



Can Do MS Interviews Jack Osbourne Episode 7

Rachael Protas: Hello and welcome to the Can Do MS Podcast. My name is Rachael and I'm the marketing coordinator for Can Do MS. We're excited for today's podcast where we have the chance to chat with Jack Osbourne, creator of the "You Don't Know Jack" about MS web series. Jack is 33 years old and has been living with MS for six years. He'll be discussing his MS diagnosis and how he manages his health and wellness while living with MS. Thanks so much for joining us Jack.

Jack Osbourne: Hey, thanks for having me.

Rachael: I've watched a good chunk of the You Don't Know Jack about MS webisodes, including the most recent one, which is your 5-year Flashback. But to get started, I think it'd be great for people who haven't watched your webisodes. To learn a bit more about your MS journey. With that in mind could you tell us a little bit about your life before MS? What did it look like? Why was it important to you?

Jack: Sure. So, life before MS was I think I was a pretty carefree when it came to anything health-related. I had that like mid-twenties attitude of like, I'm perfectly healthy. I always took pride that I was never on any kind of medication. I've been sober like see I've been sober like nine years at that point right up and when I got diagnosed so like I felt like I got a handle a lot of things. I was relatively healthy. I just, my wife at the time was pregnant with our first born and things were, I didn't really have to-- I mean, my biggest concern was like, "Oh crap. I'm about to be a dad."

Jack: Then three weeks after my daughter Pearl was born. I developed optic neuritis on I didn't know it was what it was at the time but I went to the eye doctor. The doctor I think knew what it was, but he wasn't a neurologist so he couldn't kind of tell me. So, he sent me on to a hospital to have an MRI and then, one thing leads to the next and spinal tap more blood tests and all that and, I got the the news that you've got MS. And then I come to find out that about 18 months before the optic neuritis that I've had a flare-up thinking. It was like a pinched nerve in my back. My legs went numb for like three months because we only have dumb legs and losing the vision, and then with the MRI, I had like seven lesions, it all little old all signs signs pointed towards MS.

Rachael: Once you got that official diagnosis from your neurologist, how did MS change your life not just for you but for your loved ones as well?

Jack: Yes, it was a really it was a really tough thing to have to kind of process and digest at the moment because I was trying, I was old happy about being a new father, starting this new chapter in my life and it was accompanied by something that I really wasn't anticipating or expecting. And so it took a bit for me to really wrap my head around kind of what had landed on me. I think I did the typical like, I mean it was probably a couple weeks where I was kind of down and dump about it, but I kind of quickly push past it.

Jack: I really want to kind of dwell in the negative very much just because I knew that didn't that wouldn't serve me. So once I kind of got educated as to really, the landscape of the disease, what kind of treatments were out there and started working with my neurologist to get on a treatment plan. Like what worked for me as quick as possible. Things started feeling like I could handle this and then obviously the more, the more I got educated the moment family got educated to it and it was a really, it was a really kind of interesting transitional period of my life.

Rachael: One of the things that struck me about your 5-year webisode was how you've managed to just surround yourself with people who support you. Can do MS educates people on a team approach to managing all the different aspects of MS. How did you manage to build such an amazing team of friends, family, co-workers and medical professionals that completely support you?

Jack: I honestly think I'm just really blessed and lucky person. I mean, I relies so much on my friendships and my loved ones for support. It's just, I'm a very social person and so I get a lot of really, I get a lot of energy from being around the people I love and care about. And it was, just through, having worked in entertainment for long enough, you kind of, you build up, you can go one of two ways. You can either get really draided and really Kind of resistant to making friendships? Or you can you know build the scoot the skill set to really determine who your friends are and who they aren't.

Rachael: Yes.

Jack: And I think I was kind of more of the laughter and I was, my friends are so important to me and loved ones because it's everything. Someone, there's a saying, "You are who you hang out with". And I like to think that my friends kind of bring it my support around me and people I work with. They bring out the best in me.

Rachael: What advice would you give to people who don't feel like they have that support? We talked to a lot of people who don't feel like they have anyone they can rely on or don't know how to communicate their partner that they need that support. Are there any steps or strategies that work for you that you can share?

Jack: It's like, I don't respond too. Well for like a gentle end. I respond really well to like, I kind of subscribe to the tough love a little bit and one of my best friends in the world. He was a combat wounded veteran and got retired out of the military and he was one of the first people I called I was like "Dude, I can't see I can't do all this thing. I don't know what's going to happen", and he just kind of told me like, "Listen dude, you got to figure it out. You got to find a way to keep walking. You've got a kid now. You've got all, you got all these responsibilities. Don't let it win. You can find a way to make this work with you." And that was the kind of advice I needed.

Jack: My other friend I called and I was like literally the day I got out of the hospital and I was still like in shell shock. I called him and I was like "John like I'm in a bad way dude. I got a mess", and he just looked at me and he went, "So?". I was like, "Really?". He's like, "Can you breathe?". He's like, "Are you still sober?" and I sad, "Yeah". He's like you still got used to, "Have you lost anything?". I'm like, "Not yet". He's like, "Cool, you're good today."

Jack: That's kind of my, those I surround myself with and I know some people will hear that and be like, oh my God, that's so harsh. But like, that's the kind of stuff I need now. If someone called me out of the blue and it's like, I get a lot of messages on Instagram and social media with people asking for advice. I'm suddenly not that harsh. But, I kind of tell people like in a softer way like, number 1, It's going to be okay and 2, you just got to find your new baseline.

Rachael: And what we're kind of on the topic of support in the 5-year episode, you said one of your favorite episodes was going to support group and I wanted to ask you about that because there's just so much stigma in our culture when it comes to admitting that you need help, especially for men. So, why was it such a powerful moment for you?

Jack: Man, it's tough because I still, I still don't necessarily like to ask for help. It's, you're born in England. I lived there till I was 12 and I do contain a lot of the British sensibilities of like stiff upper lip, but I know that, I can only do so much and to me, I had to rely on, my family for support and they had to kind of understand that it's all good and well for them to be upset. I was like I don't need your, I don't need your sympathy. I don't need your pant leg kind of modeling. I just need your support and encouragement.

Jack: This is the support group for me was so, every time I've ever gone to walk. I got, I came away feeling a lot of hope, that was there individuals. Because when you go to a support group, you'll see everyone in all stages of MS. And I got so much hope and comfort in the people who are in a similar to a kind of newly diagnosed with kind of, how in the relapsing-remitting kind of category. And then the individuals who are the primary Progressive a secondary Progressive. Who have had to completely shift their life because of the debilitate, debilitating components of this disease and and just that, the folks in that group. It's just, it's inspiring because I'm sure they have that bad days. But in those moments that I shared with them in the group, they always found them very inspiring because of their outlook and they seemed very positive no matter what.

Rachael: Definitely. That's great. One of my favorite webisodes, it's one of the earlier ones. It's called I think it's called Movement and Subsidence. I just really liked that moment when you went to the yoga class and you talked about how you were used to doing more high impact exercise and it really think yoga was exercise but this experience really helped you look at exercise a different way. And it can do a mess with something that we really try to encourage people just like you might not be able to do something the same way, but you can do it a different way. So what are some other big learning moments you had during this five-year campaign? And this journey of living with MS? Whether it's with wanting to look at exercise, nutrition or motivation a different way?

Jack: I think it comes to down to kind of how I like have had to re-evaluate, re-evaluate things. Like there's always this extra question added on to any anything I do, either work related issue or stuff with travel or exercise or doing an endurance event or whatever. It's like, I want to do this. Here's why I think it's good, obviously. And then how, all right, is this going to affect my MS? And if it does, can I still accomplish it and if so, how?

So it's just kind of a bunch of questions I always ask myself and just the evaluation process.

Jack: I've been really fortunate to where my treatment plan has worked wonders for me and I've been able to pretty much do everything I've ever wanted. I mean physically I have very few limitations now and I got back into doing a kind of high endurance exercise and although I know that's not everyone not everyone suffering with MS has the ability to do that. I just look at it like well I can right now so I'm going to, and I still do yoga like once a week and I kind of mix it up because I think a body in motion will stay in motion and stimulating the nervous system. Any way, you can have great benefits for MS. It's just my opinion.

Rachael: So let's pretend that you're someone who's just been recently diagnosed with MS. And like you've just stumbled across your, "You Don't Know Jack". What 3 webisodes do you wish you would have had access to at that moment of your diagnosis?

Jack: I think, I love the kind of more sciency, nutty kind of content. My favorite episode we've ever done was that when we went in when we did the cartoon webisode where we went inside someone living with MS. That to me just to see what MS does to the body would have been a huge benefit to me because I read all this stuff and I like that I don't understand what like a myelin sheath is and I don't know what any of this means. That webisode I think the history about MS which is I think we released that earlier this year like a Webisode 17, I think, 18 and then what else? Probably, maybe movement you sustenance because, exercise is such an important thing to me. That was like one of my first questions I even ask the doctor like, "Can I still do that?"

Rachael: In that episode, you also talk a lot about eating right? You even took your friend to a health food store. How did diet change after your diagnosis?

Jack: I've always had struggled with diet and my weight kind of yo-yos. And so, I think in the last kind of 18 months, I've really been on a good kind of uptick with it. And for me, it's like I just had to figure out what foods they me feel good. And what doesn't it? I try to stay away from bread, mainly and dairy. That those are kind of the two things I really limited and I kind of doing this thing now where I'm doing that like night time, the fasting so, I won't eat until like 1:00 o'clock in the day. I probably drink way too much coffee, though. But I like that stuff. It makes me happy.

Rachael: What about your latest episode?

Jack: The 19th one that just came out is our latest one and that's the history. What started the kind of reflective like looking back on the last five years of running the campaign with the team. And I think it's been kind of funny too because like, they I've worked with that group of people that worked on the campaign since my diagnosis before. And I remember like coming into the office after being diagnosed and I'm just being like, "What is it?" Like what is it that's wrong with you, we don't get it. And you don't even know, going back to the kind of what you're asking about the stigma even though that there's everyone's heard of MS. No one really knows by and large like you go to Jos Mo in the street and you go what does MS do to someone. They just look at you like, I don't know.

Jack: So that there has been an interesting process. They're all basically experts in the disease of a MS now over the last five years. So it's kind of, I think for my working relationship with them it helps so much to be in that position.

Rachael: Why is this campaign so important to you?

Jack: I think for me, it's important because I'm doing a campaign. That for me, I feel like I could have utilized at a time when I needed it the most. I like to think well if I could have needed it and it doesn't matter what my job was is, if I was a carpenter who lived in Kentucky like, I feel like, I still would have needed the same kind of speaking too. And so for me, I wanted to make a campaign that I could have utilized them and really benefited from.

Rachael: What can your viewers look forward to in the next few episodes of You Don't Know Jack about MS?

Jack: Well, we're actually getting back to the drawing board to see what 2019 is going to look like as far as content. We actually just came up with a really good webisode today. I have a really bad tendency of being a bit of a head in the sand when it comes to like going to my doctor's appointments and I'm just, if I'm the classic case of I feel good. I don't need to see my neurologist. I'm fine. I haven't had an MRI in a few years. So I think we're going to do a webisode basically about don't stick your head in the sand and make sure you go

to your doctor every six months.

Rachael: Well, thank you so much for joining us today Jack. We really appreciate you taking the time to share your personal experiences and all your stories of living with MS. Where can people find the You Don't Know Jack about MS webisodes?

Jack: You can go to youdontknowjackaboutms.com and that's where everything lives.

Rachael: If you enjoyed this podcast episode be sure to check out our other in person and online programs at [Can do dash MS dot org](http://CandodashMS.org). Can do MS delivers health and wellness education programs that help families living with MS thrive. Thanks so much for tuning in.

[END]