

Jimmy Turner:

Our natural response to a bad situation is to look for a way out. But if you don't do this first, you're going to end up just as unhappy in your new situation. Don't put the cart ahead of the horse. Here's how to find a way out of your situation. This is The Physician Philosopher Podcast. I'm Dr. Jimmy Turner, an anesthesiologist, personal finance blogger, and life coach for doctors. The Physician Philosopher Podcast teaches you how to create the life that you deserve. One thought at a time, start before you're ready, start by starting, start now. Hey everyone, welcome to episode number 12 of The Physician Philosopher Podcast, where we take an uncurated and unapologetic look into physician life. Today's thought is this, before you change circumstances, you must first do the tough thought work. Otherwise, you'll end up back where you are right now.

Jimmy Turner:

So here's the problem. When we're miserable, unhappy, or otherwise dissatisfied with life, instead of facing things head on and figuring out what the issue is, we often look to change our situation instead. So for those of us that are burned out, morally injured or otherwise feeling stressed or overwhelmed by the various things that we have in our life, the answer seems to be to leave medicine, to go part-time, create non-clinical income streams. We have Facebook groups that have hundreds of thousands of doctors in them, that are all about side gigs, and they're all about leaving medicine or joining the dropout club. That's the actual name of a Facebook group, by the way. Why? Because we think those changes will make us happy or content or satisfied or fulfilled. Something I often ask my clients in these situations is, "Okay, you want to do X. You want to go part-time. You want to go do locums. You want to start a business". Let's say that you've done that. It's five years later, how do you expect that to make you feel?

Jimmy Turner:

And as it turns out, our feelings drive everything. We're either trying to seek pleasure in this life or avoid pain, and so I'll really dig into that. What are you expecting? And they'll be like, "Oh, I think it's going to make me happy. I think I'll be more fulfilled". And the truth is if we don't figure out why we're unhappy first, and we change our circumstances by getting a new job or making new clinical income or non-clinical income, we have a very high chance of being unhappy after we make the change, and we see this all the time, right? In the space that I live in the financial independence community, particularly in the FIRE community, the Financial Independence Retire Early community, this is so common.

Jimmy Turner:

I can't tell you the number of people who think that as long as they put the work in, save a bunch of money, they don't have to enjoy the journey right now, but FIRE that's going to make it all worth it. They anticipate getting there and that FIRE is going to solve all their problems, it's going to make them happy and content and fulfilled and be in control of their life. But there're so many people that I know, that it turns out that they didn't enjoy the journey on the way to FIRE, and then they get there and they end up being miserable afterwards. And the reason why is because they never spent time figuring out why they weren't happy in the place. So, this is actually why we started the Alpha Coaching Experience as our first coaching product, right? Because without examining your current thoughts, changing jobs, producing non-clinical income, financial independence, financial freedom, they're not necessarily going to make you happier.

Jimmy Turner:

And I have to admit I'm one of the people that used to think that was true, right? So I used to think that financial freedom was a way out of burnout. And I think financial freedom is still a tool that can be used in that situation. Don't get me wrong, but I don't think that financial freedom in and of itself is going to solve all your woes. It's going to make you happy or content or fulfilled or satisfied or satiated. That's not what happens. In fact, that's not what happened in my own life. I decided to build a business and I made it successful, right? I have multiple sources of six figure income inside The Physician Philosopher now, and I can tell you that before I found coaching, despite having those things going on, I was not happy. I was burned out. I was miserable, right?

Jimmy Turner:

And so that is why we offered the Alpha Coaching Experience first, and I'm super excited. It starts on the 18th, it's the two days after this episode comes out. So I'm stoked. I'm so excited to dive into that with the new Alpha clients for this fall program. But many people out there were probably like, "I don't understand you man you went into coaching, you're a personal finance blogger, you're a podcaster about medicine and money, right?" I have a money meets medicine podcast. I've got the physician philosopher blog where I have written about financial freedom for three years. Actually, when this blog... this podcast comes out, this site, this business will be almost exactly three years old. So I had a lot of people that are probably thinking, Jimmy, why didn't you just offer business coaching, right? Now, well business coaching be offered for doctors who want to create non-clinical sources of income?

Jimmy Turner:

Absolutely. I was a personal finance blogger and a podcast, for who became a coach. I didn't forget my roots. So honestly that would have been a much easier product for us to launch and to sell. Truly at the physician philosopher where we've been about financial freedom, a lot of my email list expects that content. And then I went with life coaching. Imagine if I had pitched the idea, "do you want to build a six figure source of non-clinical income as a blogger podcast or coach or online course creator? Let us show you how". That would have been so much easier to sell. And in fact, it makes a lot more sense. That's what people would have wanted, and I would have blown it out of the water and that's what would have happened, honestly, but we didn't start there. And the reason why is because I didn't want to put the cart ahead of the horse, because even though that's what people want, it's not necessarily what they needed.

Jimmy Turner:

And I know that because I've lived that journey, I've gone down that path and I didn't want to build a product that wasn't really going to help people with what they needed. We didn't start there, even though it would have been easier. It would've made a lot more money having a paid up business coaching course, right? Or program. And it's because that's not the answer. That's not the answer to solving your discontentment. It's not your answer for solving your unhappiness at work or at home. And I know this because I've lived that journey.

Jimmy Turner:

This is why we didn't do that. Before you can get effective business coaching, you must get effective life coaching. At the very least, you need to have both offered to you at the same time. If you're going to jump right into the business side and you say, "hey, I really want a non-clinical six-figure business. Can you coach me to get me there?" The answer is, yes, of course, I've done it multiple times now. I can absolutely show you how to do that. And the process that took me three years will take you much less

time as part of going through that process. But we started with Alpha Coaching Experience because we recognize that if people don't do the tough thought work, the tough thought work to figure out why they're unhappy to figure out why they're not content to figure out why they feel stressed out overwhelmed or otherwise just aren't where they want to be. That the business coaching isn't really going to be as helpful as it could be.

Jimmy Turner:

Though, as we did perform our needs assessment for the fall launch for the Alpha Coaching Experience, we realized that these people who knew they needed life coaching, they were action takers, they were ready to take change and to make effective plans in their life to become who and what they want to be as a partner, a parent, a physician. That starts on the 18th, but we did the needs assessments beforehand and turns out that, even a ton of people over 90% of the people in the program, want to get business coaching. So we're probably going to offer some of that in the fall program as an example, and as a way to introduce these topics to people. But I think it's so valuable that they're getting life coaching first, that they're getting life coaching alongside of that, to help them figure out why they're unhappy, to help them figure out what the problem is in our country, where 80% of doctors feel overworked and 50% are burned out. So many are looking for a way out. And what you normally do in this situation.

Jimmy Turner:

This is the problem, is that we look for an escape patch. We look for a new job. We decide to switch to part-time or to locums work. We seek financial independence or FIRE through saving enough quickly or generating non-clinical income. And all of these are escape patches to a bad situation. As it turns out, if you don't do the tough thought work first, there's a really high chance that you're going to end up changing your circumstance and still being unhappy afterwards, right? And that's not really the goal. If you ask people, why do you want to do this? They'll say, "because I want to be happy, because I want to be content". Well, what if I told you that even after accomplishing those things, you might not be happy or content, would you still want them? Once you get to this space that you need to be mentally, your business can actually not only get off the ground, but it will thrive.

Jimmy Turner:

So until you learn these tools, business coaching isn't really super helpful for people, I don't think. And I think it's a bit of a disservice because we're selling them something that's not going to actually produce the result they want. If the result that they want is to be happy and content, let's work on that. And then we'll teach you how to build a six figure business, right? So remember the thought model, circumstances, thoughts, feelings, actions, results, right? This comes from life coach school, Brooke Castillo, where all the coaches in the Alpha Coaching experience are getting certified. And so C T F A R, that is the thought model and the most fundamental lesson from that thought model, the circumstances, thoughts, feelings, actions, and results is that your circumstances do not cause your feelings. And if you need a reminder of this, go back and listen to episode 10, where we talk about burnout and the issues there and moral injuries and the issues there.

Jimmy Turner:

And how most of us feel those circumstance of medicine causes our burnout or moral injury. And I walk you through why that's just not true. It's actually our thoughts about our circumstances that cause our feelings and we control our thoughts. So this is why changing your circumstances, changing the sea line before you... in order to produce a new feeling, doesn't really work because it's not the circumstance.

It's not the person who cuts you off, that makes you mad, it's your thought that they don't care about your safety or space, right? It's not the person who died in the hospital that you took care of recently. It's your thoughts that, "well maybe I could have done something differently or I remember meeting their family. They were wonderful people". It's your thoughts about the situation, right? That caused your feelings. That is why changing your circumstances, changing jobs, going to locums, doing part-time work, creating non-clinical income.

Jimmy Turner:

None of that stuff works if you don't do the top thought works first. And that is why the Alpha Coaching experience was the first thing that we offered in the coaching niche, because what people actually need harder to get people to recognize that need? Absolutely. Business coaching would have been a much easier thing to get out there. But that said, there is a solution, right? And it is coaching. And what we do in coaching is we examine those previously unexamined thoughts in our circumstances, we have thoughts and we examine those thoughts that are going buck wild, unexamined. You've never even thought about them before you think them all the time, they seem otherwise harmless. And then you figure out, "Oh wow, this thought is making me feel terrible. I feel like I'm not in control. I feel discontent. I feel unhappy. I feel unfulfilled. I'm not having the impact that I want".

Jimmy Turner:

And that leads to the actions and results that you take, right? Those actions could be buffering our emotions with drinking, under eating, over eating. It could be avoiding them, right? That's what that is. It could be resisting it, trying to keep the door slam shuts so that we don't have to deal with the problem and ultimately that makes it worse. Or we can learn how to change our thoughts to create intentional thoughts that aren't running buckwild, that are our thoughts that we've designed to help us feel, act, and show up how we want. So some people come to me be like, "well, Jimmy, that's great. I understand coaching could be really helpful, but you want to do it myself. I just want it to be a DIY. Self-coach kind of person who takes these concepts and applies them to my life".

Jimmy Turner:

And that is exactly what this podcast is all about, right? These tools that we talk about, the concepts we talk about in this podcast are for you to go back and use, to apply. I want to teach you these concepts and I want to provide value. And this is the freeway that the physician philosopher does this. This is how we do this In this business, we provide these concepts and topics and tools and value to you through this podcast. In fact, it's actually not free. It's free to you, but it costs us money to run this. You'll notice that there aren't any ads on the show because we want to provide value to you so that you can change your life. But at some point, you're going to realize whether now or later that coaching yourself can only get you so far. And we know this, right?

Jimmy Turner:

If you think about your own life and especially if you're married or have children, how many times have you had a conversation with your partner, your spouse, or with your kids. And you're trying to help them understand something or see your perspective on whatever the topic may be. And you talk until you're blue in the face, you explain how, you explain your thought process, your rationale, and they just don't get it. And it just makes you mad and you get angry. And you're like, "I just don't want to see how you don't understand how it works, X like this". And then someone else comes along. It's your neighbor or another family member or a teacher or someone completely different. And all of a sudden, your partner,

your spouse, your kid, that thing that you're trying to help them understand clicks. And it's because there's an outside perspective.

Jimmy Turner:

There's an outside point of view that helps them understand it in a non-judgemental space. You see this happen all the time. And the reason why is because outside perspectives help us grow. And they now do that. I love to give to people. And I probably tell it really often people ask me what's coaching? It's like any other kind of coach you've ever had in your life, right? I got a golf lesson a few months ago because I kept hitting the ball out of bounds. And I recognize that not everybody listening is a golf person, but I think the analogy will make sense regardless. And I kept in the ball left. I kept in the ball left and I was like, "finally, I'm just going to get a coach. And I'm going to get a lesson because I don't know what is going on. And I need to fix this".

Jimmy Turner:

So I show up and I have some ideas about what I'm doing and what's going wrong. And my left arm is probably not as straight as it could be. I need to shift my weight a little bit differently. I've got a really unorthodox swing. So he asks me, put some balls down and it has me hit him. And he takes a video while I'm hitting them. And then he asked me to come sit down and says, "hey, let me show you this to you". Now we lost lots of golf in our house. Masters is coming up, super excited about that. I watched tons of golf. It's probably the only thing I watch on TV regularly. Actually, I don't watch a lot of TV outside of Wake Forest Sports and golf. And so he shows me the video of my own swing. And before he even says anything, just by showing me what my swing looked like, I was like, "wow, that is one of the worst swings I have ever seen in my life".

Jimmy Turner:

It was remarkably bad to the point where he actually said, "you actually have to be pretty decently athletic to hit a ball the way that you do with that bat of a golf swing". And without even touching me, without even changing anything really in terms of physical stuff in real life, he showed me some exercises, he gave me some thoughts to think instead, "feel like you're going halfway back, just take half a swing and hit the ball". And sure enough, I was actually taking a full swing and peering it down the middle and it's because I wasn't overextending my swing anymore. And the only thing he did was changed my thoughts. So I could've kept hacking at it, trying to figure things out myself, watching YouTube videos and trying to apply those. I've tried that those are free. Try the lessons and yeah, it would fix things occasionally.

Jimmy Turner:

But then when I went and got a coach and they actually could show me what I was doing, what my thoughts were and the actions it was producing in this world with pitting a little white ball and me snap poking it and then gave me new thoughts to think. And I started hitting it down the middle. It was amazing to me how valuable that was. And it saved me so much time, the results that I could have gotten watching YouTube videos and getting free content to try to help fix my golf swing, would have taken me years to get the same result that I got by just going and getting a lesson for a few hours. And coaching doctors is absolutely the same. Yes, you can totally listen to this podcast. I want you to listen to this podcast and apply the examples and tools and valuable concepts that you get from this podcast to help change your life.

Jimmy Turner:

And to think about things in a little bit of a different way than you have previously. But until you get coaching, you're not going to realize how much faster those changes could happen. You're not going to realize exactly where you're stuck, talking to someone else helps you figure all that out. And I think that is fundamental to understand that we have to do the tough thought work before we change our circumstances because so many people reach for the escape patch when it comes to burnout or moral injury or being unhappy or discontent or feeling overwhelmed because they've got so much to do as a partner, a parent, a physician the responsibilities you have as a mom or dad, or as a wife or husband. That can just be truly overwhelming when you happen to be a doctor too. And the things that we think about that are what caused that feeling of being overwhelmed.

Jimmy Turner:

But until someone shows you that, you're probably not going to believe it. And you're probably also not going to be able to make a change. So I just wanted to throw this idea out there that you have to change your thoughts before you change your circumstances. And then when you get to a place where you understand why you are unhappy? Guess what, you will be better equipped to actually pick a job or to pick a situation, where you can change your circumstance and actually end up being happy because you know why you aren't and now you've done the thought work. You've gotten the coaching. You've figured it out. The unexamined thought has now been examined and you now will be able to change your circumstance, change your job, change the situation in your life and have a much higher chance of being happy, content fulfilled, satisfied after you do that.

Jimmy Turner:

But if you don't do the thought work and I'm not going to lie to you here, you're sticking with me 18 minutes and do a show. I'm just going to be honest. Most people don't want to do the tough thought work. And you know why it's because it's hard. People don't want to change. They say they want to change, but most people don't want to change. And so if you're done, you're tired. You're done being the way you are. You're done feeling the way that you are. You're done being in your situation. Don't try to escape it and run away by changing your circumstance. Put the work in, do the tough thought work, get some coaching at the physician philosopher or somewhere else, but don't change your circumstance and then expect for it to make you happy. That's just not the way that it works. It requires tough thought work first.

Jimmy Turner:

So today's thought is this, "before you change circumstances, you must first do the tough thought work. Otherwise, you'll end up exactly where you are right now". All right everybody, thank you so much for listening. We really appreciate you being here. Make sure to all your friends, other doctors you feel like would benefit from the show. About it, make sure to subscribe and hit me up. You got questions, comments, concerns, you feel like an episode is particularly good or particularly bad [editor@thephysicianphilosopher.com](mailto:editor@thephysicianphilosopher.com). I love hearing from you guys. So don't hesitate to reach out. I will see you next week until then start before you're ready, start by starting, start now.

Speaker 2:

My dad, Dr. Jimmy Turner is a physician, first Personal finance blogger and a life coach for doctors. However, he is not your physician or your life coach. He also isn't a financial advisor, financial planner or accountant. Anything discussed in this podcast is for general education and entertainment purposes

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