

Trust Me, I'm an Expert: Risk

Written by Madeleine De Gabriele, Deputy Editor: Energy + Environment

Ah, the new year. A time for throwing off your shackles, following your bliss, quitting your job and abandoning your family to finally start the artisanal yak-butter-sculpture studio of your dreams.

But big choices come with big risks. In this episode of Trust Me, I'm an Expert, Hassan Vally, an expert in epidemiology from La Trobe University, talks about “[microlives](#)”, which measure how much your life span is increased or decreased by particular activities.

We all make trade-offs between risk and reward, Vally explains on the podcast and in an [article](#) on The Conversation today. Every hour of television on the couch, for example, knocks 15 minutes off your life expectancy, on average. On the other hand, a daily serve of vegetables will increase your life expectancy by a couple of hours, and three coffees will add half an hour to your tally.

Even medical procedures can cost us “microlives”, as detailed in a [table](#) Vally put together for us.

“Having a mammogram costs you four hours off your life span, but if that diagnoses a cancer that’s going to save you maybe 20 years on your life. You’ve got to be really careful about understanding the costs and benefits,” Vally says.

Also in this episode, Michelle Lim, a lecturer in clinical psychology at Swinburne University of Technology, discusses one of the biggest risks we face as social animals: loneliness.

Loneliness and isolation seem to be on the rise, but Lim explores the ways we can understand – and overcome – loneliness, without being afraid of it.

And finally, we ask the big question: have you stuck with your cocktail, liquor or tippie of choice over the holiday season? Alex Russell, a wine expert at CQ University, asks why we’re so

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reluctant step outside our gastronomic comfort zones, and how we can expand our horizons.

As an encounter with “spit-bucket gin” proves, it’s not a totally risk-free endeavour, but Russell says that with awareness and intention we can open up a whole new world of flavour.

Lastly, we wanted to pay a quick tribute to Jesse Cox, a friend and audio producer who recently died from a brain tumour. He was a giant in the podcasting world. He worked on programs like Trace, This Is About and Long Story Short, and helped influence many of the podcasters working in Australia today, including some of us here at The Conversation.

We’ve included in this episode a montage of Jesse’s work that was first broadcast on RN Breakfast [here](#) , and check out his incredible back catalogue [here](#) .

Music in this episode of Trust Me, I'm an Expert

Kindergarten by Unkle Ho, from [Elefant Traks](#)

[Gears Spinning](#) by Podington Bear

[Pour Me Another](#) by Cletus Got Shot: Free music archive

[Wine Wine Wine](#) by Stompin Riff Ruffs: Free music archive

[Smells like Timperley Spirit](#) by Ergo Phizmiz: Free music archive

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[Crawfish and Beer](#) by Guitar Lightnin Lee and His Thunder Band: Free music archive

[Muscadine Wine](#) by Waylon Thornton: Free music archive

[Glass of Wine](#) by The Blue Onesies: Free music archive

[Drink Beer \(Till The Day That I Die\)](#) by Dazie Mae: Free music archive

[Easy Life](#) by Lee Rosevere: Free music archive

[Blue Highway](#) by Podington Bear: Free music archive

[Ofelia's dream](#) : Bensound

Additional sound

[WH.GOV](#)

[Game of Thrones](#) theme music

[Jaws](#) theme music

[Pouring Whiskey](#) , Albertofrog: freesound.org

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[Small crowd pre-concert talking party bar walla talking](#) , JohnsonBrandEditing: freesound.org

[Pouring beer into short glass](#) , megashroom: freesound.org

[Champagne cork pop and pour](#) , ultradust: freesound.org

[New Years Eve Sydney](#) , MrRobAU: YouTube

Authors: Madeleine De Gabriele, Deputy Editor: Energy + Environment

Read more <http://theconversation.com/trust-me-im-an-expert-risk-88862>