

Corey Andrew Powell (00:03):

I'm joined today by Joan Fallon, founder and CEO of Curemark, a biopharmaceutical company that focuses on novel therapies to treat serious illnesses. Joan is also a visionary scientist who has dedicated her life's work to children's health and wellbeing worldwide. Joan, welcome to Motivational Mondays.

Dr. Joan Fallon (00:20):

Thank you so much for having me.

Corey Andrew Powell (00:22):

Oh, it's my pleasure. These are great conversations to have, especially when they are tied to wellbeing, wellness, healthcare, any of those topics. But before we begin, I have to thank you personally, because my family, at some point or another, I've been impacted by the things you work with. Like autism, Parkinson's disease. My extended family. I've had some issues with that too. So I just wanna just say thank you for the work you're doing in those fields.

Dr. Joan Fallon (00:48):

I appreciate that. It's kind of what allows me to keep going.

Corey Andrew Powell (00:50):

Yeah, well, it makes a difference because, you know, we don't know a lot about those areas, which is part of what your platform is about is that these are areas where there's minimal treatments available in many cases. Right? We don't know as much about these areas as we do other areas of disease, correct?

Dr. Joan Fallon (01:09):

Yes. They've been overlooked for a very long time. And I think because they look a little different in each person and they have a lot to do with the mind that, uh, the neurological system that we do sort of have put them in the background in terms of treatment.

Corey Andrew Powell (01:26):

Hmm. Yeah. Things that are like less visible too, to the eye. Exactly. I want to dive in and also discuss that among your other accomplishments, you were also an author with an upcoming book called "Goodbye status quo, reimagining the landscape of innovation." And of course you have also secured 300 patents <laugh> so if anyone knows about innovation, you are among them. For sure. But I wanna know if you can tell us about your book in general and why you wrote it, what's it about?

Dr. Joan Fallon (01:56):

So I think because I have been an entrepreneur now for some time and tackling a very big problem, people are always asking me for advice, for mentorship, et cetera. And I think it's important for people to understand that if you're going to change something, you have to change in the process. Hmm. And that's not something you could actually teach in an hour or discuss in a short period of time. But giving examples of that, I think, and, and key aspects of how that change comes about is really important. And so I thought it was important to put it all together, uh, in one place.

Corey Andrew Powell (02:41):

Yes. Because you have spoken often about where you can set out to change the world, it's you, who has to change. And I do wonder though, if you could expand a little bit more on that. I mean, is it about having a clear vision of what you think is this change you want to bring? Or what exactly do you mean by, you know, you have to change first before you can change the world.

Dr. Joan Fallon (03:05):

So I think entrepreneurship is really a journey and on journeys, there are detours sometimes, and you have to be willing to take those detours or to change course if you run into a storm and very often the vision that an entrepreneur has also has a defined roadmap. And while you can hold that vision, that roadmap not, may not be the way you need to get there. Mm-hmm <affirmative>. And I, I think I once likened it to practicing corporate yoga, you have to be able to bend and not break.

Corey Andrew Powell (03:43):

Mm. You know, it's funny you say that too, because one common denominator, well, there's a few, but one common denominator that I do find when I speak to successful leaders, CEOs, uh, or just anyone who's in their field successfully, it is this moment they had where they had to exercise adaptability.

Dr. Joan Fallon (04:04):

Absolutely. That's true of organisms out there in the world. And it's true of us as human beings, you have to be able to adapt and you also have to be able to take some risk. Learning how to manage risk is a really important part of that, of that journey. If you've got a vision and you have to detour and you're afraid to take risk, then you've got a whole other thing going on. Yeah. And you'll run into roadblocks.

Corey Andrew Powell (04:27):

Yeah. And it's funny, cuz risk is one of those things that people look at it as a negative. But I mean, on one hand there are no great rewards that will come from you not taking risks. Right. I mean, it's, <laugh> I mean, how else will you ever succeed if you don't, you know, if you don't do that. And another thing is you, you speak about, uh, and this is another common thread I found with successful people, which I love because it means I can keep making mistakes, uh, and be okay with if I just learn from them. But the idea that mistakes are actually teaching tools. They're not bad things necessarily. So explain more your thoughts on mistakes being used as a learning tool.

Dr. Joan Fallon (05:08):

So I think that, you know, the classic way to look at that is to talk about design thinking where you come up with an idea, you vet the idea as being something that could actually solve a problem. Cause sometimes what you think is a problem really isn't the problem. And then when you go to solve the problem, you have to iterate different ways of solving that problem. Maybe it's building a automobile that self drives, or maybe it's something else, but you have to be able to look at the failures. Well, that crash, that doesn't work. Mm-hmm <affirmative> like, those are part of finding out what will work. Yeah. And so failure is a big part of that.

Corey Andrew Powell (05:52):

Yeah. It's almost like you're allowed to do some almost like free market research that you get. You don't have to pay for it. You just get this data back and it says to you, well, that didn't work. So <laugh>, we know what not to do the next time you talk a lot to more organizational leadership. But very often I find that when speakers apply organizational leadership ideas or ideology to how a company can function, a lot of those same accountabilities translate into our everyday individual lives. And one of them is where you mentioned in order for a company to grow scale and be successful. Uh, they must be ready to grow scale and be successful. And I think that can be applied to individuals when they're ready to sort of be their best selves. But do you see the correlation between that? And if so, how does that work as an individual for individual people?

Dr. Joan Fallon (06:43):

So I think it's, it's the same thing. I think that it's just applied differently. So if you are growing and changing, you have to be willing to do that, right? It has to be something that comes from inside. No one can make that happen. They might be able to show you a way that you could do something, but it has to come internally. There has to be a self-driven piece of wanting to change and grow. And when things change, that's where the leadership piece comes in. So that's true, whether you're in an organization or whether it's true for yourself, but you have to be, you have to come from inside.

Corey Andrew Powell (07:27):

Mmm. Yes. There is such a strong correlation between companies and people, because I know from experience, a brand I worked with years ago, you know, I saw some current trends that was my job to see what was happening. And I say, you know, there's an audience you guys should be speaking to. It's very specific. You should target campaigns for LGTBQ. Then you should do black target marketing for African Americans because these people are using your products, but you're not speaking to them specifically. And I was told at the time, well, we don't do that. I said, okay, but other brands are doing it. You better start doing it. And slowly but surely they did begin to lose their market share in this industry because they were unwilling to change. You know, it's almost like if you don't transform, you die - that old expression. And so I totally see that correlation with people.

Dr. Joan Fallon (08:15):

Absolutely. It's absolutely true, people, especially as you get older, their narrative becomes part of their truth and they follow that narrative. But that narrative may have absolutely no applicability in today's world. Yeah. Yeah. Like I had a friend who,

uh, who has a daughter that was looking for a job and she said she can't send out that resume until I look at it. I said, why <laugh> she says, well, I have to make sure it's okay. And I said to my friend, how do you know it's okay? Have you ever hired anyone of this, this in this time period? Well, no. I said, well then how would you know it's okay? Right? I hire people all the time, but I would never presume to think I would know what her resume should have in it. Cause I don't hire people in that area. Mm-hmm <affirmative> but because she's the mother and she was the one who knows all these different things. She was the one who felt that, that, that was the gate keeping mm-hmm <affirmative>. But that was an old narrative. Right? Yep. Yep. And it's true with companies that I always talk about Sears, Sears Roebuck which people don't even know of.

Corey Andrew Powell (09:25):

I mean I grew up with it, but yes.

Dr. Joan Fallon (09:26):

I know <laugh> but they were originally a catalog company. They were mail order. And then when that became something that wasn't okay. It became a retail store, but when things went back online again, now they couldn't make that change.

Corey Andrew Powell (09:41):

Mm. They weren't prepared for that. Yeah. Wow. Yeah. Sears and I, that was like, you know, my Saturday weekend trips with my family was, you know, Sears was like a field trip, you know, <laugh>, it was the ovens and microwaves and oh, it was a field day, but you're right. Um, they quickly, they just really fell apart. And I think there's only maybe one left if that in the entire country that's still even in existence.

Dr. Joan Fallon (10:05):

Yeah. There's very few of them. Right. So it's, it's you have to be able to change. And I also find myself because of my age taking a step back, and saying, wait a minute, how would a young person think about this? Mm-hmm <affirmative> I think this, but is that what everyone else is thinking? Probably not. So now I've gotta find out where everyone is, what's going on. Yeah.

Corey Andrew Powell (10:30):

But see, even having that level of awareness to know, well maybe I may be thinking about things in, in a different way, because it's generational, like even having that insight and to, to do that, people aren't even usually willing to even have that sort of level of self-reflection. I think maybe they feel vulnerable. Like it means that maybe they're wrong, but it's really again about adaptability and you bring up the resume thing with your friend's daughter. I had, uh, an interview here with a woman she's a millennial and she's got this great platform for millennials. Her name is Madeline Mann. And her whole platform is HR for the millennial generation because she used to be an assistant and she saw all the things they did wrong, why they didn't get the job and she felt bad for them. So she began to reach out to these people behind the scenes and go, here's where you messed up in your interview. And she began to help so many people. But one of the main things she speaks about is the fact that these old HR processes are still in place because the gatekeepers have antiquated thinking. And they're trying to adapt to these kids who are like 25 and 30, who are not even trying to adapt to that old, you know, they want, you have to come forward to meet them.

Dr. Joan Fallon (11:41):

Right. Exactly. Yeah, that's right. And you need to know who, I mean, that's the workforce of the future mm-hmm <affirmative> so you do have to understand what that's about and how they think and what they do. And, you know, I had my nephew in here who I gave him... He was intern during the summer and I gave him a project to do and the task was very tedious. It involved looking at things at another, uh, database. And he's like, aunt Joan, I'm just gonna write a program to access that database <laugh>. And therefore I can run hundreds of these things at a time mm-hmm <affirmative> And I'm like, are you sure there's no firewall? I said, no, it's gonna be fine. And that's what he did. He sat down, he wrote a program, he accessed that database and he was able to get all the information in very quick time, which would've taken him months to do. Yeah. They're doing very short period of time. And they also have that level of thinking as well.

Corey Andrew Powell (12:37):

Mm-hmm <affirmative> well, look, and, and at the end of the day, that's why he's thinking, because it only made you more efficient because he was doing the project for you. So yeah. Use your millennial tricks kid and make it happen. Right. <laugh> well, when it comes to though, currently being in the space that you are in, no matter what age we are today, another big part of what you discuss is arriving in your most authentic self. One of your comments was about, um, you know,

we present a, a veneer very often, and I thought about how many times we're in situations, whether it be social, trying to apply for jobs, whatever the environment we're trying to present, what we think the per us to be, I think, as opposed to being ourselves. So speak a little bit about the power of being your most authentic self.

Dr. Joan Fallon (13:23):

So I think that, you know, you could apply it in many, many areas, but I think if you morph into something that you're not, it's going to impede your getting to your vision. So if your vision comes from your authentic self, if you have to put veneer on to get there, you're not gonna get there. Because the through line is not the same. And so sometimes, and I know it's sometimes it's gender specific, sometimes it's age specific sort of dressing up and thinking that you have to have a suit on to go to a business meeting. Mm-hmm <affirmative>, you know, mm-hmm, <affirmative>, I always get dressed for a business meeting, but it's not in a suit. And because that's not who I am. I am a different person. I hug people. <laugh> and people in businesses aren't used to that. I am who I am. And people always know that when I tell them something it's authentic, it's real. And, it comes from that same. They can always know where the well is. Mm-hmm <affirmative>. And sometimes if you don't know where the well is with people, then you don't know sort of what you're getting. So I think that the throughput comes from that authentic place. And if you put up a veneer, it's like putting up a wall between you and your own vision.

Corey Andrew Powell (14:40):

Yeah. I love that. Because even when it comes to our physical appearance, I relate to that because as a kid, my mother always would, uh, cut my hair off. Like every two weeks go, get a haircut. And it wasn't until I got a little older, I just, well, what happens if I don't get a haircut every two weeks <laugh>, you know, and then like this wild hair started growing out that I had no relationship with. But I was like, what is that? You know? And so now, like you have no idea cuz you haven't seen it at full mast, but you know, it could be pretty intense. And um, it ended up being something that it gave me a bit of a, I don't know, a badge of honor, to walk in with this hair. Right. I go out someplace. Right. But it was something that typically for me culturally, my mom would not feel comfortable with tied to social implications with African American assimilation. I mean, it's had had all this other stuff attached to it. It's just my hair, how it grows outta my head. And so once I kind of wrapped my head around that, no pun intended, it changes everything. I show up in my authentic self, externally and <laugh> from there, it's like, well, if you don't like that, then I already know, then we're not gonna do well. Right. Because it's immediate.

Dr. Joan Fallon (15:47):

Right. That's exactly right. And trying to conform to someone else's norm, especially, you know, in this kind of cultural piece and the hair piece, you have to be who you are. Yep. Right. And that's your whole persona is who you are. Mm-hmm <affirmative>. Yeah. And I, and I think that's really important.

Corey Andrew Powell (16:06):

Yeah. So I love that. Thank you for sharing that. That's a really big one because we have over one and a half million members in our society here, and so that's such a diverse community. So, I definitely want that message to resonate with. Um, you know, we believe in diversity and that's, that's really, a major pillar for us. All people, everyone.

Dr. Joan Fallon (16:26):

Yes. And diversity brings the best talent to the table. Yes. Diversity is not about checking off a box mm-hmm <affirmative> diversity is about finding the best talent and bringing it together. Yes. That is what makes a successful organization.

Corey Andrew Powell (16:45):

You know, it's so funny because I literally, as one of my points to talk to you about, and I'm gonna read it verbatim. So you see how funny it is. I was going to ask you about your opinion that we hear so much about diversity, but it can sometimes feel like it's a box <laugh> being checked by a company. Yes. Just to do the right thing, quote unquote, without understanding that they really need to bring everyone to the table.

Dr. Joan Fallon (17:08):

Well, when people say to me, I can't find diverse talent. I can't find diverse people to hire, I'm like really? Where are you looking? Right?<laugh> because you have to find the people, you can't go to the same room and expect there to be diverse people in that one room. Right. That's not where they are. They're everywhere. You have to go and find it and bring it back. And too many organizations check off boxes. That's not at all what we need. We need a whole different way of doing things. Corey Andrew Powell (17:38):

Yeah. Because that would mean putting in the work to actually find the diverse talent, which then shows that your brand or your company is actually serious about it. Right? Because you're putting in the work to find it.

Dr. Joan Fallon (17:51):

And then once you find the diverse talent, there has to be inclusion. Hmm. Because just having those people in a space also doesn't mean that they have inclusivity.

Corey Andrew Powell (18:03):

Hmm. Now let's talk about that because that's a really specific difference. And I love that because we tend to lump those together in these cute little phrases. Oh D,E and I, and diversity and inclusion, but you're right. diversity means you're acknowledging that everyone should have a presence, but having the presence doesn't mean you've asked them their opinion. You've asked for their input. You've asked them to be involved in projects, right? So there's a distinct difference.

Dr. Joan Fallon (18:29):

If you have diverse people around the table, you need to get their opinions, their ideas, their thoughts as part of the collective. Otherwise just having them around the table, doesn't help you as an organization. The reason why you have diversity and inclusion is to propel the organization forward and to give it its best vision. But if you have diversity without inclusion, that's not helpful.

Corey Andrew Powell (18:59):

Thank you for listening to Motivational Mondays presented by the national society of leadership and success and available wherever you listen to your favorite podcast. I'm Corey, Andrew Powell, and you again here next week.