



FIVE POWERFUL LIFE LESSONS FROM NSM PODCAST GUESTS (SO FAR)

One of the best things that I've done in a long time was to finally start producing the [No Schedule Man Podcast](#) earlier this year. The experience has been enriching and rewarding in a number of ways.

Already, I feel like we've built up a treasure trove of helpful stories, useful experiences and life lessons that just about any of us can relate to as we go about our journey. It's empowering to hear these stories and learn from others, and to reveal more about what their process was and what struggles were met and overcome, as opposed to just putting attention to success and results.

The fact that these guests may not be among the people you have heard of before further illustrates the point, in my opinion, of how relevant and impactful these lessons are. These are people like you and me; everyday people who are trying to live a life more true to themselves, do more of what they're passionate about, and stretch themselves beyond their perceived limits as well as overcoming personal challenges that they encounter along the way. How are they doing it? What have they learned? How can we apply in our own journey what they have already conquered in theirs?

I encourage you to listen through any of the episodes in its entire completely, as I feel that each guest has shared all kinds of valuable perspective and learning. But I also think there are some key lessons that keep coming up over and over again, and so I felt it might be helpful to summarize them here and you can consider and/or reference them as you like.

LESSON ONE: Personal Transformation IS Possible & Enormous Challenges Can Be Re-Shaped to Fuel Your Future

It's a common mistake to judge ourselves while just assuming everyone else's grass is greener. When we lose our flow or come upon the inevitable challenges that life brings upon us, it seems almost automatic for us to feel like something's wrong with *us*, that we're not "doing it right" or that life would be better if we "could only be like other people."

Here's something I've come to believe deep in my heart and soul: Everyone struggles sometimes. It's *what they do* with the struggle or setback that defines their experience.

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When I was going through what ended up being a divorce after 12 years of marriage, I honestly felt like a complete failure as a human being. I was embarrassed and ashamed, despite the fact that I didn't feel the same way about any of my many friends and colleagues who had been through the same thing. But ask me now, all these years later, and I'll be quick to tell you that it may be one of the best things that ever happened to me, albeit incredibly painful at the time. I learned – and continue to learn – things about myself I don't know that I could have learned any other way. And, as I can see now thanks to my podcast guests, everyone else has gone through significant challenges as well.

Some examples:

[Winnie Anderson](#), host of the Let's Talk Tech Podcast ([Episode 16](#)), was flying along as a top-level HR whiz in the corporate world when a car accident left her with a traumatic brain injury. She went from identifying herself as "smart" to not being able to tie her own shoe. She was no longer able to work. So what did she do? She reinvented herself.

[Mike Mulligan \(Episode 2\)](#), owner and creator of Moving Forward Rehabilitation and Wellness Centre, had his whole life ahead of him when, at age 16, a car accident left him a quadriplegic. Years later, he has created a facility to assist others like himself, and is vigilantly pursuing his goal of walking again by age 40. His perspective on his journey is inspirational and remarkable.

[Lisa Brandt](#), Radio Broadcaster, Author & Voice Talent ([Episode 6](#)), almost died of sepsis, because no one seemed to be able to tell her what was really wrong with her. She ended up having to trust herself and face ridicule from paramedics when she called for an ambulance when, as it turned out, she was almost at the end of her life. Everyone else kept telling her she "had the flu." She's since written about it ("My Sepsis Story") and is informing, empowering and helping others as a result. Her efforts will probably save someone's life.

[Jim McCormick](#), creator of Allstage ([Episode 7](#)), worked most of his life as a steelworker, not particularly enjoying it but making a good living and enjoying a lifestyle of a certain level. And then one day in his 50's, he was told he was no longer needed. With no other formal education or career skills (other than his love of and skill for music), what do you do? Well, Jim reinvented himself and is happier than ever, doing something he loves.

[Jason Stephenson \(Episode 12\)](#), creator of Meditation Masters.tv, was a lost soul, entangled in drugs, debt and self-loathing. Then one day, he chose to live differently. Now, he is a guiding light to tens of thousands of people around the globe, including me. His story of personal transformation is remarkable. Give it a listen.

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[Sheila Stevenson \(Episode 17\)](#) grew up suffering from, in her words, “horrendous abuse of every kind.” No child or person of any kind should ever have to endure that. And yet, endure it she did, and she continued to march on, learn and love, and eventually became an Author, Speaker and Human Potential Life Coach who helps others to heal similar scars and move forward with their lives. Sheila now experiences joy on a regular basis and is a remarkably kind and caring spirit.

[Rose Cora Perry \(Episode 3\)](#), Musician, Model and Media Personality, took lessons from several derailed creative pursuits and some deep personal disappointments to evolve and fuel her current passions.

LESSON TWO: To Do Anything New or Achieve Some Level of Success, You Have to Get Started, Keep Moving and Learn as You Go

Raise your hand if you’ve ever waited on something until “the time was right” or “until you were ready.” We all have. And sometimes life *can* wait. At times, it has to. But in many cases, the thing we didn’t do or didn’t even try to reach for is left in the shadows simply because we were too busy listening to the excuses we tell ourselves of why we can’t, or shouldn’t, instead of just getting going and learning along the way.

We weren’t so hesitant as kids. At one time, we didn’t know how to ride a bicycle or even walk, but we were so determined to learn that we were willing to take those first steps, fall down, get back up and do that over and over again until we finally had it right. Why should the process of developing a new skill or experience later in life be any different?

The message: it isn’t. Just get started. The fun is in the journey. Every time you fall down is another story to tell later on down your path. If you are willing to just get started, you will grow almost in spite of yourself!

Some examples:

[Kevin O’Hara \(Episode 11\)](#) of AlcoholMastery.com started his video production journey with an iPhone sitting on music stand with a photo of his son behind it, which provided him with a feeling that he was actually talking to someone.

[David Ciccarelli \(Episode 10\)](#), now the CEO of the globally recognized Voices.com, began learning how to design a website by going to the library and signing out “Web development for Dummies.” He also described how he found ways to come up with financing for building the

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business when, on the surface, there appeared to be no money at hand. But he didn't let that stop him. He believed in himself and found a way.

[Jason Stephenson \(Episode 12\)](#) worked at producing his meditations for years with few results and was almost to the point of shutting it all down and giving up ... until it finally started to catch on and later became what he described as a “snowball.”

[Alfredo Caxaj \(Episode 8\)](#), the Executive & Artistic Director of Sunfest, kept music close to his heart, his guiding light through all of the dark days of having to flee Guatemala as a refugee and then enduring discrimination and hardship in his new home in Canada. He started small, with just a few live music events, and then acted on his idea of a World Music Festival, which has now grown to be recognized as one of the best of its kind, anywhere in the world.

LESSON THREE:

Sharing & Giving Are Two of the Most Powerful Things You Can Do

You've heard it said many times before: you get what you give. And sometimes, we underestimate what we *have* to give, such as gift of simply being open enough to share our experiences with others.

Some examples:

[Jason Stephenson \(Episode 12\)](#) describes the ritual he conducts prior to recording any of his guided affirmations, asking himself, “What can I give?” to his listeners.

Impact Speaker, [Andy Thibodeau \(Episode 13\)](#) teaches students and school faculty that “Sharing is Caring” and that there is always something to be learned, some way to grow, someone to be helped, at every single point in your journey.

[Sara Westbrook \(Episode 14\)](#), UPower Speaker, Author & Singer, spoke of the value and deep connection that comes through other people sharing their experiences, which help us to feel as if we're not alone in our journeys or with our particular challenges.

[Sheila Stevenson \(Episode 17\)](#) helps people heal and improve their lives by sharing some of the most traumatic of her personal memories. In turn, that allows her to position her experiences as a way to assist others, as well as herself.

[Kevin O'Hara \(Episode 11\)](#) put himself on camera when he was most vulnerable and bared his soul to the world by sharing his story on YouTube. By doing so, he ended up connecting with

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and helping thousands of other people around the world – including me – simply by being genuine and openly sharing his journey.

LESSON FOUR: Be Creative & Resourceful

This is “part 2” to the lesson of just getting started and learning as you go. So often we think we need to have the latest gadgets and gear, staff or other resources before we can set out on our creative journeys.

Baloney.

If you look around, you’ll find all sorts of ways that you can get started, and you can always adjust and change as you go along.

Some examples:

Musician [Chad Price \(Episode 4\)](#) started building an audience on YouTube by simply singing a song into a camera in his bedroom. His videos have evolved over the years. The more he did, the better they got, and he’s built a loyal following in the time since. And when it came time for him to embark upon the quest to record his first CD, he didn’t let his lack of experience or name recognition slow him down. He decided who would be the best, big-name Producer to work with, reached out and invited the opportunity to come alive. And it did.

[Mike McCurlie \(Episode 9\)](#) of MJM Media is the embodiment of creativity and going with the flow. He built and lived in a treehouse in his early 20’s! When he didn’t know how to do something when his career took new twists and turns, he learned. He read books. He took courses. His curiosity continues to propel him into new creative endeavours. Go on and give Mike’s story a listen. It’ll make you smile!

[Kevin O’Hara \(Episode 11\)](#) got the idea he could combine the production of his videos with improving his fitness, and began recording as he would go out for hikes and long walks. I’d always wondered how he got the footage, so I asked him about it. His answer? A selfie stick.

[Sean Vigue \(Episode 15\)](#) of Sean Vigue Fitness is now known as “YouTube’s Most-Watched Yoga and Pilates Guy.” But there was a time when he didn’t have any videos at all. You’d think he’d want a fancy fitness studio with all the bells and whistles. Instead, he took his flip cam outside, dropped his yoga mat on the driveway or in a park on in the middle of the woods, and got to work. It’s become part of his brand, a key to his charm. He just got going, and let his personality, passion and knowledge shine through.

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Are you holding yourself up waiting for the time to be right? I sure did. I did it for years, with my thought of starting the podcast, or doing my [YouTube videos](#), or sharing my songwriting. I don't wait anymore. I work with what I have, and let myself learn along the way.

LESSON FIVE: The Idea of Doing What You Love is No Myth!

You may have heard people say, "Do what you love and you'll never work a day in your life." Perhaps that can happen, but I bet these people would tell you that the work *very* hard, even though they love what they do. Maybe the difference is that, when you're working on something you love that aligns with your values, you can put in a lot more hours and effort without feeling as if you're toiling as tough as when you're at one of those jobs (and we've all had them) that grinds away at your soul.

You *can* do what you love and make a good living. The idea that you can't is just a belief that you've agreed to at some point. Need evidence?

Some examples:

[Winnie Anderson \(Episode 16\)](#) is doing it. She left the corporate world once to be a consultant, failed, went back to corporate, and then was forced to make a new choice after the car accident that left her with a brain injury. The irony is that the challenge forced her to make some choices, and she is now doing something she loves, helping people and continuing to reinvent herself.

[Andy Thibodeau \(Episode 13\)](#) is doing it. He originally thought he'd be a high school teacher until he realized his talent and passion for speaking to young people and equipping them with an empowering message. Now in his 40's, he's never known another way but to do what he loves to do.

[Jason Stephenson \(Episode 12\)](#) is doing it, after almost giving up after a few years of effort. He now is enjoying a vibrant lifestyle of health and creativity and is being supported by the grateful audience (which includes me) that have identified with his kind and giving spirit.

[Kevin O'Hara \(Episode 11\)](#) is doing it, after making a complete lifestyle change and relocating himself geographically. With hundreds of videos, several books, an online course and growing community as results of his genuine effort, he's off and running, working at helping people all around the world overcome addiction and improve their lives.

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[Jim McCormick \(Episode 7\)](#) is doing it, after spending most of his life as a Steelworker before being suddenly left without a job or any clear, immediate path to follow. In his episode, he describes how he would envy friends of his who actually enjoyed their jobs. He went on to identify why he now feels like he's one of them.

[Sean Vigue \(Episode 15\)](#) is doing it, putting his love of theatre and passion for fitness and overall lifestyle together to create videos, books and a smartphone app.

[Sheila Stevenson \(Episode 17\)](#) is doing it, as a Speaker, Author and Life Coach helping people heal and go forward with more peace in their hearts.

[Alfredo Caxaj \(Episode 8\)](#) doing it, now known around the world for the incredible work he has done to bring cultures together through the incredible power of music.

[Chad Price \(Episode 4\)](#) is doing it, determined to make his love and passion for music carry him forward.

[Derek Botten \(Episode 1\)](#) is doing it, a former broadcaster in an industry that has changed drastically since the heyday that he once enjoyed. He now does voice-over work full-time and spends as much time as he can in his shop building and creating other things. He's happier than I've ever seen him.

Race Car Driver, [Jay Doerr \(Episode 5\)](#) is doing it, spending time with his family while continuing to pursue new challenges and experiences to build upon the success he's already enjoyed doing what he loves most: racing.

If these people are all doing what they love, why can't you and I?

BONUS!

Here's one more lesson that has come up several times in many different ways, but was summarized best by [Sara Westbrook in Episode 14](#):

You have the power to make your own choices, believe what you want to believe and think what you want to think.

I strongly encourage you to [listen to what Sara had to say](#), as it's a game-changing life shift when you realize that you can put your attention to (or take it away from) whatever you choose.

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I hope this is helpful to you! As the podcast evolves and grows and more guests contribute, I'm sure we'll have to come back to this list, add to it and maybe even revise a few things. But for now, I'm just happy that I got started, that I'm working with what I have, that I'm sharing openly and genuinely, doing something I love, being creative and choosing to work on something I hope will make a positive difference for someone else at some point.

Thank you for taking some time here. I'm well beyond grateful.

Wishing you health and happiness always,

Kevin Bulmer

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