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Anonymous Female Voice: [00:00:02] A LiSTNR Production.

Maggie Dent: [00:00:04] This podcast was recorded on the ancient lands of the Gadigal peoples of the Eora Nation in Australia. I wish to acknowledge the rich and continuing culture and especially pay respect to the elders past, present and emerging, and to acknowledge and pay respect to any First Nations people from anywhere in the world who may come to hear this podcast. We hope that we may all come to walk with gentle feet, strong minds and compassionate hearts in this global village.

Maggie Dent: [00:00:36] No dad wants to be a lousy dad. Aiming to be a good dad is great. But you know what? Being a good enough dad is so much more important. I'm Maggie Dent, parenting educator and author and champion of Boys and Men. And this is the good enough dad, right? Chat with committed, caring, sometimes confused and often funny dads about all the ways they've discovered to be good enough at this parenting gig. My Good Enough Dad today is How to Dad, Jordan Watson.

Jordan Watson: [00:01:11] Welcome to this instructional video on how to hold a baby. First, you're going to need a baby. Standard shoulder hold, baby. Jesus. Double, baby Jesus. Stinky nappy for me. Stinky nappy for you. Box of beers. And that's how to hold your baby. No babies were harmed in the making of this video.

Maggie Dent: [00:01:33] Jordan is best known for his hilarious How to dad New Zealand videos. And that one there. That was the first one he ever posted that catapulted him to social stardom. Jordan is now co-creator and face of Golden. That's a thong. No, it's a jandal, as they say in New Zealand. And the co-host of the Parenting Hangover podcast, his husband to Jodie, Dad to three girls, [00:02:00] Mila Alba and Nala. Hi, Jordan. Welcome to the Good Enough Dad.

Jordan Watson: [00:02:05] Good day. Nice to be here. I've aged a bit from that first clip you played haven't I?

Maggie Dent: [00:02:08] A little bit. How many years ago was it?

Jordan Watson: [00:02:14] That is eight, I think that one is eight years ago. That was just off the cuff video for a mate and went nuts.

Maggie Dent: [00:02:22] I know you grew up in rural New Zealand. Tell me a little bit about what that childhood was like.

Jordan Watson: [00:02:30] A lot of going outside, of being forced to, but not having an issue with it. Growing up rurally you had parents that could just say to you in the morning, we'll see you at lunchtime, go on out. We had a couple acres of land. We weren't a farming family. You'd say we had a lifestyle block, but not a lot of money and a lot of just coming up with your own fun and going out and trying to build a make a little wooden boat for the pond or go and build a tree hut or run around from the scary steer that we had where he would charge at you. Because when he, when he got docked, only one of his testicles came off. So he was still a very angry steer. So you'd sprint through the paddock rushing and we had that with our sheep, George as well. Again, George only lost one of his testicles, so it was still a very angry sheep. And you get home off the school bus and that was the game. You didn't have to, but we would all sprint through the paddock running for your life as George the one nut sheep would try and charge you down.

Maggie Dent: [00:03:28] George the one nuts [unintelligible, muffled by laughter]

Jordan Watson: [00:03:32] Ram? Reap? He's a mix, so maybe it was a reap the one nut reap. Sham? Whatever you want to go with. She's lost it. Anyway, guys. And that was the podcast for today. Thank you very much and we'll see you again.

Maggie Dent: [00:03:50] I got regroup in a minute. Oh, so funny. Um. [continued laughter]

Maggie Dent: [00:03:56] So that that sense of freedom, did you have a couple of siblings or [00:04:00] what was the story around your co playmates at that stage?

Jordan Watson: [00:04:03] I've got an older brother and older sister and a younger sister. So it was all four of us. Great. I love that we were that size of a family and could just annoy and explore and create with each other. And me being the third, it was usually my older sister, older brother kind of annoying me like you'd ride your bikes around, the classic shaving your tire. They tease me to this day, but riding my bike and as soon as they'd come up behind and just shave the back of your tire, I would lose my shit, apparently. Um, but yeah, They, they love to remind me that quite often.

Maggie Dent: [00:04:37] So where do you think you got your sense of humour from? Was it that childhood or was there, you know, a parent who had a good humour? What was...?

Jordan Watson: [00:04:42] My dad has quite a good sense of humour. Definitely does not talk as much as me. A classic of the era New Zealand rural dad where they'd get together and grunt at each other about things. And that was about it. There wasn't like a big "G'day kid, how are you today? Let's go do this and let's talk about our feelings" or any of that, which I think everyone can relate to. 80 dads, that wasn't the thing. But he did have a good sense of humour and also had these kind of comic strip books. There was the famous in New Zealand called Footrot Flats, which was a.

Maggie Dent: [00:05:13] Oh my God, I know all about it, I loved it.

Jordan Watson: [00:05:15] Footrot Flats, Murray Bell And my dad was addicted to them and had a bookcase full and as a young, I would have been six, seven, eight, I would just read them and also some Billy T James. He came out with some comic strip books, very famous Kiwi comedian. And I don't know, I think it's the mix of the quirky world of having a dad who was a jack of all trades, had a big mix of quirky kind of jobs. We hunted possums and he'd sell possum fur. He was an eel fisherman, which is a freshwater fish. So he's a freshwater fish commercial fisherman. And the mix of reading these comic books and it's just that New Zealand humour that I've, I feel a lot of Kiwis say that it's in them. And I don't think there was a moment where I'm [00:06:00] like, Hey, I think I'm pretty funny now. I've just learnt all that. It's I think it's just a classic Kiwi rural upbringing and it's sewed itself into me.

Maggie Dent: [00:06:08] What do you think you've learnt from your dad about being a dad?

Jordan Watson: [00:06:12] Hard to say what you take away exactly. I think things are built into you directly. Like he was very strict on us. When we catch up at things and you get talking with your siblings about other. It was so good. Other people are such little shits like dad used to do. Like we'd have the stick if you were naughty, you get a smack on the butt. And we're like, We've grown up and we're all bloody great. Like, that was great. That kind of discipline. Obviously I'm not that hard, but my kids do have quite a bit... I can be quite strict on them and I don't have an issue with that. I think that's great and it helps mould them and know what their boundaries are. And also the biggest thing would just be having fun when you can. There were a lot of times where it's just dad working, struggling for money, trying to raise four kids, keep a house over ... divorces in there. But always I remember there was just a laugh or a party or a family get together and yeah, have fun when you can.

Maggie Dent: [00:07:02] What have you consciously chosen to change that that kind of work balance or super strict?

Jordan Watson: [00:07:10] Yeah, I think you definitely take on what you went through as a kid and and you have your memories of what you were. And I'm definitely not as strict as my dad was. And that's a on purpose thing. Like, I don't want to be as strict as he was. There were moments as a kid that you were like, scared. We're like, Oh crap, Dad's home and I know Mum's going to say that I did this and Dad's going to really yell at me and I don't ever want my kids to be scared of me. So I think it's my saying is, no matter how good your dad was for you personally, no matter what podium you had them on, if they were if they were terrible or if they were the greatest dad ever, even if they were the greatest, you should always aim to be better than what your dad was. So we're constantly raising the bar. My dad's still around. Catch up with my dad all the time and I don't look down a big long nose at him about how he raised us. I'm very much and very much in the understanding that that's [00:08:00] just how it was. That's like like I said earlier, none of his mates were doing anything different. They were all the same. I'm not going to throw the rugby ball around with you in the paddock, but you can come and watch me work on this ute all day as I try and fix the engine. And that's all stuff that I know now. And I wouldn't have known all this without just sitting there watching Dad. He

wasn't saying to me, All right, boy, I'm going to turn to page six now and you hand me that one. I'd just sit there watching. And that was that was your hanging out with dad time. And I learnt so much from that.

Maggie Dent: [00:08:27] I think that's such a really important point that we all need to remember that our parents did the best with what they knew at the time. And until you know more, you can't do more. And that's kind of, don't you think that's one of the most really exciting things at the moment is how fathering has just turned in the opposite direction. We have just dads everywhere stepping right up, you know, with babies tied on them, cleaning shitty nappies at restaurants, like stepping right up. Well, their dads didn't not do it because they, you know, it was wasn't what dads did then. And we need to let our dads off the hook. I think that's a really important message.

Maggie Dent: [00:09:08] There's no question your videos are hilarious, but you can't be having fun all the time. Can you give us one of the most challenging experiences that you have come across as a dad of these beautiful girls?

Jordan Watson: [00:09:21] Yeah, of course. I remind my Instagram audience every month, I'll do, a couple of months I'll do a post being like, just to remind you guys that the things you see that I film are clearly to make you laugh and have a chuckle. And I'm trying to do that. But behind the scenes I've had a bloody terrible morning. This one tripped over crying with this one. She's got a snotty nose, this one's stolen her thing. And we go through all of that. It's just what we choose to put out there. Um, but I think right now, the most challenging thing we're going through is just the, the, the new ages where I've got a ten year old. People think, who tune in, I might post old videos, [00:10:00] right? I share old videos all the time. And there's some people out there that think I just have a one year old that has never aged for ten years.

Jordan Watson: [00:10:06] But no seriously, people are like, What? Sorry, you've got a five year old now? So yeah, my kids are ten, eight and five. And it's the it's the ten year old now becoming a 14 year old in her own head. And it's this five year old who's doing ten times more out there, out the gate things than what her ten year old sister did when she was five. I think we can all relate to that. The third kid or the youngest is always the more boisterous and go getter. And I'm always reminding my kids that, because my oldest will get upset that, why is Nala already getting her own skateboard? And I'm like,

it's because she can skate and she wants to skate. You never wanted to skate when you were five and and we were wrapping her in cotton wool because it was our first. We didn't know what was normal. And now you're just like, shit, go for it, Nala. Off you go. You want the keys to the car? Like, that's how we feel and we feel real bad. And we're constantly finding ourselves explaining to the older two like, we're not spoiling her. She's just so lucky to have awesome sisters to look up to and everything you guys do, she wants to be able to replicate that so I think that's our biggest challenge at the moment is just trying to get through these, these age differences and them how they're gelling.

Jordan Watson: [00:11:14] And there's moments where it's bliss and they're all hanging out like the happiest kids ever. But most of the time lately, they're at each other's throats.

Maggie Dent: [00:11:24] And also, I think this is one of the things I keep saying to parents is that every age and stage of your kids is going to have some great gifts. You know, you can't wait till they walk and then you can't find them. You can't wait till they talk. Then you can't want them to just shut up, like and then there's there's a challenge at every age that that brings us to our knees at times. And you know, that very big shift of one of your girls now about to step on that bridge to transition to adulthood. And, you know, the other two are still kids. So hang in there. Hang in there. Now, I've been curious about where you get your ideas from. So does Jodie [00:12:00] help you with some of these ideas? Or is it all your beautiful brain. Come on, Jordan.

Jordan Watson: [00:12:06] I'm not being a chauvinistic idiot male. But it is. It's 90% my baby of brain fart ideas that just happen at the most random times. Um, I don't really sit down and have a little brainstorming sessions. It's things that just come to you in the shower or the toilet or walking down the street, or I'll just stop a conversation and email myself. That's how I do get all my ideas. I email them, and then when I'm back in my office and I sit down at my computer, I'll see this random, badly written subject line. I'll be like, What was that? And then if I remember it and I like it and I still think it's a strong idea, I'll put it into the pipeline to film it and get it out there. But my wife's been amazing where she had quite a few years there at home when How to Dad was kicking off quite well and doing well where I could throw everything I had into it and just keep coming up with the content, dealing with the emails, the brands, trying to figure out how to make it into something and not just be a one hit wonder. So it is very much, um, my baby and

out of my brain, which sometimes goes viral and sometimes really bombs. So there you go.

Maggie Dent: [00:13:18] I just want to touch on one episode that I found just incredibly deep and meaningful, and that was, you know, the death of your original stubbies because people don't realise just quite how sensitive our boys and men can be about their favourites, whether it's their favourite t shirt, their jocks, their the stick under the bed. So how did you recover from that really big moment where they had to just go?

Jordan Watson: [00:13:44] So in Australia, you know stubbies as short shorts as well?

Maggie Dent: [00:13:47] Yeah.

Jordan Watson: [00:13:48] That was, that was the original original pair that I wore on the very first video. And then I was here I am just, you know, branching out and I did a mini little "How to [00:14:00] Sport" series where I went and interviewed some famous Kiwi, not interviewed, but shot some little videos with some famous Kiwi sportspeople, went weightlifting. And yeah, as I squatted down I heard it and oh, you just think it's a joke, like it can't be true. And I had blown the butt straight out of my favourite stubbies and I should have seen it because as you held them up to kind of hang them on the line, you'd see the sunlight come through the crotch area. You knew that the fabric was thinning, but you didn't want to, you didn't want to let them go. And yeah, it was a tough moment of my life. I'm very upset you've brought it back up.

Maggie Dent: [00:14:34] So it is, it's a deep pain. I have a son who was 24 and I was hanging up his favourite jocks and the elastic band came off the bottom part and I brought them in and said, Look, I think they're done, mate. And he says, Oh, no, you've got a sewing machine. Can't you? So. I just put them back in his undies drawer. It was just, it was just too painful for him at that time to think that they've gone for good. So he's just kept them in two pieces.

Jordan Watson: [00:15:00] People will see me out in the street sometimes and I'm not in stubbies and a bush shirt, and it just freaks people out. Like what? You wear regular clothes?

Maggie Dent: [00:15:06] You mean you've got other clothes?

Jordan Watson: [00:15:07] Yeah, but I'll have you know, I've got my drawer of clothes and my wife gets very angry because I still, very similar to that, I'll just wear one black t shirt, even though I've got three others that I just love. And I've got one of the, I don't know if everyone does this, but I'm a very simple ...This is my favourite jumper wear everywhere. Yeah.

Maggie Dent: [00:15:26] No, no, it's a really big sensitivity. I have to keep explaining to mums that you shouldn't ever go in and clean out your son's drawer, whether it's clothes or it's stuff. Because you could throw out something that is deeply special to him because there is this beautiful sensitivity under the sometimes big bravado that's on the outside.

Maggie Dent: [00:15:52] You dived into a slightly different version with some of your videos when you went into the relationships videos, which seriously were [00:16:00] just hilarious. So were you actually on this journey of exploring how to strengthen your marriage, or is this just kind of other material? Because they were they were really good.

Jordan Watson: [00:16:12] It was totally just another way to strengthen what I'm doing, not the marriage. It was just new material. Our marriage, I can say it out loud and I say it proud and I sometimes feel terrible to say it. But I've been married for 11 years. Married for 11 years, and not once through that 11 years have we had someone storm out of the house. We've not had someone have to go and stay at a friend's for the night. We seriously are the most cheesiest, best mates and I'm very, very grateful. So that's why I have such confidence and safety in doing these tongue in cheek marriage kind of videos. Like, you know, my wife wanted to buy a set of blinds and I make a big song and dance about and turn into a video where and I know it's so relatable and we can have a good chuckle at it, but I love that I can play with that kind of content as well. And it still connects with people because most people as well have got kids. They're in a relationship and so they can connect with the stuff that's going on with their partner or their other half. So get to have fun exploring that world as well.

Maggie Dent: [00:17:13] We know emotional honesty helps relationships stay. You know, intimacy is about us being honest and open with each other. And I think, you know, there are times that men aren't always open and honest about the vulnerable feelings and when they struggle. But sometimes laughter can help us go into that place. And what I felt you guys were so comfortable with each other because you were both laughing equally as much. And I think that's the other part to it, that laughter can help us keep our relationship strong, you know, because we all think we're right at times, don't we? You know, we all think we should be the one, you know, doing whatever. And you've got that wrong. You know, I'm married to a to a really good bloke and I just take the Mickey out of him most of the time when he's annoying the hell out of me and it just moves on. Whereas if we're [00:18:00] going to attack someone, that's a whole different ball game, isn't it? So I'm just must say I really enjoyed them. I hope there's some more coming.

Maggie Dent: [00:18:16] Now, I heard what you were saying before about having just enough strictness, and I think you've put a call out to parents to make "no" great again. And as the Queen of Common Sense, I have to agree with you on that one, that kids actually need boundaries and they need to know they can't always get what they want. So was there a particular reason why you suddenly put that that call out? Come on, let "no" be great again?

Jordan Watson: [00:18:38] Yeah, it's there was the talk in the media about phones and schools and look, my kids aren't really at that age. There's a couple at our kids school that might have phones, but I just in my brain, it makes no sense that kids should have phones at school or in class and how these parents feel like they're peer pressured into having to get a smartphone or bullied by their own 11, 12, 13 year old kid when you got to remember, you're the parent. And so I was kind of reminding people about you can get dumb phones, which are the ones that we kind of had back when they first came out. You just got a keypad you can call mum, you can call this, but it doesn't come with all the other social media shit and all that pressure that's going to come with it. My daughter knows and hears me talk about this and I know like she's freaks out about that because she's asked, Hey, when can I have a phone? And I'm like, Oh, maybe when you're 15 or 16, but I'm not there yet. I don't have the pressure. I don't understand what's going to happen with a 13, 14 year old's brain. But it was very much that.

Jordan Watson: [00:19:35] I do feel that a lot of parents, we've gone soft as well. It's great how dads have stepped up and how we're much more aware of how our friends and everyone around us is parenting. Social media has helped with that. So you're seeing a new world of parenting. But also I think a lot of us have softened up, gone too far soft where kids are now just, can I have, and you might say no once [00:20:00] they'll ask you the next day, okay, great. Here's your brand new pair of \$90 crocs or the big hoodies that every kid wants or whatever the big craze is. So I was just saying, yeah, let's make "no" great again in a video. And it connected with a lot of, it connected with a lot of people. And everyone was like, Amen, I agree. Let's make "no" great again. You shouldn't see a kid at a flipping restaurant on every... We were at a restaurant the other day and there were four kids, came in with a family. Each of them pulled out a tablet and was on an iPad. As they're sitting there, like, that's just, that's not right. You got to be able to say no, say no, shush, wait for your dinner, sit there nicely.

Maggie Dent: [00:20:38] And also have conversations. You see, this is what we're not doing because that screen is displacing real human communication. And I'm a nanny. I don't want to be, you know, at a table and my kid's looking at a screen. So what we actually do is have the conversation first, and right then if they're going to drive everyone mad, it's like, I think there's a really good place for sometimes iPads and things on long haul flights, especially if you're sitting near me. I think there's a place that we can use them, but I really feel we have to prioritise the relationships and connectedness.

Maggie Dent: [00:20:38] Obviously you've made quite a few cock ups on your videos, but I want to know what's a really significant parenting fail that you think, Yeah, yeah, I mucked up there. Well, I definitely mucked up then.

Jordan Watson: [00:21:26] Mine and it's still an ongoing one. It wouldn't be a moment. It's something that I kind of have to work on. And it's that, which it's kind of a bit cheesy because everyone probably goes through it every day, but it's that work life balance. It's very hard for me. I work from home. I run these these How to Dad channels where my brain, as mentioned, is constantly firing up ideas and my wife's noticed that there's as the years go on and on, there's just moments where I'm fully absent. I'll be at the dinner table and boof and ideas popped in and I'm writing it and I'm scripting it in my head and I'm just daydreaming out [00:22:00] and then boof! And she'll be like, Did you hear that?

And it's as bad as I don't know if people can relate to, there was the TV show Scrubs, and the lead character on Scrubs was famous for going into these very vivid daydreams. And I have the same thing now, just full constant now and then daydreams. And it's because I'm thinking about How to Dad, my fourth child is How to Dad and I need to make that work. And if something comes in strong, it can overtake whatever else is going on. And I need to learn to almost have a time where I can shut off or just stop that tap from running all the time because there'll be moments where my kid can be talking to me and I'm like, Sorry, what was that? And it's really bad and I need, and but I'm aware of it, which is a good thing. It's been brought to my attention, especially by my wife, and I notice it and yeah, I'm trying to work on that one.

Maggie Dent: [00:22:47] Oh, that's just such a really good point because I've had dads say that to me as well. They can be really distracted. It's a single focus, right? Guys are much more single focused because we're biologically wired. You know, if we go back to the very beginning of time, you guys had just 1 or 2 jobs, mainly one go out and kill the mammoth or the saber tooth tiger to go out and kill the deer for dinner or three practice killings. So you do a good job with killing. So you weren't doing a thousand things, but females, they were wired to do all the rest of it, basically to keep everyone else alive. So they do this whole multi thing and they can be doing 2 or 3 things and still hearing a full conversation, whereas guys can't. And sometimes I know it causes problems, particularly for the female and the family. Why can't you? Why have you forgotten bin night? How can you forget bin night's the same night every week, right? Or you've gone to get the milk and you get the wrong milk. There's only one milk that the woman wants. You go it's just milk. It's the single focus. And I think when we actually really work together with that, you know. So I reckon give that little hint that that beautiful woman in your life comes up and just rubs your shoulder to just bring you back into now. Because at the same point, it's important [00:24:00] stuff what you're thinking.

Jordan Watson: [00:24:01] Yeah, yeah.

Maggie Dent: [00:24:01] But also your kids are important too, right? So you're not a bad human. But what you've got is a functioning system that works a little differently at times.

Jordan Watson: [00:24:08] And I do love that on a very shallow level. You did mention, though, that I can take away from this podcast and say to my wife that this science that backs up my very singular thinking, love it. Thank you thank you.

Maggie Dent: [00:24:19] Single focus brain.

Jordan Watson: [00:24:20] Yeah. There you go.

Maggie Dent: [00:24:22] Yeah, but you're going to keep training.

Jordan Watson: [00:24:24] Yes. Yes. Yes.

Maggie Dent: [00:24:31] Every parent has fears and worries about their kids. But is there a big fear that you may have about raising your girls in today's world?

Jordan Watson: [00:24:40] Exactly. That that is my biggest fear, having three girls. And as they get older, this this world that they're heading out into, um, making sure that they're strong enough and physically strong enough so they can deal with some bloke that's going to squeeze their arse in a pub one time and they just want to shut that down. We constantly play fight like at least a couple nights a week. It's me on the lounge floor wrestling quite aggressively with all three of my daughters and they love it. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Pile on, beat up. Dad, I have to yell out now. No, no, no. Okay, stop. You've actually got my shoulder there, quite bad. As they get bigger, it ends up hurting. But I'm trying to stick with them.

Maggie Dent: [00:25:19] Yeah.

Jordan Watson: [00:25:19] I don't know what exact one thing it is, but as they get older, it does. It scares me shitless having teenage girls. I don't want to think about it too much and stress myself out, but that is my biggest fear, having three teenage girls out in this world. And they're not at home. They're not just at the school down the road. They're out doing things and not having that protection. And I'm very aware also that I don't want to be that worrywart dad, but I do want to try and figure out and instill some things into them that are going to help them get through those teenage years and deal with all the things that life's going to throw at a teenage girl, which I try to figure out what I don't

know what life throws at a teenage girl, but I'm going to pretend I can help out and be there for them.

Maggie Dent: [00:25:58] So one thing I want you to keep whispering [00:26:00] to your girls is no matter what happens when you're a teen, you can always call me and I'll come. I'm always going to come. And not to be frightened of me. Just call me and I'll come. It doesn't matter whether it's you or Jody, but at the end of the day, we want our kids to call and call our dad and call our mum rather than go, No, it's just not going to be, it's going to be terrible. Yeah, Always call me no matter what. Yeah, it's so important. Okay, so now it's time to really blow your trumpet. Even though I think you've mentioned a couple of things, you're doing quite well, but what do you think is your biggest parenting win so far as a dad?

Jordan Watson: [00:26:33] Oh, I think there's a few things. As mentioned before, you always want to do better than whatever your own dad/ parents were. Think everyone should have that as a goal, as a parent, and I think mine's just having that time for them and that goofing around and having fun and being really present like my ten year old daughter can catch a high kick bomb rugby kick that I do, better than ten year old boys at her school, like she blows them away. Because I've been doing that with the girls since they were young. Just getting out there, being rough and tough with my girls and teaching them. They know that Dad's into cars and they've they love to jump on the quad bike with me. They love to go fishing and making sure they're doing all those things that you might think, Oh, that's stuff for boys. No, it isn't. Like these girls are going to be bloody tough little troopers. So watch out your teenage boys. All right.

Maggie Dent: [00:27:18] That is exactly the greatest gift you can give your girls is your presence. Your full presence. And you've been doing it. So well done there. Alright I'm going to ask you a tricky question, so I'm going to ask just one thing that you want your girls to learn from you as their dad. What would that one thing be?

Jordan Watson: [00:27:40] Geez, that's that is a hard one. I think hopefully what they'll take away is that you can go as hard as you want on any task, anything that challenges you at life, but also be able to laugh along in the process. And we try and do that so much like even everyday little things like I'll take them out fishing and it's all [00:28:00] serious and they know we've got the rods, got the bait, I'm explaining everything to

them. It'll all turn to custard and we just laugh like we'll go back. We've spent so much money and you'll come home with a chili bin, sorry. An esky with no fish in it. And I'll just say to them, Hey girls, that's what happens. And they're used to dad having fails and that's fine. But as long as you set your mind to it, to a task and give it all you got. But hey, you can have a laugh and have a giggle along the way. Life's not all stress and and freaking out about it.

Maggie Dent: [00:28:26] I love it because my dad was that sort of a dad. Do you think that's where my sense of humour came to and also my kind of ability to go, Oh, you know, bugger up everything. There's going to be times things just bugger up. If we just get back up, brush off the dust and keep on going. So for my final question, I want you to imagine going back and talking to Jordan before he became a dad. What advice would you give him for this big journey of being a dad?

Jordan Watson: [00:28:57] Jeez, quickly get sleep. Like, just quickly, just go to like a like a chamber where they freeze you and just try and quickly have five years sleep before the first one arrives. Stretch. Stretch more. Because, like, just fighting the kids, your back starts to hurt. So make sure you're limber. But on a serious note, like I mentioned, I am strict on the kids. You'll see I have fun with the kids and they know when, but they also know they know very instantly when you've crossed a line and hey, cut that out and you don't have any leeway if you don't cut it out, it's straight for time out on the timeout chair or whatever we've, whatever timeout device we've come up with or seen on Instagram that week. So for me it would be don't be too strict on them. I think especially my ten year old Mila like because she was the first and very have high standards of her kind of leading the charge for her sisters. So just take a step back on the strictness. Be strict but take take your foot off a touch.

Maggie Dent: [00:29:53] Oh, it's so good. And it is a juggling act, isn't it.

Jordan Watson: [00:29:55] Oh, it's so bloody hard to figure out. And it's great. It's great and it's bad. [00:30:00] Me I'm the strict one and my wife's the more chill one. And then we'll have our little catch ups and be like, No, she's going to come up more strict so I don't have to be as hard on them all the time. And then that never works. And it goes back to me being enforcer, and it's a constant juggling act between you and your partner, you and yourself, you and your own brain, and you just got to constantly chip

away at it and you're never going to master it. But as long as you're trying as hard as you can and you're aware of what you're doing, then that's the best thing.

Maggie Dent: [00:30:28] Jordan, thank you. Thank you for helping dads everywhere be good enough and helping the rest of us have some really beautiful light moments in our life.

Jordan Watson: [00:30:37] Hey, thank you very much. Yeah, Hopefully. Hope. You've made me feel like I'm doing good enough, so that's good. I can take that away from this.

Maggie Dent: [00:30:47] Jordan Watson, best known as the How to Dad New Zealand and co-host of The Parenting Hangover. Yeah, Jordan was quite hilarious. I had tears rolling down my face, but among the laughter there were some really good tips that we're going to chuck into our good enough dad checklist.

Maggie Dent: [00:31:11] I felt the first one is it's really important that we have laughter and lightness in our homes and that sometimes that's what diffuses that tough moment with the tantrum with your toddler. The, you know, slam door with your teen or with your partner just getting frustrated because you did buy the wrong milk. Let's lighten up and bring more laughter into our homes. The second one I'm really big on, of course, the kids need to know "no". They need to know we've got boundaries that you are the grown up who holds those boundaries because, you know, caving all the time doesn't end up with kids who know how to navigate environments that have rules. And number three. I think another really important message from Jordan is acknowledging that your dad did the best he could with what he knew, [00:32:00] with what was considered normal at the time, which was often using fear and being really, really strict and probably not as soft and loving as today's dads are choosing to be. So if your dad was like that, how about you let him off the hook? Because he did the best he could with what he knew at the time. I'm Maggie Dent and this is The Good Enough Dad. Follow us on the LiSTNR app or wherever you get your podcasts.