

[00:00:02.180] - Aileen Day

Welcome to The Value Driven Brand Podcast, where you'll learn insights on how to communicate with authenticity, deliver genuine value, and create a memorable experience across your entire customer journey, helping your business become a sought-after leader in your industry. I'm your host, Aileen Day, now onto the show.

[00:00:30.690] - Aileen Day

G'day, everybody, and welcome back to another episode of The Value Driven Brand podcast, I am your host Aileen Day. And today I am joined by an absolute superstar, I am pretty sure the man doesn't sleep, considering all of the phenomenal things that he gets done every day; for himself, his business and his community, and the wider planet. I tell you what, it is a privilege to be joined by the one, the only Luke Connors. Thank you so much for joining us on the podcast today, how's it all going?

[00:01:06.370] - Luke Connors

And answer to your question, a little bit tired we spoke about before, but I am fantastic and pumped to be here. Thank you for having me.

[00:01:13.540] - Aileen Day

My absolute pleasure, now if you're wondering why looks a little bit sleepy, that's because he's been hanging out with Tony Robbins at midnight every night this week. And how's that guy what's, what's the biggest insight from hanging out with Tony?

[00:01:31.210] - Luke Connors

The ability to just be able to find energy within I think, there's a lot of insights into business and mindset and all that, but I love when I get back in his space and it's like sometimes we tell ourselves, I'm just tired, it's all too much at the moment it's like nah there is another level. Just do a few little habits, do a few routines, like just move your body sometimes get yourself in a good space, you can handle everything that's coming and yeah, it's been so we've been up from one-two a.m. until about one p.m, we've been fishing, we're in day four now, so.

[00:02:02.800] - Aileen Day

Oh my goodness

[00:02:03.280] - Luke Connors

But it's ahh...

[00:02:04.540] - Aileen Day

How many days?

[00:02:05.210] - Luke Connors

Was... Five, so tomorrow is the last one, and then sometimes there's a lot of stuff that we're doing in the community, like you said. But it's good to come back and go back in within and level up yourself so you can go back and support more, so I'm loving it.

[00:02:20.480] - Aileen Day

Absolutely, I always say there's no developing others until we've developed ourselves, so great work. Now, for those of you who are listening in and thinking, who's this guy? Well, let me give you some insight into who this guy is. So Luke is the owner of Spartan Projects, which is a construction company out in New South Wales, and he's so, also so he's a builder in construction, he's a public speaker, he is a coach, he's a businessman, an entrepreneur, a friend, obviously has some family around, and my favourite part, lover now, Luke we have to congratulate you on your recent engagement and what did you just tell me about getting married?

[00:03:12.690] - Luke Connors

Yeah, so we're getting married in five weeks time and got engaged back in November last year, it was...

[00:03:18.740] - Aileen Day
Wow.

[00:03:19.680] - Luke Conners

Few things happened in life which we'll probably go into, big walk's coming up across the country and really come back to the point when I left the army and come back to, back home about three years ago to focus on business and focus on just a different chapter in life, sorry, but one of the reasons I come back was family, it wasn't business, it was family. And, when we're walking around the place that we're looking to get married in January it, it just dawned on me it just started flooding like your grandma just turned 9, your dad just turned 70, not everyone is going to be around forever, what are we waiting for? And if Covid taught us one thing in business, in life, in anything, it's that we can't take anything for granted life's short, things can change all of a sudden. And I was like, let's get married now, so five weeks out, here we go.

[00:04:06.390] - Aileen Day

That is so adorable, I'm so happy for you both and as you did mention, there's a bit of a walk going on, but we'll talk about that very, very soon, so give me some insight so you just mentioned the Army and family and projects. Talk to me about what you are, what got Luke where Luke is now?

[00:04:31.380] - Luke Conners

So rewind a bit probably one of the key moments in life is a parent separation at 12, and I just remember that those years were very difficult in a young man trying to find out where he sits in the world and went down the path of getting in a lot of fights and living out of home and on the streets a little bit. And I was just a little punk, and I think to get me where I was today, to be honest, was there was grace behind it and, when I reflect on myself now, I'm only 28 still, but when I reflect on myself, I've been someone that's followed my gut and find intuition and sort of just done what I felt was right even before I probably even understood what that was, going with a gut feeling and intuition and I just landed in the army at 17, was driving one of my mates that I hang out with he was, love the Army, and he's like, I wanna go, can you drive me there, he didn't have a licence. He drove me to the base and get me in, and I was like, there's no way I'm joining up. And next thing you know, we're sitting there talking about it and this goes, what do you want to do? I said, leave school and maybe become a carpenter or something, but he's like, you want to join the army? I was like, not a chance in the world, and before you knew it, I think it was about four months later, I was in the army, my mate wasn't in the army and the rest is history.

[00:05:48.930] - Aileen Day
They got you in the end.

[00:05:50.940] - Luke Conners

Yeah, I think that definitely going to the army, grew me up, maybe grow up quick. I was 18 at Capaca, which is basic training. Had to really, yeah, you're in an environment of adults and I was just these little punk kid and it's like sink or swim. You just going to get are you're going to become part of the herd, which has a high standard in the military. You go and it's just like you rise to that to what it was and it put me on the right path. Also, I found a apprenticeship at the same time and got deployed at, I think in 2012 when I was 20 overseas, and yeah and that was there was when I really started really getting a taste for the Special Forces career and that's where this hunger inside me started growing for that. And then I was always reserved, but I was fortunate enough to always have deployments in between a lot of opportunities that come up, so we keep coming home and doing my apprenticeship and then I started a business at 21 and that sort of was just a backing at that age to bring revenue in and have a bit of freedom, which is really why I did it so that I could keep this journey going for the Special Forces. I then travelled all around the world at 22 and about 23, I was ready to, to go and I went over to the SAS in Perth and trialled and got to the back end of it and come back home, and there's a lot of emotional breakdown then I couldn't understand why I pulled off in, and a lot of the stuff from a kid could come back up in me, emotions and I then went down a lot of seeking out help and mentors and coaches and psych's and getting here and those are a dear friend I had Matt who I deployed with in 2012, and he, he was the epitome of soldier, he was a corporal, I was a young digger.

[00:07:33.150] - Luke Conners

He took me under his wing, he had a bit of special forces experience, I just idolised this guy and he really helped my journey along the way. If he would put training sessions on for me four, five, six-hour beach sessions, which would just gruel like you helped me get my body and my mind ready and, and I remember sitting with him for hours and just talking about mindset, mindset, mindset. And then 25 I went back to over west SAS and I thought that was the part, this is where I'm going and I got to the last few days and this intuition, this thing that I can now call intuition hit me sort of like a ton of the bricks in the face and said, this isn't your path anymore you need to come home, it was almost like a voice like this feeling.

[00:08:15.660] - Aileen Day

Wow.

[00:08:16.270] - Luke Conners

And umm, and I fought it, feel like mind comes involved there like no, I'm just six years of my life has been prepared for this and then.

[00:08:23.440] - Aileen Day

Yeah.

[00:08:25.170] - Luke Conners

Is this overwhelming, you need to leave, and I remember sitting down in this morning, walk through like the sun was coming through the trees and I sat down, sat on my pack and you never sit on your back in the army, and Neil was on it and it was like this metaphor now and I look back on it, it was like I was done. I remember saying to myself out loud, out loud, like, are you happy for this journey? You're proud of yourself? And I was like, yeah, and then you're willing to leave it all behind and have faith, which was whatever next happens. And I said, yes, and I end up candidate 50 I went to withdraw and I come home and, a few months later I went dove into business and dove into a few other things in a few months later, I got a phone call that, that Matt had died from suicide. The one that trained me up.

[00:09:14.650] - Luke Conners

Yeah, I was actually at a Kerwin's event at Nail It and Scale It, walking under the Sydney Harbour Bridge, I'll never forget it on the second night of that event, and that was sort of like the the moment it just hit me I was like, how could this guy that I put on a pedestal and always asked about what was happening in your world? I always talked about mindset, but never ask what was happening in your world, because I never thought that he would ever have a problem or he was anyone that you needed to go and check in with. I was like, if he struggles, maybe

[00:09:46.270] - Luke Conners

I can struggle and it just changed my whole perspective on mental health, on just the world, I think and I made a call in that moment that I'll do something big in his name and that's where we're probably going to roll into him bran and 'talktomebro' and, what we're doing in business and that. But it was, that was a little bit of me that's where I'm at now, in the last three years, I've been focussing on community work, focussing on, you know, making trying to make suicide a thing of the past, helping people's lives, making sure our building company has a good culture, making sure the boys are checked in with so that, you know, we can. I think you have a responsibility as a business owner to your employees and we call them our talent.

[00:10:28.588] - Aileen Day

Absolutely

[00:10:29.470] - Luke Conners

To make sure they're checking on, and then I think that creates a brand, creates the culture, creates a family, family effect, and yeah, that's a little bit about where I am today.

[00:10:40.570] - Aileen Day

That is an absolutely heart breaking story. Oh, my goodness me. Thank you for sharing that. That

makes so much sense, and it's, it's so true, you know, like in, in my 40 years, I've come to realise that it's generally the strongest people that are probably the most broken, and that's how they stay strong, is being strong for other people. But they don't necessarily have that same strength when it comes to vulnerability for themselves, wow, that's amazing. So we are going to talk a little bit more about the 'talktomebro' stuff. But this is The Value Driven Brand podcast, and you certainly have some insights into what you believe creates a value driven brand. So talk to me about what those are for you and how can the audience listening in take that, that insight and deliver it into their own business, creating their own value driven brand?

[00:11:52.860] - Luke Conners

Yes, I think, there's a few things that come up culture, which I just said is a huge one, I think, in a brand, because it's in the business, but it's people say that and I think they start wanting to be a I find we're, a building company, so your when you come to us, you've got us potentially the next six months of your life in your house.

[00:12:13.980] - Aileen Day

Yes.

[00:12:15.090] - Luke Conners

Because we do, we do renovations, residential renovations so most the time we're in your house. So they need to trust you, they need to like you, they need to feel as a client, they need to feel, you know, sanhood, valued, acknowledged, connected with. And I think that starts you're not going to get your, your employees or your talent to do that if you're not if the culture's not already there, they going to work hating life it's going to roll on, isn't it?

[00:12:42.480] - Luke Conners

So that's a huge one, is getting the check in with our boys we do a daily check in and we play golf days and it's that fun, we have ten employees, but there's that fun as well as the hard work. There's a standard that's throughout everyone and I think that high standards, the next one is like if you have a high standard within your team, you from the top hold the highest standard, and then that goes down and you have an expectation of yourself.

[00:13:10.050] - Luke Conners

Yeah, I love the quote that expect more from yourself than anyone could expect possible. And if you hold yourself there, you might not get everyone at the same as you being a business owner, but if you get an 80, 90 percent, it's going to be high flying because everyone's different, I don't think I'd want a whole team of me.

[00:13:26.730] - Aileen Day

I certainly don't want a whole team of me.

[00:13:30.410] - Luke Conners

And I think that's the, that's important you hire people for the different attributes that I'll bring in to the team you find the weakness your not good at and you put someone there in place that can support your weaknesses while you step into your strengths and you can say each other's lot the whole time. And I love the saying I have a saying, like even to our first year apprentice that just come along at 17, I'm big. You're big, you're big, I'm big.

[00:13:58.950] - Luke Conners

It's not your small. I'm going to play small because I'm worried about that. And it's not like I'm going to make myself feel better because I'm the boss or whatever, and you're going to make you feel small because it makes me feel better about myself that I think it should be. I see you and your greatness and I'm going to be my greatness, too.

[00:14:19.350] - Aileen Day

And how does that play out? I mean, you know, if you reflect on the fact that you were that seventeen year old joining the army, and I imagine that's a very different culture to the army, you are probably

made to feel small in that situation. But in a business context, especially when you're responsible for the team and those individuals, how does that play out for a 17 year old to actually know that they are important, that they've seen and heard?

[00:14:55.170] - Aileen Day

How does that change the way business works?

[00:15:00.090] - Luke Conners

I when I was 17, I worked for this employee as my apprenticeship. He was abusive. He was just one of the worst human beings I've been around. I absolutely hated my apprenticeship that when I got that deployment and took off. I couldn't wait to get out of the country on it.

[00:15:20.010] - Luke Conners

And I remember that. And I also remember that time when you were younger coming into the army.

[00:15:25.230] - Luke Conners

And they do have a fight. There's that essence of the army which does really well at breaking it down and rebuild you into a soldier, but not so much an awesome mental health here. Their role is to make you a good soldier. They're getting better. They are getting better now and checking in over the years, but they have horrendous numbers in suicide and all that. But I think is so my thoughts on that is. I thought, yes, you had you need to have the discipline you need to have, like there's still a bit of a pecking order and say more respect, like you need to.

[00:15:57.080] - Luke Conners

I think for 17, you need to put them in the deep end at times and put pressure on them. But then when they fail, you don't cut them down and you don't rip them apart. You then discuss how could you even improve there? What went wrong? I'll put my team under huge pressure, sometimes not verbally, not by swearing, not by calling them names.

[00:16:16.490] - Luke Conners

But I'll be like, this is the standard. This is when we need to get it done by, it needs to be done. But it. And I'm not I'm not your mother. You and you empower them along the way. But then I'm there when they they fall to pick them back up. So it's like and then when you give them that space of hey, now I do see you we slow down, we stop getting to a bit of feminine energy and actually just ask him a question about how did you feel with that, you know, the last few days and then shut up and listen.

[00:16:43.850] - Luke Conners

I think they start feeling I can turn it off very well of being like sort of like I'm in that boss mode and now I'm in your friend mode. But it's like as an employee, you need to find that balance very well. Yeah. It's like when it's game on, it's game on and when it's not. But at the core essence, we have a saying like bring your problems to work.

[00:17:03.450] - Aileen Day

God, I just literally did a LinkedIn live today and I said exactly the same thing. I love it.

[00:17:10.910] - Aileen Day

Oh my God, my head's exploding.

[00:17:13.970] - Luke Conners

Yeah, well, that's amazing.

[00:17:16.400] - Luke Conners

It's like bring your problems to work and don't let them. Don't leave it at home and have all the chaos and then you come in and no one knows why you're not, you're moping around or whatever is going on, and then you don't feel like you're part of the team. And it just causes so much looping in the mindset that can then spiral into depression and mental health, into a dark line and where if you can just verbalise it and articulate it that day or the next day, it's like, oh, it fizzles out, the energy fizzles

out and they go, I feel safe and valued.

[00:17:49.610] - Luke Conners

Hey mate, go and have a day off, like something would have happened, should have the day off go so that they have a day, a mental health day to check in on themselves. We get back in there.

[00:17:59.880] - Aileen Day

We used to call them doona days.

[00:18:04.330] - Luke Conners

Have a doona day. Yeah, I love that. That's a good one. Yeah.

[00:18:07.910] - Aileen Day

I'm going to go sit under a doona and hide from the world for the day. I love that you take the opportunity to apply pressure. I think I think I know I know that there is a generation of employees of talent who and I'm not just talking about the young kids, there's even to be honest. There's even a generation around your age who have never really been put in situations where pressure has been applied and they crack the second that they are put under that pressure and the the part that would actually resolve that cracking is using those moments as, as what you're doing as learning opportunities.

[00:18:58.760] - Aileen Day

So, yes, I'm going to apply some pressure and I know I'm applying the pressure, but we're also expecting that not everything's going to go perfectly and we're going to use this as a really great opportunity to build resilience and to learn from what happened so that we can improve it for, you know, improve the experience for the next time. Pressure has to be applied. And I think that's the gap in so many people's business. And the culture in so many businesses is that we just apply pressure.

[00:19:30.170] - Aileen Day

We just keep putting the foot down on the pedal, but we don't release the pedal. Like you're saying, you know, we lift it back up again and then say, OK, well, let's reflect. Let's learn from what just happened. How can we make sure that the next time we have to put the foot down on the pedal, that the windshield, the windshield doesn't break or, you know, the door doesn't come flying off or whatever, you know, analogy you need to use, but making sure that they build themselves up and that confidence in that resilience to be able to take the pressure even better the next time, because it scares me.

[00:20:09.890] - Aileen Day

It really actually scares me. How many examples I've had where I'm going to say kids, because I'm an old lady now, kids can't deal.

[00:20:24.590] - Aileen Day

And as you said, it spirals into this I'm not good enough. You know, the self talk of I can't do it, I'm no good. They're going to fire me. You know, I'm I'm as my son my 10 year old son has this thing at the moment where if he can't do something, his self talk is to say I'm trash. That scares the shit out of me. Yeah, to come home at 10 and I'm trash. I'm trash.

[00:20:53.260] - Aileen Day

Like what? Who said that? I did. No one's even telling him he's trash. He's telling himself. So, to use those opportunities of pressure also to have them backed up with a learning opportunity, I think is just amazing and I absolutely commend you for for putting that into the way that you do business.

[00:21:18.190] - Luke Conners

Yeah, it's like building a muscle, you build the muscle on the 10th 11th, if you're doing 10 reps, you build the muscle at 11 and 12.

[00:21:25.280] - Aileen Day

Yes, exactly.

[00:21:27.670] - Luke Conners

It's a resilient bubble, we call it, it's like you push the limit of it and then you bring it back in. It's your rest, your rest, and then it's going because then your bubble gets bigger and then you got bigger into chaos could be around you. And it's like, but I'm comfortable in the chaos.

[00:21:42.760] - Aileen Day

For sure. Yeah, absolutely.

[00:21:45.880] - Aileen Day

And, you know, and we all have to learn it by all means. I used to, I used to thrive on chaos.

[00:21:53.170] - Aileen Day

Like if chaos wasn't in my life, I didn't actually know what to do. But at the same time, I would amplify chaos. And that is also a bad thing. So I had to be taught how to recognise what was actually chaotic.

[00:22:11.050] - Aileen Day

Versus what I just wished was chaotic, you know.

[00:22:15.740] - Luke Conners

Not creating chaos yourself, but being like when it does get bad, I'm good, when when the when the waves crashing huge and the storm's not there, there's nice peace. I'll enjoy that as well.

[00:22:27.310] - Aileen Day

Don't, don't sabotage it.

[00:22:29.260] - Aileen Day

Yeah, exactly. Exactly. So it goes both ways. That is amazing. So what's the other what's the other point that you've got around delivering and value driven brand?

[00:22:39.400] - Luke Conners

I think for me the last one is probably giving is. We've got out there building business, which is the brand we've got our not for profit charity talk2mebro, which is the brand. I've also got to look on his role as sort of my speaking coaching, where we run a lot of stuff in schools and more resilience, emotional resilience based programmes and sort of mix some army stuff in there, run like a two day army course where it's break it down and then we do exactly what we just spoke about.

[00:23:07.520] - Luke Conners

But when I reflect, there's all brands in that. But when I reflect back on what really started off, because you think three years ago I was going down the line of sneaky peaky, I didn't have Facebook, I didn't have Instagram, I was going down a lot of special forces and being a ghost. So then when I'm over the last three years, I was never I was never on any platform. So then for me over the last three years, to put myself out there and be like, you actually need to build a brand.

[00:23:33.170] - Luke Conners

It sort of happened a bit by default. But I'll go back to when we started. I can I can pick it together now. But it's like when I come back the first week I come back from the Army, one of my best mates, Mum, she does runs a charity called Soul Cafe in Newcastle, which does sleep at night. I sleep out for the homeless, but what they do at Soul Cafe is they make meals for the homeless.

[00:23:55.100] - Luke Conners

They do laundry, They do. There's all these different programmes, alcohol, drug programmes. And they really just a point. I got about one hundred and fifty volunteers. I think I do a thousand meals a week like it's. Oh wow. They go there. It's amazing what they do. And she rings me up, I did the year before and she and I said to her that year I said 2017. I said this is good doing the one day sleep out because the community gets involved.

[00:24:18.170] - Luke Conners

I was like, but what's it like to sleep out on the street for a week. Yeah. So the next year I come up and she rings me up and they're Christians. She goes I've got this God thing. I was like here you go, put it on me at seven o'clock in the morning, put it on me and you guys, I think Jesus loves you.

[00:24:33.470] - Luke Conners

She's like, I think we need to sleep out on the street for a week.

[00:24:36.830] - Luke Conners

And I was like, I love this job. And I'm thinking, I ring you back and I go back in time is like, let's do it. So we went and slept out on the streets. It was May six, nine year old son and she's 50. And I'll tell you what, in my whole life, I've never been more scared the first night that we're going. Yeah, we had a car. We're in Newcastle, which I knew there was a whole different ballgame when you're driving around Newcastle going where are we actually going to stay for the night?

[00:25:01.630] - Luke Conners

Yeah, I started getting concerned for their safety in the army, you might say next year. You know, they can handle themselves. So it's not the sort of they're together as a unit. Yeah, I was I was scared. And it's like, do you sleep in the alleyway where, you know, I can say, do you sleep out on a park bench where you're in the open? You can yell out if you need support like it was not.

[00:25:19.930] - Luke Conners

So it changed my whole perspective. So we slept down on a park bench in the open for a whole week and we had a lot of media attention.

[00:25:27.220] - Luke Conners

And that wasn't why we did it. I did it because I wanted to raise money and awareness for people that were struggling like, yeah, but that that that started a brand. And then I've just had so many flow on effects. I made the statement, I think that year on the, on the radio that I was going to take my building company overseas and building a Third World country. And then I was at a Tony Robbins event a year later and I was like, you made that statement to the.

[00:25:50.920] - Luke Conners

And I hadn't done anything about it, you know? And I was like, you made that statement to the public and you had an actioned it. So then I got on this group chat that had four thousand people on it, like a Facebook thing. And I said, I'm taking my building company over to overseas. Where can we. Does anyone know someone that we can get a build for? And this lady reached out and she goes, I've got this project in Nepal.

[00:26:13.630] - Luke Conners

It's 400 km's west of Kathmandu. We need hospital, school built, all this stuff. It just along with me. And she goes, I can't make it now.

[00:26:22.570] - Luke Conners

I've got to go to San Diego to run the leadership part of got the leadership for Tony Robbins and always literally on the plane going to San Diego to to go to the same event.

[00:26:33.730] - Luke Conners

So I'm thinking that she's part of the event, but I'm thinking she's just a participant. Like, it's just I didn't know who she was. We get there and I see guys let's meet on the same block at lunchtime. And so we met at this spot and she comes out and she's one of these head trainers.

[00:26:47.380] - Aileen Day

It's like the Tony Robbins buddy bench.

[00:26:49.900] - Luke Conners

It is. But it wasn't it wasn't just one of these head trainers like she has.

[00:26:54.360] - Luke Conners

Like, she has access to him. I was just like she's a she is an amazing woman with a heart of gold.

[00:26:58.780] - Luke Conners

And I was like that connection there has helped me so much in everything else we're doing. And I think there's there's something that happens when you go and say, I'm going to help someone without asking for anything and replies like the universe universe that's conspiring with you. And that giving that sense of giving also is a brand in itself, because it's like our building companies done stuff. The people that have been sick from cancer have come in for a day and just brought in all trades and done stuff for free for the whole day to get builds moved.

[00:27:29.280] - Luke Conners

And that's not that, you know. Yeah, tell us how good we are.

[00:27:33.340] - Luke Conners

That's what we do. But people say that.

[00:27:35.200] - Luke Conners

And I think if you do things that you just got to give because you just can't wait to put this on social media, I can't wait to get this out here and that sort of stuff that gets, the Universe smells that to, people smell the fakeness.

[00:27:48.100] - Aileen Day

It stinks.

[00:27:49.510] - Luke Conners

Yeah, it won't work for you.

[00:27:50.860] - Luke Conners

But when you literally just turn up and go, oh, I'm going to help someone like this, I'm just going to give it my resources for free. Yeah. Stuff happens. Your brand grows. It gives you credibility. Yeah. Other people see it because they go wow he's helping or she's helping, I want to go help someone to. I want to get involved. A lot of times people don't know how to do it, but I just go follow your heart, follow your gut, go and give the secret to living is giving like it makes.

[00:28:16.820] - Aileen Day

Oh, I love that.

[00:28:19.090] - Luke Conners

It makes you feel good about yourself if you don't get so worried about office. I love the stuff, the suffering, the suffering. And I worried about who's outside of you. It's been bigger, is bigger than me. And at the same time, I promise you, the world will start, the world will pay it back in the form of your brain growing, your business, brain growing, whatever, you will grow because of it when you are helping other people lost, supports, lost, like if you're helping life, life will help you back.

[00:28:45.940] - Aileen Day

Yeah, absolutely. Yeah.

[00:28:48.490] - Aileen Day

And I think whatever way you know like you're saying, people don't really know how to. There are so many avenues to give back. And one of the one of the things that I truly believe in is karma and and, you know, giving to the universe so that the universe goes, hey, good on you, here. Have something, have something in return. And it might be a small thing. It might be a big thing.

[00:29:18.400] - Aileen Day

But at the end of the day, you are caring for someone other than yourself and delivering value for someone other than yourself. And to me, I think that is so important and something I certainly try to instil in my son. And and it's funny that you talk about the sleep out for one night thing. I actually did the Melbourne City Mission do a sleep out like the Vinnies CEO sleep out type thing. But it's for everyone and. I actually remember at the end of it crying because I felt like such a fake, because to be honest, even though it was freezing cold, they do it I'm quite certain on purpose in winter, in Melbourne winter.

[00:30:09.890] - Aileen Day

It was freezing cold and we slept on cardboard and whatnot.

[00:30:13.160] - Aileen Day

But we were still behind the, you know, the safety of the gates of the MCG and there was still security guards wandering around at night. And and so ultimately, you still safe. And no sooner had we packed up our sleeping bag and our cardboard box and we drove out of the city or went to drive out of the city, did we see a whole bunch of homeless people sleeping in an alley. And I just thought. Like, what have I done?

[00:30:45.160] - Aileen Day

Like how? I mean, yes, it's it's helped it has it has helped I raised a fair bit of money. I was very proud of myself, but are still people experiencing that stuff that is just phenomenal. But at the end of the day, I could sit there and cry or I could just make sure that I was doing everything I could in my power to give back and mitigate those issues. And I guess that's where I see talk to me coming up as well to do what you can to mitigate those issues of suicide.

[00:31:26.020] - Aileen Day

And and that's why.

[00:31:27.550] - Aileen Day

Oh, my God, so. Luke and Co are about to walk 4000 kilometres, four thousand kilometres. I don't know what that is in miles just in case you're in the US, but it's a lot. And they're doing that. Why? Tell me why Luke.

[00:31:54.020] - Luke Conners

I'll work out how many miles it is. Two and a half thousand miles.

[00:32:00.910] - Luke Conners

Yeah. So there's a few of us that you can talk to me bright, my best mates, Jack, who we were overseas in the Army together and Christie. And now we have a team around us which is amazing. And so we're sort of sitting down late last year and we like to sit down and go what's the stats, what's the statistics. What did we achieve? And last year we we spoke in front of in COVID I think I spoke in front of about three thousand people face to face, Jack did about a bit over two thousand.

[00:32:32.400] - Luke Conners

So when our sessions because of were only 10 to 15, I think now we've got about one hundred and fifty sessions that I did like is the sheer numbers were crazy, like, wow, when you put that in perspective and and we were proud of what we achieved.

[00:32:46.920] - Luke Conners

And then the stats, statistics come in from LifeLine, Beyond Blue, a lot of the call back places and we don't have a number, but in 2019, there's about 3,300 suicides in Australia, it's about eight a day. Yeah, in 2020, these platforms these call platforms have gone up, their calls have gone up. The the call for help is going up about 60, 70 percent over the year. So we're guessing and I think we're being conservative that it will be over four thousand.

[00:33:18.640] - Luke Conners

It could be. I don't even want to think about how many potentially could be suicides in 2020. And I was

just like, we've made this thing in our community. Yeah. We get the text messages behind the scenes of today, "You saved my life". What you come in like that shakes you when you get it.

[00:33:34.710] - Luke Conners

I've I've got numerous ones like I could get you in my phone and just read them. Like today you saved my life. I went and got help. Today I get messages six months later saying I've changed my life around because of that talk you come and did, the tools that you gave me today I'm sure I saved my friend. And when you hear that you just gave the evidence, why it's like I feel very blessed to be able to do it.

[00:33:56.640] - Luke Conners

And it's a blessing for both the people we lost. We both lost. I lost Matt and Jack lost his cousin Matt. And it was Christie's husband, Matt. And it's like it's there's a happiness in it because their lives weren't in vain. Like this thing got started because since then and I don't know how many lives we've saved, we won't actually know numbers. But we're saving people's lives because of. Yeah, we've lost. But we've it's a good thing because in a sense, we can help from here.

[00:34:22.440] - Luke Conners

And it's like that their, their legacy aren't done.

[00:34:25.530] - Luke Conners

So we look at it from that line that we we're helping people and then it got raised, like what more can we be doing? And four thousand km's. Four thousand. Sorry, come out of the four thousand amount a walk come up. I think Brisbane, Sydney got talked about and a lot for what purpose. One of my favourite questions. For what purpose are we doing it.

[00:34:46.050] - Aileen Day

I love that question.

[00:34:48.240] - Luke Conners

And it was like I was like two thousand five hundred km's. I was like it's not enough. What do we, what are we doing? And it was I put in my phone Perth to, we're sitting in Wollongong at the time was like four thousand on the nose. I was thinking, I'll see him. I come from Perth, Perth, significant for me with the SAS stuff. And then I was like, what? Imagine walking coast to coast and then we Googled, who's done it?

[00:35:15.090] - Luke Conners

There's hardly any of that stuff. I don't think anyone's ever done it in the name of actual brand at the time. Like a charity.

[00:35:21.000] - Luke Conners

Talk2MeBro. So there's being people that raised money, but like the charity will be doing this and then that just kept growing and it was like, how many km's do we have to do a day. Forty five. My brother's weddings in sixteenth of October so I need to be back for them. It's not like we put it all together, like gone. Oh my goodness, we're nuts. Jenna's sitting next to me. Who's my fiance going, yeah.

[00:35:44.490] - Luke Conners

She's on board a bit. Christie's going you two are nuts and Jack and me. And the final question, so we got to the point of like we'll raise awareness we'll raise funding to so we can keep running these programmes for free around the places that help, because a lot of time, all the time that suicide goes hand in hand with financial difficulties. And it's like if we can get in and run these events and retreats and that for nothing we can and get further and spread like larger, we can help so many more people.

[00:36:09.990] - Luke Conners

So like there's a funding there. But I was like, I'm not giving up four months of my life where we could be running the programmes here in Newcastle and Wollongong still. Yeah. If we're not helping people along the way. And then it was like, right. I want to be talking to every single community that we stop

at. And then we've so we've run numbers. We've got this lady who's amazing. She loves geography.

[00:36:29.040] - Luke Conners

She's worked out how many population there is we reckon we can talk to about 25,000 people as we talk to about, yeah, face to face along the trip, potentially a million through media, it looks like we're going to get a documentary made on it like it's huge. And I was like, I can walk four thousand km's for four thousand plus. It looks like it's four thousand five hundred now because we're going to go down into Victoria because there's more numbers there that we can influence more towns.

[00:36:53.850] - Luke Conners

And yeah, so that's where it all kicked off. And then Christie goes you's are nuts. And I go we're doing this and Jack goes we're doing it and then me and him slapped hands together and Christie said Luke needs to go talk to Jenna about this and then Jenna goes, I know what he's like, they're doing it and it just grew legs. And you know I had to talk to my business partner about because Spartan's going to be, our building company is going to take I'm taking the car, taking myself away for four months that we just put on three or four more staff like we're going to be under the pump.

[00:37:26.610] - Luke Conners

There's no doubt about it. Three huge hit is hard financially hit us hard in all different aspects. Yeah. And it's like he's on board.

[00:37:38.100] - Luke Conners

And one of the boys said the other day, which I just thought was special. You guys don't worry, because I'm there's no lie. There is some stuff that I'm getting worried about now, like making sure we get a motor home a few different, like shoes to stuff along the way because we need support along the way with that.

[00:37:54.830] - Luke Conners

And he goes, look, we've got this under control, you got to do what you're good at, we're all in this mission together and that's that's what we want to bring up. It's like Jack and I walking and Jack and I are talking about its walk with me. We call it what we try. And it's the message is for male, females, whatever you identify as, youth, the elderly, like the message is the same. It's just as two bros that are talking about it.

[00:38:19.460] - Luke Conners

And the message is to walk with us if you can walk with us along the way and be part of it. We'd love to have you. If it's a short stint couple of days, we'd love to have you. But and it's like, yeah, we're all in this together and we just want to save lives and support lives like our goal on this walk. If we if we can get it big enough, is to drop the suicide by 25%.

[00:38:37.850] - Aileen Day

Wow.

[00:38:39.800] - Luke Conners

Guys, big goals and our big goal with Talk2MeBro is to make suicide a thing of the past and you know, yeah. It's a big one. But have a big, hairy, audacious goal why can't we and not just us like there's so many awesome organisations out there doing similar work that people grab for the brand. You go get part of those communities, get a part of those groups. It doesn't have to be.

[00:39:03.370] - Luke Conners

Talk2MeBro, and we'd love to have you to get in there and help people. Yeah. So that's yeah. That's our big walk.

[00:39:15.420] - Aileen Day

That is so amazing. So I'm curious then, you know, when it comes to the to the equipment that you need and the things that you need to kind of get together to make this a reality. Is there like an Amazon wish list or is there things that people. Is there a place people can go to where they're like,

hey, I've got to spare motor home, you can borrow it for four months or I sell running shoes and, you know, let me donate to you or whatever the case.

[00:39:46.710] - Aileen Day
Is there something like that?

[00:39:48.540] - Luke Conners
Yeah, absolutely. Well, honestly, we like I said, we can't do it ourselves. We're putting our funding in our time and everything on the on the line. But we we honestly need help.

[00:40:00.510] - Luke Conners
Our mission our goal is to raise a million dollars doing this across the country, big partnerships, big brands. But that's not all going to go to us. We're going to send some to probably LifeLine some to a female charities that are doing similar work, like across, spread it, because the the message is still the same. But we need like big sponsors that want to get on board. And if they just got cash that they want to get on board and give it to us with it like and help us out, please give it to us.

[00:40:25.410] - Luke Conners
I promise you, it saves lives and we can come and make it your business or your company and do our programmes and stuff too in there. We'd love to. And then if it's like if you if it's not funding, but it's like you need shoes, you need a lot of media stuff. GoPro's footage we want to capture the whole thing is when we get to places and talk, we'll have ice baths. We want we need the motor home because we want the whole thing set up.

[00:40:51.570] - Luke Conners
Some of our programmes will have ice baths at our events, yoga mats and we've mixed it up. And depending on how much time we got places to support in the style that will be doing our food will be a big one. Fuel will be a big one. But also, if you can think of stuff, maybe if you've travelled across the country you're like

[00:41:09.570] - Aileen Day
Fresh socks.

[00:41:12.300] - Aileen Day
My friend did. I was a support crew for my friends when they did the Oxfam 100km walk and they didn't fathom that they might need fresh socks.

[00:41:22.950] - Aileen Day
So I'm going to tell you, you're going to need fresh socks,

[00:41:26.460] - Luke Conners
We'll probably need bulk bandaids. Strapping tape.

[00:41:32.130] - Aileen Day
You'll need me, saying get the f*ck back in there, I don't care about those blisters.

[00:41:40.140] - Luke Conners
We're on the driven brand what a way to give and get your brand out there. Exactly. Exactly. Hint, hint if you're listening to this.

[00:41:49.110] - Aileen Day
Yeah, right. You can come with come walk. Maybe you can sign up on the on the motorhome and and you know, I feel good about yourself because you're doing something for others, not just you.

[00:42:04.740] - Aileen Day
Oh that is so amazing.

[00:42:06.120] - Aileen Day

And, and will there. I'm so excited by this and I'm like a kid at Christmas. Will there be like a way to kind of follow you guys on on the trek.

[00:42:17.160] - Luke Conners

Yeah. Yeah. So we'll have a we'll have a website. So we've got to talk2mebro.org.au which is the website. Yeah. We have www.walkwithmebro.com or .au or .com, we'll have both of them, both linked up.

[00:42:35.370] - Luke Conners

Or Facebook will be walkwithmebro. Yeah. That will be where you can really follow Jack and I's journey along the way. Obviously we're still waiting to talk to me bro brand. When we talk to brands it won't all be inundated with our walk because some how we still want to give the service that we provide while we're a way of supporting each other and talk2mebro, I'll keep that brand but Jack and I will not walkwithmebro essence.

[00:42:59.790] - Luke Conners

You'll get to follow the whole story. Yeah. And come along on the journey with us because it's not again, it's not just about us doing it. It's like we need support with this to support other people.

[00:43:12.120] - Aileen Day

Well, whenever you get to Victoria, book me and I'm there with my with my Everlast running shoes.

[00:43:19.800] - Luke Conners

Yes. I love it.

[00:43:22.510] - Aileen Day

My son was giving me crap for having cheap runners the other day I said I spend all my money on you, that's why.

[00:43:31.440] - Aileen Day

Now, I'll tell you what, everything that you have been doing in the last few years has just been phenomenal. I feel so blessed to have coincidentally got to know you. And and and as I think about. I got to know you because you were doing NISI again. I gather now knowing that story, so that makes it even a little bit more special for me, that I got to be that little support person for you through Nail It and Scale It. So, that's so nice.

[00:44:09.980] - Aileen Day

But before I let you go now, for those of you who don't don't know or haven't heard the podcast before, at the end of every podcast I get my guests to tell me what is the one song that gets them pumped up for anything. And if you have just heard about all the amazing I was going to say crazy, but it is crazy, but it's just frickin amazing stuff that Luke and his team are doing for humanity. Then you're going to know this man best be following what I say next, because his song that he has chosen and it was.

[00:44:55.000] - Luke Conners

We own it and who by Wiz Khalifa, and 2Chains,

[00:45:01.850] - Aileen Day

So, We Own It is now going to be included in the Spotify playlist that I make, specially especially especially for all of my guests who join me on the Value Driven Brand Podcast. So thank you so much for your contribution to the playlist and for anybody who needs to get pumped up for anything you will find on that playlist every single guest and the song that pumps them up for anything any time.

[00:45:35.080] - Aileen Day

So now there's no reason why you two can't be pumped up for anything. And I just want to say I am. So I feel like a Mum, but I am I'm so proud of the work and the value that you add and drive for your

community, for your businesses, for your personal brands and for you and and the team that work with you on all of those. I just want to absolutely say congratulations and thank you for being such amazing leaders in what actually creates and drives a value driven brand.

[00:46:15.490] - Aileen Day

And thank you so much for joining us. It has been an eye opener, to say the least.

[00:46:23.370] - Luke Conners

Thank you so much for having me now.

[00:46:26.500] - Aileen Day

Yeah, absolute pleasure. And for everybody listening, I want you I know Luke is being humble and saying that you can go and support other people and yes, you can and so you should.

[00:46:38.730] - Aileen Day

But this, my friend, is the call out to make sure that you visit valuedrivenbrand.com, and get all of the links that get you to get closer to supporting Luke and the guys and the girls and everyone in between from Perth to New South Wales, Perth to Sydney, from coast to coast in their bid to walk four thousand plus kilometres. To make sure that the people that sadly are no longer with us through suicide last year, their lives are not in vain.

[00:47:22.980] - Aileen Day

And to help them drop the Australian suicide level by 25% through the work that they do in suicide prevention and mental health awareness. So you can go to valuedrivenbrand.com/podcast-series where you will find this podcast and all of the links and the resources available from Talk2MeBro and WalkWithMeBro.

[00:47:50.220] - Aileen Day

And if you're in the, if you're in the market for some renovations, feel free to also follow Luke and the team at Spartan Projects as well. But all of those links will be available for you to follow. Donate, chip in, get involved in, get your running shoes on, find your part on the map and get involved and support what is an amazing group of humans and an honest blessing to be part of it. And I look forward to putting my running shoes on at the Victoria end of it as well.

[00:48:26.460] - Luke Conners

I can't wait to see you there either

[00:48:28.490] - Aileen Day

I'm going to be ready and raring.

[00:48:30.180] - Aileen Day

I mean I don't do exercise, but I'll make an exception for you.

[00:48:36.410] - Luke Conners

I don't think, I think we'll be coming into Victoria until probably August.

[00:48:39.870] - Aileen Day

So I've got a few months to get ready.

[00:48:41.850] - Luke Conners

But that's some months of training then, We leave on the 24th of May

[00:48:46.970] - Aileen Day

Oh good. Just after my birthday, I will have some champagne to burn off. Very good.

[00:48:53.450] - Aileen Day

Ah, thank you so much for joining us, Luke, and for everybody else joining us as well. Please get out

there and deliver value to somebody else in your life because what goes around comes around. I'm Aileen Day and we'll see you next time.

[00:49:12.240] - Luke Conners
Thank you.

[00:49:15.420] - Aileen Day
Thanks for listening to the Value driven brand podcast with your host Aileen Day is your business, you're going to become known as the sought after leader in your industry. Access our Value Driven Brand Quiz and special three part podcast series to identify the gaps and what you need to focus on, first.

[00:49:34.260] - Aileen Day
First, go to www.valuedrivenbrand.com/podcastcast-series. That's valuedrivenbrand.com/podcastcast-series. Tune in next time where we discuss more ideas on how you can deliver your own value driven brand.