

43. Turning FOMO into JOMO with  
Dr. Arpita Gupta DePalma



**FULL EPISODE TRANSCRIPT**

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**Arpita:** Hello, everybody. I hope you guys had a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday and we are back at it after having a little bit of time with our families and to regroup. How are you doing, Michael Hersh?

**Michael:** I'm doing really well. Wonderful holiday and excited to be back here recording with you. And, you know, when I was looking at the, the title of this week's podcast, it's pretty intriguing. Because I think it's an abbreviation that I I wasn't super familiar with, and I love that we're going to get a chance to talk about it today.

**Arpita:** Awesome. Yes. It's a fun one. Shifting our FOMO to JOMO is what we titled it. Right? And so a lot of people don't know what that stands for means I don't know to be gender specific if it's a more male versus female thing. But for those of you who don't know, FOMO is the fear of missing out, right? So it's when we are worried or concerned about what is going to happen because we are not present somewhere. We're not getting to participate. And so I have caught myself feeling a lot of FOMO, especially around the holidays, is what I noticed when all the opportunities and the events are coming up for getting together with friends and family and loved ones and even people that we really don't want to be around sometimes. So that's FOMO and I'm going to talk to you a little bit today about how we're going to shift our FOMO to JOMO, which is the joy of missing out, right? So when we're like, okay, I am opting not to go there and it's a hell yes. And I am so glad I'm doing that that way. Right. So that's what we're going to talk about today a little bit. So Michael Hersh tell us about your FOMO. Do you have any FOMO for the holidays?

**Michael:** Yeah, I mean, I think FOMO comes up a lot. You know, we, we just talked a little bit about scarcity and I would say scarcity and fear of missing out comes up so often in all the things, right? If I don't do this thing, if I don't you know, record all the podcast episodes, if I don't put myself out there at every opportunity, accept every opportunity that comes my way, not, not just with the coaching, but also in my work work, right? If I don't see all the patients, if I don't attend all the meetings, then there might be something really important there that I'm missing out on or that I'm going to miss an opportunity to kind of show up and be involved in, quote unquote, be in the room. And, you know, as you and I are both aware, you can't be at all the things. And so there's always this feeling of, oh my goodness, like, what am I missing by not being there? So I love this idea of switching it to being really excited about not being there. And I can't wait to talk about it with you.

**Arpita:** Totally. I think for me, a lot of this started when I had realized is that I had a lot of this FOMO around not being a part of different groups for different activities, right? And my fear was really unfounded, but it was around the possibility of if I don't show up this time, if I don't go to this party, if I don't attend this event, like with my cultural group friends, if I don't do X, Y, and Z, then I'm not going to be included anymore. The next time we do something, they're not going to think of me. And so even for the holidays, I think this is a great time to talk about this because I think a lot of people have this fear of if I don't go to this party I'm not going to be seen and that's the talk of the town this this year. Or hey, if I don't do this activity at the school, they're not going to think about me next time when they need help or volunteers. And I only have a certain number of years left with my kids to volunteer at school. It shows up in so many different ways.

And so what I want to talk about is first recognizing why we have the FOMO. Like when you find yourself feeling, Oh crap, I need to do this, but I'm doing it out of obligation. I'm, I'm fearful of what's going to happen if I don't go there, but I really don't want to go, right? That's the part that we have to kind of check in with ourselves and clue into first, because we, a lot of times, don't even realize how we're doing so many things out

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of obligation. I would say the biggest thing for me is, is starting to, and maybe this is a factor of age, but starting to recognize as I got older that I really wanted to build authentic connections and friendships with people. And for me, that looked like having smaller, Interactions like one or two people at lunch, maybe, or maybe a one off here and there. But these holiday parties that had 50 people trying to chat at you at once in one room, mind you and then multiply that by the multiple events that are happening each night. Right? So when you find yourself hopping from one party to the next, to the next, why are we doing that? Right. We're fearful of what we're going to miss out on who's going to be at that event over there that I don't get to talk to. Part of this is starting to really become true to yourself of what is going to bring you joy. What authentically do you want for yourself and how can you uphold that? And that's where some of that shifting happened for me personally, where I realized, you know, I do enjoy some of these events, these holiday parties, and some of them, it's just kind of. Jumping around just to show face. And I don't know if I really want to do that anymore. Do you have any examples? I know you talked about the job and like, how you're showing up for coaching and the events. And I can totally relate to that as well. Anything specific to the holidays for you that comes up?

**Michael:** Yeah, I mean, I think that there are always so many kind of events. So my wife will look at the calendar of all the things, there's, you know, going to the botanic gardens because they have their, like, lights and the trees and there are the cookie bakes and the family events and there's always so many things that need to happen. It also coincides with my busiest time of year at work. So you know, for anybody that's in a procedurally based specialty, you know that insurance deductibles are very important to patients. And when they have met their deductible for the year, and this happens year over year, right? I've been doing this will be my 15th holiday season in my current job and it happens every year that there is this race to get everything done in the month of December. And so trying to figure out how do I attend all of the events that, you know, the Polar Express and, and all of the fun things that, as you were mentioning, we only have a limited amount of time with our kids where they are interested in doing all of these fun things. So how do I make sure that I am present as a husband and a dad while, you know, committing to all of the obligations that I have during my busiest season at work?

And yes, certainly a lot of FOMO comes up for me. Also just, you know, I, when I am on weekend call, it is for the entire weekend, 5 p. m. Friday to 8 a. m Monday morning. And so what are the activities that I'm missing out on over the weekend? There's all these fun holiday things that are, that are happening and I am at work. And so kind of just that, that underlying feeling of all of the stuff that I can't do. And if I'm not aware of it, if I'm not completely cognizant that it's happening, I show up at work, cranky, frustrated, unhappy, wishing I was someplace else. And it's, I think it's a really important awareness to have because that is not how I want to be showing up and in any aspect of my life, not I don't want to be showing up at work like that. And I don't want to be showing up at home like that.

**Arpita:** Totally. And I think that's why we shift from how or we want to talk about how we shift from this fear of missing out to accepting the joy of missing out, right? I think a lot of us have this inner kind of awareness that I really don't want to do this X, Y, and Z event or this activity, whatever it is, but I'm doing it because of out of obligation to another X, Y, and Z. Right? And so if we can start to say, hey, let me maybe be a little bit more intentional with this. Let me figure out what authentically really feels good to me, how I want to spend my time. Then we can be more deliberate about what we're choosing to put on our calendars and what we're choosing to find joy in.

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So, you know, when they ask you, Hey, can you bake a thousand cookies for school for the holiday event coming up in a couple of weeks? And you're like, yeah, no, I really don't want to do that. You can find a different way to be involved in the school, right? And the activities with your kids. What we're ultimately trying to get there is that connection, right? With maybe some with the other parents, but mostly so that we can be there and be enjoying that time with our kids. There's so many different ways you can do that. So you get to determine what is truly bringing you joy minus the expense and chaos of creating a thousand cookies, right?

Another example is just as I mentioned these holiday parties, right? Pick one or two events or maybe create your own event that really brings you joy, right? What do I ultimately want to get out of this? What is my goal when I go to these events and these parties? Do I just want to have fun and chit chat with a couple of people and have some meaningless banter back and forth and then never see them again for until the next holiday party next year? Or am I really in to build some connections and friendships with people to maintain a relationship with them over time? I was watching an episode last night on the blue zones. I don't know if you're familiar with the blue zones. These are areas across the world where people have the highest longevity in their life. There's the highest number of centenarians living there and there are different components that they're finding that contribute to their reason for being able to live so long and not just live so long and be decrepit, these are active, happy individuals who are healthy. And one of the biggest components was building the connections with people having their community of a small group of individuals who they count on, who they communicate with, who they built relationships with. And so that's what I've noticed for myself personally, is having the joy of finding friendships that are meaningful, right? I'm not as invested and interested in spending time having minor chit chat with people. I want to build these relationships and connections with individuals who I'm going to be in touch with until I grow into my hundreds, hopefully. Right? That's, that's part of it, right? So the, that joy of missing out, I'm okay with not going to 15 parties, but rather choosing one or two where my people are, where I love to be around them.

**Michael:** Yeah. And for those of you that, that want to see some of the medical literature around community and how it can impact health and longevity, the Roseto effect is something that has been written up in the medical literature and it is, it exactly ties the link between community and health and longevity, important stuff here. And so, you know, I think that that's a really essential thing that you're highlighting, but I want to ask you, right? So you, you've talked about finding joy in the things that you really want to be doing. But how do you actually shift from FOMO to JOMO, right? Like, so it's like, maybe there is a party that you do really want to go to, right? That's, you know, the, the one that you know, a lot of your friends are going to and you really want to go. But your son has a school event and you don't want to miss out on that. And so you do have the fear of missing out on the party, but you want to be at your son's event. So how do you shift your, your thoughts around the party from, you know, not wanting to miss out on it to being happy that you're missing out on it because you're going to your son's event? What does that process look like for you?

**Arpita:** Yeah, I don't know if it would necessarily be that I'm happy about missing the other event, but it's just having the acceptance because I am in choice here. I am choosing to do this. So between my son's activity and the party, I know that I want to be here. I'm going to love being there. I'm going to have joy being there, and I'm choosing to not do the other event in order to do that, right? It's just being logical about it for me. It's a, it's a series of mathematical equations in a sense, right? You get to pick your discomfort. So am I going to be more uncomfortable if I go to the party and miss my son's activity, or am I going to be more uncomfortable if I go to his activity and miss the party? What matters most to me? And I think that's the trap that most people fall into

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is that they're not being true to what matters most to them. Rather, they're worried about what other people are going to think or how it's going to impact them down the road. How do I want to be in this moment and this point in time, what is going to be best for me? How do I be true to that? And so a lot of this is just the thought work of figuring that out for yourself and then being intentional with what you put on your calendar, you know? And, and that, I mean, maybe it's for me, it seems very simple and simplistic, but I can get how it gets very convoluted and complicated for people because they're not able to make a decision, right? Part of it also is not staying in that period of indecisiveness, because when we are in that space, we're consuming so much energy. So if you can analyze the opportunities that you have in front of you, figure out what are the pros and cons for each one, which one feels best for me in that moment, make a decision and stick with it. It's very simple if we can kind of get in a system where we don't waste a lot of time spinning.

**Michael:** I think what you're highlighting here is the key to joy of missing out is empowering yourself into the choices that you're making, right? So the joy comes from the fact that you're making your choice that aligns with kind of how you really want to be showing up. It doesn't mean that you're happy necessarily about missing the other thing, but the joy comes from the fact that you get to be present where you actually want and need to be right? So yes, there are always going to be opportunities that we don't get to partake in and you don't necessarily get to be happy about missing those opportunities, but you get to have the joy in knowing that your decisions are aligned with who you want to be. And I think that that is really important here is to focus on your choice. When you sit in the disempowerment of why is this happening to me? How come I can't do this thing? I never get to do the things that I want to do. That is where so much of the frustration and again, the disempowerment comes from. But when you can sit in choice, recognizing that you are showing up exactly where you need to be, that's where you can elicit the joy from.

**Arpita:** Totally. And I think another great example is this year, I think I've said it so many times, you know, that my, my son is a senior and my primary goal and my priority was to spend as much time with him before we're empty nesters. Right? And so for me, that looked like me turning down speaking events, me turning down opportunities to go to some of these conferences and meetings with people that I love and adore. And I'm kind of sad about that, right? I have that fear of missing out of what at all are they going to discuss? What am I going to miss out on in terms of new opportunities rising? And I get to have the joy of seeing my son play at every single game, and I get to have the joy of really being present for him 100%. And a lot of times we don't recognize how much it means to those individuals for us to be there. I will have more conferences, I will have more opportunities come, and in this phase of my life, this is exactly where I want to be, this is exactly where I need to be, and I'm okay with that. Doesn't mean that I'm not a little bit sad here about missing out, but I can carry that with me while being super joyful with what I am doing.

**Michael:** Yeah. And that goes back to, you know, we have talked a lot about feelings and how important it is to embrace the feelings that don't feel so great. The negative feelings, the sadness, the disappointment, in order to get the things that you really do want. Right? So focusing on the joy of getting to be present with your son in his activities during his senior year. You know, yes, there's some sadness from the other things, but in order to feel the joy with your son, you got to allow for the sadness of missing out on the other things, because if you show up to the events with your son sad that you're not at the other thing, you just miss out on everything.

**Arpita:** A hundred percent. Yes. Drove that point home for sure. I, and I, you know, it's, having your ability to just stay true to yourself and sticking with it. And not really caring about what other people think, not really

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caring about what impact it might have down the road. It's all going to work out the way it's supposed to work out. And the last thing you want to do is miss out on everything because you're stewing in the what ifs of had you done the other thing instead.

Well, amazing. The last little piece I'm going to put out there is this year, guys, when you're planning your events and even spending time with family, family members, you know, if there's people that you are not crazy about being around, you get to build your boundaries. And if you have questions about boundaries, go back to that episode and listen to that. Right? But we get to build our boundaries for what we do want to allow into our lives and what we don't want to allow into our lives. And that pertains to everything we can, we can use these little nuggets of wisdom that we've offered in so many different areas and how we kind of flow in and out of each situation using them is key for creating the life that we want to be living deliberately with.

**Michael:** Absolutely. And we will link to the episode that we did on boundaries in the show notes if anybody's interested in checking that out. It was a great episode with Dr. Sasha Shillcut. And you know, and maybe even circling back and talking a little bit about those relationships in the future and what it's like to show up at events when maybe some relationships are strained and it's the holidays and what that might look like for all of us. That might be a good idea in the future.

**Arpita:** Yes. I can't wait. That will be great.

**Michael:** Well, thanks everybody for tuning into this episode of Doctors Living Deliberately. So happy to have you here with us and looking forward to seeing you next time. Take care everyone.

**Arpita:** Have a wonderful couple of weeks coming up. Bye.

**Michael:** Bye.