreneurs all the time, and I can't tell you how many of them on any metric of business success are more successful way, way, way more successful than I am, but they're not happy. They're constantly at work. And they're constantly putting their their soul into their work. And they go home. And they always say, I just want to get home, I don't want to switch off. But you know, I've got the kids there, I've got to do this. And I sit there. And I think, Wow, this is so broken, because I have way less maybe financial resources than you. But I go home every day I you know, at the end of the day comes for maybe a bit early if I feel like it. And I go, and I engage with my hobbies. And I'm just generally a much happier person, like, I'm a very happy person. And I realized that this, this role of hobbies was a big part to play with that. So I refer to them as recreational obsessions. Now typically what happens is people are only really obsessed with their work with their vocation. But I have a number of obsessions that feed me. So you know, again, when the lockdown happened, you know, I love I love reading fiction. I love board games, I love riding my electric skateboard. Like, I like snowboarding, there's a lot of things motorcycle riding that I'm obsessed with. And being able to move into one of those recreational obsessions and to shift my state, I think is what allowed me to be happy. I don't switch off at the end of the workday, I switch on something else. And that's a big part of what I think where my enjoyment of life comes from.

J

Jax Aitchison 06:18

Yeah, I remember you were talking about, you're excited about your workday. And you're excited about ending your workday, because you had so much to look forward to after the workday. But because you were changing state, you were moving into a different creative space that allowed you to be excited to go back to work the next day.

R

Richard Mulholland 06:36

Yeah, exactly. I mean, for example, today, right, so I'm going to be finished about 430 today, and my son and I were going to play a game of Tash kalar. It's a renal combat board game that we want to play, which got two new factions. So we're quite looking forward to that. And then at six o'clock, myself, and my son and my daughter, we all go to jujitsu. And you know, that's the thing we're going to do together. And then you know, everyone's going to do their own thing after that. So I'm looking forward to the States. But then what happens is I come back to work the next day, and maybe one part of a metaphor that was introduced to us at jujitsu to teach us a specific move, maybe something that I applied to, you know, a conversation that I have Edward tomorrow, and this happens more and more often than you would think, you know, people often say to me that I think outside the box, but I don't think I do, I just think I have more boxes to draw from, you know, you cannot output anything that you didn't input first. And most people only input stuff in their vocation. And I think that makes you a very narrowly focused

J

Jax Aitchison 07:34

100%. I agree with that completely. And it ties into that philosophy of thinking or that theory of thinking that we often see in business books, and even TED talks in that way, people are saying you should work your passion. And because if you if you working your passion, you'll never work a day in your life and all that sort of thing. And I'm not convinced that that's the answer, because it does feel very narrow, it seems a very narrow approach. So what's your take on that theory?

R

Richard Mulholland 08:00

Yeah, so my first book I wrote is called leg aside, and I actually got to war with that idea quite early on, I really, really think it's problematic. If I did what I loved, I'd be a pizza delivery guy, you know, I would I love motorcycles, you know, if I wanted to ride motorcycles all day, go get a job or take a lot or something like this, right? That's not what I want to do. And in fact, what you invariably find is that people who do what they love, end up not. So my son wants to get into game design. And that's partially because of not so much the games he plays, but actually, the board game stuff. They've been designing board games for me for my, for my birthday for years. And these kinds of things, you know, and so this is something that he wants to look at. But the people that he's been speaking to her who are in video games, they all tell him the same warning. Just be be ready to let go of your love. Because you're not going to feel like playing video games when you come home after a day of video gaming. And he's okay with that. She's like, Okay, fine. Like, I'm happy to make this my vacation, we have another recreational obsession, and I'm sure there will be some times he wants to play. But I think that when

you say yes to something being your primary vocation, then it's no longer your recreational obsession, you'll need to find something new. Whereas instead of doing what you love, learn to love what you do. So I do presentations, for goodness sake, like I make help people be better at PowerPoint. I didn't get into that, because I loved it. I got into it because I hated it. I thought presentations were so bad. And as intrapreneurs we fix a problem or we fill a gap. You guys are changing the way people think about education, you're doing things differently. You didn't do that because you love them. You felt Everything was perfect. You didn't chase your passion, you chase your frustration, and you executed on that. And the other byproduct of that, by the way is if you do what you love, then it already works. That means the opportunity there is somewhat less. If you find something that frustrates you and you fix it within the market there because people you know can tap into that. So I always say chase your highest first And then fall in love with solving the problem. And you can still love your work, find something you hate and fix it, you will have the best day ever.

G

Gersh Aitchison 10:08

I hear a whole lot of voices sitting on my shoulder of mums who have teenage sons. And one of the biggest demons that they have to deal with as a family is the children's or the teenage boys have sessions with gaming, or anime or art or digital art or doing something digitally. And this is a conversation that I have quite often with him because like you, I have a lot of extracurricular curiosities and passions that I look forward to at the end of the day, if it's not servicing and tinkering on the Landrover, then it's playing Dungeons and Dragons, or doing robotics or 3d printing for Dungeons and Dragons, or robotics, or it's archery or something like that. And a lot of those like you are childhood obsessions that I've brought through into adulthood. And there's two conversations that I have with parents at that point. And the first is it often an end or an all conversation and they see it like that. And the conversation that I have to have with them is that it can be an end conversation, I can be good at school, and do all the schoolwork. And I can do gaming, and I can do sport, and I can have an exciting life. But when you're not managing that, and the exciting stuff becomes the 100% focal point and obsession and you're not doing the work part, then often the parents have to step in, and it's an all conversation, you'll do your schoolwork, or you will do your passion and curiosity. And often that's quite demeaning, because then nobody's got anything that is exciting that they can look forward to at the end of the day.

R

Richard Mulholland 11:37

I also think, you know, a lot of people worry about, you know, this game design thing, and, you know, go into getting into video games, and this is just, you know, it's yet First of all,

we need to understand that what's big in our world isn't big in their world. You know, what's big in my world isn't big in your world. That's that's an important point of departure, this video game thing that they see as being a distraction for their kids, video games are currently larger. So it's a \$70 billion industry, which is bigger than the \$50 billion Hollywood industry and the \$20 billion \$19 billion professional American sports industry, getting into the video game industry, you can be a content designer, a writer, a set designer, a you know, there's so many different things there. Your kids are training, they're learning, if that's the field, they wanted to get into, you know, they're learning in their obsession that this stage. And again, this will hold them in good stead. So even if they've become an accountant in this in maybe a field that they're passionate about, they get a job, but one of the big game publishers, and then they are able to make their recreational obsession work. That's okay. So right now what I think at this stage, I think we should be encouraging our kids to chase anything to get some excited, all I want is my kids. Okay, and you're gonna have to probably beat this, but we talked about having a gas tank, all I wanted my kids gas tank there give us a tank to be full. The biggest problem with the world today is people who have an empty gas tank, if your tank is empty, you're not going to be motivating yourself to do anything. My son is very motivated by doing a destiny, getting on to destiny meeting with his friends. You know, it took me ages to realize that the four kids other kids that he's been speaking to online for the last five years are his best friends. He's meant to have them in person. And for a while I was like, This is so crazy. And then I realized, you know, I speak to my best friends on zoom all day long. And I you know, one of them just moved to England, I don't see him every day like like, this is the reality we're in. So who am I to judge what his friendship should be like?

M

Malcolm Gooding 13:39

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G

Gersh Aitchison 14:11

What I'm curious about his recreational activities that are either lean forward and active and passive recreational activities, and I see things like computer games, developing things like strategy and focus. And as you said, team building and connectivity with other people. And it's an active process, whereas sitting watching TV is quite a passive process,

and there's not much brain activity happening in that space. And quite honestly, I'd rather have a child who's actively involved in a recreational activity that's promoting curiosity and passion and that obsession you're talking about than somebody who's lying back, you know, eating chips or popcorn watching TV where there's no actual mental activity happening at that time.

R

Richard Mulholland 14:52

Those great book read years ago maybe when my my son's 80 now is a metric. I read it when he was maybe I don't know Seven or eight, and it was called everything bad is good for you. And the entire premise was they explained that this was already back then the amount of thought processes. So in board game I rate in board games, my enjoyment based on a decisions per minute scale, how many meaningful decisions do I have to make in a minute. And if I try to compare that to what my son is doing, he has to make decisions per second. But he is making decisions per second, that guy just ran out there he is using this weapon, he's got that armor, this weapon I have is not going to work with that armor, I'm going to be jumping up across this, I've got to move out of the way of his weapon, I've got to switch my weapon to a different thing. And I should probably be moving forward. And I've got a time it because my weapon is optimized to do something at, you know, point three seconds after he moves into my range, and fires it and then gets a headshot and makes a video of it and shows it to me at dinner. But that's the computational processing that video gamers are doing. And parents are getting upset with them, that that they are judging their life away. My son's ability to compute and make good decisions, under stressful situations, because it is stressful for him is very real. This is not badly, this is a very, very lean in hobby. And it's a cooperative hobby. So he can't do it by himself, he has to work with other people, I think we are going to see a very positive upswing of behavior because of the level of decision making, that this generation is having to do. And then by the way, while he's doing that, he's watching YouTube videos on the side with other guys streaming. And invariably, if it's a break, you'll be checking out, you know, an anime, as you mentioned, or something like this, or sorry, manga.

G

Gersh Aitchison 16:44

So one of the things that I'm hearing right now is a parent saying, but the schoolwork is not getting done in the mock solo. Because it's interfering with the learning process and the studying process.

R

Richard Mulholland 16:56

Yeah, so I mean, I guess that would be true as well. And you have to have the balance. So

my son isn't allowed to play games during the week. That's That's the rule we set up for him, then he's very happy with that. And, and that's it on a Wednesday, if he wants to, he can do like an hour and a half with his mates to give him a little bit of a midweek break that he does. And I guess you've all everyone's got to have their own system. The thing is, I don't want to rob my kid of the thing that he's passionate about. But yeah, so I do think that there's a loss. However, years ago, a friend of mine, Dustin birthdays, he bought Skullcandy into the country, he sat down with with my son, Callum, he said Cal schools hackable. He said, Imagine you would have to be there anyway. He said, All my friends would go into class and they'd mess around the whole time they're in class, and then it has to come home. And then you'd have to cut into their game time or whatever it was, in his case surfing time. By doing all the homework. He said, the way I had school is I realized I have to be there anyway. So I'm just obsessed, lovely and attentive when I'm at school. And I try get absolutely everything done during school hours. So I can get home and switch off. And this has been my son's mindset. So he gets most of what he has to do at school, his teachers are generally happy with him. But other than that, he's like doing better than I've ever done. So I can't really I every report card is better and more positive for his teachers than anything I've ever done. And I never see him doing homework. So I don't know what's going on. Kids are delirium.

J

Jax Aitchison 18:21

Now, you see, this is really interesting, because for the last two years, we've been dealing with a COVID situation. Now very, very quickly, when this all happened in March last year, we started schooling from home. And it was within 48 hours, we had our kids going and we haven't missed an hour of school. And they've they've we've toured full curriculum, face to face teaching, you know all of that. But one of the things that we quickly discovered was that to be successful online takes a specific pattern of behaviors. Because what we're finding is that the kids don't necessarily have the skill set yet because they've never needed it before, to be able to engage in the classroom while navigating all these other distractions that they want to be engaged in. So there'd be a discord chat going on over there and the manga video is going there and the YouTube video on how to improve my Minecraft schools is going over there at the same time. So I like what you're saying about be obsessive about your schoolwork so that you can do all of those things later on and have the end situation you can have your discord chats and all of these things. And your schoolwork. It doesn't need to get to the point of an or situation as long as we're managing the balance correctly.

G

Gersh Aitchison 19:37

And it sounds like rich that your your role as a parent in the space has been to help

manage the end so that it is an end conversation. And it's by setting those boundaries within the house that as you said, I know my son, I know what's going on. I know the family values and you can game on the weekend. But during the week you don't have access to that. On Wednesdays you can connect with your friends. On Discord. And obviously in the holidays, there'll be different rules depending on what needs to happen. So it sounds like the parental role is clearly defined. And it's understood and the expectations are understood. Am I understanding that correctly?

R

Richard Mulholland 20:13

Yeah, absolutely. And that's what my son who needs it more my daughter, she's much more self regulating, she goes to bed at the right time does her own thing. She's way more organized. So, you know, I have a whole different set of rules there. She's 13, she kind of sets the rules. So that's the thing. Yeah, I think that's, I think that's spot on. I can like, I'm just making this up as I go along. Like, we're just totally trying to pretend that I know what I'm doing here. And, and it's really tricky to get it right. And you know, Katelyn will constantly try and push back that he should be allowed this. Like with baby, at least with Bailey is, she's still at the stage where she just constantly trying to find new things. And I'd like she'll, she'll watch one bit of TV on repeat. So she will watch Gilmore Girls over and over and over and over and over and over again. And she'll watch your favorite episodes over and over. And the reason she likes to do that, she'd like to have that in the background while playing something on Minecraft, listening to Kpop like an in one earphone, and she does her makeup. She's not trying to become do horror makeup. So she wants to do all these horrific she just comes into the squad on her face. And like, I think that I don't know if that's a loss like that worries me because I always want to say to like, like, baby, just focus on one thing, like pick something and go deep in it that gets your concentration. But I think our brain craves distraction, like cognitive candy now, and she needs like those hits.

J

Jax Aitchison 21:46

I found this whole topic fascinating because tradition, traditional research or traditional studies suggest that as human beings, our brains are not physiologically capable of multitasking, they say there's a transaction cost every time we switch between two different things. But I can't help wondering if that has evolved and changed in these younger generations, these alphas that are you know, the generation alphas that are coming through now, because

R

Richard Mulholland 22:11

they do evolve that quick.

J

Jax Aitchison 22:14

They definitely are managing these multi-platform situations, way better than I ever thought that they would. So they say we can't train them.

G

Gersh Aitchison 22:27

Yeah. And as you said, is cognitive candy, I think it's a good hit to be able to do that maybe there's something in the transactional cost that that stimulates the brain, I'm not sure.

J

Jax Aitchison 22:37

So there is something else that I'd like to just dive into please. And that's to go back to the the happiness success ratio that you were discussing, and how your hobbies are and how you get passionate about them, and you get obsessive about them, and it makes you happy. You know, one of the huge things that we're dealing with right now this year is anxiety in the children, there's massive anxiety, and it has definitely increased, it's definitely higher than we've ever encountered as a school before. And what we seeing is more avoidance behavior when it comes to the downtime. So that's the Netflix and chill. Because I don't feel that I can engage. I don't have the energy left. If I'm being dragged down, what is your advice to adults and kids about how to reignite that and how to find the bits that make you happy and excited again,

R

Richard Mulholland 23:24

I can't speak for kids, like, I actually don't sometimes I think about this stuff they go through and the demands of being a young human, are higher, way higher than I can possibly imagine right now. And so I can't begin to sit to explain to them how to navigate the realities of this. But I do think finding common interest groups. And that's why, you know, when my both my kids really, really like manga and anime, and you know, we just lean into all of those things. If they're leaning into something, again, that's filling their tank. Our job as parents should never be to empty the tank, or job as parents should always make sure the tank is as full as possible. It doesn't matter. You don't have to understand it. They're not asking you to read them and watch them. I mean that in fact, occasionally if they do, you really should know you know, we did watch this one publisher, the both the kids really liked we watched some of their films together as a family. Because now watching I don't know what it's like in your houses. Watching TV together is an event.

It's like once a month, we try to do something together as a thing. The why we still have TV rooms in our homes, as central meeting areas is completely and utterly beyond me. Because a television is no longer a staging area for the family. Like you know, so that's a whole nother conversation we could have around that like the restructuring of homes to suit the purpose of when we get together. I think that that has changed fundamentally. I have a board game table I would advise that for everyone.

G

Gersh Aitchison 24:56

What I'm what I'm curious about rich is How your children have got into this curiosities, you talk about doing a lot of things together as a family. And there's a conversation I have quite often with parents who are really struggling to engage the curiosities of their children, and they will go bike riding with them, and they'll go to cricket with them. And they'll do a whole lot of things with them. And I have found, while the conversation that I have with them is that, in my experience, I have a lot of curiosities and things that I really like doing, and I'll open the space for them to join me in those curiosities and passions. And if I find something interesting that they are doing that I'd like to be exposed to your jump into it. As an example, the dungeons and dragons club that a drink has an afternoons or one of the afternoons in the week. I didn't start that it wasn't a passion, but it was a curiosity that I had. And I joined something that the students had started with other teachers. And I've really dived in deeply with that. But there are other things like the archery and the robotics, which I'm interested in, and I do automatically and the kids have joined me in that space. my curiosity is about the dynamics of running off to kids and feeling frustrated, and then you spent the money on things, etc, etc. What is your advice to parents? And people who want to engage in a curiosity? What does that dynamic look and feel like?

R

Richard Mulholland 26:18

So first of all, the word curiosity? I mean, I think it's the God Particle of everything. If there was, if there was one core value I'd want my kids to have it's with this curiosity, I think there's almost no better skill to have if we can create curiosity and our kids over almost anything else. I think that's a great place to start. Curiosity creates gravity, right? Like draws you into something. And I think that's what what happened there for you is that DND area had a gravity it drew you and you tried it, you open to it, you might have liked it, you might have hated it, and then you go away, or kids of this age are flitting from one to the next to the next. So my daughter is she wants to do jujitsu, but she changes her mind quite often. So we had to buy a GI and outfit, we bought a family membership, because we'd have to upgrade to do that. So I said to her, okay, cool, like combatives is a year. So there's a year that you've got to do to learn the 36 principles. But the deal was, then she's

got to give me the full year. And now she already wants to she's like, halfway through and she wants to move in and she wants to do kickboxing like my son did. He did mui Thai and he did some fights and some tournaments and things. And by the way, his other obsession is bouldering. So it was he does jujitsu, gaming and bouldering. My daughter does the makeup jujitsu. And now she wants to do mui Thai. She tried bouldering she didn't like it. And but I said to her, she cannot do that, because I'm not spending more money until she. So I have a year that and I'm not going to hold her to it like a sentence. But I do believe it's okay for us. If we're spending money to get some degree of commitment, like there's these things need to last beyond the novelty.

G

Gavin Kennedy 27:59

Richard, I'm curious about your childhood hobbies? And did they kind of stop when you became a young adult? And did you resume? Or was the evolution a journey from those to what you're doing now?

R

Richard Mulholland 28:11

So first of all, the most important hobby that I've ever had in my life that led to everything was reading fiction. So I started reading fiction. Then I started reading fantasy. So I was reading a bunch of game books. The the series I got into was a series called blood sword. And you would read a book and it wasn't just that choose your own adventure, you actually had to roll dice and make choices and go and fight things. From there. I decided that okay, I want to get Dungeons and Dragons. And the funny thing about I was at a quite a big school. And a lot of people don't want kids to be at big schools. But you know, lots of my year had 10 classes. And the one advantage of that is that there are more outliers, there's more space for the outliers to fit in. Everybody went to film school and I didn't go and I took my new brand new red box of Dungeons and Dragons there. And two of the other kids who didn't go to film school, there was five of us in total, walked up and said, We love that you're playing dungeons dragons, but you bought the wrong box you need to buy second edition, a d&d second edition. I started playing with them. We became friends for years and years and years and years. We role played all through, into probably I stopped for a couple of years while I was touring, but basically up until my late 20s as a dungeon dragons and led into Magic the Gathering. That was my most expensive obsession I've ever done, told me about it. And then and then there was a few years where it was very, very much like I would always take a little game on holiday and I would play on occasion. And then I took my son and my daughter to rage or must be about eight or nine years ago now. And ad rage they had a board game stand and Richard Garfield, the founder of the guy who you know created Magic the Gathering. He had designed a game called King of Tokyo. I bought that game and the obsession just reignited but but most

consistent is reading fiction Sorry, sorry. I just I mean, a lot of people don't think this is, this is a hobby. I'm a deep introvert. For me. reading fiction is like my, probably my favorite, favorite, favorite thing to do. And I think it is the thing that's made me the smartest by far. And every fiction book I read, it has got monetary value, do two to one of business book I read.

G Gavin Kennedy 30:24

And boredom, do you schedule some time to be bored, to let some of the stuff settle in land and make connections for you.

R Richard Mulholland 30:32

It's been a bit of a loss there. So that was definitely my motorcycle riding, when I would go on a ride got, you know, between meetings and things like that. That's where I had all these ideas, because I would just be thinking, it's definitely been a bit of a loss. What I do have now, so every single day, but this again, it's actually the opposite every single day from nine to 10, is vocational reading. So I read about something to do with my craft every workday, from nine to 10. I'm just trying to learn to write now I'm going really, really deep on ancient rhetoric, and just trying to understand the terms and you know, the nuances of that. So I've been going doing a lot of that feels like going back to school again. But what I do try to do is apply anything I learned in one day, you know, later on on the same day, we're going up in a meeting, bring it up in a conversation and, you know, try work that in. But it's not always possible, and it has been a loss, it's definitely something I should make more space for.

G Gersh Aitchison 31:28

So Kevin, Jack's often asked me if I ever get bored, and I've got too many things to do. And seldom borders Ed right, Mrs. Edison.

J Jax Aitchison 31:35

Yeah, that's why my Dungeons and Dragons video on the back instead of character name just says long suffering wife of geek.

G Gersh Aitchison 31:44

That's amazing. So boredom is a luxury. And if kids are getting bored, then they need some more hobbies, and they need to do something.

J

Jax Aitchison 31:52

Well, the question is, will you still have ruthless curiosity? Because I like that, I think that's given what we're going to title the episode ruthless curiosity.

R

Richard Mulholland 32:00

There's still a there's I mean, there's a huge correlation. And the longest study ever done was all men. But in the longest study ever done of men, some of the participants, you know, they started in their teens, and they're now in their 90s. JFK was on it, things like that. They studied what you know, the people who did the best. And it's the people who had hobbies, and consistent hobbies, and other things to keep their mind going. Were the happiest as a whole. And Funny enough, the biggest detour to non happiness. And you know, I've not, I don't drink alcohol, since I was 19, but is alcohol. And I think the problem with it is not that alcohol, the idea of trying to lubricate and dull your senses, to a degree, is maybe kind of what happens to try to tap out from the day rather than to try and tap in, this is a whole nother discussion. And I certainly will always have wine at home, like I'm not judging anybody. But yeah, I think that by all means, do both. But the one really, really switches your brain on and the other helps your brain switch off. And I think if you did more of the former, you wouldn't need as much of the latter.

G

Gersh Aitchison 33:08

So Richard edulink, we're a small school, and extracurricular activities are not big sports fields. We have a lot of sports kids. And we do cater to, you know, he did sports kids. But what we've done from the very beginning is we've created clubs in the afternoon. And those clubs come together based on teacher and student curiosities. And where that juncture is, and some clubs last the term some last a long time. Some are structured by the school because of the teachers passions, and some are generated by students. So as a departure point, you know, Dungeons and Dragons, a dungeon master is one of the students, and he drives the whole process. But the robotics is something that we use for the curriculum, but we've also created the space after school for kids to be able to join. and Mrs. HSN, I really believe that our jobs as the leadership of the school is to create spaces where children can explore curiosities and their passions. So if you're a robotics club member, for example, you have access to the robotics lab. That's the 3d printer. And it's expected that you have the responsibility to look after the things in that space. If you want to arrange in the holidays to come and work with projects and things that you're doing, then you can do that. If you want to arrange on the weekends, you can do that at break time, you can go into that space. And it's exclusively available to you because of your affiliation with a club and we don't regulate what that looks like. And often the projects and the things that are happening in that space are not specified. They're not

dictated. It's more a case of what are you building that's interesting. What do you want to do with that type of thing and just allowing them the space to tinker, as it were, the garage band does exactly the same thing. The equipment's there, you can go in and play whatever you want. I left school today and three of the students were busy playing one on the drums, one on the guitar, one on the piano, and they were just tinkering around because we've created the space for them to Do that.

R

Richard Mulholland 35:01

I mean, I think it is absolutely incredible. When I was at school and they find out our PE times and dragons say they called my parents and and tried to have an exorcism. The world has changed. But I just, I mean, obviously, I jealously wish this was something that we have. But you don't have that now. And I think that it's it's such a pity that I can't imagine there's a single parent listening to this, it doesn't think that's amazing. My my, I think we spend a lot of time worrying about the youth. And I think we spend not nearly enough time worrying about people my age, you know, I'm 46. Right? And I think that, don't just be excited about this stuff. Like if you have that, start that in your business, like people should be doing this in their companies and in places to you know, to make play and recreational obsession, a thing that, you know, Google says it has that, you know, that 20% time, but that's still doing work. I'm just like, give people more time, like, encourage people to have these recreational obsessions, you know, ruthless curiosity and recreational obsession.

J

Jax Aitchison 36:08

Absolutely. You're rich. We could we could talk about this all day. I love hearing what you have to say and your opinions on all of this because you do come at these things from another angle. And it's just really valuable to to just engage with you on these things. Hopefully, we can get you back on the campus at some point so that the kids can see you up close and personal again, I know they'd love that. Once we get over this COVID hiccup and we can actually meet face to face again, I'd really like to do that. But from my side, thank you. Thank you so much for spending the time and just lending us your wisdom as you do. Thank you. Thanks so much for your time.

G

Gavin Kennedy 36:45

Thanks, everyone for joining us today. And thank you Richard for helping us fill our gas tanks a little parents children. Don't forget to visit our YouTube channel where you can see Richard's video from a couple of years ago on campus called How to suck less at public speaking. We'll see you all again in the next podcast. Cheers. You've been listening to

another production from Solid Gold Podcasts.