

Grow Your Clinic Ep. 213

One Man, Three Roles: Chris MacDonald on Growing as a Clinic Owner, Leader, and Family Man

Description

This week on the podcast, Chris MacDonald, Director of Eat, Speak, Learn, shares how he got into the business of clinic ownership despite his non-clinical background, and how he co-manages the clinic with his wife.

Chris also talks about how he unplugs from his clinic role after work, tips for starting a business with your partner/spouse, how the hiring process affects team morale, and how setting up systems has helped their team expand.

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[INTRO MUSIC]

This is the Grow Your Clinic podcast from Clinic Mastery. We help progressive health professionals to lead inspired teams, transform client experiences, and build clinics for good. Now, it's time to grow your clinic.

Introduction

JACK: Well, welcome back to another episode of the Grow Your Clinic Podcast. My name is Jack O'Brien. Thank you for joining us wherever you're listening or watching this from, whether you're on our YouTube channel, Grow Your Clinic on YouTube, or you're listening in Google podcasts, Spotify, Apple podcasts, thank you so much for joining us, we really, really appreciate your time. And we realize that your time is important.

Hey, we got another clinic owner spotlight for you today. And I want to just put it out there right at the top, if you want to learn more, grab any of the links or any of the connections that we talked about here today, you can head over to clinicmastery.com/podcast, all of the resources will be over there. And you can find any of the other links to the Assess Your Clinic Scorecard. You can get in touch if you need help to grow your clinic, whatever you need — clinicmastery.com/podcast.

But with that said, I'm really excited to share another clinic owner story to shine a light on clinic owners who are doing amazing things in different allied health professions in different regions in different contexts, and today is a banger. Our guest is not a clinician by trade, which is a really unique story, and this guest is one of the most lovable characters you could come across. I'm really excited to have Chris McDonald, the director of Eat, Speak, Learn in Canberra with us today. .

Chris McDonald, welcome to the podcast. How are you?

CHRIS: I'm great. Thanks for having me, Jack. What a privilege!

JACK: It is gonna be a whole lot of fun. And yeah, look, Chris could talk on the water with a mouthful of marbles. So make sure you've got two and a half hours set aside for this podcast. I mean, I'm joking.

Chris, we're gonna have lots of fun. I got a couple of quick icebreaker questions for you off the top. Are you ready?

CHRIS: I'm ready.

Rapid-fire Questions

JACK: All right, number one. What are you reading right now?

CHRIS: Now I'm reading [The Coaching Habit](#) at the moment. Myself and the leadership team, we're all onto it.

JACK: Yeah, nice. And who's the author of that one?

CHRIS: That's Michael Bungay Stanier

JACK: That's the one. Definitely recommend it for leaders. The Coaching Habit: how you get the best out of your team. Good stuff.

Number two, who inspires you?

CHRIS: From a clinic owner perspective, I work with an awesome team through Clinic Mastery. Lauren Haskins, Marion Giddy, just so many, there's about five of us in the group, we do so much good work. But yeah, we're gonna do a big shout out to Lauren, we're on completely opposite sides of every spectrum. So she just makes me think in all these incredible ways that are like that —. Personally, I've got a background in history and politics and whatnot. So I'm obsessed with people who have complex history, people that are in positions that the endgame isn't always guaranteed. So people like the founding fathers of the US. Paul Kagame, the president of Rwanda, like just these fascinating stories that people going through tough times and building these sustainable nations and what-not. So fascinating.

JACK: Ah, interesting. I didn't know you're a history buff. That's, that's good to know. Number three, what did you want to be when you were growing up?

CHRIS: I wanted to be an architect. I wanted to be a flight attendant. I wanted to be a teacher. I wanted to be a test cricketer. I'm still working out what I want to be.

JACK: Okay, well, I'll have to dig a bit deeper on a few of those. And finally mate, what's the motto that you like to live by?

CHRIS: I love 'Manage Expectations.' A mentor of mine put me onto it years ago. And it's just key, you know, if you manage expectations, whether it's with your clients, your team, your family, like it's easier.

JACK: I like it. That's awesome. Okay, so why don't you give us the headline, the elevator pitch of Eat, Speak, Learn, tell us about your clinic.

About *Eat, Speak, Learn*

CHRIS: Okay, we're a speech pathology clinic located in Canberra, in the ACT, we've got 13 speech pathologists working with us. We've just introduced exercise physiology, we want to break out in some more spaces so we've now got an OT any dietitian working from some other practices helping us out with groups. But really, we just want to do amazing services in the ACT and we've got a great reputation for doing that.

JACK: I like it. So it's not just speech, we're crossing over into the multidisciplinary world, hey?

CHRIS: Yeah, pediatrics too, Jack, lots of fun with the kids. Yeah, great.

JACK: So good. So good. So you know, I snuck it in at the top, Chris, for listeners, you're not a clinician by background. So can you maybe connect the dots for us? What's been the timeline of Chris McDonald from, you know, sending down fast bowling in the backyard, wanting to be test cricketer, architect teacher. I know you've traveled lots. Run us through a bit of your career arc and how you ended up being a clinic owner.

Chris's Journey to Becoming a Clinic Owner without a Clinical Background

CHRIS: Yeah, so it's bigger —. I'm currently the father of three and married to speech pathologists, so I'll give away a bit of the end. But it sort of goes right back to my high school days and my first job. I'm the son of immigrants, my father Scottish, my mother's Irish and growing up all our family lived overseas. So a big driver for me was to go back and visit family. I was lucky enough to get a couple of trips out of the ... in my early days. They said, 'Look, Chris, if you save up half the money for a trip back to see the family, we'll pay the other half.' Okay, so I've got my first job at 14 in a butcher's. and I saved up my money. And at 15, I was ready to go, I'd saved up half the fare. And off I went, took the last term off year 10 and I went off to the other side of the world to visit my family. And then I did it again when I finished high school. And I went into studying to be a teacher. But the thing was that I just wasn't passionate about that role of being a teacher. And very quickly in that unique career that that became apparent. I love finishing things and doing what I do well. So you know, I finished the qualifications and whatnot. And then I went traveling again. So I've had a few years overseas at this point, and travels has been my passion. And it was at the end of that adventure, coming back at about 22 years old, 23 years old that I met my wife almost the day after I got back, I was working at liquor land. You know, I lined up those jobs while I was overseas and walked straight into it and there she was standing that day and standing now. And that sort of started an almost 20-year journey with me. I spent the next few years traveling again. I'd work... I'd work casual in the liquor industry, and I'd work 70-80 hours a week, and I would save more money up and work for seven months of the year. And then I'd go traveling for five months, and I've ... the Test Cricket, played all over the world. You know, just read a book, you know, read on the beach one day, and you know, the next week, I'm in Thailand.

So that was kind of my life on and off for a few years. And then I thought, 'Look, I need to get serious and grow up a bit. I'm starting to get towards my late 20s. And what do I want to do? So I enrolled for a Bachelor of Teaching again, the teaching, I thought Geez, I need to get serious. And while I was there, I found a master's in International Relations. So I signed up to both studying one in Sydney and one in Newcastle and living on the Central Coast.

And from there, I went straight into the masters. I've dropped the teaching for the second time in my career and finished the masters and decided to move down to Canberra and search for a job in foreign affairs. So that — was that was how I landed in Canberra. And I found that work was a bit more difficult to get than I thought. So I ended up in a tenure career at Parliament House and doing all sorts of jobs, managing the Senate chamber, the accommodations manager for the Senate, contract management works for the Department of Parliamentary Services, so many varied roles, you know, got to be part of presidential visits and all sorts of things. The privileges of being able to sit in the Senate chamber while Obama did his speech, you know, just amazing, amazing things, you know, getting to meet the Dalai Lama and Hulk Hogan. Cool experiences. And I love that passion of being able to serve.

JACK: And so while you're, you know, gallivanting around the world, and hanging out with politicians, Lauren, your other half, has she started a clinic at this stage?

CHRIS: No, so the moment I moved to Canberra, you know, like with Lauren, that that was going to happen and asked her if she'd like to move with me, she was commencing her masters of Speech Pathology at that point. And she said, 'No, I don't really want to move to Canberra.' And it's funny, we joke later because Canberra is the best place in the world you could possibly live. It just doesn't have that reputation.

Right. Lauren was doing that. And she got some roles in community health and working for the ACT government. And her adventure as a speech pathologist got a little bit railroaded by the NDIS. So when that came in, in 2013-2014, at the ACT was the first whole government trial site. And that meant that all those allied health professionals working for the government knows, there were a lot of them, they all got put out of work effectively. And so Lauren had to find a role that worked for her. And she interviewed in private practice, she interviewed with some NGOs, you considered the government roles that weren't therapist related, but there was nothing there ticking the boxes. And we're going for a walk around the beautiful lake, Ginninderra and Belcanto and just being where our clinics are located. And she said to me one day, "I just want to deliver these amazing services for

clients but be part of a collaborative team and feel like I'm working with people with that higher vision” and I said, “Well, why can't we do that?” And the idea of running a business just terrified her, but it excited me.

JACK: Right! Because she's spent most of her time working in public health system and you're a public servant, right? Like it's a private practice, it doesn't really seem compatible with public service life.

CHRIS: No. So it was, it was a completely different plan. So the good thing about the government pulling out of those services was they had a long, waiving of any conflict of interest. So she was allowed to run her own private practice while having the safety of being a public servant. So this unique little window that opened up, have a safety net. So we started our clinic from the spare bedroom. Saturday morning, seeing three or four clients a week. We weren't, we weren't even sure if there was a need for it. Right? Just have a go and see what happens. Yeah, we've never weightless to 400. So it's come a long way.

JACK: It's come a long way. And so you're at this stage, early days, bootstrapping in the spare room, you're still working your day job, and then moonlighting as a wanna-be practice manager?

CHRIS: That's right.

JACK: So tell us about that journey into now full time director, manager, etc.

CHRIS: Yeah, so you know, setting up the systems and the practice management, software, the invoicing, all those kinds of things, that was enjoyable — doing it now, here, now and there. But as we grew, we started to bring on some team members and have more children that... went along. That one or two hours here and there started to become a second full time job. So I was in an amazing position in my role, where I was leading a project that had a definitive finish date and as part of that, I did my desire statement, when I was working at Parliament House. And I had this lightbulb moment that said, ‘Where do you want to be in three years time?’ And it wasn't working as a public servant anymore, it was working for Eat, Speak, and Learn. So I was able to line that up with the project finishing and come across into

the business full time. That was pretty scary at that time, we were at that time, we were a clinic of four practitioners and one admin staff member, that started off by myself. And over that next year, we built that up to being 10 practitioners, and a team of three admin.

So you know, just by having that 100% investment in the business, for my time, that was amazing. And we had two young boys at the time, as I was able to have the time with them on their days off when they went to preschool or childcare. So we started to get that work life balance around the family and support Lauren in her role as a practitioner, doing what she wanted to do and building that team.

So from there, we've built up to having a team of 21. At the moment, we're always looking to grow, and we want to do amazing things. As I mentioned, we've got a long waitlist, so being able to help those families is something I'm so passionate about. For the last four years, while I've worked in this role, full time in our clinic, I just don't feel like I've ever done the work.

JACK: It's not a job.

CHRIS: It's not a job. It's a passion.

JACK: And it's interesting because you're you don't have a clinical background yourself and yet you're immersed in the clinical world for most of your waking hours. Is there ever an imposter syndrome that says, I shouldn't be doing this? Or I'm not good enough? Or I'm not clinical? How do you manage that tension of being non clinical?

Dealing with Impostor Syndrome

CHRIS: There absolutely was imposter syndrome, a good way of putting it over those first few years, I think for any clinic owner, when you start out, you don't know what you're doing. Doesn't matter where you're getting help. It's hard! And I think some of those conversations with practitioners early on, when you don't have good systems in case you don't have clear direction around what that expectation you're trying to manage is, then those situations are really difficult when you're not coming from a clinical

background because anything can be shut down with the 'you're not a practitioner, what would you know?' And I think probably my first five years in our business was a lot of that and we've just hit the seven year mark for context. The last two years, I feel I've really been able to amplify what my impact is, by understanding that there's a lot of drivers around clinics that aren't therapy related. Clinic mastery has been a big part of that journey for me, as well. So good systems for example. Good systems will manage good outcomes. When we first started, we let every practitioner deliver the therapy the way they thought was best. We thought that was best practice. And then we realized different clients transitioning from one practitioner to the next, the service delivery could be 180-degree difference. So being able to get systems in place was critical.

JACK: Yeah, sure. So I think we breezed over a little bit. But you mentioned the it's been less than 10 years, you now at a team of say 21, or 23. That's quite rapid. Talk to me about the human side of things. How have you gone about recruiting in a profession that's traditionally really hard to find, Not just speech, but, you know, OT, and psych and EP and Dietetics, it's typically hard to recruit. So how have you gone about growing? So such a large team? And how have you been able to maintain your soul in the process alongside your core values? How have you grown? And have you maintained yourself?

Tips on Recruiting New Team Members

CHRIS: At the start around recruitment, it was those personal relationships that Lauren had with others in an industry that was key to our recruitment pathways. But those don't last forever. So I think there was a few different evolutions of where our recruitment come from.

The second stage was around hustling. So knowing that we needed to bring more practitioners on to achieve what we wanted, actively going and searching for them and building those relationships, and bringing people on board. And then looking for those new grads, you know, that was that period as well. We first did that.

But through those periods as well, we also had people leave us. That was probably the biggest lesson we learned. Hustling to get people's one thing,

understanding, if they don't stay, why was the next and that's really where the values started to kick in. And growth from there has been built all around being true to our values, having the team build the values with us together, living them every day, infusing them in what we do, and infusing them with clients, not just with our team.

JACK: So when you say, Chris, a couple of people had left along the way, how did that enable you to crystallize things like values?

Lessons Learned when People Leave Your Business

CHRIS: Well, I think when people leave, you ask yourself a lot of questions. And if you get the opportunity to ask them a lot of questions, too. And often in these industries, we're all trying hard to do the best but sometimes it's not aligning. And being clear around what we're trying to achieve together. And what we're trying to align has been such a key part of what we do now, from the start through that recruitment process, making sure that we're recruiting the right people that align with the right vision.

JACK: It's that kind of rap. That sounds lovely. But in practice, sometimes, especially in speech lands, right, you just, you just need someone who has a degree, two feet and a heartbeat to service the waitlist. So how do you, you know, how do you make sure someone's aligned when you just desperately need someone?

CHRIS: Well, years ago would have just taken someone. Now, I won't.

JACK: Right, say more.

CHRIS: Well, when you have people that aren't aligned in your business, it can become toxic, that you're more likely to lose a load of practitioners by having the wrong person in there than you are to recruit more. So that way that values conversation, and your team and your culture, they all fit together so closely. And sometimes we're just so desperate to get anybody in, we can make terrible mistakes. I won't say we've made mistakes over the years. But we may have not investigated that hard enough and we might have had these amazing characters as part of our team. But we might have been trying

to achieve different things. And that's where, you know, asking those right questions at recruitment, really having those rights systems up when you're on-boarding team, managing those probation periods, well, the goal setting. All of those things really show you whether that alignment is coming, or whether you need to call it a day. That's really hard.

JACK: It's incredibly hard. So, you know, we've talked about, kind of, keeping the recruitment aligned with our values, now though, you're leading quite a significant time, we were talking off-air before we hit record around what your day looks like, today. How do you go about nurturing your team? You know, I'd imagine your roles, nearly full time people management now. How do you go about leading the team like that?

Leading the Team + ESL's team Values

CHRIS: Yeah, there's certainly an element of that. I have an incredible team. I'll say that from the start. We value culture above everything else. So we have our team culture days each quarter. You know, they're always a load of fun, whether it's going out to a llama farm or doing a master chef session. That's the reward at the end. And coming back from there, you know, we have our goal setting. So we've spent the last fortnight doing really strong goal setting, lining ourselves up for the next quarter so people can achieve what they want and everybody in my clinic has a different version of success. This time, it's all about a high income. For others, it's around flexibility around family, or taking time off. For others, it might be around professional development. So really understanding what somebody is going towards and working on that as an in with each individual is critical. Then coming back from that, there's the daily stuff that we do every day. So you know, we get together and have a morning huddle and we celebrate our wins and ask what we need help with and things like that. At lunch, we have a practitioner meeting for just 15 minutes, so people can share what they've learned. And those personal interactions every day are so important. I've spent my day today, I had nine practitioners, half an hour with each of them, and we just zeroed in on what's important to them. But sitting above all of that is probably our core purpose. We have a shared core purpose as a team of achieving 2000 meaningful outcomes by December 2022. And that's, that's a goal we set last September that we felt was achievable. And that one core purpose ties into everything we do. So it's

based on, you know, what have we set out to achieve with the client? When are we checking in, did we get there or not? If a client's achieved that goal, we put a leaf on a beautiful tree out in a white room, and they get to write on what it was they achieved. And, you know, it might just be sitting at the dinner table for 10 minutes or taking three turns and again, really simple things that can be understood. And with those 2000 leaves the plan at the end of next year is to turn them into real trees.

JACK: Ahh, nice.

CHRIS: Yeah, so that hard work becomes really sustainable. And from a values perspective, then it makes things easier, so you know, 'Be the Best You' is one of our values. So the therapists, bringing their best; the clients bringing their best around what they're working on, and their parents. 'Making it Happen' and achieving results is the second one. And 'Keep it Fun' is a third value. So you know, in a pediatric clinic, there's a lot of fun, you know. There was a bunch of them throwing water bombs off the balcony with their clients the other day, everybody having a ball. And finally 'Stronger Together' is our last one. And keeping that team culture and working stronger together is just so important. So we have an above the line channel in our Slack, for example, where we call each other out or call ourselves out for making mistakes. So it might have been that "I didn't clean the clinic room today. And I'm really sorry that that's impacted the next person." "I'll be in there in the morning and I'll get that sorted." Or "I've forgotten my mask during... Can somebody get me a mask quickly?" Whatever those things might be, the team is so honest and raw with each other. And it means we don't have the beat sitting around the background, you know, the gossip, the self sabotage, or any of those any of those things that are part of a team.

JACK: So, you know, that's taken years to build. I'm sure. What do you do differently now, as a leader, what you didn't used to do?

CHRIS: I'm constantly learning. Jack, and constantly trying to be better. I think when I first got into this, I understood numbers.

JACK: Right?

CHRIS: I'm one of those rare clinic owners. Numbers made sense. What I wasn't great at with some of those values-things, the listening, I've gotten better. And I've struggled a long way to go. I think a lot of the things I've done differently has really been about learning and investing in my journey. So that I'm not going around in circles, constantly changing things without getting somewhere bigger. So I've gotten better at my strategic planning, and I've got better at aligning the team. And what we do with that. Overarching, I think values is probably the key thing, just infusing them into every single thing that I do. And leading there and watching that get picked up by those around me has been very satisfying.

JACK: Yeah, nice. You mentioned, you mentioned learning. How do you learn? And perhaps, what roles Clinic Mastery played in that? What does learning mean to you?

CHRIS: It's interesting you say that, one of my team put it back to me very recently, we work on a 70-20-10 learning model — 70% is experience, 20% p you know helping each other out and 10% formal. And what the team member said to me was what I love about working here is you let us make mistakes.

JACK: Right?

CHRIS: And I thought that was really powerful. We do stuff things up from time to time. But the stuff ups actually not the issue. It's "are we coachable?" What are we learning? Making the same mistakes every week is a problem. But making them once or twice, that's part of all journeys. I've got a one year old at the moment. I'm watching him try to learn to walk. —so many mistakes in there, it's no different as we get older. .

And I think the role Clinic Mastery has played for me there, I've been with truth mastery over two years now. The role there is about moving to a higher place. And when I first got into it, I thought, "Great, I could probably sign up to this for a few months, I can get all the bits I need."

JACK: I think you've said those words to me in Brisbane. In fact, I recall it.

CHRIS: I thought it was kind of like a gym where you just go in, you're pitching and off you go. What I've learned through this journey myself is the implementation is actually the most difficult piece. All the learnings are out there. There's self help books as motivation books, there's coaches, outside of Clinic Mastery, inside Clinic Mastery. You can find any of these things anywhere you want. You're getting the rubber to hit the road. That is the tough bit of doing it. And when I started my journey with Clinic Mastery, I was in the wage, and I'm dealing with it might be a client issue or a team member issue and that's not the higher plane that I wanted to be on. So getting a few of those things sorted, and understanding the jigsaw of where things fit together, what a good system looks like, how that ties in with values, what a career pathway for a practitioner or client support work looks like. Putting all of those bits together, knowing my numbers and our KPIs, and having that longer term plan, that's really where I've gotten to now and where a lot of growth and sustainability has come from.

A couple of years ago, I did all the finances, because I wouldn't know, 'could I trust someone how to do that?' It systemized. Now, I've not even paid myself in a year or two, I've got a team member that does that. They manage all the finance work. It's amazing and liberating, and having that trust in them to be able to do that. And they do an amazing job. I used to stay up at night on all sorts of things at work. But having that higher purpose around a strategic plan, and being able to delegate those tasks out to a leadership team, and have reporting structures and what-not. That means that I'm just looking at the results sometimes and being part of the project plan not always being accountable for delivery.

JACK: And if we were to pull out the crystal ball, and fast forward a little bit, what do you see for Eat, Speak, Learn? What does the future look like for your clinic?

The Future for the Clinic: *Eat, Speak, Learn*

CHRIS: We've got some big visions, and dreams about a multidisciplinary practice. That's always been part of the original dream. But the delivery is hard because it's reliant on the right people. Right people are hard to get. So our big vision is, how do we turn Eat, Speak, Learn from a little family owned business into something that our team members can own, into something

that others can come into, into something that can be a practice for everyone. I think when we commence these journeys and businesses, we're quite protective of the effort we've put in, we know how much has gone into those things. And I feel that we're in a really good space now to start looking to that next journey of how do we make Eat, Speak, Learn sustainable beyond Lauren and myself?

JACK: Wow, that's a big question.

CHRIS: We've got some ideas ... We've been doing a lot of work of partnerships around that community in the ACT, because we know there's a lot of clinic owners in the ACT across multiple disciplines, all in those same spots that we've been in, or you're in and part of those journeys. And, you know, we're really looking to the future of 'how do we do this better' rather than all doing a lot of work when we're achieving the same result.

JACK: I love it, mate. I think if we lay in the plane, thinking about your journey over the last five or 10 years from transitioning out of public service to a small mom and dad clinic in the spare room to now a team of dozens and those big dreams — I love that. And I love the fact that you've been able to wrestle with having a clinical spouse and non-clinical yourself. If you want to talk to a couple of different clinic owners, what would you say firstly to the solo hero or the guys that are starting out and really hustling and grinding in those early days? Any pearls of wisdom for that gang?

Advice to New Grads and Clinic Owners

CHRIS: I think investing in your future, both time and learning, is key. I think so often we're just trying to get the cash flow right and look after ourselves but finding, like, a mentor group like clinic mastery, building those strategic plans and understanding those numbers, that takes a whole level of investment that sometimes we don't always recognize, and it's life saving. And for a married couple, you know, talked to a lot of married couples in business and having some rules around that setup at the start is really important.

JACK: What are some rules you've got now?

Unplugging from Your Director Role Once at Home

CHRIS: Threshold rules such as, you know, 'when I come in the door, I want to get changed out of my work clothes, go to the bathroom, and then I can be a family man.'

JACK: Nice.

CHRIS: Not using the dinner table as at the boardroom table. Access to slack and things like that, you know, when are we doing those things? And I won't say we graded them. We try really hard but yeah, knowing which hat you're wearing, or your dad or your director?

JACK: Or husband, right?

CHRIS: Yeah.

JACK: Yeah, that's interesting. Okay. And so if you were to then talk to say, the clinic owner, who's built quite a significant clinic, who's done it themselves and thinking where to next, maybe they've hit that, you know, it's like there's a there's the threshold, or there's multiple thresholds in clinic on a journey, if there's a clinic on who's reached a, a level of success or a version of success, and they've, they've hit the threshold. What do you say to them?

CHRIS: Thing visionary about what's next. Is it staying on that solo journey? Is it working with others better? You're coming from a place of real security and stability, I would hope that you can open up a whole different vision. For us that's been around investment in technology. And COVID was actually a really, in a strange way, a good time for us. Because we're a paperless office, we're a cloud based office, we're able to expand services during that period by offering telehealth from Queensland, and Adelaide, and Tasmania, and all sorts of places. So investing back in with that next vision of what's next. We could do speech pathology for the rest of our lives, and we'd be comfortable. But we know actually, what our clients want is one-stop shops and multidisciplinary services, and that currently not available in the ACT in private practice. So we committed to building that because we know we will

do an amazing job for our clients, and ultimately, that's what our reputation is based on.

JACK: I love it. And finally, if there's a clinic owner out there listening in, you know, typically, in the broad sense, clinic owners or practitioners, can you maybe speak to those clinic owners who have a non-clinical partner and they'd love to get into business together and those those married couples that want to work closer, what sort of encouragement or advice would you have to people considering being non-clinical and involved in health practice?

Advice to Couples Who are Thinking of Starting a Clinic Business Together

CHRIS: If you've got a good partnership with your partner, you can make it work. Lauren and myself are a team, we have been for almost 20 years. This isn't even the first time we've worked together but we're on the same page. And that really makes life work. We've done desire statements together, you know, those life plans. We're aligned when we're talking to our team. Those sorts of things are really important. And if that's going to be difficult, as a married couple doing that, then I think, sticking to two separate jobs — the marriage should come first. And also, who is the ... in that? So we have really distinct roles. I run the practice and Lauren runs the clinical. We can both do both.

JACK: I love it. That's really good advice, really practical, but I think, yeah, I think it's boots on the ground. It's what people want to know. So that's super helpful. If people want to have a look at your clinic, maybe get in touch with you, is there a URL or LinkedIn or something like that? How can people check out more?

Connect with Chris and His Team

CHRIS: Yep, absolutely love having people come and check out our website. We love people coming into the clinic. They're more than welcome: www.eatspeaklearn.com.au. We're on Facebook, we're on Instagram, we're on LinkedIn. That can also send me an email at chris@eatspeaklearn.com.au

We're more than happy to share our experiences and knowledge with the wider community.

JACK: You're a legend. Folks, we'll make sure we link all that up in the show notes over at [clinicmastery.com/podcast](https://www.clinicmastery.com/podcast), all of the social links and all those sorts of things.

Hey, Chris of Eat, Speak, Learn, it has been an absolute pleasure, mate. Thank you so much for joining us on the Grow Your Clinic podcast.

CHRIS: Thanks, Jack.

JACK: And folks, thank you for joining us for listening in. I hope that's been useful, insightful. There's plenty of gold in there, so if you need to rewind, slow it down, or grab the show notes over at [clinicmastery.com/podcast](https://www.clinicmastery.com/podcast). Make sure you do that, make sure you put action to what you've heard and learned today. But again, thank you for tuning in to today's episode and I can't wait to bring you another episode of the Grow Your Clinic Podcast again really soon. Bye for now.

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