



THE PODCAST

S1: E8 Simon Jones Lessons Learnt

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Beth Stallwood: Welcome to the Work Joy Jam. In this episode, I'm talking to Simon Jones. Simon is actually somebody I used to work with and he's been so involved for many, many years in high-performance sports, which is often called upon in business to look at why can we get better? How can we taken the lessons from this?

And I thought it'd be really interesting to talk to Simon who works in this world and to consider all of his advice over many, many years of working here. And some of the great things we talked about here was a lot around authenticity being yourself and also vulnerability and how it's one of those things that in other people, we really admire it but in ourselves we find it really awkward and horrible, and don't like it. And that difference in what we admire versus what we see in ourselves and also Simon's approach, which are very much, I think, echoes the work joy theory of life that you need to find the passion in what you're doing right now.

And I call it the love, the one you're with factor that nobody's situation is perfect, but there are great things in almost every situation. So it's about finding them and making that choice to see those break things. I hope you enjoy this episode.

Hello, welcome to the Work Joy Jam. Today we have Simon Jones joining us, and I'm really excited to hear from him and all of his experience across sport and leadership and his great thinking. So I'm going to let Simon introduce himself because people introduce themselves a lot better than anyone else can.

[00:02:08] And I'm going to ask Simon to tell us who he is, what he does and his story so far. So Simon, over to you.

Simon Jones: [00:02:16] Hey Beth, great to hook up with you again, spent some time at the LTA, which I thoroughly enjoyed. So my story is I was a professional tennis player, not so very good that I did. I set the world alight but that led me into a career in tennis coaching. I did that for I was a private tennis coach for about 10 years. and then after that stage of my career, I was finding I was coaching some, my preference was working with talented tennis players. So that procured me a job as a national coach with the Lawn Tennis Association.

So I started to work for the national governing body of tennis then. and, that lasted for 31 years. That, that, employment, just

[00:03:03] **Beth Stallwood:** [00:03:03] A short gig.

[00:03:04] **Simon Jones:** [00:03:04] A short thing. They couldn't get, they couldn't get rid of me. but the interest, same thing for me during that time was I had probably eight different eight different jobs within the organization from, from being a national coach, lead into leadership roles, I was, head of performance support at the national tennis center for one stage, which meant that I was overseeing sports, science, sports, medicine, talent identification, and a wide range of subjects. That, that look after our very, very top tennis players.

[00:03:39] And I also, during that time at the LTA, I spent four and a half years, sitting on the executive of the governing body as well. So, it was 30 years, it was a long stint and many jokes that you get less than murder. But it was a long stent. and you know, I finished doing that in August, 2019.

I look back on, on my, my time at the, at the LTA with tremendous affection. not only because the subject of the, of the, of the matter was professional tennis players and working with elite athletes. But what that attracts is an amazing, dedication and the people around them. So the opportunity to work for so long with people that had so much dedication to the chords was tremendously rewarding and the diversity of roles I had from, as I said from national coach through to an executive role, that diversity of roles gave me a tremendous learning and skill set. Yeah, that, you know, at the time you don't realize you're developing it. But it gave me a tremendous experience to look across not only the technical aspects of sport, but leadership and, and the wider business.

And so that was my crew at the LTA. And I finished working there in August, 2019, [00:05:00] and then started a private, working as a consultant. And now I'm working in professional football. Mostly in football. I do, I do four things, actually. I'm the head of, coach development at Chelsea Academy, Chelsea football club.

I'm the strategic coaching advisor for the premier league. I'm the performance advisor for Chelsea women's team. And I also maintain a, private coaching business where I coach individuals in sport and education. So got a multitude of things I'm doing now, keeps me very busy. but I have to say the opportunity to use all of my skills and experiences that I learned at the LTA, finding it thoroughly rewarding.

[00:05:46] So that's me

[00:05:46] **Beth Stallwood:** [00:05:46]. Thank you so much for your story so far. And it sounds like some really exciting projects and work in football and beyond football in sport, with a real portfolio of different things that you can use all of your different skills on.

Simon Jones: [00:06:05] Absolutely. I mean I went into Chelsea academy, specifically to work with the coaches, in developing them as coaches and as practitioners.

But because my skillset was wide, I've been involved in things like developing a strategy for the, for the loans team. You know football is big business. There's a lot of money at stake with these footballers. and we wanted to get a much better organized strategy with how they loaned the players out and how they looked after them.

[00:06:36] So I had that strategic part. the premier league, the work I do with the premier league, they asked it was, it was funny. It was I left the LTA and the week after they, they asked me to write their coaching strategy. Which was a year long piece of work. So I immediately left the LTA. I was smack right back in the middle of some strategic work.

So the balance of working with coaches and the strategic work, and then the, the team development of the coaches. So a tremendous diversity of work that I've got and you know, really rewarding that aspect of it actually, lots of different people. I do a little bit of work with the Chelsea women's team and that's a sport that's at a different phase to the, to the men's game, as many would know. so that's exciting as well, cause that's almost like a startup. And I also really love my private coaching and I do a bit of work with some coaches in America. You know, the, the sadness of the, of the lockdown period and COVID has actually enabled many, many more virtual connections.

And that's enabled me to work with some coaches in the, in the NBA, the national basketball association. So yeah, it's I feet don't touch the ground, but loved every minute of it.

Beth Stallwood: It sounds like it, and I'm really fascinated to hear more from you. And I'm going to ask you some questions in a moment, but one thing that just really struck me there is how we can all assume that because people are coaches, they can coach themselves and that they get it.

But actually there's something for me that kind of everyone needs a coach and guidance and support and mentoring and all of those different things as well. Oh, absolutely.

Simon Jones: In the future, it will, it will only grow. I mean, if you take the, sort of the, the football model, we have a staff of about 25 coaches working with something round, well, they've got over 300 million pounds worth of football is out in the field right now. So, you know, if you've got 25 people working with 300 million pounds worth of assets, you need to look after those people. and you know, when I say I coached them, I, I coached them in many aspects, their leadership, their leadership skills that, that personal efficacy, the way in which they present, and then the more technical aspects and the pedagogical aspects around their coaching.

[00:09:07] So it's not just looking at the way they run a football session. It's looking at the whole person as a coach and. You know, particularly in high pressure environments. Cause I spent most of my life at the top of pro sport in high pressure environments. People are very, there's a lot of pressure on them, and to have support and and confidence building is an essential part of the work that I do with them.

It's very competitive and you know, it's a dog eat dog sort of sort of environment. So encouraging them to be vulnerable and open up and share. And, you know, it's something that they don't normally get the opportunity to do. It's a unique environment.

Beth Stallwood: Yeah, and right at the top of that elite level, and as you're saying that a huge amount of investment and money in the assets and the assets are people and the coaches are the people who look after the people and someone needs to look after the coaches.

[00:10:05] Absolutely.

[00:10:05] **Simon Jones:** [00:10:05] Yeah.

[00:10:06] **Beth Stallwood:** [00:10:06]. So I'm going to ask you now to, to kind of veer into the world of work joy and how we all individually, as teams, as leaders can really develop that sense of joy in our work and what for you are some of the things that you think about for joy? At work. What gives you that joy and also what do you find and you help other people with as kind of the coach who helps coaches?

Simon Jones: Well, well, there's definitely a parallel of course, because you know, when I help other coaches, I tend to say that, I've just got a whole bag of mistakes in my life and I just don't want you to make them. So of course, the way, the way in which I've approached my life is, is the foundation of how I'll help others.

So you're very on point there. I think the best way to sum it up. I mean, I could talk for ages about [00:11:00] this one, but the best way to sum it up as an expression, you know, you know, there's an expression, you know, find something that you're passionate about, do something that you're passionate about.

Well, I actually don't really believe in that cause that's great if you can do it, but realistically it's not possible in many instances. And I'd always had the, sort of, the idea that be passionate about what you do. So rather than looking for the perfect situation all the time, find the passion in actually what you do.

Because nobody's situation is perfect, but there are great, there are great things in every situation. So I'd always believed in trying to find the passion in, in what I did. And, you know, when I started off my career as a private tennis coach, and in those days we didn't have any indoor facilities, Beth, you know, is in the freezing cold and gloves.

And, and in order to generate the interest of people at all levels, when you're a private tennis coach, you have to have some great enthusiasm. and I can remember in the early days of this, making a decision that, you know, I mean, they're going to do this or not do this. and actually the way in which you can do it is to be really passionate about it.

And that it will rub off and it will have an influence on people around you. And, and as a consequence, they will come back for more tennis lessons and I will establish a business. And I can remember that moment very, very well. I can, you know, bizarrely, I can even remember where I was sitting. When I met, when I had that conversation with myself, thought I was a bit mad nowadays, we'd call it self reflection, but you know, it was, I had to do it in order to, in order to make, to make my business work and then I've kept that up for forever more. Actually, and it's, you know, you've got to find the passion in what you do as much as looking for something that you're passionate about.

Beth Stallwood: [00:13:01] We're so aligned on that Simon, because not everyone can work in a job that they feel 100% passion for.

There are going to be people out there. And in fact, I think most people, it's probably 1% of people who get to live and work and. In, in their true calling and their true passion and are able to make money from it and live the life that they want to live. Most people work in a, a job that they might care about a bit or not care about at all, or care about a lot, but it's not everything that they're

looking for because you know what they're skilled at might not be what they're passionate about, what they've got a background in an experience then might not be what they're really passionate about. What they're passionate about. It might be something that never actually let you earn any money. Like, I, I would love to spend my days just like playing with all the dogs in the world, but that's not going to actually be a career for me.

And I, you know, you call it like, be passionate about what you do. I, I often think in song titles and I call this one, the love, the one you're with song don't, you know, I won't start seeing it now maybe later on. But there's something here about that is great things in, in all jobs I believe. And, I talked to lots of different people about this even jobs that you might think like, wow, that sounds really dull.

Different people find different things exciting. And sometimes it is about reflecting. And understanding, I love the idea, have that conversation with yourself. What is it that will make this work for me that will bring the joy for me and really working on it from that way. Yeah.

Simon Jones: I mean, I'm not, you know, I'm not, I'm not the spiritual sort but I do believe that if you take that approach, then you'd tack, then the things that you are passionate about tend to come your way. You know, the two, the two things come hand in hand. But it's, you know, in, in, in, in life we talk a lot about decision-making. then the first decision that you make is whether to enjoy something or not, you know, things, making an effort. Being passionate about something. All of these are decisions that are in our control and you, you know, one has the opportunity to control them. If you let others control them for you, that's not the right place to be. These are decisions that you make to see the good in something to find the joy in it and to find the passion in it.

[00:15:28] You can make that decision. It's not easy. Anybody listening to this will think my life has been an easy ride. It's not, you have really tough times too. but actually it's a decision that you make. That is the majority of the time for you. Yeah.

[00:15:46] **Beth Stallwood:** [00:15:46] And that's so true is that their decisions are the choices that we make are up to us and so often I think we allow people or we, we make the assumption that it's other people influencing some of those things versus us really kind of sitting there going, actually, this is what I want to do. I find a lot of people. I like, oh, well, my boss is really difficult. Therefore I can't find any joy at work or I'm in this job that I don't, you know, I'm not really passionate about.

So I can't find any joy and it's not really in that binary there's a whole like colorful world yeah. In between good and bad that we can find ways of working. And you're so right, from my perspective, there is no such thing as 100% joy all the time. It's just that's not realistic. That's not the human experience.

[00:16:31] There are going to be highs and lows. And it's, it's so much more about appreciating the height and finding ways to get the highs as well as understanding that the lows don't last forever.

Simon Jones: Absolutely. Absolutely. I mean, I was very lucky in my time to be involved with. With athletes that won world championships in tennis, in juniors.

[00:16:51] And so the, the ideals that one uses with athletes, they apply very well to this context that we're talking about Beth, because, you know, I'll say I'm at my worst when I'm complaining and

when I'm blaming. I'm at my worst when I'm complaining, when I'm blaming athletes at their worst, when they're complaining and when they're blaming.

And I will absolutely say, of course I've blamed other people and you know, complained about other people. But, you know, I've been fortunate enough in working with the people, the athletes that I have to realize that that's the wrong way and to make the choice not to do it. You know, and if you look at it, if you look at the negative side, you look at the negative side of one's career.

[00:17:37] The list is long. If you want it to be, it's a long list, but it'll just kill you and suck your energy. So why make that choice, you know, why make that choice? And that's the kind of take the bull by the horns. Take ownership of your life. Take ownership of how you show up, how you respond to things that have gone well and understand them and unpick them and know what's good and understand about what's gone by the end. Be able to let some of that stuff go, be able to learn from it and keep that constant growth mindset of understanding that actually every time you get something wrong or it doesn't go your way, you can learn something from that process.

Simon Jones: Absolutely. I think another big thing for me was authenticity. you know, I was lucky enough in a one stage of my executive life at the LTA to had been given a coach by the organization. And, this, this person really helped me understand how much energy was not being, how much energy I was using, not being authentic.

You know, something that I taught, as you said at the start, I, I pass on what I've learned to other people, not to try to impose myself on them by the way, but, but, you know, and authenticity is absolutely paramount. You have to be yourself. Nobody's better in the world at being you, you know, it's something that people need to embrace and be as authentic as they can because it releases an energy in you.

[00:19:06] That's a fantastic feeling. but we don't know in, in the work environment, we're acting we're trying to be something that we're actually not. And the so many people are around like that. So the people that I always knew always worked for me, I always tried to get them to be authentic and the real them.

[00:19:27] And that is such good advice. And one thing I always reflected on in my own career, when I, when I worked in organizations for organizations versus running my own business is if I look back over my career, every time I had a successful career move had a successful moment, had a big thing that went really well, whatever, whatever measures of success you put in place for yourself.

Whenever I got promoted, whenever, you know, the opportunities came to me, it was always at the moments I decided to be myself to be authentic, to be me, were the moments when those things happened, the moments when I felt met more stuck in a rut, or I didn't get things right, were all the moments when I was trying to adapt myself to be different or to be something that I thought someone else wanted versus just going with my version of what it should look like.

Simon Jones: [00:20:17] Absolutely. And having worked with you, Beth, I can absolutely endorse that in you. I saw that in heaps.

Beth Stallwood: [00:20:25] Oh, thank you, Simon. That's such a nice thing to say. Thank you. I really appreciate that. So you're thinking about your kind of guidance to others. Obviously, authenticity

really important for both, making things work and joy and all of the things that we want in successful times, you're working with these amazing, coaches who are coaching some of the best athletes in the world right now. How do you go about helping them find that balance between the, you talked to her quite a lot about that, that pressure that they're under, and it must be an immense pressure to kind of win on the field.

And there must be a lot of blame to the wards, the coaches, when things don't go right, how do you help them to see the benefits and to get the joy and to balance that pressure being a good thing versus pressure being an overwhelming thing.

Simon Jones: Okay. so, so I have a sort of a, three point approach with the people that I work with, which I'll share with you in a second.

But one of the things, one of the tools I use within it is to try to understand what's stressing you. Because stress is everywhere. We all, we all have stress and it has an amazing effect on us. It can have a positive effect if it's in the right way, but it often has an energy sapping, effect and over time it can be really debilitating.

So, you know, helping people understand what's stressing them and then identifying those areas and doing something about it is a really, really good tool and that worked for me personally, really well. Actually it was one of the things that helped me a lot at this stage when I was struggling a little bit, but my three, my, the three sort of my three pronged attack with people are, vulnerability self-awareness and critical thinking.

So, you know the vulnerability is so how can I best describe it? If I'm vulnerable to you, I feel it as weakness, but if you're vulnerable to me, I see it as a strength of yours. So vulnerability is, is courage. It's strength. It opens your mind up to an immense amount of learning, but it also creates empathy with the people that you're vulnerable with.

Because if you open up to me, I'll open up to you and you get that, you know, you get in the sort of inside the real important parts of a relationship then, and the higher. The higher you go up in your industry, the harder it is to be vulnerable. But what happens is the ones at the very top they're very vulnerable.

So nobody asks me more questions than the very top people I work with. So they, and it's curious, you'd think they'd ask less and I'm definitely thinking there's a parallel between the fact that they have the ability to be curious and the confidence to be vulnerable and the success that they have.

So vulnerability is the first thing, self-awareness is, is absolutely critical and, you know, self-reflection and the ability to sit back and understand what your preferences are, you know, your emotional intelligence, the effect of your behavior on others, how you respond to things, how you feel about them.

That is really, really important as without that tool and without an enhanced ability to do that, you'll struggle because you'll keep things bottled up and you won't realize what's going on. And then finally critical thinking is very important in sport coaching. And I believe it's very important to everywhere and, you know, to simply define critical thinking, you know, we get data and we have opinions. So too often people just take data at face value. There'll be told something and they'll just

accept it or they'll form an opinion of something. Critical thinking, encourages them to actually do neither, but to really think about it and to think about the options and where it's come from and why that's being said, and really scrutinize things.

And, you know, work working with the guy with the, with the people that I work with, those three elements are always in and around my practice with them, and the critical thinking is, you know, that's where, that's, where I'll give them the most challenge. Because the best question you can ask anybody.

Beth Stallwood: Yeah. Like that start with why, why are we here? What are we doing? You know, really think about

Simon Jones: Why connect with your, why? I mean, people, if you had to one tip, if I had, what if you said, let's say you've got one tip, it would be connect with your, why actually identify why you're doing what you're doing.

Beth Stallwood: And while you're doing those decisions and all of those things and those first two coming back to them, I totally agree. And this idea that it is something, vulnerability is something we admire in other people, but really hate about ourselves. It's such, it's such a weird human. I see it in every, almost everybody has the same thing.

If you open up to me, I'm like, wow, you're amazing. I love this. It's so brave. And so courageous. And then, you know, for yourself you go, oh no, I couldn't possibly do that because that's too much risk and there's too much going on. But yet we see it and admire it in others. So definitely vulnerability being able to have that and that curiosity and empathy.

[00:26:10] Totally. Yeah. It's so interesting.

Simon Jones: Somebody is listening and said, well, how do I be more vulnerable? It's a very easy answer. You just say to people, what do you think. Yeah. What do you think? And immediately that unlocks that simple question, unlocks a whole host of emotions and opportunities by just asking that simple question.

[00:26:35] **Beth Stallwood:** [00:26:35] Or even just saying something like, I don't have the answer. I don't know. Can you help me? I don't know. Can you help me? You know, and yeah. people always are, I think often scared to ask that. Can you help me question? Because they think everyone's going to say no, but when people come and ask you for help, it's, it's actually like a really, it can be a really great thing.

You feel like you're important and you feel like it's that people value your time and your energy and equally, I don't think people say no that often when you actually genuinely ask them for help. So. Definitely.

Simon Jones: I've never seen it. I've never seen anybody say no. And, we all are, we all ask love to be asked our opinion and things.

So the, you know, the, the emotional, the social capital in those, in those simple questions is immense

Beth Stallwood: [00:27:22] It's immense. And the second part, I think, you know, your, your idea about this self-awareness is, definitely something so important to understand yourself, to give yourself some time, to understand your preferences, what you like to do, how you like to work, and then to also have the understanding that you can't use those just as an excuse as to why you own, you can't do things or why you won't do it. So sometimes people get a bit aware. So they do self-awareness level one is what I kind of call it, which is, ah, my preference is to do things in this way. And then they go, oh, because my preference is to do things in this way I will no longer do things or try anything else other than the way that I'm trying it. So it's so for me, it's self-awareness but if you really want self-awareness to work, it's actually. Acting on what you know about yourself and letting yourself grow from that position.

Simon Jones: Yeah. Yeah. Look, and there's so many layers. There's endless layers. You can look into it. but again, one of the things that I would find, I would say that's really common in the top people that I work with is they not afraid to question themselves and they're not afraid to ask people what they think, but it also doesn't second guess their beliefs.

So, you know, it's a key feature. cause some people, when, when they sort of self-reflect or ask others opinions, they completely changed direction and then they change direction again and they change direction again. I think when I, when I work with, with my people, you know, I always want them to understand their true beliefs first, actually.

Beth Stallwood: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. And then the third point you made there about critical thinking. it, again, a fascinating thing when I see so many people, either being driven by data completely by data or by their own opinions versus this idea that you can actually really unpick.

What are the situation where what's the, why, what are we trying to achieve and, and to go a bit deeper. And I wonder how much of our and, you know, this is more of a putting out there as a big question, how much of what we do or don't do around critical thinking is around how time poor people are to actually stop and reflect and consider and think.

Simon Jones: Yeah. Yep. Yeah, definitely time. I mean, so yeah, absolutely. I mean, empathy is another one that comes to mind. Is empathy is linked to that critical thinking, because it's trying to think about trying to give consideration to how it affects others and what others might be thinking. rather than my opinion, or the facts say this, so we've got to do this, what I've learned and, and boy, am I learning all the time? What I've learned is that. Other people's views can be very different to mine. And that's actually a good thing. Shocking as it may seem to myself.

Beth Stallwood: And do you know what the other thing is? They might be very different and they might be right.

Simon Jones: They may well be right. And most of the time they are. Right.

Beth Stallwood: And, and that's the thing, isn't it is that sometimes we get into a zone where we're a bit afraid to ask for other people's opinions. Cause we kind of want to go with our own versus. Who else has got something to say, but surely in this world and where we're at, but when you're looking at, especially in things like sport or in business, or actually in any industry where you're trying to

achieve something or trying to deliver something, is that more perspectives will ultimately, if you can really work with them, lead to a better, more considered answer.

Simon Jones: Yes, definitely. Definitely. No doubt about it. Well, put.

Beth Stallwood: But again, I always think about this the time poor people trying to find time to properly listen and input and understand other opinions gets harder in, in some, some zones when you're under that pressure. Yeah.

Simon Jones: Yeah, absolutely. That's right. I mean, the pressure of the pressure that people are under not, not to do this, it takes a big, it takes a really big character to step back and do this properly and I've had the. Privileged to work with some really good people in football like that.

Beth Stallwood: And to say like, let's, let's really make this work and, and change how we do things to make it better. right. So some thinking, it's, it's amazing to see your kind of three point maybe four point if we add empathy end, but we can count that under other things, your, your real philosophy there.

[00:32:19] And when you're thinking of this, one of the things you said was around you're, you're always learning. How do you make sure you keep learning? Because I think that's a great way of getting joy into your life is to keep learning new things. You've had obviously a, a great long career with lots of different roles, lots of different perspectives in it.

[00:32:38] How do you stop yourself from getting into that zone of I know everything now I can stop learning.

[00:32:44] **Simon Jones:** [00:32:44] well, you know. I'm very lucky in as much as I, at my, my stage of my life, when I finished the 30 year career with one organization, most people then don't. Just wind down but I found myself, right, right at the bottom of a steep learning curve in a totally different sport.

So that in itself has helped supercharge my appetite to learn because if I didn't learn really quickly, I wouldn't have been able to float here. Yeah. the next thing I would add to that is, is, the tragedy of COVID and the lockdowns, created a massive explosion in learning. So that, that, that was helpful as well.

I have a few learning tools that I use that I recommend for others and you know, to, to it, to help me learn and, developing what I'm doing. so one of the learning is like three hooks. and the three hooks represent my philosophy. So when we were talking about vulnerability self-awareness and critical thinking, I could listen to 10 podcasts for example, Beth and the four of them have something related to those hooks, then I'll capture it. But if they're not related to that, those hooks are just nicely consume it and let it go away. Yeah, so that's one thing. And then another tool that I use it is something called three things. So whenever an event happens or I go to an event or I have a meeting or anything, I consolidate it down into three core takeaways and those take just three. So the process of doing it is important there.

Beth Stallwood: So a really kind of honing it down into the three key messages or takeaways.

Simon Jones: No more than three. and then what I do is I keep them, I keep them in an electronic notebook, which is, which is relevant here because with electronic notebooks, like OneNote and Evernote they're available on all your devices.

So if I'm on a tube train and I'm bored as most of the time I am on a train, I can just flick through my phone and I'll go to three things and I'll revisit and retrieve the information very, very, very quickly and that, and then I'll sit there in the train thinking about that event and recalling it. And then the final thing that I do I do with my people is it's based on something called the Ebbinghaus forgetting curve, which is a bit of research. And it's fundamentally how much information you've lost after 20 minutes and after hour and after a day and after two weeks. So, so it's this concept of retrieval. So if I do a workshop with somebody. Within three days, I'll send them an email reminder of it. And then two weeks later I'll send them a WhatsApp asking them a question about it. And then I'll always retrieve it at the start of the next one. So learn the tools like that have been very, very helpful to me to wrestle down this massive monster of things that need to be learned.

Beth Stallwood: Yeah. I think that's one of the challenges, isn't it? There's so much that can be learned and there's so much content out there in terms of podcasts, Ted talks, YouTube. Online learning that there's a lot of it and you're right. There has been a massive explosion on the online stuff. And what I really liked about your learning tools is actually the simplicity of them that it doesn't have to be complicated, that you can just write down three things afterwards and keep it somewhere and then refer back and refresh your mind, and I quite like your first one, and I think I might need to do that a little bit of this there's sometimes I read things or listen to things and I think I have to like really understand it all and get into the detail of it. But the idea that some of it, you can just say, actually it doesn't really fit into my big three things, so I can let some of those go and I can just enjoy the process of listening versus thinking. I have to really learn these things. And that's a good way of keeping your brain a bit or giving your brain a bit of space

Simon Jones: And folks, everybody listening to this is going to be exactly the same. The odd thing is, is that you have a pretend, a possibility to recall it much better when you do it like that.

[00:37:34] If you just let something go, you can recall it quite easily, but when you're under pressure to learn it all the time and you don't have a learning structure in your own mind, then it's very, it becomes very hard and it becomes a pressure, you know, in regards to the simple word, Beth. Simple's great. You know, the sophistication is in the simplicity of things for people.

Beth Stallwood: And sometimes making things simple is the hardest thing you can possibly do. But when you do it, it's the best thing you can do.

Simon Jones: It's one of the it's one of the things the coaches will always say is when they listen to a Juergen Klopp or a Pep Guardiola, or these famous guys, and you ask them what they picked up from it, that's how often they'll say. Oh, it's so simple what they do. It's so simple what they do, because it is simple what they do, but behind it is a lot of critical thinking of course, but, yeah, you're right.

Beth Stallwood: And often with the simple stuff, the outcome is what looks simple. Like if you've created something or you're putting it out there in the big wide world, it's it's 20 or 30 or 40 years of experience, you put into your simple three step portal, but it took you 30 years to create that model.

And you didn't have it when you first started. And you, you learn through all of the things that you got wrong on the awkward, horrible moments and the failures and the like lying in bed at three o'clock in the morning. Wondering how the hell you get through the day.

Simon Jones: Absolutely. When people pay me for my private coaching. They're not paying me for that 60 minutes, not 40 years.

Beth Stallwood: Exactly. The 40 years of learning that maybe be don't need to take 40 years. They only take 20 years. And maybe when they're then coaching, someone only takes 10 years. but with that, we all need to make our own mistakes as well. Don't we, we need to be able to learn through getting things wrong, as well as getting things.

Right. And for me, some of my best learning points are the things where you think, oh God, that was a massive fail.

Simon Jones: Yeah well, we have those moments when we reflect back and cringe that way. Yeah.

Beth Stallwood: Yeah. And well, I hope, hope for life is that you have slightly more moments where you smile than when you cringe, but you know, some, some weeks it doesn't work or

Simon Jones: And lose your memory.

Beth Stallwood: Yeah. That's awful. Unless you lose the memory of all the others,

Simon Jones: Only the bad things,

Beth Stallwood: Right. Simon It's been amazing talking to you and all your advice and guidance. I have some quick fire questions for you to finish off with. Are you ready for it?

Simon Jones: I'm ready for them because if I'm not, I'm not being paid much attention, but go ahead.

Beth Stallwood: I'm going to go ahead. Say question one for you personally, as an individual in your life. What is always guaranteed to bring you some work joy?

Simon Jones: Finding the passion in what I do.

Beth Stallwood: Yeah. Great question two. What book are you currently reading?

Simon Jones: I've got three books on the go right now and two of them are by a guy called Michael Bungay Stanier. One is called The Coaching Habits and the other one is called The Advice Monster. Michael is not from sport but he's a tremendous author and, I also, signed up to his, a year of living brilliantly, which is, a free course where you get a video clip. An inspirational video clip every week. So those The Coaching Habit and The Advice Monster, and the other book I'm reading is a book by Sam Walker, it's called The Captain Class. Which is, a research into the greatest sports teams of all time. And what were the real drivers of success? And it's all about the captain and the personal characteristics of that captain. And it's very surprising in terms of leadership, what actually, what actually makes the difference. So those are my three books.

Beth Stallwood: Brilliant. You're a bit like me. So, I mean, I, I never just have one book on the go. There's always a multitude going on. Right question three. What is the best or most useful bit of advice that someone has given you that you always come back to,

Simon Jones: Get over it? That's probably why I would, in my early days, somebody challenged me to get over something. and it really shifted the dial in terms of the way I looked at things, no complaints, no limits, no blame. And it was harsh at the time, but I remember it well, and I remember the impact it had on me get over it.

Beth Stallwood: Love it. A very, a very good friend of mine, who I have known for a very long time, who, a long time ago said the words to me. Exactly. How long is it going to take you to get over it? And when someone puts it to you like that, you kind of go, oh yeah. How long am I going to waste? Just thinking or overthinking or being annoyed about this. So, great advice. Just go for it. Tough. But. You know, in the right zone. Okay. Now let's think about your advice for our listeners. Can you give our listeners one bit of really simple, practical advice of something they could go and do right now? Do it tomorrow. Do it regularly that you think would help them get more joy into that?

Simon Jones: I'm going to go back to this, the piece on the vulnerability here, Beth. And I'm going to say the one piece of advice I would give to you is go and ask people what they think. Yeah. And see, and then watch what happens, pay attention to what happens. And of course, listen, you know, we haven't used the word listening, but it is fundamental.

But one bit of going to ask people what they think more often as people ask people what they think and you'll see what happens.

Beth Stallwood: Amazing. Thank you. finally from me, where can people find out more about you, your philosophy, what you do, et cetera?

Simon Jones: Well, I'm on LinkedIn and I'm also on Twitter. people can contact me that way and I'm very happy to speak to people.

I love love sharing and, and listening to what others are doing as well, and, you know, listening to their ideas. So I'm on LinkedIn and Twitter. I am not really out there in the social media world, in the, in the book world and the, and the podcast and website world. But I am contactable by LinkedIn and Twitter.

And my Twitter handle is a SI one OS if you haven't worked that out, and I'm also on LinkedIn.

Beth Stallwood: And what we'll do is we'll put those links into the, notes about the podcast on the website, et cetera, so that people can go and click on them rather than trying to find you individually, on LinkedIn, et cetera, Simon, it's been amazing. Thank you so much for coming on and being part of the Work Joy Jam. It's been a great conversation. I love your inspiration and totally going to take some of those things, around that, those three bits, those that, that advice and use some of it for myself. And I really hope some of our listeners will take, so thank you very much.

Simon Jones: Pleasure, Beth. Great, great to listen to you and hear and make contact with you. I can't wait to listen to these podcasts. This, this is going to be one in the list that I'm going to follow. Not me doing the other ones.

Beth Stallwood: Well, you can listen to your own ones. Everyone else's as well. Thanks Simon.

Simon Jones: Thanks Beth.

Beth Stallwood: Thank you for listening to that episode where fireman Jones. I definitely took a lot from my conversation with Simon and some really practical tips, but the one I'm going to come back to, and I think it's a really great tool that Simon suggested is the three things options. So whenever you're at an event, obviously at the moment, many people are doing event events online or meetings online, narrowing it down, thinking about what are the three core things, the three core takeaways and popping them down so that you can always come back and remember what they are.

I don't know about you, but so many people are in the zone of going from one meeting to the next meeting, to an event to a session to trying to manage that day. And to remember everything is so impossible, but to write down and really consolidate those three things, I think is a great suggestion. I personally, because I'm an old fashioned paper, kind of a girl would write it in a notepad. So I'm going to get a notepad starts doing this. But what a great bit of advice there from Simon. I hope you enjoy this episode of the Work Joy Jam. Do go and listen to some of our other amazing, different, interesting, insightful, guests that come along, you can find more about work joy at www.createworkjoy.com and we're on Instagram.

So if you want to, and we would love it. If you could let us know what you think, tag yourself in some actions and tasks and tell us what you're up to. Thank you very much for listening to the Work Joy Jam