

The Limitless Life Experience Podcast
The Convo about Mental Health with Finn Prett
Transcript

Intro

I need to be here, and not because I'm running away from something, I feel like I'm running to something and this is where we are running to. And that was, I can't really explain it. That was just, we just knew that we had to be here. Welcome to the Limitless Life Experience podcast with me, your host, Suzy Ashworth. I'm a mum of three, seven-figure, serial entrepreneur, Hay House author, international keynote speaker, quantum transformation and embodiment coach, and believer in miracles. My superpower is helping female entrepreneurs like you create six-figure breakthroughs in your business fast, so that you can expand into limitless living and create an incredibly positive difference in the world. In this space you will hear me talk all about wealth, yourself, spirit, and impact. This is The Limitless Life Experience podcast.

Suzy: Hello? Hello. You gorgeous a human being. It is Suzy Ashworth here, and I am really excited to welcome you to The Limitless Life Experience podcast. And I've quite a juicy convo lined up for you today. And I feel like I need to credit the power of Instagram for this conversation because, a lot of people talk about how big of a network they have grown on Insta, but it's not really my natural home. I am more of a Facebook girl, but the lovely Finn, co-founder creator of The Positive Planner, we actually met on Instagram, didn't we, not so long ago. Do you want to share the tale?

Finn: Yeah, we did. So I found you through a few people actually and had recently started following you. And I was watching your stories and I think I accidentally sent you a sad face emoji and you quickly replied saying why the sad face, and then we just got chatting. And I think you asked where I lived or something. And I had said that I live in Kenya and I think that intrigued you and we just got chatting really, and then ended up talking about what it is that I do which is I, I co-founded The Positive Planner and we make planners and journals to support mental and wellbeing. And yeah, I think we just got chatting from there.

Suzy: I'm obsessed with basically everything that you have just said. Which is why I was like, you need to come onto the podcast. I have a slight not mental block, but a, I feel like product-based businesses - it's this special Holy Grail of, wow, you've actually made something tangible. And it is totally, as somebody who is obsessed by journals, it is totally my dream one day to have my own journal. So I would love to hear, well, obviously we're going to talk about how the Positive Planner came to be born, but what was your life like before entrepreneurship or has it always been your life?

Finn: Well, I've always been an entrepreneur, but I, if you had told me even four years ago that I would be running a business, creating journals to support mental health that are stocked around

the world, I would never have believed you. So I set my first business up as, I'm a hairdresser, I trained as a hairdresser when I finished school. And when I was about, I think in my early twenties, I went and set up like a mobile hair thing in London. So I did that. And then I went and worked on cruise ships for a little bit. Came back to London, had a breakdown, realised I couldn't do London anymore and moved to Cambridge where I then lived for, I think, 10 years. And in that time I then set up a salon in Cambridge. But my life's just really weird because I've never had a plan. It's all just sort of strange things have happened. So I ended up with this salon which I then had for eight years. And during that time I got married and then I went on to have my son and that was when things really changed actually. And my perspective on what I was doing really changed. So yeah, I've been a business owner for a long time, but obviously hairdressing and beauty therapy versus working in mental health as a mental health campaigner and, you know, designing and producing journals is quite different.

Suzy: Yeah, really different. And I love the fact that you set up your own mobile hairdressers. Do you do your parents, are they entrepreneurs like who gave you permission?

Finn: Okay. So I had a very, I grew up in a family, we were very, very poor. So I grew up in a council state in just in Cambridgeshire just outside of Cambridge. And I'm one of five children. I lived in, you know, my upbringing was very, very difficult. I lived, there was, there was a lot of domestic abuse in the house and it was yeah, a really, just a, not a very happy place to be. And I just knew from a really young age that this was not going to be my life. I just knew there was something in me that said like, no, this is, this is not going to be you. This is just for now. And yeah, you're going to get out of this. So I always knew that I would kind of have that drive to do something. So I left home at 16 and kind of just, you know, I don't know, I just sort of bumbled along, working really hard, trying lots of different things, and I fell into hairdressing because I got fired from a job in London. And I was drunk and my friends said to me, what are you going to do with your life? And I said, I don't know. And she was enrolling on this hairdressing course. So I said, okay, okay, I'll do that. So that was how I fell into hairdressing. And then I worked in salons for a while, but I kind of quickly knew that, that didn't work for me either. So that was when I went and sort of went self-employed. I used to work on photo shoots and doing like styling for photo shoots and stuff. So yeah, it was just the kind of big juggle really. And then that was when I went and tried the cruise ships, but cruise ships, they, they weren't really for me.

Suzy: I always really wanted to work on a cruise ship.

Finn: Yeah. It was, it was an experience, but yeah it wasn't for me. And my mental health was very vulnerable back then. You know, I had lived through a lot of trauma in my childhood and in my sort of late teens, early twenties, completely all unprocessed, I had no idea that I was living with PTSD. I just didn't - that hadn't registered. So then being on a cruise ship in very confined space and kind of no escape, it probably wasn't the best place for someone to be. We have a delicate mental health, so I didn't do that for very long in the end. It was about four or five months, but it was great, it was a good experience, I don't regret it, but it was yeah, it wasn't, it

wasn't something I was cut out to do.

Suzy: What were you living with when it comes to, you said that your mental health was very delicate and essentially you were living with PTSD. How did that manifest itself?

Finn: So anxiety was probably one of the biggest things. I lived with a constant state of anxiety, which cause I've done a lot of work in trauma. I now really understand all of this, but back then I didn't, and that was coming out in sort of, you know, I have chronic irritable bowel syndrome, you know, have very like a lot of physical ailments, insomnia, migraines, this kind of stuff. So it was living in a constant state of anxiety really. But also had just crippling depression. So I, and actually I later went on to be diagnosed with bipolar, but before that it was very, it was a really confusing time because I would just be well that kind of classic bipolar cycling between extreme highs and extreme lows. So yeah, that was how it was manifesting itself. And actually what that then means when you're sort of in that cycle is you, you can be seen to be like a really confident outgoing person, 'cause that's what people tend to see, you know, when you're in that sort of hyper place. But with that comes quite a lot of destructive behavior. So, you know, not very healthy relationship with drinking and just unhealthy relationships, no boundaries, this kind of stuff. So that was how it really manifested itself. But there would also be times of just deep, deep depression, you know, where, and people don't see that, you know, only a small number of people see that. So, you know, that's, that's what I think is quite difficult when you're living with a mental illness like bipolar, is that people tend to just see the really confident side of you and don't necessarily see that like real depression, which is maybe why the cruise ship wasn't very good for me because there's no hiding when you're sharing a 10-foot cabin with someone else.

Suzy: What did you learn about people during your time as a hairdresser?

Finn: Oh my goodness. Wow. Just, I mean that people are just complex. We are just so complex as human beings. And I think as a hairdresser, you do play this role of a therapist as well. You know, you see people in, in such, in like complete vulnerability when, when you're a hairdresser because yeah you really see sides of people that I don't think they often show to other people, you know, that act of actually like washing someone's hand, putting your hands in their hair, talking to them about the way they look, you know, these are all things that are really quite personal experiences, so when you're doing, yeah, you learn a lot about people. But it was a great time in terms of, you know, understanding people, understanding myself. Yeah, it's a real honour being a hairdresser in that you do get to care for people and look after them and help them grow their confidence. And you also learn that some people are just really, really fucking awful to be honest, but aren't we all at times, aren't, we all sometimes. And I think when you're a hairdresser, if you mess up and it's someone that is really not in a good place, then you're going to get it.

Suzy: It's really interesting because it is, our hair is known as the crown, but it's also very much part of our mask. And I really hear you when you say that it is an honour and you are seeing

people at their most vulnerable. And of course, if you reset the mask and somebody doesn't like what they see, if you're very attached to your identity as let's be real 99.5% of us are incredibly attached to how we are going to be perceived. Yeah, I can imagine that being on the receiving end of that, you either get people who burst into tears. I feel great. Or you get, people are going to let you have it with both barrels.

Finn: It's funny. Cause I never talk about this. I rarely talk about the salon. It's something I feel like I've kind of, and, and I was talking to someone about this recently. I feel like it was like another life when I look at my life now and I only sold that business in 2019 January, I think it was 2019. But I think because it was just so attached to me, it was so attached to like an emotional roller coaster of mental health that climaxed in this, then me having a baby and being diagnosed with bipolar, that I find I'm only just ready to talk about the salon. It feels like, yeah, it's very, it's still very raw because you know, I had that business for eight years and I learned a huge amount. And obviously my business now is a product business and it's completely different. So although those, you know, a lot of skills have transferred over just general business skills or like I think just having to have the confidence to run a business, you know, they, there was transfer over, but, but yeah, it's really different having a service-based business versus having a product-based business.

Suzy: Do you think you can hide a little bit more with the product-based business?

Finn: Oh my God yeah, like totally, totally. You know, I would, yes. I felt very, but well, yes and no, because you still have for, for the product-based business, which we have now, although I still have, you know, we are the face of The Positive Planner. We're the face of that brand and our story is intrinsic to that brand. So, you know, but then yes, I sit and I work from my office in my house and sometimes, you know, I can hide, whereas when I had the salon and I'm there doing clients, you can't hide. So yeah, I suppose it is, it is very different.

Suzy: What was the straw that broke the camel's back for you with the salon? Was it getting pregnant or was it just a buildup?

Finn: It was, it was just so many things I think. So I ran the salon with a really good friend of mine. We actually didn't know each other very well when we set up in business, but you know, we are very close friends now. And I think we just got to the stage where it was just, it was so hard to make money. It was so hard to grow it, we employed 11 people and it was just really hard to manage people and grow the business to make it worth our while you know, the return wasn't worth the work. And because of how hard we had to work in the business, we just both completely lost our passion for, for, say my friend, she was a beauty therapist. I'm a hairdresser. We both just completely lost the passion for doing it. It's only now, recently, I started to cut my friend's hair again. You know, I've got my scissors back out and the last couple of months, because we just lost the passion and then the toll it was taking on both our mental healths really because of the work that we were having to put in and then sort of throw a baby and start and a

mental health breakdown. It was just like, this is, yeah, this is not worth anymore.

Suzy: Sure. So do you, I mean, you've just said it was really hard to make money. Do you count that business as a success? Or...

Finn: Yeah, I do, I do. But it's interesting the money thing, because to me, I, for so long I didn't see it as a success because of money. I mean, it was a success in that we turned over a lot of money, you know, but it was, once everything had been taken away there wasn't much left. And I did find that very difficult, it made me feel, you know, lots of negative things, a failure, not good enough, all of this, but I do look at it now and see the successes from it. The things that I learned about people, the things I learned about running a business about working with women, about supporting women, about, you know, I mean, I messed up, there's so many things I learned from that I made. Yeah, so there's a lot, there was success in it, you know, and on the outside it looked really successful, but that is so often the way with a business. It's like, you know, we were winning awards. We had done a stunning refurb. Like it looked a success, but it wasn't sustainable. I think that was the real issue.

Suzy: So obviously you were with your partner when you got pregnant, how long has he been in the picture?

Finn: 10 years. So he's seen it all. Yeah, he's seen it. Oh we met when I had about a year after I'd moved back to Cambridge. Yeah. We met. So we were together for six years before we had our son.

Suzy: What do you think has made your relationship sustainable even though it's had, you know, you've had a really big thing in the middle of it to deal with in terms of your mental health and I'm sure the strain that that put...

Finn: Yeah. He's very, very patient. He's very patient and he's very stable and he comes from a really stable family. And yeah, he just has brought stability to my life, but we still have a lot of fun, you know, we have a really adventurous life. So as much as he's brought that stability, that stability has enabled me to become a lot more adventurous because I've become more stable. So yeah, I'd say that like, he's very patient. And he, he, he is, you know, he brings stability to our lives, but also we just, I don't know, we just really work as a team. And for me, I just didn't care about meeting someone. It was not important to me. I never thought I'd get married or have children or anything like that. So it was like, I was just, to me, it was only worth it if it was like really good. So I think because, you know, he managed to convince me that it was good idea. I just was like, okay, let's go, you know, I'm going for this. So it's always been just, yeah, I'm just very lucky we have a good relationship and a lot of fun. And I think that's the main part.

Suzy: I love it. So how was, what happened when, after you gave birth? Like what was the breakdown and how did that lead into The Positive Plan of then being born?

Finn: So I had a really complicated birth and it was, you know, in the end it was very, very traumatic. And I was, you know, I couldn't, I couldn't do anything with my son. I couldn't lift him up. I couldn't, I just couldn't look after him. Because physically I was very sick and then just really quickly something just switched one day. And I can remember I was sat on the sofa looking, my husband was looking for the TENS machine that we'd rented from Tesco. And you know, he looked at me and was like, oh, you know, where is it we need to say, we need to give it back. Where is it? In that kind of voice. And in that moment, something just snapped and changed in me, like literally in that moment. And I just started crying and I just didn't stop for a really, oh I feel little emotional, sorry, for a really, really, really long time. And it was like, it was like, I, I was out of my body looking in to my life and there was nothing I could do to, yeah. It was like an out of body experience and, and it just got worse and worse and worse. And it was like because of the nature of bipolar and how sick, sick I was, it was like, I'd either be nailing it, you know, nailing it at being a new mum or just completely unable to do anything. And it kind of - so how it led on to The Positive Planner was I, I feel really embarrassed, I set up like an Instagram account. And I was being really open and honest about, you know, this journey of motherhood, but I was going through highs and lows. So I was just, you know, this account was, it just makes me cringe a bit to think of it now. But a friend of mine that I'd lost touch with who also had had children, Ali, who I now run the positive planet with, she was watching this account and she just reached out and was like, Oh, hey babe, how are you? You know, I've seen that you've had your son Jasper and we just got chatting. I think she could kind of see that it wasn't, things weren't good. And she had had postnatal depression after her second child and had had this kind of idea of a journal of The Positive Planner and me and my manic state was like, I can help you do that. I can help you with the business. And she's very, very arty and, and isn't very business savvy and she wouldn't mind me saying that. So, you know, we got chatting, she told me about this idea and I was like, have you got a business plan? Have you done this? Have you got a spreadsheet with costings? And she didn't. So I was like, I'll help, I'll help, I'll do this, I'll do that. And it just kind of went from there really. And yeah, we just, it just went on and on and on. And then we started this crowdfunding campaign to raise enough money to publish the first 500 books and then 500 turned into a thousand and two thousands and three and four and five. And it, yeah, it just went from there. And then a year later we published a second book and another year later we did a third and yeah, so it was very much like a raw experience of, we are really sick with our mental health. We can't find anything that we think is good enough that you know, that we deserve to help us look after our mental health in a way that doesn't make us feel like an outsider and we couldn't find it, so we made it.

Suzu: You make it sound like you're a little bit, like, I don't know, we just did this and then we just did that and at a time when I was like up and down. It's what you, I mean, how many books, how many planners have you sold to date?

Finn: I think it's about 35,000. Yeah.

Suzy: That's huge. That's A hell of a lot of people you have helped.

Finn: Yeah. And that's the like, amazing thing really is that as hard as it is, you know, is hard running a business. You don't need to tell you that it's amazing, but there are times where it's pretty hard and you question everything you're doing and the fog comes and the voices are there and your head and you start to question what you're doing, but then I have this light stack of all our books. Cause we've got four books now because we've just launched kids one, I have a stack on my desk and if I'm in doubt, I just look at them and I'm like, right, this is why this is why just keep going, because I know that thousands of people around the world are opening that book each day and it's helping them. And that is the most incredible, amazing feeling.

Suzy: What do you think has been most challenging working with your business partner?

Finn: Well, I think, I wouldn't say, like challenging in a negative way, but we both have our ups and downs with our mental health. And obviously that comes with challenges both personally and professionally, and it does affect the business. So yeah, that, but then having said that we're both very understanding about mental health and, you know, we can kind of see it coming and we can talk to each other about that really openly. I decided a year after we'd set up a business, my husband and I made the decision that we were gonna move to Kenya. And that has been a challenge because although my business partner and I have always lived in separate cities, she, she lives in Bath and I lived in Cambridge, so we were never on top of each other. I think then the thought of like being in a different country definitely brought, was, was a bit of a shock and it was hard to think of how we'd make it work, and, but I just knew that this was something I needed to do for my family and, and yeah, and we've made it work, but it definitely, definitely wasn't easy. It was, it was lots of adapting and trial and error and finding a way that made it work.

Suzy: I mean, what were the biggest things that you have to work out?

Finn: So in the early days we were a lot more hands on, you know, sort of like packing all the logistical side of having a products-based business. We were doing that. And so obviously removing myself completely from the country meant that I was going to be removing myself completely from that. So there was that, but now we use a fulfillment partner and, you know, we've worked pretty hard because we just can't manage the volume of orders anymore. And to, to be able to grow, we needed to, to change the way we were doing our distribution. And then the technical side of living in a developing country, you know, it does come with challenges. We will sometimes have power cuts here for 24 hours. You know, or just sometimes things just aren't easy. Somewhere like Africa, it takes, it takes a lot more planning and preparation sometimes that can affect, you know, my workload or if you have a power cut for 24 hours, for example. But on the whole, I just think we've really adapted and we have a real respect for one

another and, and our different lives and what we bring to the business. And I would say it's actually really been positive in the sense that it's shown both of us, that the business is adaptable and we set the boundaries, we set the tone and it doesn't require us to be in one place all the time. And I think for me having had the salon for eight years where I just felt trapped, I didn't want another business that meant I had to be in any location. I wanted a business that would allow me to be wherever I choose to be not where I need to be.

Suzy: What... you talked about growth and in order to allow the business to grow, what does growth look like when you think about 2021? What's the goal for the end of the year?

Finn: Oh, Suzy, what's the goal for the end of 2021. Oh, I feel like a terrible business person now because I haven't thought about that. I mean, we're expanding, we're expanding globally. That's like a big thing we're working on at the moment, but oh, I think just, we were both training to be coaches as well. And then, we're both sort of like, we've got our own specialities. So for me next year is a really important year for my coaching. And I'm really what I, what I want to specialise in is trauma-informed coaching. So I suppose next year, what is the big goal. It's, it's like evolution we've really wanted to start to do, and this is again why we're focusing on the coaching side of our training at the moment, we want to be able to do like creative group programs that we can do online, and that is a big focus for 2021 to be able to move the, because we were doing in person workshops obviously until 2020 hit. But it has sort of helped us to adapt things. I've not answered your question very well, because you've really caught me off guard.

Suzy: Nothing in your life and business had been planned. So perhaps, tricky question, you've just, you know, you've, you've shown up as, as you are without that big plan and it served you proud until now.

Finn: I mean, yeah. And I definitely see 2020, like this year is the year I've learnt to be selfish and it's been so amazing and I'm planning to be even more selfish next year.

Suzy: Yeah. So what does, I mean, I've got questions about 2020, but what does that actually mean? What, where have you been more selfish this year than you have previously?

Finn: So I come first and, you know, I don't need to be the martyr trying to do everything anymore. Like I need what I need is help to get everything done so that I actually have time to look after myself. And I've just stopped feeling guilty about that because I'm so much happier. My child is so much happier. My husband is so much happier because I'm not, or we're, not trying to do everything as, as you know, as the parents in the house, we are saying we actually, we want more from life. And if we can get help doing the things that take up all the family time that we have, then that's what we're going to do. And I now have time, like if I am feeling anxious in the morning, I will journal or do tapping or sit and do a meditation or work on my breathing. And I will just go again and again and again, using all these little pick-and-mix tools that I've got until I feel like, okay, now I can step into work. And that's been a really recent thing. Like actually

saying, no, I'm not just going to have this routine. If I've ticked off journaling, I've ticked off a meditation. I've ticked off this now it's about right, but is the anxiety still there, but is the overwhelm still there? Because if it is like, let's try again, let's try something again. So for me being selfish is that we have carved out space for ourselves. And it's just, yeah, it's been so good. And just like, I've invested in a lot of healing, this year whereas, you know, and I just, I couldn't do that before. So I've had hypnotherapy this year, which has just been amazing. I've been having psychotherapy for 18 months. Again, it's just been life changing and yeah, just lots of making time for myself and, and, you know, seeing the value of that, rather than that being the thing that always gets put to the bottom of the list.

Suzy: Has that decision or the decisions that you've made to invest in yourself and to put yourself first, how does that have anything to do with the pandemic or it just, it just so happens that it's this year,

Finn: I think is for me, it's just so happened that it's been this year because it's just been a natural part of the process of healing I've been on since I was diagnosed with bipolar. Yeah, but what I think 2020 has meant is, say for me, I was traveling more, whereas I haven't traveled, you know, I've traveled once in 2020 before everything kicked off. So I've been at home all year, which, you know, has never, that's, so I suppose it's given me time and space to pause which I haven't ever really had before. So yeah, maybe it's a bit of both.

Suzy: Yeah. I hear that. Has COVID affected the business in any way?

Finn: So it's, it has had, yeah, it has, it has, it's meant we really had to adapt how we did things. And it's made us make some big business decisions and bring, bring more help in because you know, we both have kids and we've both been homeschooling and we were fulfilling from an office and we, we, you know, we rented an office and obviously couldn't then use the office space, couldn't fulfill from the office. So our like amazing girl that's worked for us for awhile women, not girl which is Hazel. She was fulfilling from her house for months, you know, couple of months. So we moved, we now use a fulfillment partner, as I mentioned. But the, the demand for our product really shot up in March, April, May. And that was amazing, but it was also really, really overwhelming because everything we did just had to change and had to scale up in a really short amount of time. And I remember one day there was this day in April and there was like, you know, the post service was really struggling. And I think we had 250 orders missing and I just, we, it was just like such overwhelm. What do we do? What do we do? Because we've got all these orders go missing and these orders keep coming in and we just didn't know what to do. And that was when we started to bring other people in to help us.

Suzy: So with every adversity, there is an opportunity always. And has it sustained that growth?

Finn: So, no, it's it's, it's definitely quietened down like August, September, we're quite quiet in comparison. It's still up on last year, but in comparison to the previous months but what we get,

we are on course to have, you know, huge Christmas comparable to last Christmas. So I have no fear that it's gonna like suddenly dip and not grow. But I think that was kind of, that was very much of the moment, but what it did do is it showed us, wow, like people love this. People want this, people need this. And we have the, you know, we have this amazing business and now it's time to scale it up. And that's what it definitely showed us. And it gave us the confidence, like we're just about to launch in America. And it kind of just, it just gave us confidence to be like, right, let's just do this. Let's just go for it.

Suzy: Amazing. It's interesting to me, the number of people that say, they don't use these words, but I always think about Take That, like we're going to break America and that's all I hear when you say, you know, you're about to launch over there. Any big differences between that market and like the UK-European market, or is mental health, mental health across the board?

Finn: So in terms of America, we, we are, so we're in Urban Outfitters. It's one of our big clients. And they approached us last year. I think 2019 in March, we just got this message in our Instagram and then it was Urban Outfitters and that's turned into being like we supply Urban Outfitters in America, all of the shops. So we knew that, so from that, we were like, oh, okay, let's see how this goes. So we knew that there was a demand for the product. And we started, we've always had interest in people shop with us from America and have the product shipped. I think mental health is mental health and America is being, but, you know, it's, it's definitely being spoken about if not more than it is in the UK.

Suzy: Interesting!

Finn: Yeah. But in terms of what the market's like, well, I mean, you probably need to ask me that in six months because we're just going for it. You know, we've found the great partner in America that approached us a while ago when they sort of saw that we were with Urban Outfitters and we've been working with them for a long time to get to a place where we feel ready to launch and order with them and just put all the kind of logistical things into place to enable us to do that. But yeah, I think the market is going to be different and that's going to be really interesting because you just have to learn and adapt and grow. And, you know, content that is interesting in UK may not be interesting in America. And I was talking to, we have a lady that's just, just been, come, come on board with us who has been helping us with like blogs and newsletters and copywriting and just general like messaging of the brand. And we were saying, I, you know, we're going to have to really adapt that, you know, make sure that we're being inclusive and it's quite exciting.

Suzy: It's really exciting. And I when you talk about content and blogs and you being the face of the brand, not so different, it doesn't sound like the strategy is so different from what it will be when you are introducing more coaching and how you get the brand out there. Do, I mean, is it any different from launching a personal service-based brand? Do you think?

Finn: I think coaching is almost, it does feel quite different. It does actually feel quite different. I mean, the books, the coaching, it feels like a lot more pressure. But in a good way, in a good way, like it's good to push yourself. But the books are the books, you know, they're written, they've a program, you can follow it. When you're coaching it's not like that. You adapt, you mold. It's really fluid. You've got to be able to bring it and like really listen and work with your, you know, who, whoever you're working with. And you don't know what's coming to that session. So yeah, it does feel really different. Whereas with the books, obviously inside the books is what's inside the books. But yeah, it's, it's something we're really excited about. And it's been a really interesting thing to do that qualification together because we've seen how different we are, which I think is going to be great. Ali is so creative and you know, we can imagine her doing a lot of creative coaching, whereas my interest is a lot more trauma informed and sort of working with people to kind of grow, grow from that and use that to propel them, use that as a way to like move past it. So yeah, I think we're going to do some brilliant, interesting stuff, but what it is right now, I can't, I can't tell you not because I can't tell you, but because we don't know yet.

Suzy: It's not one of those I'll tell you after.

Finn: No, no, sorry Suzy, it's not.

Suzy: Talk to me about Kenya. What was it that drew you to Kenya?

Finn: So, I have always had this thing where I just wanted to run away. It was just a constant thing. Whenever I'd have, you know, low mental health or be going through real mental crisis, I think, oh my God, I just want to run away and go traveling. Or I just want to move abroad. And it was, it never happened for one reason or another. It just never happened. And we'd come to Kenya a couple of times because my husband went to university with some friends that from here, we come here a couple of times. And then the third time he came here, which was two years ago, we came to this town where we now live. And I remember just feeling like I need to be here and not because I'm running away from something. I feel like I'm running to something and this is where we are running to. And that was, I can't really explain it. That was just, we just knew that we had to be here and we didn't know how, and that was when the business went up for sale and the cogs went in motion and yeah, 12 months later we were here.

Suzy: Amazing. Does your husband work online?

Finn: No, he doesn't. He has a restaurant in England and a restaurant here. So it was, yeah, like we, we weren't sure how we were going to make it work, but I went home and went on the vision board. It was like, this is going to happen, going to make this happen. The business sold and then an opportunity came up for a restaurant here, which was like, the goal really was to find, my husband had always had this dream of having a beach bar and an opportunity came up and now he has this amazing beach bar and it's just, you know, it's everything he wanted. And it's just so

amazing to see. And it's yeah, like it's chilled really good food, really good vibes, but nothing massively stressful, right on the beach. And it's a place we used to go to whenever we came here and sit there and be like, wow, this is amazing. Wouldn't it be amazing to have this beach bar? And then it just happened. It just happened. And it was like, wow, okay. You know, it just happened. And it was, yeah. So, so good. So good to see. And just so good for us as a family because in the UK his restaurant, it's amazing, I'm proud of him as in, you know, for all the things he does, but this here in Kenya, it's about us as a family. He runs it with his best friend, the match just gone so well. And it meant that like, we all moved out here from Cambridge together. So it feels like we've got a bit of a gang here and we can spend time together as a family. You know, my, my son and I can go and hang out at the restaurant here, cause it's on the beach. We can go there and say good night to daddy before it's bedtime. We can pop there for lunch or whatever, go and have a dance, if they've got a DJ on, it's just, it's just such a nice lifestyle. And the restaurant in Cambridge, it's gorgeous and lovely, but small it's a bistro. You know, it wasn't the place where me and my son could go and hang out and who was working 12 hours a day, five, six, seven days a week. And it was just rubbish.

Suzy: So, you have literally created, you know, the life that you desire.

Finn: Yeah. We have just, yeah, it's just so great. And it's yeah. I feel really proud that we did it really proud that we did it. I think everyone was like, what? You're moving to Kenya? What? And then various people have been out and when they get here, they're like, oh, okay. Yeah. Now we get it.

Suzy: So it doesn't sound like this is a temporary move.

Finn: No, I mean, it's, I would, I don't, I don't know. I just don't know. I think we know that we're really happy here now, but doing something like that, it just gives you the confidence, you know, to do it again, you know, we've only been here a year, but do I think we'll be here forever? I don't know. I can really, like, we talk about living somewhere in Portugal or Spain or, you know, like it's given us the drive to think, yeah, we can, we can do this. We often say we can't see ourselves going back to the UK, but you just never know. You never know. And the lease on the restaurant is five years, so there's four years left. So yeah, we'll just see, but right now it works for us. It works for us as a family. It works for us as a couple. It's just been a really nurturing experience on so many levels.

Suzy: And I'm really curious then with your, I don't even like saying your actually, but with the anxiety, do you ever envisage a day or a time in your life where that has gone and you're, in inverted commas, "cured"? Like what's...

Finn: No, it's really, that's such a good question because it's something, so it's something I talk about. I have my personal Instagram as well which I share a lot on there about my mental health and my experience and I do daily mental health check-ins. And on there, I talk about the fact

that, you know, I don't think that you ever can be healed or cured. It's, it's just a process. It's like an ever evolving thing of healing. It's, you know, it's like a burn, it changes, but it doesn't ever go away. And I love the fact that I feel things so strongly. I like the fact that I experience intense emotions and sometimes it's uncomfortable, but it's also incredible. And it teaches me so much and it means that I can kind of connect with people. So I don't, I don't see it as a destination of being healed, because you know, as much as some of my past is really difficult to think about, it oh, actually, not so much now, cause I've had a lot of therapy, but it's still it's me. It's a part of me. And some of those things do define me. There are defining moments in my life. They may define those moments, not me as a person, but no, I don't. I just, I don't see a need to be cured. But what I have now is it's, I care about myself, enough to listen to the messages that anxiety or, you know, depression or whatever it might be, what, what that's telling me, I'm a lot more in tune with now. So I don't get to that chronic state anymore.

Suzy: And when you say listening to what it's telling you is that usually slow down, is that usually take stuff off your plate or is it a variety of different things?

Finn: It's sort of a variety of different things? I'm not sure I could slow down much more. I like, I think you mentioned in one of your podcasts recently that you like don't run anymore anywhere. Like if you're going to get, do something in the house, you don't run to go and do it anymore. You just walk and that's, do you remember saying that?

Suzy: I do, but that's not true. I set the intention. I'm very, where I am on that journey is being aware of the quality of movement when I slow down. So it's almost like if I'm in a rush and I get the awareness that I can notice a contraction and then as soon as I want to create expansion, all I have to do is slow down and bring my attention to the breath and I can get that quality of movement. And so where I am in that journey is how can I bring more awareness to more, be more aware?

Finn: What you said is it, is it often about slowing down? I would say some, sometimes it is about slowing down, but there are, there are other messages. And the one example is that recently I became really not very good at staying in contact with people that I really care about. And at some point I realised that was affecting them, you know, and it was affecting our relationship as friends, particularly, you know, as I've moved away. And I was experiencing really uncomfortable feelings surrounding that because I realised I had, I'd messed up really. So at that point there was a bit of depression. There was a bit of anxiety, there was overwhelm. And that was telling me to think about what's important and like, make time for that. So I think it tells me different things. Of course there is often like, slow down, but I do feel like my life's quite, you know, comparable to before it has slowed down quite a lot.

Suzy: It's pretty chill. And when you talk, talked earlier on about your routine of journaling, tapping, meditation, is there anything else that you include on the daily to help manage?

Finn: Yeah. So I want to be really clear about this because I, this, and this is my opinion, but I think it's really easy to be like, you have to journal, you have to meditate, you have to move your body when actually that isn't always possible, and that itself can put people in quite a negative space because they set themselves up to do this 5:00 AM routine. And if they don't do it, then they feel like a failure and it's just a vicious cycle. So I don't really have like a perfect routine, but what I have is, and I was talking to a friend about this a couple of nights ago and she was sort of saying, it's so hard to fit stuff in. And then I just don't do anything. And I said to her that, I have this, think of it, like standing at a pickamix. And you've got your little boxes of different treats in your pickamix. So for me, I've got journaling, I've got meditating, I've got swimming in the sea, doing a workout that gets my blood pumping, tapping, swimming out into the ocean and having a good scream, crying, calling a friend like, closeness with my partner. You know there's, or special time with my son. There are so many things and it's, for me, it's like not, I can't try to do them all. It's like pausing to think, what do I need right now? What is it, do I need to go and have a hug with my son? Do I need to actually stop working, go and have a swim or do I need to do a bit more work? You know, it's, I don't think there's a like destination with it, I think it's a pickamix.

Suzy: Yeah. I hear you. And tell me what's in The Positive Planner, how does that guide people?

Finn: So the three adult books are all quite different. So The Positive Planner, which is the yellow book, and that was our first book is very much about self-discovery, learning who you are understanding what self-care is, what that means for you and like, allowing yourself space in your life to make time for that. So it's really great for people who have perhaps experienced a big change. So, you know, maybe they've moved, lost a job, had a relationship end, or a new relationship or been unwell, had a child, you know, any kind of big change. You know those times where you suddenly just think, I, I don't really know who I am anymore? That's what The Positive Planner is really good for because there's loads of exercises in it that are about self-discovery. And like, look in reflection, looking in on yourself and understanding who you are. Because for me, particularly after having a son, my son, I don't know about you, but there's this thing of, I just want to get back to myself. I just want to get back to myself. And I felt like I was saying that to myself for a long time. And then suddenly you realise, but I'm, that, I'm not that person anymore. I'm never going to get back to myself, because myself is different now. So I think The Positive Planner is really good at helping you understand who you are. And if you, not someone that does self-care, which I wasn't, when I wrote this book, like we just never made time for self-care. I didn't understand it. I thought it was just like a really stupid term, fluffy. But now I, you know, I get it and it's, it's about helping people to form that habit. And then The Positive Wellness Journal, which is our orange book, is a much more split into sections, mind, body, soul. And it's about understanding yourself as a whole and bringing all that together, bringing that together as a kind of understanding, what does your mind need? What does your body need? What does your soul need? And yeah, like a holistic approach to looking after your, your, your, your mind and your, and your body. And it's, it's got longer sections for journaling. So it's kind of, I suppose, a little bit more advanced to The Positive Planner. The Positive Bullet Journal is...

Suzy: You're going to have to, not that you have to do anything actually but, I've never been able to get my head around bullet journaling, all feels very complicated.

Finn: Then you need The Positive Bullet Diary. I called it the journal. That's really bad. It's called The Positive Bullet Diary, correct myself.

Yeah, so we made The Positive Bullet Diary because bullet journaling is quite, it's, it's an amazing tool, bullet journaling for those who are listening and don't know what it is, go and check out on Pinterest, because it is, it's basically creative journaling. So using a blank space to create your journal and to create things like mood trackers, habit trackers as a creative outlet and a creative way of organising your life. But if you, but it can be really overwhelming, like knowing where to start. So we created the structure of a bullet journal and the monthly and the weekly flat lays, and you just personalise it. So you don't have to spend the time structuring it all, it's more about adding your nice tapes and colours and styling up and yeah, so it's a creative outlet and it's a space to organise your, your life and your mind. And yeah, it's really awesome. Yeah. Yeah. And it talks you through what bullet journaling is, and it gives you examples and tips and yeah, it's, it's really, it's a lovely book and it's, it's undated, so could be started at any time. It's a creative outlet and yeah, it's great for yeah, organising yourself basically.

Suzy: And then what about the wee ones?

Finn: Yeah! So we just launched our latest book, The Positive Doodle Diary, and ugh, it's just, I'm so proud of this book because we wanted to write a book that was for children to help them learn about mental health and wellbeing and teach them how to look after their mental health and how to become emotionally intelligent and build resilience and have a growth mindset. So we have this amazing idea and, and it was all coming together and I'd been back in February to kind of, you know, structure the bones of this new book and then Corona hit. And we were like, whoa, no way, we can't do this, it's too intense homeschooling and everything, it's just not going to happen. And then yeah, March went on and on and we just thought we have to make this book. We have got to find a way to do it because kids are going to need this. And yeah, we made it happen. So that book was written during lockdown.

Suzy: Amazing. I'm just having a look at it now, actually. And I'm like, Coco would love this.

Finn: Yeah, it's for age 5 to 10, and there's lots of space for creativity, lots of space for doodling and coloring in, but there's also, it's packed with loads of tools that actually all the parents say are really good for them as well. So, you know, it's got loads of quotes and we worked with you know, several experts to contribute to this book and yeah, it's just amazing. It's a really beautiful book, it's fun and kids are absolutely loving it and yeah, I think it's, we're very, very proud to have made it happen.

Suzy: Oh, well just huge, huge congratulations. And yeah, I'm really grateful to you for taking your time to share your story with us, it is very inspiring. Where can people find, find you?

Finn: So they can find me at pp_finn and they can find The Positive Planner at @the_positive_planner and The Positive Doodle Diary, @the_positive_doodle_diary. And that's all on Instagram, that's our kind of main social media platform.

Suzy: There are a lot of underscores in there, but never fear.

Finn: Yeah. I'm sure you'll tag it and it will be there. So just, just such The Positive Planner, you'll be able to find us.

Suzy: We will do, well look, good luck for breaking America, coaching and just really supporting more people in their mental health challenges. You're doing amazing work.

Finn: Thank you. And thank you for having me on the podcast it's been yeah, really, really, really wonderful. Thank you for asking me. And I hope that my openness can help other people know that, you know, even with mental health illness, you can, you can do what you want with your life and have an incredible life.

Suzy: It's an important message and an incredible messenger. So thank you so much.

Finn: Thank you. Thank you, Suzy.

Suzy: If you have loved this episode, as much as I have, you know the drill, leave us a review on iTunes and don't forget to tag me on the 'gram so we can share the love far and wide. And please remember that...

Faith + Action = Miracles