

The Bottom Line

I'm going to spend the next few months connecting with you, my community—podcast and social media channel subscribers, followers, friends, and colleagues—focusing on TRUST. I'll share nuggets I've learned, suggest prompts, ask and answer questions, and respond to others' channels on trust.

Everywhere and Nowhere

Unsurprisingly, the word of the year for me is TRUST. When has trust not been paramount in history? Never, I think. More than 120 of my 600+ episodes have included trust, with 25-30 primarily on the topic.

My mission is 'Learn with people on the journey toward best health.' Learning is built on trust. Embarking on a journey requires trust. Best health is an uncertain destination. Comfort with uncertainty entails trust. Decision-making is easier with trust.

Model of Trust

Researchers break TRUST down into interpersonal trust—do I trust you? —and organizational trust—do I trust this hospital?—and then way up into societal trust—do I trust the healthcare system itself? There's a 1995 model by Mayer, Davis, and Schoorman that keeps showing up in the research. They say trust boils down to three things: Can you do what you say you can do? Do you actually care about me? And do your actions match your words? Ability, benevolence, integrity. Simple framework, massive implications. There's a 2007 update that looks back at what has happened in trust research since 1995. I especially bonded with sections on affect and emotion in trust, on distrust separate from trust, and on cross-cultural tensions.

Trust in Self

Missing from these articles is trust in myself. Do I trust my ability to manage my health and own my life? What a can of worms—self-knowledge. Understanding my risk tolerance, my culture, my history. I may be a trusting soul at heart, but I've been burned. I'm curious, but a skeptic. It affects trust. But I can control myself more than anything.

Comfort with uncertainty

I'm daunted by the stormy sea of trust. Gosh, I'm scared of water and a low-confidence swimmer. The sea of trust is massive, too much for me to get my brain around. I need a cove to focus on - boundaries. You know me. I can spin anywhere. No, Danny, focus.

I want to explore the trust we need to make health decisions. Think about it. Someone hands me my lab results—that's data. How does that become information I trust enough to act on? My doctor says I need surgery—what makes me believe her? I'm looking at my health data, trying to figure out next steps—what combination of data quality, sensible interpretation, and relationship strength tips me toward yes or no?

I keep coming back to this intersection: a trustworthy self, trustworthy data, and a trustworthy person or source interpreting it for or with me. That's the slice I want to dig into over the next few months. Not trust in general—trust in the specific moment when someone with a health concern must decide what



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to do next. What data matters? All of it? Some? Which part? What would you do with it? What approaches, tools, and methods do you use to clean it up and trust it?

Calculated Risks

When exploring, I need to feel safe. I'll take calculated risks, but I won't set sail without a team, provisions, a destination, and a sextant (or other guiding tools).

What's next

So, what's next? I'll start with a Book Club format, well, not books. Too long. I don't have the time - perhaps a story, a quote, a chart, a comment made, or an article. I'm going to partner with my buds, Laura Marcial, Amy Price, and Christine Von Raesfeld, on Substack. Maybe include LinkedIn and YouTube. Social media will have short or shorter content - Two to 15 minutes. Of course, my podcast will be included - combining shorter stuff. We'll see how it goes. We'll figure out some kind of rhythm—maybe we'll even end up with something publishable. Who knows? That would be fun. Spread the wealth.

I'm depending on you to join me. Onward!



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