

# Can You Take Care of a Baby AND a Podcast? Podcasting & Parenting

Colin Gray:

Hey folks and welcome to another episode of PodCraft. This is the show all about podcasting, from launching your show to monetization, and everything in between. I'm Colin Gray from [thepodcasthost.com](http://thepodcasthost.com), and I'm here with Matthew from the same place as always. How are you doing, Matthew?

Matthew:

Yeah, very well, thanks. Slightly sleep deprived. It's been an interesting few... it's five, six days now, five days. I became a dad on Friday, so I'm finding out all the things that you warned me about.

Colin Gray:

Struggling through.

Matthew:

Yeah, exactly.

Colin Gray:

We'll put a pre-qualification in here, won't we? Today we are going to talk about parenting and podcasting, because obviously Matthew's situation has changed so drastically in the last week. So if you couldn't be less interested in babies, in parenting, in family, and how that relates to podcasting, but actually we'll probably just end up moaning about the downsides of having kids in general quite a lot. Although there's many upsides as well, obviously.

If you're in that situation, then do tune out now, because this is going to bore you to tears. But if you are a parent or if you're thinking about being one in the future, then maybe there'll be some nuggets in here, hey Matthew?

Matthew:

Yeah, exactly. Although I must qualify straight up front, if you think I spoke at load rubbish before, wait till you hear me now. I was saying recently there that I did get four-plus hours of sleep last night, that's a new record high since she was born, so me and the bairn have been going out for big, long walks with the pram, the back of midnight, let her mom get some sleep. It's actually been really good walking around at that time of night, and I've not done that for a long time, and I've actually managed to start catching up on some podcasts that've been listening to now and then. Sometimes I have to take the headphones off because again, I'm starting to notice all wee subtleties about the way the world is at that time of day, so there's big gangs of seagulls.

I've realised the streets and the industrial estates and that that they hang about in, they're quite territorial, and at that time of night, if you're the only person walking about, they'll circle you to escort

you out the area. So there's places now, but I'm getting to know all where I'm like the headphones need to come off here because I'm going get potentially attacked.

Colin Gray:

Going to get swooped.

Matthew:

Yeah, so-

Colin Gray:

That's funny.

Matthew:

Aye, very interesting world at that time of day, because again, you've got that thing where you'll pass somebody that's maybe doing a night shift on their way to work, get a wee nod, and then you'll get your Jakey who's on his way out somewhere else with a bottle of Buckfast, so it's a really interesting time. Yeah, [crosstalk 00:02:53].

Colin Gray:

Yeah, totally. Yeah, that's funny, isn't it? Noticing the different world at a different time entirely.

Matthew:

Yeah, aye.

Colin Gray:

Cool.

Matthew:

Yeah. And I thought, this was kind of me that talked about doing this with you Colin, because selfishly I want to pick your brain about a few things, but also last few weeks, and we worked with a lot of different companies doing partnerships and stuff like that. So sure to Harry at Lower Street Podcast Productions, great production company, and Brenden at Podpage where you could make a really easy podcast website, because both them I've been chatting to about work related stuff recently.

And this came up that they both had wee ones very recently as well. So they're very understanding and were giving me a lot of the warnings as well. So I don't know if this is maybe a pandemic thing that there's a few more babies. I don't know. Maybe they'll be referred to as a certain generation in the future.

Colin Gray:

Yeah, yeah. It is. It's a fact, I think. As you know, my wife works in obstetrics and delivering babies quite a lot. She's a doctor in that area. And she has said there has been a huge, there's been a boom for sure. Like after, what was locked down last March, wasn't it?

Matthew:

Yeah.

Colin Gray:

So you've got from March to July, was everyone stuck in the house, nothing else to do. So, you know...

Matthew:

I know once you'd completed Netflix and once you'd played all the board game, computer games and stuff, then it was you were running the options. So intimacy was the one last hobby. So here we are now, we're bearing the fruits of it now. [crosstalk 00:04:34] But I couldn't be happier. The house is bomb site, and I've had sleep, but I genuinely could not be happier with her, she's brilliant.

Colin Gray:

Yeah. And I will qualify as well, obviously long term listeners will know I've got a couple of kids a fair bit older, six and nine, and I'll qualify that I do love them to bits, I would change nothing, but I do like a good moan about how [crosstalk 00:04:56], so...

Matthew:

Before we [inaudible 00:05:01] Colin, how are we recording this call today?

Colin Gray:

Oh yeah, this is cool. Yeah, we're recording on Alitu, Alitu's call recorder. So we launched our call recorder a fair while back now actually, but we just haven't done a whole lot of regular PodCraft in the last wee while have we, so we've not had a chance to give it a proper use on PodCraft itself. But yeah, we are inside alitu.com, A-L-I-T-U.com. Long term listeners, again, will know that's our podcast production tool designed to make it easier to make your podcast.

And it was always editing originally, but yeah, we added call recording. And so now we're recording our call directly in Alitu, and that'll be all cleaned up and popped into our Alitu library for editing straight after in production. So yeah, it's really cool. It's really nice to use it in anger actually.

Matthew:

Yeah. First time for me properly using it aside from the just, "Can I grab you for a quick test," sort of thing.

Colin Gray:

Yeah. Yeah.

Matthew:

So I really like the fact that the link remains the same. So like I could just pretty link it and use it. I like to automate stuff with Calendly so I could have my link in Calendly, and then you've also got that cool lock in feature because obviously if loads of people have got your link, you might be in the middle of great interview and some guy just comes up from like three episodes ago. I don't know why that would happen, but you can lock-

Colin Gray:

Yeah, But you never know.

Matthew:

... to sort of safeguard against that. So I really like that feature, I'm all for automation, especially now when my brain doesn't work so well.

Colin Gray:

Yeah, that's good to hear. That was always the intention with it actually. There's many good call recording tools out there. We've used a bunch of them in the past and they often go quite deep on different ways to use it, like being able to schedule rooms, being able to set up like eight different calls that you're going to do over the next few weeks. And they all have their own link, and the link generally changes each time.

And that's cool, that's good in many contexts. But I don't know, I wanted to make Alitu's one just really simple, really easy, really quick to use. And so there's no scheduling or anything like that. It's just when you want to run a call, you just hit, "Start call," you've got that same old link every single time. Like you say, you can automate it if you want, and you can manage the emails and the invites and stuff on your own side.

And we might expand that later. But for now it's really nice and simple. It's kind of almost just like a Zoom room, you send over your Zoom link and you run the call except in Alitu's one, obviously it records it and it cleans it up and it puts into the editor. So yeah, that's the intention. So yeah, glad you like it.

Matthew:

Lovely stuff. Yeah, so will we dive on with the meat of the episode then?

Colin Gray:

Yeah, indeed.

Matthew:

How being a new parent can affect your podcast. And I was thinking as well, I mean that this applies to content ration in general. So if you're maybe still on the fence about podcasting, but maybe you're on a blog, maybe you do a bit of YouTube, maybe it's just you're running your sort of wee small business, your side hustle, whatever, the same rules apply here, don't they? It's about carving out time to get stuff done.

Colin Gray:

Yeah. Applies to rent, it applies to work, it applies to... Yeah, even if you're... whatever you're doing. Yeah, totally. It's how you handle the chaos perhaps, or the total change in your routine and your life in general. So yeah, are you so far or is it still just survival?

Matthew:

I'm handling it. Yeah, aye. The first couple of days, like that is... I don't even think I could remember it.

Colin Gray:

No.

Matthew:

So I think the dust very slightly settling in now. So I was on one of my 4:00 AM walks with the buggy, and I was just thinking to myself, with this podcast at seasonal, with my own show, which is an audio drama, it's very... I go months and months without publishing an episode. But if you're a podcaster who is very committed to weekly or regular releases, I was just, I was thinking to myself, "How would I have approached this if I wanted to keep episodes going out?"

So I think that'll be a good starting point Colin, let's just dive into your... Like I remember not long after I met you, we had arranged a little get together with a couple other podcasters in our area and you actually didn't make it because Daffney was born.

Colin Gray:

Yeah, exactly.

Matthew:

So at that point you were doing podcast pretty regular. You'd sort of started the business in a very small way. Did you go into that with a plan in mind, or did it just hit you and you were like, "Right, let's see what we can do with this?"

Colin Gray:

Yeah. So that was our second you're talking about there. So we'd [crosstalk 00:09:40] had the bit of the experience, we'd had the first time around the bombshell of like thinking, "Oh, it's going to be great. It's going to be easy. We're going to handle this. All these other parents, they're just like, they're chaotic, they can't manage it. I'm more organised, I'm more resilient."

And then you realise that that's all nonsense. Everyone gets in the same situation of wondering, "What the hell has just happened to me?"

But even the second time around you realise as well that, so I planned around our second, Daf, being similar to the first and it wasn't in any way, because they're completely different and they're very good at being unpredictable. So the birth of her was very different to the birth of Alistair, and like you say there was a few things I'd organised around it thinking we could manage it, and I just had to call it off.

And I think that's some of the advice I would give people is it's really... it's so unpredictable that it's really hard to plan anything around that time.

And I think you're doing amazing right now being on a call, like four or five days in, you should be on paternity leave right now. But just to tell everyone out there, like Matthew's volunteered to do this because he wanted to keep up with work a little bit, but I would not... But I said to you, didn't I Matthew, "If something comes up overnight or this morning, let's just cancel it."

Because you need to kind of keep that in mind, I think, is that even if you want to try and stick to a schedule, if you want to, if you think you can, even if in the first few days it feels like you can, just always be kind to yourself during that time and don't feel like you have to stick to something.

Like I remember always just, I got the advice, "Get sleep while your baby is." Like, don't try and stick to certain routines or certain events, or if people are coming around to visit, but your baby falls

asleep just before they come, give them a phone and say, "Look, she's just falling asleep, I'm going to grab a few hours cap, I'm sorry, can we put it off?"

Like, don't feel bad about that. People will understand. Just grab it when you can. So I don't know, it's chaotic advice, but it's kind of that's, how I see it still, or how I remember it being certainly.

Matthew:

So looking at the... I mean, the birth of Alistair was your first kid?

Colin Gray:

Yeah.

Matthew:

Alistair now is what, what age is he?

Colin Gray:

He's nine now, nine-and-a-bit, yeah.

Matthew:

Nine. So what sort of content were you doing back then? Was it mainly blog-based content? Like I know the PodCraft was in its infancy, I think wasn't it? [crosstalk 00:12:17].

Colin Gray:

Yeah. That was like 2012. So I was still working at the uni at that point. So I was still working for [inaudible 00:12:24] and doing the podcast host on the side. So we were doing podcasting, but not on a super regular basis at that point.

And yeah, it was just me as well. So it was just kind of... Yeah, so it was the blogging really. It was planning ahead really, and just trying to get some stuff queued up I think at that point. I accounted for being off for two weeks because I was working at a proper big company, so you got like full paternity leave, and all the allowances around that and everything. So I think I'd just planned to queue up a few things and have two, three, four weeks worth of stuff ready in advance.

And I think you've done that as well. Haven't you? I mean, you've planned around it the whole time, even though your new arrival came around a bit later than expected, didn't she?

Matthew:

Yeah, she was two weeks over. Yeah, so I'd looked at the calendar for paternity and stuff like that and kind of had an idea where it might have all fallen and that's all been moved back a wee bit. So I can't speak from any experience because I'm only five days in, but one of the very early sort of things is just that for me, if I'm doing something like this, I'm not also trying to watch her.

So if I'm doing anything other than watching her, somebody else needs to be watching her, if that makes sense. So very early on I've realised that, I've heard people in the past saying, "I'll just try and get that done while she's sleeping," or whatever. And I don't know that that would work certainly for me, I'd rather be doing one thing basically, and give it all my attention, and so-

Colin Gray:

Yeah, do one thing. Well, yeah, totally. That's always good advice. Isn't it? In general life I think particularly.

Matthew:

At least do one thing mediocre.

Colin Gray:

Yeah, yeah. At least... Yeah, certainly the early days, it's the cheesy old cliché, but it changes every week and you want to remember it, you want to appreciate it. I regret, I suppose, how hazy those memories are now, and I'm not sure what I could have done more, because I don't think I tried to do too much at the time either, but it is like a huge milestone in your life, and these humans that you're going to know for years and decades hopefully, and it's worth not trying to do too much. And as you say, be a bit mindful about it and just, yeah concentrate on one thing well.

Matthew:

Yeah, and I was [inaudible 00:14:55], again I was saying to my wife, like I've had... When you go out, again, with a buggy at that time of night, it's the opportunity to think the big grand thoughts, because when when you're in here and you're just thinking about like, "I might get a sleep in 15 minutes," or, "She needs change." Those are very small in-the-moment things that you just need to get through.

But when you get out there, and you've got a bit of time to think like, "Well, this is interesting," and the bigger thoughts about life and stuff. And I'm thinking to myself, like on the one hand my brain's telling me, "Just two weeks until things settle down, just three months until she's feeding a lot less." And then I'm thinking, "But don't wish these days away because these are," everyone said to me like, "Just really enjoy it." So it's just your brain's battling between wishing things forward so the dust settles, but you really shouldn't, should you?

Colin Gray:

Yeah, totally. No, I absolutely agree. And again, it's hard to accept the at when you're in the maelstrom of it, because you're right, there's tonnes of it that's really hard and really difficult and not that much fun, but appreciating the parts that are lovely and nice, and when they're just sitting peacefully staring at you and holding your finger and all that kind of stuff, it's just, it's lovely. So yeah, not wishing it away is very...

I mean, ours are enormous now and there's already times where I can see, they're not quite old enough to not want to spend time with us, like they still really enjoy that, but you can see it coming up. Like I can see Alistair at nine coming on 10, he's already got stuff that he really enjoys doing. And he'll not always, like if I say, "Do you want to play something? Do you want to do something?" He'll not always say, "Yeah, yeah, yeah," which he would've done a year ago, two years ago. And Daffney still does.

So it starts to make you think more about appreciating that time and remembering it, because you when they're 16, or 14, or even 12, they'll be like, "No way, I'm not going with you. I'm doing my own stuff. I don't want to spend a minute with you."

Matthew:

Aye [crosstalk 00:16:55]-

Colin Gray:

At that time you can make all the podcasts and all the blogs you like.

Matthew:

Yeah, exactly, aye. So like, how-

Colin Gray:

Yeah, sorry go on.

Matthew:

Sorry, go on.

Colin Gray:

I was just going to say, but it is still worth thinking about, like there will still be people out there that want to keep growing their audience, and keep getting their content out, and keep doing these things because I think you can do both if you plan around it certainly. So is that what you were about to jump into too?

Matthew:

Yeah. I was just thinking about that, that now that we could maybe move on to the a sort of actionable tips, which will probably mainly be coming from you Colin because like I say, I'm very much the novice.

So I suppose that if you're happy with that, just before we get to that it's maybe worth mentioning that, and this ties in the episode, it's something that we've just released, a new podcast host planner. And yeah, like I was saying at the start, I'm very into the automation and stuff like that. And especially now I'm going need a bit more help organising my life, and any content that I'm [inaudible 00:18:01].

So this idea sort of came about a few months ago. We decided to produce this physical podcast planner. So we've got A how to start guide in there, a sort of whirlwind tour. We've got pages around setting big picture goals and stuff like that for your podcast, the sort of things that you could come back to when things get difficult, maybe when you do have a wee one and you're very sleep deprived and you don't know why you even started the thing in the first place.

And then we've got lots of episode templates where you could do stuff like you could note down the key points that you want to cover in the episode, you've got your episode title, you can use it to document edit notes, calls to action, social handles, all that stuff. You've got pages to regularly reflect on your episodes too.

So there we're looking like what went well, what didn't go so well, what lessons did you learn even about your attitude? What are you quite thankful for the last few episodes and stuff like that. So I'm really excited to get this out actually. Have you got a copy yet Colin?

Colin Gray:

No, I haven't, no because I'm only just back from Australia. So I haven't managed to get myself one yet, but yeah, I've seen it. Like I've seen the digital version. And I think you and Lindsay have done such a good job on this, I think it's brilliant.



And we've had such good feedback on it as well. We've sent it out to about a dozen or so people in the industry, and you posted them all out. But somehow I managed to get the thanks, like loads of people kept sending me-

Matthew:

That's how it always works Colin.

Colin Gray:

Loads of people sent me just a message saying how much they loved it. And they thought it was a great little tool. So yeah, I think you've done a great job on it, Matthew. Well done on it.

Matthew:

Thank you very much.

Colin Gray:

Yeah, so no worries at all.

Matthew:

Yeah. So if you want a wee look at that, and you could find out a bit more if you maybe want to get yourself a copy, you'll find it at [thepodcasthost.com/podcasthostplanner](http://thepodcasthost.com/podcasthostplanner), that's all one word [podcasthostplanner](http://thepodcasthost.com/podcasthostplanner). Have a wee look there, you'll get a sample of what's in the book. You could see if it looks like something you might use, and you'll find out a bit more details about it as well, just in general. So yeah, get a wee look at that at [podcasthost.com/podcasthostplanner](http://podcasthost.com/podcasthostplanner).

Colin Gray:

Cool. Is it worth, before we jump into the tips, is it worth thinking about, one of the things you asked was how it changed in the first year, how it changed in the first five or so years?

Matthew:

Yeah, aye, definitely, yeah.

Colin Gray:

Because if people are in the early stages still, then that can be one of the things where you think like, "When will routines begin? When will things change to this or that, or make things easier or whatever?"

So I can certainly share some of my experiences there. Although having talked to... I was lucky enough, I always find it weird that it seems like, and this seems quite common across the board, like people's groups of friends often end up with babies all at the same time. Did you say that was similar with you? Like you've got a few friends that have all had their first around a similar kind of time?

Matthew:

Yeah. I mean you could give or take three or four years, but that's not a small amount of time, is it really?

Colin Gray:

Yeah, yeah. Yeah, me and my group of friends, actually, we were all within like three or four months weirdly.

Matthew:

Really?

Colin Gray:

And there was no collaboration and planning around this. It was-

Matthew:

Yeah, some sort of get together, where ball and some car keys.

Colin Gray:

Yeah, they all look like us, they all look like the right person. But yeah, there was four, yeah four of my best friends, four of my good friend group had babies all within six months of each other, which is weird. And then another two or three within a couple of years. So yeah, it just seems like, I don't know, people reach a certain stage of life I guess.

But anyway, going through that experience with everyone, you start to see some common experiences. But one of the common things is that nothing is common as well. Like everyone is entirely different. Every baby, every kid is entirely different.

So I can share what happened to us and some of my friends, but it could be entirely different for you, but I think some of the stages are pretty relatively predictable. So yeah, we could jump into that if you like.

Matthew:

Yeah, definitely. So the first year, like is there obviously a lot of changes then?

Colin Gray:

Yeah. The first year, the first three months, I remember just being hell [crosstalk 00:22:35]. Yeah, just to give you some expectations, because it was just no sleep, just so unpredictable, and this is quite personality-dependent as well.

Because I'm a relatively organised person. I relish control and being able to manage my own schedule, and get stuff done. Like I'm happiest when I'm finishing things, and completing things, and making things, and making progress, and stuff like that.

I'm one of those annoying people that just can't sit on holiday and just stare at the sun, or sunbathe or whatever. I'm always annoying can Kate to go out for a walk or something like that. Like, "There's a mountain over there, let's go and do that trail over there."

And I realise that's not a great thing in many ways. So that's why I think it didn't suit, like I particularly struggled with it in the first few months because I wanted to get some blogging done, or make some podcasts, or just some personal projects as well.

But you just couldn't plan around it at all. Because I found the thing that worked for us was we would just kind of follow the baby schedule. We would just follow... When it was sleeping, we'd try and grab a couple hours sleep if we could, if we're not working. But even like I said, if people were coming to visit, we'd literally phone and tell them, "I'm sorry, can we put it off to tomorrow? We're going to go to

bed right now because the baby's just fallen asleep." And we'd just follow that for a few months, because I found that was the only way to stay sane. So certainly the first two to three months were like that.

Although in saying that, there's also that point up to, I would say, the six month mark, as I remember with both of ours, where it's also actually the time where they do sleep the most. So in some ways it's easier to get some stuff done because certainly after a few months some of them, and ours weren't exactly the same, but we found that Alistair would sleep for six or seven hours at a time, maybe three months in. So that three-to-six-month mark actually at that point when he did fall asleep, it was relatively predictable. He'd stay asleep for at least a few hours. So I could then say, "Right, okay, I'm going to go and record something," or, "I'm going to go and write something." So that was definitely... Yeah, there was good and bad parts to that first stage I would say. Are you seeing any evidence of those right now?

Matthew:

Again, I've got a very small sample size. But I have noticed, like I say, last night when I got in from my walk and I left her in the buggy and she was sleeping, and I went and I'd just lay on the couch and I was falling asleep, but my wife come down and she said, "Look, she's staying asleep, go and get yourself a few hours."

And I actually got over four hours last night, which has never happened yet. So I am feeling a lot more human.

I had this weird thing, I had so little sleep in the first couple of days, I thought I was getting like tinnitus or something because my ears were ringing really heavily.

Colin Gray:

Oh yeah, really?

Matthew:

And I'm assuming, I didn't Google it because you know what these things are like, suddenly I've got a brain tumour, so I just sort of put it down to sleep deprivation, which it obviously was, but a bit better today. So the first year, that's obviously going to be the most variables I would assume. Like what about the first five years?

Colin Gray:

Yeah, for sure. Yeah, after that six months, that second six months is kind of difficult in that they at that point they start crawling about and things like that and causing a bit of chaos. So even, yeah, but [crosstalk 00:26:10]-

Matthew:

So that's just where do you find like a mixer, or your settings are done, or [crosstalk 00:26:16]-

Colin Gray:

Yeah, they're all ruined.

Matthew:

... all spooled out and you can't find where it goes or...

Colin Gray:

And that always affected you as well, didn't it? Alistair would come into the office and play around with the mixer, and then you'd come to record someone the next day and be like, "What's happened to this?"

Matthew:

Yeah, that literally did happen. Yeah, more than a few times.

Colin Gray:

Yeah, sorry again. But yeah, I found actually that really hard in that they did sleep more at that point, but they needed so much attention because they're always walking about and they're always looking for you.

And when they're babies, when they're awake, at least if they're happy, they'll just lie there and you can chat away or you can get something done, like you can cook the dinner. But yeah, that second six months, if they're awake, you're having to be with them and entertain them, and that's fun and lovely in many ways, but it also gets exhausting at times as well.

Matthew:

Yeah.

Colin Gray:

But yeah, beyond that, at that point, I think during that year, I think the kind of... I feel like the keys were really just around not having, this maybe sounds defeatist in some ways, but not having huge expectations, like not planning too much, like being realistic about what you're planning.

So still plan for your regular content, still plan for getting something out every week. But maybe just plan around that for six months. Like just plan around maintenance mode almost in many ways. Like still put out some good stuff and still... but don't go out and do those really ambitious ones, like go out and interview three people and put it all together into one episode, and you know, the bigger projects.

Certainly you want to maintain it and you want to try and set that schedule, but be a bit more flexible with it and actually just try and record something when you can fit it in. And you know what? If during that six months, if your schedule slips a little bit and you don't post one week, it's not going to kill your show.

Like we always tell people that, don't we Matthew? You can miss a week and your loyal listeners will miss it, but they won't blame you for it. Especially if you've been honest and open on your show and you've been transparent, you've said what situation you're in. They'll be like, "Ah, it's all good. He's obviously having a non-sleeping week and needs a bit of a break."

So yeah, again, it's being kind to yourself, and realising that it's not going to kill your show just messing one week or letting one slip by a few days. Yeah, I think so.

Matthew:

Do you think that pain, and especially in these early days, do you think that could make you more efficient in terms of like before if it's just you and your partner at home and you've got eight hours after

work before you go to bed to do something, you might kind of go and start a, and then you might lose interest, you go and get distracted, you do some else. Whereas now it's like, "Look, I've got maybe 45 minutes. I'm going to really just sit down, get the headphones in and just hammer this out." Do you think that's a fair point?

Colin Gray:

Yeah. So that's a really good point. And it's one that I've heard talked about by other people as well. And I definitely experienced that to an extent. I remember Pat, Pat [Flynn 00:29:31] talks about this as well, he had that experience too. And there's a few other folk in the industry.

Yeah, for sure. You are so much more focused. You decide like, "So the baby's asleep now, so I've got an hour-and-a-half to do this," so there's no faf, there's no messing around, no procrastination. You just get it done.

And what's that, there's a kind of maxim around a task will always expand to fill the time allowed. So if you have an hour to get a good episode done, you will get a good episode done, and you'll make it work. So yeah, there's definitely something around that being more efficient, and setting yourself really defined time goals for it.

Like maybe not setting a particular time to do it, but say, "Right, at one point today I've got an hour when the baby is sleeping to get this episode done." And as soon as you hit that point, you're like, "Right, that's what I'm doing. There's no checking emails, there's no checking social, this is what I'm doing," and get it done. Yeah, that's a good point.

Matthew:

So there are some tips here that we're just going to run through. And one that's just came to me that I've not even got down here is that you might want to rethink your show's format. If, say your podcast, you're doing it every week and you're doing the Rogan- style three-long-hour interview, so there's a lot of work around finding guests, scheduling the interview, a lot of work around the research. Recording the thing itself's going to take a lot of time, producing it and stuff like that.

So maybe you're going to say your [inaudible 00:31:04], "Look, we are completely revamping things for the next at least three months. What I'm going to do instead is just bring you a wee 15 minute valuable episode, still very much on topic, but we're just mixing things up. This is what's going on at the moment. And this is what we're going to do just to keep these episodes going out."

Do you think that sort of thing puts your audience at risk? You know, if your numbers maybe drop more that, do you think that's a fair shout?

Colin Gray:

I honestly don't think so. No, I think if you've built a show where it's around your content, your thinking, your personality, the stuff that you deliver, you'll know your audience, you'll know what they like, what they don't like. So you can build and you structure around that, and have every chance of maintaining 99% of the people that listen to your show just now.

And equally, if you have built that loyalty and people enjoy your show and they enjoy your personality and your content, then even if you change it to something that they don't enjoy as much, as long as you explain what's happening, if you're honest about it, you give them maybe a timeframe like, "For the next three months, I'm going to do this," then they'll go with you.

Because that's the great thing about podcasting. It's that loyalty, it's that credibility, that kind of trust, that fandom that you can build with the people that listen to your show. So, yeah, I think that's a

really good idea. Yeah, cutting it down. Maybe making things a bit more simple, even doing solo shows or shorter shows, whatever it might be. Put out like a five minute tip every week instead of your two hour epic, just to keep things going. For sure, yeah. As long as you keep contact with people and communicate what's going on, I think you can get away with most things

Matthew:

Cool, and then Colin hit me with another tip.

Colin Gray:

Yeah. I think there's two things that I often bang about, just for general bang on about just in general podcasting, which is batch recording and seasons.

So seasons-based podcasting, quick summary being you pick a topic and you cover it over maybe one, two, three months and you take breaks. And it kind of gives you... It creates a block of content where you talk about one thing bit by bit over a certain couple of months, or a certain timeframe. And there's huge benefits in doing that type seasons-based approach for general podcasting. But particularly when you are time-limited, when you're resource-limited, when you've got a baby, using seasons could really help.

Because one of the big benefits is that you can plan it so much ahead. So you can sit down and say, "All right, for this season, I'm going to cover podcasting equipment. So I'll plan out eight episodes around podcast equipment. Episode one will be mics, episode two will be mixers, episode three'll be software, episode four will be," blah, blah, blah. And you can plan that all out, really in depth in just an hour or two.

So you can take one of your little time slots that you get, plan out the season, and then you've got that in the bag. And the next time the baby falls asleep, or the time you get a couple of hours, you don't have to cast around for a topic, or think about planning. All you do is you pull out that list and you record the next episode on the list.

And because it's seasons-based as well, it means you can take breaks in between the seasons as well. So you can record it all and then take a month break, and enjoy that time sort of a little bit more free with your kid or whatever you want to do with that time.

And mentioning batch recording as well, when you plan out a season because you've planned it all ahead, you can record three, four, five episodes all at once. So you can sit down and you can, if you get two hours, maybe you can record two or three half-hour episodes all at once. And then that's three weeks worth of work done and in the bag, and then you can schedule them to go out, and then you can just relax and not worry too much about your schedule from then on.

So I think they work for general day-to-day life in podcasting, but particularly when you're time-limited, resource-limited, sleep deprived, all that stuff. So that could work. What else do you [crosstalk 00:35:13] think, Matthew? Any other tips? Oh, sorry go on.

Matthew:

Go on the batch recording, yes, because it's not like this creeps up on you, you know with a good few months to spare that this is going to be happening, don't you?

Colin Gray:

Yeah.

Matthew:

So if you are very particular about, and you're determined to stick to that schedule, whether that's weekly, or whether it's just biweekly, or just regular, and you're determined to stick to that, then you've got plenty fair warning that maybe every second week, let's sit down and get an extra episode in the can.

That means those first three months, if things are chaotic, which it looks like they will be, I do have that buffer. So yeah obviously the only caveat is like, if you do a very, very sort of current affairs podcast, again, you might have to rethink the format slightly, keep it on topic, but do something a bit different. You're not maybe going to be able to keep up your daily news podcast, but maybe switch to taking a look at the news for 25 years ago, every week or every fortnight.

Colin Gray:

Yeah, yeah, exactly. Yeah, that's the thing, isn't it? You can be doing a normal non-seasonal show just week by week by week, but in the two or three months leading up to the birth of your kids, you can maybe on the side be recording a 10, 12 episode season, which will cover your first three months, about something different.

And you can say, "I don't normally do seasons, but during the next two months, during July and August, I'm going to be looking after my new baby. And therefore I'm going to put out a prerecorded set of eight episodes, which will cover that time. So it's still going to be great content for you guys. I'm recording it just now. So it's going to be not as timely as normal, but I hope you forgive me, and I'll put it out for those two months and still give you something to listen to." Yeah, that bit of planning can make all the difference. Anything else, Matthew?

Matthew:

Yeah. This next one, I would say this isn't without its risk, but to try a temporary guest host is an idea that you might want to weigh up. So that could be occasional co-host, it might have been a guest who came across a really well, obviously somebody that's willing to do it and put a lot of work in, or put a bit of work in it.

I say it's not without its risks because I know this from my own experiences as a listener, I've seen podcasts do this temporarily, maybe the host has been, like you did recently Colin, moving around the other side of the world. They've handed the reins over for a month to somebody else.

And I do find that even though I'm completely reasonable and it's great that they've done this to keep the podcast going out, and the content's great, and I find myself, this wee voice is like, "What are they doing there? I want the usual guy."

The really unreasonable expectations we have as listeners sometimes, and I do find myself very briefly thinking that, and then I go on and really enjoy the episode. But podcast listeners, they can sometimes be a wee bit unreasonable, I include myself in that. So that's not without its risk. And obviously it's not so easy to do either because you're asking somebody to do quite a lot of work. Aren't you? So...

Colin Gray:

Yeah, yeah. But I think you mentioned the key point with it that could make it work really well earlier, which is if it's someone familiar already, like maybe you do have a co-host that comes on every now and again, or maybe you've had a guest that appears that has appeared a couple of times. So your listeners are familiar with this person.

Because I think that's always the key with podcasting, isn't it? People tune in because they know you, they trust you, they like you, and you're familiar; every week they know what to expect. So if it's somebody that has appeared there, has built a bit of trust already, then that can make all the difference. And that doesn't suit everyone, obviously.

Not all shows are interview shows, not all shows are co-hosted shows. So it might be that that doesn't exist. But yeah, it's worth a try I would say. And again, as long as you communicate it well, as long as you say, "Right, we're going to have a guest host for the next four to six episodes, but I'm going to be back in mid-August," whatever it might be. Then even if people say, "Oh well, I'm just not going to bother listening to those, but I'll be back at that point," as long as you communicate it right I think it can still work.

Matthew:

Before we move on to the next one Colin, I've kind of thought of another one on the fly. And this is something that you might do if you've got a bit of budget behind you. So say for example I've been running this pod, I've got 100-plus episodes, what I could do is go on a platform like Fiverr, or maybe I know somebody that I could pay to do this, and I could just say, "Look, there's all my episodes. Go out, here's the budget, here's the time I could allot to this, go through them and just pick out themed clips."

So for example maybe in every episode you finish with one particular question, what's your top tip or top advice for this or that. So you get somebody to go and just pull all those episodes out and just put an episode together for you, like a montage, we've talked about these a lot in the past.

They might pull out other stuff that has a reoccurring theme. So you could actually create episodes without you even being involved. And it's still the content you created, it's just archived content, but it's produced in a completely different way and it's refreshed and invigorated, and the listeners tend to really enjoy that sort of stuff.

Colin Gray:

Yeah, for sure. Absolutely. It's the classic flashback episodes on sitcoms when they have a break over a holiday or something like that. They just pull back all the old ones. Yeah, if you've got a deep episode back catalogue, go back in, and people love to be refreshed. You'll have plenty of listeners that I've never listened to those old episodes as well. So that could work really well. How about any more? I think we've got a couple more Matthew. What other ones do you want to share?

Matthew:

Well, before we get to the last one, I suppose, just thinking about alternative ways to maybe record your show because we do get a bit stuck. We invest in, like I'm sitting in my wee booth that I've got at home, I've got my mic and everything set up around me. Maybe you get a bit attached to that, but you know what, depending on how things go with a kid and what your setup is and how much you're having to look after them yourself, you might just think about alternative ways to record your show, like going out to the car, maybe, maybe that's going to be a better place for to record.

There's lots of good equipment these days to take your show for a walk. We've talked about it in the past, tools like the Rode SmartLav+, the Rode Wireless Go is one that we've looked at quite recently as well, basically lavalier mics, and you can just get the buggy go out there and record your episode as you're walking around, and it'll create something really unique and quite memorable for you as well.

Colin Gray:



Yeah, for sure, yeah.

Matthew:

So I guess, don't think that recording means sitting down in this perfect optimal conditions that you've created. Maybe you're just going have to rethink it a wee bit for a while.

Colin Gray:

Yeah. I came across a show recently, which was a guy who was doing a nature show, talking about foraging and wild food and stuff like that. And he was just out in a forest, just recording stuff. And obviously that was kind of the theme of his show, so it was more expected. But even if you do a show about gaming or marketing or something like that, like if you're on a walk with your baby along the promenade or something like that, there'll be a bit of surrounding noise, the sound of seagulls and and waves crashing and stuff might be quite relaxing to people to hear in the background. So absolutely, it's a really good idea.

Matthew:

So last one we've got down Colin, what is it then?

Colin Gray:

Yeah. I mean the big one really is, and I mentioned I'll wee bit of it in the seasons one, but don't be afraid just to take a break, like just be honest and tell people, "Look, my child is due to come on July 1st, and I'm going to just take July off because I want to just relax and enjoy my first month with him or her. So I know it's not ideal, but I'm going to be back 1st of August. I hope you can bear with me through the four weeks, but I'll be back and I'll be bigger and better at that point."

And I think that honesty, that transparency, just communicating that to people, your listeners will come along with you. You'll lose a couple of grumpy ones, perhaps a couple of impatient ones, but they probably weren't your loyal audience in the first place anyway, if that's the case. So yeah.

Matthew:

Yeah, you'd have to be pretty unreasonable to argue with that wouldn't you?

Colin Gray:

For sure. Yeah, totally. So don't feel bad about it and just go for it.

We do PodCraft on a seasonal basis anyway, don't we? And we're kind of on a break right now anyway, because I was moving and now you're having a baby, obviously. So we're taking an extended break at the moment and just popping in this one, hopefully to keep people going.

But I think it's fine, it's fine. We've seen many shows and we've had much experience with podcasts that have taken breaks like that. And more often, much more often than not, most of the time, they come back with just about the same listeners, if only a little bit less that builds back up again really quickly.

Matthew:

Lovely stuff. Any closing thoughts on that? About that? I have found that really useful, it's made me feel a bit better.

Colin Gray:

No, I think it's just kind of... Yeah, it's going back to those cliches again. Just enjoy the time, enjoy the time, try and appreciate all the bits you can. Be easy on yourself, just to take those breaks when you need them, and know that it's going to change.

Do you know I think most advice about kids and babies is useless, because like I said, they're all so different. So anything somebody tells you is generally, there's a small chance it'll apply to you. And if it does apply to you, it'll probably change within a week.

But that was the one bit of advice, actually that did hit home to me and made me feel better about many things, was everything that happens with a kid is just a phase. So whether it's something bad, it'll pass, like in a few weeks they'll be doing something different. So whatever's happening right now. That's annoying you, it'll pass and it'll be changing in a couple of weeks.

But equally any really good thing, if they're sleeping overnight, that's going to change again in a couple of weeks. So appreciate it while you can, and get as much sleep as you can while you can. So yeah, everything's a phase, just enjoy what it is, or look forward to when it finishes in a very short period. So I hope that helps in some way.

Matthew:

Very useful. Yeah. So a wee change in tack at podcast and parenthood, it's been a fine wee discussion. Any closing pointers for the listener? We've mentioned a couple of things already, how we were recording the call, and the podcast host planner as well.

Colin Gray:

Yeah, no, I think just to come back into that. Yeah, like Alitu Call Recorder, yeah if you want to try out, we'd love for you to come and try out the call recorder now.

If you record your calls in other ways, then if you want to include your call recording in your editing package, Alitu can do it all. So you can record your calls in there. It'll clean up the call, it'll do your noise reduction. It'll do your levelling, all that kind of stuff, and then pop it right into the episode builder so that you can then add your theme music really simply.

We've now just released actually the new episode builder, which can do transitions between every single clip on the timeline. So now if you've got like five or six different clips, we can do overlaps and transitions between every single one. So that's really cool. So yeah, go over to [alitu.com](http://alitu.com), A-L-I-T-U.com and you can get a seven day trial. And what about the podcast planner, Matthew, do you want to give it a final mention?

Matthew:

Yeah, sure. So [thepodcasthost.com/podcasthostplanner](http://thepodcasthost.com/podcasthostplanner). That is the book that I'm going to rely on now to get me through now that my brain is pulled in several different directions-

Colin Gray:

Now it's mush.

Matthew:

... I'm going to need something physical, tangible, offline basically. And I'm going to document everything, my podcast episodes, my plans, my reflections, things like that. So yeah Podcast Host Planner.

Colin Gray:

Yeah. I'm going to get ahold of that actually now. I'm going to go and get myself ordered a few copies and start planning out some stuff. Because [crosstalk 00:47:25]-

Matthew:

Number one in the digital audio charts on Amazon, I don't know about Colin, but that to me is the biggest chart on Amazon. So...

Colin Gray:

It is absolutely. It's the only one I keep an eye on. You know when people release a book and they always say, "This is a number one best seller," and then you actually look at the small print and they say, "Number one in obscure category number three," and that gets on the stamp on the front.

Matthew:

It's classic new and noteworthy. Like it's impossible not to... Everyone got in there basically.

Colin Gray:

Yeah [crosstalk 00:47:59].

Matthew:

And I think it's really specific on Amazon that we'll be number one on a chart somewhere-

Colin Gray:

Somewhere.

Matthew:

... at one point. It's just inevitable, but it's a good boost, you know?

Colin Gray:

Yeah, absolutely. No, it is, it's genuinely good. Like I think that actually is a popular category, and I think people have reacted really well to it, so it's really cool. So yeah, I'm going to go and get one.

And I'm kind of planning a new show at the moment, actually. I've not told you about this yet, Matthew, but I'm planning something from us that's a bit less podcast-related and a bit more general. There's a couple of different ideas actually. So I'm going to grab one and start jotting some stuff down and I'll share it with you soon.

Matthew:

Exciting stuff, look forward to that then.

Colin Gray:

Perfect. All right. Well you go and get some sleep right now. Go and enjoy your time with Brooke, and yeah, I'll talk to you on a PodCraft episode sometime soon. And in classic don't-do-what-we-do example, we have no idea when we're going to record our next episode, but hopefully it'll be this side of 2022.

Matthew:

Yeah. I've got a few ideas about the next season. Just need to let the dust settle on Colin's travels around the world, and my travels into the darkest reaches of nappies as well.

Colin Gray:

Indeed, indeed. But yeah, no it'll be, in a [inaudible 00:49:16] it'll be, we'll hopefully aim to do one in, I don't know, maybe mid to late September. So yeah, stay tuned over the next four-to-six weeks and we'll hopefully have a new season for you ready. So yeah, don't go away. We'll see you then.