

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / E250: Jack Whitehall's Emotional Confession About His Dad, His Biggest Fear & His New Life!

He's the most loving person ever.

I want him to have a relationship with my kid.

I mean, that's why, oh my God, I said I wasn't going to do this on this.

I'm now getting emotional.

Jack White, ladies and gentlemen.

Actor, writer and the award-winning comedian.

You are in for a treat.

Oh, God, that's the key there.

What is the reason why you're a comedian?

I use humour to connect with people and have always done so.

Growing up wanting my dad's approval and definitely not receiving it.

It dented my confidence, but it also made me like I would one day make him proud.

If people really knew you, what would they be most surprised about?

I do feel the pressure and I do feel the anxiety of it all.

Worrying about stuff that is not worth worrying about.

A bad review, rejection, online trolls.

So many times I'm just like, why don't I just delete all social media from my phone?

That would be such a good thing for my mental well-being.

Have a little bit more sense to be vulnerable than I tell people.

Do you doubt yourself?

Yes.

What impact does that have on you?

Overworking, not prioritising family and I'm not present when I should be present.

Roxy's pregnant now.

How are you honestly feeling about it?

Now I'm regretting putting this on camera.

What you're doing is incredibly high stakes art.

Why are you smacking?

Stephen, I've got a punchline about not for Tramp behind a wheelie bin.

I mean, that's not...

I've sat here with so many incredible comedians and it's funny because there's an ongoing stereotype with comedians that they get into comedy for a variety of different reasons.

A lot of comedians have said to me, you know, comedians themselves are depressed in some way.

Then had Jimmy Carr say to me, when you meet a comedian, you should ask him which of their parents are depressed.

And then I sat here with one particular comedian who really didn't fit into any of those stereotypes at all.

What is the reason why you're a comedian in your own words?

I think in the most reductive way it's because I use humour to connect with people and have always done so.

And so I think I've always enjoyed making people laugh and that's felt to me like a

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great way to connect with people, whether that be in real life or my audience when I'm up on stage.

And I think there are, you know, lots of different reasons that people become comedians and there is this kind of the sad clown trope and that's definitely one that does exist.

And I think there are people that use comedy for other reasons, but for me, I don't think I fall into that category necessarily.

I think I have always loved comedy and stand up as an art form because I just really enjoy making people happy and making people laugh and using comedy as escapism.

As escapism?

Yeah.

From?

Yeah, from, you know, it can be from whatever, like if you've had a bad day at work and you come and see a stand up on stage and they make you laugh and bring you out of a dark place or if you're, you know, on your phone and watching the news and depressed about the world and then you can go and forget about all of that.

And you know, it's a great way of, I think, you know, just going and completely relaxing and listening to someone else entertain you.

And I think that for me, like, that's what I see my kind of duty as a comedian.

Your parents are comedians?

Yes.

I spent a lot of time watching the Wittering Whittle white tools on YouTube.

Your father in particular is absolutely fucking hilarious.

Do you think your sort of comedic edge came from there or because you have siblings, right?

Yeah.

Who aren't comedians?

They're not comedians.

I mean, they're both pretty funny people and there was a lot of laughter in our household when we were growing up.

And I definitely think my dad in particular was my kind of most, you know, dominant early comic influence because again, I would watch how he used humor and how making people laugh was this way that he had to kind of unlock people and he was an amazing rack on tar and told these incredible stories and I watched how people would hang on his every word and I remember being really in awe of that and thinking, oh, I'd love to not only amuse him when I'm able to do so, but also, you know, emulate him and try to be, you know, someone that people enjoy the company of and the presence of because of my kind of like wit, I guess.

And so, yeah, he was definitely like for me, the person that influenced me the most when I was thinking, oh, yeah, that's definitely something that I would be interested in pursuing. When was that point where you thought I could pursue comedy professionally as a real job? I don't know.

I think it probably wasn't until the Edinburgh Festival when I went to the Edinburgh Festival in my teens and saw stand-up comics.

I mean, prior to that, like most of my knowledge of comedy had been stuff that I'd seen on

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TV and movies and Laurel and Hardy and Norman Wisdom and that felt like, you know, hilarious but kind of very alien in a way and then going up to Edinburgh and seeing like stand-ups performing and people that were maybe slightly closer to me in age and were talking about things that I could relate to and all of a sudden, I was like, wow, this is like genuinely a viable career path had I known that they were probably all up there performing for a month at Edinburgh and hemorrhaging money and not filling out the venues every night. It's like a really, really difficult career path for the vast majority of comedians but like I was kind of young and doughy-eyed and just saw, you know, the incredible aspect of it which is, you know, the other thing that appeals to me about comedy which is that it's a way of doing something that isn't a real job and isn't sat in an office doing something that to me would be kind of mind-crushingly boring.

It's a creative pursuit which I think I would always have been gravitating towards.

Was there not a lot of influences in your life telling you that comedy is not a real job?

Like, I remember...

Yeah, definitely.

A lot.

Who were those influences and what were they saying and why didn't you listen?

Well, so at school, I was always talking about trying to do stuff off my own back and do sketches and taking a show to Edinburgh was my idea and the school were very anti that at the time and the drama teacher thought it was a waste of time.

My parents were very, very keen that I didn't necessarily pursue a career in the like arts I think because my dad was an agent and he'd looked after loads of really successful actors but he'd also looked after a load of actors that had been out of work and had really struggled and my mum had had a career as an actor that hadn't necessarily given her the fulfilment that I think she'd wanted it to and, you know, she'd had some sort of bit parts on television and then had to give it up and so they were very aware that, you know, that it was a very, very competitive industry and so they were very keen that I make sure that I focus on my studies and have something to fall back on if I were to not make it in, you know, the arts.

I mean, it was a little ill thought through because the other passions that I had were things like art and so I ended up going to university to study history of art which I didn't necessarily think is, you know, of industries to fall back on like art history is not the most transferable skill and then also by pushing me away from, you know, going to drama school or becoming an actor, which would have been the other thing that I would have wanted to do at that age, I was so frustrated that I wasn't able to do that that I went and I did the degree and then I was like, well, I need to perform in some way.

Oh, my God, I could do stand up and they'll have no control over that.

So then I started doing stand up as my side hustle and, you know, they pushed me into comedy, which, again, is like a really, really competitive industry and, you know, if they'd wanted me to become a lawyer or a banker, which they always claim that they did, they went about it completely the wrong way.

In hindsight, hindsight is such a wonderful thing.

What do you think if you could reverse the clocks now and you could be Jack's parents

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and you could make the decision for Jack at that age, that really pivotal age, what he did next in the, with the intention of accelerating his career, his happiness, his talent, what would you do as Jack's parents in hindsight?

Oh, I don't know.

Push him towards drama school?

No, no, no.

I think they probably, they did probably play it right, is the weird thing.

In a roundabout way, it all sort of worked out okay.

And I don't begrudge them for any of those decisions.

And they were, which people are always surprised to hear, it's like, well, they're not surprised to hear it now because people have seen my relationship with my family and, you know, we have a, I call it a travel log, but some people I've pointed out is also almost like a reality television show where like the posh Kardashians and so people have been exposed to my family and can see that, you know, we have an unusual relationship where we are very close.

But people are always surprised to hear that it was always the case, even when I was, you know, away at boarding school, we still had like a really good connection.

I in fact always say that going to boarding school was probably quite helpful to my relationship with my parents.

If anyone has seen my father, he's, he's quite, he's better in small doses.

And I think having that distance from him was probably very healthy and is why we had such a good relationship.

So yeah, there's a lot of things where at the time I was, oh God, why are you doing this?

And I, I mean, when they sent me to boarding school, I was, I was so upset.

I was like, I do not want to go.

I'm happy with my friends.

I want to stay in London with them at this school.

And I was really struggling at that school and I wasn't coming out of my shell and I hadn't found, you know, any of my kind of passions or interests and there was no one cultivating any of them.

And so they looked at that and thought we need to do something and make a change.

And they found this school in Oxford, which I went round and they met lots of teachers and it had a far more kind of like, I don't know, it had like an eccentric feel.

It felt like a better fit for me, but it was a boarding school.

And so they took me out of the school that I was struggling in and sent me to that boarding school. And I remember being, oh my God, I was so upset.

I was like, no, please, like, honestly, daddy, I don't want to go.

And he said to me at the time, he was like, look, it's fine.

If you go, then you don't like it.

You can come back after a term and I promise you, if you turn around and you tell me that and you can come out and go back to the school that you're at in London.

I was like, OK, well, that's, you know, something that I can hold on to.

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And I remember that really helped get through the first term away.
And then I asked him subsequently many years later, I was like, you know, when he said that, it really helped.
He's like, I had no intention of doing that.
If you had been very upset, you were there for the year.
I'd got you in.
It had been very hard to get you in there.
And you were staying whether you liked him or not.
And I don't know whether that's him sort of slightly being a nuisance.
But there may have been some truth to it.
Didn't you around like 11 or something auditioned to be Harry Potter?
Yeah, that's crazy.
Yeah, I did a bit of child acting again, just because I was sort of adjacent to that world and I saw, you know, my dad in that industry and my mum and my mum was still acting back then.
I was so enamoured of it.
So as a kid, I did want to do it and, you know, I had a few sort of quite low level acting jobs as a child with like single lines in TV shows.
I got dubbed in one because I couldn't deliver the line properly.
I had one line, which was, it's not a monster.
It's a rabbit.
And I and the day just developed a speech impediment.
It's not a monster, it's a rabbit.
And when it actually went out, they redubbed me.
So it was another child's voice coming out of my mouth.
So I'd had that job and then I'd had one other job where I had no lines.
I had another job that I got and I swear this is true, but I'd have to.
I can't remember exactly how it happened, but I got like demoted.
I got cast in a part, which was like quite a good speaking role.
And then like on the day, all of a sudden I was it was goodbye, Mr. Chips with Martin Clunes.
And all of a sudden I was like at the back of a class and had no lines.
And I can't for the life of me, understand how that happened.
I mean, I was very young at the time.
Maybe I was just so terrible.
They saw me in the rehearsal and thought, nah, you're now out of shot right at the back.
And then Harry Potter. Yeah.
So that was around the time that obviously I was doing these little acting roles.
And then there was this audition for Harry Potter and they did an open casting at my school.
They came with a casting director to kind of audition loads of kids and they were doing it around the country.
And there was a lot of like excitement about this because obviously the book was so popular.

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And I remember calling my dad and saying, they're doing this open casting and I'm going to enter myself into it.

And he was like, oh, no, that's a complete waste of time.

I was like, what do you mean?

He's like, well, they never cast anyone at these open castings.

It'll be some casting directors, assistant, assistant, you know, it's it's a complete waste of time.

If you genuinely want to audition for Harry Potter, I will get you in front of the casting director.

So he drove down to Oxford, took me out of school for the day, got me down to London through some connections of his managed to get me an audition with the casting director of Harry Potter.

I went into the casting room and completely tank the audition because I was not a very good actor as a child, as is proven by the track record up until that point. I also hadn't read the book because I've just never been a great reader.

And I'd read like the first couple of chapters and then got bored.

And I didn't have any knowledge of the the plot of Harry Potter.

And that was exposed in the audition as well.

And so it was about as bad as an audition could go.

And I came out and I looked and I was like, yeah, I don't think you need to worry about about that one.

And then I think the nice heartwarming end to this story.

My dad having been, you know, outrageous in his behavior and the nepotism being out of control in the open casting, they cast Emma Watson as Hermione.

And she did get cast from just entering through the correct channels and not calling up her dad and asking him to get her in front of the casting director.

And she had that wonderful life changing opportunity, which she earned.

And that's the way that it should be.

But I look at all of that and I go that that phase of your life.

It doesn't seem like there was a ton of self-belief because you've got your dad sort of chiming in at parts,

saying subtly saying the odds aren't good, son, indirectly.

And then, you know, the being sent to the back of the classroom in there, the acting thing you do, subtle knocks.

Yeah, does that stay with you as you go into comedy?

And is that an accurate assessment of how you were feeling at that point?

Yeah, I definitely was not very confident at that age.

And I was quite, I was quite odd and eccentric and in the right company and in a safe environment.

And around my kind of family, I think I was a little bit more confident.

But at school, I certainly wasn't very awkward, like very, like unfortunate looking child as well.

I had huge buck teeth and glasses and like a cowlick.

And you see photographs of me from then and you look like a kid that would not have a lot of confidence.

And then had the like, you know, the massive braces in my face for a long period of my childhood.

And that made, you know, that there was definitely a lack of confidence because of that and, you

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know, the various knockbacks.

And then realizing, oh, I quite like acting and performing.

And, you know, for years, I would audition for all of these school plays and I would never get cast in anything.

And so that didn't help.

And also, you know, I guess, wanting my dad's approval, which I always did, you know, right from the get-go and definitely not receiving it like that.

It did it dent in my confidence, but it also made me like, I don't know, I think it gave me a kind of resolve that I would, I would one day achieve it and I would make him proud and, you know, because he'd been sort of dismissive.

Oh, you don't want to become an actor and you're never going to become an actor.

That made me want to do it even more and be like, oh, no, no, I really think I can do this.

And then with the comedy thing, the other aspect is that he was and remains the hardest person to crack ever.

Like, he doesn't laugh anything.

And, you know, I do have that, like, overriding memory that as a kid, like, I always was desperate to try and make him laugh and to, like, crack him and to, if I could get him to laugh, like, that felt like such an achievement.

And even to this day, you know, like, when he comes to shows or if I'm doing things with him, like, he's a really hard, like, tough crowd.

He's got, as you've seen, like, a real, I mean, resting bitch face.

I believe it's what the kids are calling it.

And, yeah, if I can even get, like, a smile from him, it transports me back to being, you know, 12 or 13 years old and having that same thing of, I really want to make him laugh.

Has he had any sort of acting qualifications or anything?

Because when I saw him on Chatty Man with you, I was thinking, he's an unbelievable actor.

He's an unbelievable actor.

Like, he's, you're right, just steel face.

Yeah, yeah.

No, he's had no training at all.

But I guess just because he does so, so little and gives away so little that, I don't know, that almost feels like it's performative and maybe it is to an extent.

But no, he's, yeah, he's had absolutely no training whatsoever.

So you go off and you do the, you go up to Edinburgh.

You see that.

That's a big inspiration for you.

What happens next?

How'd you go from there to doing shows and climbing up the comedic ladder very, very quickly?

So then I, yeah, I went to Edinburgh with a sketch show with two of my friends from school and we did it at the Pleasance and we did a month in this tiny room that's now a disabled toilet.

That's how small it was.

Um, and there was like, you know, 10 seats and us performing the sketch show.

We had no idea what we were doing.

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It was all kind of cobbled together sketches that we'd copied from not the nine o'clock news and League of Gentlemen and got terrible reviews.

But, um, in the middle of it, I came out and did stand up and I'd never done stand up before. And I thought that stand up was just something that you could do.

I'd never done a gig.

I literally just walked out in the middle of this sketch show and did 10 minutes of stand up.

Um, it was described by one reviewer as Jack Whitehall appears on stage in the middle of the show and does an impression of what he thinks a stand up is.

And that is a pretty fair assessment of what it was.

But, um, a guy called Ben Cavey, who, uh, was a producer at the time came to that show and saw me and saw that there was.

I had some promise or there was something that he recognized in me that he thought, you know, I had some potential.

And so I then, uh, went and met with him when I was down in London.

He worked for Tiger Aspect, a great production company.

He made Mr.

Bean, Catherine Tate, Benidorm, all of these shows.

And with him, I started developing.

Um, he asked me to, uh, do tour support for, uh, Horne and Corden.

Uh, when James Corden and Matt Horne were doing their double act around the time of Gavin and Stacey, because he was working on a show with them.

And he said, oh, there's this guy who I saw at Edinburgh.

He's really funny.

He's very new, very young.

Uh, you're doing these warm up shows of your sketch show.

You should get him to come out and, uh, he could do some stand up before, uh, you go on.

And so I did support for them.

And that's how I met James and how I met Matt, who would end up being in my sitcom.

And, uh, James and Matt were kind of quite instrumental in me getting my first television gig as well.

So, uh, they, um, they did a big brother's big mouth and they were like the guest hosts on that.

And they were meant to do a whole series and they had to pull out and because they'd seen me do stand up for them as their warm up act.

James, like, was very good at kind of, you know, speaking to whoever the person was at Channel four and saying, oh, you know, you should get to host this show is Jack.

Um, and so, yeah, I ended up doing like live TV, hosting big brother's big mouth, which was the show that kind of had created Russell Brand.

And I was, I was 18 or 19, 19.

I was, I was young and very, very, very inexperienced.

Like my comic persona was, you know, all over the shop because I hadn't like found my voice yet.

And I was already on TV.

I got definitely got catapulted onto television far too quickly.

Like I always say this, like you look at like Mickey Flanagan or John Bishop or any of the kind of like really established comedians.

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When they break and they become TV stars, they've been doing it for 10 years and they've honed their act and they know exactly who they are.

And you get like the finished article.

When I was put on TV, I was like still basically an open mic comedian almost.

I mean, I done paid gigs, but I was still like going on and talking in a Mockney accent because I hadn't worked out what like, like that I could be myself on stage.

I was so terrified to go up onto a stand up comedy stage and talk in my voice because I was like, they're all going to hate me.

No one's going to want to like listen to some public school by waffling on.

So I'm going to have to disguise that and I'm going to go on and I'm going to talk like Danny Dyer.

And so for the first couple of years of my like stand up career, I do that and all these other comedians afterwards.

They would be like, oh, yeah, well, you've got some great stage presence, but you just you haven't found your voice yet.

And I was like, oh, well, could you tell me what my voice is?

And they're like, that's not really how it works.

You need to find your voice and you'll go on a journey.

I was like, just cut the Yoda crap.

Like just what is my voice?

And I found it so frustrating, but that is a process that you have to go through as a comedian.

You need to find your voice.

And my problem was when I was trying to find my voice, I didn't even know who I was as a person back then.

I was 18, 19 years old.

Like I'm like at that age, like I didn't think you've like formulated who you are.

And so I was in this kind of weird like period of flux where I was trying all these different comic personas.

I settled on this one that was like basically a kind of like a homage to Russell Brand.

It was so inauthentic.

It wasn't who I was, but, you know, it gave me a kind of a little bit of a, I guess, a little bit of an armor

that I was hiding behind a kind of character almost.

And it gave me some confidence.

And so I was, I was, I was in that kind of like period of my like development

when all of a sudden I was doing like live television for the first time.

And I watch some of the footage back of me from those early days and I want to hide behind the sofa.

It's so cringe.

I've got this big shock of like electric hair and wearing the skinny jeans.

I look like I've just fallen out of the holy arms.

And I'm talking in a way that just bears no correlation to like who I am.

It was, it was, it's very strange.

Do you know, do you not have imposter syndrome at all?

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Because, you know, you come in at 19, 20 years old to an industry full of, you know, veterans and people that look like they know what they're doing.
It's the playing a good job of like knowing what they're doing.
Do you feel that at that young age?
Yeah, I think I did feel a little bit of that.
But yeah, I think I was just probably, I don't know, so ambitious that I went into those dressing rooms and even though I was kind of in awe of a lot of these people again, I was just like, well, I really want to kind of prove myself and every time I had a bad gig, you know, I would always, my takeaway would be, well, I need to just like get better then and I will get better and I know I can get better.
And I, and I, yeah, I think I had quite a lot of resilience.
I was naive, but the naivety probably helped get through some gigs that if I'd been a little bit older, I would have been like, why the hell am I doing this?
And also, you know, obviously, I mean, it helped very much that I come from a background of privilege and that I was, you know, wasn't having to support a family or pay a mortgage and I could kind of pursue this fool's errand for a bit.
What's a bad gig, you know, for someone like you?
What does that feel like? What does it look like?
I think I've had so many bad gigs.
Back in the day, it was going and doing 10 minutes in a pub and performing to 20 people.
You're set up to fail, really, because it's never going to be a stormer because the environment is not conducive to comedy because you're in a noisy pub fighting against a, you know, fruit machine and some of the people are on their phones.
Some of the people are sort of half listening to you.
There's like a tinny microphone, terrible sound system.
And you're going on like 10th on the bill and everyone's a bit drunk and you're never going to kill that gig.
And then you will go out and you do 10 minutes of your material and it like barely raises a titter and then you've got to get on a train and go back to London and be in your own thoughts for two hours.
Like that's pretty soul crushing, but I don't know why.
I don't know why I like and there were a lot of those at the beginning.
I think probably because I was like still at that point,
I was living in Manchester with all of my mates in a student house and having like a great time, didn't have many worries in the world because I was 18, 19 and I was going off and doing these gigs and sometimes they go well and sometimes I would crash and burn.
But I don't know, I just didn't feel the pressure.
That's what was so amazing about that period of my life

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is that I just don't remember feeling any pressure
and now if I tank a gig or I go out and mess up the Brit Awards,
I do feel the pressure and I do feel the anxiety of it all
and I didn't have as much professional anxiety back then
because I was on a relatively upward trajectory and it all felt so full of possibility.
I just think I was unburdened by all of the kind of anxieties
that I would have now as a comedian and a performer.
Reminds me of my conversation with Lewis Capaldi.
He told me about singing in pubs in Scotland and like no one was really listening.
He almost talks about it as if he would prefer to go back and do that now
because there's no arenas, there's no expectations, there's no pressure.
And I actually think he said on the podcast, I think he said like,
I just want to sing in a pub in Scotland.
Your success and his success have meant that that's, you know,
I would say it's certainly possible.
But even if you were announced as being in a pub, expectation would show up.
Yeah, yeah, and I do and I connected with his documentary in that aspect
when I watched it and saw him articulate some of those elements.
Because it is so true and you do a show now and you're putting it on in an arena
and like the level of expectation is so much higher
and you've got to shift a huge amount of tickets.
There's going to be reviewers there.
You've got to entertain like a vast crowd.
If it goes wrong, like that's a news event.
And back then, there was none of that.
Like I die in a pub, you know, if Jack Whitehall crashes and burns
in the middle of an empty forest, does he make a sound?
And my forest was a pub in Preston.
Does that make it less fun?
Is there like a certain point?
I enjoyed it and I still do to an extent when I'm like maybe more so now
like when I'm working it through, there is like a sadomasochistic thing
that White enjoys like the tricky gigs and like working out why it hasn't worked
and what I need to do to get it to work like I do.
But I mean the pressure now, does that make it less fun?
Oh, the pressure.
Sorry, yes.
Because you've used the word professional anxieties a few times.
Yeah, yeah.
I mean, that element of it does for sure.
And I don't remember feeling that when I was in my kind of early 20s,
but all of a sudden they sort of creep up on you and your,
you're in your own thoughts a lot more and constantly like, like, I don't know.

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Just thinking about like, just for me, it's like you worry that it will all go away. That's always like the kind of the greatest fear is that it's just going to stop and I've loved doing it.

But yeah, there are lots of other added pressures that weren't existing when I started doing it.

And I look back on it and do kind of like miss that headspace.

A lot of people can relate to that, that fear of worrying that it will all go away.

Even, you know, people that have climbed the corporate ladder, they've gotten to a certain position and I've seen it a lot of times with some of my friends and even in some of my companies where people will say to me that they're just trying to kind of hang on to where they are.

And when you have that mindset, it can, it seems like it can be quite unenjoyable because there's that constant sort of, as you describe anxiety.

But also, I'm not sure if everyone does their best work when they're kind of hanging on because there's not this sort of mental freedom to fully express or to relax or take time off. So I'm not sure if we do our best work.

Is that what you're saying?

You feel like you have a constant worry that everything you've built might someday change?

And I guess the more important question is, do you know where that's come from in you?

That idea that it could just...

No, I mean, I don't know. I don't know where it comes from, but I don't know.

And it's not like a cancel culture thing of me going,

oh, I'm worried I'm going to say something and then all of a sudden I'm going to get canceled and then I'm never going to be able to do shows again.

It's not even like linked to that, although obviously there is like a small chance that that could happen.

I didn't necessarily feel like I pushed the boundaries in such a way that that feels likely.

But yeah, I don't know how I've allowed that to sort of creep up on me.

And I think the key to not allowing that to consume you is to sort of just try to refocus your mind on what's important and ultimately some of the things that are the concerns that build up as professional anxieties

ultimately aren't as important as long as you're doing...

Ultimately, as long as I'm still doing stand up and still doing what I love and still getting to act and perform,

it doesn't necessarily matter how I'm doing that.

I'm doing what I love and that should be enough.

And then also just like refocusing my energies on like my work-life balance and focusing on what's important,

my relationship, family, those are the things that make me happy.

And as long as those are working, then I think I will feel fulfilled.

And so I think it's how I frame that in my head.

Even from doing this, because I'm not a journalist or if I didn't go to a podcast or whatever, I still sit here and go, how the fuck is this still a thing?

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Like how are people still listening to this?

We admit it.

I mean, Jack did production beforehand, but Jack, you've never done anything like this before, have you?

I've never done anything like this before.

So it's all a little bit, what the fuck is going on?

Just keep going and hopefully nobody notices us.

That's like almost the feeling, because you almost assume that all of your competitors or other people that are doing it in your space,

they have some certificate that has given them the right and a rule book that we're not privy to.

Can you relate to any of that, that feeling that like?

Yeah, I mean, there is no kind of like playbook for it is there like with a career and with, you know, with all of it.

So like the worst thing you can do is start like comparing yourself to other people and like thinking about that too much as well.

And I mean, so, so many times I'm just like, why don't I just delete all social media from my phone?

I think that would be such a good thing for my like mental wellbeing.

I just haven't quite brought myself to do it yet, but maybe that's something that I should try.

It's just like the worrying about stuff that is not worth worrying about.

It's like, I wish I want to get better at that.

I really want to like work at that.

What impact does that have on you?

That I'm not present when I should be present.

I think that's why I feel it is most frustrating in my life is when I'm worrying about fucking nonsense that doesn't need to be consuming me.

And I'm not present with friends and family and people that I need to like give more of myself to.

What's an example of something that might consume you like a little troll online or like a review or?

I mean, yeah, I mean that can it can take me out for a couple of days.

Like rejection, professional rejection, not getting a part in something, a bad review, things like that.

And then for a couple of days, I'll sort of be spinning out and then, you know, I'll catch myself doing it and be like, what am I doing?

I don't need to do that.

I have more sensitivity, I think, than I sort of let on.

I've always sort of built myself as being quite resilient and thick-skinned, which I am to a degree, but I think there are things in elements where I have a little bit more sensitive and vulnerable than I tell people.

You and me both.

Yeah, you and me both.

And I think obviously in different jobs that I've had, I've had to be, I've been the CEO of the companies.

So you kind of learn to put up a everything's fine.

But some you can be behind the scenes like spinning out a little bit for a couple of days based on something.

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When you say spinning out, what does that if I'm Roxy, your wonderful partner, what would Roxy observe when Jack is spinning out?

That I'm in a sort of weird fugue state because I'm also one of those people that just like I'm a barrier.

I don't articulate a lot of these emotions.

And I definitely, I don't know whether it's because of my background or my upbringing, but I'm someone that doesn't really want to burden people with them.

I feel like as well as a comedian and as a funny person, again, I feel like I'm letting people down if I'm like a Debbie Downer and talking about stuff that is going to kill the mood.

I just don't like conflict.

I don't like to depress people.

So I think I sort of, I like, yeah, very at all, put it on a brave face.

And then, yeah, just maybe not quite myself.

So you probably wouldn't even realize it was going on.

But I think for Roxx, it's hard because, yeah, sometimes I'm just like a little bit away with the fairies, but that's because I'm having this like internal dialogue is everything going to be okay.

Oh my God, they hate me.

No, no, no, you're going to be fine.

And that's all going on.

And I'm like, yeah, yeah, fine.

Someone said to me once they said the people that care most about the applause, which tends to be like performers and comedians have also care the most about the booze.

Yeah.

Do you think that's accurate?

Yeah.

Like it's not possible just to care about one side of that spectrum.

You can't just care about the applause and then say, booze don't matter.

I don't care.

I'm invincible.

Yeah.

Feedback, isn't it?

No, definitely.

Yeah, it's definitely feedback.

And, you know, like audiences that upset me or online trolls.

I mean, I do consume quite a lot of that.

If I, if I'm brutally honest with myself, I probably consume more of it than I should and read it.

And again, I'm like, I think it's fine.

I think it sort of bounces off me, but maybe it does off me as much.

And I'm like, it's all stored away somewhere.

You know, it's good.

But I don't know.

I also like part of me and I'm not encouraging people to troll me online.

I'm like, there is a good, it's good to like keep your ego in check as well.

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I do like, like constructive criticism as well.

I think is very useful and like some feedback because if you didn't have any of that and you was just like, you just went on the reaction to the audiences of paid punters that have come to see you and clearly are like on side.

And it's like a home gig because they're, you know, fans of you that have walked to get to you. And that was your only like interaction.

And that was where you kind of garnered what like your relationship with the public was.

You think you were just like the Messiah.

So it's quite good to be reminded.

Yeah, there are some people that find you a bit much.

But has their feedback, those people, those trolls, has it made you a better comedian?

I mean, every now and again, I get quite good, like, you know, joke from something that someone said.

Oh, okay.

No, I don't think it's maybe a better comedian.

But someone says on Twitter that my new hairstyle looks like a Tesco's value, Richard Hammond. I'm like, those are quite rare.

Normally it's like, why is this posh twat on television every time I turn it on?

No, I can't want that.

When you, when you bury stuff, though, like a seed, it kind of grows.

I always, always think this.

And I think it certainly changes us over time, all the things we have buried.

Like, even if we don't ever express it or whatever, I feel like it kind of just infects our character a little bit.

That's certainly what's happened to me for sure, for sure.

Just over time, I think slowly the things that I've like buried or ignored, they kind of just weigh me down a little bit.

And you might become a little bit snappier or a little bit, you know, more impatient or negative about the world or whatever.

Is that the case with you?

Yeah, I think for me, the main way it, it affects me is, is, is like, it's like a, it is, it is ultimately just like a focused thing.

It's like focusing on, it makes me focus on the wrong things.

And that's the thing that I struggle with most of my life is my like, is work-life balance.

I think I'm terrible at work-life balance and I always have been.

Because I started when I was 17 and I just didn't stop.

And so I used to hate going on holidays.

I was like, go on a holiday. It's a complete waste of time.

And I remember like calling my agent and my dad from a beach somewhere going, I can't wait to get home.

And I've always had that like weird attitude to like work and wanting to work, work, work, work, work, work, work.

And, and I'm, I'm about to have quite a big life event.

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And I think that will.

What life event, Jack?

I'm about to have a baby, which I'm like, I'm so excited about.

And also I'm just like, the thing that I pray that it does is just completely like shifts my focus.

And, and I'm so excited to have this little being in the world that is more important than anything else.

And I think that's going to be such a healthy thing.

And I know that's not necessarily the reason to have a child.

I probably should have worked through some of these things before the baby arrived.

But like, that's an element of it that for some people might be quite daunting, but I'm like, I think that's going to be amazing.

And I'm really, really excited and I can't wait to be a dad.

And I'm like, it just, it just really, really cannot wait to like sort of step up to the plate and, and, and try to be the best dad that I can be and have that as my focus.

And, and when I'm focused on that, I'm not thinking about all of the other stuff.

I think it's going to just be great.

Maybe that's quite a glass half full.

Well, yeah, it sounds like a conversation that I've been having with myself, but also with my partner, where I've said to her, because she's scared that I might just keep working.

And she, I think she asks me once every month.

She goes, are you going to be like this when we have kids together?

And I'll go, no, no, no, I'll change.

Yeah.

When the baby comes, I will be different.

Yeah.

I'll, I'll just cancel stuff.

I'll say no to everything in your face.

And now I'm having all of these conversations.

Um, yeah.

But I've always said you don't know.

You don't know what will happen.

None of us have ever experienced that feeling that some of our friends,

I'm sure I've explained where your priorities shift upon the arrival of this arsenal.

Baby, you know, baby arsenal work.

Do you think I've asked a few people this because when I meets one that describes themselves as being a bit of a workaholic.

I wonder whether they drew it, whether they are driven or whether they are being dragged, which, which resonates more with you.

Do you think you're driven or do you think you're being dragged?

I think I'm driven.

I think I'm, if, yeah, I'm driven.

I think it would be quite helpful to be dragged back a bit sometimes.

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I definitely think it would be good because I have this weird career where I act and I write and I do stand up as well.

It's very easy to fill my entire diary all the time.

And if I look at it like, you know, a couple of months, I'm like, I'm not doing anything there.

You know, I was meant to be filming a movie then and it's been delayed now and I've got two months.

I was like, well, I need to do stand up and I'm going to write a script and going to produce as well.

And I have a production company.

So I'm constantly developing things.

And I just like, and that all comes from me.

That's not people going, oh, Jack, can we, we've got this gap.

Can we do this now?

It's me going, we can do this now and we can fill this now and we can develop that and I can write this.

And I cram so much stuff into, you know, my schedule and I think again, like, you know, professionally,

it might be better to take a beat sometimes and prioritize like taking some time off as well and having a little bit of headspace.

I mean, the pandemic was weirdly a time when we were forced to do that.

And I found it very helpful creatively to not be working all the time.

And, and this stand up tour I've had longer to prepare for it than I've ever had.

And I've had way more kind of headspace and space to like, like live my life a bit, which is so important when you're creating and you're writing,

especially when you're trying to, you know, write personal material, you need to live your life.

You can't be working all the time because then all of your experiences are going to be professional ones.

No one wants to go and watch stand up comedians had a load of jokes about what it's like being on set and like anecdotes

about like, you know, script reads and whatever like that's not interesting comedy material for anyone.

And fame as well, I don't think is necessarily always the best kind of, you know, source of relatable stand up.

So I think it's really important as a comedian to have that time to go and like live your life and build up some experiences

and find inspiration as it naturally occurs rather than trying to force it.

And on a personal level, that conversation about work life balance and giving yourself some time and not just cramming everything into the calendar.

What are the consequences of you not being balanced as it relates to your personal life?

I think, yeah, I seem to sort of, that's the perennial mistake that I make is overworking, not prioritizing friends and family

and then having to sort of make up for it.

And I don't want to always be making up for it.

And I think I'm quite good at making up for it and, you know, I then put a lot of pressure on myself.

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Well, I've got to like see all of these people and make sure that I cram in a load of social situations and sneaking a little holiday there.

And I wish I didn't have that approach because then everything feels rushed and I'd prefer it not to feel as rushed.

I'd prefer to, yeah, just, but look, it's all going to be fine.

When the baby comes, it's all going to change like that.

How are you feeling overnight?

How are you honestly feeling about, you know, Roxy's sort of five months pregnant now?

How are you honestly feeling about becoming a dad?

I'm feeling excited.

It's hard. It's a weird one because like sometimes it feels very real and then sometimes it's just a sort of abstract concept and idea and it feels very, very surreal.

And it sort of flits between both of those things on almost like a daily basis.

And sometimes I feel overwhelmed thinking about it.

Other times I'm like barely engaged with it at all because I'm so distracted with other things.

And so it's a really weird emotional place to be in right now, like this sort of run up to having a kid.

And I've spoken to lots of friends that have been in this period as well.

And a lot of them have said that that's quite normal as well.

But, you know, again, there's sort of no right way to be feeling at any one time.

And that, you know, you're thinking about her and looking after her.

She's had some like health issues as well.

And so we've had a bit of a journey to get here.

And so there's, it's quite a scary period as well.

I'm just really looking forward to the moment when the baby is born.

And then, I mean, I say that like then, and then you can relax.

No, it's then 18 years.

And so it doesn't stop then.

Again, like maybe I've just framed it in quite a positive way.

But yeah, I don't know.

I am, I'm excited about being a dad because I never thought that I would get to it this early either.

I honestly, because my dad was, you know, 50, nearly 50 when he had me.

He really, he was 50.

I've made that.

My math is right.

Yeah.

He was nearly 50.

And so I was like, well, I'll be an old dad, you know, I'll, you know, live my best life.

And then when I get to 50, then I'll just pop out a couple of kids.

It'll be great.

And honest and always thought that that was the case.

And then ultimately started looking at friends and seeing how happy they were and my sister with her niece and my niece, not her niece, my sister and my niece and thinking, oh, you know what, maybe I, maybe I do want that.

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And, and then like began to really like yearn for it.

And I was lucky that I met Roxy, who's the right person and my person.

And we felt like we were both ready.

And so, yeah, it, it's, it's, I think people will be surprised when they find out that I'm, a lot of people were friends and family when I told them, I think, because they just didn't think that I was necessarily ready for it, which again, like in my weird mentality just makes me go, oh, I'm going to preview, I'm going to be the best dad ever.

So is there a fear?

Because I think if I'm being completely honest with myself, and I don't think I've said this before, when I think about the prospect of having a child, which is again, something that I really want to do when I see myself as having full kids and I also see myself as hopefully being a really attentive, present father, there is a little bit of a thing in my head that goes, you don't have any time as it is Steve.

So something's going to have to give and it's going to be your career in some respect. Like there's going to be some element of reduction in your career and maybe that's okay. But if I think about it practically, I'm already using all 24 hours in the day.

So where's it going to come from?

Yeah.

That's definitely a thought that crosses my mind and being realistic about it as well and not, it's not something that you can like, just like, you're not going to want to like just schedule it in or can deliver a family time here and then I'll go and do some, you know, tour dates in Australia or that like, I think, yeah, it's that that's going to need to be like a significant moment of like change because I'm not going to want to work in the same way that I've worked.

That's why this like, yeah, this last year has felt a little bit like, I don't know, in my head, I am definitely like mentally prepared for that.

I was like, the baby is coming in September.

I'm going to have a massive tour there.

I'm going to do a tour and then I'm going to, I don't want to having a tour sort of like hanging over me.

I wanted to do it now and weirdly, a lot of the comedians that I'm friends with, I was like, yes, I'm doing a tour and then having a baby in September was like, you're going to regret putting that tour in then.

You're going to, yeah, because then when the baby's like, too, that's when you don't notice a lot of comedians start getting out on tour because they want to get out of the house.

If you look at all of them, if they do, I won't have that excuse that all will be done.

And then you'll be at home for two years.

Changing nappies.

Excited about that?

Yes, I am.

And I actually know that.

I'm genuinely happy.

I'm very excited to do that and to like roll up my sleeves and get involved and be a hands

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on dad.

And now I'm regretting putting this on camera because she's going to have that clip top.

You remember when you said this to Stephen?

Upstairs.

Now there's a punami that needs attending to.

Yeah, I was just saying that for the sake of the podcast.

And you've got this tour coming up called settle down.

Yeah.

You're doing a lot of dates in a lot of places.

How many dates are you doing, Jack?

I'm doing, I would say at the time of recording, maybe 40, 50 dates, they keep getting added and so it's hard to keep count.

And I actually, in my head, mentally, it would be quite good to just think of it as being 40 because that sounds quite manageable, but it may be a few more now.

How are you honestly feeling about it?

Give me all the emotions.

Weirdly, I'm actually kind of excited for it to just start and to just be doing it.

The bit that's a bit of a slog is this sort of build up to it and the writing of it and the getting it all ready in time and booking all of the venues and doing the promo and talking through the design and, you know, it's a whole, you know, production and it's just, and it all has to come through me.

It's quite hard to delegate when you're building something like that.

And so I'm really, really excited to just be then on the road doing the shows and that's all I have to worry about.

And I remember that.

I remember this feeling before in the run up to the show being like, I'm just desperate for the first one to come about so I can then just like actually be doing it.

And then when I'm on the road, I love it.

I try to not do too long of a tour in terms of like, you know, a lot of comics will go out for like six months or a year.

And I find, I mean, you know, quite brutal way just after a while, I just begin to hate the sound of my own voice and get bored of the material.

And I don't know, I, I like doing it in quite a kind of condensed burst and, you know, then like keeping some kind of like momentum going and doing a couple of shows, having a day off and a couple more shows.

And, and I love it.

I honestly, it's like, I've had a long period away from it, you know, four years is the biggest gap I've had between tours.

And I, I'm just, I'm excited to be doing it again.

And, and they're like, I was talking to the, I can't remember who it was, but I was talking to an actor, a successful actor, this is about the appeal of stand up and how you never really get that moment.

No matter how big of a movie you make, like you might go to a premiere and it gets a great

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reaction and, and that's amazing.

And you have good reviews and it does great at the box office or whatever.

But like that thrill of the live experience, I think it's why so many actors want to be musicians and end up in bands and whatnot.

So they can have that like experience and like that thing of like going out in front of a huge crowd and, and like having that live experience and connection with them is like the best thing in the world.

And it's so hard to replicate that anywhere else.

What's, what's influenced this, this show in terms of the jokes, in terms of the humor, in terms of your style, what, what, what are the key influences or the differences from previous tours?

Well, it's called, I called it settled down because it is sort of about this period of my life where I am settling down, becoming a little bit more of an adult.

A lot of my comedy before and my previous tours, it's all about being the sort of man child and that's kind of like, I guess, you know, on stage on this sort of foppish man baby and telling stories of drunken hijinks and putting my foot in it and generally just being a bit of a sort of clown.

And, and this, this show has an element of that and an element of me being self aware enough to be like, this is definitely the like the last show where I can be telling those stories and maybe this is the last moment of my life where I can lean into that and, you know, that was the sort of feckless, misadventure that was my twenties and now I've entered into my thirties, I've got a mortgage and a girlfriend and a dog and a baby on the way and I am now going to be forced to settle down whether I like it or not.

And so it's about this like, like this transitional moment of my life.

And, you know, talking about the anxieties and the fears of that and like, oh my God, have I got everything out of my system?

And, you know, I, I don't know.

So it's, it's, it's a lot about that.

I've got everything out of my system.

I just don't want to, and I, I'm not having a pop at him, but like, maybe I haven't and then, but I don't know, I was going to say, I'll be like, I'll be like, you know, a great dad until the kids 18 and then I'll, I'll be in what, my fifties.

So I could just, I'll go like, if I haven't got it all out my system, maybe that, that's what happens.

The kid turns 18 and I'll go from like, Gary linica to Wayne linica and I'll have this other period when I'm in my fifties and sixties and I'm going out and clubbing in Ibiza.

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And I always find this really interesting about comedians, because I watch these comedians, I've watched you for many, many years of my life, Jimmy Carr, Russell Howard, et cetera.

Um, and then when I meet these people, they surprised me, obviously, because they're not, yeah, in Jimmy Carr's case, telling like filthy one-liners when they got here, or when Jimmy Carr did arrive, the team texted me and said, Jimmy Carr's just walked in and cracked a joke about riding someone's mum downstairs.

So I thought, Oh God, here we go.

But then when he came up here, a completely different person, there was thoughtful person, incredibly thoughtful person.

Um, what do you think people would be, if people really knew you, if people really knew the Jack that Roxy, your partner knows, what would they be most surprised about, about you versus their image of you from TV?

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Yeah, this is something I think about a lot.

Um, that kind of disparity between the, the comedian that you see on stage and the comedian that is there in real life.

Um, and I think I'm relatively close to the, the person that you see on television or the person that you watch on stage.

Obviously that's like a heightened version of myself.

And I think the reality is the thing that people will find most surprising is that sometimes I'm quite a quiet person.

I'm quite introspective.

Um, I can be a little bit shy in some social situations.

Uh, I think people would be surprised at that, but then I'm also so conscious.

I was like, Oh, I don't want that to ever come across as me being rude or aloof.

And, and, and yeah, I get a little bit of kind of social anxiety as well.

I, I, I think I definitely drink as like a crutch because I find it's so much easier in certain situations that are overwhelming to have a drink.

And, and I find I maybe lean on that a little bit too much.

Um, so I think all of those aspects aren't necessarily things that you would look at me and think, Oh, he's going to have all of that going on.

But I'm also, I'm aware of it.

So I always feel like I don't want to be a disappointment in real life as well to people, especially, you know, fans or whatever.

If I meet people and they have an expectation of me, I always feel the need to kind of, you know, not, not let them down.

I think that's why I've always said it's like so much easier if you're Jack D or even my dad.

It's like his persona is sort of grumpy, deadpan.

That's very easy to maintain in real life.

Mine is this is like over enthusiastic clown.

And I'm like, Oh, that is, that's quite a lot to, to maintain all of the time.

And especially if you're having a bad day or you're tired or, you know, you to have that spark in your day to day life can be quite tiring.

When you, when you look back on what got you to where you are now, you're at the top table in your game.

When you look back at the components that got you here, what are those components, if your son or daughter was asking you for those components?

I would say important elements that I have.

I do think, I always say this to comedians.

I do think you have to build a resilience and, you know, the ability to kind of learn from your mistakes and your missteps and take on board criticism and use it to get better.

That's definitely an important aspect.

I think recognizing people that could be good collaborators could be helpful.

I've been very lucky that I've had a lot of really, really great people around me.

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Um, that guy mentioned Ben Kavey, I've worked with him for nearly 15 years.
My writing partner, Freddie, I've had some really good agents.
My dad, who's been amazing and has always kind of helped advise me and, and finding those, those kind of people that you can sort of work with and put around you.
And people as well, that will challenge you and people that will call you out.
If needs be, I think if you surround yourself with the wrong people, that's a very surefire way of doing it, but I think it's a really good way of doing it.
If you surround yourself with the wrong people, that's a very surefire way of heading off in the wrong direction.
And I feel very lucky that I've got good people around me and have always been able to find good people to put around me and, and build good relationships with people that are important.
Ultimately, that's having a good judge of character as well.
I think that's a really important, um, aspect.
Your work ethic is clearly one of them.
Yeah.
I think work ethic is good to have for sure.
Um, although if you're, yeah, now maybe you can just turn it down a little bit.
Work ethic is good for the kind of takeoff, but then maybe there's, there's a different speed that you can find once you're airborne.
Yeah.
Cruising.
Yeah.
What else though?
Because we haven't really talked about the creative brilliance in terms of what you're doing is ultimately art at the end of the day.
And there's got to be something that's separating your art form from others.
Is it in the process?
Is it in just a, a natural thing?
Is it a muscle you've built over time?
When I think about the, your, the content you've crafted to go on tour with.
Why are you smacking?
I still can't call it art.
I can't.
And I know technically it is, but it's always such a hard one with comedy because I'm like, I'm thinking of some of the routines.
And I'm just like, Steven, I've got a punchline about wanking off a tramp behind a wheelie bin.
I mean, that's not hot.
But I, if we're in America right now, I'd be like, yeah, we're British.
And I'm like, oh no.
No, but there is no, I insist.
There is a, there's, it's a talent and it's an art.

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It's one that I couldn't come near when I look at it.

I look at it with such awe because not only are you, because it feels to me like there's such a clear success or failure with every line you deliver.

Whereas in every other game, even this podcast, some things might be interesting, some things might not be, but there's no, there's no instant feedback on every line that I deliver.

Boom, boom, boom, boom, boom.

So I think it's incredibly high stakes art and something that I could never ever, I shouldn't say never ever do.

I could do it, but I wouldn't do it anywhere near 1% of what you could do it.

So when you think about why you're so good at it, have you been able to diagnose that people hate these questions because they have to say nice things about themselves?

No, I'm, yeah, I mean, you're right that you can't, you can't like coast it with stand-up because it is, it is pretty brutal.

That is for sure.

And you do get immediate feedback on every single joke that you put out into the world.

But I don't know why I'm any more successful at it than anyone else.

I don't know.

I mean, I don't know whether I'm like the, if I look at my faults, I'm getting straight back to my faults, but I don't think I'm like the greatest writer.

I think I'm a good writer and I can come up with like good jokes and good routines.

I think I'm, I'm a better like, I'm better at performing it.

I don't know.

I think that's something that I've learned, like I can really sell a joke, which is maybe sometimes to my detriment because, you know, I could, could write better routines if it weren't, but I don't need to, I don't know.

That makes it sound like I'm lazy because I'm, but I, but I don't, I'm really like

working the material as much as I can to try and make it as good as it possibly can be.

I can, I've got really good delivery basically.

I think I'm very good at delivering jokes.

Do you doubt yourself?

Yes.

I read quotes.

I think that answer made that up on you.

Some of my material can occasionally be a bit ropery, but I can bloody well sell it.

I really quote Sky News, I am still sort of dogged by a slight sense of imposter syndrome and the feeling that at any point someone's going to come and tap me on the shoulder and tell me that I need to go on a plane and go home.

Yes.

That's it.

Back to telling inappropriate jokes in a, in a pub to 30 people.

Yeah.

Constantly.

I feel like that, especially with the, with the acting and because again with the acting

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like even more so because like, I didn't go to drama school.

I didn't know what I'm doing.

And I've been afforded the amazing opportunity of being able to be in some great shows and some big movies now.

And again, like I've tasted that in the same way that when I had that experience of stand-up I was like, oh my God, this is amazing.

And I love this.

And now it's going to be really hard if I can't do that anymore.

And how do you be happy then if there's that constant?

I don't know.

I wish again, why could, could someone tell me?

No, that's not how it works.

It's like the voice thing again.

I'm like, please, could you just say what's the answer?

But that, but I always find I do this as well.

By the way, in any kind of like deep dive interview and you are a wonderful interview because you know, you are able to like get your interviews to open up more than they normally would.

And I feel like I have done that today.

But whenever I do that, I then, and it normally happens in print.

And it's why I stopped doing print interviews.

I don't really do any print interviews because I'd read them back.

I was like, oh my God, I sound so depressing.

It's just like self-flagellation for three pages.

And I just feel like I read it back.

And I'm like, is that a reflection of who I am as a person?

Because I don't think I'm as depressing as I sometimes come across when I'm talking about myself.

I think, I don't know.

I don't know why, but when I, you know, I don't know why that is the case.

Yeah, in print interviews, I mean, the reason I try and avoid print interviews as much as I can as well is because you get a really narrow perspective.

And it's, and what I love about podcasting, you're a podcaster as well, is you get it all.

Yes.

So you can see all of the, all of the color and the whole picture.

So you can see, and that's what I love about this, especially the way we do it here.

Because we do it, we, these podcasts last a long time, as you can tell.

Yeah.

And there's really no editing at all.

So it is what it is.

Exactly.

And I think actually, if you heard our interaction written down verbatim in print, you would probably read it back and go,

Jack's quite a sad man.

Yeah.

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But then if you watched and listened to us, then maybe you would ascertain that it's not all doom and gloom.

I'm just, I get a little bit morose when I'm being introspective.

I think it's really important that particularly the point that even someone in your position has those insecurities about losing their position.

The self-doubt, all of those things that everyone has every day in all of their jobs.

And really like the reason why I started this podcast, actually, I've come to like learn why we do this podcast.

It goes back to the word you said at the very start, which was about connection.

Yeah.

You said at the start, when you're most authentic, when you're most open, people feel connected.

Yeah.

What you also do for them in those moments is you liberate them from thinking that they're inadequate and broken.

Yeah.

So by you saying it, you've just liberated a ton of people from thinking that those thoughts that they've been having make them actually an imposter.

That's why we call it a syndrome because it's actually just a perception we have, which is usually like flawed in some way.

As it relates to acting though, you are, you got a movie coming up, Robots?

Yeah.

Yeah.

That's coming out this summer, which was a movie.

Yeah.

We shot that a couple of, couple of years ago, actually been waiting a while for it to go through the editorial process,

which is another element that I find so frustrating with films is that you film it and then it takes years for it to come out.

And you've forgotten you've even done it.

But I, yeah, that was a great, again, like a great experience, really fantastic people to work with.

Writer, director that I really got on with.

And Shailene, who's a fantastic actress who was having, you know, a blast working with her.

And that's again, like, that's, that's one of those things where I'm like, that, that was a moment I was really happy.

I really enjoyed the whole process was working with very good people, very nice people.

It was a very happy set, very creative environment.

And yeah, like that was one of those moments where I was like, I'm very professionally content.

Your father, do you, do you think he's proud of you now, clearly from the origin of your story, that he was a big sort of figure in your life that you tried to impress and please?

Yeah, definitely.

I think, you know, he's proud of me and he's expressed that and continues to express it.

And my mom as well, like, they're so sweet.

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I'm so happy that they've, you know, had this kind of second wind in their lives as well.

Maybe with my dad's, it's a third or fourth wind, I don't know.

But yeah, they still come to my shows and, you know, call me afterwards and say nice things and watch me on TV.

And then if it's something good, they'll text me and, you know, that means a lot still.

You still trying to impress him?

Yeah, I think so.

I think so because when I do something that he doesn't think is good enough, which, you know, does happen from time to time, he will let me know.

He's very honest and he's one of the few people that will, like, really cut through everything and just, like, be very honest with me.

I mean, the other thing that we haven't sort of touched upon, and again, is something that's very present in my mind with all of this in terms of having a baby, in terms of, you know, trying to achieve as much as I can in my career is that I want to do all of it with him around.

And obviously, I know that that's not going to be the case forever.

And so I think that, yeah, I mean, that's why I said I wasn't going to do this on this.

I mean, I'm now getting emotional.

I wanted to have a baby because I wanted him to be around and to know my child and to spend time with my kid.

I've seen how amazing he is with my niece.

He's the most loving person ever.

And so I want him to have a relationship with my kid.

And then, yeah, I want to do all of these things and, you know, have success in my career that I can share with him and he can see these things and enjoy them.

And if the, you know, yeah, I love having him there for all of that.

And so, yeah, I do still think a lot about impressing him and his approval still means a hell of a lot to me.

It's such a beautiful thing, you know?

It's such a beautiful thing.

Yeah.

How am I that closeness you have with your father so much?

And even when I see you like doing, you know, gigs and stuff together and doing like, you know, you did the Netflix thing with him.

It's such a special thing.

I feel, and I'm so lucky as well that I've had the opportunity to do it.

And, you know, it's never lost on me.

The amazing thing about doing that show as well is having people that come up to me and they say, you know, like, I watched it with my dad and, you know, I have, you know, a really good relationship with my dad and we watch your show.

And then we went away and we did a trip together and it was one of the, I'm so happy that we did it.

And, you know, or the flip side of that is I have people that, you know, maybe lost a parent and have watched the show and really connected to it because it's reminded them of the relationship that they

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had with their father when they were around.

And I think, you know, I just, I know how lucky I am to have had that experience with him and continue to have experiences with him and to work with him and it never feels like work when I'm doing stuff with him.

Honestly, you know, it's, I mean, partly because of the shooting hours that he insists upon and the hour long break for lunch with a wine present wherever we are, whatever.

You know, the situation is, you know, but just hanging out with him, it just feels like that.

It can never feel like work because it's my dad and yeah, I cherish like hanging out with him so much.

There's so much banter when you guys are together on the screen.

But I wondered, you know, from hearing what you've said about him today, like, does he truly know what he means to you and the impact he's had on your life?

I think so, but I think mainly from hearing me talk about it when he's not there because I don't think I necessarily would ever articulate these feelings to him just because that's not like the nature of our relationship.

The reality is a lot of the time when we're talking, we're talking about, you know, we talk about work stuff quite a bit.

We talk about football, talk about current affairs, things like that, but we don't really talk about our emotions and never really have.

But I think he knows it and I think, I think he's, yeah, I think he's very, very, very aware of it.

And I'm glad that he is as well. I'm glad that he knows how much he means to me because I don't think I would necessarily be able to say it to him if he were sat in front of me.

A lot of people can relate to that.

Yeah.

It's bizarre, isn't it?

Yeah.

I don't know. Yeah. And I look at him and I'm like, oh, what will I take from him when I become a dad?

And, you know, I think he's surprising you.

He is more affectionate than people think, like, because that's obviously not an aspect of him that you ever see on any of the Netflix shows or on his podcast or whatever.

But like, I don't know, just, yeah, watching how he is with my niece and knowing what he was like when we were like very little.

It's like, I, yeah, I want to be like that.

And he took a decision in his life as well.

You know, he had a very successful career and was a producer and an agent.

And then he really did, he did wind it all down and stop when we were kids and spent, I mean, I know, again, we went to boarding school.

So we were away for a period of our youth, but he did, you know, spend a lot of time with us.

And he was very like present in our lives and wasn't as consumed with work.

And I think that was a good decision of his.

And so I think that's why I'm aware that it's even more important, like, to make sure that I address that work-life balance thing when my child comes along.

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Because I do want to have enough time to like, you know, be a attentive and present parent. I think about this a lot with my dad.

I've talked about it quite often on this show that the last thing I want to have is, it's almost like regrets of words unspoken when my dad's 70-odd years old now.

And we've not had the closest relationship over the years.

And I've also struggled like I took him to the World Cup and stuff, but we never really talk.

You know what I mean?

Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

And I find it much easier to say things to him, maybe on this podcast or on text, maybe.

But to say, it's such a strange thing that with my partner, I can be open and expressive.

But with my dad, it's like, you know, and I worry if I'm being honest about the regrets of the words unsaid.

Yeah.

So there'll be times where I haven't been far this day or other days, and maybe it's birthday, where I'll just try and express it.

Yeah.

You have...

Do you write it down?

I write it down.

But it's hard, isn't it?

If someone doesn't receive it how you want it to be received as well, it can make it very difficult.

Yeah.

And there are, you know, especially like men of that generation, it's just very...

Because it must have been so different with his father.

And so, and yeah, it's just not a way of communication that we're as used to.

So I do think that's why sometimes it can be a real struggle to say some of those things.

Because if you said them to anyone else, then you know that they would go on an illicit kind of emotional response that you would be...

What would be welcoming?

Yeah, welcoming, yeah.

And it's hard when it's not like that.

We have a closing tradition on this podcast where the last guest leaves a question for the next guest, not knowing who they're leaving it for.

And I have such a bad issue reading and handwriting.

Okay.

What do you place...

Oh.

What do you pledge to do this year to live life fully while you still make a difference?

It's so hard!

What have I pledged to do?

I'm going to be more present and attentive with the people that I love and I cherish and hold close to me.

They're going to clip...

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Roxy's going to clip that.

She's going to play it every time.

I'm going to change some nappies as well.

There you go.

Yeah.

I will change a nappy.

Okay.

It's already gone down to just being a singular nappy, but I will do a nappy.

That will happen.

Well, Jack, thank you.

Thank you so much for your time today.

I'm incredibly excited for your tour.

I'm actually coming with my team.

That sounds a little bit...

Amazing.

Dodgy, but...

I will be attending your tour with my team.

I believe we're going to the London show and I'm very, very excited because I've been a big fan of yours for a very, very, very long time.

And your particular style of comedy and performance, I think, is what makes you exceptional at what you do, but also a very necessary voice in comedy.

Because I just think where we are in the world with public discourse and polarization, if there was ever a time for comedy, it is now.

And so it's so lovely that with everything going on with the macroeconomic backdrop and all these things, we have great comedians out there adding a little bit of joy to people's lives.

And that's really what you do through your work from my observation.

If anybody wants to come to the Settle Down Tour, tickets are on sale now on the internet, wherever you get them, he's doing fucking shit tons of dates.

So I hope to see some of you at the London show in particular because I'll be there.

But yeah, thank you, Jack.

Thank you very much.

It was lovely to chat.

Yeah, thanks so much for having me on.

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