

GED_S01E10_The_Good_Enough_Dad_tristan_mcmanus_23 1213_MID28-56_FINAL.mp3

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. 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, author, and a champion of boys and men. And this is the Good Enough Dad, where I chat with committed, caring, sometimes confused, often funny dads about all the ways they've discovered to be good enough at this parenting gig. My Good Enough Dad today is Tristan MacManus.

Tristan MacManus: [00:01:10] Hello there. Top of the morning to ya. It is Wednesday, September the 7th. And what a jam packed show we have for you today. Top of the morning, top of the morning. Top of the morning. Top of the morning.

Maggie Dent: [00:01:19] Tristan is the Irish dancing twinkle toes of Studio Ten Mornings. He was a judge on Dancing With the Stars Australia, but he's really dancing to the tune of his three kids Echo, Oisin and Tadhg and possibly his wife, Tahyna. Tristan, you grew up in Ireland. What was your childhood like?

Tristan MacManus: [00:01:36] Yeah, it was great. Yeah. Um, grew up in Ireland, in a town called Bray. It used to be a holiday destination for people in Ireland before, before international travel became a big thing.

Maggie Dent: [00:01:47] So it's what? Not now?

Tristan MacManus: [00:01:47] Uh, not so much. I mean, it kind of it, like on a sunny day in Ireland, you still get the dubs coming out because there's a beach. It's kind of like Cronulla, but not like Cronulla. Yeah, it's a pebble beach now. Yeah, it's a pebble beach now. [00:02:00] But it's it's a beautiful town. Yeah. Uh, all my aunties, uncles, grandparents, parents, sister all still live there. Most of my cousins as well.

Maggie Dent: [00:02:07] Whereabouts in Ireland is that?

Tristan MacManus: [00:02:08] Um, it's called the sunny southeast. It's about 20 odd kilometers from Dublin city centre, so I suppose I live in the Shire here now in Cronulla. So I suppose the same distance from Cronulla to the city centre would probably be the same in Ireland. Um, again. Seaside resort. Uh, it's a beautiful town. I absolutely love it. Yeah. Growing up there um, was great. Really loved it. Very close to our family as well. My grandparents spent a lot of time with them, and I'm still nostalgic for my time there. But, um, yeah, we've done stuff a bit different, I suppose. When I was a kid, like, my dad was in the army. I have memories of him being away an awful lot, which he wasn't, you know, like, he obviously went on a couple of tours and stuff, but not, you know, yourself. Like when you're grown up, you kind of think, yeah, I grew up with no dad and stuff. It certainly wasn't that. But I just, I remember him being away and I think maybe, maybe because they used to send back like, all the dodgy, uh, videotapes and like, music tapes and stuff. So I always, yeah, the cassettes, I just always remember that, you know what I mean? And that's, and that was a huge part of my childhood as well.

Tristan MacManus: [00:03:14] Getting those sent back, getting the letter sent back from my dad, getting the photographs sent back. So I remember it as a positive as opposed to a negative. But in that, like I said, we spent a lot of time with our grandparents and in my case, um, led to my whole dance career, you know, which wasn't itself great. But at the time, because of where I was from, you don't dance when you're a boy. So a lot of that was a secret when my grandparents, they took up social dancing.

Maggie Dent: [00:03:41] Awesome.

Tristan MacManus: [00:03:41] The area I came from was a little bit rough. My ma wanted to keep us out of trouble, I guess, you know, and keep us busy. And then I

suppose it was a discipline. And there was a romance when it came to dancing like that. So they took myself and my sister in to learn that. Sisters a little bit shy, I was probably a little I was a little bit of a, uh, like a shitbag, I suppose, when we were [00:04:00] a kid.

Maggie Dent: [00:04:01] Yeah, like a lot of boys.

Tristan MacManus: [00:04:01] So we were kind of just going for whatever it was. Like, I loved the bit of attention. Yeah, I was a little bit of a ratbag. Yeah. So the attention was great for me. There wasn't too many boys doing it. So there was a lot of girls attention, which even as a young age you kind of like.

Maggie Dent: [00:04:14] Better than nothing.

Tristan MacManus: [00:04:15] Yeah, exactly. I mean, it is, um, but at the same time, you're not selling that to your mates at that age, you know? So dancing certainly was a big secret. And something I suppose, to a degree, I grew up embarrassed about, even though it was something I liked doing and it was something I was good at. I was very much embarrassed about it. And I wouldn't say I was a timid kid, but I certainly didn't want to get my face smashed in.

Maggie Dent: [00:04:41] Did you play anything else? Any other?

Tristan MacManus: [00:04:41] Yeah, well, I played football as well.

Maggie Dent: [00:04:42] So you were doing the "boys stuff".

Tristan MacManus: [00:04:43] Yes, I was doing that and that's essentially what I wanted to do. That was in my head, my career. In my head, I was good enough to do, in everyone else's, of course I wasn't. I was bleeding rubbish. But I lived for football. So even if I had to do a competition at the weekend, which meant that I missed a game of football, I'd be devastated. Which is mad in that dancing was the vehicle then that took me around the world, that led to me to where I am right now and something I love. But yeah, certainly that was my childhood. It was great. A lot of people I was friends with as kids, I'm still friends with now. Yeah, probably my truest friends as well.

Maggie Dent: [00:05:20] So was it a free ranging there, that neighbourhood sense where kids hung out together or not? You said it was a bit rough.

Tristan MacManus: [00:05:25] Yeah, it was rough, but it was. We lived in a cul de sac.

Maggie Dent: [00:05:29] They're the best places.

Tristan MacManus: [00:05:31] They are the best. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Like I said, it was rough as guts. You'd go up the road and someone would give you a clip and you'd go home and you tell your ma and she'd go, well, what did you do? That was the response to it. So you kind of you really did get raised as people always say, it takes a village or whatever it might be. It certainly took an estate and it definitely took our estate. But I love it. You know, I look back, I look back at the few beatings I took as a kid from the whole neighborhood boys, girls, adults, whoever it was, you know? But it made us who we are. And like [00:06:00] I said, there's a there's a strength in that, I think.

Maggie Dent: [00:06:03] Yeah. So what we've actually we kind of know if we look back at traditional kinship communities, etc., children of multi ages of all genders hung out together, usually within a blood curdling scream of a significantly safe adult, but doing stuff that they wouldn't normally do if there was a parent hovering. And so the reason why that is actually how you raise kind of resilient, capable kids is because when the adults aren't there, we're biologically wired as the older children, to watch out for the younger ones and the younger ones are biologically wired to kind of copy older kid behaviour. So that's how it's meant to be. So you see what happens when we break down neighbourhood and play like that? Then we have to bring social and emotional learning classes into our schools.

Tristan MacManus: [00:06:45] It is very much that, I can relate to that, of course. Yeah, the older kids.

Maggie Dent: [00:06:49] We don't trust the fact that childhoods actually got a purpose around it..

Maggie Dent: [00:06:55] So, Tristan, what is one of your happiest family memories from that time of your life?

Tristan MacManus: [00:07:01] It's funny, I always remember because my dad played football as well, and it always sounds weird now, but, like, I used to love going to watch my dad playing football and, uh, more so, like, at half time, you could run on the pitch and you could kick the ball into the nets and stuff. And then their team was very much young adults, you know, who had just been married, a couple of singles in there as well, but they used to all hang out together. They go down to the pub, and this was at a time where they get. I'll sit in the pub, you know, they'd give you, like, a rock shandy and a couple of, uh, bacon bites, you know, and then you'd play out in the street for a couple of hours. I just remember that just floating around, it sounds weird when you say it to people now. Like just hanging around in the in the beer garden and things, but it was never, I don't know, I just love it. I remember there was a World Cup on and all the kids would be left in the house 2 or 3 doors up, and all the parents would be down in the pub and we'd be watching the football and just, jeez, just having great craic.

Tristan MacManus: [00:07:56] Yeah. You know, I remember [00:08:00] doing the dance competitions as a kid, being allowed to stay back to watch my grandparents dance because I knew I'd already planted a seed that I'm not going to school tomorrow. So, um, my parents would go home, I'd stay with my grandparents and air quotes, watch them dance, and then start to feel sick in the car on the way home. Stay in my nanny's house like that. Yeah, and then get the next day off school. I remember that, you know, I remember, um, like, climbing the back wall out of my mates house because we weren't allowed go through the house. I still remember falling off that, like the seven foot wall, being winded raw and crying, and my mate making me walk back against the wall because again, I couldn't go through the house. I remember the camping out in someone's back garden and then roaming the street at night time, getting back before their ma caught ya, you know, I remember robbing sweets from the shop. I remember it all.

Maggie Dent: [00:08:46] I have to go back to the kind of bit around the pub, because when I visited Ireland many, many years ago, um, it, it was the whole family at the pub.

Tristan MacManus: [00:08:58] Like it's really selling a stereotype here. I don't mean that kind of way.

Maggie Dent: [00:09:02] I mean, I guess it's kind of like that. And, you know, the culture with RSL clubs that are parts of Australia, you know, you all go together. But I grew up with the barbecue chips and candy, lemonade for dinner outside and with a whole bunch of kids.

Tristan MacManus: [00:09:16] Sorry when you mention family dinners there and stuff. We had a very loving family where we did that, you know, to the point that obviously I'm here a couple of years now, but we'd still like, um. Uh, Saint Stephen's Day, you know, uh, Christmas day, New Year's Day. We'd have a routine that we do every year, and we'd absolutely, we'd manage to fit about 50 people into a room that holds about five. You know, like, I love those memories when I look back at them. Even now, living in Australia, I look back and I see how close all my cousins are with my family. I love watching them do everything together and kind of, almost lived through that from here. You know, there's a lot of love in our family. That's all I remember as being a kid.

Maggie Dent: [00:09:53] That's huge.

Maggie Dent: [00:09:59] How [00:10:00] were big emotions handled in your family that maybe wasn't quite so sparky and loving?

Tristan MacManus: [00:10:06] I suppose from my own life growing up, I have a lot of repressed feelings from a lot of things, but I don't think any of them have been generated probably by my family. You know, I kind of I'm trying to remember any significant things that happened as a child that really affected me that kind of way.

Maggie Dent: [00:10:25] Were you allowed to be sad? Were you allowed to be vulnerable and all that?

Tristan MacManus: [00:10:28] Within my family. I was, yeah, maybe not so much within your community and maybe not on the street and stuff. And I'm sure that stuff happened in my family that was kept in house. And I think a lot of people are still that way inclined. It might be a bit controversial to say, but like my feelings are my feelings. They're not for you to interpret them. Not not you, sorry, anyone to interpret them and tell me how I feel and who I am. You know, I think there's a lot about that. I don't know what that is, what I own, the stuff that happened to me, and I feel like I'll deal with that. I

don't know if it's an old family thing, if it's a dodgy family thing where you kind of go look at whatever happens in this family, we'll keep it in here and then we'll deal with it.

Maggie Dent: [00:11:09] My experiences around death and dying were very much the Irish are very authentic and real about things like that. Like, you know, grieving was open and raw and real, but quite often within a family home, whether the body was brought home and left on the dining table and people came to it, was you came into the home. And I feel that that actually was kind of a positive in terms of us helping to understand that sometimes in life we have times where it's it's hard and it's crap, and we're allowed to have those feelings rather than shut them down to be stoic because you're a boy or a man, you're not supposed to feel them.

Tristan MacManus: [00:11:45] I always remember our next door neighbour, young girl my age was hit by a car when we were kids, and I always remember she passed. There was kids within our estate who died. I remember that I'm very aware of people dying as I grew [00:12:00] up. I was probably kept away from that. I remember one of my best friends dying, and I sat with the body for a couple of days in the house as well. The first one I remember was my grandfather's brother. I remember going to that. So I think we probably shied away from that or we were kept away from that by our families. But yeah, that's something I've always kind of felt a little bit, um, difficult to deal with considering it was so prominent. You know, but I had found a way as a child and probably as an adult as well, to, like I said, suppress things to a point that I don't know if they actually happened or not. Yeah. You know, and I'm all right with that.

Maggie Dent: [00:12:36] Denial can be protective.

Tristan MacManus: [00:12:37] Yeah. Yeah. And again, I think it's definitely important to talk about things and I'm getting around that but not everything.

Maggie Dent: [00:12:43] So in my background with death and dying, I've learned that there are some people, um, a significant number of females who process grief by talking over it, bringing it up, reanalysing it, sharing it, crying and all that. And yet there were times working with men who that's the last thing they wanted to do. And it sounds like you were in that repressing. In other words, I'm pushing it down for a while till I can make sense of it. So it's not always necessarily an unhealthy thing. It's a different way of

processing it. And sometimes that can be really difficult in relationships. And it's one of the reasons why there's a death of a child, it really increases the chances of that relationship not surviving, because quite often women say, why don't you talk about it? Because you're not grieving. In actual fact, you are grieving. You're grieving in the way that a man grieves versus the way that a woman grieves. And sometimes when you get to work that out, it can come up sometimes in safe environments, or it might not, but it still may be processed.

Tristan MacManus: [00:13:44] It can definitely be a powerful thing. Yeah. And, um, so I'm sure we'll get into it as well. But yeah, we we certainly we've experienced miscarriage has been a huge thing. And um, and certainly our first miscarriage was definitely something that I never addressed from an [00:14:00] emotional point for myself and I double grieve that, eventually.

Maggie Dent: [00:14:06] So let's go to that point. Yours wasn't a straightforward path to your three beautiful kids. So where did it begin, and how were those first steps along the journey to having a family Tristan?

Tristan MacManus: [00:14:21] Well it began when I met Tahyna. We met when we both lived in Los Angeles. We were put together or certainly introduced to each other with the intention of us spending our lives together by mutual friends. Mutual friends that we that obviously we'd met at different times.

Maggie Dent: [00:14:37] Much more reliable than Tinder.

Tristan MacManus: [00:14:38] Yeah. Well, you'd think so. It depends if your friends like you or not, you know, they have that wicked sense of humour. So, I used to live in London, and, uh, I, I happen to have a great bunch of Aussies who I met over there who were really good friends of mine. They had moved to Los Angeles a couple of years after I had. And obviously there's a lot of Aussies in Los Angeles as well. There's a lot of Aussies everywhere, a bit of like Irish, and it just so happened that they all knew each other from ways back when. And then they put us, put us together and said, we'll all go out for a dinner and whatnot. And then I met Tahyna and I fell in love with her straight away. We start going out with each other and whatever it was, maybe it was the success of my own childhood or not. But all I ever wanted to be was a dad. And I

wanted to be a husband that someone would love. That's what I strive to be. And when I met Tahyna, I knew, right. This is it. This is who it is. And we kind of we openly spoke about wanting to have a family.

Maggie Dent: [00:15:33] So good when you're on the same page.

Tristan MacManus: [00:15:35] Yeah, I think so. Yeah, most definitely because we were very different, um, at the time as well. I mean, Tahyna was a bit more straight-laced. I was loose, as you know, but somehow it worked. Sometimes you just need someone else to fill your boxes kind of thing. Um, I sound weird, but you know what I mean? We were on the same page with that in terms of, uh, I had no problem, after [00:16:00] a few whiskies in me, um, letting all my feelings come out, um, and I could sometimes I can say the right words. Sometimes I can find them. Yeah. We spoke about a family, and then we said, all right, let's get into it.

Maggie Dent: [00:16:10] How old were you when you decided, let's go, let's start it. Let's build it now.

Tristan MacManus: [00:16:14] Uh, I suppose. Jesus, I don't even know what age I am now. Um. When was it? 2015. What would that make me? 20, 20? 30? 33.

Maggie Dent: [00:16:26] Okay, good your pre frontal's growing.

Tristan MacManus: [00:16:27] Yeah, I probably wasn't mature, but I was old enough. And then we, like I said, we got cracking on it, we got into it. But I was doing Dancing With the Stars in the States at the time, so I, so I was still traveling, but our base was obviously in Los Angeles, so I'd kind of go on a couple of trips, come back, blah, blah, blah, back and forth. And then I'd come back from one of the trips and it was Father's Day. Tahyna got me a Father's Day card. Now, just before that, like I told you, I was pretty loose before that. So I was always worried about can I even look after myself, let alone anyone else? So what we did was we got a dog. A little puppy, adopted a little puppy dog, and then, um, it was probably a month or two after that, which was this Father's Day. So I was like, ah, Tahyna has to get me a Father's Day card, obviously, because of Pikey, the little dog. And then I opened and said we were pregnant. And like I said, I was buzzing. I was over the moon. It was great. We both were. And we were

kind of in this love bubble. It's like we kind of fell in love again, you know? And then, um, unfortunately, like every, every second of every day was then how are you feeling now? How are you feeling now? Is this. And then Tahyna started feeling a little bit rough. And again, we didn't know if that was just maybe it's just part of the process, your body's changing.

Maggie Dent: [00:17:39] Um, how far in was that?

Tristan MacManus: [00:17:41] This was only a couple of weeks. In a couple of weeks in, it was probably. I'd probably be a bit vague on a lot of things. Sorry, but I'd say it was probably maybe the 10 to 12 weeks. 12 weeks always stands out when people are pregnant and you kind of wait for 12 weeks and this and that, blah, blah, blah. Whatever it is, I know it's kind of real taboo subject as well, but then Tahyna started [00:18:00] bleeding an awful lot. And then we went to straight to the emergency and we talked to them and then got some scans, and then we were told there's no viable pregnancy here, go home and take a couple of Panadol. And that was our kind of first experience of what that was. So that was our absolute heartbreak. So I guess you go into defense mode then and you kind of go, because then you look at everything as right, we're both emotionally broken here, but you're physically going through this. So then you kind of go, all I can do now in this unknown is focus on the thing that I can do. And even though you're thinking you can't do, you can't bleeding do anything, you know what I mean. But what you can try and do is you can kind of support as best you can, but then you're like, well, how do I support? I don't even know how I can support her, you know? So you then you ask a million times, are you all right now? Are you all right? So you're asking the same questions you've been asking for the last 12 weeks.

Maggie Dent: [00:18:53] No I'm not alright. And you can't fix it.

Tristan MacManus: [00:18:54] And you can't fix it.

Maggie Dent: [00:18:55] And how powerless does that make you feel?

Tristan MacManus: [00:18:57] 100%

Maggie Dent: [00:18:58] As aman, too, right. This is the woman I love, right?

Tristan MacManus: [00:19:00] And then you get angry because you've just been told, um, there's no viable pregnancy here, and we'll get this thing out of you or we'll get, you know, whatever it might be, the wording is never right. And so you just want to grab someone by the throat and rip their face off, but you can't. You know what I mean? Because

Maggie Dent: [00:19:15] It's not recommended.

Tristan MacManus: [00:19:16] Well, it's not recommended. No, no, it's probably not a smart thing to do either. You don't know what to do, you know. And so like I said, you're devastated. So you revert to and again this isn't everyone, but certainly for me you revert to what you know and then you kind of go, right, well, what am I going to do is I'm going to shut my face, I'm going to stay quiet. And I keep asking you if you're all right. Yeah, I'm going to clean the dishes for you, and I'm going to do this for you, and I'm going to do that for you. I'm going to pick up that for you, and I'll pick up that for you, not for you, you know what I mean? But you're just trying to distract yourself so much and making sure you're checking in that you're feeling all right. Can I do anything for you? Can I? You're almost not wanting to address what's happened. So you focus on what's happened to them and them being your partner. You know what I mean?

Maggie Dent: [00:19:52] So how comfortable were you with Tahyna's grief?

Tristan MacManus: [00:19:55] Um. I certainly wasn't comfortable.

Maggie Dent: [00:19:59] No, [00:20:00] no.

Tristan MacManus: [00:20:00] But it was definitely a shock because we didn't know it and we didn't know anything about about miscarriage, you know. And then we assumed if you're going through a miscarriage, well, then the people who do know about it are going to tell you about it. But going home to take a Panadol. I've been told to go home and take a Panadol when I've been hung over. You know what I mean? So it's kind of. Surely that's not the same. So then you're kind of like, now what do I do? So now what you have to do is you have to broach a conversation with someone about something that's happened to you. On the assumption that, do you know any about miscarriage?

Maggie Dent: [00:20:33] It's such a taboo, you know, like.

Tristan MacManus: [00:20:35] 100% it is.

Maggie Dent: [00:20:36] And it's still kind of in that space. And my challenge is when I was in my intensive breeding program, which is quite some time ago, my oldest baby's 42, it wasn't taboo. When we fell pregnant, we told our friends and family we didn't have to wait till the magical 12 weeks.

Tristan MacManus: [00:20:54] Yeah, so it doesn't mean anything anyway the 12 weeks.

Maggie Dent: [00:20:56] No. So. But what happens then if you've been, you know, this is what we recommend in case something happens. Then if something happens, the people you love the most don't have a clue. So it's his craziness. And I want to pull that right down. I want to be able to have people say, look, we are fingers and toes crossed. Let's hope, um, and therefore if something happens because we've got women, you know, going back to work who have miscarriage 2 or 3 days ago and nobody knows. It's just outrageous. So thank you for speaking about it. But also. How long was it that you felt? Should we have another go? Like, how long does it feel okay in that space?

Tristan MacManus: [00:21:34] To be honest with you, we never we never really thought about it as time. I mean, it's it's almost one of those, I suppose, in any sort of traumatic situation. There's no time anymore, is there? There's just kind of there's certainly not a time when you forget about it. It's certainly not a time when it's okay, and there's certainly not a time when the new chapter starts. It's just you're not even addressing the first question [00:22:00] that comes into your mind, which is. Right. What did I do? What did I do wrong here? Or whose fault is this? Or it never was a whose fault is this? But something's to blame because you're not telling me that this happens to people.

Maggie Dent: [00:22:12] Unfortunately, it does.

Tristan MacManus: [00:22:14] Exactly.

Maggie Dent: [00:22:14] It's incredibly common.

Tristan MacManus: [00:22:15] You don't tell me that it happens to one in every four, you know, one in every four, 75% or whatever it might be. Like you're not told any of this stuff. There's there's just this undying guilt that you're carrying around. You don't know what you're guilty for. You don't know what you feel guilty about. You're either guilty because you didn't address it, or you're guilty because you haven't been told that what you did like, maybe it was that one cigarette I had when I was 12 or wherever it might. You just don't know what it is. And then you're certainly, from Tahyna's point of view, it's like, well, you probably get this, didn't you? Or you probably you probably smashed a couple of days too much. You probably drank these. You put whatever it is.

Maggie Dent: [00:22:50] Major loss. We often do "what if?" Don't we?

Tristan MacManus: [00:22:51] We need something to to be able to put a tick on to say, all right, well, that's what that was.

Maggie Dent: [00:23:01] Tristan, you said you kind of double grieved. So what did that look like?

Tristan MacManus: [00:23:08] A lot of tears. Um, yeah, well, I guess..

Maggie Dent: [00:23:11] Not the first time? But the second time?

Tristan MacManus: [00:23:12] The second time, because the first time was something to get through because of my lack of understanding of it. The second was coming to terms with what had happened. And grieving that and being sad for that. And then the double grieving. So because it was, there was two miscarriages. The double grieving was not grieving my first miscarriage.

Maggie Dent: [00:23:36] Yes, that's exactly right.

Tristan MacManus: [00:23:38] And the guilt that I had with that, because your guilt goes from what did I do wrong? To your guilt of not addressing what happened. You know. So kind of. Because your miscarriages are still your babies. And, um, I didn't

grieve my first baby as [00:24:00] much as I should have. And it's a guilt that you'll, that you carry with you however, um, right or wrong that is in your heart. It's still there, isn't it?

Maggie Dent: [00:24:11] And in my counselling rooms. There were times I worked with men your age who hadn't processed the death of their dad when they were eight, and they weren't allowed at the funeral, and they weren't allowed to talk about it. And he wasn't spoken of again. So that grief still can be lurking deep inside them and can lead to a lot of anger and numbing behaviour. Alcohol and drugs and things. So again. Letting it out. Yeah. Let it all out.

Tristan MacManus: [00:24:39] Let it all out. Yeah.

Maggie Dent: [00:24:40] Tristan, how do you deal with those big, hard feelings when they come up with your kids now?

Tristan MacManus: [00:24:46] It's kind of different when you're talking to kids than when you're talking to adults. Certainly, when it comes to my kids, I want them to be as open as possible. And sometimes, I don't know, I guess as an adult, the most simplistic answers probably feel like their childish answers.

Maggie Dent: [00:25:04] How do you manage the big meltdown in the supermarket?

Tristan MacManus: [00:25:06] Oh, mate, that's that's a nightmare. Yeah.

Maggie Dent: [00:25:08] Coz that's big feelings.

Tristan MacManus: [00:25:09] They are huge feelings.

Maggie Dent: [00:25:10] Irrational big feelings.

Tristan MacManus: [00:25:11] Well, well well, how we do it now because we've got quite emotional kids is we've tried the, tried the get angry thing. We've tried to calm down, calm down. Stop crying. Try it all out. None of that works. None of that works with

our kids. What we do right now is with our kids. We give them a bit of time, try and get a little bit more of that out because you don't know how long they're going to last.

Maggie Dent: [00:25:33] Let the glitter jar shake up.

Tristan MacManus: [00:25:34] That's it. Our kids get to the point where they a few times they've worked themselves up so much they spill their guts. Now we just try and be a bit more patient with them. Try and ask them, what are you feeling? Because, I mean, we're assuming that the only reason they're melting down like that is because they don't know how to explain what they're feeling. So we try and ask them if that's not working well, then we just we pick them up and we try and hold them. Um, and we kind of cradled [00:26:00] them for as long as they need. Uh, I mean, look at every situation is different, you know, but I just, I kind of find just trying to be as caring as possible, and, and the first thing we have to do is certainly forget what's important to us in that moment. Because the most important thing has to be it has to be the kids. You know, like we get caught up in our own stuff, we're stressing about our own stuff and we're not, we've got one eye on trying to calm the kid and one eye on trying to finish that email, finish that phone call, whatever it is. Just kind of have to drop everything and let the kids know that we're there for them. Yeah, it sounds a lot easier than it is, but it works 80% of the time for us, I think. Yeah.

Maggie Dent: [00:26:39] And I think just shifting the lens from my child's being bad or naughty to my child not coping.

Tristan MacManus: [00:26:44] It's easy to kind of say that they're just being little ratbags.

Maggie Dent: [00:26:47] Yeah, they're deliberately doing that. No they're not. Yeah. They've just lost control.

Tristan MacManus: [00:26:51] Sometimes they are.

Maggie Dent: [00:26:51] No, no. You would have.

Tristan MacManus: [00:26:55] Well you kind of put yourself, because you try I guess rationalise the kid's emotions. About how you would be acting in that situation as an adult and you're like, yeah, but they're not thinking like an adult. They're thinking like a kid. That's it. Like, you know.

Maggie Dent: [00:27:09] They don't have a prefrontal lobe. And the two tiny tips in that too, particularly with girls. As soon as you suggest they might be feeling frustrated. Man, oh man, they're going to really have you. Because seriously. Yeah, they don't like that. I'm not frustrated, but they are. But of course you've named it. So therefore you've taken their power away. And the second one too is um, just knowing that it is very much a storm within their nervous system that we don't have to join. Because when we join it, yeah, they've got no possibility of accessing their prefrontal. So logic won't work. And actually they can't hear you. So it's the flip the lid until the lid's down. You've got. So the idea is to stop them from running on the road and destroying the whole of Woolworths, or breaking something or hurting themselves is our number one priority. And knowing that this will pass and how [00:28:00] we are beside them, that's, you know, and they have to do it thousands of times.

Tristan MacManus: [00:28:06] I think that's why they've been great. That's why the kids have been great for me as well, because like I said, I'm not aggressive person at all in any kind of way. But frustration is a is a strong emotion that I'm in, well not in control of.

Tristan MacManus: [00:28:18] But you know, like most guys, I suppose it's very easy for us to get angry. It's very easy for us to get frustrated and we shut things down, and then that's the end of it, you know? And it's not right to be doing it to adults. It's certainly not right to be doing it to kids. But certainly you have to address that. I guess that there's an element of embarrassment in that as well. When it comes to the kids like that, it's just trying to be a bit more empathetic and kind of, um, comforting or anything else.

Maggie Dent: [00:28:44] And the total number of people who've calmed down because people have asked them to calm down is zero.

Tristan MacManus: [00:28:50] Zero.

Maggie Dent: [00:28:50] Yeah. Totally zero.

Maggie Dent: [00:28:50] When Tahyna fell pregnant with Echo were you kind of able to relax throughout that pregnancy? How did you how did you feel going into it?

Tristan MacManus: [00:29:07] We charged on. Yeah, we charged on and we kind of, um, it's just like we are so happy that we've been able to fall pregnant again. And that's all our focus is on right now. Yeah.

Maggie Dent: [00:29:18] That's the gratitude now.

Tristan MacManus: [00:29:20] Yeah, I think so.

Maggie Dent: [00:29:21] That we're we've got one that's going forward.

Tristan MacManus: [00:29:25] Yeah. But for sure we had stuff in the back of our mind. Of course every scan, we were nervous. But we were very much there for each other and together we didn't address because we had another miscarriage before Echo as well. Yeah. Um, so we had two before then, before Echo, but, um, it, a lot of it we didn't address until after Echo was born, maybe even after Oisín was born.

Maggie Dent: [00:29:49] Tell me, how was it when that baby, healthy baby arrived? It just I mean, it's amazing anyway, but this is doubly sweet. Let's be honest.

Tristan MacManus: [00:29:56] Oh, do you know what? I just lost it. Absolutely lost [00:30:00] my mind. I was just I was so happy. I was afraid to hold my own baby. I wanted to do everything. And at the same time, I wanted to do nothing. You know, I just wanted to look at her. Yeah. I just wanted to look at her forever.

Maggie Dent: [00:30:14] Count the fingers and toes.

Tristan MacManus: [00:30:15] Oh, yeah. You just wait for the doctor, isn't it? Yeah. There you go. Like ten lovely toes and 14 fingers. You're like, what? You just slip it in there. He could have slipped in there. Two beautiful noses, huh? Um, yeah, but it was just, I don't know, it certainly it wasn't even relief. It wasn't celebrate. It was just. It was just 100% in the moment of this is our baby. This was everything we ever wanted, you

know? And it was kind of and most importantly, it was it was a raw and crying, healthy baby. Yeah.

Maggie Dent: [00:30:47] So did miscarriage turn up again on your journey?

Tristan MacManus: [00:30:53] Yes. It came up again because again, funny with miscarriage again, it's like you kind of go right with miscarriage. We've done that part. Yeah. You know, we're over that now.

Maggie Dent: [00:31:02] Was it any easier.

Tristan MacManus: [00:31:03] No it wasn't. You know, the thing is we had the conversation and we were like, right. So, um, and again, this sounds weird. We've had the miscarriages now we've had a baby. So we're obviously we're back on track. What ended up happening was we had another miscarriage after Echo. And then Tahyna just threw herself, started documenting what was going on. And it was I was more, more. So a case of going from Tahyna, she was like, right, well, I don't know what, still don't know what's going on here. And I can't find this information anywhere. And whether it's bedside manner of the people that we were talking to or not, it just kind of put us out of joint a little bit. Like, surely there's people going through this, and surely there's people who are not as lucky as we are. Whether we decide to use it or not, to have people around who they actually can at least try and reach out to someone.

Maggie Dent: [00:31:55] What support did you get? Where did you find it?

Tristan MacManus: [00:31:58] Well, [00:32:00] like I said, I didn't address it, so I didn't find it anywhere.

Maggie Dent: [00:31:58] Thanks for your honesty

Tristan MacManus: [00:32:06] Yeah. I mean, well, this was the thing, because again, like I said, when Tahyna started documenting, I was like, I was like, look, I'll support you. You know what I mean? I feel very uncomfortable about this because I don't, the way I looked at it was the reason that Tahyna wanted to do it was for herself, of course, but it was to reach out to help people as well and to give people a platform. I didn't know

what my feelings meant. I didn't know what my thoughts meant, and I was scared of giving an opinion. That, well, that might make things harder for people like, you know, I didn't want to be a voice of something that I didn't understand. There's a huge responsibility in it. And certainly when it came to Tahyna being pregnant, in my head it was like, and it was selfish, I get it. But I was like, I don't need you and I don't want you to be under this pressure and this stress of trying to explain and help people when you're going through something. Because when you're looking at something so closely, you don't know how that's affecting you, because every single, what does that mean? Or what does that feel like? Or what's that feeling and what's this? And then you're reading whatever you're reading somewhere when that doesn't correlate, like, you know, because you're so helpless, so you're trying to cling on to things that I was I was afraid more than anything else. And I was afraid of being afraid.

Maggie Dent: [00:33:20] Did you have a conversation, or have you had a conversation with any other man who's gone through that? The miscarriage?

Tristan MacManus: [00:33:27] No.

Maggie Dent: [00:33:29] Even till today.

Tristan MacManus: [00:33:30] Oh, after the documentary was filmed. Sorry. What that led to Tahyna making all making all the notes, speaking to different people about different things. Um, she made the documentary. MOM, uh, misunderstands of miscarriage. Um, it's on Apple TV right now. Check it out. And it was one of those ones. And again, we kind of talked to different families who had gone through different things because again, miscarriage is not an experience that you all relate no to. Everyone's experience is different.

Maggie Dent: [00:33:58] Everyone grieves differently.

Tristan MacManus: [00:33:59] Everyone [00:34:00] grieves differently, of course, but even in terms of your day to day and what you feel and what happened and how you dealt with it, everyone's is different. And you might be very, very lucky to find someone where you can kind of go, that happened to me and that happened to me. But there's an element of it, and it's more important that, you know, people have gone through this and

you know what? If you look close enough, someone's going to have felt something that you need to hear. So there has been that. Yes, I've so I've talked to people in that. And since it's been released since people have watched it for sure they've, they've reached out. But like I said, it was more to kind of. I didn't want to be the voice to anyone. Not even in private. Certainly not in public. So it was something I didn't quite understand. The power that the platform would have at the beginning. And more importantly, I was like I said, I was just I was afraid to take part in it because I didn't know how to deal with it.

Maggie Dent: [00:34:53] And repeated loss is another thing. You grieve one, two, three like it merges together. And it doesn't make any more sense then, does it?

Tristan MacManus: [00:35:02] No. There's an element of things happen in your life, and I don't know where that's come from in my head, but shit happens and then shit happens to everyone and it's how you deal with it.

Maggie Dent: [00:35:13] Yeah.

Tristan MacManus: [00:35:14] You know, and it's so selfish and cold to think of it that way. That shit happens. And you know what? That miscarriage, that was just shit that happened. Because it's not it's so much more than that.

Maggie Dent: [00:35:26] It does. But it's what we do, not only us that's amongst it all. And that's one of the things we know about true resilience is that we're not resilient on our own. Yeah, we're more resilient when we have people around us who care for us when that happens. Yeah, it doesn't matter whether it's, you know, cancer or it's this or that and that allowing others to share that journey with us, which obviously wasn't easy for you to start with. Do you think if shit happens now, not a miscarriage, but something else that you're more likely to be able to [00:36:00] open up?

Tristan MacManus: [00:36:00] Yeah, I think so, I think so.

Maggie Dent: [00:36:02] You're a better man.

Tristan MacManus: [00:36:04] Most definitely. Yeah, I think as I'm struggling to find the words I was about to say, I'm a better communicator. No, I was like, it definitely helped me. It definitely helped my heart. It definitely helped my head. For sure it helped our relationship. It's not for me about, hey 12 guys, lets all get in this room, cry about stuff that we feel sad about, and we'll feel like better men. But there's certainly a part about it where I kind of I can see the strength in speaking about my emotions, which I didn't before. Yeah, I'm not as afraid of my feelings as I used to be. Granted, I don't still don't fully understand them all.

Maggie Dent: [00:36:48] And I think there's that place that we grow as humans through the experiences we have. And, um, you know, the big experiences are not what we want, but they can actually give us that unexpected gift later that we may be more attuned, aware, wise, you know, and could possibly just offer someone that word of comfort. Yeah, I think it's a it's a good way to being a better dad.

Tristan MacManus: [00:37:15] Yeah, oh, definitely. Well, because it opens everything up. Like I said, I'm very aware that everything I'm talking about is very singular. And I wouldn't have been able to express those things or be how I am right now if my partner Tahyna wasn't as resilient and as strong as she is. It's that, isn't it? Sometimes you can have it all around you. You just don't know because your eyes are closed.

Maggie Dent: [00:37:44] Time to fess up, Tristan. So to be a good enough dad, you, you know, like there are times we fail. So what's what's one of your worst ones that you can share?

Tristan MacManus: [00:37:53] I kind of fully fess up here now, but you know that one I hate. Like, I still refuse to do it now. The nails. Cutting the nails. Oh, yeah. [00:38:00] Clipped Echo's finger for a start.

Maggie Dent: [00:38:02] Blood everywhere

Tristan MacManus: [00:38:02] Oh, mate, the way she looked at me was like, absolutely not. I'll never do that again. I'm afraid of that one. I'll tell you one of my fails was, um, with Echo, uh, you know, like with your kids, when you get out, when you get younger kids, then you think the older kids are grown ups when they're only still four years old,

you know, and you're trying to lodge these morals into them. And this is what's right. This is what's wrong. And you forget that they're too young to process that whole thing. But Echo asked if she could join a football team like a soccer team. I was like, absolutely, you can 100%. I was like, this is the best. This is about to happen. She's going to play football. I was like, And I'll be the manager. It's gonna be amazing. And so she came on the team. And then the first year we kind of had like a different parent every week, a taker. And it came to my week and I was like, here we go, go time. If there was seven of them on the team, you start with five and whatever way they were sitting down, I went right one, two, three and then I skipped over Echo. I went for five. Alright you guys start. You can come on in a minute. Because in my head it was like favouritism, you can't be doing that, like, I don't want to, I don't know, I thought, I got real funny about it. I was just like, I don't want to be favouritism. So they played blah blah blah. Echo full had the shits with me during the game, put her on like everyone was coming on every ten minutes, just substituting them on our five minutes or whatever. Anyway,

Maggie Dent: [00:39:21] It was fair.

Tristan MacManus: [00:39:21] Well I thought it was fair.

Maggie Dent: [00:39:21] You just didn't put her on first.

Tristan MacManus: [00:39:23] Just didn't put her on first. I said, no, this is the way we're going to go with it. And I'm giving her little instructions during the game. She's not looking at me. I was like, oh, maybe she's just focused because she's a little gurrier. Yeah, it was great. Oh, she was so pissed. Yeah. But she she had so much fight in her. I was absolutely, she was grabbing jerseys to run past people and stuff. I was like, yeah, get in there. And I'm screaming they're gonna go straight through the middle of them. I still do it. Go straight through them. Don't be afraid of the big kids, blah, blah, blah. That was it. And then and then the end of the game came. I can't remember what the score was, whatever it was. But you're handing out, they had like, McDonald's vouchers for a play of the game. Player of the Game had two of them. One to you and one to you, blah blah blah. So she's looking at me. I can see the lip going and [00:40:00] then she's still not talking to me. Got in the car on the way back and she goes, you

skipped over me. I'd forgot about it. At this stage I was like, what do you mean? She goes, you said.

Maggie Dent: [00:40:10] She's a girl she's not gonna

Tristan MacManus: [00:40:10] You said one, two, three and then jumped over me. I was like, yeah, but I tried to explain it to her and she goes, and then you didn't give me the Player of the Game. I was like, no, look at when your daddy's there. I said, it's not nice to kind of do that. We won't be showing that. I said, it's only right that we do it this way. I'd say about four months down the line, someone else done it, and then they gave their daughter the Player of the Game. And as soon as as soon as he hand it over to her, her eyes darted to me. And I knew exactly four months earlier. Exactly. It came into my head. I was like, oh no, I'm in big trouble here. And she brought the conversation up in the chat. That was a huge fail. She goes, I never want you to be my coach ever again.

Maggie Dent: [00:40:45] They're deep those girls.

Tristan MacManus: [00:40:46] Oh, it absolutely killed me. That was a huge fail. Now, granted, two weeks ago she asked if I could be a coach again, which is awesome. So we're back on track. But I only took what, six years?

Maggie Dent: [00:40:55] So I'm going to let you know that she's never going to forget it.

Tristan MacManus: [00:40:58] I know.

Maggie Dent: [00:41:00] Never. I know girls don't. And also when there's an emotional thing. Whoa! Yeah.

Tristan MacManus: [00:41:07] Do you know what's great about Echo, though? This is a win. Yeah. Straight into a win. And Echo has no problem telling me exactly how she feels about stuff. She's so bullheaded. She's so determined and she's so confident within herself. She'll question absolutely everything that I say to her. And I love that about her.

Maggie Dent: [00:41:28] And you, the big, big gift you're giving her is you're going to listen. I'm not going to shut her down. I'm going to listen because that's the whole thing that helps that relationship, you know, we know is so important between dads and daughters. They need to be heard. And you need to really listen. And you don't have to agree with me. But if you really hear me, that is the biggest gift you can give me. And yeah, there'll be times, there'll be long conversations.

Tristan MacManus: [00:41:54] Oh, yes.

Maggie Dent: [00:41:55] Yeah. And I can't tell you how important they are in terms of a girl's growth and development [00:42:00] through life that she's heard.

Tristan MacManus: [00:42:01] The thing is, I love them.

Maggie Dent: [00:42:02] Yeah.

Tristan MacManus: [00:42:03] I like I love the conversation. There's nothing. Oh, it's the best. You know, she's like.

Maggie Dent: [00:42:08] They're so deep from about six, seven and eight.

Tristan MacManus: [00:42:10] She's like come in and sit down here. And she's like 100% mate. She's like, do you want to hear me sing the song? I was like, you better believe it, sunshine. And yeah. And she writes her own songs now. Some are rubbish. But at the same time, the fact is she writes these for days, for days, for days. She's very thoughtful in terms of how she speaks to you. She understands what makes people feel good, and more importantly, she understands how important being kind is. And she also understands how important it is to speak earnestly and honestly to people and not to appease people.

Maggie Dent: [00:42:50] Great. No people pleasing or a little bit even.

Tristan MacManus: [00:42:52] And I was like, yeah, but everyone else except for me. I said, whatever I do, you go, yeah, yeah, and then no one else.

Maggie Dent: [00:43:00] And then you laugh and she knows you're kidding.

Tristan MacManus: [00:43:01] Yeah, yeah.

Maggie Dent: [00:43:01] What do you reckon is your biggest fear as you're raising these beautiful kids?

Tristan MacManus: [00:43:12] I mean, I suppose it's the same as everyone. It's. You're so busy trying to teach and tell them things that you don't realise what you're doing at the same time. How I deal with stress is very different now, and I'm afraid of of sometimes those minimal times, granted, when I might lose my rag if they're around it, how they process it. I'm afraid, like most parents who their other influences are, I'm afraid of letting them down in any kind of way, you know? Um. I'm afraid of trying to tell them too much. I'm afraid of trying to cradle them too much. I'm afraid [00:44:00] of not letting them make their own mistakes. I'm afraid of them turning against me because I'm trying to be strict because I think that's the right thing to do. I'm afraid to tell them the opposite thing to their mum, you know, um, loads of things. Everything you can, everything you can think of. But more importantly, I'm afraid of them losing their innocence through stuff that I do.

Maggie Dent: [00:44:23] Okay. What do you mean?

Tristan MacManus: [00:44:25] I don't know how to say it. I'm just. I'm just afraid of doing something that makes them lesser. I'd be afraid of embarrassing them somehow.

Maggie Dent: [00:44:36] You will. I just reassure you. Oh, yeah.

Tristan MacManus: [00:44:38] But not embarrassing them by the bleeding clothes I wear or, you know.

Maggie Dent: [00:44:41] Dancing randomly in the shopping centre.

Tristan MacManus: [00:44:43] I went over to, um, Tahyna was away with the kids, and, uh, there's a little kid who's in Echo's class, and his family invited me over for a dinner while they were away, and I was like, yeah, yeah, no worries. I went over and, um, the

little fellow was like, oh, where's Echo? I was like, She's in Bali, with her ma and the family. He goes, oh, he's like, oh yeah. We, you know, we, we googled your name and school. I was like, yeah, righto. And he goes, you came up loads. I was like, oh, here we go. And in my head I'm thinking, because he's a big football fan, he's gonna call it football.

Tristan MacManus: [00:45:13] And he's like, uh, said you had a drinking problem. I was like, oh. But yeah, so that's the headline on something because I talked about it before because of my heart attacks and whatnot. I was like, I used to drink a bit too much and this and that, blah, blah, blah. And so I'm just picturing him and my daughter sitting down there reading it and echo, like said, not really knowing how to process it, not knowing what it means, and then just sitting there with that big smile on our face of my dad's the best. Oh, what does what does that mean? Do you know what I mean? Like stuff like that and stuff, you can't kind of if you're on the telly, you're on the radio. But if you're in the public eye, people can write whatever they want about you. Some of it's probably true, but if it's there, it's hard to get away from it. Whereas if you're not working in that industry [00:46:00] and you're just a bit dodgy, you can kind of go, that's just hearsay.

Maggie Dent: [00:46:02] The bit about embarrassing your kids. I need you to let that fear go, because it's pretty sure we're going to. And when we do it with laughter, moments of lightness, it gives you the material for the conversations around the dining table. Years later, my boys are all still bringing up the stories of embarrassment, so I want you to see that as actually a possible gift rather than, you know, an irrational fear. As long as you haven't got those nudes online, it's going to be okay.

Tristan MacManus: [00:46:30] Yeah, I think maybe, maybe it's a lot of it is down to not well, it's still being embarrassed yourself about things.

Maggie Dent: [00:46:38] All right. So now it's time for a big dad brag. What do you reckon is your biggest parenting win moment, dad win moment stands out from all the rest.

Tristan MacManus: [00:46:49] Do you know what? It sounds simple, but I think my biggest dad win is the fact that my kids want to spend time with me. Yeah. That's it. And

maybe it's the age. I don't know, but they want to, um. They have a little fight over who gets to lie beside you in bed at night. Like, look at you and you go, why? Why? How come you're not putting your arm around me? I was like, all right, mate, and you snuggle in there. And then he's like, yeah, just the boys. I was like, yeah, you know, mate. And he just started calling me Big Fella.

Maggie Dent: [00:47:16] Oh my God, that is so cute.

Tristan MacManus: [00:47:19] Hey, big fella. Um, because because I tell them every day, I tell them I said I absolutely love being your dad, and I genuinely do. Tadhg, I really have to fight for his affection. Now he's just about mam. But, um, I tell Echo every day, I say I love being your dad. Um, I absolutely love being your dad. And, you know, and they'll say the same back. They just, the fact that my kids actually want to spend time with me is the biggest win I could ever have. And I know that will go at some stage.

Maggie Dent: [00:47:45] Not necessarily. No, no, no. Can I can tell you the, the reason they're doing that is because you tell them all the time how much you love them. Right? It's not always an easy thing for guys to do. And I can tell you now the number one thing [00:48:00] you can do now is to. Yeah, tell your kids. And that's your grumpy teenager as well. You know, that's why we want you to put love notes into the into the lunchbox. If you can't say it out loud to them, you write notes to them, you write on the banana, you stick it on their mirror. It's huge when a kid knows. You know a parent loves him, but particularly dad, who it's not always been traditionally easy to say, I love you, but.

Tristan MacManus: [00:48:24] They keep saying, what do you want for your birthday? And I was like, well, I'd like you to write down all the things that you love doing together. Like what's the thing that you remember most that we did together. And then I want you to make a list of things that you want to do with me coming up. And then we can kind of, we'll address that. Yeah. Keep the list and we'll see, and we'll see where we see where we go.

Maggie Dent: [00:48:44] So that one on one time, it's one of the big challenges that it's hard in a busy world and parents are working. Right. But it's it's like the greatest gift is a regular date, you know with either co-parent. But it's a date we don't break. It's a date

we do without plans. It's a date that it doesn't have 15 minutes, 20 minutes, half an hour, an hour. It's the way to go.

Tristan MacManus: [00:49:05] Well, they know that. I keep saying to them like, it's very different now. We have three kids. Yeah, because obviously all the kids, like with two, they want their time. Oh, well, they always want their time. It doesn't matter if there's one kid, it's the 17 kids. They all want their own time and obviously having a third kid in there makes it a little bit difficult. But look, we're trying our best. You know, that's like every parent. You're just trying your best. And you're hoping that they come out the other side with a smile on their face. But my kids know more than anything else, doesn't matter what you do wrong, you can do everything wrong, you want. But if you lie about it, you're in trouble with dad then. And I think they're very aware of that. So they can they can talk to me.

Maggie Dent: [00:49:39] So if you look back, what do you think you learned from your own dad that you've taken forward as being helpful?

Tristan MacManus: [00:49:46] Just being accountable. Yeah, just being accountable. And, um, like I said, we we, me and my dad probably knocked heads a little bit when we were growing up as well, because my dad was very, uh, [00:50:00] I don't want to say strict. Strict in the terms.

Maggie Dent: [00:50:04] Come on, he was in the army! Rules.

Tristan MacManus: [00:50:04] Well, yeah, exactly. Yeah. But it was more so like it goes. Look at this is what I'm going to set you up for, you know, and kind of and you don't I don't think you appreciate that when you're growing up so much. Like I had no interest in school growing up. I was just I just want to talk to people, you know what I mean? I wanted to cause a bit of havoc, and then I wanted to kind of have a bit of crack with people and then go home, you know? And I used to get killed for that all the time. He's always talking. He's not paying attention. He should stop dancing, he should do this, blah, blah, blah. Focus here, focus there, focus there. So obviously my dad, his role in that was right. Math hammer it into him. Like, you know, I still remember raw and crying, trying to do maths homework and my dad going, what? What are you doing? You know what I mean? But now I'm good at maths. Do you know what I mean, and that

is what I need now. So kind of again, the amount of times that I got, um, like, suspended in school, uh, detention in school, thrown out of school, you know, like, all this stuff, it all kind of. Yeah. I don't know it all. I needed that because I was feral as a kid in the nicest possible way. Like, people will look at me and they go, what do you mean? You were nothing compared to the kids that you grew up with in terms of your behaviour, like, you know what I mean. But at the same time, I was still asked to leave school. You know, like all these different things, like. I was a rat bag.

Maggie Dent: [00:51:23] So are you saying...

Tristan MacManus: [00:51:23] Discipline

Maggie Dent: [00:51:23] We still need to be encouraging?

Tristan MacManus: [00:51:30] Yes, we we need to be encouraged. We but we need to be disciplined. And we need to be accountable because you can be encouraged, but you're not going to be encouraged in someone who's just being a ratbag because they don't understand. Like, you know what I mean? There's an element of that. And this whole thing, boys will be boys. Yeah, boys will be boys, but arseholes will be arseholes as well, you know? So there's there has to.

Maggie Dent: [00:51:53] You don't have to be an asshole.

Tristan MacManus: [00:51:54] Exactly. There has to be a balance there somewhere.

Maggie Dent: [00:51:57] And, you know, I just think the system doesn't meet [00:52:00] the core needs of our boys, right? Until we change the system that makes it, boys can learn 100%. Massively. Um, but we've got a system that isn't. It's actually suited for girls. What from your dad have you chosen not to bring forward as a dad?

Tristan MacManus: [00:52:15] To be honest with you, I'm probably lucky enough that I haven't had to address that.

Maggie Dent: [00:52:18] Great.

Tristan MacManus: [00:52:19] Yeah, I don't think so. Like I said, I think. I think the view of my dad in the majority of people's eyes rings true. My dad has always been dependable to people. He lost his dad very early. He was the oldest son. He went off to the army. He was successful and stuff. He has his own business. He's always worked hard. He's always been honest. Um, I think if you asked 95% of people who know my dad will tell you who he is, and the other 5% are dickheads anyway.

Maggie Dent: [00:52:50] Yeah.

Tristan MacManus: [00:52:51] That's right. There was an element of, um, when I was a kid with this whole dancing thing that I was embarrassed about it. Like I said, uh, first off, what people find out about it, there was an element where I was embarrassed to dance in front of my dad as well. Um, and again, not from the way he behaved or anything. He was always proud of me. He always pushed me forward to do it. But there was an element where I kind of thought, uh, I don't know how this kind of sits, like, you know what I mean? So there might have been a little bit of hesitation in that.

Maggie Dent: [00:53:23] But he didn't stop you doing it.

Tristan MacManus: [00:53:24] No, no, we know he never did. He never did. I remember one time when I was an adult at a wedding or something, and I don't even know how this came up, but I, I probably had a few drinks at me. I'd said to my dad, I was like, I always thought you thought I was a dickhead of some sort or, you know. Yeah, uh, I legitimately don't know why I even said that sentence, but it was something that I had in my head. And he goes, no, what are you talking about? I was like, yeah, right. Oh, maybe I am, but just for a different reason.

Maggie Dent: [00:53:50] That's so interesting.

Tristan MacManus: [00:53:51] Yeah, I've never had to address it and for my dad and kind of go that that's not me.

Maggie Dent: [00:53:54] Because there's one thing that Steve Biddulph talks about in not only his books and his talks that he says, [00:54:00] you know, be really good if you let your dad off the hook that, you know, they fathered how they with what they knew

and that and so he talks about a guy who rings his dad just to kind of thank him. And he gets on the phone and dad answers the phone and he goes, oh, I'll get your mother. And he says, no, dad, I want to talk to you. And he says, I haven't really thanked you for being the good dad and taking me to sport and doing these things for me over the years. I just, I'm sorry I haven't thanked you, but thanks, dad. And his dad pauses and there's quiet on the phone. Then he says, have you been drinking? Do you know that same moment, isn't it? And he and I love it that Steve says, have that conversation with your dad, because the way that you think your dad thinks of you might be very, very different. And he's probably been just as frightened of bugging up as you have.

Tristan MacManus: [00:54:48] It's a different way of kind of viewing your hero, I suppose, isn't it? Being your first hero and then you kind of. That's it. You think you're too old to have heroes, then?

Maggie Dent: [00:55:01] What is the number one thing you want your kids to learn from you?

Tristan MacManus: [00:55:05] The one thing I want them to learn. I don't know if it's from me, but it's that they're enough. Yeah, I think I've always struggled with that myself. Um. Still do. And I don't know if you ever find that, if you have so much doubt in yourself. So when it comes to my kids, I bury as much confidence as I can into them. I want them to feel ten foot tall when I'm talking to them. I want them to know how important mistakes are for development. I want them to know that trying is all I ask from them, and I need them to know that that's enough exactly as they are. That's all I want. That's all I want my kids to know is that they're enough. Because I feel like, I feel like not feeling enough has hampered my life in a lot of ways, and I'd hate to think that they would think that way.

Maggie Dent: [00:55:58] It's really common [00:56:00] in people who mucked up a lot early on because you were told you weren't.

Maggie Dent: [00:56:04] If you could wind back the clock to before you started this journey of becoming a dad, what would you say to yourself? What advice would you give to your pre dad self about what's coming?

Tristan MacManus: [00:56:18] I don't know, huh? You're going to be right. You're gonna be right. Whatever's going to happen is going to happen. Yeah, yeah. No. Do you know what? I guess you have to, you have to trust that you're going in there. I've been very lucky. I feel like I've had a partner beside me that's always been right, in terms of like I said, we're on the same path. We understand that we're different, but our goal is the same. I guess I'd probably just say, look at the times when you're not trusting yourself, trust Tahyna a little bit more. Because at times I probably haven't. But the thing that's most important for our kids right now is that me and Tahyna are on the same page. And I think we are.

Maggie Dent: [00:57:09] Tristan. Thank you.

Tristan MacManus: [00:57:10] Thank you, I appreciate it.

Maggie Dent: [00:57:14] Tristan McManus, co-host of Studio Ten. Tristan has so many insights to share yet again, so here are the three that you can add to your Good Enough Dad Checklist. Number one, you don't always have to talk about your grief, but also know that you're not alone in your grief if you experience it in your family. However, when you do speak about your grief, it can help you process your feelings whenever you're ready, just not 25 years later. Secondly, all children, however, especially our girls, need to be heard, need to be listened. [00:58:00] Need to be accepted when they come to talk with us. Oh number three. Telling your kids you love them. Absolutely. Writing notes and reminding them, even especially after they haven't been your most wonderful child in the moment, makes an enormous difference in children's lives. So remember, if you can't say it, write it often. Tell your kids you love them. I'm Maggie Dent, and this is The Good Enough Dad. Follow us on the LiSTNR app or wherever you get your podcasts.