

# 12| Inside NavNeuro: University of Florida ANST Q&A

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This is an audio transcription of an episode on the Navigating Neuropsychology podcast. Visit [www.NavNeuro.com](http://www.NavNeuro.com) for the show notes or to listen to the audio. It is also available on the following platforms:



**Speakers:** University of Florida students, Ryan Van Patten, John Bellone



**Intro Music** 00:00



**Ryan Van Patten** 00:17

Welcome, everyone, to Navigating Neuropsychology: A voyage into the depths of the brain and behavior. I'm Ryan Van Patten...

**John Bellone** 00:23

...and I'm John Bellone. We have a different kind of episode for you today. We were recently asked to speak about NavNeuro at an ANST brown bag lunch at the University of Florida. ANST is the Association of Neuropsychology Students in Training, a trainee organization of the Society for Clinical Neuropsychology, the APA's Div 40. This was a question and answer format with students who are particularly interested in the podcast.



This episode probably isn't for everyone, but for those of you who want more of an inside look at NavNeuro - more of the details about how we got started, what our plans are for the podcast, a bit more about Ryan and I on a personal level. If you're just here for new neuropsych content, then maybe hold off till our next episode in two weeks. But I will say that the students asked really good questions and we cover some interesting topics like how to educate the general population and other clinicians about neuropsychology, how to explain difficult neuropsych topics and concepts to a broad audience, how to get into more controversial topics in the field, how to debate them on NavNeuro. So I think most people will find it pretty engaging.

I just want to also mention that we did the recording via Skype, and there was a lot of background noise on their end in Florida, so we only included their audio when they're actually saying something. Otherwise, it'll just be the audio for Ryan and me. A special thanks to Erin Trifilio for inviting us to present and for putting this all together. And now we give you our Q&A meeting with the University of Florida ANST students.



**Transition Music** 02:07

**John Bellone** 02:17



Okay. So maybe it's good for us to say what the inspiration was for the podcast, and then maybe Ryan will give an overview of the format for anyone who might not be aware. Really the main impetus for getting this launched off was because it didn't exist before. We saw an opening for something that we thought could be useful. I had discovered podcasts a few years ago, and was really grateful to have just found podcasts in general because I really hate wasting time. The fact that I can learn about really interesting topics while I'm sitting in the traffic on the 405, for anyone who's from LA, or washing dishes or working out or something, it really was a game changer for me. I would periodically search iTunes looking for a

neuropsychology podcast, but of course there wasn't one. I would listen to brain related or psychology related ones and those were useful, but, really, I wanted one that was specific to my field, to my passion. So pretty serendipitously, actually, one day when I was sitting in a clinic meeting and this intern, Ryan over here, randomly brought up how it's such a shame that there's no neuropsych podcast. I was so excited to hear him say that. I had been thinking the same thing for so long and that thought stuck with me. I didn't say anything to him in the meeting and we just brushed it off, but I kept thinking about it. Then we happened to be grabbing a beer a few days later and I asked if he might be interested in actually doing it and creating a podcast. And the rest is history. [laughs]

**Ryan Van Patten 03:58**

So that's the conception story of NavNeuro. That's how it got started. Obviously, there's a lot of different ways this could go or it could look very differently. A few things that are important to us is we want to cover every topic that we talked about very thoroughly. So the episodes are a bit longer. They usually are an hour to an hour and a half as opposed to really just scratching the surface. We like to go for depth, so we ask a lot of questions. Obviously, all of our topics are related to neuropsychology, but they're not just lectures. We don't want to be redundant with respect to what we get in grad school and just cover ADHD and Alzheimer's disease and concussion. Those are really interesting topics, but we get a lot of that already. So with NavNeuro, we want to give listeners something they won't already have likely, different topics, things that are unique, or if we talk about Alzheimer's disease, we'll just talk about it from a specific angle or specific niche. That way people who are in neuropsych hopefully can listen and learn something new that they didn't know. For example, in a few of our recent episodes, we talked to Neil Plisken about electrical injury and neuropsych evals of people who have experienced that, which is a pretty low base rate injury. We don't see it very often as neuropsychologists, but it does happen. It's not in textbooks very often. We're not reading or hearing about it in class or in didactics so much. So if we can cover that in NavNeuro then people can get something they don't get elsewhere. So we want to both provide very good practical, clinically applicable information, but then also new and cutting edge information as well.



We have a lot of ideas in terms of future content, topics we'll talk about. But right now, I guess a few more facts, or laying out with the podcast looks like. We're releasing episodes every other week, twice a month. Again, they're about an hour, hour and a half long. Most of them are interviews with an expert in the field, but sometimes John and I just talk about something that we know a little bit about. Like recently, we released an episode on interviewing for internship and postdocs, since

we've gone through both of those processes recently and it's that time of the year, as you guys know. So episodes might look a little bit different, but we try to make all the content really relevant.

**John Bellone** 06:35



We also had three main objectives when we started the podcast. Ryan touched on a couple of them. We saw a void in the neuropsych community and we really wanted to, like Ryan said, just provide interesting and easily accessible information, often directly from experts in those areas. Then we wanted to begin working towards unification on certain important areas of debate within the field, but also to encourage people to express diverse and creative ideas and opinions. We thought also, there's really no one outlet for breaking news or if we have a statement that comes out by one of the main organizations, there's not one outlet for everyone to hear about it. So we thought that, well, we might be able to reach a broad audience and we can also meet that need as well.

**Ryan Van Patten** 07:31



We were thinking about this as a Q&A. So we received your guys' questions ahead of time, but feel free to ask those or any other follow ups or questions you guys have for us.



**Student** 07:46

People are adding to lists. [laughs]



**John Bellone** 07:48

It's fine.



**Ryan Van Patten** 07:49

Sure.



**Student** 07:50

How did you guys come up with your name? Were there other names that you had in mind? Or was this just, like, you automatically knew you were going to be NavNeuro?



**John Bellone** 08:01

It was just, yeah, the muses spoke through us. [laughs] No, we went back and forth on many different names. I don't know, we would both create a list and then text

each other back and forth. "What about this? What about that?" And some were not as good as others. [laughs] What was the...? There were a couple like...



**Ryan Van Patten** 08:23

I can't remember some of the others.



**John Bellone** 08:24

NeuroPsyched or Psyched About Neuropsych, you know, like stuff like that. [laughs]



**Ryan Van Patten** 08:29

Yeah.



**John Bellone** 08:30

Then I was looking for some alliteration and Navigating Neuropsychology, it kind of, you know...



**Ryan Van Patten** 08:38

We wanted a theme, too. So we've got the nautical theme. Ideally, the name would have some sort of theme that we could then incorporate into the logo and the website, and that would be catchy and would stick.



**John Bellone** 08:51

Yeah, yeah. So if you haven't seen the logo, it's a ship. Like an old wooden ship sailing in the silhouette of a brain and you get the water and the wind and the sky in there. So we thought there was a lot of potential for the name.



**Ryan Van Patten** 09:07

The idea being that we're navigating through the brain. Anyways. [laughs]



**John Bellone** 09:13

[laughs]



**Student** 09:14

You guys forgot your sailor hats. [laughs]



**Ryan Van Patten** 09:17

That would have been perfect. Yeah. [laughs] Keep the theme going.

**Student** 09:25



I feel like to pull something like this off, you almost need to have - you know, you definitely need to be creative. You also need to really have the initiative and the discipline to actually get something like this up and running. Do you guys feel like, as a team, you possess those qualities together? Is there somebody that's more of the creative mind, somebody that's more of the, you know, "we have to do this by this date". How do you guys work together as a team?

**Ryan Van Patten** 09:53



Yeah, that's a great question. Going off of John's story of how this got started, when he first brought up to me the idea of starting a neuropsych podcast, I was really excited. And then when I started to think about it, I was like, Well, I knew him fairly well, but not very well at the time. I thought, I'm definitely all in and sounds like he is as well. Because it has to be the right balance, like you said, right? I mean, it's a great idea but if the two people don't work really well together, it can be hard. As it turned out, I think we do work really well together. It's just been natural in terms of the evolution of the workload and how things have fallen out. We've both taken the lead in certain aspects of the podcast. John has taken the lead on the tech side, which is very work intensive and has required a lot of learning new stuff that you didn't know before. I've taken more of the lead on the content in terms of writing out the questions, often contacting the guests initially. Those are two big halves, or big proportions of the work. It's been natural. I could do the tech side and he could write the questions, and I think that would be fine. But we both prefer it as it is. It worked out well that way. We're both really motivated, I think. So that it's not like I'm dead weight and he's pulling me along I don't think.



**John Bellone** 11:20

I don't know about that. [laughs]

**Ryan Van Patten** 11:22



[laughs] I mean, it's enjoyable for us both. It's a hobby. It doesn't really feel like work so much, so that helps because that way neither of us has to drag the other one along or like try to motivate him. We both do it out of enjoyment. We tend to be pretty on top of stuff.

**John Bellone** 11:44



Yeah. And both of our personalities, it seems like we're people who, when we are super interested in something and motivated, we give it 100% and really dive into it. This is definitely our passion. Like Ryan said, we don't really view this as work so much. It's a fun hobby for us. All these topics are topics that we really are interested in and we want to learn about, so I don't see it as extra work. I see it as part of my clinical knowledge. I'm preparing for my ABPP exam now so it's all a part of the studying process.

**Student** 12:33



How do you find time? I mean, there's school stuff and family stuff and taking care of yourself and work. And how do you fit it in?

**John Bellone** 12:46



Well, luckily, we don't have school anymore. That's been done with. I don't think I could have done this in grad school, honestly, or even on internship. We had launched right as my postdoc ended and right as Ryan's internship ended. So I feel like we both had a little bit more time, nights and weekends, to work on this. But, yeah, neither of us has kids yet, which also probably helps a lot. [laughs]

**Ryan Van Patten** 13:15



No. It's a fair question. I think where I go is coming back to the idea that I allocate some of my free time to this because it's essentially a hobby. So we often work on it, like nights and weekends, but it's not like a drag. I still find time for other things outside of regular work and the podcast, other fun stuff from time to time.

**John Bellone** 13:45



[laughs] Once in a while.

**Student** 13:47



Did you have a background in recording or podcasting before doing this?

**Ryan Van Patten** 13:52



Nope.

**John Bellone** 13:53



Zero.



**Ryan Van Patten** 13:53

Not at all.



**Student** 13:57

How did you figure out how to do it?



**John Bellone** 14:00

Yeah, it wasn't easy.



**Student** 14:03

Do you guys read a lot? [laughs]

**John Bellone** 14:05

Yeah, for learning the audio part of it, it was really almost exclusively blogs and YouTube for me. [laughs] Same thing for the website. So it was incremental, like, Okay, what's the first step? We need to get microphones. And, okay, well, we need headphones and have to be up to a certain caliber, and what type of microphone - you know all those things. Each decision point took days of research and reading. I'm super frugal, so I don't spend money on anything unless [laughs] I know that it's going to be what I want and I'm sure about it. So there was that piece. And then each part of the recording is just another thing to learn. But, no, neither of us have any background and this was all just new learning. Same thing with the web design, that was also totally from scratch.



**Ryan Van Patten** 15:07

The timeline of this was that originally the idea first came up in April of last year, that's when we met and we decided that we were definitely going to do it. So we started all the background research and reading and we threw around a few launch dates. Ultimately, we ended up launching September 1. So there was quite a bit of work on the front end just, to your question, we hadn't done this before, So it was a learning curve. But we knew that once that work in the front end was done, and we were up and running, it would be a smoother, easier process. Now, it's just a matter of content every other week, and we're both used to our roles. We've done it for a while, so it's much more efficient now. We gave ourselves plenty of time, multiple months to get all that stuff done in the front end and learn everything.



**Student** 16:00



John had mentioned something like "Oh, well, we don't have kids yet, so we have some time" or something like that. Have you guys talked about what your goals are in terms of being able to sustain this podcast over time? Are you seeing it as just a hobby that you're going to take one day or one week at a time? Or is it something that you guys have a plan for in terms of how you're going to balance it when you do have those crazy monsters in your life? I have one so I'm allowed to say that. [laughs]

**Ryan Van Patten** 16:34



Yeah, great question. Mostly, we're focusing on the here and now, the next few months. We talk most about our upcoming episodes, the next 2, 3 or 4. And then we talked some about the next three or four months, but we've also thrown around the idea of what's the long term goal of NavNeuro and where do we want it to go? I guess, first, what comes to mind is that we definitely don't want this to just go for a year or a few years and then die off. We want to keep it up and running for as long as possible. I know I've come across podcasts that have been around for 5, 8, 10 years and continually put out content. So that's what I definitely want for NavNeuro. We understand life will get in the way at times. Luckily, we don't have a boss, you know. If something happened, we could put out episodes once a month for a while - I don't anticipate that'll happen, but we could always do that and that wouldn't be a big deal. But I'll say that long term, some potential options, I think either we will continue to host as we have for quite a long time well into the brunt of our careers. Or something else we've thrown around is after a while, maybe 5 years from now, we are at towards the midpoint of our careers and we get to know a couple of grad students who think NavNeuro is great and would actually be interested in taking it over. I would consider that. It's definitely not "the plan". But I would consider it being something that could be passed down to early career folks every 5 or 10 years, something like that, once the cohosts sort of move on. As long as good content is continually put out frequently and interesting topics are covered and NavNeuro lives on that would be my goal.

**John Bellone** 18:33



I think given the list of topics that Ryan and I have come up with so far, we'll probably have things that we want to talk about for decades. [laughs] I don't see any - definitely no end in sight. I mean, we can consider different possibilities, but like I said, we put a lot of work into getting this project off the ground, and money as well. So the web hosting the media hosting, music, audio equipment, especially Ryan's Hello Kitty microphone.



**Ryan Van Patten** 19:07

[laughs]

**John Bellone** 19:07



You can't see it, probably. But that wasn't cheap. [laughs] There's just so many expenses that add up. So really a lot of that a lot of the work and money is on the front ends. So I think that like Ryan said, we could maybe adjust how we do things or if we wanted to do shorter kinds of episodes once a month, and then one other longer one, that might save us some time. But yeah, we'll roll with the punches.

**Student** 19:38



I think this is such a great idea. As somebody that listened to podcasts for years, it's great to finally have something like this. It's really interesting, something that'll definitely push on my relatives over the holiday season.



**Ryan Van Patten** 19:49

[laughs] Thank you.

**Student** 19:50



One of the things that I wanted to ask related to that is increasing the visibility of the field. I'm sure you guys have experienced this and even somewhere here where neuropsych has a long history, we meet a lot of professionals who could benefit from a lot of things that we do that don't know anything about neuropsychology. So I think that increasing the visibility of our field is really important. And this is one great way to do this. I was wondering if you guys can think of any other, just off the top of your head, can you think of any other ways that you can increase the visibility? Are there other avenues? Should we start a Twitter account?

**John Bellone** 20:31



Yeah, I think there are a number of other things we can do. I think it's a shame that not many people know what neuropsychology is. Every patient that I sit across from I have to explain it because they have no idea why they were referred to me. And oftentimes the clinician who sent them also doesn't have a great idea of what we do, at least the ins and outs, which was one of the things that sparked our wanting to do the podcast. Our episode two explains neuropsychology for a non-neuropsychologist. So we wanted to lay it out for the lay audience. But, in terms of what else we can do, I think it's all about being creative and finding a problem that needs to be fixed. If it's holding seminars in your area, or going to a hospital and

giving a lecture on neuropsychology, or also just getting the word out to the public, so that they understand about brain health and lifestyle choices. I think there's so many things related to our field and what we know about cognitive health and physical health that could really benefit a lot of people. So I think it's just about being creative. Getting involved in local governments and advocacy work. Joining professional committees that do this kind of outreach. I think it's all about just finding those creative openings where your interests and your talents fit, and then and then put in the work.

**Ryan Van Patten** 22:11



My take on your question is that I think it's most important for referral sources and other health care providers that we might run into to know specifically what neuropsychology is and how we can help because they are the medium through which we see patients. So it's more important that the physician or other doctor knows about neuropsych so that he or she can refer patients to us and do that appropriately. In my mind, it's more important for the general lay audience - I'd love them all to know about neuropsychology, but I think that's not as crucial. What's more important for them is to know generally about things like cognitive decline, brain health, as John mentioned, just general cognition and health behaviors. When they might be concerned about a relative so that they take them to the doctor. Like, this person has known me for 30 years and then suddenly can't remember my name, that should definitely be a red flag. Everyone in the public should know those sorts of red flags to take a family member or spouse into the doctor's office. Then that physician hopefully knows about us, again, knows some details so that they know when it's appropriate to refer to neuropsych. I think that that's a really good model. Once we get that, then I would think more about, oh, can we educate everyone in the general public about neuropsych specialty?

**Student** 23:48



You're just talking about education and interacting with people who don't really have a really great sense of neuropsychology. How do you take that idea and apply it to this very podcast? When you're putting it together, what types of things are you considering to make sure that your audience understands and can follow along?

**Ryan Van Patten** 24:11



Yeah, that's a great question. I think a challenge to the podcast is similar to saying you're giving a talk and the audience for the talk could range in their knowledge and expertise from not knowledgeable at all to quite knowledgeable - that's how we think about our audience. I mean, we don't know exactly who's listening. It seems to

be primarily trainees, but people who listen to our podcast could be board certified neuropsychologists or they could know essentially nothing about neuropsych. So we've talked a lot about how we can serve multiple masters and make this relevant to people on the extremes and everyone in between. So I think about it similarly, again, to if I was giving a talk and my audience was quite varied in their knowledge. We try to shoot for the middle to some extent. We try to define terms, I think that's a big one. John's really good at that when we're launching into a new topic, we try to take the beginning part of the episode and really define terminology. We don't take too much time for that, but that way, we get everyone on the same page then hopefully we can proceed from there. And even folks who don't know as much about that topic can follow along a little bit better. Our episodes are also in more depth, and the length and the depth of the episodes I think helps us hit that span. So people who know nothing can learn the basics, but even people who know quite a bit about, for example, assessment and management of driving in older adults, we had a recent episode on that even if neuropsychologist who has seen patients and it's been relevant for them, we think that our episode will be helpful to that neuropsychologist and to someone who really has never thought about this before. I know I really enjoy the idea of explaining complex psychological and neurological topics to people, it's part of what drew me to clinical psych in general. We do that a lot in feedback sessions, right? So in some ways, NavNeuro is like a feedback session in terms of taking these concepts that we are very familiar with and explaining it in a way that hopefully someone who's less familiar could understand. Complex topics explained, hopefully, accurately, but also simply.

**John Bellone** 26:43



I think, yeah, it can be really difficult but it's crucial to learn how to talk to different audiences, not just as podcasters but in general as a professional. One of my mentors used to say that, if you can't explain a concept to a person of average intelligence, you really don't understand it. I think I think that's true. But learning to explain things to non-clinicians or researchers is a skill that definitely develops over time. I feel like I'm very much still in the learning process. I've found that using analogies and comparisons usually helps a lot. Like, for example, when I explained what executive functioning is to my patients, I had a lot of struggles for a long time trying to explain that. Then I started to think, "Okay, well, what's the best way to think of that?" And now I say that we have a part of the brain that acts like an executive, or a CEO of a company, and that's why we call them executive functions. And that part of the brain is involved in planning and multitasking and organizing, being flexible, thinking abstractly. So I think that comparison to a CEO really tends to help or at least it gets a lot of nods from my patients. [laughs] I think breaking down difficult concepts, both in the podcast form and just when you're speaking to

patients or clinicians or different levels of your audience, we're always going to be doing that. Researchers too very frequently have that task of not just writing a journal article for an academic audience, but then to translate it to the lay audience. I think that that's hugely lacking across research and scientists. I think we really need to get better at getting the word out to the general population.

**Student** 28:39



You talked a little bit in the beginning about being a podcast fan. Do you have any podcasts that inspire your style?



**John Bellone** 28:50

Oh, wow, yeah, we have a lot. [laughs]



**Ryan Van Patten** 28:51

Yeah. A long list.



**John Bellone** 28:53

Where do We start? You want to start?

**Ryan Van Patten** 28:57



I would say probably the podcast John and I talked most about is Waking Up with Sam Harris. If you guys are avid podcast listeners, I would 100% recommend it. Sam Harris is a neuroscientist and philosopher who now has transitioned and his entire job is based on hosting Waking Up. He covers a - I feel like this is an ad for Waking Up. [laughs]



**John Bellone** 29:22

[laughs]



**Student** 29:22

[laughs]



**Ryan Van Patten** 29:23

I promise I receive no royalties for this. This is purely my true thoughts and interest. But he covers a wide range of topics, from politics to economics to theoretical physics at times. He's very knowledgeable and interested in consciousness, I'm sure growing out of his days as a neuroscientist. I'm not familiar with his exact work

when that was his day job ,but he's just a great thinker. And he really pushes his guests. He has really good back and forth intellectual philosophical debates.

**John Bellone** 29:59



Yeah. I absolutely love Sam Harris and Waking Up but the first podcast that I ever stumbled upon was Radiolab which most people probably know if you listen to podcasts. You can't beat that podcast. The other several that I subscribed to are Skeptoid by Brian Dunning, challenges people to think critically and be skeptical about the pop kind of psychology and pop evidence and really be thinking critically about things. I have more of a bend towards finances, personal finances, one of my other hobbies. So, I listen to a lot of financial podcasts. ChooseFI, if anyone's interested in finances, that's my favorite. We could go on and on.

**Ryan Van Patten** 30:48



I'll just put in a few more plugs. Then I'll be done. My other favorite is Rationally Speaking. Julie Galef. It's also a philosophy podcast. Few other topics, a more general audience podcast is Stuff You Should Know. It's really good. And a really good politics podcast that I like is FiveThirtyEight.

**John Bellone** 31:09



No one's going to listen to ours now because we gave you all these other great podcasts. [laughs]

**Student** 31:16



I think it's interesting you brought Sam Harris up. I enjoy listening to his podcast as well. Did you have a chance to listen to his podcast with Ezra Klein, they talk about race and IQ?

**Ryan Van Patten** 31:25



It's been a while. Yeah, but I have. He's tackled that topic, the topic of IQ and intelligence several times. I know multiple things are controversial for Sam Harris. But that was one of them.

**Student** 31:36



Sure.

**Ryan Van Patten** 31:36



Yeah.

**Student** 31:37



How would you handle it if someone was essentially implying that you're racist because you're reporting the data that there are differences in cognitive performance?



**Ryan Van Patten** 31:49

Yeah.



**Student** 31:50

You guys thought this was going to be an easy talk. [laughs]



**John Bellone** 31:51

I know. [laughs]



**Ryan Van Patten** 31:54

I didn't know this was "grill John and Ryan." [laughs]



**John Bellone** 31:56

I didn't know this would go controversial. [laughs]

**Ryan Van Patten** 31:59

No. We opened the door, right? It sounds like you're asking if we were in Sam Harris's shoes and we're getting blowback after we give our best effort to try to handle the data in a scientific way. I mean, I think I generally like how Sam has handled those situations. I think that I would try to react non-defensively, I guess that's my first thought. That's really important. Even if I'm being attacked or called an -ist of some sort, I would try to stick to the data and the actual intellectual debate. I find debates or discussions like that to be really interesting. It's unfortunate when it devolves into a personal attack on someone. So if that was me, I would try to not take offense, not react defensively, stick to the data. If I felt very strongly about the findings, then I would just continue along those lines and not allow it to become some sort of back and forth and really emotionally charged, which is hard in terms of obviously being called a racist. That is very, very hard to hear. But I just think it's not helpful for listeners or either a participant in discussion if you're just throwing around those accusations. What do you think?





**John Bellone** 33:32

Yeah, I agree with everything Ryan said. I don't want to get into the topic specifically of IQ and race.



**Ryan Van Patten** 33:39

Yeah, I avoided that too.



**John Bellone** 33:41

We do want to cover it in a neuropsych context. And we actually have some plans, hopefully in the near future, to release an episode on specifically how to correct for cultural differences and acculturation and language and different IQ levels, how to correct for those or deal with them when we have patients that are different from the norm in the population. So we are going to cover that. But to your specific question, I think that we have to stick with the data wherever it leads us - good or bad. Whether we're expecting it or we want results there or not. And if anyone has a problem with the research, with the studies, if there are limitations, I'm totally fine with them pointing those out. But like Ryan said, getting defensive about someone broaching a topic, I don't see that as beneficial or leading to progress.



**Ryan Van Patten** 34:42

Yeah, I agree.



**Student** 34:44

Thank you.



**Ryan Van Patten** 34:45

Sure.



**Student** 34:46

You were just talking about difficult topics. Do you plan on maybe holding debates because it seems like so far there's a lot of introduction, which is necessary because like we talked about, not many people know a lot about neuropsychology. But as you move into deeper and deeper topics, there might be some controversies in the field. How do you propose tackling those topics? Maybe bringing two people in who have different opposing viewpoints? Or how is that going to go?

**Ryan Van Patten** 35:16

You guys are asking great questions. This is a really good one. We actually were just talking about this very issue last night. We definitely want to use that format that you described - more of a debate. So here's a topic that is controversial. There's arguments on both sides, there's probably data on both sides. And that could look different depending on what it is. So I can tease a few potential topics that could happen in the future. One is the postdoc system match, non-match. There are certainly a lot of strong opinions in neuropsych about that. John and I have opinions. So we've considered the two of us hashing it out. One of us taking one side, one of us taking the other. Reading up on it, hashing it out. We could also have guests on the show who have strong opinions and we could ask them questions. That's one. Another topic that's right for discussion is, I don't know if any of you guys were at INS last year, at the point-counterpoint on Alzheimer's disease and biomarkers and diagnosing it purely through biomarkers. So Adam Brickman, Joel Kramer, Mark Bondi, Cliff Jack, Jennifer Manly were all there. It was a really, really good talk. So we've considered that. Having several of those folks on NavNeuro to talk through arguments for Alzheimer's disease as purely a biological entity versus why we as neuropsychologists our leanis to really focus and hold in high regard cognition. So there are a couple ideas. We definitely will dive into the weeds on that. We were just laughing last night because we will record an episode and then afterwards, we will have an informal discussion about it. That's really a debate that we have just naturally. I'm like, "We should be recording these, you know." We had a little bit of this, like a tiny bit. [laughs] I'm going to call John out.



**John Bellone** 37:12

Oh, geez.



**Ryan Van Patten** 37:12

A tiny bit of this at the end of the driving episode with Jennifer Davis.



**John Bellone** 37:16

Oh, yeah. [laughs]



**Ryan Van Patten** 37:17

So John has this opinion, I can let him speak to it in a moment, but essentially, this idea of a driving age. I'll let John make his argument and then you guys can feel free to tell him he's wrong.



**Student** 37:34  
[laughs]



**John Bellone** 37:34

Listen to the assessing and managing driving in individuals with cognitive decline [episode]. We talked about a little bit of a controversial standpoint. Ryan and I kind of go back and forth.



**Ryan Van Patten** 37:47  
It's not controversial.



**John Bellone** 37:47

It is controversial. [laughs] I don't want to get into driving right now, but I think we are definitely looking towards moving to that format, at least for some episodes. I think this has been a building up process. We initially just started by finding people at Brown that we knew - Christine Trask and Jen Davis, Steve Correia, Geoff Tremont. Very great people and experts in their area. But now we've had some success, we have a pretty healthy listenership now, and we want to cast a much larger net, and cover some of these more difficult to talk about topics.



**Student** 38:33  
That was a nice dodge. [laughs]



**Ryan Van Patten** 38:35  
Thank you for pointing that out.



**John Bellone** 38:37  
Well, I don't want to tell Ryan how wrong he is in front of an audience.



**Student** 38:45  
I have a question, actually. Well, do we want to stick with these? Yeah, I won't distract us from the more linear process.



**John Bellone** 38:53  
[laughs]

**Student** 38:54



I have a question about content. It sounds like you have a lot of ideas. How are you choosing the content that you're hitting first moving forward, since you are growing the podcast and you're trying to pull more general interest? Is that going into your decision making process?

**Ryan Van Patten** 39:12



Another great question. I would actually say we're - it sounded like at the end you're asking about if we're choosing general interest topics first? And actually, I'd say we're trying to provide a good mix of topics that are more right in the wheelhouse of neuropsychologists like neuroimaging, driving to some extent, but then also give a good balance of topics that are a little more on the fringes or like definitely related to neuropsychology but just not something that we would typically think about. So the electrical injury episode is a good example. Pediatric cancer could be an example, I suppose. It depends. If you're a pediatric neuropsych trainee and working in a med center, then that's probably more of your day to day. I didn't know much about it. And then we've got an episode upcoming on the microbiome and how it impacts cognition and emotion, mental illness. So these, we both think that, if I was listening to a neuropsych podcast, I want to know what neuropsychologists know about topics that are not right in our wheelhouse, right? But to answer your question, how we're choosing upcoming content, we definitely have a very long list of potential topics. So there's a lot of factors that go into what comes next. Part of it is sort of serendipity, people we know, people we have contact with. Several of our episodes are based on talks we've gone to. Like, John went to Christine Trask's talk and out of that came pediatric cancer. I went to a talk in the microbiome, and that episode is up and coming. So some of it is just people we know, our exposure, but then we do have this long list. How do we prioritize, what do we want to release first? We contact people and based on their availability, go from there. So I'd say it's a mix.

**John Bellone** 41:07



Yeah, right. After grad school and internship and postdoc, I really can't sit through another Alzheimer's disease overview. So I think we want to really tackle topics that are going to hold people's interests. One of our tactics is to think of topics that we just really want to learn about, and then find the expert in that topic and ask them a hundred questions about it, which is why our episodes are so long. But we would much prefer to thoroughly cover a topic, rather than just having a 20 minute scratch the surface conversation. So far, we've focused on broad content types of topics. We'll definitely continue to do that to bring interesting broad topics, but we also

want to go over some more nuanced and specific things. The best way to calculate reliable change, or what test labels make the most sense, or some of those debates that we had talked about. The more nitty gritty types of topics.

**Ryan Van Patten** 42:07



I'd also like to say, all of you should feel free if you have ideas for episodes to shoot us an email. We're always open to hearing that out. We also factor that in. We've gotten emails from people requesting specific topics. Like they'd be really interested in hearing about CTE or something like that. So if any of you have strong feelings and would like to hear about something, again, it's [feedback@navneuro.com](mailto:feedback@navneuro.com). Yeah, tell us what your thoughts are.

**John Bellone** 42:35



We try not to leave anyone out. We factor the diversity of the audience into our decision also about what topics to cover. Try to alternate topics so that they cover different groups of practitioners and researchers. If we do a topic on peds one week, then we'll try to do something else the next week. Try to kind of balance it out.

**Ryan Van Patten** 42:57



Yep.

**Student** 42:59



I have two questions. First one is, have you guys had any "celebrity moments", so to say? [laughs] And then the second is, what [unintelligible].

**John Bellone** 43:14



I'm sorry, it was the second question?

**Student** 43:16



The second question was what was the biggest obstacle in getting this off the ground?

**Ryan Van Patten** 43:22



Both really good questions. No celebrity moments for me yet. [laughs]



**John Bellone** 43:32

I've had so many.



**Ryan Van Patten** 43:33

Everyone loves John. I'm just support. No, we've wondered what it will be like, at INS if people will know about the podcast or not. Regardless of whether our voices are recognized. [laughs]



**John Bellone** 43:50

[laughs]



**Ryan Van Patten** 43:52

Hopefully people are just getting good info from the episodes.



**John Bellone** 43:57

We're both pretty introverted and relatively modest. So I don't know. I don't want the spotlight.



**Student** 44:06

We're all getting autographs at INS. [laughs]



**Ryan Van Patten** 44:11

[laughs]



**John Bellone** 44:11

All right. \$10 a pop.



**Student** 44:12

[laughs]



**John Bellone** 44:16

Obstacles. I don't know what the main obstacle was. I think it was just the idea, the limiting belief that, "Who are we to do this?" We had to get over that. We all have crazy thoughts. "Oh, I want to start a business" or "I want to write a book" or "I want to do..." whatever. And then we think of a million reasons why that won't work, or we procrastinate and it just never gets done. But I think the main obstacle for me, and I see it in most people, is the gap between having the idea and then actually

doing it. Putting in the work that it takes to do [it] and then suppressing those limiting beliefs. Being reasonable and realistic about your abilities, but then too if you really are interested in it and you really feel like it's going to be a benefit to the field, like we thought, we just sucked it up, just put away all those beliefs that we couldn't do it or that we were just out of internship and postdoc, like, how could we start this? That was the biggest obstacle in my mind, I think.

**Ryan Van Patten** 45:33



There wasn't one task, one specific task that was overwhelming and that was the main thing, I'd say. It's a little bit like internship applications in my mind. There are a lot of tasks. So the sheer number of small tasks felt like a lot. And just maybe the unknown because there hadn't been a neuropsych podcast before so we didn't know how much work it would be if it would be realistic to keep it up and running while having day jobs. Then we had no idea if people would be interested in listening. I remember talking to John, like, what's the lower threshold? If we get, like, five downloads per episode would that be enough? I remember thinking, if it's even like 20 or 30. Words that I say are rarely heard by 20 or 30 people.



**Student** 46:20

[laughs]



**Ryan Van Patten** 46:20

So, even that number was okay. It's sort of like giving a talk, and it's worth preparing and putting in the work for it.



**John Bellone** 46:29

Yeah, definitely. Not to brag or anything, but we were absolutely blown away by the download numbers. We get stats through our media hosts and each episode has been listened to between 800 and 1500 times, and the number grows every day. We were beyond thrilled that we were reaching a very large audience. It's both national, but also international, on several different continents even. So we're getting a very broad listenership and way, way more than we could have ever expected. So yeah, super happy for that.



**Ryan Van Patten** 47:06

For sure.



**Student** 47:07

Sounds like your self therapy sessions went well and now you're seeing some success of it. [laughs]



**John Bellone** 47:14

[laughs] Yeah, it did.



**Student** 47:16

As a final question, I wanted to know what you guys will be presenting at INS so we know where to go for our autographs. [laughs]



**Ryan Van Patten** 47:28

Did you say where we'll be presenting?



**Student** 47:32

Or when you'll be presenting at INS?



**Ryan Van Patten** 47:34

Oh, well, yeah. So we're both attending. We don't have any posters, per se. But I guess I can tease. [laughs] So we've been communicating with the INS Student Liaison Committee. Our idea was to get a partnership. This is a student organization and they might be interested in partnering with us. So they've talked about, they host at least one social every INS and they talked about announcing that we would be there. [laughs]



**Student** 48:10

[laughs] Woo!



**John Bellone** 48:10

Party! Party at INS!



**Ryan Van Patten** 48:12

Student Liaison Committee social. I know I'll be around the conference all the time. I guess now you guys know what we look like. [laughs]



**John Bellone** 48:19

That's true. [laughs]



**Ryan Van Patten** 48:21  
Yeah, but we'd be happy...



**Student** 48:22  
We'll bring our WAIS manuals and get them signed. [laughs]



**John Bellone** 48:27  
That's awesome. Yeah, yeah. We'll be around. We'll also be announcing on the podcast we might have a separate meetup as well, I'm not sure yet. We'll have some announcements if you want to meet us and get some autographs, of course, you can. We'll tell you where we'll be at a certain point in the conference so that you can come meet us if you'd like to.



**Student** 48:49  
Cool. Thank you so much.



**Ryan Van Patten** 48:52  
Thank you guys. Really appreciate the great questions.



**Student** 48:54  
[applause]



**John Bellone** 48:58  
All right.



**Student** 48:59  
Go Gators! [laughs]



**Ryan Van Patten** 49:04  
Well, that was it for our meeting with the University of Florida students. We really appreciate their questions and their interest in what we're doing. If you have any questions for us, as always, please leave us a comment and our website at [navneuro.com/12](https://navneuro.com/12) or email us at [feedback@navneuro.com](mailto:feedback@navneuro.com). We definitely don't want to have NavNeuro to be the John and Ryan Show. So we would greatly prefer it if the topics and format were more crowdsourced. We certainly want it to be representative of what the full neuropsych community is interested in. So please reach out to us.

We also want to quickly mention that we have two new members of the NavNeuro team so we have doubled in size. Leslie Gaynor and Charles Moreno, both are University of Florida neuropsych grad students and part of ANST and they emailed us after the Q&A to see if there was any way that they could help out. So they'll be doing some of the behind the scenes work. We're very grateful to have them. We welcome them on board and they've already actually helped us out a great deal. So big thanks to Leslie and Charles. And that's all for today. Join us next time as we continue to navigate the brain in behavior.

**End of Audio** 50:14

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