

Maggie Dent (00:00.29)

I'm a country girl raised far from the ocean, however moving to Albany on the south coast of WA meant I connected to the ocean big time as a young teacher. When my oldest son took up surfing that begun a journey of a growing deep respect for surfing. Gradually, one after another the Dent lads all became surfers, eventually as teens, and they're still surfing today. It took me a while to understand what surfing was really all about and why they liked it. I couldn't think of anything worse than getting in that damn cold.

I didn't like getting out of bed early to chase waves after a full week of teaching, but when I saw my boys and their mates return to the car after a surf, something was really obvious. They were full of life. Their face was alive. They were talking in a way that you would never hear them during school time. And so today my boys are all dads and a couple are already surfing with their kids. So, I actually had to include some surfers in the season, or they were going to sack me as their mother. So instead of one, I've hit the jackpot and I've got two. So Adrian Ace Buchanan and Glenn Micro Hall, I'm going to call them Ace and Micro, have both been professional surfers.

Ace spent 16 years with the World Surf League Championships, twice beating Kelly Slater in 2008 and 2013. He retired in 2021 and is currently Chair of Surfing Australia. And then Micro, he grew up competing on the central coast of New South Wales, was picked to train at the Australian Institute of Sport at 16 for its surfing program. Became a rookie on the World Surfing Championships at 31, only to battle through injury to finally retire in 2015. He went on to become one of the most successful and highly regarded coaches in surfing. Even my boys say that. So welcome guys.

Thank you.

Thanks for having us.

Maggie Dent (02:20.206)

Let's go to you, Ace. Where did you meet? How come you have this journey is about both of you?

Ace Buchanan

Yeah, I mean, look, Glenn and I met, I want to say it would have been early 1990s, so probably like 1991. A long time ago. Yeah, on a beach with some coloured singlets on, both in our very first competitive surfing event. Would have been kind of 9 or 10 years old. We lived at kind-of different parts of the Central Coast, but both had a deep love for surfing and dreams of making it on the world tour. And that's kind of where the friendship started and from that moment on we started spending a hell of a lot of time together and obviously we're lucky enough to travel the world and have families and do a lot of it and share a lot of experiences together.

Maggie Dent

And that's kind-of why you are together. you're both good friends, but you also had your kids while you're on this journey. So Ace, you're married to Becky and together you have Ruby, 11, Indigo, eight and Harley, five. And Micro, you're married to Gemma and you have Zara who's what, 13, Poppy who's 11 and Alfie who's seven. We've got an Alfie, it's a great name. So that's why I wanted to know in that journey, cause you've obviously been mates, but you then become probably crazy teenagers and then you became dads who happen to surf, so that's why we wanna know how it all happened.

So let's start with you, Ace. When I watch my boys surfing, and heck, some days it's really cold and windy and much fun, so if you've been taking your kids with you while they've been younger, how do you do it when it's cold and wet and windy and they're hanging around? Does it build more resilient kids being around surfing beaches? What do you reckon?

Ace (04:11.34)

Yeah for sure and I mean I think the joke in surfing is you're going to get wet anyway. So the rain shouldn't stop you. And I mean there's something magic about being outside despite the elements which I think does build resilience but I think and you alluded to it in your intro the magical thing about surfing is that it enables you to just rediscover that childlike joy. And it doesn't matter if you're five or you're 75. The smile you see on people's faces is just something else. And that's what keeps us coming back. It's the one sport that you literally see people running towards to get their fix. Even just before I came here this morning, I dropped the kids off to school and I went down to Avalon and you know, I like, all right, I'm going into the city, but I just need to touch the ocean. I'll see it. And, you know, ended up, I'll go for a swim. And then I'm like, I should have brought my board. And I ran into Tom Carroll, who's a, you know, two time world surfing champion, someone that Glenn and I looked up to as kids, as a bit of an idol. And he now lives in the same town as me. And he was just down there doing the same thing, just having a swim. And he was like, I'm also going into the city to see my daughter. And she's, you know, a world-class ballet dancer.

We were just both laughing that we're still these kind of young grommets just trying to get our salt water fix. So I think once your kids have that attachment, it doesn't matter if it's raining, doesn't matter what the weather's doing, you know you're going to get into the ocean and feel better.

Maggie Dent

Yeah, it's that wild connection with nature which many of our kids are struggling with today. So Micro, do you remember experiences? How young were yours when you were taken along to the beach and when did they start surfing?

Glenn/ Micro (05:56.718)

My eldest daughter, when she came along, was competing, so kind of organically had to come to the beach whether she wanted to or not. But yeah, I think her love for the ocean is deep within her own soul, so it's pretty cool. It's like whether she surfs, whatever board type, whether she competes or not is completely irrelevant. But the fact when she's in the water, it's exactly like what you said. She just thrives and you can see it on her face. She goes to school, a better person. It's pretty cool. I used to take her out in the winter even with a beanie still on her head because it was cold and you knew she wasn't going to fall off. So you can kind of like catch some waves and only her feet got wet and was, she would have been one and half or two and just to introduce her to the water and then as it kind of like the years went on, I noticed that the conversations you had when you're in the water, because there was no other distraction in life except talking about the ocean or the birds or the trees or the wind and that was, yeah, that was when I was like, wow, this is like the best connection point.

Maggie Dent

I have to touch on that one because I remember once, I was a high school teacher, every now and then they'd write pieces for me and I remember this 14 year old boy who was pretty rough, let's put it that way, and didn't really like writing, creative writing for me except one day I said, you can write about anything that really fires you up. And he wrote about surfing and he wrote about there's a place while you wait for a wave that is the most peaceful place any human can know on earth. He's 14. And then he said, and then the only thing that beats that is the peak moment when you're in the blue tube. What else do you call it guys?

Glenn/ Micro (07:44.962)

The green room?

Maggie Dent

The barrel? And that was when I suddenly realised hang on there's a lot more going on than going out there and getting wet and weeing in your wet suit to get warm. You didn't end up with somebody who loved rugby or netball and said, no way, I'm never going back in the water.

Glenn/ Micro

No, my middle daughter loves netball, but she loves the beach and she loves, she's like more of the, on the nipper boards and swimming and body surfing. And yeah, I'm just, we're all at beach all day long and they're all equally happy.

Maggie Dent

Well, one of the things the boys have told me over the years is every now and then there's that peak moment with not just a wave, but the creatures that live in our ocean come and join you. And I have actually witnessed them surfing with dolphins riding the surf. And when we were in Hawaii, I saw them with those little turtles coming up and saying hello. I want you to each share with me, you can start those, a peak moment with a creature in nature. And hopefully it's not a Mick Fanning moment, you have to punch someone out, but can you think of one that you could share with us?

Ace

I mean several. It's like, yeah, I've had encounters with sharks and I've had encounters with dolphins and whales and I think probably to bring it back to the kids, it's like getting them out in the ocean and we were just in Hawaii recently and surfing with turtles and dolphins and seeing the kind of awe on their faces and surfing, you know, in its simplest form, I guess, is about being in nature and getting exposure to all of those things. Like, yes, it's about riding a wave, but, you know, as you said, that moment of just actually kind of sitting out the back and waiting and that solitude. Surfing's a deeply kind of spiritual pursuit. And I think as you grow it, can mean different things to you. Obviously Glenn and I were lucky enough to make a career from it. But I think once you stop doing that, you kind of then realise how important it's become to your physical and mental wellbeing. So yeah, just sharing the ocean with the kids, you know, every year here on the East Coast, we have the whale migration and going down and seeing whales come past and then come back after they've had their babies and, you know, dolphins and turtles and yeah, there's things in big grey suits out there as well, but we're part of this beautiful ecosystem and yeah, you kind of learn to respect that.

Glenn/ Micro

I think the point on that too that comes to mind for me is there's like been many times where we've both been out there and there's either been a shark or we've heard there's a shark or you see something with your kids and I know for me anyway my kids are so strangely okay with it and I feel like that trust knowing that there's something like that out there but they're they don't just instantly go to fear they kind of feel comfortable and they feel like they trust the ocean and they trust that not everything out there is out there to hurt them. And I feel like that's something cool. I've had some crazy moments with the kids where there's like 100% a shark just been sighted and they're like, that's alright. And I'm like, sure. But I kind of love it about them as well because they have this unique trust in the bigger picture.

Maggie Dent

I had a similar experience. we were in Dunsborough living at one point and the day before someone had been attacked at Bunker Bay. Not killed but attacked. Anyway, so it's on the front page of the Sunday Times. My four boys get up the next morning, put their wetties on. They're walking towards the door and they've turned around and said, you're all right, Mum? And I said, of course I'm not all right. Of course I'm not all right. And then one says, you know, if we die, we die doing something we love, Mum.

And then the second one is, you know how many millions die from mosquitoes and donkeys compared to sharks? And then the last one course was, yeah, he's probably not hungry. And I kind of thought they had absolutely no fear returning to the ocean the day after, and it was something I had to learn to come to respect as a mother, because if I wanted to drown them in my fears, then I'd steal some of the joy.

Glenn/ Micro (12:26.552)

for sure.

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Did either of your dads get you into surfing?

Glenn/ Micro

Um, yeah. Well, my dad grew up in Mittagong in the country. he was not at all a surf dad. Nah, but they moved to the coast and then I grew up in Umina Beach, they moved up there when, before they had kids. And then I grew up there with my family. And I think my dad grew to love the beach and grew to love kind of what surfing was about, but it was kind of cool. Cause it was almost like we were on the same journey, trying to learn to surf. And then like he said when we were about roughly 10, we met and our parents met as well. they're still really good friends today like we are. I feel like that was kind of, Ace's dad was a diehard surfer and he can talk to that. I think they helped my parents kind of understand the whole world of surfing. So it's a bit of a bigger family that we've grown into.

Ace

Yeah, for sure.

Maggie Dent (13:28.546)

So your dad was a surfer before you landed on Earth.

Ace

He was. I mean, my dad and my mum, but my dad's got an interesting story. He actually grew up in the middle of Africa. So in Northern Rhodesia, which is now Zambia. So by rights, it's amazing that I'm sitting here as a ~~kind of~~ retired professional surfer. So my dad discovered surfing whilst he was in Cape Town at university when he was about 18.

Surfing in the kind of frigid waters there in a rugby jersey and yeah, just fell in love with it. And about 10 years later, mum and dad immigrated to Australia, you know, were lucky enough to get accepted here. I think a big part of them choosing Australia was at that point, dad was kind of a fully fledged surfer and, you know, seeing these photos of all the beautiful right hand points up the coast, you know, like The Pass and Lennox Head and Noosa and thought that looks like a great spot to not only come and raise a family in a country where things were stable and safe, but also hopefully ride some waves. So they actually moved to Pearl Beach, which is just over the hill from Umina and that's where I was born. And then I grew up in a little town just behind Avoca Beach called South Kincumber and obviously Glenn and I met shortly thereafter. My dad, he doesn't surf anymore, he's in his mid-70s, but he loves to sit on the beach and watch the waves and you know.

Glen/ Micro

Good sunbaker.

Ace

We've been lucky enough to kind of share, you know, many, many sessions around the world and, you know, go hunting for waves and obviously, Glenn's dad and my dad spent many hours sitting on the beach watching us compete which was awesome.

Maggie Dent

Alright, so other than being really good surfing teachers, I'll come back to you. Glenn can you tell us what you think you've learnt from your dad being your dad?

Glenn/ Micro

I guess my dad's probably got a bit of small man's disease like myself, where he's like just willing to give it a go. I think in my own surf career, I was never the best at all, but I was, always willing to, to kind of give it my all

and have a go regardless of how it ended up. And I think my dad was a pretty good football player and he's not very big. I guess he had that in him where he was kind of willing to get out there and have a swing against the big boys. So, and then, just that sense of adventure. He loved, you know, trotting down creeks down the Murray River, fishing. And I feel like I've definitely got that from him. Yeah. That real kind of eagerness to go on an adventure. And if we're ever anywhere and there's a mountain in sight, he wants to climb it. And yeah, I feel like I've got a bit of that in me.

Maggie Dent

So Ace, what about you? What do think you've learnt from your dad other than how to surf?

Ace (16:33.838)

Yeah, look, I mean, like I was saying, I think my dad's journey is pretty unique. Like he kind of grew up in colonial times, really in Africa to English parents. He pretty much raised himself as a kid at boarding school. And he, I think passed on to me that kind of sense of independence and adventure, like Glenn said, like he fell in love with surfing and exploring, traveling.

And, you know, I think he, much like Glenn said, that idea of actually just giving it a go. I think too many young kids these days don't want to try for fear of failing. And that was certainly something that we didn't adopt, I think, in our careers. I can be happy to say that. Like we gave it our best effort and that was something that, I think Glenn and I bonded over, just leaving nothing out in the water. And, we had many battles together as friends where, you know, you probably wanted to rip their heads off, but we would always kind of shake hands and then, go and have a milkshake or a beer probably later on in life. And I think they were traits that we both got from our parents.

Glenn/ Micro

I think another point on that too is like we would be 10 or 12 years old, scrapping around the water, serving a heat against each other. And our parents sat on the beach and didn't get involved in our battle. And I think that's something that they really taught us obviously now as parents, but it was always like, you know, they'd sit under the same umbrella, sharing a beer, watching us trying to figure out how to serve a heat and win a comp and get stuck into each other. But it was never an emotional attachment to that. I think that was a really good lesson from our parents and obviously that's a whole other topic, whole parents in sports thing and I feel like in reflection our parents were unbelievable at the roles they played.

Maggie Dent (18:40.014)

Yeah, because there is definitely an over-investment in our kids' performance sometimes on the sidelines at the moment, isn't there?

Maggie Dent

OK, so if you could look back at the way your dads have raised you besides that, but is there anything you've chosen deliberately to do differently when you became a dad? Let's go back to you Ace.

Ace

Look, I think the landscape has obviously changed now in terms of the world we're raising our kids in. Even just reflecting on our own careers, social media came along about halfway through our careers and that was something that, you we had to adopt and become part of our, I guess, offering to brands. Now raising young kids in an age where that's commonplace is a challenge. I think some of the things, probably not to do differently, but to continue to do in a new landscape, like all sitting down and having dinner around a dinner table whenever you can, not having screens and devices, just connecting, reflecting on the day, sharing kind-of hardships and triumphs, travelling as a family without distractions, you know, like we've just come back from a trip together and I think my kids are now all at an age where hopefully they'll remember that. I think it's not the kind of gifts you give your kids, the material things, it's those moments you share with them that, at least for me, are the things that I really remember going up the coast with my parents or going to visit Africa for the first

time, which we did as a family when I was about 10 years old. They're really vivid memories. It wasn't the things I got for Christmas or my birthday, although I remember a couple of surfboards.

Ace (20:34.96)

Um, I actually think there's probably more to learn and take forward than what I wouldn't do.

Maggie Dent

Yeah, exactly. What about you?

Glenn/ Micro

Um, yeah, it's, I don't know, it's a big question, but I guess there's, there's so much like, you know, when you see, all right, as a parent, you should do this or you shouldn't do this. And then you're trying to make your own judgment. Then you compare it to what your parents did for you and you're trying to filter it all. It's so hard because obviously like I had an amazing upbringing and I wouldn't change a thing.

Then the times are different now, so then you've got to consider the social media and the dangers of the world. But then I also think back to how much freedom I had. Like sometimes I sit back and I think, you dropped me in that camping area when I was with two mates and at 10 and 12. And I'm like, there's no way I'd do that now. It's like, but yeah, so, yeah, it's definitely hard to manage that decision making of how you raise your own kids. And when you've had an awesome upbringing, it's like, well, I want to kind of learn from that. But then you've also got to kind of go with your gut feeling and then you've got to go like all the things you read on Instagram and your messages. And then you just kind of feel like you kind of can't get it right.

Ace (21:52.942)

A lot of those experiences that maybe we'd think twice about putting our kids in those situations now I think actually built us into who we are. You know, like we were travelling overseas at 15, 16, no mobile phones. If you wanted to call your parents you were going to a pay phone trying to reverse charge them internationally.

Maggie Dent

I think also, you we talk how much, and you expressed it absolutely beautifully, it's about the connection as family, and you had that, but also when you were competing, they were with you, weren't they? You were bringing young families with you on the world tour. And so that's exactly what we're talking about. Today's world, the biggest problem is disconnection, particularly disconnection from dads who work incredibly long hours or who travel away.

That's the hunger we keep hearing from them. I really want to be a different dad. I want to have more time with my kids, but at the moment I can't do that. In actual fact, your surfing trips and competitions, even though it was work, actually created exactly an environment where you would see each other more and hang out, even though sometimes I'm sure you could have done with more sleep.

Glenn/ Micro (23:15.64)

For sure. I think our careers were just the dream scenario to show our kids the world and have some incredible moments as families together, like even as our own family and traveling with friends and bigger families. I think this day and age now though, I don't know if it's any different because I wasn't, I wasn't there, but maybe there's just a lot of more material things that like, I just really don't like to feel like you're buying your kids happiness. I just don't agree with it. And I don't, I feel like you see that a lot more, like just buy them more things and that'll make them happy. It's like, it's just not good anyway.

Maggie Dent

So one other thing I found with the surfing was as my boys were heading over that bridge to adulthood, there were times that their own dad worked really long hours and wasn't as super keen at getting them out surfing as

much. But when we were out, especially on holidays at some of the campsites and things that were surfing, what I loved was watching all the other dads pick my boys up and take them surfing.

I used to get quite emotional about it because I couldn't. I mean I can swim, I could probably save you but no man, I know nothing about surfing and I'll tell you I don't know anything from offshore to onshore to whatever. I can't tell you if I'm a rip or anything but what I noticed they didn't bat an eyelid to come and pick up my boys and I felt that was something you actually it's what we call lighthouse figures other adults that influence our kids that we're not just in silos where we're doing it all by ourselves and that's the breakdown of the village so I think we've just shrunk it, so I call it about having tribes now.

Ace

I think for Glenn and I, made a conscious decision and whilst we couldn't take them everywhere, whenever we could, decided, you know, and you touched on investing and we chose to invest in memories with our family. You know, like if I looked back through a financial lens, I could have invested in second properties and things and so on. But we've got this bank full of beautiful memories with our kids, and it wasn't all easy, like, you know, you'd be checking into long haul flights with two board bags and, you know, car seats and prams and crying babies. And I kind of now jump on a domestic flight and think, how the hell did I do that? And you'd be arriving in Europe and, you know, maybe your career was on the line and you had to make a few heats to keep your job, but you all shared in that experience.

And, you know, now being on the other side, I think, wow, imagine we hadn't done that. And, you know, as athletes, I think you do see peers go through their careers where they're living separate lives to their family and then that causes real issues, you know, when at the end of the day, you kind of like go, wow, this is my family. And now I've got to live a more, you know, normal life. So.

Maggie Dent (26:38.978)

So one of my favourite memes for parents that I have all the time is making memories that matter. Whether that is the water fight, that is staying at the beach to hang out for a bit longer instead of going home and having the fabulous dinner. What you did was consciously exactly what creates memory pathways for your kids for the rest of their lives. God, you're quite wise, aren't you, for someone so young?

Maggie Dent

What is your biggest fear going forward now raising your kids as they're heading to the adolescent window and things, you know, raising them in today's world? Ace, what are your biggest fear?

Ace

Hopefully, I probably choose not to live in fear and worry too much. I don't think by nature I'm a huge worrier. You know, I think like you want to see your kids succeed, right? And you want to equip them with the skills and the opportunities to do that. And you work hard to provide them with those things. I think as a dad, it's about as a parent, whether you're a mum or a dad, I think it's about trying to find that balance. And for me, like there's a huge difference between having kids and being a parent.

Maggie Another gem.

Ace You know, I think what we tried to do was be parents despite having these jobs that led us around the world, you know, on these great adventures and try and take our kids with us to do that. So I think it's about continuing to find that balance. I've got no desire to have a job that pulls me away from my family every day and, doesn't allow me to share those moments with my kids. I love being able to pick them up. If the surf's good for them, take them down and sit on the beach like you said and, you know, not be pulled home because we're meant to sit around the table and have a cookie cutter dinner and happy to get fish and chips and watch the sun go down and have them playing in the sand dunes and just kind of react to the world around you. So I think it's just not a fear but just wanting to find that balance and be able to work enough to provide them with

the things that give them the life that we've had but not work too much so I'm missing out on sharing those things with my own family.

Maggie: Glen do you have a fear?

Glen/Micro

it probably sounds a bit cliché and a bit kind of the way that the world now, it scares me that their kids will lose that sense of adventure through technology. My daughter's 13 now, she's got a phone and she's got her own Snapchat and friends and that's it, she's amazing. Like she still gets in the water every day. And, just in general, I think it scares me that once they've got their own freedom, cause it's definitely a battle as a parent, same as every other parent, I guess it's like, all right, turn the TV off, put the phone down, whatever. It's like, I fight so hard for that at home. I totally understand it's an addictive device. And I feel like if, if you just let them go, will they eventually not go out before school every morning and go and play tennis and do bike jumps at the front. That scares me for my own kids, but also for all kids that kind of, even if they don't have the fortunate position to have parents who can take them to the beach or whatever. Yeah, in general, that's kind of my fear for kids these days.

Maggie Dent

You would not be alone being concerned about the impact of social media but also our beautiful kids drowning in screens. I could give you an hour lecture on that and it would scare the pants off you. So what we do know is that we are a social species and we're meant to be connected but in actual fact the world has conned our kids that their connecting online is equally the same as connecting online. We have a generation of lonely kids so your concern is incredibly valid and the key tip again is that we have to have incredible boundaries if they've already got a phone. And that is none overnights, none in their bedroom, none at mealtime and that they continue with their activities that bring them joy. And that we are the people who need to keep an eye on it. Cos the potential for harm is profound so you're valid to be concerned. But also it's having these awkward conversations over and over again with our teens at quiet times, not lectures, not growling, not banning. We just keep on talking about them, that they can always come to us when anything happens that harms them or their friends. And our biggest thing if you've got tweens and teens, there's this big saying that no matter, no matter what happens we've always got your back. And when you've got that in place.

Ace

I think that's the big difference too - the question you asked about that we would do different. I think as parents we need to be much more open with our kids now than our generation was. Our parents generation left a lot unsaid and they trusted us but there are so many more distractions and potential hazards now through this social world, so I feel as though we need to have much better lines of communication and honest conversation with our kids because of the changed environment.

Maggie Dent

Thanks for that cos that's why I wrote my last book, Help Me Help My Teen. The main reason was how do you have the conversations if you're not good at it or don't know how to do it that they'll engage. And most teens have got the most incredibly big BS barometer, they know when there's something coming. But when you can communicate they actually definitely want to have them and half the time they know more than you. Dammit.

Micro

Thanks for that advice I'll definitely forward that to my daughter on Instagram.

Maggie Dent

One of the things that dads like to hear is that even famous people who are amazing surfers, you've obviously bugged up at some point. So we'd like to have a significant parenting failure from either of you, please, so that everyone sees you normal. I'll start with you, Ace. One, just one, just.

Ace: Oh wow.

Glenn/Micro: Oh, there's a little smile on it.

Glenn/ Micro (30:56.236)

I left the beach yesterday without my son. I didn't drive off, but I was...

Maggie: No, that's a good one. You just noticed something was missing.

Glenn/Micro: As I was walking in the car, my wife was driving past in the other car and she goes, have you got our figure? I was like, no, do you?

Maggie: Head counts. So that has come up a number and actually hand up I've also left one at the but it was at the pool but I thought dad had him dad thought it's only 50% your problem but that was yours 100% yesterday good one.

Micro

Thank you.

Ace

I have a significant parenting failure. Look, I think I'm pretty laid back by nature and I probably get that from my dad. I'm not quite as laid back as him. Glenn can probably attest to that. I think I can probably be a bit vague, which my wife, I think, struggles with. Not forgetful.

Maggie Dent (31:46.51)

Does vague equate with forgetful.

Ace (31:53.145)

I'm not always on time.

Glenn: Never. Sorry.

Maggie Dent

Yeah, okay, so possibly not good at punctuality.

Ace

Punctuality is an issue. It kind of excites me, you know, it's like that thrill of like maybe being a little bit late injects that kind of excitement. yeah.

Maggie Dent

I think you can get therapy for that. I want a specific fail. Do you remember anything when they were younger? Because we can always have those moments when, you know, situations happen or...

Glenn/ Micro

I lost my daughter at the beach once, which was a good life lesson for me because she was my eldest. So I only had one daughter, she was three, I think she was. And I had a surf school at the time and I had the trailer back at the beach and I was like, someone else was doing the lesson, but I was meeting them there to kind of like, you know, it was my surf school. So I was hosting the group as they turned up and I had Zara.

And she just walked, I think she was about three and we were on the boardwalk at Terrigal and she just started walking and I kind of was like trying to do the meet and greet thing. And I turned around and she was gone and there was one way to the surf club and one way to the road. So I just started running to the road and she

wasn't there. And then I ran back and the lifeguard's like, are you missing something? And so that was my life lesson of like, now I knew.

Maggie Dent (33:34.124)

Because they can disappear really quick.

Glenn/ Micro

Yeah, and she'd only walked, whatever, 50 metres, but I ran the other way because the road was that way. But it was more so like, you can't try and have toddlers and do a good job of something. You're either going to ruin the job or lose a kid.

Ace

I've got one for you Maggie and my five year old son reminds me of this one, but I dropped the two girls to preschool, which was 15 minutes from home. And Harley, my youngest, wasn't at school at the time. And this would have been probably three years ago. Anyway, I took him, there was a park on the way home from the preschool that he used to love going to. And he just started talking and he started saying, park, park. So pulled over. I was meant to be working this day, you know, remotely. So, I was happy to take him to the park on the way home. Took him to the park, he was climbing around and he was up in one of the little cubby houses and I pulled my phone out to check my email and as I was doing that he fell from the top of the cubby house and hit his head on the way down on one of the little plastic stairs and he'd split himself open and he needed to get stitches so we went into the medical centre and he got stitched up and then we got home and mum asked Harley what happened and he said, dad was on his phone.

Maggie Dent

I mean heck, it wouldn't have stopped him falling.

Ace

But you know, it's one of those moments where as a parent you go, like gosh, it could have been so much worse, you know?

Maggie Dent

Now it's a time to blow your trumpet. I want a specific kind of thing. What do you think is one of your best parenting dad brags that you could give me. I want you to drop your modesty and I want you to say no I've actually done this quite well.

Glenn/ Micro

I guess one thing that I would say that Ace, when he was talking before about traveling and we chose to take our kids on the road and we chose to sacrifice the time and the money and the whatever, just to share that whole journey. One thing I was thinking of was throughout our years of traveling at the end of every year when I was still competing, it was those few years I would always look in the mirror and you kind of do the end of season like what could I have done better and how could I have achieved better results and all those answers were like you know I didn't get paid much money so we were kind of scraping around the world and I would be the one up in the middle of the night walking with the kids with jet lag and walking in the streets and within the pram so my wife could sleep in.

I wouldn't have changed a thing. And at the end of every year, I knew that that was what I could have done better for surfing, but I just decided not to change it and was like, I wouldn't have it any other way.

Maggie Dent (39:21.56)

Oh you're such a good dad. To realise it. And also to do it and then have to go surfing on two hours sleep. All right, so what about you Ace?

Ace

Well, I was sleeping in a separate room and I was competing so I can't say. Nah, look I was... Of course, you know, like...

Mirco

Good honesty.

Maggie Dent

But you have another thing you've done well. What else? You cook well. barbecue well, what do you do?

Micro

He's good at all of it.

Ace (39:44.238)

No, look, I think like Glenn said, just choosing to be a parent despite the career that you're chasing. Surfing inherently is a selfish sport because you're out there doing something that fills your cup up. But what I think the difference is that selfishness, for lack of a better term, I think allows you to be selfless because you've got so much fulfilment enjoyment that you can then show up and be your best self. You know, and I think when you take your family with you, you are then getting to share all those things as a great individual with your kids and with your family. So, you know, I'm really proud that we got to do that as a family and that I've been able to kind of pass on the gift of surfing and the love of the ocean and of travelling and experiencing different things.

Maggie Dent

If there's one thing you want your three kids to learn from you because you are their dad, what would that one thing be?

Glenn/ Micro

Resilience. Yeah. And that sounds like I'm just saying that because the topic of the conversations, but I really do. I reckon I use that word every day in my life with my wife. It's kind of like, yeah, just as soon as something's hard for the kids, and that's kids in general, I guess, but I just feel like that's, if they have that, they'll be fine.

Maggie Dent

Ace, your turn. What's the one thing you want them to learn? Because you are their dad.

Ace (41:35.694)

I think maybe just being kind to other people, you know, I think the thing that you probably get from travel is obviously perspective, but I think when you see your parents out of their comfort zone and, you know, interacting with people who, you don't have friendships with, you've got nothing to gain from, you really see, who people are and what they're made of. hopefully just passing on to my kids that showing up with kindness and with generosity is something that, whilst it might not bring you any financial reward, I think it just brings you so much gratitude and love back into your life. So hopefully passing that onto my kids would be something really special.

Maggie Dent

Alright, lucky last question. If you could go back in time, you know, before you became a dad, I'll start with you Ace. What advice do you reckon you'd give yourself before you became a dad?

Ace

I'd probably say you had no idea. Get some sleep because you're not going to get a hell of a lot. We had three kids that, they actually had really bad reflux as kids. Our first was two months premature and both of my first kids, I was lucky, for all three I was lucky to be there for the birth but for both of the first two I had to leave the

country when they still in hospital including my first one was in intensive care and that was, I think you're filled with a lot of guilt but you're also going out there because it's your job and you know, so I think what would I tell myself? Just that it's all going to work out and just, you know, trust your instincts, be yourself and just let your love and passion lead the way. And I think whether that's for your family or for your surfing and being able to bring those together, yeah, just trust your gut.

Maggie

Alright Glenn, your turn now...

Glenn/ Micro (44:08.75)

Copy and paste that. No, I guess there's, there's so many things when you reflect on what you didn't know before you had kids to what you know now. I guess there's a lot of trust cause my wife is in childcare. So when I, when we had our first child, I was just like, felt like I didn't know anything and she knew all the rules to, to however these things are going to grow up. It was a blessing in disguise, I think, cause I could just trust that she, if, if I didn't do it right, she'd know what's going on. But it almost allowed me just to kind of like just do what I'm doing. And if, I was getting it wrong, she'd kind of jump in and it was, it was kind of cool. Cause a lot of it is just common sense, I think. And I didn't have the fear of so much unknown because I had the backing of my wife. She like read all the books and she was like, that's what she studied. So I was able to trust it without, well, kind of with having a safety net there. So yeah, I was lucky, but I just feel like that, that trust of kind of common sense of a lot of it, so much of it is, if they're hot, them down, they're cold, Yeah. Yeah. And if they're hungry for, I don't know, there's a lot of it is, is so intimidating, but really. If you didn't know anything, it'd work. yeah, just trust that you just do what feels right and you'll get there.

Ace

And just don't be hard on yourself. It's like we didn't always get it right and it's like you kind of you can beat yourself up and no one's perfect. But you figure it out and there's not a one size fits all.

Glenn/ Micro

Still the same every day, feel like you go to bed every night going.

Maggie Dent

Some days you get it right and some days don't because no one is nailing parenting which is why it's called the good enough dad and I think both of you have got my tick.

Glenn Thank you. I'm trying.

Ace (46:13.582)

Not every day.

Maggie Dent

So thank you both so much.

We had some serious double trouble in today's episode of The Good Enough Dad and both dads had some really important messages to share so I am going to put them on our wonderful list, the Good Enough Dad checklist.

Firstly, investing in memory moments and living in the moment. Wow, that came through so strongly, especially when those moments are in nature. Secondly, parenting can be easier and better with friends. Look at these two. And then those friends make little tribes. Oh gosh, they made it sound a little easy, didn't they? And thirdly, when you fill your own cup with whatever it is that gives you joy, that gives you light, then you have so much more to bring home to your kids.

I'm Maggie Dent and this is The Good Enough Dad. So please subscribe and rate this podcast. It means more people will find it. And my boys aren't going to sack me because I finally got two surfers, not one.