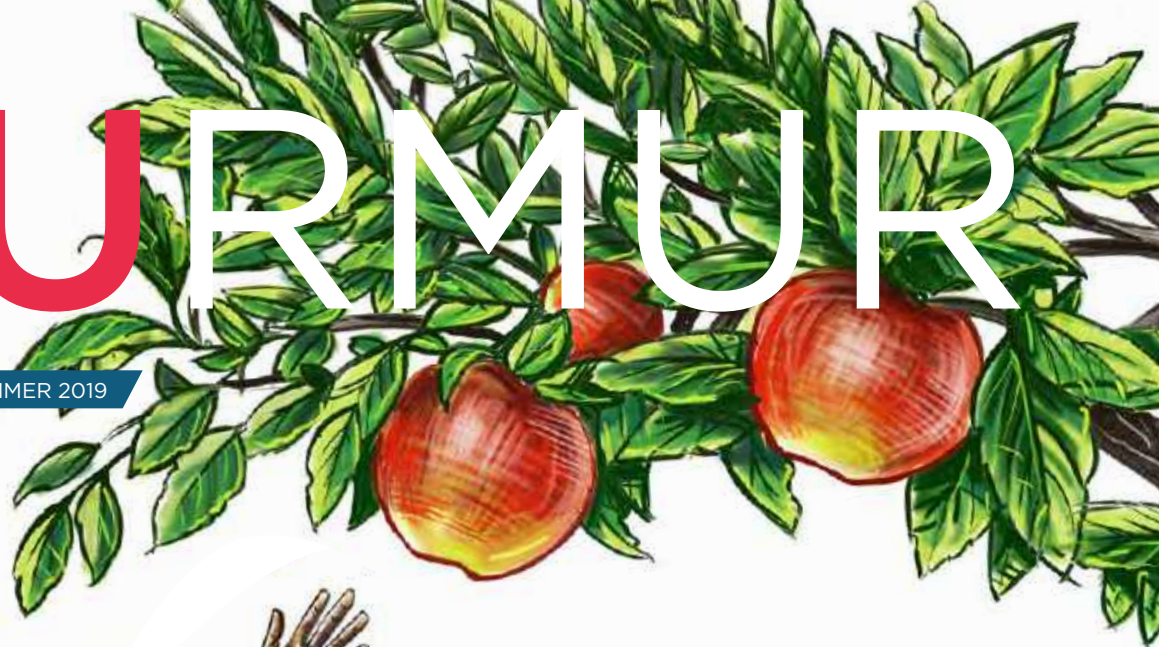


# MURMUR

ALUMNI MAGAZINE | SUMMER 2019



## THE ELUSIVE ALLURE OF WISDOM

From Socrates to Tyler Durden, wisdom remains a staple dinner party battleground.



**Murdoch**  
UNIVERSITY

Wise up. Wise as an owl. Old and wise. Wisdom has generated a handful of idioms, but in a similar fashion to terms such as self-respect, or charm, there is evidently no concrete agreement on what exactly we are referring to. Wisdom is coveted, revered, but seldom defined. It's ok to say you have acquired considerable knowledge, but unheard of to declare yourself brimful of wisdom. Sages cannot use post-nominals. Surely reason enough for our opening story which attempts to shed some light on this dimly lit, grey area. Is wisdom merely behavioural knowledge elegantly applied? Is it the ability to assess complex scenarios and dilemmas and know the optimum path ahead? Knowledge is traditionally binary. You either have it or you don't. But wisdom has no definitive encyclopaedia at time of writing.

Surprisingly, even though the subject remains as relevant as ever, the most quoted agents of wisdom (Plato, Aristotle, Socrates) finished their musings over 2300 years ago. And even before them, further east, Confucius was laying the foundations with timeless conclusions such as, "By three methods we may learn wisdom: first by reflection, which is noblest; second, by imitation, which is easiest; and third by experience, which is the bitterest." Alumnus Campbell Jefferys can take it from here, and overleaf makes a stellar effort to broach a subject as vast as the variety of human life it attempts to fathom.

Imagine having to find somewhere to work, decide what to work on, know when to stop, make all your decisions alone, work out what you can pay yourself and convince others to believe in your product or service. The life of an entrepreneur is not an easy path. It's an arena where the common doctrine is that roughly one in ten start-ups make it.

But with risk comes reward and the flipside can bring choosing the work you want to do, being your own boss, flexibility and creating a successful business that can work around your life. In this issue we put entrepreneurship in focus. Our feature interview is with Murdoch alumnus/Entrepreneur in Residence Jeremy Chetty, who has built a global business over the last 16 years. Knowing the common challenges of the journey, Jeremy has a unique role at the university meeting students, alumni and staff who have great ideas, and gently mentoring them should they choose to pursue them commercially. In addition, we feature Commerce alumnus Ross Wyness, an entrepreneur building his second start-up that is breaking new ground in the veterinary field.

Beach season is upon us, the public payback for winter indulgence. How is your exercise program going? Adding to the sea of articles that will promote the plank or berate the burpee, we have consulted some Murdoch expertise. Associate Professor Dr Timothy Fairchild provides us all with some insightful clarity, including analysis of the very topical, high-intensity interval training.

Finally, we finish this edition and Murmur for the year, with some stories of Murdoch figures whose guidance was paradigm shifting for some of our alumni. It took me back to the key figure at my own university, whose gentle steer towards certain books gifted me both colossal slices of wisdom eg. "True salvation is freedom from compulsive thinking, from negativity, and above all from past and future as a psychological need" and ones laced with whimsy – "Go out into the world, find someone as screwed up as you are, and settle down with them!"

Enjoy.

**Michael Sampson**  
Murmur Editor



## Words of Wisdom

Writer Campbell Jefferys tackles an elusive subject and leaves us all a little wiser.

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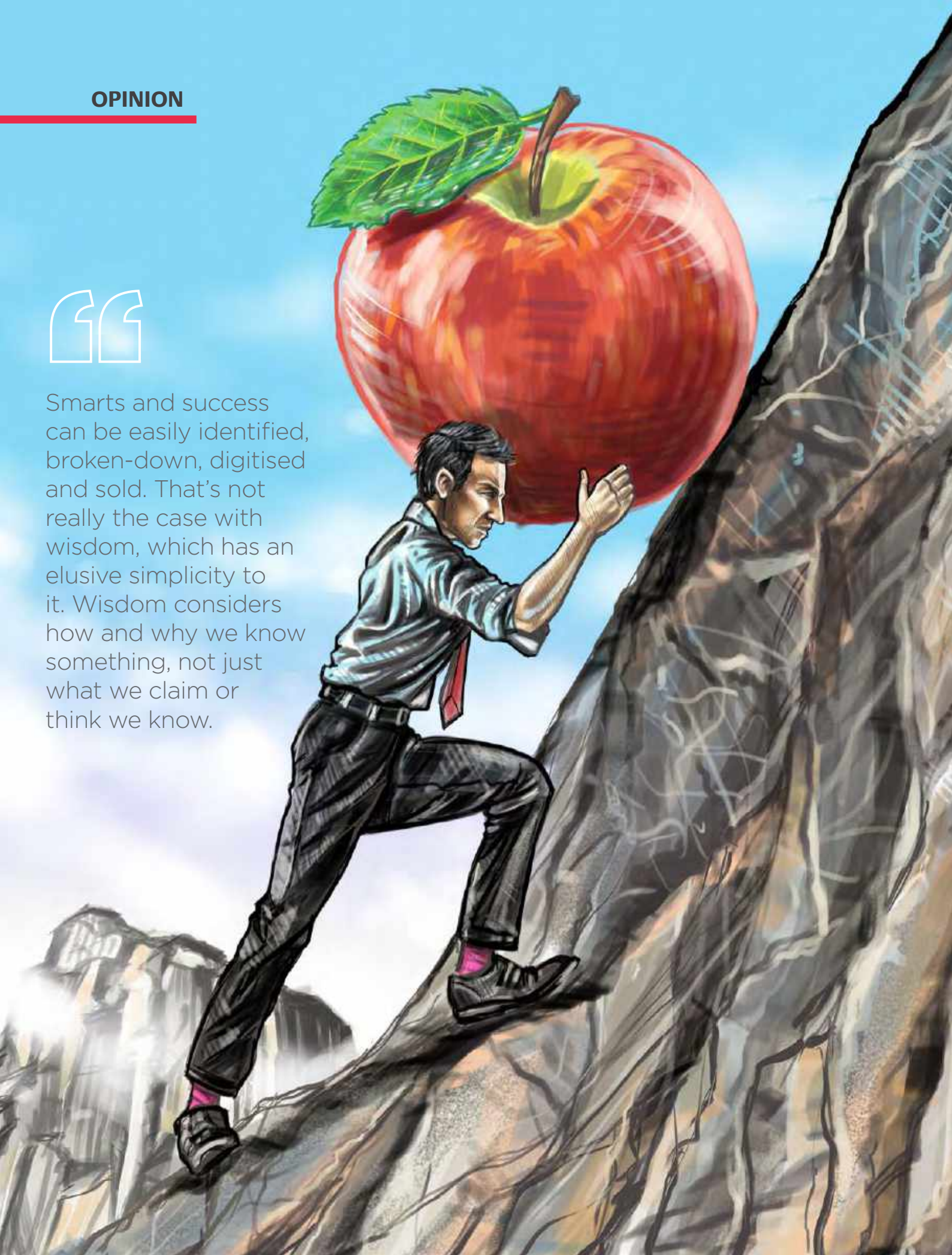


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Smarts and success can be easily identified, broken-down, digitised and sold. That's not really the case with wisdom, which has an elusive simplicity to it. Wisdom considers how and why we know something, not just what we claim or think we know.



# WISDOM: A WORK IN PROGRESS

For millennia, philosophers, writers, spiritual leaders and thinkers have tried to understand the concept of wisdom. But in an age dominated by science and technology, do we covet knowledge, smarts and success over wisdom?

Everyone can surely attest to having gained, at some point in their life, an important piece of insight that has stayed with them. Call it knowledge, call it learning, call it experience; maybe even put those three together and call it wisdom.

It could be simple, such as a toddler learning something the hard way (fire + hand = “waaaaaa!”); or complex, like a teenager being told love is tough by someone older and then having their heart crushed for the first time.

It could be something that seemed like nothing at the time, but years later you realise it completely changed you: an innocuous event, a sentence overheard, a chance encounter with a stranger, a mistake, a surprise. Or maybe it was something monumental, a defining experience after which you knew life would never be the same again: a birth, a death, a marriage, an accident, a betrayal, a well-earned success, an embarrassing failure.

Maybe you were sixteen years old at the time, or sixty. You experienced something, it resonated within you and you changed. You were wiser as a result.

In human evolution, what changed us was awareness – the gaining of sapience. From the *Homo* still slightly hunched over whose only thoughts were the basics (eat, sleep, survive, reproduce), to the *Homo* standing upright, painting caves, making tools, starting into the fire and wondering about his place in the world.

*Homo Sapiens*, Latin for “wise man”. The one who knows, who learns, who has wisdom. While *Homo Sapiens* may be the self-proclaimed wise one, over thousands of years we have done some incredibly stupid things such as fight war after war over God, glory and all that glitters which we think is gold.

The Garden of Eden parable in the Book of Genesis can be read as a metaphor for our gaining of self-awareness: the earthly paradise where everything became unstuck because, hey, now we have the ability to consider our options and make decisions. We must not eat the forbidden fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but forget that. Let’s do it anyway and see what happens.

Not wise, because we are usually given rules for our own good. Or perhaps it was wise, because sometimes, rules need to be broken. Plus, a supposedly wise elder telling an exuberant youth not to do something often results in the youth only wanting to do it more. God to Adam and Eve: “Don’t eat that fruit.” Adam to Eve: “There he goes, always ordering us around.” Eve to Adam: “I bet the fruit’s amazing.”

The word wisdom features more than 200 times in the Old Testament, and philosophy literally means “the love of wisdom.” There was a time when being wise was what many aspired to, but is that still the case? Has the desire to be clever overtaken the desire to be wise? And if ignorance is bliss, do people even want wisdom?

“Strangely enough, ignorance plays a role in wisdom that it does not in knowledge,” said Tim Flanagan, lecturer in Philosophy at Murdoch University. “In other words, if knowledge is complete, wisdom is in a sense constitutively incomplete, since it may also involve judgement. And the object of judgement is the truth of reality, whatever that turns out to be, not just the presence or even coherence of certain facts.”

## Greeks with gifts

The philosopher Aristotle decided there was theoretical wisdom, the use of scientific knowledge and intuitive reason, and practical wisdom, the ability to see what is right combined with the ability to do what is right. Of course, this concept of practical wisdom opens a massive can of worms because individuals can have differing opinions of what is “right.”

The ancient Greeks spent a lot of time discussing wisdom. They came up with some concise pearls that fit nicely on greetings cards and as quotables for Twitter and Facebook posts. If prompted to share some “words of wisdom”, Siri or Alexa would probably chirp one or all of the following:

*“Wisdom outweighs any wealth.” (Sophocles)*

*“Knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom.” (Aristotle)*

*“The only true wisdom is in knowing you know nothing.” (Socrates)*

There’s something provocative about Socrates, the wisest man in Athens (according to the Oracle of Delphi), proclaiming to all and sundry that he knows nothing, and that because he is aware he knows nothing, he actually is the wisest and the Oracle was right. You can bet Socrates, while perhaps not saying it out loud, thought himself the smartest person in every room (and cave) he was ever in.

We all know, or have known, someone like that. These people are insufferable and absolutely the last you should turn to for wisdom, theoretical or practical. And if that’s what wisdom is, considering yourself the smartest in the room, then I’ll take foolishness any day of the week. Judge me by my actions and not by what I say about myself.



We pursue wisdom, we yearn for it, since we do not already have it and because sometimes we become aware of this ignorance. That's why we're still chasing it after thousands of years.

### Knowledge vs wisdom

In *Fight Club* – which spouts a lot of (male-centric) wisdom, but is remembered for its barbaric violence-solves-everything mantra far more than for its insights – Tyler Durden asks, “How’s that working out for you...being clever?” Questioning the value of cleverness is an important concern at a time when “smart” has a far higher currency than “wise.”

“Smarts and success can be easily identified, broken-down, digitised and sold. That’s not really the case with wisdom, which has an elusive simplicity to it. Wisdom considers how and why we know something, not just what we claim or think we know,” said Flanagan.

“In essence, to ‘do’ philosophy (to be a ‘Philosopher’) is something that is difficult only because its task is arrestingly simple. An example of this is the way in which certain questions (the ultimate nature of Love, Justice, Beauty etc.) involve something very concrete – not at all abstract – and yet remain something which we cannot conclusively define. And yet we keep at it, consciously or not. Science does the same with Truth – which is why those who reflect on and add to their discipline are awarded a PhD. Perhaps we should just be more conscious of the ways we do it (or rather, and more often, the ways in which we don’t).”

Parents want their children to be smart, cities want smart mobility, companies want clever innovations. We connect being smart with becoming successful. In a similar way, we assume successful people are smart, but neither are necessarily wise. And someone who knows a lot about stuff may know absolutely nothing about life.

Consider the fire analogy. A person knows that fire is hot, yet if they don’t change their behaviour, they will keep getting burned. That could be explained as having knowledge, but not wisdom. Now, apply that to relationships. A person may know they are attracted to a certain kind of personality (say, someone who is wild and temperamental), yet they keep seeking that partner and engaging in relationships that ultimately hurt them.

The knowledge about themselves and their tendencies isn’t changing their behaviour. They keep putting their hand in the fire, even though they know it will get burned, which is along the lines of fool me once, shame on you; fool me twice, shame on me.

Perhaps that’s simplifying wisdom too much. But it is certainly hurtful to watch those closest to us continuing their self-destructive behaviour patterns, and frustrating to listen to people complain about the very things they could quite easily change.

### Change management

This word keeps popping up: change. “Evolve” is too scientific, “Adapt” too technical, and both sound somehow negative. The former alludes to the strong surviving and the weak being left behind, while the latter hints at the machines taking over. “Change” is human. Learning, knowledge, experience and self-awareness should contribute to us changing our behaviours for the better, but it doesn’t always work like that, does it?

The American theologian Reinhold Niebuhr famously said, “God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.”

Which is a fancy way of saying, “choose your battles wisely”, and it’s a cop-out, because so much can easily be dropped into the things-I-cannot-change bucket. I’m addicted to heroin and there’s nothing I can do. The earth is warming, but I alone can’t do anything to change that. My boss always shouts at me, but he’s my boss, so I can’t stop him.

Niebuhr is correct that it takes courage to change, because you might well put yourself in danger in the process. Someone has to stand up to the bully, to stop the cycle of bullying. Someone has to call out the boss for his inappropriate behaviour. It’s not easy, and you might suffer as a result, but in some situations, it can be wholly unwise to just sit back and do nothing.

That brings us back to Aristotle and practical wisdom: the combination of moral will and moral skill. But this is also where instinct and intuition come into play. If knowing yourself is part of being wise, then listening to yourself goes along with that. Because of your unique connection of mind, body and spirit, and how those three elements have digested everything from your past, often, the wisest thing to do is to trust your gut.

### Construction ahead

Humans are a work in progress. While we may think we’re stuck in our routines and repeating the same behaviours, each day is in exercise in improvisation where we make dozens of decisions based on all the knowledge, learning and experience we have gained.

Sometimes we trust our instincts, sometimes we heed the advice of others, sometimes we need to make mistakes and learn from them, and sometimes we change without realising it. A person who is resistant to change is not only rejecting wisdom, they are also rejecting the possibility that others can change.

The proof of our wisdom, and also our foolishness, is in our actions. It doesn’t matter if a person says they are different or claims they are wiser than before. What makes them different is what they do.

“We pursue wisdom, we yearn for it, since we do not already have it and because sometimes we become aware of this ignorance. That’s why we’re still chasing it after thousands of years,” concluded Flanagan.

**Campbell Jefferys**  
(B Arts 98)

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# WORK OUT YOUR BEST WORKOUT



Getting your fitness started, or even getting it back, can be confusing. With so much conflicting information out there, it's hard to know who and what we should believe. A good time to seek out a specialist...

Dr Timothy Fairchild is a researcher, accredited Exercise Physiologist and Associate Professor at Murdoch University. Specialising in metabolism, Tim's areas of research include the impacts of physical activity on appetite and the prevention of obesity and its related illnesses.

We sat down with Tim to demystify some of the advice floating around concerning fitness and HIIT workouts.

#### What brought you to Murdoch?

I grew up in a sporting family, my father was a tennis coach and my older brother followed in his footsteps. I enjoyed playing sport and science classes at school, so sports science seemed like a natural fit. I completed my studies at UWA and then worked at Syracuse University in the US as an Assistant Professor for nearly 4 years before returning to Perth with my wife. I took up a lecturing position at Murdoch University in late 2008 and haven't looked back since. I now chase three children around playgrounds and try not to break bones at the skateboard parks, reliving a long-lost youth.

#### What do you love about the fitness industry and the work that you do?

I think the best thing about the industry is how varied it is. Fitness comes in all shapes and sizes, and it benefits everyone. There is no single individual who would not benefit from improving fitness and to a large extent, it is under our control. Fitness includes not only endurance and strength, but also incorporates flexibility. When discussing endurance, this can also be broken up into muscular endurance (think: how many push-ups can you do?) and cardiovascular endurance (think: how long can you run for?)

#### When we talk about 'exercising', what do we mean?

I'd like to distinguish between 'physical activity' and 'exercise'.

Physical activity refers to any movement of the body which requires energy. This can include unplanned or unstructured activities (e.g. mopping floors at home, walking from the car to the shopping centre).

Exercise on the other hand, is planned and structured physical activity, with a goal of improving fitness. Exercise can take many different forms, from yoga to running, the gym, to training to become the next ninja warrior.



Exercise is a type of physical activity, but not all physical activity is exercise.

#### What is your best advice for someone who is extremely time poor but wants to stay fit?

In society today, we have to be efficient. Most people struggle to find time in their day, for one reason or another, and this is by far and away the most common challenge people face, particularly full-time working parents and working single-parents of young children (not yet at school-age).

The best advice that I could give to those people is to remember that chasing the kids around the playground or throwing the Frisbee, riding bikes and kicking the ball are all types of physical activity which not only benefit health, but also teach the kids valuable lessons.

#### What is HIIT?

HIIT stands for high intensity interval training. Interval training has been around for a long time but has primarily resided in the sports domain. Most people with a background in sport would remember doing some type of interval training which includes periods of high-exertion activity mixed with periods of low-exertion activity.

The key to this type of activity means that you can train at an intensity which you can only maintain for a very short period, recover, then train at that high intensity again.

This kind of training was made popular when it was introduced into the general population; transferring this training from a sporting setting to a general gym.



Chasing the kids around the playground or throwing the Frisbee, riding bikes and kicking the ball are all types of physical activity which not only benefit health, but also teach the kids valuable lessons.

### What does a HIIT workout look like?

Again, this varies from person to person. For a young, healthy adult with years of consecutive training, a session will look vastly different to an older adult enrolled in a bone-strengthening program.

That's not to say that HIIT is just for young individuals. If we simplify it, a session may include walking slightly faster for 2 minutes and then walking at usual pace for 5 minutes; it doesn't have to be an all-out-effort. For individuals with clinical conditions or considered to be higher risk, HIIT may need to be adapted or may not be suitable and it's something I would not recommend to people returning to exercise or starting a new exercise program.

### What are the benefits?

To understand the benefits, we must remember that humans have the ability to adapt to their environment.

If we take someone who usually sits on the couch for most of the day and we strength train them, the person becomes stronger. If we take that same person, enrol them into a running class and train them in preparation for a marathon, they build up their cardiovascular fitness. The amount and rate of adaptation is proportional to the exposure and intensity of the training stimulus.

To understand 'exposure', one can think of the length and amount of exercise per week. If we take someone and strength train them once per week, it is unlikely that the person will adapt and therefore we won't see many benefits. If the person is training two times per week, we would expect a slight increase, but again, it would not be much. Three or more times per week and we should see an improvement in strength.

Using that same principle, it is also important to make sure the 'intensity' is appropriate. If we take the same individual from the couch and start them on a training program but do not modify the training program, the individual will improve in the first few weeks but will then eventually fully adapt and there won't be any need to adapt (or improve) any more.

HIIT can help us get used to training at a higher intensity, by allowing us to train at the higher intensity for short bursts of time. It takes many shapes and forms and is most often thought of when running or cycling, but can also take place in the strength room as well. The easiest way to understand HIIT is to think of it as a mixture of high and low intensity exercise – with a recovery period between activities. The benefit of HIIT is that the high-intensity activity can span from a few seconds to minutes, and the recovery can range from seconds to minutes and from doing low-intensity (e.g. slow walk) to doing nothing. A very rough guide would be a 1:2 work:recovery period (e.g. 60 seconds:120 seconds), but this can range from 1:1 to 1:5, depending on the type and duration of activity.

So, coming back to the original question, what are the benefits?

- Because the higher-intensity is such a strong stimulus, it kick-starts your system to adapt. It essentially forces your system to adapt because it has been pushed away from the comfort zone. That is by far and away, the greatest improvement.
- Our research has also found:
  - > HIIT training seems to improve appetite better; you are not as hungry after HIIT training compared to continuous or steady-state training.
  - > It may benefit mood for individuals with low mood, although the most important factor was "liking" your trainer and the session.

### So, what is the best way to exercise?

A mix of training is the ideal way, for almost all outcomes (e.g. managing blood sugar levels; body weight management; mood profiles) which we have tested. Indeed, for older adults, performing three or more activities—irrespective of the type of activity—is associated with better quality of life and reduced falls risk. Again, it's important to individualise the training program. There are times where it's highly advisable to start with a strength-training and balance training program, before commencing a cardio (even walking) program, particularly in the case of older adults who are at risk of falling.

### When fitting exercise into your schedule, ask yourself these questions:

Is it more feasible to train in the morning or in the afternoon/evening?

Is it easier to find time on the weekend or during the week?

Is there a crèche facility at the community hall or gym or are you able to leave the children with family?

Are there fitness options for the whole family or is it possible to train while the kids are doing their activities?



## TIM'S STEPS FOR SUCCESS:

### 1 Find an activity you enjoy.

It might seem obvious, but many don't think about this. If you enjoy soccer or AFL there are some excellent options in the community, or if the gym is more your thing, many offer excellent classes, and there are probably some great programs offered by your local council too! Even if none of these things work for you, for whatever reason, taking a short walk through your suburb or city is still physical activity.

### 2 Stay consistent.

Humans are creatures of habit, so make sure you set regular and consistent training times. If exercising on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays work for you, then keep the same time and day.

### 3 Make a promise to yourself.

Following on from the last point, plan your next training session/time before leaving the current session. If you put the time into your diary there's less chance of other commitments getting in the way.

### 4 Plan ahead.

If you are planning to exercise after work, school drop-off or running errands, take your exercise gear with you. Don't rely on having the willpower to train after going home and changing, as we will typically prioritise other activities.

# EXCEPTIONAL

# A U M M

# HONOURED

## 2019 Distinguished Alumni Awards

**The extraordinary careers of five Murdoch University graduates were celebrated in front of the University's leading academics, alumni, VIPs and government representatives at the 2019 Distinguished Alumni Awards.**

The awards recognise the outstanding professional and personal achievements of former students. Fittingly, this year's awards ceremony was held at a venue very familiar with star performers – the RAC Arena.

The award winners represent a varied cross-section of achievement across advertising, law, politics and justice, journalism and government, a clear indication of the diverse doorways that Murdoch University opens for its graduates.

Multi award-winning advertising creative Adam Ferrier (BA 1993, BComm 1994) said Murdoch honours the fine university tradition of giving students the tools and space needed to become really good versions of themselves.

"It really did help me find my way in life. The academics and staff at the university continue to create a progressive culture that allows misfits like myself to shine," he said.

Barrister and former Federal Member for Perth, Tim Hammond (LLB 1999), was the second recipient of the night. He said working in Murdoch's SCALES community legal service opened his eyes as he got to work in a Rockingham legal centre with real people facing real problems.

"It came along at an important time in my life. The way it transferred theoretical values about what is important about the law into what it means to help people was something that set me on a path that otherwise I wouldn't have gone on. It put me on a path through the law, and politics, where I was able to translate values I had swirling around internally into action," he said.

"Perhaps what I'm most grateful for is the structures that were created for me at my time at university and the way it allowed me to articulate and to prosecute my values professionally. It served me in a way I would never be able to foresee. I don't think I would have had the courage to leave politics 12 months ago, but for the way key people taught me how to prosecute my values back when I was studying my law degree."

Fellow former Federal MP Michael Keenan (BA 1995) said university taught him that in life, you have really got to be a



“

It really did help me find my way in life. The academics and staff at the university continue to create a progressive culture that allows misfits like myself to shine. **Adam Ferrier**

self-starter, set your own goals and decide what you want to achieve, and you can't wait for people to give you permission to achieve it.

“It also taught me how to make sensible and cogent arguments for things you believed in, things that were against the prevailing views of the time. The skills were really useful for me and I subsequently took them into my political career later in life.”

It was Murdoch's flexible learning options that paved the way for fourth recipient Gail McGowan (BEd 1992, DipEd 1994), Director General of the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage for Western Australia.

As a regionally-based young mum of three, she was able to benefit from Murdoch's commitment to both alternate tertiary study options and accessibility for mature age students.

Despite the fact Gail had finished Year 12 ten years earlier and couldn't attend lectures, she was grateful for Murdoch allowing her to explore a whole new world in her own time and at her own pace.

“My closest relationship was with the green cover sheet on my assignments, something that I waited for anxiously at the

post office seeking that vital feedback. But behind those green sheets of paper were committed staff who were sensitive to the challenges of being off campus. The support I received enabled me to embrace the concept of lifelong learning and when I returned to Perth in my final year of undergraduate study, I discovered the value of a university community. I was inspired to undertake post-graduate study in public policy, an area that became my passion as I forged a career in the public service.

“The Murdoch ethos of out of the box thinking and multi-disciplinary knowledge has really shaped my career and positioned me well to promote a whole of government mindset – something I find quite easy to do and I am sure it was the Murdoch edge that helped in that. And now I lead a fabulous government agency charged with shaping the future of this great City and State, while respecting our culture and heritage. Even I have to stop from time to time and think... that's not bad for a farm girl from Darkan!

I'm grateful for my ongoing involvement in Murdoch – an institution that has proud history of being at the leading edge of what it means to learn, work and think a bit differently, but nonetheless relevantly in a global environment.”



Left to right: Tim Hammond, Adam Ferrier, Gail McGowan, Michael Keenan and Basil Zempilas

The night's final recipient is no stranger to a stage microphone. Australian television and radio presenter and sports commentator Basil Zempilas (BA 1992, Dip 1994), presents sport on Seven News Perth, and co-hosts Perth radio station 6PR's Breakfast Program, as well as Channel Seven's Weekend Sunrise.

It was the practical experience that Basil had in Murdoch's radio studios that put him in good stead for his subsequent career success.

"I gained expertise in studios that were as good in 1990 as the 6PR studios are now in 2019! The opportunity to go into a studio, turn on the microphone and broadcast was a gift. One I didn't even realise at the time that was putting me so far ahead of my competition it was not funny. It was a remarkable opportunity and one that still exists at university," he said.

He added that possibly the most important thing he learned at Murdoch was the importance of resilience.

"I learned the value and benefits and joy of it. As I have discovered on my journey, and other journeys I have observed, you don't have to be the best, the smartest, or the funniest. Sometimes you just have to be the most determined person to be there, to be there again, get knocked down, but continue and just keep going, because so many people will not."

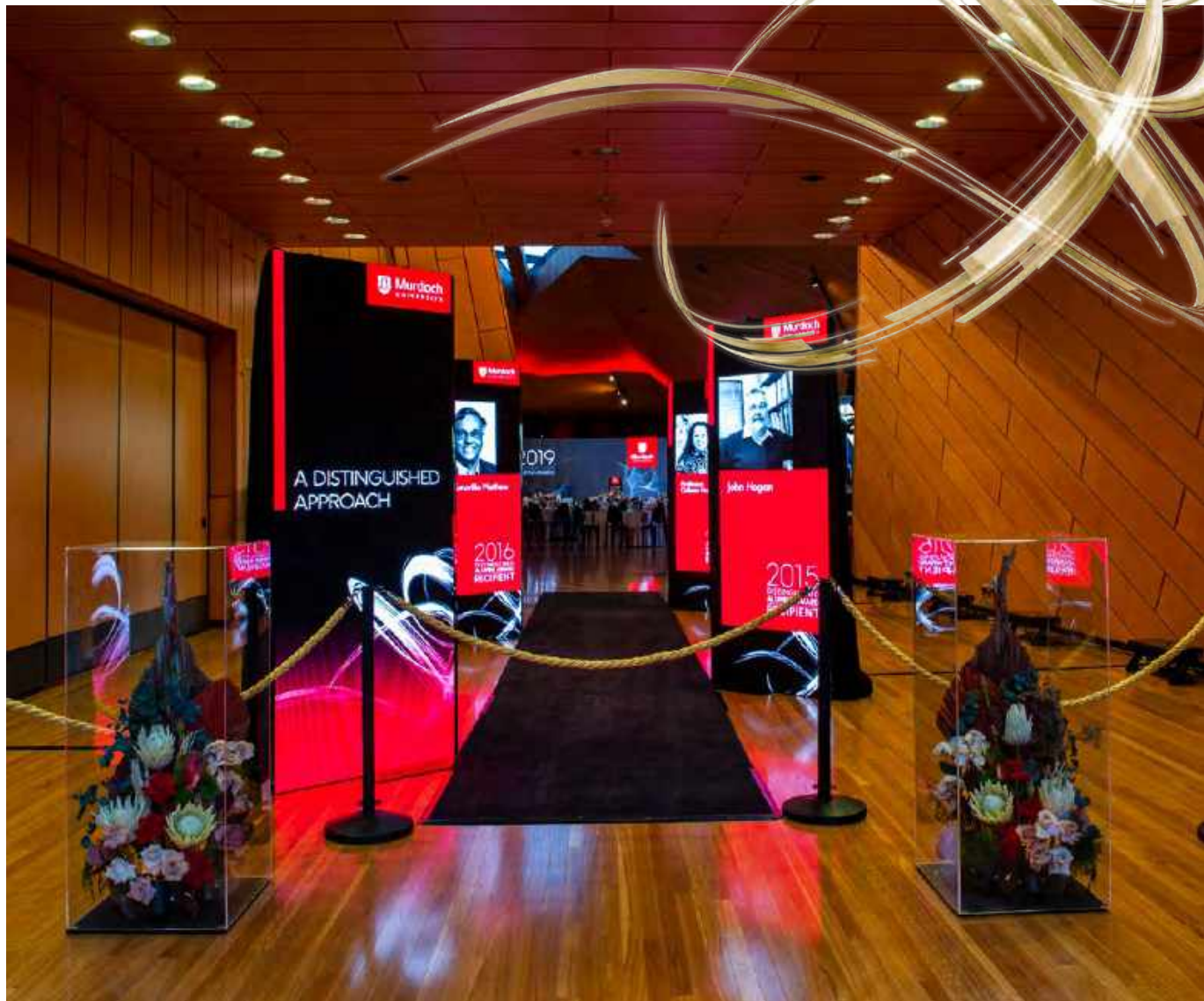
Speaking at the event, Murdoch University Vice Chancellor Eeva Leinonen said each of the alumni were leaders in their field, and



a terrific example of the opportunities higher education can open up to the community.

"Every single student who graduates from Murdoch University leaves with the opportunity and the skills to make it to the top of their game," she said.

"The personal journeys of the five recipients are both inspiring stories and a reminder of how the curiosity and passion that Murdoch University ignites can lead to pioneering careers that make such a difference to our world."



“

I'm grateful for my ongoing involvement in Murdoch – an institution that has proud history of being at the leading edge of what it means to learn, work and think a bit differently, but nonetheless relevantly in a global environment. **Gail McGowan**

# ADAM FERRIER



Q+A

Following his Distinguished Alumni Award presentation, ad man extraordinaire Adam Ferrier kindly agreed to an interview. In just a few crisp responses we covered sausage sizzles, stiff cereals and the modern day, super-saturated world of marketing...

**You said in your acceptance speech “Murdoch continues to create a progressive culture that allows misfits like myself to shine”. How did that work for you during your time here?**

Murdoch University literally made it easy to combine my two interests; money and people, by allowing me to study Psychology and Commerce simultaneously. Within 4.5 years I had bachelor degrees in both. However, as importantly, I was able to supplement these degrees with eye-opening and mind-expanding subjects like ‘Structure, Thought and Reality’, and ‘You and Gender’, ‘Introduction to Radio’, and some crazy drama classes with an amazing guy called Serge Tempolini. Finally, it was great to get out of the golden triangle, and the confines of a private secondary school education and meet people from all pockets of Perth and the planet.

**Is there anything you feel Murdoch should emphasise in its marketing?**

Murdoch’s doing a pretty good job tapping into its spirit. I like the idea of ‘free your think’ I like that it doesn’t quite make sense and is grammatically incorrect. You get it with a twist. Good advertising makes the familiar feel new, and the new feel familiar, and this is a new way to say something familiar - ‘think for yourself’. I also love the fact the Murdoch University marketing doesn’t conform to the norm and promise a job, or a guaranteed career path. It promises what universities should be – a place to explore your interests, get inspired, and hopefully leave with a clearer sense of where your value to the world might best be served.

However, Murdoch University could dial this up a lot more in its advertising, be more out there, have more fun with the idea of freeing your think, and just push it a lot more. It’s a university, not a financial services product, and therefore should embody original thinking, ideas, and inspiration.

**What are your thoughts on university advertising as a genre?**

Crap. The whole sector does a terrible job of marketing itself – probably worse than any other category I can think of. No other category has a product that is so transformational and inspiring (an education). No other category has so many brilliantly amazing stories to tell, nor emotions to pull on than universities. However, the category just promises people they’ll be either a) gainfully employed (boring and expected), or b) change the world (BS). Where’s the inspiration, emotion and storytelling? My favourite ad from Australian universities is Deng Adut from Western Sydney University. I also love the Get Smarter campaign by Griffith university that featured ads with Ray Charles, Bob Geldof and Desmond Tutu. (All viewable on YouTube).



### Which brand have you been most loyal to in your life?

The brand I continue to love most is Weet-Bix. The fascinating thing about Weet-Bix is that they are really hard to eat without spilling milk around. The brick of wheat is actually quite hard and needs to be cut skilfully with the side of the spoon at just the right time. Try and do it too early and the brick of wheat will slide under the spoon with force, causing milk to splash up out of the bowl. Do it too late and they get too mushy. I think there is something in their imperfection and steadfast ability to never change that I love. I now feed them to my kids (with cinnamon, yogurt, honey and a sprinkling of chia seeds). At four Weet-Bix a morning, for most mornings of my life I estimate I'd have eaten over 45,000 Weet-Bix. At today's rate that's approximately \$5,600 tax free dollars I've contributed to Sanitarium and the Seventh Day Adventist Church.

### When people keep buying the same car brand throughout their lives what is commonly going on in their heads?

Loyalty in most categories is probably overrated. It's not that we are loyal, more we can't be bothered changing. If we have a positive experience with a brand, then another brand must believably promise an experience so good it's worth changing to. In automotive, there is a general feeling that most are pretty similar to one another, therefore it's probably just not worth changing. The same goes for financial services, if you're with one of the big four banks, then it's completely unbelievable that one of the other three will provide an experience that warrants the effort of switching. Humans are not loyal, but we conserve effort, and if it's not worth switching – well then it's illogical to do so and we won't.

### "...you can add magic at any point along that consumer journey." Can you give me an example of magic sprinkled in the journey?

Go to the QT Hotel in Sydney and step in the lifts. If there is one of you it plays a lonesome song (Are you Lonely), if there's two of you it plays 'Islands in the stream' or some other corny duet, and if there's three or more, it plays party themed music. This little bit of magic has been doing its thing for years – putting a smile on peoples' faces in a most unexpected way. Now thinking about the user journey for those at Murdoch University – how does free your think come to life in unexpected and charming / inspiring ways on the campus? Where's the ideas confessional, or the zone that allows people to free their think – there and then? What would that even look like?

### What ad or campaign do you wish you'd made?

The Bunnings stuff. Marketing and advertising are about building brands and businesses, and those ads featuring the staff, plus a good sausage sizzle (magic) has, in part, revolutionised that business.

### "Every generation of consumers is less marketing-savvy than the generation before." Why is this happening?

Kids today are A) growing up in a marketing super-saturated solution. When I was a kid brands belonged on TV, outdoor ads and supermarket shelves. Now everything is branded, from our influencer friends, to our social networks, our entertainment and festivals, and – well everything. B) with this rise in branding there has been no equivalent rise in educating the consumer about how brands work and their ability to influence, C) it's not in anyone's financial interests to educate people about how brands work. So, every year sees us become less and less marketing savvy.

### In your view, who has been the 'Bradman of advertising'?

This is easy. By far the best advertising person Australia has ever produced, is a chap called Dave Droga who has his own agency called Droga5 which he recently sold to Accenture Interactive. He's really, really good.



I like the idea of 'free your think' I like that it doesn't quite make sense and is grammatically incorrect. You get it with a twist.





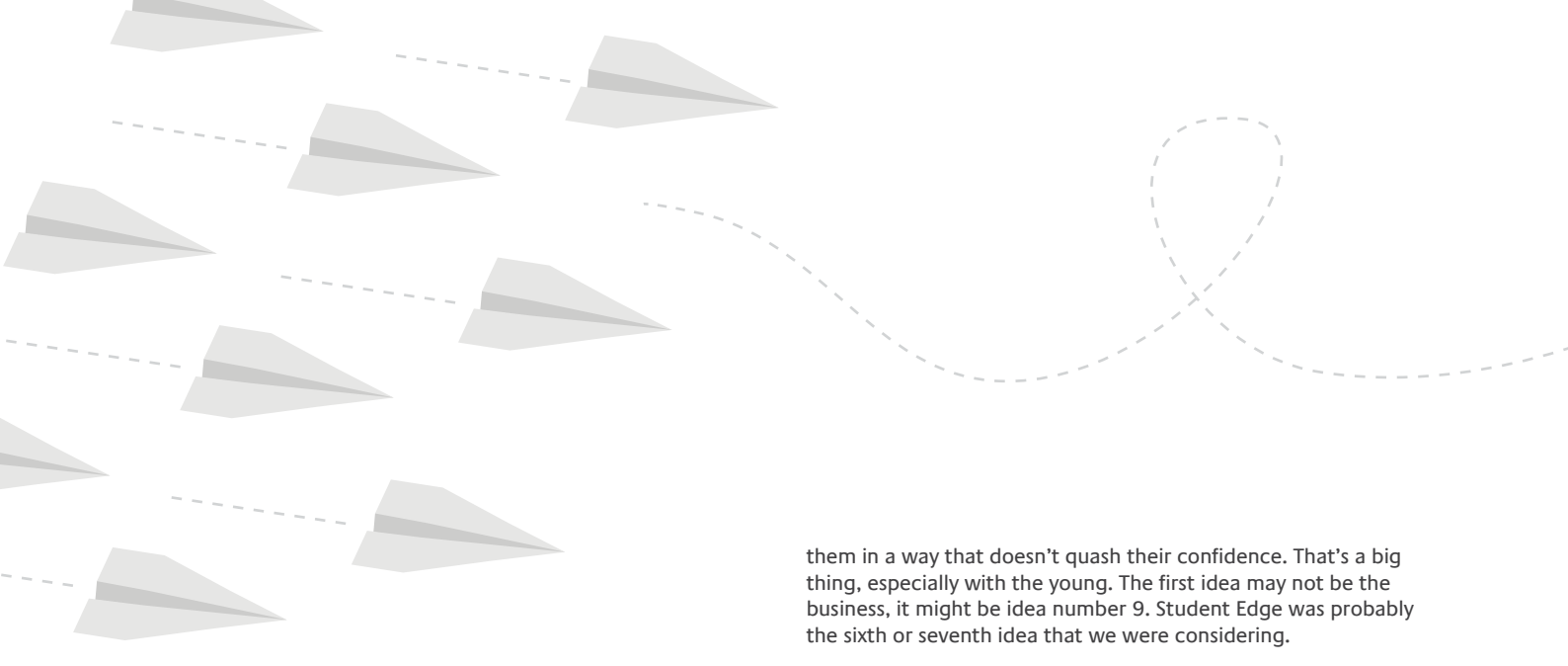
# THE ENTREPR

If you walk to the back of the Murdoch University library you will enter The Launchpad. A dedicated space for students, researchers and industry to come together to solve problems and develop commercial opportunities. Chances are you will see a man in a suit in the corner, deep in conversation with a budding entrepreneur.

That man is Murdoch University's Entrepreneur in Residence, Jeremy Chetty. An alumnus who, in 2002, joined forces with his brother and two school friends to create the largest member-based organisation of high school, TAFE, VET and university students in Australia – Student Edge. When he's not busy running this international company, Jeremy is on campus guiding the students, staff and alumni who come to him. He is often the first person they feel comfortable enough with to open up about their business idea. We made our own appointment with Jeremy to find out a little more...

A man with a shaved head and a goatee, wearing a grey suit jacket over a dark blue button-down shirt, is sitting at a light-colored wooden table. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. His arms are crossed on the table. He is wearing a black watch on his left wrist and a black braided bracelet on his right wrist. The background is a blurred office or retail environment with shelves and other people. Three white paper airplane icons are flying in the upper right area of the image. A large red paper airplane icon is in the lower right corner, containing the word 'IN' in white.

# ENEUR IS IN



### What's a typical day for you?

Basically, I come to The Launchpad for 2-3 hours depending on the day. The team line up meetings for me with Murdoch staff or the current Launchpad team. But mainly it's student consultations. Students book sessions with me, typically for half an hour. Primarily, the reason is they have an idea and want to know "How do I take this idea and make it into a business or enterprise?" They know my background, my personal story and that I was a former student here. So usually there is an instant rapport where they quickly feel comfortable talking to me.

Our meetings are usually sharp and to the point. They discuss their idea and I give them some pointers and tips. With all start-ups there is a journey and they are traditionally at the very beginning. Often, students have been sitting on an idea for a couple of years and use me to begin exploring it.

It's a great opportunity for them, while studying, to see if their idea has the potential to become a viable business. The rest of the students are coming to the Launchpad to learn. Perhaps for a hackathon or an entrepreneur skills workshop. They know employers are looking for people with problem solving skills, enterprise skills and ability in critical thinking. You develop these when you are an entrepreneur and students want to learn those soft skills.

### Did you base the content on what would have been good for you to hear in your early days?

Exactly right. That's one of the reasons I love this 'on-campus' role. I would have loved to have had someone to talk to when I was studying and we first came up with the Student Edge idea. A person to chat to, validate or bounce off. An experienced entrepreneur who had walked the path before and could quickly say "Yes I think this idea has legs" or "It needs more work" or whatever it may have required at the time. Hopefully that is what I'm bringing to the table. Sixteen years of experience, being a former student who started a business after graduation and is still a practitioner today.

### Do you feel you have a big responsibility when they initially share their idea?

I take every meeting very seriously for a couple of reasons. Firstly, someone has come to speak to me to discuss an idea that is probably very close to their heart and been on their mind for a while, if not years. They may hold fear about raising it – all the typical emotions linked with an idea. Secondly, even if it is an idea that doesn't have commercial viability in my eyes, I tell

them in a way that doesn't quash their confidence. That's a big thing, especially with the young. The first idea may not be the business, it might be idea number 9. Student Edge was probably the sixth or seventh idea that we were considering.

At 16 years old, when I was first dabbling, I often think 'what if someone had quashed my confidence back then?' Student Edge may never have happened. That's why I take it so seriously.

### Even if the first idea is evidently not commercial?

Based on my experience and working in the ecosystem with other entrepreneurs and start-ups, I'm qualified to offer an answer. Validation is important, e.g. "The idea at this stage may not work, why don't you go away and do some research and validate the idea?" It's an initial no, but you leave the window open for them to go and explore the idea further and dig deeper. It allows them to go and talk to another 20-25 people and perhaps they come to the realisation themselves. It's not about just talking to me. I am just one person they speak to initially. I leave them with a validation process that encourages them to converse with others. It's not just 'Jeremy's opinion' that counts. They must also liaise with potential customers.

### Do they come back?

I'd say 90% of the time I see them again. And that's important to me because I want to see that their confidence is still there and that they are still eager and hungry to learn about entrepreneurship. With the 10% that don't return, I often find it is not so much that the idea is not flying, but more of a discovery that entrepreneurship is not for them. The entrepreneurial mindset, complete focus and the long, unstructured hours may just not be for them.

Also, as an entrepreneur you must be able to sell. Whether you are an introvert or an extrovert doesn't come into it. If you can't pitch your idea or articulate it to people, who is going to do it? This is especially critical in the early days. People realise they need to have an entrepreneurial mindset. When I go through these things a lot of people decide they just don't want to go down the path. The self-awareness piece is very important. There is so much uncertainty in entrepreneurship and you must be comfortable with it, or be able to operate in spite of it.

### Did you know at age 16 that you were cut out for it?

There was no epiphany as such. For me it was more just dabbling in stuff, 'hobby businesses' if you want to call it that. In Willetton Senior High School, we had different events on campus and we got involved in buying and selling and I realised that I liked it. I liked the marketing aspect and the products and buying and selling stuff and talking to people. In hindsight, I realised in those very early days that I was enjoying all the different functions that are involved in a business. In high school at the time there was no concept of a 'start up'. There was no business program as such, or formal education element to it. It was a self-awareness discovery. I just did stuff and felt good doing it. I felt comfortable talking to strangers.



### How did you know Student Edge was the idea that could fly?

We didn't to be frank. We just thought 'this is a problem that needs solving'. We were students at the time. We felt we were in a position where we could give it a shot. That was the driver.

Student Edge was developed with my brother, Craig, and two friends from high school, Simon and Damien. We were always discussing ideas. Damien had two pizza shops at that time, he was doing his own thing. We came together because business was a common thread. Then all of a sudden we landed with Student Edge and that was the idea we were most passionate about.

I say this now in my talks with budding entrepreneurs. I tell them that you can mull over 10 ideas but there is a way to figure out which one to focus on. The litmus test is the one idea you are the most passionate about and believe in the most. Because that will be the fuel when you grow the business. It's your "why" as we say. That for us was Student Edge. It came from looking at a younger brother of one of the co-founders, Simon, who happened to be in Year 10 at the time. We saw him struggling to choose a career – that stressed look of Year 10/11s that begins to appear when they feel they need to work out what they want to do as a career.

### So in the beginning the 'problem' wasn't the fiscal challenges of being a student?

No, in the beginning it was the career choice element. It is the problem we are still trying to solve and are still tackling. We haven't moved away from the problem we are trying to solve at all. Our business has evolved, and the offering has evolved, but the core of our vision and our mission remains, which is simply that we want to help young people make better career and life choices. So that when you get to Year 10, you don't just get a textbook of careers to wade through and a few appointments with a career counsellor.

Nobody really sits down with young people at length to go through the process of career/training/university selection. There's advice from parents and peers - "You'd make a really good bricklayer etc." The decision-making process is the thing we are still passionate about solving i.e. How do you present the right tools, information and resources on a platform for a young person to help them make the right career choice? We believe that if you make the right career choice, you grow up to be a happier, more productive adult.

So what do I mean by that? Think about the friends you have in a profession they hate, or they are onto their second degree that they still dislike, or they have finished at university and are in a career that has nothing to do with what they studied. We have all heard these stories. This is the result of the career decision process if it is not done correctly.

The result can be detrimental, resulting in a person who gets to their 30s/40s and still dislikes what they do, or still doesn't know what they want to do. Unfortunately, there is no career counselling service when you are 38! You will have more life experience which should help, but you are still navigating on your own pretty much. But at Year 10/11, aged 16/17 students begin trying to work this all out. We want to be a platform to assist.

With our offering we essentially help students with three things: Help them save money; Help them earn money; Help them with career and life.

When we started with Student Edge we were four young guys with no money, no idea about starting a business, had no mentors, and concluded that we had to focus on one thing.

When we asked students at the time "What is the one thing that would get you to this platform every day?" they said - the discounts.

The career information they probably check on average once a year and you can't build a business on that, but they eat every day! We should have perhaps realised that at the time because whether you were a student in the 1960s, or at any point up to the present day, you can still benefit from money off your text books or your shoes etc. So, we said let's start there. That is why you see the discount offers on our website. It's evolved over the years but that is essentially where we started.

In hindsight, I'm so glad we did that because it was simple to get off the ground. We called 200 businesses and got 25 to sign up offering a 10/15% discount or buy one/get one free etc. It enabled us to quickly get some members, build a brand and get some money in the door because initially we were charging \$20 a year for each membership pack.

### So how did you get those first businesses to sign up? Was it selling the potential of the idea?

Yes, all we harnessed was our solution to a problem. It wasn't just commercial businesses we were calling but also social partners, government, schools etc. All we were initially saying was 'we want to solve this problem, we have created this and here is how it is going to help young people.'

I will give you an example. We had to get McDonalds on board. It's a good brand, adds credibility to your venture and of course, students eat there every day. We managed to get a meeting with a manager who owned three McDonalds stores at Willetton, Riverton and Canning Vale. We talked his ear off for half an hour. At the end of the meeting he said "Great, sounds good, what do you need from me?" We said we need \$500 and a discount from you. He agreed.



Our business has evolved, and the offering has evolved, but the core of our vision and our mission remains, which is simply that we want to help young people make better career and life choices.

As we were walking out of the store we were very excited. He said the reason he signed up was that if we were going to build what we had described, it would help his two teenage boys. That was the reason he signed up, not our sales spiel, but our passion for what we wanted to create. I use this as an example in my talks about how you can get your first customers to sign up - on the belief of the idea. If you are genuine about it and the problem you are looking to solve, people buy into it.

We were ecstatic. We started talking about our pipe dreams about how we were going to go national etc. He then said "If you are going to do that, come back and see me. Because I happen to be the President of all the McDonalds franchises in Australia and I'll open up 700 stores for you to the deal!"

We fell off our chairs. Incredible. People call it luck, but I think if you are passionate about something, you pour out your heart and then let people do the rest. People respond to it. He felt moved to help us even with our pipe dream and here we are.

#### **Did you do all your learning and trial and error locally?**

Yes. In the start-up process there is a step called 'go to market'. I always advise clients to start off small, iron out the bugs, and test, test, test. Then roll up to the next level. For us, we started with one community - Willetton, with 30,000 odd residents. Then from there we rolled it out to WA. Then nationally to the other states and a year or so ago, internationally. There are stepping stones. It's been 16 years since the initial idea to now, so it is a long process. For us it was organic growth, but that's not to say it's the right or wrong way. It was a way we could manage as the product grew and developed.

#### **Did you have an office?**

We finished our degrees and began by giving it a crack at home, while doing part time night fill jobs. We based ourselves in all three houses of the founders for about a year and a half. Then we rented an office space in an accountants. A co-working space, far from glamorous!

#### **Did you have a moment when you thought "This is it. There is enough momentum now - I don't need to go and get a job."**

Not quite like that. It was a confidence thing. As we were going out, having meetings, calling businesses, seeing the traction we were getting and earning money for the business our confidence went up. Getting a proper job just never came into the equation after that. We were just completely focused on making it a go. My younger brother was in his first year at Murdoch and deferred. In fact, he is still deferring as he is MD of the company!

That's why I say to young people - don't have a plan B. I always say have a plan A and if plan A doesn't work out, get a better plan A. Otherwise, if you have a plan B, when it gets hard you will psychologically lean to it, your safety net. I think it's good we didn't have that. It worked in our favour.

#### **When you have your own business how do you switch off?**

Honestly, you don't. There is no such thing as balance either. But you have to keep yourself sane. It's different when you don't look at it as work as such. We look at it as 'we are solving this problem and running a business to tackle it and it all has to work around our lives'. Me personally, I now have a wife and a two-year-old. I can't operate the way I did two years ago. I have had lifestyle changes. Instead of coming home at 7pm at night, I now come home at 5.30pm and have some family time. But by around 8.30pm I'm back on the laptop again. But again, I don't see it as work. I see it as things I just need to do before the next day. I still pretty much do a twelve-hour day, but the times shift around. You don't really switch off, if you are a true entrepreneur.

#### **So, the trick is to avoid burnout?**

Yes. When I say I'm doing a 12-hour day that is not something that people should aspire to do or something that I at all recommend. I need to be clear that this is only possible as I don't view it all as work. I see it as what I just do. If you are in a job and you are working 12 hours a day that is not manageable, practical and you will burn out. Sometimes to describe it I use the analogy of a painter. If you paint for a living and you love it - you just paint. It's not 'work'.

#### **It's odd how that shift in energy and capability can occur when you don't perceive of something as 'work'.**

It's wiring. A shift that happens when you are wired to do something and totally passionate about it. Then you just have the energy to keep doing it. I'm not qualified to speak on the biology of this - I'm just talking about how I feel and describe it to you. You just don't get tired in the same way everyone is familiar with. If you are a true entrepreneur and feel it is what you are meant to do, you don't get burnt out. Look at someone like Jeff Bezos. I saw an interview with him in Business Insider last week. He has been running Amazon for 20 odd years but still looks fresh, with the same amount of energy he had two decades ago. It's not chance. I just think he's wired to run the world's biggest company.

#### **Have you had any mentors or key books along the journey?**

A lot. I've been lucky. I always say to students have a mentor, a sounding board, someone who doesn't have a vested interest in your business. Someone who doesn't have a hidden agenda. Mentors will change over the years, but you don't have to do the journey alone.

I read a lot of business books. I take them on holiday with me! Also podcasts and YouTube videos. Driving to work every day I have half an hour for podcasts - there and back. Now I'm a parent, Gabor Maté is who I'm listening to. He talks about what happens to us in the first few years and how that trauma can shape us.

#### **What is the most rewarding thing about your position?**

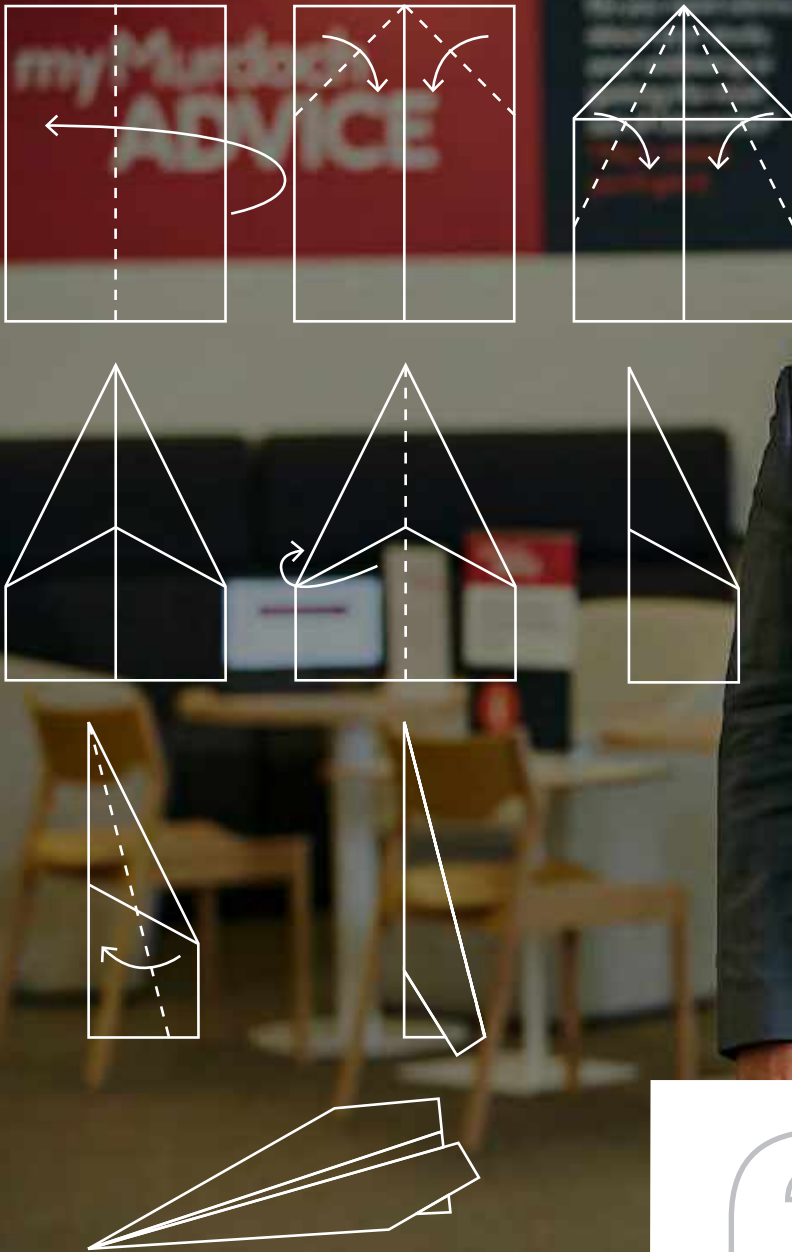
The most rewarding part is when you have these meetings and you see young peoples' eyes light up. You can see it. The brain shift where they are like "I could actually pursue this idea. It could be a possibility." That's rewarding for me because suddenly somebody is empowered and believes they can solve a problem. We need lots of problem solvers in this world. There are so many issues to solve, whether it be in the environment, or education, or health or finance.

Then thereafter, working with them and coaching them all the way through to their goal. Ultimately the reward is seeing them take control of their lives through entrepreneurship which is the ultimate equaliser of course. You can come from any walk of life, black, white, gay, straight, any race, religion or socio-economic arena - it doesn't matter. Background is irrelevant. If you create a product or service and bring it to the market place, and it's one that solves a problem and people pay you for it - that is the ultimate. Entrepreneurship is a vehicle that allows you to do that.

The benefits to entrepreneurship are massive too. You can go to places you never imagined and meet people meet you never dreamed of meeting. When we hit a million members we had a congratulatory phone call from the then prime minister, Malcolm Turnbull. Amazing.

#### **Quite a unique role you have at Murdoch...**

Yep. Other universities may offer access to entrepreneurs, but not in such a formal, structured, and open way on campus that is dedicated to serving students, staff and alumni. We are the only WA university that has an entrepreneur in residence, on campus, every week of the semester. We are starting to get some incredible ideas unearthed from the 'Murdoch vault'.



For example, many staff here are sitting on brilliant ideas and I have met a lot of them this year. They just need a helping hand. There are so many ideas surging through this campus.

I work with a great team here that includes Matthew Evans (Director of Library & Student Management) Melanie Molloy (Project Officer) & Kelly Prowle (Administration). If we, through Launchpad, through my service, and through the entrepreneurship events we run, can continue to unearth these ideas then we are onto something pretty special.

When Romy Lawson (Murdoch Provost) first presented this idea, I jumped at the chance to be the inaugural one. There are so many alumni that could have been approached. What an honour and a privilege. My dream is to see what we have set up continue and flourish and watch over the years ahead, as all these new businesses develop.

People call it luck, but I think if you are passionate about something, you pour out your heart and then let people do the rest. People respond to it. He felt moved to help us even with our pipe dream and here we are.

CHIPS

THE KEY FOR







“

I like the strategic side and I just love solving problems.

Ross Wyness

From bulls, to bathers, to basset hounds. There has certainly been some diverse tangents in the career journey of Murdoch alumnus Ross Wyness (B Comm 2005). An entrepreneur with a broad experience of making something from nothing in consumer goods, fashion and of late, the veterinary world.

The genesis for Ross's latest venture began way back in 2001 when he was staying at the Murdoch village and first made friends with veterinary student, Steve Joslyn (BSc/BVMS 2005). The two have remained friends over the years and a couple of years ago began discussing an idea that led to their current business venture – VetDB.

Steve was outlining all the problems that can occur with animal medical records such as lost vaccination documentation, issues with moving between veterinarians, and animals arriving for surgery with no medical history. As the subject matter expert, Steve saw a clear patient-data disconnect.

They came up with the ingenious idea of having medical records linked to the animal's microchip. So, wherever the animal goes, their medical history goes with them. The VetDB software saves precious time, eliminates human errors and lost documentation and ensures accurate, tamper proof records are locked to the chip.

The startup is gaining considerable traction in the WA veterinary world, as well as creating a buzz at national and international conferences.

Ross's journey to entrepreneurship began nearly 20 years ago when he first began doing sales work for the drinks giant, Red Bull.

“I started off working purely at the merchandise level, ensuring stores had stock, in the right location and at the right price. There were just two of us working full-time for the company in WA, so it was a steep learning curve but a great grounding in basic sales and marketing skills,” said Ross.

Ross loved the work, attending numerous events and often working weekends. In those early years Red Bull took anything but a traditional approach to marketing which brought Ross into new worlds and subcultures for which there was no map.

“I was working among graffiti artists, surfers, break-dancers and in clubs. You had to navigate underground worlds and respect anonymity and work outside of traditional marketing parameters. We weren't there like a traditional company to just throw money at an event and place branding everywhere. We wanted to become more integrated into the worlds we were entering. For example, Red Bull wouldn't have pull up banners/bunting, or just have branding as a presence. Every element needed to serve a functional purpose for the participants. It was about integration, not saturation,” he said.



Ross eventually moved to Sydney to take up a national sales role, before returning to Perth as Marketing Manager for WA/SA/NT. Although he loved the company, some reflection time during a surfing holiday in Hawaii clarified that his future would be elsewhere.

“In my last couple of years, I felt like I started to plateau, and my learning curve flattened out. I began to think... do I want to become the national marketing manager, or a head office bigwig? The answer was no, so I left,” he said.

Ross helped out with the family commercial fit out business and did a bit of marketing work for his sister Storm, a fashion designer. As he learnt more and more about the fashion world, he began to see gaps in the market and a possibility for his next venture.

“We realised there was no home or central point to access the products of all the independent and emerging fashion designers in Australia,” said Ross.

As a result, they created Clique Arcade, a start-up that provided a place for the labels to sell and an online space for people looking to seek out something different and unique. They created a platform for smaller labels to get noticed in a highly saturated online market.

Clique Arcade developed quickly, and they soon had over 200 designers signed up. However, building the brand and making it commercially sustainable proved very challenging and after a lot of soul searching they decided to close the venture.

“It was tricky to get the consumer to find us and we didn’t have control of three out of the four p’s – product, price, place (distribution) and promotion which presented enormous challenges,” he said.



This led on to the late-night discussion with old Murdoch buddy Steve Joslyn, an established Veterinary Radiologist who had moved back to Perth in 2015 from Illinois. Steve had a passion for informatics and new technologies such as blockchain and believed there was scope to explore how they could be utilised to improve the veterinary world. This was the foundation of VetDB.

“We began by focusing on vaccination records because that is the initial element common to all pet owners and pet owners traditionally have the most contact with veterinarians at the beginning of a pet’s life.

“People were filling out paperwork, faxing between organisations and it brought with it a lot of misplaced data. If records can’t be found or verified, the common practice is to re-do vaccinations which obviously isn’t good for the animal. It also results in a lot of wasted time for the vet such as conducting blood tests and increased time for distressed pets in waiting rooms.”

This led to the pioneering idea to connect data with a pet’s microchip.

“VetDB is the gateway if you like – we weren’t looking to own a mainframe with vast swathes of animal data on it, but to be the connector between the animal, vet and medical data. We have designed the company logo to reflect our unique position in the relationship.”

Steve and Ross have joined forces with Chief Technology Officer, Anton Tjea, who is helping them roll out the technology to new veterinary fields, create a software ecosystem and an app

for vets and ultimately, pet owners. However, they remain mindful that the business does not expand too rapidly or fall victim to shiny object syndrome – the lure of new features or opportunities that can force businesses to veer off course.



Pet Health Record

Name: Rover

DOB: 22/11/2018

Breed: Doberman X

Gender: Male

Vaccinations: CDV, CAP, CPV-2



(L-R) Anton Tjea, Ross Wyness, Steve Joslyn



“You have to first concentrate on the foundation element, the initial problem you are solving and build up credibility in that core area,” said Ross.

He also acknowledges that the entrepreneur lifestyle is not for all but suits his temperament and background.

“I’ve never really seen my jobs as work in the conventional sense – at Red Bull, Clique and now with VetDB. I was passionate about those previous roles and could operate with all the autonomy and uncertainty. I like the strategic side and I just love solving problems,” he added.

Ross feels that his Murdoch Commerce degree, helped him develop skills and interests that have served him well as an entrepreneur. This included the marketing units, but it also offered him an opportunity to develop an interest in technology.

His family background also gave him a good grounding. Ross’s father and father’s siblings all established and ran their own businesses.

“I grew up surrounded by people making their own mark and running their own operations. Even the role at Red Bull was anything but a 9-5 one, with frequent weekend work and travel to the various festivals and sporting events that the company was involved in.”

Experience at the fashion start up gave Ross some invaluable experience in the challenges of entrepreneurship. He has brought lessons learnt in funding rounds, public accessibility and company structures into his work building VetDB. Although in its early days, Ross feels its emergence also owes a debt to the character of veterinarians.

“The take up of our service is helped considerably by the fact that vets are simply lovely people. They don’t go into the business to make money – it’s a myth. They are altruistic people who care deeply about the animals and once they see we can help them improve their care they are onboard.”



VetDB is the gateway if you like – we weren’t looking to own a mainframe with vast swathes of animal data on it, but to be the connector between the animal, vet and medical data. We have designed the company logo to reflect our unique position in the relationship.

# WHO WAS THE **BIGGEST** INFLUENCE ON YOU AT MURDOCH?



A very big thank you to the alumni who responded to the above question earlier this year. Due to the number of responses we will be including them as a series in the alumni newsletter, Echoes. There are some very powerful stories outlining the ripples of change generated when undergraduates' lives are touched by the guiding hand of key Murdoch figures...



I had the drive and desire to succeed. All I needed was someone like Helen to believe in me and push me and advocate for me when I needed it the most.

Her name was **Dr Helen Tarry**. She was one of my ESL teachers when I arrived in Australia as a political refugee from El Salvador. Because of her, I was allowed to do an English course for academic purposes in my first year in Australia.

The course was called Migrant Academic English (MAE) and it was taught at TAFE in 1988. I had sat for the admission exam but the examiner for some reason decided that I would be better off doing pre-TEE even though I had already been to university in El Salvador.

I tried that but felt that pre-TEE was not for me, so I went to plead with the examiner to allow me to do the MAE. The examiner kept me waiting outside her office the whole morning. Helen was also interviewing prospective students and saw me there.

By the end of the morning, she approached me and asked me who I was waiting for. I explained I was seeing the examiner and the whole situation. She went to talk to the examiner and obtain permission to interview me then and there. I explained at the time I wanted to study computer sciences or something at university. I told her of my background studying law in El Salvador, and how I had learned some English in the first few months in Australia.

She said she would recommend admission into the MAE course, but warned me not to waste that opportunity by slacking off. I assured her that was not my intention. I started the course a couple of weeks thereafter and I learned a lot with Helen as my teacher.

Towards the end of the course, she encouraged me to apply for admission to a university. I applied to three universities, one of which was Murdoch. I applied to do Politics, Philosophy and Sociology and was hopeful that I would be accepted. Except that I was not. Murdoch and the other universities rejected my application on the grounds that I had not provided evidence that my English was proficient enough to study at the university level. I almost gave up and planned to go to TAFE the following year.

Shortly after receiving the rejection letter, Helen followed up by asking me if I had received any news. I told her I had been rejected but assured her I would go to TAFE the following year. She did not accept the rejection. She said she believed in me and that my English was good enough to go to university.

She took it upon herself to go to Murdoch Admissions and interceded for me. She was my English teacher and she was doing a PhD in Education at Murdoch too. She vouched for me and insisted that in her opinion as my teacher, I had the necessary English skills to study there. Next thing I knew, I was accepted in the second round of admissions.

Ecstatic, I went to enrol on 10th February 1989, exactly one year after I arrived in Australia, my new home. I completed my first degree in 1991. Sadly, by then, Helen had passed away due to bone cancer. My biggest regret was that I was unable to go and see her and thank her before she passed away.

I was invited to do an honours year. However, I was lured by the prospect of studying law at Murdoch. I applied and got accepted into a grilling Law Graduate Program in 1992. My graduation ceremony for my first degree was in 1992. In that very same ceremony, Murdoch University awarded Helen her PhD posthumously. I remember her two boys receiving the award. I finished my law degree in 1994 and eventually became admitted as a barrister and solicitor in Western Australia in March 1996. I have been practising in the areas of human rights, industrial law and discrimination law since 1997 to the present day.

Much later, I was fortunate to receive a social justice scholarship to do a Grad Cert in Australian Immigration Law in 2016 at Murdoch. I also participate as a guest lecturer for law students every now and then.

I had the drive and desire to succeed. All I needed was someone like Helen to believe in me and push me and advocate for me when I needed it the most. I would probably not be where I am now had it not been for her. I will forever be grateful for giving me the opportunity to study the English course I wanted and needed, and for actively interceding for me to get me enrolled at Murdoch. That's my story.

**Jeff Rosales-Castaneda**  
**BA Politics, Philosophy & Sociology**  
**1992, LLB 1995, Grad Cert Australian**  
**Migration Law & Practice 2016**



**Dr Anja Reid** was my tutor for a number of Master's units and a supervisor for my thesis. During my thesis, my father passed away and this shook the foundations of my resilience. Anja oriented me on a path towards completion, whilst still inspiring me to find new ways to look at my findings. The incredible aspect of her guidance was the manner in which she conducted her support. Rather than assume the platitudes that we associate with the passing of someone close, she chose a path to ensure that I did not subsume my grief with my work. She offered emotional support, but kept me focused.

She found a way to extend my thesis' completion date whilst encouraging greater depth in my research. Unequivocally, Anja's focus was to deny the natural reaction of flight in the face of inner turmoil that such a momentous occurrence catalyses. Without a doubt, her passion for robust and intellectual arguments kept me focused on my work and engaged with subjects that I was starting to consider immaterial in the light of my father dying.



Anja was the reason I finished my study.

When Anja and I caught up after the conclusions of my study I witnessed the sort of empathy that is hard to comprehend. When we talked about my grade, a D, she thought that I would take umbrage with the results. After all she did for me, she was worried that she had somehow failed me. Emotionally, I told her that I was categorically staggered by my result, that I was overwhelmed with the support she gave me, and that I was dumbfounded that she would think otherwise. I gave her wine as thanks, but that gratitude extends well beyond some off grapes. Anja's impact was meteoritic, world ending sort of stuff.

**Luke Stewart**  
**B Education B Arts 2013**  
**MA Asian Studies 2018**



David's passion for science and ability to tell an entertaining and yet insightful story has stuck with me ever since.



The person who influenced me most during my time at Murdoch was **Emeritus Professor David Macey**. David was an inspiring and dedicated teacher who showed me within my first few weeks of starting that uni study was much more than just rote learning, while at the same time teaching me discipline in writing that has stuck with me throughout my undergraduate studies and well into my career.

I remember meeting David Macey on enrolment day (in those days enrolment was done in person in the gym). My next encounter with David was as a lecturer teaching a foundation unit that at the time I think was titled "Life, the Universe and Everything." David's passion for science and ability to tell an entertaining and yet insightful story has stuck with me ever since. I remember him recalling an anecdote about 'scientific method' and a couple of researchers hypothesizing over whether a wild goanna they had cornered had teeth, and deciding to test their hypothesis with a very much hand to goanna mouth approach - with the somewhat predictable, and yet very amusing result!

David had a real knack for telling a story while making learning fun and relevant at the same time. My second encounter with David was a year or two later when I enrolled in a course titled Comparative Animal Physiology. I had chosen this course partly on the strength that it was run by David Macey. This course was memorable to me in two ways. Firstly, the course was incredibly hands-on with weekly lab practicals using real animals. I suspect that many lecturers would have shied away from running it simply because of the sheer volume of work required to get the necessary ethical approvals, let alone the logistics of arranging labs each week. The practical exposure to animals really drove home the theoretical concepts of animal physiology in a way that a less hands on approach could never have achieved.

Secondly, throughout the course David was a tough task master requiring a detailed and extensive lab report every week. I think it is fair to say that my writing skills at the start of that course were well below par and I might have even got less than 50 per cent for my first lab report or two. Having to write a detailed lab report each week was a baptism of fire for me in both in technical report writing and sheer volume of work. Nonetheless with David's support, by the end of the semester I had mastered lab report writing to the point where I was able to get full marks. Upon reflection, I think that while many of us in the class moaned about the sheer volume of work required of us, few of us realised the

incredible marking workload this created for David. The fact that he was able to mark each one with meaningful comments, week in week out, demonstrated his dedication to teaching.

While I know David would not be able to recall me from the thousands of students he has taught over the years, his enthusiasm for learning and the discipline he taught me in writing clear and concise reports under pressure has stayed with me throughout my career.

**Justin Sauvage**  
**BSc Biological Sciences 1999**  
**Grad Dip Education 2000**

I remember meeting **Peter Newman** in a house in Canberra in 1975, where he told me about the Environmental Science course he was setting up in the west. So, in January 1976 I put a year of Arts Law at ANU behind me to drive my ex-girlfriend's VW across the Nullarbor, with my Dad playing co-pilot. I started the year on the science side of the Quad, and was seduced by the West Coast tones of John Raser's 'Peace and Conflict' course. There I learned from Jim McLelland, Bomber Beazley, and Belinda Probert when they were fresh out of Post-Grad. Somehow I graduated, despite the hippie attraction of living in Freo. Hard to pick one from a great group of teachers, but I give my nod to Peter Newman - he got me to Murdoch, even though I wandered away from him to the other side of the Quad.

**Steve Wise**  
**B Peace and Conflict**

The person who influenced me the most was **Claire Macrae**, the course coordinator for the Master of Education as well as a teacher for International Education and Teaching with ICT. Before joining the Murdoch Dubai campus I was studying at another university in Dubai. The teacher there had treated me very badly and given a major blow to my self-confidence.

I joined Murdoch Dubai at an all-time low with fear in my heart and Claire not only motivated me and gave the confidence to continue my studies, but also helped me overcome my fear of studying again. With her amazing teaching style and faith in her students, she helped me not only overcome my fear, but also helped me explore abilities which I never knew I had. She has always inspired me to step out of my comfort zone to learn new things but also become a better teacher and serve as the agent of change.



Professor Down has been one of the most influential figures for many of us who continue the struggle for reclaiming our work as educators of inclusivity, equity and social justice.

She takes a personal interest in her students and provides guidance and support in every way she can. There are very few people who have been truly inspirational and I believe that Claire Macrae is one such person. She has always been available to support and guide whenever I needed help. Claire is the mentor I aspire to be for others.

**Asma Nisar**  
M Education 2018

The most influential person in my academic career is... **Professor Barry Down.** Caught up in our busy academic lives, it is sometimes too easy to forget why and how we reached the path we are on. I therefore want to pause a little while from my research to talk about a significant mentor in terms of my educational pathway.

Greek and Latin terms such as 'education', 'pedagogue' 'academia' and 'democracy' are often easily misrepresented or even forgotten, and I reflect that we must pinch ourselves and meditate on the meaning and relationships with these words before they are 'lost'. Sometimes we need real 'mentors' to remind us that these are powerful concepts that 'belong to the people' and the 'public good'.

As a young keen 20-year-old, I graduated as a secondary school teacher in the late 1970s in Western Australia in a time of relative autonomy. The training was both practical and theoretical and I had consequently many suitable 'tools' to take with me into the classroom. My enthusiasm to be in a democratic schooling system was met because I was fortunate to work at the then very new Willetton High School with teachers and leaders who had educational vision. They were heady times and Murdoch University was also in its heyday. We must also remember these were the Whitlam years! I continued teaching in various secondary schools throughout WA and continued to take those apprentice years of sound and social, democratic pedagogy with me.

Then my path altered somewhat in the late 1980s. I had taken some time out to travel, met my husband and then lived in Europe where our two children were born. During this time, I also studied remotely to upgrade my teaching qualifications. I avoided the two units that frightened me because they contained the terms 'theory' and 'policy'! How fortuitous then, when on returning to Western Australia to teach at a large, regional high school, I had a lecturer for those 'dreaded' completion units who has continued to be the most influential mentor in my educative life.

I had returned to my teaching role assuming my past and present experiences (both from 20 years teaching but also in living abroad and having children of my own) would make my mid-life career a

breeze! I was soon to experience otherwise. There had been many changes in the world of education and most seemed foreign to me. Policies were no longer one-page documents and the culture of competitive managerialism and marketing had infiltrated large public institutions. Barry Down was my lecturer and he welcomed our study group to question and theorise many of the changes that we were experiencing in our practice as public servants. I needed to 'sap up' more of this and therefore continued with my new academic life by completing a Masters in Education that investigated the impact of public policy on our teaching practice 'within' by focusing on school improvement.

I thus gained confidence in my own capacity to make the 'personal political' and the 'political personal' in my own workplace. I had also accumulated a taste for critical theory and ethnographic methodology that enabled me to connect and investigate, in fine intricate detail, the impact of public policy on education. With my renewed courage, I wanted more and continued the mentorship path and tutelage under the supervision of Professor Barry Down to complete my PhD at Murdoch University.

Since then I have been appointed as a research associate on an ARC linkage project titled '*Getting a job: Identity formation and schooling in communities at disadvantage*' (Down & Smyth, 2010) which culminated in the significant international publication, '*Rethinking School-To-Work Transitions in Australia: Young People Have Something to Say*' (Springer, 2018).

I now also continue to be an Honorary Research Associate with the School of Education at Murdoch and assistant to editors of a soon to be published, three volume Sage International Handbook of Critical Pedagogies. I love my new research job and would never have discovered this pathway if I had not had Professor Barry Down as my mentor.

To me, Professor Down is one of those unsung heroes who continues to struggle for social justice and democracy for all children. It is too easy to consider heroes as being those charismatic characters we see and watch on sports fields, in movies and on television, plus fighting fires and saving lives. There are however, those 'others' who are often not always recognised or celebrated for their continued perseverance, dedication and professionalism in mentoring and inspiring others in democratic education.

**Dr Janean Robinson**  
PhD Education





# DEATH CAFÉ

## ALIVE AT MURDOCH



(L-R) Dr Margaret Sealey and Dr Ruth Wei

How often do you think about death? While the subject might spring to mind occasionally, you probably don't spend your Tuesday afternoons sitting in a loft above a café discussing the ins and outs of what it means to die with a group of strangers. This however, was where I found myself when I joined attendees at Murdoch's very own death café.

For many people, what happens when we die is a subject better left untouched and undiscussed. For others, curiosity leads to a desire to lift the veil that covers the 'last taboo' and a university seems an ideal setting to explore the terrain of the unknown.

Since 2011 groups of such people have gathered at death cafes across the world to talk openly about death and dying.

The term death café may sound morbid, but the conversations are far from it. Robust and honest, yet still comfortable, the discussions cover all aspects of life's only guarantee.

Inspired by the work of Swiss Sociologist Bernard Crettaz and created in the UK by Jon Underwood, death cafes are a 'social franchise' focused on group discussion rather than grief support or counselling.

Wanting to establish an outlet for their students to discuss the subject outside of their studies, counselling lecturer Dr Margaret Sealey and nursing lecturer Dr Ruth Wei set up Murdoch's very own cafe.

Hosted once a month on the South Street campus, the cafes are an opportunity for anyone interested in death to discuss all topics related to dying including what happens after you die, palliative care and what happens to the people left behind.

Death remains a taboo topic in many cultures and Dr Sealey says the key to removing this taboo is to talk about it openly.

"We fear what we don't know, so the first step to demystifying something like death is to hear other people's perspectives," she said.



“

We fear what we don't know, so the first step to demystifying something like death is to hear other people's perspectives.

"By having these discussions about it in a normal, non-threatening environment it will hopefully educate people that death isn't always horrible or scary."

For those who have attended the cafes, like Murdoch student Kelsey, the forum has been a welcome place to discuss a topic usually shied away from.

"When the cafe first came up on my Facebook feed I was initially interested in going but apprehensive," she said.

"Death is something I think about quite often due to where I grew up, but I can't bring it up in conversation without feeling judged or like I'm bringing the conversation down."

For Bernadette, another attendee, the cafe offers an opportunity to find out more about how others feel about death.

"I'm very interested in how people think and talk about death," she said.

"I think the biggest thing I've learned from going to the cafes is that death is an important aspect of the living experience and others think so too."

For more information about these events please head to the Death Cafe – Murdoch Facebook page.



# VICE CHANCELLOR'S COLUMN

**As we all head off for a well-earned break, we can reflect on another notable year for Murdoch University.**

I was delighted to attend the annual Distinguished Alumni Awards at the RAC Arena in September. You will have seen in the feature on page 10 that the evening was a prestigious occasion, as well as a celebration of Murdoch's point of difference. The careers of our distinguished alumni are testament to our ability to unlock potential in students, who subsequently go on to build careers that shape the national and international landscape. One of this year's recipients has reached the highest level of State Government and two have changed Australia with their endeavours at the highest office in the land. Reflecting the diversity and quality of our disciplines, we also honoured two individuals who have reached the very top of their professions in advertising and broadcasting respectively. Every year I attend this event I am in awe of the superstars unearthed among our alumni, and it remains a very powerful illustration of how university can change lives.

Murdoch as this catalyst for change reveals itself in many diverse ways. For example, through supporting the seed of one simple idea. The feature interview with entrepreneur Jeremy Chetty in this issue documents how Murdoch is pioneering the nurturing of ideas through our Launchpad service. A project making giant strides with Jeremy at the helm, who 16 years ago shared an idea that has grown into an international service making a difference to the lives of thousands of students.

Perhaps the landmark Murdoch event of the last 12 months was the recent formal opening of the Australian National Phenome Centre. The ANPC is the most significant health research collaboration ever realised in WA. Led by Murdoch University and housed in the Harry Perkins Institute of Medical Research (South), the ANPC will revolutionise our understanding of the world's biggest health challenges including cancer, diabetes, obesity and dementia and provide a roadmap for people to live longer, healthier lives.

The Centre is an important symbol of our vision, with its precision, or personalised approach to human health, and capacity to improve the lives of millions. We interact with our environment constantly and we also make personal choices that impact on our own health. Phenomic medicine is so exciting because it considers all these factors to give us a complete picture of an individual's health and a pathway to prevention of disease or better, more effective treatment of existing illness. Murdoch is very proud to be leading a project which will help address some of the world's greatest health challenges.

With a keen eye to the future, we will continue to invest in new teaching, learning and research facilities. One such investment was the recent acquisition of a prime parcel of land within the Fiona Stanley Health Precinct. Known as the Gateway Project, this major new infrastructure will position Murdoch at the forefront of health and medical research and teaching. Encompassing research laboratories, allied health facilities and stage two of the ANPC, Gateway is currently securing the necessary planning approvals with construction scheduled to commence in 2021. The co-location of health disciplines and



research in aged care, Aboriginal wellbeing and allied health will provide great outcomes for both students and the broader community.

The University has recently launched a new teaching and engagement space in the Perth CBD. The new space, located on St George's Terrace in the heart of the city, will help facilitate stronger connections with industry, government and business and offer alternative learning opportunities. We will use our CBD presence to strengthen our relationships with key stakeholders and contribute to activation of the CBD through collaboration and learning.

For this venture, Murdoch has partnered with Spacecubed, a creator of world-class co-working spaces and a company created by Murdoch alumnus Brodie McCulloch. The space features seminar, teaching and modern learning areas, hot desks and offices that will allow staff, students, alumni industry and business to meet and engage in an open and innovative way.

Our decision to establish a dynamic presence in the city comes at an important time for the future development of Perth. Just last month, State and Federal Government Ministers discussed the idea of establishing a university campus to provide economic stimulus in the heart of our city, supporting small business and local jobs. Murdoch University looks forward to being part of this important initiative and I believe we can make a significant contribution.

These exciting projects, partnerships and infrastructure developments will be the cornerstone as Murdoch enters its next chapter and continues to position itself as a global university. One rapidly evolving and harnessing all its powerful resources to increase innovation, pioneer research, and foster the leaders of tomorrow as they embark on solving global challenges and the priorities of the generations that follow.

Wishing you all the best for the season and new year.

**Professor Eeva Leinonen**  
Vice Chancellor

## HELICOPTER VIEW

Were you at Murdoch when Hawke was in The Lodge? Was your academic building even built then? Take a moment to peruse this shot which shows just how much your university has changed over the last 31 years. This aerial view of the Murdoch campus was taken during the 1988 Open Day by University Photographer Brian Richards.

This image is part of the History of Murdoch University Collection. The collection is comprised of images taken by various university photographers between 1974 and 2006 and is currently being curated by the Special Collections team in the Geoffrey Bolton Library.

– Image courtesy of Murdoch University Special Collections

# 1988





**Murdoch**  
UNIVERSITY

Kashmirra  
Bachelor of Law  
Bachelor of Business

**Commuting to  
your next internship.**

**This is free thinking.**

*Free your think*