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Hello and welcome to my show, The Mel Lawson Show. This is my very first solo episode where I don't have my trusty Liv by my side to help me, support me, prop me up in many, many ways.

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I've been quite nervous about this because, well, various reasons. I was brought up in the 70s. So "don't speak unless someone speaks to you" and, you know, "don't don't go on, don't hog the airspace". "Is there anything I have to say that's vaguely interesting?". So all those things going around your head.

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But then it'd be a bit of a crap podcast if I sat here and didn't say very much. So, yeah, quite, quite nerve wracking. But I've had an idea for the format, which I hope you like, which is three things I've learnt this week, and maybe some weeks it will be three things I've tried or three things I've realised.

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Interesting things I can share with you. But this week it's really three things I've learnt about life in general, about myself.

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So I hope you enjoy it. Do leave feedback but don't be too brutal. 00:01:15:20 -

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The first thing I have realised this week, and it's taken me until 51 to realise it, is it takes years and years and years of practice to get good at things.

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And I can't believe that's only just suddenly dawned on me. And I'll tell you in a minute how it dawned on me. But to give you some examples of this in my life... So I play tennis, I love tennis, I played as a kid quite well- I didn't ever get to competitive playing, but I was pretty good.

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And then I didn't play again until my early 40s- playing properly and consistently. And by that I mean on average three times a week for the last 3 to 4 years. And I've only, I would say in the last few months, got to the point where I'm actually not terrible and I'm okay, and I can beat my husband occasionally, but it has taken me so long to get there.

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It's a really frustrating game because you're so bad at the beginning. I mean, children obviously learn way, way, way faster, but at adults like you are just hitting it in the net all the time or you don't even hit the ball, that's so embarrassing. You don't even make contact.

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You hit it out over the fence. and it can get really irritating. And plenty of times I've thought, oh, you know, bugger this. I don't want to play this and but I have stuck with it because I do love it and I can actually play fairly well now. So tennis is a really good example.

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Weight training is another really good example where I've dipped in and out of it over the last ten years. The reason I do weight training is really as sort of "future proofing". So when you get to my age, you start losing a lot of muscle, especially as a woman, and you have to protect against osteoporosis.

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And so I do it really for long term health. But when you don't see any "gains", to use a gym term, but when you don't see any progress, you kind of think, oh, you know, because I don't hate it. I don't love it like that. Every time I have to force myself.

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Yeah, I don't love it. So I've dipped in and out, fallen off it several times. And then for the last two years I have been consistently, apart from the odd illness holiday, doing it twice a week and I can now deadlift my own bodyweight. I'm much faster on the tennis court because my legs are much stronger too.

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But it's taken nearly two years for me to actually notice and go, "oh no, I am stronger". Because I don't necessarily look that different and I don't I think, you know, with going to the gym and weight training and again, especially as an older woman, you know, my son, he's 15, is doing some weight training and I swear from one weigh in to the next, he looks bigger and he his muscles are more defined.

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I've been doing it for years and I don't look any different, but I my husband commented just the other day that he used to be able to do little drop shots over the net and knew I wouldn't be able to get

to them, and now I can get pretty much get everything. and that's from the weight training.

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So that's taken two years. The other thing is running a business, and I'm so much better at it now, and I'm still always learning. There's still so much to learn because the business evolves, it grows. You learn from challenges, problems, mistakes, new thing, new technologies, new challenges. So you're always learning. But I'm way, way better than I used to be at running my business.

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There's a few things. So meditation is something. I went through a phase of really trying hard, when my mum was very ill and had terminal cancer. I looked after her, and I also had the kids who were really young, and I just started my business and she moved in with us. And it was such a difficult time.

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So I really tried to meditate, to just try and calm down. And in my head, I couldn't do it, because my mind was racing so much and I've got quite a racing mind anyway. And I have OCD, so I have quite a lot of obsessive, repetitive thoughts going on. I was like, I just can't do this.

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It's not for me. I can't do it. My mind just wanders off. I can't focus on my breathing. To the point where I actually said to the team, we're not doing any newsletters about meditating because that's a banned subject. I'm really irritable about it, but I've read so much about it, and I'm reading a book by a guy called Joe Dispenza,

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called Becoming Supernatural. It's really reignited my desire to learn meditation, and I'm starting right at the beginning. So far, I'm enjoying it. And when my mind wanders - and it did that this morning quite a lot because I was thinking about what am I going to say on my podcast,

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I just said, well, this is part of the process, is learning to recognise that my mind wandered off.

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It's insane what meditation can do. And I thought, I'm just going to do five minutes every day. And I've been doing it for the last sort

of ten days. And again, it's realising, well, actually it takes years and years and years and you could be, you know, an absolute meditation guru.

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So that was a huge learning curve. I've learnt this was from my Tai Chi teacher. So a random conversation I had with an chiropractor in Costa Rica this Christmas- he said, "I've started doing tai chi. It's cured of my knee problems. It's amazing." 00:08:19:09

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So I said to my husband that, we're in our 50s, I think we need to do Tai Chi. And he's like, "this is one of your mad, weird ideas". And I just booked us in. It's incredibly hard, really hard. And we go every week and we have this lovely teacher and there's a group of us and we're all like, a really random mix of people and we look ridiculous.

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And I have to spend a lot of it trying not to giggle. We've done, I think, six classes now, six hours and we can barely do the first move. It's actually okay because that is the whole point in a way. So our teachers said to me, you have to change your mindset and not be success oriented, which I am, I'm quite competitive.

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He said, "you have to be learning oriented", which I thought was really interesting because suddenly I thought, oh, yeah, that's the same with tennis, because you cannot be Novak Djokovic. I mean, you can't be him anyway, but he still has to learn and get better. The tai chi grandmasters are still improving and trying to get better.

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So that was a proper epiphany moment for me. I thought, okay, it's the learning. I would love to learn the piano. So again, as a kid, I was not bad at the piano, but I hated reading music, so I found it really difficult. I could learn things by ear and then play it, and then I would pretend I was reading the music, and then I had this very mean

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French piano teacher. And she used to hit me on the hand if she realised that I was faking reading the music. Obviously that put me off a little bit, but I just can't read music. So I'm really bad at maths and there's something slightly mathematical about it for me that I thought I just want to learn it by ear and then play and pretend I'm reading the music.

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So I picked up piano again in my 30s and I thought, when the kids are sleeping, I'll play the piano and in 20 years time, I'll be a great pianist. And it's still a dream of mine, but I didn't. I jacked it in because I could very easily find an excuse.

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I've got young kids, pregnant. you know, I don't have time to practice. I can't practice because they're having a nap and I wake them up. But they were just all excuses. If I had just done one lesson a week for the last 16 years and not even done any practice, I would be able to play the piano.

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And the thing I also kind of realised, which is so obvious, but when you try to do these things, you think, oh, it's going to take too long. I want to be good now - if I'm not good now, this is quite boring and there's not much payback and I don't really have the motivation to keep going with it.

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But again, it's changing that mindset into a need to enjoy the process of learning. And these 16 years have passed and I'm no better at the piano. In fact, I'm worse because my piano sits there every day and it looks at me like giving me the guilts. "I'm actually out of tune now as well, because you left me all this time".

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And I regret that because that was silly. Because I wanted to be amazing pianist like that. And obviously that's impossible. So I'm going to learn the piano. Maybe not this year, but that was a really good example, and I'm very lucky. I speak quite a few foreign languages for various reasons. but I know lots of people who want to learn a language, I think if you just do a little bit every day in ten years time, you'll be able to speak pretty well.

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And it's that mindset around changing it to learning rather than success kind of tick tick achievement thing. So that was my first thing that I realised. And Tai chi is quite challenging in a way, but, I'm getting a lot from it spiritually because it's making me actually slow down and go, okay, I've got to spend an hour just learning to move my hands in this one way, which is, yeah, for somebody like me, very Type-A.

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I need to achieve. So that's my first thing, 00:13:55:16 -

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is that it takes years of practice to learn anything and get really good at something.

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And I mean obviously there's no point slogging away something that you hate, but if it is something you would like to be good at and a skill you'd like to master, I think the classic ones are learning a language, learning musical instrument, learning a sport. Then just keep doing it and the years will pass, and then you'll find you're actually quite good at that thing.

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The second thing I learned this week the hard way, and I like to learn a lot of my lessons the really, really hard way, is that I still have not learnt to not go in all in hell for leather on new things, and especially things that I'm introducing to my diet.

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So I have a very sensitive stomach. I have digestion issues, I have irritable bowel. My stomach is the thing that goes when I'm stressed. I feel sick when I'm nervous, I'm a stomach person, and I've been hearing a lot about an electrolyte brand called element LM and tea, and I got heavily, heavily influenced by, I think, probably Tim Ferriss, who is my normal Qi influencer.

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And also it's co-founded by a guy called Rob Wolfe, who I really like and I was sold on it. And I said, all right, I'm going to try that. And it was on Tuesday this week and we had our big monthly tea meeting where we all get together. And I got up really early and I thought, right, I'm going to take this electrolyte drink.

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I'm going to feel amazing. I'm literally going to be like flying all day. I'm going to be so hydrated. And I took a sip and I thought, that is really salty. And this is the whole thing, by the way- I'm not bashing the brand at all. I think it's probably very good. I just perhaps needed to take it a bit more slowly.

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And I thought, oh, that's really salty. I feel like that's going to make me feel a bit sick. And instead of thinking, you know, I've got a team meeting today, I probably shouldn't just chug something I've not tried before. I just chugged it.

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I felt so ill. I felt so nauseous. and was driving into Brighton with my husband (he's now joined our team), and he's like, you always do this. You, like, pick a really bad day and moment to try something new. And instead of having a little sip or you just chug the whole thing.

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And that is such classic me. And I do that with a lot of stuff. I've done it with a lot of supplements, or I've read something about, I remember reading about sauerkraut years ago- right, I'm going to try that. And I ate loads and got really ill and just yeah, I'm hoping now that I've finally learned the lesson and I will just remind myself, okay, just go slowly.

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And I don't know if any of you can relate to this, but just yeah, try things slowly and gently and just introduce them, especially if it's something you're eating or like a supplement. I mean, we advise that with our supplements, don't go like all in make yourself feel ill. So yeah, take things slowly when you're doing new things.

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There's my second lesson from this week. 00:17:54:04 -

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My third lesson I'd say is something I learnt about myself. I thought, this is time to change.

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My husband really enjoy listening to this as my need to have the last word is not serving me well. And I don't really know where it comes from. I mean, I think as a child- I've got an older brother. He's a very strong character. And, you know, we were quite competitive.

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But I, as the younger sister, wanted to always win the argument. And also, we had quite a difficult house. I had a very difficult father. And I often felt a lot of injustice. So I always wanted to make sure that I had said my bit, which often got me into trouble.

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As a child, I hated any sort of bullying. I'd go piling in, I defend people a lot and I don't get pushed around, but sometimes I just

need to not have the last word. 00:19:19:03 -

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So I had, well, a couple of things this week have come out of this exercise, but I was part of a WhatsApp group and I'm sure you'll probably know where I'm going with this...it's a sort of businessy networking type one. I don't really know anyone on it, to be honest, and I don't really participate.

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A subject came up and I put in a comment about something and then somebody who used to work with us, who's on that group, basically had a go at me, sort of indirectly, but it clearly was having a go at me, and I literally had to hide my phone from myself to stop myself from responding.

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I've been listening to Live Who You'll Meet on this podcast. He's he's one of my team who's also a coach. And I remember her saying, you have to sit with these emotions and really sort of think about why am I, where's this coming from? So I sat with it and my anger, my need to reply, thought, why do I need to reply to this?

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And it was this feeling of, well, I don't want other people on that group thinking that she's right because she's totally wrong. Because also she she hasn't worked in the business for a long time and she doesn't actually know what she's talking about. And I don't want people thinking that she's scored a point and and all this

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competitive posting around. It really made me think, why do I need to prove something to a group of people I don't know who probably don't care? They don't care. They probably don't know who I am. They don't know who she is.

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Nobody cares. And it's just this thing I have of needing to have the final say. And be like, I'm right and you're wrong and you don't know. And I'm very happy to admit when I'm wrong. But when I know that I'm right and not wrong, I need to say it. Anyway, I slept on it, even though I kept waking up thinking about it.

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I'm sure you relate to this, where you replay these things over and over and then you rehearse what you would say. Or what if they say that back? And it's just such a bad use of head space and energy-



so I didn't reply and it took a lot to hold myself back. 00:22:23:18 -

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But actually it was the right thing to do, and often not responding is a more powerful message. But that's not why I did it. It was to teach myself to not have to have the last word because actually it wasn't really important. So that was two things really- I recognise that in myself.

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It was not a good use of my energy or head space and also those bloody WhatsApp groups- so this morning I was telling Liv about it ahead of this episode. So I just leave the group. I left the group and I feel really good because it was just bothering me and I wasn't getting anything from it.

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And now I just don't need to even think about it. So, yeah, I think there's a few things in there that maybe you can take away. And I think at home and in relationships and with partners, it can be that temptation to want to have the last word.

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Maybe just try not having the last word and see how that goes. And yeah, if you're in any of those WhatsApp groups, maybe just leave.

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Right. My three things this week: it takes years of practice to get good at something- embrace the learning rather than the successes,

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don't go all in hell for leather on new things (especially if there are things you're putting in or on your body, it's a really bad idea). And number three, if you're one of those people that feels you have to have the last word, try not having the last word and see how that goes.

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I hope you enjoyed this. Please leave comments, suggestions, and if any of this rang a bell with you, we'd love to hear about it. And thank you very much for listening.