

Transcription - Aaron Dozier Part 2

Welcome back, I'm Kim Baillie, she's Fulyana Orsborn, and this is Inside Exec. We're continuing our discussion with Aaron Dozier, and this week, we're looking at how we can manage or prevent or look after injuries that are inherent in certain professions. So dentists, vets, hairdressers, others, not so not just the trades, but other areas where we might really need to be thinking about how we have a management plan for the stresses on our bodies that are inherent in the professions that we take up. We're also going to look at what the buy-in is, in terms of a wellness program, for an organization and what the benefits are to the organization as well as the individual.

So you have a plan for each individual obviously, they need an app. If we take an example, a rehabilitation sort of situation, Aaron, do you cover everything from what exercises to do, what not to do, and how to mentally deal with it? It's because in some cases it can be, even for non-rehab, someone like me who doesn't exercise, I probably need to work on it a lot more mentally. So does that play in it as well?

Absolutely, that's probably the biggest part of it. I mean, I often knew that when I did my undergrad, particularly, I had a lot of psychology subjects and I'll be honest, I didn't pay a lot of attention. I thought, oh, I'm just going to write these great programs and everyone's going to do them and I don't need to worry about the psychology. Like I'm just going to be so good at the exercise stuff, that would be wonderful. Now, after practicing for like 15 years, I'm like, oh, none of the exercise stuff matters if you can't initiate behavior change or get a buy-in. So it's all psychological really. I'm often like, oh, I need to get back to uni and just do all the psychological subjects again, super useful. But I didn't think of that when I was young, unfortunately.

One of the big things we try to do, say someone is coming in and they are trying to get through something because one, you need to provide a value structure for them somewhere. So they can go in different ways. If I have an athlete that comes in that is very motivated and they're very keen and they're like, I can't train and obviously they're getting into that mindset, we generally try to shift focus. So within any training plan, there's a whole, no matter how you put it together, there's always going to be some things because you just can't get everything on all the same time. So often if I have an athlete that comes in and they're like, oh, I've injured this part and I can't participate in the running or I can't participate in the weightlifting for my sport, we try to find some things that they might not have been focusing on within their program. And then we try to shift focus to that. So okay, look, you were doing all this training and weightlifting and running and stuff, but your mobility has suffered quite a lot. So can we shift the focus now to getting you to do a lot of mobility? Well, maybe they are a powerlifter and they've been lifting a lot of weights and they're just lifting weights, but we might be like, hey, you haven't been doing a particularly lot of cardio. So can we take some time then to build a cardio base? So it gives them something to work towards, it gives them a process to be engaged in, it gives them a goal to think about. That way they feel like they're getting somewhere. If they're injured, they feel like, I'm wasting everything or the training I've done is lost, and that can lead to that little psychological and mental spiral downwards. So you've got to shift that focus a

little bit from there.

If someone's coming in, just a normal human that's saying, I have a bit of a sore back and it's really impacting my life, then we try to set up a few more quality of life metrics. Can we get you to where walking in the afternoons isn't giving you any pain anymore? Can we build upon that? So a lot of the time it's about shifting focus away from this aspect of what can't I do and trying to move it back to what can I do in the meantime? Where can I improve in the meantime? What can I actually work on for the time being? We try to get them a little bit out of that, what can't I do right now mindset which can be quite debilitating for people. Particularly the athletes that are like, I'm pushing, I'm training, I'm working really hard. I'm really trying to get into this and they kind of feel like that's been taken away by the injury. Try to reframe it to them and hey, this is a unique opportunity to do some things that you might not have focused on in the other times.

There's a couple of groups that seem to have the cause of their injury, if you like, is their job. It's inherent in their job. I'm not talking about tradies. There's a couple of people I mentor, one has a hairdressing salon and is a hairdresser. Their body, I mean the way they stand, even though they use all the ergonomic stuff, it seems to be inherent in jobs like that. So I kind of feel they need to have preventative as well as early detection or something. Have you ever come across any of that?

A lot of it. My wife is a vet. So she's spending a lot of time in awkward positions. She specializes in small animal surgery. So a lot of time, yes, leaning over in funny positions. Dentist is another big one that I've seen. Even just computer work, essentially sitting at the computer at times can cause a lot of issues like that. The first step there is we generally try to get in what we call stop gaps throughout the day. When we look at the research around ergonomics and you talked about all the ergonomic aids and all that kind of stuff that can go on, the general consensus with ergonomics is that there is no good position for a really long time. Regardless of all the ergonomic aids that we have you're really designed to move frequently. So there's different things that go on. The soft tissue will change in response to constant position, all those kind of things. So we need to find a way to break that cycle a little bit. So it's identifying with the dentist what structures are tired. It might be that they're getting pec tightness and trap tightness from these positions. And how can we work in some positions throughout the day to stretch that tissue out to give it a little more length so it's not just constantly getting chronically tighter and tighter and tighter throughout the day. And then we look at counterpoint stability. Okay, what's the opposing muscles that are meant to support me in this position? So can I add links to the ones that are working too hard and can I increase the resilience and the strength and the ones that are meant to help it out? If we use the dentist example again, they usually very tight, like I said, in the neck and the front of the chest from this position all the day. So we generally need to open and stretch out all that anterior muscles and I generally need to strengthen all the back muscles to hold them up a little bit. And then I need to have something that they can work in the hour, every two hours or so, to kind of keep this thing throughout the day. Otherwise if you have them do five minutes of stretching at the end of a 10 hour day, it's not a lot of work back in the other direction. So usually we need frequent interaction. Can I change that position frequently throughout the day to try to give them a little bit of relief and try to stop that cyclic pattern of

tightness,
tightness, tightness that occurs.

Finding those little things they can do the most, we call this minimal effect of dose or MED. It's the smallest amount of movements I can give them frequently throughout the day to make a big impact. And that might just be one 30 second stretch between each patient, a little bit of strengthening stuff at lunchtime or a little bit of movement here and there where they can. So it's very much a nuanced approach, but yeah they're the kind of basis ideas and philosophies that we work on in that situation. That's been something that they should be learning about in their initial training before they actually start practices in these roles. It'd be wonderful. It'd be really nice.

I mean preventative medicine is just such a, it's just something I wish we spent a lot more time focusing on and a lot more time doing because those little things are teaching people up front. When I did work in America, yeah we used to do several talks. We'd get to Facebook and Google and all the big corporations. We had a couple little talks. We've done a lot more than we did in the past.

Because I'm quite involved in the floral industry, growers and at the other end of the scale, the resellers, to me, the industry associations and the professional groups are the places where you could start to introduce that by having the talks there about these things. And then out of that, you get the people who want to pursue a little bit further or who are training others, you know, they might have a college or a florist school or whatever else it is and then they realise that that's something that they should incorporate into their curriculum and so we get to introduce it that way a bit better.

Yeah, that'll be great. You do see it a little bit. I know my brother is a tradesman and they have some little things. They do their toolbox chats, I think they call them, when they've started to do some little stretching and some little movement in the morning and stuff like that, which was really good. It's very cliché, but that ounce of prevention is worth so much. You can save you a lot in the long run, so that'll be fantastic. In terms of organisations that's going to help their bottom line and that's what they're about, you know, they're interested in the bottom line. And if you look at well run wellness programs for those big companies, the decrease in sick days that people are taking, the increase in productivity, the increase in mental health, all those things matter. Yeah, a really well-run wellness program that incorporates these things has huge impact on that bottom line. And I think it's becoming more well-known. I know when I was working in Austin, Texas, it'd become a little bit of a boom place. So there was a giant Facebook headquarters and a Google headquarters. All these big corporations, the University of Texas itself, which is really big, and they all had wellness staff that were running yoga sessions throughout the day. They had gyms at their headquarters. They were trying to get people to kind of work out and take some time or they were actually having offset accounts where you could pay for gym memberships and all that kind of stuff. So I think that they realized the trend and they had looked at the bottom line and kind of looked at the data and being like, oh, the healthier we can keep our employees, they're happier. Obviously, the better it is for everyone.

Well, we're half an hour in to our session and we're up to a second question! Watching you

on the screen, which our listeners aren't able to see, but you're constantly moving. How do you stay positive?

How do I stay positive? I was thinking about this one, obviously. It's a little bit of an interesting one but yeah, I do fidget a lot, which is a funny thing. It's just one of those little habits I have to a move a lot. You probably tend to stay fit and moving. It's interesting. I don't know if you've ever heard of the term of someone that defines himself as a hard gainer or someone that has a little bit of trouble putting muscle and size on. I know they're a bit rare but they do exist. But one of the things they find is that actually they just fidget a lot. There's a lot of fidgeting and a lot of little, little, little movement that goes on. Yeah, I don't know if it's something that I consciously have tried to build in or just something that I've subconsciously started doing but yeah, I kind of walk around a lot. I'm in the gym as you can kind of see too. So kind of always moving around and moving something and doing something. So good little environment.

But staying positive is an interesting one. I was thinking about this and there's definitely been times in my career where I felt very positive with what I'm doing. There's been times that's been quite challenging to stay positive. I mean, we got introduced by a mutual friend who has an incredible positive and wonderful story.

So that's obviously one of the big success stories but I think for every one of those stories, in this industry, you end up with maybe 20 people that you couldn't reach. So the success to failure can be a little bit tricky and sometimes I have been bogged down and you can really feel like, "I'm not making impact with people." Or those wins can seem very few and far between. I made a conscious effort about two years ago to spend a little bit more time celebrating wins and thinking about the good things that have happened and the people that you have impacted. Because like I said, if you see 20 people over a couple of days, you might get one of them that comes in and is doing really well and is feeling really good. And it's quite easy to forget about that and overshadow that by then thinking about the others. And it's just human nature a bit too. I've noticed I spent a lot more time thinking about the ones I couldn't reach or the person that's not responding more.

What am I getting wrong here? What are we not loading correctly? What's not going on there? And all that kind of stuff. So sometimes it's very hard to get bogged down on that. So I think just taking the time to celebrate wins. Trying to be a little bit more engaged in the presentness of the process and realizing that if you take those little wins and celebrate them too, you can have a profound impact on that as well. So professionally wise, yes, trying to not let them get too overshadowed and too buried down while you're spending all your time humming and harrang about the kind of things that you feel like you're not quite getting right or you're not quite getting exactly like you'd like to. Fortunately, it's kind of part of the process, human nature.

Most people come to me of really struggling with something that they haven't been able to achieve, whether that be physical or diet wise or health management or something like that. So they often come in with quite big problems and quite big things that they haven't been able to solve and you're trying to figure out these kind of solutions and these kind of very multifaceted problems, which can sometimes be quite tricky and you don't always have a, oh, this is the answer for that. This is exactly how you go about it. Every human's different, everyone requires a little bit of a different response and no matter sometimes how good you feel like you've done your job or options you've given them,

some people just aren't willing to be active participants or do what they need to do. So I think you have to find those little ones you can really focus on and spend some time thinking about those a little bit. And then personally, I think if you can set yourself up with your own set of good habits and your own set of good routines. So I generally work out in the morning, get up, work out, take a little bit of time in the morning for myself, a little bit of breath work after I work out, just to kind of get started for the day and then kind of going through, I try to incorporate a lot of movement throughout the day. So I'm moving and walking throughout the day and going through that process. I obviously try to sleep well. I do have an 18-month-old, so that's been a little bit more challenging. That's been a little change to the sleep schedule for sure. She's on her own schedule. And obviously, I think if you can set yourself up with a good foundation that we're working through, okay, I want to take care of myself physically. I want to have something that I can do mentally that's inspiring throughout the day, which is focusing on those ones you feel like you're doing a good job with, eating well, sleeping well, all those kind of aspects, I think.

And then I think too, just realizing that no matter how good I thought I was going to be when I graduated uni, you just unfortunately, you can't win them all. Everyone would like to.

Yeah, you can't perform miracles, but when you celebrate your success, which is a brilliant thing to do, maybe do you add to it a bit that way with the ones that you don't feel like you've done anything, have you thought about the fact that you stopped them from deteriorating?

Yeah, absolutely. So that's a success in itself, you know. Yeah, and I think reframing that success too, because obviously, doing some work with some of the kind of more chronic disease patients, so we have several with muscular dystrophy or advanced age Parkinson's, MND, some things that are unfortunately just not ever going to be very impactful, but you can still play a huge role in helping them maintain their independence, helping them maintain their ability to do the things they want to do, their quality of life. So yeah, that big focus of that too can be a little bit of that perspective shift that yes, maybe this didn't exactly pan out the way that I wanted it to, but you still did a lot of good work for them. And they're still usually very appreciative for the quality of life you've given them, and helped them.

We've got a friend who trained as a physiotherapist, and he gave it away because he felt that he couldn't help people, he wasn't helping them, he wasn't alleviating their pain, all those sorts of things. Of all things, he became a paramedic. And he's been a paramedic for the last 25 years, and I said to him just recently, he gave away the physiotherapy because he wasn't helping anyone, you're not helping everybody now, and you've been doing it for 25 years, and he said it's the immediacy, the immediate feedback, and it's knowing that it is either life or death for the most part, and that if it doesn't work out, we had a good solution, I've done everything I could, whereas with the physiotherapy, I never knew whether, even if I did everything I could, I was still reliant on the other person doing everything they could to make it a success.

Yes, that is one of the trickiest things, the quality of your work is very much dependent on the buy-in and the compliance of someone else, which can be quite tricky to manage at times, and quite hard to kind of wrap your head around a little bit as well.

There's certainly a lot there for us to digest and to relate back to our own professions and our

own organisations. We will take a break now. Join us for part three of the discussion. For now, I'm Kim Baillie, she's Fulyana Orsborn, we're talking with Aaron Dozier and this is Inside Exec.