

Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Dr. David Phelps

You are listening to The Freedom Blueprint Podcast with your host, Dr. David Phelps. You'll get straightforward advice to transform your practice into a self-sufficient cash machine, compound your net worth, and multiply your cash flow stream with hassle-free real estate. More at freedomfounders.com.

David Phelps:

Okay, everyone, this is Dr. David Phelps of the Freedom Founders Mastermind community and the Dentist Freedom Blueprint podcast. Today, I've got a young doctor who is really making strides out there in the space. I've had a chance to connect with him online and really listen to a little bit more about what he's doing, where he's coming from in his life and really, who I think he's expanding the discussion and the discourse about everything in dentistry, but in particular, about mindset.

We're gonna get into some of that today, so my guest today is Dr. Robert Toth, Robert, how are you doing sir?

Robert Toth:

I'm doing well, thanks for having me on, Dr. Phelps. The pleasure's all mine. Your podcast is super valuable. When I hear success stories from some of your guests, I started to believe big things were possible for me too, so if these guys can do it, so can I kinda attitude.

But also, you guys are so far ahead of me, it's definitely humbling, but I just love ... I feel like I get to surround myself with people with positive attitudes just by listening to you. It's tough to find people in our own lives that really have that drive that I like to be around, so when I get to be around people like you or people online, it's great.

David Phelps:

Well, you know, you make a really great point in that there should always be people in our lives or within our circle, our sphere of influence, I believe, that should push us, right? It's not a matter, I think, of comparing ourselves. Social media's really bad for comparison and people feeling bad about inadequacy. That's not what this is about at all.

We're talking about the positive aspects of just being around people that maybe think differently than we do. And we're all on that path. Most of us are, we should be. We'll talk more about some of the things that I think you've already figured out early in life, but same thing for me. It's like I've always been a path to improve and evolve and there's always people that are beyond me.

Now, does it mean I wanna be exactly like them or have my life exactly like they do? No, it doesn't mean that necessarily, it just means what can I learn from them? How can I shift my thinking, whatever my thinking is today and we all have a certain set of beliefs, do we not? We all grew up with a family, it could be a great family, could be an okay family, maybe a dysfunctional family, whatever it is and we went through school and we got certain constructs there.

And as we go along, we start to develop a mindset about the way we think life is from a perspective from which we've grown up and it's not necessarily true, is it? It's just like how do we break those mindsets, how do we challenge ourselves to think, not to use a cliché, but outside the box, right, is what people talk about.

Robert Toth:

Yeah, so I wanna bring something maybe more actionable, but for me, it's been well, meditation's been a

big thing. I started that a couple of years ago. I think the real underlying thing for me is discipline. Unfortunately, nowadays, I don't know if it's our generation or not, I hate to throw it under the bus, but there's not a lot of discipline.

We just expect things to come easy. You see that all the time, I just opened up a bank account with a local bank and it wasn't Bank of America, I couldn't do the online ... I was easily frustrated, because I couldn't do my online banking and I couldn't deposit checks and stuff remotely and I'm just so easily flustered now.

So, we just expect things to be easier, there's not a lot of discipline. It's like that instant gratification whether it's through like you mentioned, social media is horrible. All the studies have shown that it's causing a lot of depression, especially in the younger kids in school, high schoolers and stuff, less communication between people, less connection, less relationships both friendly and sexual have plummeted.

And then, depression rates are up too, so it's staying away from that, delete your social media accounts. That's number one. Get some discipline, meditation's a great way to just force yourself to sit down and do nothing and think about nothing. You kind have to tell your body, "This is what we're gonna do and shut up and don't move kind of a thing."

Yeah, I don't know, there's a lot of different things. You could take it as far as your diet, working out everyday, but yeah, that's the biggest thing for me I've found, biggest shift the last two years has just been buckling down and being disciplined.

David Phelps:

Well, it sounds to me like you are what I would call a contrarian, meaning that you don't follow the majority, that you've been able to develop some discipline, some behaviors, some discerning critical thinking that all generations I think are missing today and so, I'm a little bit curious.

Let's go a little bit back into your background and just whatever you feel like is relevant on your pathway to where you are today and I don't even know how many years you've been in practice. Maybe start there and let's go backwards. How many years have you been out of school and actually in practice? Because you graduated from Case Western, right?

Robert Toth:

Correct, yeah I graduated in 2016, so I've been practicing coming up on three years now. My fiance also graduated from Case, she was a couple years younger. Her and I are opening a practice now. We made an offer on a building, obviously it needs to be ... it's not a practice yet. It's actually a gym, but it needs to be renovated, so we're kinda in the process of doing that.

Obviously, even though I'm doing the blog and podcast thing the past probably year, year solid, podcast has been with Brian Gallagher and I, we've been doing that for about six months and yeah, I'm doing a lot of reading, trying to read at least a book a week, maybe a little bit more than that. I noticed you have a lot of books there behind you, so I guess you're no stranger ...

David Phelps:

I'm no stranger to books, no. So, when was your path defined for you in terms of, "I'm gonna go into dentistry?" Where was that?

Robert Toth:

Yeah, my dad's a dentist. I like to work with my hands. I'm artistic, I like to think so at least. But, you know, I was thinking about this actually before you called and the truth is we can psychoanalyze the psychology of why am I driven, why am I not? But I think what it boils down to is I see a mountain and I just wanna climb it. I see a hill, I wanna run up it.

It's as simple as that. I'm not sure if there are childhood experiences to examine. Maybe there are. My dad's a hard worker, maybe we can, I don't know, make sense of it, but at the end of the day, I just when I see something, I wanna climb it, I wanna build. But like Justin Shorts that I know you had him on your podcast recently, I think he had a quote in Titans of Dentistry where he said, "I just can't turn it off and being comfortable with the fact that I can't turn it off has made my life more comfortable," if that makes any sense.

David Phelps:

Yeah, well no, I totally get that. The mind just doesn't turn off. I sometimes have to try using some discipline to get focused in the moment. Sometimes, that can be a problem for us, because we have to also learn to enjoy the moments and sometimes, that's been a problem for me in the past. I'll just be very transparent.

Being driven sometimes too far, so again, those things come into play. Why the Dangerous Dentist blog and podcast? Where did that come from? What was the inspiration there?

Robert Toth:

Well, I listen to a lot of podcasts as I'm sure you do and I read some blogs and I wanted to have a blog or a podcast that was more about just kinda the stuff I was doing. I mean, yeah, clinical dentistry is interesting, but

I'm not an expert in that. I mean, I enjoy it, but like I said, I'm not an expert in that area. I'm really not an expert in anything to be honest, but the blog and the podcast really focuses around what I'm into right now.

Whether it's diet, lifestyle, mindset, I mean, I'm very much into mindset. I've read a lot of books on that and I can give some recommendations as well. To me, that's been my latest things and like you, I'm sure it's constantly evolving. I'm constantly driving for something different.

Whatever I'm drawn to is where I go. I don't hold back and like you said, as far as being a contrarian, yeah, that's pretty accurate. What I've found is what the masses are doing is probably wrong in everything. Are they watching TV? All right, you probably shouldn't be. Are they on their phones? You probably shouldn't be. Are they eating a whatever diet? It's probably backwards. We don't need to go into politics, but you see a lot of stuff that's just sideways and upside down.

David Phelps: You ever heard of a guy named Earl Nightingale?

Robert Toth: Rings a bell, but no, would you tell me more?

David Phelps: Yeah, so that might be interesting for you to do. When I

was growing up, when I was probably around your age, thereabouts, high school, college my dad was good for feeding me what he thought was relevant. Of course, back then, we didn't have Bluetooth, we had these things called cassette tapes. You've probably heard of them,

these little things that you plug in and they play.

I'm being a little bit facetious ...

Robert Toth: Oh, yeah.

David Phelps:

No, I know you know what they are. But I remember we were, my dad and I, we were going on a camping trip and so we were in the car together, which is cool to hang out with your dad in the car and just spend that father-son time and I don't know, he was always out in secret too, so we had these tapes from Earl Nightingale, so you can probably still get them with Nightingale Conant, but Earl Nightingale was a thought leader back in the '50s all right.

So, he had this program, he had a number of programs, but one was called "Leading the Field," so anyway, I won't tell the story in there. That's not really pertinent to our conversation, but one of the things he said, which I ... he was one of the first ones I heard say, "When in doubt, don't follow the majority, because the majority's usually wrong."

Now, I don't know if he's the initiator of that quote, but it's been passed on from generation to generation. I think as you already stated, it's very, very true. When in doubt, don't follow the majority and the better thing to do, I think, then beyond that is then find people, find your tribe, right? Jim Rone, who says you become the average of the five people you spend the most time with.

Well, I think that's absolutely true and if you're not happy, satisfied in where you are in life, well maybe look at upping your average and that takes some work, does it not? It means getting uncomfortable, it means putting yourself in a position around other people, maybe it's a group, it's a community, it's a Mastermind, it's a study group, I don't care what it is. But you're gonna put yourself in a place where it's not so comfortable, because

you're gonna have to start upping your game, the way you think and it's actually a good thing to do, but maybe at the time, it just doesn't feel so safe, right?

Robert Toth:

Right, yeah, I mean, if you want to have the life that other people don't have, you have to do things that you're gonna get judged. And I'm sure when you left dentistry, were there not people that were ... who knows why they're being judgmental, maybe they're jealous, maybe deep down that's what they really want. I have a theory that a lot of, maybe even the majority of dentists, deep down if they could retire, would, but everyone's always telling them, "I love it, I love it, I love it."

And yeah, parts of it are great. I'm not gonna deny that, but I think that deep down, a lot of us would love to do what you have done and not everyone's willing to admit it to themselves or has the balls, I guess for lack of a better word, to actually follow through with it and deal with the judgment and the backlash that comes back from society telling you you're not allowed to quit your job.

David Phelps:

Can I just tell you, Robert, that you are so much like me, except ... the exception is when I was your age, I didn't find a safe place to even say what we're talking about today. I just kept it all inside and even though I just like you and anybody else, I worked really hard in dentistry and I became a pretty darn good, confident dentist and had a good practice, I could ... well, you graduate in physics, I mean my gosh, a degree in physics, that means you're a guy that perseveres and you've got capabilities.

But I was talking to somebody, another friend of mine today, and we had the same kind of conversation. We're talking about the fact that even though we go down a

certain framework in life and we go for the higher education, nothing wrong with that at all, but we get into a construct that says, "This is the way you're molded to be," and I don't think it's wrong to say, "Maybe my passion, my unique ability is maybe not in working clinically, microscopically four days or so out of the week."

Maybe I like a little bit of that, but maybe I don't like the whole thing as much. And when do we give ourselves permission to actually identify with what's really inside of us? And giving ourselves permission is number one, number two, how can we actually take what's inside of us once we with some kind of clarity determine what that is and expand upon that to allow us to evolve, iterate into another place in life, which can still be within, in this case, the realm of dentistry.

Don't have to leave it, but you don't have to be what everybody else says you need to be. Yes, you need a lot of clinical dentistry, you need to take all these courses and just become the epitome of the best clinical diagnostician, you don't have to be that. There's so many ways, I think, to serve in life and use what you've got. Arthur Ashe, again, I'm taking you back in time to probably people you've never heard of, but Arthur Ashe was a great tennis player, well maybe you do.

And he said, "You know, start with what you've got. Start with what you've got and build on that. Don't try to be something else. Take what you've got, the assets you've got in front of you, and then use that to build onto your next and your next and don't get ram rodded into some tunnel."

So, I just have to say, you are expressing, I think how I felt, but I didn't wanna admit to everybody. And yeah, circumstances in my life pushed me into a place where I had to come up with a different path, which today, I have to tell you, it's actually the best of the best. But had I not been forced to make some changes and give myself permission to make those changes, I might not be as happy as I am today. I can say I'm really, really happy.

And that doesn't mean life's perfect, doesn't mean life doesn't have challenges. It just means I love the place I'm at. So, I love the way you think and I hope this message goes out to everyone who's listening who says, "You know, don't feel like you're getting ram rodded into something you're not." Find that place, but it doesn't mean you have to throw away all the work you've done, right?

Robert Toth: Yeah.

David Phelps:

So, mindset's sorta where you're at, so let's talk a little bit about what that means, because again, I don't think that was a word in my vocabulary at your age. I don't know when it became a word in my vocabulary, but again, it was something kinda like words like "leadership" and "culture" and "vision" and "purpose" and "mission" all that stuff was out there, but it never really resonated with me until later in life.

So, why is that something that you've really become interested in mindset? How has that become something that's become important to you? Because I agree with you. I agree with you, but early on in your career, you're already looking at that, so why?

Robert Toth:

Well, I guess you just look at who's successful, who's doing objectively best, whether it's in dentistry, in our class. A lot of the most successful guys weren't at the top of the class. Obviously, IQ plays a part, but it's really obvious that IQ is not the underlying factor. Kinda going back to what we were saying before as far as going through those iterations, going through the changes, I noticed in Titans of Dentistry, a lot of those guys, they're working three days a week.

It seems to be a pattern. I don't know, not everyone disclosed how often they work, but I noticed I kept seeing three.

David Phelps: `

Yeah.

Robert Toth:

So, it was always less and one thing I know about myself is I guess with mindset, I don't know how I stumbled upon it, but once I came across it, I just really latched on and I realized that all the limitations that I had were just in my own mind as far as what was possible.

And once I started believing that I could do something bigger and have something more, then I found myself pursuing those goals. Yeah, I mean, it all starts with the belief that you can. It's like with dental school, no one got into dental school without believing that they could get accepted first and no one started a practice without believing that they could operate it.

And you could take that as high as you want. You could take that to the edges of the universe if you wanna be, but the point is if you don't believe that you can achieve it, then you're never really gonna take those first steps.

David Phelps: Yeah, exactly. Some of the articles that are popular on

the Dangerous Dentist blog, one of them was "Fear and Regret". You care to talk a little bit about ... what does

that mean to you? Fear and regret.

Robert Toth: Well, I guess I would say my biggest fear is basically not

living up to my potential. It's not the expectations of other people, but it's what am I capable of? And obviously, we don't have that much time to achieve it. And that actually

reminded me of what we were talking about earlier, because I know you yourself are a bit of an introvert. I know I am. I shouldn't speak for you, but I think I heard

you say it or read it somewhere.

David Phelps: I admit to it, yes.

Robert Toth: Okay. That being said and getting back to how many days

a week are you working? Are you working at the office at all? One of my most popular articles, actually, was being

an introvert as a dentist.

David Phelps: Yes.

Robert Toth: I guess, I don't know if it's just blog readers that happen to

be introverts or if that's just the type of person that's the profile of a dentist, but in either case, what I came to the

conclusion was, at the end of the day, is if you're introverted, how do you get through your day as a

dentist?

Well, you just have to work less. That was it. I went through all this information and at the end of the day, I was like, "You just can't" ... I mean sure, you can train the mind to be around people for longer periods of time and as you know, a lot of times for me, after a couple of days,

I'm just wiped out physically, I don't wanna talk to anybody, even my loved ones and it's nothing personal.

David Phelps: Right.

Robert Toth: But it's just I want to be by myself and that was the only

conclusion I could come to.

David Phelps: I think that's good, because you're right. I say often that I

like people, but I can't be around lots of people for long periods of time, because it drains me. It drains me, I've gotta go back and recharge so that to your point ... in fact, when I was growing up and I was still at home like in high school, my mom who was a great mother and she cared about us kids and she wanted to know what was going on in our lives and I feel badly now, but she would ask me questions about what was going on in my life and it's like I didn't wanna talk about it, because everything was good.

I didn't wanna talk, because it just took too much energy. I'd rather go back and like I said, think and recharge and read and I like to think a lot, so being around a lot of people is not necessarily a good thing. If it's the right kind of people, yeah, I can be stimulated for a while, right? If it's my tribe, my people, yes, I will ... but even then, I gotta have a break and back off a little bit, so I totally get what you mean by being an introvert.

So, I like what you're ... I like your conclusion is like, yeah work less. That's good.

Robert Toth: You just have to work less and it's funny, because I'm

sure there's extroverted people who listen to this too and they just won't get it. And you can explain it all day long, but being physically drained, they're like, "Oh, come on,

you're fine. Get over it." It's so hard to explain and extroverts don't get it and I'm sure that they would admit that they don't get it either.

They can't understand. But getting back to some maybe more actionable things for mindset, one thing that I like to do is what's called self talk and checking in constantly. And I'm a real competitive guy, so I like to kinda set challenges for myself and one of those would be as far as checking in and self talk, so self talk is basically how am I feeling right now? I just saw this patient that frustrated me, how can I ... what emotions are going through, are you feeling tight in your stomach?

Are your shoulders tight? What's your breathing look like? Are you slowing your breathing down? So checking in, seeing how you feel, and then, you can actually control, you can learn to control those emotions and in the beginning, you're just flying off the handle bars. To me, that's a loss. So, when I'm playing this game with myself, like all right, can I stay cool no matter how stressful this situation is?

And you get better and better at it and it's actually kinda fun to see how laid ... because people come in and believe it or not, some people, they wanna get you.

David Phelps: Yeah.

Robert Toth: Subconsciously or not, they may not even know that

they're doing it, but they may just be having a bad day and misery loves company and they're actually trying to bring you down and when you can be unfazed in that, it's a pretty powerful feeling just being able to control your

breathing, walking slowly and confidently and just not being phased at all, it's a fun thing that anyone can do.

David Phelps: Why did you use the term "The Dangerous Dentist"? I

meant to ask you that early on. I was like I gotta get to

that. So, tell me about the Dangerous Dentist.

Robert Toth: I just wanted something that was eye catching and would

be easy to remember, probably more of a marketing thing. But also, because I didn't wanna talk about stuff that was politically correct. I just wanted to talk about

whatever the hell I wanted to talk about.

David Phelps: That's good.

Robert Toth: Yeah, so for example, one of the latest things for me is it

goes back to discipline, but I'm just not really drinking much anymore. Everyone in my family enjoys drinking, my brother, my fiance, everybody. So, it's been a real challenge just being around those people all the time and

I still, every now and then, I'll have a few drinks.

It's not like I didn't go totally cold turkey, but basically, I posted an article, I used to be able to post my articles on some of the big Facebook groups. There's a couple big ones that have like 35,000 dentists in it, but one of the articles was like why you shouldn't drink alcohol.

Basically, you act like a fool, you say stuff you regret, you

hurt people's feelings, it's bad for your health.

There are times I think when drinking can actually be an advantage to you, especially if you're meeting with somebody or you're using it as a way of networking, it can definitely be advantageous, because you know, the world that we live in, that's just the world that we live in. People

are gonna ... you're not gonna necessarily change a social construct, but for me personally, that was always ... I don't know, it seemed to cause a lot of controversy and there's a lot of other articles, I guess, that just I don't know, they just don't ... I'm not trying to appease everybody, I guess.

David Phelps:

Well, that's it. It goes back to what we talked about earlier. It's like one of my mantras is we have to own our own agenda, because if we don't own our own agenda in life, then other people will. Someone else will substitute theirs. So, if we're trying to appease to many people, any people, that doesn't work, so you have to I think decide what you're convicted about in life, what you believe in and stick to it.

Now, that doesn't mean you're cold to being challenged about your beliefs, but yes, I think it's okay. Because when you're out there speaking what you believe to be the truth or trying to provide great information, there's always gonna be people who are going to, for various reasons and you already talked about it, it could be jealousy, it could be just whatever. They're not gonna like it, so never stray from being who you are, because you'll always have the people who are magnetically attracted to your message who will always be raving fans.

You can't have raving fans, you can't have a cause or a mission in life if you don't have values and beliefs that you stick to, so it just comes with the territory. I never worry about that stuff. In fact, I think the more times you have people not only who applaud you and say, "Wow, that's a message I wish someone else had said to me earlier in

life," or "I agree with you, I've never been able to say that," you'll have those people.

And then, you'll also have the people who will be negative, right. And you just ... when that happens, you have to actually say, "Well, you know what, I struck a chord and that's good. I struck a chord and you don't wanna be out there milk toast, because milk toast doesn't get anywhere anyway, right?"

So, I applaud you. I applaud you for being who you are and not apologizing for that, because what you're doing is not out specifically trying to offend people, take it as a negative, you're just putting a message out there that you believe to be true and people either can subscribe to it, or they don't have to. It's okay. It's a free world, right?

Robert Toth:

Exactly. Yeah, I mean we all have ideas and beliefs and at the end of the day, we're all just selling those beliefs to other people and I don't know why it is, but we want other people ... it could be a form of insecurity, but we want other people to have the same beliefs as us and actually, when I'm really trying to push a belief on somebody, if I find myself ... I mean I'm just putting these ideas out there most of the time, but if I find myself going around and trying to get confirmation from people like, "Oh yeah, this is a good idea. This is what I'm doing, what do you think?"

It usually just means I'm really insecure about it. So, if you ever find yourself like, "Oh, does this person agree with me? Can I get this person to agree?" Guess what I'm doing here. If I was real confident in what I was doing, I wouldn't tell anybody, because why would I care what they thought anyway?

That's one thing that I've sort of evolved over the past couple years is that at the end of the day, I don't really care what people think or ... I honestly don't. And there's definitely a shift that takes place where you're not trying to convince other people of your lifestyle or your beliefs, but you can share those online, but also, you display those in your actions and that tends to be the most influential way to persuade people anyway is through action.

David Phelps:

It is and I think the other thing too, which you're doing a blog and a podcast and I think when we are forced, not forced by outside constraints, but forced, because we wanna get our message out to either articulate it verbally like you and I are doing right now, or to put it in a blog or written form, it helps us to clarify our thinking.

At least it does for me. I'm a bigger writer than I am a speaker, because when I have to get in my head and get it on paper, then I go through the concept of thinking it through and it actually helps me clarify and occasionally, I'll figure out something that maybe I wasn't totally clear on, right, because I go through the process of doing it. So, I think there's that benefit too to actually making yourself put it out there, again, whether people align with you or not, that's not really the point, as you said.

I think it's just good to do that. The world needs more people that are willing to, I think, push back on the dictates, the constructs that society has laid out there that we've just passed on generation to generation to generation whether it's financial or personal or business, it's just good to question. It's good to question everything and then come up with your own values and beliefs and I think that's what you're doing.

And I applaud you for that. Again, like I said, early in my life, I think I was questioning, but I was afraid to actually express those questions and so, I tended to follow the majority much longer in my life until it got to a point like, "Well, this isn't really working," so I think what you're doing's a great thing and it's great to have younger dentists that are earlier on in their career that are, I think in your case, you're already seeing that at such an early age.

And it means, to me, it means that you're going to be "successful" in your own definition of that no matter what happens in life. And I just wanna number one, thank you for coming on today, thank you for putting yourself out there in the world, in space, in blogging, in podcasting, and I wanna wish you and your fiance all the success and partnership in business and marriage and family that hopefully you'll have.

Robert Toth:

Thanks again for having me. And you're absolutely right. I know we're wrapping it up here, but like you said, I mean you yourself are getting a lot of value out of just writing these ideas down and I definitely get that same value. And you probably noticed here, a lot of disjointed thoughts, a lot of ranting and going on and when Brian and I do our podcast, he sorta reels me back in, so we have a great back and forth there.

But that's what it is, getting those words down on paper. I think ... and then being able to put them together in a concise way that makes sense. And that's really where I think I tend to shine a little bit better as well. But yeah, just wrapping it up, thanks again for having me, it's a great

opportunity to talk to a successful guy like yourself. I love that you do real estate as well, I'm just getting into that.

I have a couple single-family homes that I just got this year, so you'll probably hear more from me as I have more income to invest. But anyway, it's very humbling, thank you again and I love being coached, so thanks for taking the time to coach me.

David Phelps: Well, Dr. Robert Toth, it's been a real pleasure. The

Dangerous Dentist blog and podcast. I'll be definitely

following you, all right?

Robert Toth: All right, thank you.

David Phelps: Take care.

Take the next step at freedomfounders.com. You've been listening to another episode of the Freedom Blueprint Podcast with Dr. David Phelps. The place to be to create your freedom lifestyle with more time off, security, and peace of mind. More at Freedomfounders.com.