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### S3:E8 – Nick Howard Lanes – Man About Style

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[00:00:00] **Beth Stallwood:** Welcome to the Work Joy Jam Podcast.. I'm your host Beth Stallwood founder of Create Work Joy. In this podcast episode, I am joined by the wonderful Nick Howard Lanes. Nick has had the really interesting career in film and TV, working in the costume department and he's now really transformed his world to be helping men with their mental health, through the power of styling and through clothing. And I was so fascinated about this subject. I think it's a really important one. And one that often doesn't get brought to light is around how do we help men with a mental health? In this world, Nick talks about creating that space and the conversations via the back door of thinking about your personal styling and the clothes you wear.

It's a really interesting conversation. I hope you enjoy it. I'll pop it back on at the end to tell you what my personal takeaways are.

Hello and welcome to the Work Joy Jam. I'm really excited today to be joined by Nick Howard lane and Nick and I got connected through a [00:02:00] networking group, I think, and we had a chat and I thought, what interesting career, a really interesting backgrounds and for me even more so a fascinating story of what Nick is trying to do now, and I'm not going to give it all away because I want him to tell us more.

So Nick, welcome to the Work Joy Jam. I'm so excited to have your here. I'd love for you to introduce yourself to our lovely audience and maybe to give you a story of how you got to where you are today, and then we can dig into all the things about work joy. So over to you.

[00:02:34] **Nick Howard Lanes:** Hey Beth, thank you so, so much for having me on, you've got an amazing podcast so it's an honor to be here. So yes, I am Nick Howard Lanes, AKA man about style and I'm a personal stylist for the everyday. Providing a proven positive change for guys not only lacking in a sense of style, but also battling with insecurities and mental health. So a little bit about me and my background is that let's start off with the struggles.

So back in 2019 after graduation, I spent two years sitting on the box computer emails. So many production companies looking for internships or work experience and just writing hundreds of cover letters back in the day when you would actually hand write things. And I did that for two years and I would get a little bit of work experience, but the rejection was real and I learned the hard way that was the first point in my life where I understood what rejection was and just no one wanted me. I felt like I was a nice guy, but no one would just have me for longer than a couple of weeks. So then I started, I thought, how am I going to get into this film and TV world? So I actually signed up as an extra, so I was doing extra work for commercials and a few movies.



THE PODCAST

And then I just got on really well with an assistant director. And then she said, come on [00:04:00] Pirates Of The Caribbean with me. So before I knew it, I was being Johnny Depp's hand double. Um, and then before I knew it, I was a wizard in Harry Potter and that was my first big kick through the door of right. I'm here. I'm in blockbuster Ville. Let's let's make bad words happen. I was going to say a swear word, but I don't know if it's late night.

So, so that's it. So, so I was in, and then from that they people saw my potential and knew what I wanted to get into, and that was behind the camera. So I became a runner. So I was making teas for the likes of Nicholas Hoult on X-Men and people like that. And I jumped around from film to film, but I still hadn't found my true purpose and meaning yet but what I was finding that was when I was looking after all these actors, I was looking at their clothes. Maybe there's something in this. I was always very fashion conscious myself. So I thought lets just try. So I spoke to a supervisor on world War Z, which is the zombie apocalypse, Brad Pitt movie.

[00:05:13] **Beth Stallwood:** I do love that movie, I'm not a big zombie movie lover but I do love that movie.

[00:05:14] **Nick Howard Lanes:** Maybe it's because of Brad. It's probably Brad. But it was the costume department that sucks me in and I joined world war Z. And then from then I just found that I had a passion and I found that I had a creative element of me that I never really knew I had, I knew that I could dress myself, but I didn't realize that I could use it in a, in a way to tell stories and to tell a character. So from then I just spoke to whoever I met, made sure I was super friendly. And then I joined so many other TV and film, um, productions. So like [00:06:00] The Voice, Strictly Come Dancing and things like that.

Oh, under the name of costume. And then from then I've just grown, growing my business and I've literally just dipping my toes in every kind of water I can to try and fulfill my purpose.

[00:06:15] **Beth Stallwood:** I love it. And it's such an interesting story. And there were some things I already picked out of that, which I think are so important for us all to remember is that rejection feels horrible. Right? It's a really horrible yet an opportunity of having a conversation. I write to start a conversation and one connection with one person leads you into a whole new world of what he could possibly do and all that opportunity. And it just takes one person to see something within you or to be the right person to connect with and then suddenly the rejection almost disappears and you're in a whole new world of opportunity.

[00:06:52] **Nick Howard Lanes:** Yeah, it's so true. That's the one thing that my parents are both PAYE they've had the same jobs from the age of 18 to where they are now. They've never changed, never moved. So they've never really understood my freelance game.



THE PODCAST

They've never understood that every single day I'm in a different place waking up a totally different time, getting home at totally different time today, I can never really got advice or had any peers to teach me the ways of this career path that I've chosen. But the one thing that they had taught me from a very, very young age, and that was to be polite and be a people person.

I would be that young six-year-old boy, a barbecue talking to all the older people, the aunties and uncles that I've never met before, because my mum told me to be polite and ask questions and listen, and I haven't forgotten that. And I've taken that up until where I am today. And part of that is the reason why I'm doing personal styling is the fact that I feel empathy and I can listen.

And I've got patience with people. So that's where this side of the work I'm doing at the moment.  
[00:08:00]

[00:08:01] **Beth Stallwood:** I love that. And I'm going to explore that the kind of new direction for you in a minute. Well, the other thing I found really interesting was around you didn't set out to have the career you wanted to kind of work in the area.

And then you found, you kind of found your passion for costume and styling as you went through. And I know a lot of people early on in their careers, or even actually later on their career, they're waiting for an epiphany of, this is what I meant to do, or they think that they should know. And they, they want to know, but actually what you did is you, you did some stuff you enjoyed and you explored it and thought it until you found that thing that really did it for you.

[00:08:41] **Nick Howard Lanes:** Yeah, it's true. I feel like when we have that, I think the company's Connexions that was when I was in school and they'd come and you have a five minute conversation and in that five minutes conversations, they tell you what career you should take. And I remember they said to me, I should be a policeman, but I really shouldn't be a policeman because I hate confrontation. I would be the worse policeman. I'd

**Beth Stallwood:** You'd like the outfit though!

**Nick Howard Lanes:** I'd love it. You know me well Beth! I'd love the outfit, but yeah I could not be a policeman. So you're right. I decided to. You know, live my life, doing what I enjoy and I continue to do that. And I continue to remind myself today that that is why I'm doing what I'm doing. And if I don't like something, I feel like people always say, you should just persevere.

If you don't like this job, or you don't like this person, or you don't like anything, you should just persevere and go through it. Cause it's rewarding in the end. I'm actually. I think life is too short. I think if it's not working for you and you're not waking up every morning, feeling happy, you need to change it.



THE PODCAST

So I'm doing what makes me happy ultimately, and the finance and the money that comes through is going to be a great and amazing. But don't focus on that. Focus on the happiness first and foremost.

[00:09:59] **Beth Stallwood:** Yeah. [00:10:00] And obviously this is why you're here, because what you're thinking in your career and what you do is so aligned with what I believe and what I'm doing with Work Joy. And the principles of it is you are in charge of your working life, right? You have a choice here, and that's not to say that you, you know, if you don't, if you have a bad day, you should immediately resign and leave your job. It's about understanding things that do bring you some joy, knowing what they are understanding that every job, no matter what it is, have bits of the workload bits of the bad stuff, because there's no such thing as bad.

Yeah, what's the balance for you. And if that balance is tipped, you fall into the gloom, then maybe it's time for you to make some choices and do something different versus persevering in that real negative space.

[00:10:42] **Nick Howard Lanes:** Exactly. Exactly. There's two sorts of challenges in the world. Aren't there, there's the ones that literally just suck you down into a deep black hole, but then there's challenges that you want to actually confront.

I, I see them as more like hurdles, the way, if you're at the starting line, you see those hurdles, you're not going to run and stop. You want to leap over them. But if you're doing a job that makes you want to run and stop and you want to punch them and kick them and try and knock them down, then what's the point you need to just stop and you need to become a hundred meter sprinter instead of a hurdler.

It's literally, sometimes I just want to say to people, if I speak to friends and they're really not happy, I just want to shake them and just say this isn't your life just because you've given them four years of your career already, it doesn't mean that you can't change now.

[00:11:32] **Beth Stallwood:** I think we'll get stuck in that mindset that you can't change something that you've been doing for a while.

And of course you can, and it might be different and it might not be the same source of money, or it might not be the same source of prestige or things, but if it's what really brings you joy, um, I think those things matter slightly less when you have that in your life. Can we go down now and explore enough about this change in your career that you're [00:12:00] working on now.

So there will be many people I'm sure as I did, when I first started your story here, again, you get to work in all the glamour of TV and film, and actually the reality of it is that there's a lot less drama than it looks like when it's as an extra. There's a lot of hard work involved, but you know, you're working with Brad Pitt and all the celebs and, and what people might determine what I would call a



THE PODCAST

really cool job. Right. It's cool. Um, but actually your passions now, and your purpose are not around the celebrity coolness, they're around a new mission in your life. So tell us a bit more about your new business, what you're trying to do. And one thing I was really amazed about when you were talking to me about this before, and I'd love you to dig into this a bit more for our listeners is that it's not just about the styling, but there's a bigger picture to it.

So tell us more about this.

[00:12:58] **Nick Howard Lanes:** Absolutely. So I go by the name of the Man About Style and the purpose. In a nutshell is that I want guys to start feeling their best self has as this gender that I appear to be. We don't like to talk. We don't like to talk about the struggles. If we've got insecurities, we keep them, mental health is seriously real when it comes to us.

And what I found when I first started personal styling was at the time it was, I love fashion. I like people let's get people dressed and looking really stylish. But then as I started getting more and more clients, I realized that people are coming to me for an underlying reason. They may not even know what that reason is, but what comes out in those four to six hours, if we're doing a styling session in Westfields, for example, it comes to the surface.

So wherever it's a guy, that's got skin allergies, a guy that's going through a messy breakup. A divorce has been single. His entire life is looking for love and keeps getting failed dates. There's [00:14:00] always a reason as to why they've come to me. I've taken hold. It's a selfish good deed to be honest, because it makes me feel bloody amazing at the end of the day.

So I'm basically running with what is truly going to make me happy as well in the long run. So I'm going to hold my hands up and just say that, but if guys kept staying quiet and they feel like they can't talk to anyone, then you know what, I'm going to be that guy for them. And I like to think that I'm approachable and I'm a guy next door, and I'm a good ear for, to listen to.

So if my mission is to get the guys of the UK and if we can push further than that, then fantastic. But I want them feeling that absolute best self, because clothing can do that for you.

[00:14:47] **Beth Stallwood:** It's so interesting. And there are so many points I'm going to pick up on it and then we'll, we'll go down some of the, so the things that come to mind when you talk about this, is that, um, I think from my experience and I'll come at it from, from my end and what I see, there's a lot out there about women's styling and what you should wear and, um, amazing advice and guidance.

It tends to be something that women do quite a lot of. And there's lots of people out there doing it. I. Not sure. I've seen that many men focusing on men's style and it seems to be kind of not, it's not



THE PODCAST

out there in the same way as it were in women's study. It's like, do this make yourself feel good? It's that self care stuff that comes out a lot here.

And there's so much research isn't there and it really breaks my heart about how, um, men who are struggling with their mental health often don't have an outlet or people, or don't feel they have an outlet or people, or a way of talking about that. And yet here you are through something that we may think and I'll have this totally unrelated being able to be that person for people.

[00:15:57] **Nick Howard Lanes:** Yeah, exactly. I feel [00:16:00] that the charities are obviously amazing for mental health and thank God that we've got them, but it's either you talk to someone or there's ones where you get scared when you have a kick about, and you play five side football with, but I still feel there's a stigma of owning up to having mental health issues.

So I feel by using my services as this backdoor opportunity, you're almost not labeling yourself either. I'm putting out so much free content on my socials, as well as providing my services that it's about them rather than making the issue feel much more daunting to someone. So as we get older, we learn to live in this hungry world.

You know, we have to fight for that place or fight for that ticket fight for that guy or that girl, or fight for that job role. But we need to remember that we're in the same body as we were. And, you know, from the times when we learned to share and we were open to opportunity and we lived without fear. So it's a double-edged sword. We need life experience to grow, but at the same time life experience imprisons us. So that's why we need to evolve through our life, through the chapters that we write. So we need to create a new skin and a new mindset and a way to do that is through your style and through the clothes on your backs. But it's incredible that people. Don't know this, this, this psychology, or as I call it stylepsyche has been going on for years, that clothes are used to convey or hide emotions. That's what the costume departments for in movies. And that's why we get to fall in love or despise with a character because of what they're wearing and how they're wearing it

And that even comes into the real world, us politicians, they've been doing it for absolute years. Um, and it goes as far back as the cavemen I'm sure. So it's just baffles me that this isn't out there. How To Look Good Naked was amazing for all the [00:18:00] women and what a movement that was back in the early noughties, but there still hasn't been a slot filled for the men.

And as you said, your first point, most male stylists hang around in Savile row and they do sartorial wear. So they do suits, but stylist for the everyday man using style psyche to help change their mindset is completely unheard of. And that is my purpose to try and spread that message.

[00:18:27] **Beth Stallwood:** I love the idea of style psyche here. I'm like, oh yeah. Th that, that does something for me. It's about how, and that's the in season one, we had Jody Goldman, who is a personal impact specialist. We talked more or kind of like putting yourself forward, but part of her



THE PODCAST

world is, um, she felt that also I'm helping women and how you dress and how it makes you feel and how it makes you shine and be like your best self as you're talking about here.

So in the women's world, it is so part of how in corporate life, in working life, a lot of women show up. It's like, let me get some help here cause I need some help in this area. And now I feel better when I feel better. I present myself better and you're trying to do the same thing in the space of men and with men's mental health.

And I, one of the things I'm really interested in. So talk to me a bit about more as a, maybe some examples would be really helpful is you talked about it as like it's a backdoor in to talk about your mental health. It's not a talk about your mental health, almost all you on the side type of thing. It's really integrated it's a way of it's it's, it's a really, I'm not sure if this is the right word, but I can't think of it once they go with it. It's like a gentle way in to having some conversations about yourself and who you are and how you want to present yourself.

[00:19:41] **Nick Howard Lanes:** Exactly. Exactly. So, I mean, there's when it comes to style psyche, I've used come up with basically these little, little tips and tricks that it goes as far as saying the power suit.

If someone puts on a power suit, it makes you feel amazing, makes you feel incredible. So what I've [00:20:00] done to try and combat mental health is come up with these little styling tactics that you can do that makes you feel a certain way or makes you portray a certain emotion. So for instance, if you're feeling like you're lacking attention, then you might consider what people expect you to, where you haven't changed your look in years, you dress by the book with zero fresh creativity. So then why not consider creating a positive shock value? So by that, I mean, surprising others with your style and your outfits. This could be wearing a new fashion brands, wearing the new colour, wearing a new item that no one's seen you in before, but it works with who you are by creating a positively shock value can bring you the attention that you need to then pursue what you want to in life. And it's tiny little things like that, that I've come up with to try and combat mental health.

[00:20:57] **Beth Stallwood:** And it's so interesting. I love the way you talk there about, you know, we haven't changed the kind of outfits you wear. I do feel. Well, I don't know if it, if myself who identifies as a woman, um, and I could definitely see it in the people around me do kind of get a bit stuck in our ways we have, even if we don't have a uniform for work, we create ourselves of work uniform and that tends to be the same everyday you wear. And that might be. Something that pushes you back into the background. Like I'm hiding away because I don't want to get noticed, or I do want to get noticed and I haven't really realized that I'm not standing out in any way or it could be, um, I've always worn this type of, you know, trousers because I think they suit me, but actually something else or a different colour in it might just totally perk me up or how other people see me.

[00:21:52] **Nick Howard Lanes:** How bonkers is that the we spend 365 days a year.





THE PODCAST

Putting [00:22:00] on clothes. Cause unfortunately it's legal. We have to what a shame. We have to put these clothes on our backs and people do not consider changing it up. I find that confusing. We change what we eat every day. Why don't we change up the way we dress? And I think it's something so simple that people can do and it's like having a guy guys coming to me who are trying to get a new job. I had a guy messaged me this morning. Actually, who's just leaving the army. He's only 23. He's leaving the army and he's going to get a job in sales and he wants to start wearing suits and looking sharper. And he's had to wear one uniform from the age of 18 to 23.

And he now doesn't know how do I dress? And I find that just incredible. And that's like the whole client for me. Cause he's like grassroots level is from that. So I can really peel back the layers of who are you underneath this uniform, but everyone should mix it up. Everyone should change. And it doesn't mean becoming Mr. Fashion and, you know, draping yourself in the freshest, Alexandra McQueen and Yeezy trainers. It's about finding, what's going to make you feel your best self.

[00:23:16] **Beth Stallwood:** So interesting. So I'm thinking about that, the guy that you're talking about, they're coming out of the army. It's like, he's going to start, they're so young, but it will help him, I imagine, throughout the rest of his career, because you have that advice early on.

And when you were saying that, the other thing I was thinking about is. Maybe if you go 20 years on from that, when maybe people have gotten stuck in a bit of a rut around it, and you know, as you approach middle age, your body shape changes over time. You know, I'm here rocking grey head rather than have my hair for the first time ever in my life.

Having started going gray when I was in my twenties.

[00:23:58] **Nick Howard Lanes:** But you feel so comfortable, right. [00:24:00] Just being able to just let your hair be grey and not have to worry about,

[00:24:05] **Beth Stallwood:** I mean, when you think about what's been good about COVID, um, 18 months of like not, no one expecting me to dye my hair has led to a whole new world.

A lot of women I'm talking to you now feel a lot freer to be in the zone of grey hair. And I quite like it. It's quite freeing. It's quite like I am me. It's actually the real me that's what, I've, what I've often felt for a long time. And I, this, my husband, quite a lot of the time is he's going a bit gray and he looks super, super hot in it, but there's a, there's a, has been familiar as perception.

And when women go grey, it's. Uh, good luck. Um, but now I think it's a whole new revolution, but I do think there is something so it doesn't as young people who, when people go through changes in life, whether that's things, as you said, people getting divorced or wanting something different or a new job or physical changes, um, we might need some new clothes to help support us through.





THE PODCAST

[00:24:59] **Nick Howard Lanes:** Yeah, definitely. We do. And it is literally something so simple. So I feel if there's a guy that meets me and we're meeting in Starbucks in the middle of Westfield's and he's walking towards me, I'm not just seeing what he's wearing. Well, I'm actually looking at his posture. I'm looking at the way he's walking.

What is he looking at? And nine times out of 10, these guys are walking hunched over looking at the floor, slightly nervous. They might have their phones out. They've got their face buried in their phones. So that's just telling me. What kind of security level that they're at. So straight away, what I'll do is start from the feet up because touching the ground is what makes us feel comfortable.

So I'll find a pair of shoes that I call soul support, a pair of shoes that's go a soft healthy soul. And it's not like a loafer where it's skinny and it's flat to the floor and it's making you walk very flat-footed. I want something that's going to give you. Something solid, even something with a bit of a hill in it.

And you can even [00:26:00] get trainers with bits of heel in it, because I want that person feeling an extra couple of inches taller because what that'll do is lift up his chest, roll back his shoulders. And all of a sudden within that first half an hour of meeting, he's already feeling slightly more confident to then work on the harder bits is the things that are actually touching his skin.

So that's, that's a little bit into how I begin this, uh, this journey, should I say,

[00:26:28] **Beth Stallwood:** I love that. And I haven't quite worked out which way to write soul am I, am I doing, so for, in it both ways on my notes, because there's the idea that, you know, cause I'm imagining it's actually both things that it's like support for your actual souls, but it's the thing within you and that can light you up and make you feel good about yourself.

[00:26:51] **Nick Howard Lanes:** Yeah, that's it. Well, you know, as a dyslexic person, to me, they're both spelled the same way.

[00:27:00] **Beth Stallwood:** I love the metaphor of it being both of those things. And then if I do that, what you said there it's like that, you know, the things that touch your skin, that things that are I've been a really like deep moment here, but thinking about how the things that we, where they are, they do almost become part of us don't they, they become passive how we feel and how I just had total confession. Everyone. When Nick joined today, is it today? I am currently wearing the skankiest tracksuits.

I'm wearing a pair of joggers and I have a t-shirt and a jump on top because I want it to be super comfy. And then I was like, I'm talking to Nick, who's a stylist. I'm trying to find my, my utmost coolest outfit.



THE PODCAST

[00:27:49] **Nick Howard Lanes:** That's so funny, Beth. Cause you know what I did, I actually got changed half an hour before this.

So I'm actually wearing a pair of black tailor trousers with a centre crease a pinstripe shirt, um, opened with a vest and I actually blow dry my hair. So we've, we're so opposite, but they both got the same purpose. They're both wanting us to actually perform and do this podcast feeling up.

[00:28:17] **Beth Stallwood:** Yeah, I like today I wake up and I really wanted to be comfy.

That was my, my thing today was I just want to be comfy. I didn't have many meetings. Obviously we do this in audio and now I'm explaining exactly what I worry. I'm like, I probably, should've not done that, but actually I want to be confident and he wanted to be feeling good about yourself and it's like finds a way that makes that happen.

[00:28:37] **Nick Howard Lanes:** Exactly. There's no perfect. And there's no perfect style. And I always remind clients of that. And that's why I'm not a fashion stylist. And I don't call myself a fashion stylist because fashion to me has a stigma about being current and being on trend. And that's not what I'm trying to do. I'm a stylist full stop.

So what we wear will not please, everyone it's like walking arts, some are going to love it. Some are going to ask who it's by, where did we get it from? But some are also not going to get it. And some may even make snide remarks, but the biggest importance of how the owner feels is how, how good do they feel? How is the wearer of this creation? That is the only important thing in this.

[00:29:24] **Beth Stallwood:** I love that and isn't that a really interesting thing. And I don't know about you, but I imagine a lot of this starts in like kind of the teenage world where people are, you get judged for what you wear quite a lot when you're younger and if you're not cool enough or not wearing the right brands or, you know, the colours that other people like and all of that stuff, it probably does affect us through our lives, those kinds of things.

But for me, when you said that I really loved it. You know, it's about the wearer. Oh, it's what you're wearing, making you feel good. And if it is, [00:30:00] doesn't really matter to anyone, what anyone else thinks.

[00:30:03] **Nick Howard Lanes:** It really doesn't. It really doesn't. And like I said before, it's yes, I know about trends. I'm very pop cultured, and this is what I love doing.

And it's what I'm a part of. But if you come to me and you expect to walk out of Westfield's feeling like Kanye West, that's not going to happen because that's not what I'm trying to achieve here. They might feel good in that moment, but we'd later when their bank account is in the red, um, I'm that hype has changed to another fashion.



THE PODCAST

They're then going to email me and say, Nick, what terrible service that was. So I have to forget that and really dig deep into who they deserve to feel like

[00:30:43] **Beth Stallwood:** That's a really interesting word as well, that who you deserve to feel like. And I know I am not an expert in men's mental health and I'm not a man. So I will say this with all of those caveats in mind is I imagine there's a lot of people out there who wouldn't necessarily feel like they deserve to feel like that, that that's, that's not something that they could have, but it sounds to me like your saying and tell me if I'm wrong here. That actually, even if you only have a small budget for clothes, it's not about going and buying all the designer stuff, it's just about finding the right things from there's so much options out there isn't there, but it's not finding the right things for you. Is that right?

[00:31:24] **Nick Howard Lanes:** That's totally right. I've had. People, one shirts. He spent a full day with me and he brought one shirt. But what he did was walk around with a little black book and he wrote down everything all the same, like a journalist. It was fantastic.

Um, I mean his fingers were bleeding by the end of it. He was interested in not what we were buying, but listening to what I'm saying. He had a tight budget, hence why he didn't even buy anything. But then I've got, had another client who spent £8,000 pounds in one day with me.

[00:32:00] I know, right to have 8,000 pounds to throw up the wall in a couple of hours, but it's just, it doesn't matter.

You get people from all different budgets and that goes into. Media work as well, doing TV and film I'll get Sky or Netflix or the BBC, or I'll get some low key, short film that has got a couple of pennies to throw at me to try and create some magic. So I've learned from the best to know how to work with budgets.

So I feel like there's ... I don't know. Many men's stylists out there, but I'm sure that there's some that just stick to their key brands and they'll go to the high-end stores cause they think that's going to make them feel better. But I guarantee you, if you gave me a hundred pounds, I could walk into H and M and I could dig out free, really good outfits just from Hennes that would make them feel just as good as if they walked into Tom Ford.

[00:32:56] **Beth Stallwood:** Yeah, it's good to know that because sometimes these things feel out of reach for people because they feel like a really expensive thing or like I have to change my entire wardrobe and I, I'm not going to do that. Someone just bought one shirt and that can change how you feel about yourself. And can you tell us, cause I, I love, I love how this is so important the stuff. I love how you think about a mental health policy of it. Have you got any, obviously, without sharing too many details because it's all confidential, but have you got any stories you could share with us about actually how people's mental health or feelings have improved as a result of really focusing on this area?



THE PODCAST

[00:33:38] **Nick Howard Lanes:** Yeah, definitely. I had, this one guy for Christmas who have been single for about three years, but it wasn't just living a single life of this is great. I'm going out with the boys and we're drinking and meeting new people all the time. It was three years of a steady decline to the point I did a wardrobe review, went to place and it was a mess, he just lost all control of not just his fashion and his styling, but about how he runs his life and his whole organization of preparation of life. So it almost became, I was in his wardrobe, depicting him who he is at the moment, so we can figure out clothing clarity for the future, but it turns into broader perspective. And I came up with, he basically doesn't like going out, he likes to stay in, he likes to play games. So it was finding a wardrobe that when he joins the dating scene, which was his end goal in all of this. How can I dress myself to not look like I'm overdressed just to stay in doors because you can't change a guy and you can't say no, you're going to like go into fancy bars and going to dates there.

No, like walk around a park and grabbing a coffee is probably if not better than going to a bar when you're dating someone. So I was finding outfits, which were literally, it was low key as possible but it was fabrics that were going to make him feel comfortable with things that weren't tight on the body and restricting comfortable, soft feelings that is literally going to make him embrace someone and someone that he's meeting. And not only that, he was really insecure and he didn't understand. Style, but this is where you can use a label. So I got him a nice pair of trainers that had a badge on the trainers, and that was his one piece that he felt like he needed. Just to say, look, I do have something about me, so I'm not always against logos and designers, but if a logo is going to be your wingman then I would 100% use one and he definitely needed a wing man when he started stating.

[00:35:52] **Beth Stallwood:** So interesting. Isn't it as that whole it's more than just that one thing it's finding clothes that will not just make you feel good, but fit [00:36:00] into the life that your, what you want to have. If you're not going out to bars all the time, then don't buy outfits that are going to suit that, buy them for suiting, what you want to do, but maybe buy, you know, buy the best version of that, that you can versus the, you know, the everyday version.

Maybe it's slightly nicer than what you had before or slightly more. Yeah, I, yeah, it's a really, really interesting one. And that whole thing about that, there is spirals isn't there that we get into. So anybody interested in this guy he's like there and you know, you kind of, the slow decline is something, some kind of catalyst to change that decline and to start going, actually let me care about myself and if I care about myself, I can then carry. My environment and I can care about my world. And if I care about my environment or my world, when I go out there and meet people, they would understand that I'm worthy of caring about, because I care about myself too.

[00:36:57] **Nick Howard Lanes:** Yeah, exactly. And it's like most issues with people.

If there's an issue we like to you know, brush it under the carpet, under the rug and forget about it. And that's just more so with men, as I've discovered is that if there is an issue, it is not confronted or faced. It just continues to get worse and worse and worse and decline. And that's the position that he put himself into.



THE PODCAST

[00:37:20] **Beth Stallwood:** And that gets harder and harder to get out of or without some kind of intervention, like on your own. And I ended up the way that that could be you. That could be you as a person and the method for helping someone else out of that situation might be through clothing, but it's actually the process of getting out of that situation that's the important bit.

[00:37:39] **Nick Howard Lanes:** not the clothes. Exactly. I'll let you into a little secret now, Beth, is that on you put me in front of you being, you can talk for hours. I'm sure library, but the buildup to talking on zoom or clubhouse is awful with me. Like on the seat, the nerves is ridiculous.

Put a camera in front of [00:38:00] me and I can talk to it. I really get myself into a state of panic and worry just through talking over the phone, which is so peculiar. So that's why I change my clothing to totally make me feel like right. I'm ready for business. I'm ready for action. So I'm talking, when I talk about mental health and improving other people's health, I'm not talking from the side of, I know it all, and I'm a master and health I am the number one at health. I can crush it, but I'm talking from ideal with mental health myself. So I'm on your wavelength. I'm right there with you. And I'm using my own tactics for my own game as well here.

[00:38:39] **Beth Stallwood:** Yeah. So you're with them. You're not, you're not advising and you're with them through the process. Yeah. And your not being the expert, you're being the guide, I suppose, to their own. Oh, I'm going to use the word journey...and I love the idea for you, and I totally relate to this. And I spent a lot of my childhood doing a lot of drama things on telly and on the stage you're putting your costume on.

Yeah. Right. You getting dressed before you do this, putting your costume on to be confident and be ready to play your path and talk about this stuff. I totally get it. And I, you know, I, I find myself doing some of the things I do a lot of well, pre COVID did a lot of speaking on big stages with lots of people.

And one of the things people always used to laugh me, but it's like, I'm getting there early and I just walk on the stage. So I walk the whole stage. I understand like where things are. I look at the, where the audience is, where I'm going to do that is the, it's that rehearsal, but isn't it, it's the, I feel I'm feel comfortable in my environment for comfortable in my body. I feel comfortable in the clothes that I'm wearing now, and now I am ready to do this big thing that I need to do. That actually is a bit scary, but I'm excited about it as well.

[00:39:54] **Nick Howard Lanes:** Yeah. I always say if I get guys that, um, ask me questions on Instagram or whatever, and they've got a big day [00:40:00] coming, whether it's a wedding or a meeting or they're pitching a business, I always say to them, preparation is presentation.

And I always say, pick your outfit the night before what you're wearing. Try it on. Do the do in the outfit, whether it's reading the pitch out or just standing there, looking at yourself in the mirror and



THE PODCAST

then lay it out ready. So when you wake up in the morning, you look at that outfit, it's not scary to you. You've already worn it and you're basically just jumping into your own skin. Yeah.

[00:40:29] **Beth Stallwood:** Yeah. Love that. Yeah. As you said, just then I think we could talk for hours, however, I'm not sure that everyone would want to listen to us for hours. We're pretty good. So I think, are you okay if I ask you some quickfire questions.

[00:40:45] **Nick Howard Lanes:** I would love you to.

[00:40:47] **Beth Stallwood:** Okay. So in your world and your life for you personally, what is always guaranteed to bring you some work joy.

[00:40:56] **Nick Howard Lanes:** Money? What is guaranteed to bring me joy is the people I'm surrounding. Simple as that, the people I'm surrounded by those no point there's no joy coming from anything. If you're working in a hostile environment, even if you work self-employed on your own, you're still connecting with people. There's there's no point having 50 connections. When fully of them are, rueful when they bring you down and they suck the life out of you. So surround yourself with positive people that are only got your best interests at heart.

[00:41:44] **Beth Stallwood:** Yeah. That kind of genuinely care about you and your, your work and your future. And I was going to say difficult to say it.

I'll say it now, before we go onto the next question. One of the things I really noticed about you were saying [00:42:00] is how, from a very early age, you almost trained to do this job just by the values that your parents instilled in you about having conversations with the grown-ups around you.

[00:42:09] **Nick Howard Lanes:** I know right. And then back then I was actually in. Oh, sorry. I just want to go and play in a mud, roll around in the grass. I've got to stand there and talk to the oldies, but now thank you for that.

[00:42:25] **Beth Stallwood:** I think I can totally relate. And I was, I was very similar in my childhood that my mom and dad were very sociable, had lots of friends round all the time.

Our house was kind of a gathering place and it was always like, go and talk to everybody, have a conversation, um, be polite. And I do think, oh, actually, that has been quite a good lesson. And we always think is the education system, like going to university and things that teach us the best thing, but I'm not convinced that actually teaches us the life skills who need they, they happen earlier on the lessons from your parents. The next question is, what are you currently reading?



THE PODCAST

[00:43:06] **Nick Howard Lanes:** read to Beth. Um, and here we go. The only book I've ever read in my life is the hungry caterpillar and what a great book that is. I honestly, I honestly don't read or listen to podcasts and I am a huge, huge social media mogul, um, to the point that I follow so many, um, business entrepreneurs and life coaches, and people like that.

The everyday I pick up my phone, I'm not actually scrolling a rubbish that I don't need, and that that's going to make me feel crap. I'm actually scrolling and the majority of my feed and my algorithm is people telling me what a great day I'm about to have. Yeah, I'm sorry. I'm not reading anything, but I'm just a big listener and a big viewer of people's social platforms.

[00:43:54] **Beth Stallwood:** And obviously you'd be saying that you'd recommend the Work Joy Jam podcast, but tell us what your [00:44:00] second or third in line podcasts that you love listening to after that we can recommend them.

[00:44:04] **Nick Howard Lanes:** Well, after yours, it would be Gary V um, on a big Gary V fan, um, Gary Vaynerchuk. Um, obviously check him out if you don't know who he is, but he speaks about business and about life skills on a level that doesn't make you feel like you're at school. He talks to you, he talks like you're a real person. Um, and he swears a lot. He swears actually a really lot, um, but it just feels more real and he's energy is just second to none. Um, so Gary Vaynerchuk. He's one of them and the Diary of a CEO is enough one. So check that out because that guy, Steven is the new dragon on Dragon's den. He's making big moves for, uh, black people. Um, so yeah, so he's fantastic.

[00:44:58] **Beth Stallwood:** Love it. Thank you. Next one is what's the best or most useful bit of advice that you've had at some point in your life that you always find yourself coming back to?

[00:45:08] **Nick Howard Lanes:** Do you know what it's probably to be vulnerable? There was a point in my life where I always for being vulnerable is a bad thing.

It shows weakness and it shows that you're soft. But the best bit of advice was about vulnerability. And do you know what? I cannot remember who it came from, but I just remember it because I'm very sensitive and I'm very quiet, a gentle person in terms of personality. So I remembered someone saying this to me.

It might have even been a designer I worked for and I was thinking, wow, okay. So vulnerability is not about winning or losing. It's about having the courage to show up when you can't control an outcome. So that's, that's a key thing that I always remind myself is that it's okay to be vulnerable. And it's just like me [00:46:00] sharing with you now saying how nervous I was leading up to this.

A lot of people would probably have a bravado maybe in be like, oh, I do podcasts all the time. I'm a pro, but actually I'm okay to share my vulnerability, um, because I'm comfortable with it. And I'm just. It's certainly a good thing in my eyes.





THE PODCAST

[00:46:19] **Beth Stallwood:** Yeah. And, uh, identify you, but I'm a massive fan of Brene Brown, who does loads of research in

[00:46:24] **Nick Howard Lanes:** Oh my God. Yeah. I mean, obviously I don't really just so her Netflix

[00:46:31] **Beth Stallwood:**...YouTube, she's got it all or double if you want to listen to stuff. I, I think, um, research that really, really helps me. Um, the welds of vulnerability and how important it is to kind of show the realness of yourself and be okay with that.

[00:46:46] **Nick Howard Lanes:** And when I pulled that on Netflix, I was just blown away. I was like, oh my God, there's actually, um, there's a talk about this. And I didn't even know who she was up until probably the back end of last year. And now like, yeah, I just follow her hugely as well.

[00:47:01] **Beth Stallwood:** I called her Queen Brene cause I wanted to like.

It's not like I know her. She's like, she's one of those celebrities, I suppose as she is now who I would be utterly, you know, I, it would be the first time I've been silent in my life. I think if I actually got to meet Brene, right. Well, I'd love to see now, what is one super practical bit of advice that you could give our listeners?

Go away. Think about, do something really practical, really small today the next day, um, that you think might help them get a bit more work joy.

[00:47:43] **Nick Howard Lanes:** Okay. Um, this is super easy. Learn to say no, it's literally – shall I dive into that more.

Yeah, so to say yes, doesn't mean that you're a real [00:48:00] go getter by taking every opportunity that presents itself. The ability to actually say no, allows you to put yourself at the top of the pecking order. And what that does is then brings focus to only doing the things that's going to give you meaning and give you purpose.

And what does having mean having meaning and purpose in life mean? It means that you get ultimate work and life joy. And it's as simple as that, I'm saying no to so much stuff. That is, like you said, this is a full circle. Now, like you said, at the beginning, amazing jobs, amazing actors. And it's, it's great within a conversation.

And I can say yes to that, but by me saying yes means I can't fulfill my purpose of helping the guys out there that actually need the help. So I have to learn to say no to these amazing opportunities that it's going to be great for someone else, but just not for me.



THE PODCAST

[00:48:57] **Beth Stallwood:** Yeah. And that's hard, right? It must be hard to say no to that stuff.

[00:48:59] **Nick Howard Lanes:** Right? Oh, it's so hard. I got a text. I did a bit of Bridgeton before in the year and yeah and they've been filming for so long because of COVID and they keep asking me and I actually got a text yesterday morning saying, Nick, these are the dates it's really busy.

Will you come and help us out? And I was like, look, I'm so sorry I can't. But again, it's great for, for me to tell you here and now, but working that 16 hour day is not going to tell those guys how to make their lives better off. Yeah.

[00:49:34] **Beth Stallwood:** So you're, you're making the decision to work and make choices about your time to be aligned to your purpose. Not aligned to the kind of shiny thing over there, the real stuff, the deepest stuff. Yeah. And the thing I love about advice and it's something that I always ask people when I'm coaching them is like, where are you on your to do this? And it's always. Either not on there or the bottom is like that [00:50:00] it up a few notches and see what that could do.

Right. Nick, tell us, where can people find out more about you and Man About Style and get involved with you and your work?

[00:50:16] **Nick Howard Lanes:** Absolutely. So [www.manaboutstyle.co.uk](http://www.manaboutstyle.co.uk) is the website there's free eBooks on there. There's all of my services. All the costs and the price. If you think, oh, Nick, his knee's not going to be affordable.

You'll be surprised. There's literally seven different services there that cater for every different level of comfort and every level of budget. So check me out there because I'd love to help you out. If you're listening and social media, I'm on every social media platform going, but stick with Instagram cause it's the easiest that's [manaboutstyle.nick](https://www.instagram.com/manaboutstyle.nick)

[00:50:52] **Beth Stallwood:** Brilliant. And we'll put all of those into the comments on the show notes, Nick it's been so fantastic talking to you. Thank you for sharing. And I love that we come up work joy from a really different angle hair, to be more about kind of what goes on with men more about mental health, to thinking about how this avenue and thinking about this can really help people be and put themselves out there in the way that they want to be seen and the way that they are then in, in a way that kind of makes them more joyful. I'm really loving it. So thank you very much for being on the Work Joy Jam.

[00:51:31] **Nick Howard Lanes:** Well, thank you very much for giving me this platform to share my story. Absolutely appreciate it. And you're doing amazing things. So thank you.

[00:51:39] **Beth Stallwood:** Thanks Nick. Thank you all for listening to the Work Joy Jam and this episode with Nick Howard Lane or not about style, I really enjoyed listening to Nick and hearing



THE PODCAST

about his career. Where do you love how he has taken his work and everything that he's learned through [00:52:00] his career and costuming to consider how do we help people with their mental health, through having stylists thinking about clothing and how that represents who we are and how we can use it to help us feel better and to be our best selves. I really love Nicks early career story about, you know, all the rejection and. I that sting of rejection in our lives.

And then about how opportunity is sometimes just created in that one connection, that one conversation that you have with people and how much of that is based on so many different practices. And obviously we talked there about, you know, being polite and kind and listening and being able to have a conversation and how important that is for his work. I also think it's really interesting to think about how, what we wear is a representation of who we are and how putting your costume on for whatever it is you're doing at work can be really helpful, but it's also can be something where we get stuck in a rut, or we continue to wear the same thing, even if we've maybe outgrown it or it's not matching what we're trying to present to the world and how really considering that can be helpful to us and can lead us into a new direction, which really opens some doors, opens us up for different ways of thinking and being, and feeling. I also love one of the things he said. It was a little small comment, but I really loved about the, his work now as a selfish good deed, because it makes him feel good. And I would just call that work joy. He's found the place where he can be, where he gets the work joy out of what he's doing. And he's helping other people so really living within his purpose. Stylee psyche was one of those phrases that I was like, oh, I quite like that.

I'm going to keep that as a positive shock value. And then the thing that I don't know, because I am in one of my first. I actually worked in it, she shops. And when he was talking about that, the [00:54:00] sole stuff, like getting a soul's rights, giving yourself soul support, whether that's the sole of your shoe or the soul in your body, starting there and seeing what you can go from really, really loved Nick and everything he has today.

Great advice about vulnerability and learning to say, no, you will have had that on different episodes of the work joy jam, but how good are reminders that the actually you were important and manage your time as such as take note of the things that don't really link into where you want to be spending your time, your energy and your effort.

So, thank you all for listening to the Work Joy Jam. We'd love you to get involved in all socials @createworkjoy, Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and on LinkedIn. Please do share comment and like it really helped he spread the word. You could also join Club Work Joy, which is a fantastic thriving community of people who are aiming to get and cultivate and create more work joy in their lives.

We have amazing speakers. We have networking. We have online collaboration connection with people from all walks of life. So we would love you to come and join that. Do you head to our website, [www.createworkjoy.com](http://www.createworkjoy.com) to find out more and to sign up. Thanks for listening Work Joy Jam please go listen to our other episodes.



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It would be great to get advice from all different people.