

MAN ON FIRE PRESENTS  
**THE COMBUSTION  
CHRONICLES**

**EPISODE SEVENTEEN  
MINDSET TO TRANSFORM**

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GUEST: LUCIEN ENGELEN

**OCTOBER 14, 2020**

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**Shawn:** Welcome to "The Combustion Chronicles" podcast, where bold leaders combined with big ideas to create game-changing disruption. I'm Shawn Nason, founder of Man on Fire, and your host for "The Combustion Chronicles." Throughout this series, we're bringing together the most unique and influential minds we could find to have honest conversations about not being okay with the status quo, blowing shit up, and working together to influence our shared future. We believe that when bold leaders ignite consumer-centric ideas with passion and grit, the result is an explosion that creates a better world for all of us. I'm here with my co-host Michael Harper.

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**Shawn:** On today's episode, we're speaking with Lucien Engelen, CEO of Transform.Health, a leading global digital health strategist, member of "The Collective" at "The Washington Post," initiator and co-founder of The Health Innovation School, faculty in global health care and medicine at Singularity U, and former and founding director of the Radboud REshape Innovation Center, and a global public speaker on healthcare. We are so excited to welcome Lucien to the program today.

**Lucien:** Thank you very much. And you just left out that I'm a big, huge fan of you, Shawn. Thank you very much.

**Shawn:** Well, that is the most important one. Yes. Thank you.

**Lucien:** I think it is.

**Shawn:** I was trying to think back how many years ago. I think we met with a mutual friend of ours, Zayna, in Toronto at MaRS. And then for our audience to know, I had the privilege of traveling over while Lucien was still at the Radboud REshape Innovation Center in Nijmegen in the Netherlands. Had the honor to spend a week over there. And those of you that know me in person, I have actual personal body scars from my experience in Nijmegen, where I went tumbling on a bike and got to have an amazing time with Lucien's friends. But Lucien, I look at you as one of the leading thought leaders, strategist in healthcare. And you know so much in your mind about new technologies and what's happening in the health space. Just off of top of mind today, what is the newest thing that you think, "This is gonna really disrupt and transform healthcare?" Like, just today, what's on the top of your mind?

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**Lucien:** I think the answer, like, two months ago would completely be different than the one that I will give you right now. I think compassion, getting back into healthcare, going back to the basics of what's needed to deliver healthcare has been shown to us by this pandemic that takes the world by surprise right now. And I think that we're going back to basics, that doesn't include any technology, but it's more like, what is really important? And what really important is, is

personal relationships between professionals, nurses, physicians, but also other staff, and to the patient's family and informal care, I think.

**Shawn:** So, you started a movement a few years ago, even around patients first. You want to share a little bit about...I mean, you talk about this whole compassion piece, but this is really huge for you, Lucien. Can you share a little bit about this movement? And I actually got involved in a couple conferences because of what you started.

**Lucien:** I named that the Patients Included charter, so to speak. Back in the days, I think it was 2011, I was invited for a big conference in Dubai to speak to, I don't know, 200, 300 consultants from all big companies about what they said would be the next trillion-dollar market. And it was all about mHealth. Back in the days, we not only had eHealth but also mHealth, like Mobile Health. And we're still kind of still splitting all those things, but maybe that's something for later. And the interesting thing was that they kept bragging with all kinds of charts and numbers about that huge market opportunity that was in there. And me working at Radboud University Medical Center, I thought, "Wait a minute, if this is so huge, why isn't this on our radar on a daily basis right now?"

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So, I asked whether there would be professionals in the audience or that they consulted with, or even patients, and actually prior to the lunch, the word "patient" wasn't even mentioned once. So, during lunch, I tried to find professionals, and the only guy I could find was a dentist from India who, by the way, showed up at the wrong conference. And I still carry his business card because he was kind enough to sit in my session. And I said, "Guys, this is wrong. We're talking about people without them in the audience, on stage," or whatever. And in my flight back, I created this logo, Patients Included, and I promised myself never to speak again on conferences where patients would not be incorporated, either in the program, or in the committee, or in the audience, for free, or more to have them embraced in everything that's about them.

And that took off. My other big friends, e-patient Dave really took that also into the next level. And we tried to do a couple of things into it and then to respond with a couple of volunteers, created these first charters on that. Basically, let's be honest, it's shocking to see that the one who it matters the most to weren't sitting at that table. And that's also why I just said on your first question, in the end of the day, technology is great, and I'm a technologist, and I hope, a technology realist. But in the end of the day, it's all about relationships and about choice. People should be able to have some choice and that's also where technology could bring a role for you as a patient not to have to go to the hospital, for instance, if it's not needed, if you also can run it with a video conference or what have you.

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**Shawn:** Yeah. You know, Lucien, I remember learning more about this from you when I was over there in Nijmegen. And I think I was coming back, Michael and I were heading to a big

conference here that was all focused on patient experience. And I remember getting back to the States and calling them and said, "Can you tell me how many patients you have involved in the conference?" And they said, "Well, we have one doing a speaking keynote at the end of, like, the second day." And I remember being quite irritated at myself and then making a vow at that point, that same vow, like, "I'm not going to go speak at conferences around patient experience in particular, and there not be patients in the room."

**Lucien:** Yeah. The typical answer is that, "Well, we're all patients," you know, that's one of the typical answers that you might get into it.

**Shawn:** And it's still a huge struggle for us here in the States around that. And it's still kind of mind-blowing and sad to me at the same time, but I do wonder, Lucien, in this time of what we're facing and the change that's happening so rapidly in the world, if this whole notion of compassion, we as an organization have really started over the past month and the next few months to lean into, "What does compassion really mean to self, to industries?" I wanted to talk to you...we interviewed Zayna on the podcast and she said a statement that is still just rattling in my head around that healthcare is going to be in every industry now. And I would love to hear from your thought perspective, health strategist perspective, what do you think about that? Like, healthcare, health, this whole initiative is going to be in every industry, and what does that look like globally?

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**Lucien:** Yeah. So, first of all I totally agree. It's also one of my core principles in everything that I do. When I started to help Deloitte as one of their Edge fellows, I said, "I think in a couple of years from now 60% to 70% of all your clients will have a business largely coming out of health and healthcare. Because the switch that we are going to make is from healthcare into health." And that brings in this whole notion of cross-industry where all of a sudden banks chime in, like one of the examples that we have in the Netherlands, where a bank helps people with financial depth to spread it more evenly throughout the years. And they collaborate with healthcare insurance companies because they know that somebody with a high financial depth also has more healthcare expenditure. So, they collaborated in spreading the interest rates, and with that, giving it more at ease to the patients as such.

One of the other examples of, obviously, is what I like to call the future of food, where we see that we are now entering a new era also based on data-driven insights where personalized food, for instance, for somebody who suffers from cancer. Let's be honest, Shawn, if you would be admitted to a hospital for your chemo rounds, people will take great care of you. Nutritionist and everything, and all that you can imagine will be at your service. But prior to that chemo round at your own home and afterwards, you're on your own. And that's exactly where we now see that these cross-industry opportunities are embarking on, and then we're collaborating with a couple of big corporates to make that happen based on insight-driven aspects to make sure that you take the right nutrition to recover sooner or stay healthier longer as you can imagine.

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So that also brings in the notion of more preventive care. Let's be honest, if you would look into what drives your health, it's your DNA. It's where you've been born. It's your behavior. And only 6% of what drives your health is being determined by the medical interventions. Strange enough, almost 90% of all healthcare expenditure has been put in those 6% of it. So, we really should take a shift into it. So that cross-industry approach I've been bragging about for a couple of years, it touches the future of food, it touches the future of work, mobility, finance, retail, medicine, almost everything you can think of. And that's, I think, good news because healthcare up until now has been so silo-based, we've got different protocols and finance systems and legislation for every part of that, while the patient lives his journey of life, as opposed to that patient journey.

**Shawn:** Yeah. You're just hitting on so many things that we could so dive deep into here. But I love that whole, you know, 90% of expenditure is around that 6%. And we're just not cracking the nut and figuring out what's happening in that space. And you know, I remember speaking to a bunch of your leaders from Europe earlier in the year and their passion to really figure it out, and where Europe is trying to get a grasp on this, as I saw in the Netherlands. So all of this work that you're talking about, you actually launched something that I am still blown away with and hope that we can figure out how to bring it over here to the States and partner with UN. But you were the initiator and co-founder of the Health Innovation School. And I remember I got to sit through the first round of pitches, you know, as we were there in Nijmegen.

[00:12:02]

**Lucien:** Yeah.

**Shawn:** Can you tell us what was behind the thinking of the Health Innovation School, and what you were hoping for, and even what you would love to see for it here in the future?

**Lucien:** Yeah, well, first of all, the Health Innovation School was part of a 13-point plan that I presented to the Ministry of Health in the Netherlands, which was merely a couple of things that boggled my mind and I thought maybe we should grasp on that. And to name one was that there was, and still is, a lot of skepticism about Digital Health or eHealth, if you would like to call it that. People would say, "Well, it's not really operationalized, and da-da-da, and no research into it." Meanwhile, in the Netherlands, we saw pockets of that already exemplifying and doing great work. So, I said to the Ministry of Health, "Why not create a kind of a roadshow to go by in the Netherlands and to show people what already has been done and connect those people to it?" And that became the Dutch National eHealth Week. That was one of the examples.

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One of the other examples where we at 2015 changed the curriculum of medical students at Radboud University Medical Center, we said, "So it's great to start teaching and educating new

physicians. We also should do that for nurses. What could we do with the sitting group? How could we lead leaders of tomorrow, let's say, those that will be in charge in 5 or 10 years from now, really could understand how innovation works, learn from other industries, and for people across the globe, because healthcare is also globalizing with this digitization into it?" And that became the Health Innovation School. So, I got an okay from the Ministry of Health that they would join us, and it was going to be a joint venture between them and us, non-commercial aspects.

And that was also where I needed a real passionado to help me with that, and that's where I asked Zayna to come in and help me to set stage for that very first round of the Dutch National Health Innovation School. Meanwhile, we're now in 2020, already, 10 additions have been drawn regionally already in the Netherlands and we're now crossing that also into a couple of different countries, also in collaboration with Deloitte and some others. The thing that happened me for the Health Innovation School was threefold. I always like to talk about my three Cs. First of all, we needed to provide context to the leaders of tomorrow. How does finance work in healthcare? What is legislation doing? How could you really embark on a different way to innovate?

The second C was all about learning competencies. Let's make sure that we give them the competencies that in the end of the day, they're really good enough to embark on that. And the last one to me always was the most important one, to create a community. A community of people that are passionate about health and healthcare that in two, three, four, or five years from now, will be in leading positions and have that network of people to easy and with a low threshold be able to reach out to them. And that as of day one started to happen. Not only in projects, but also people quit their job, which, obviously, was not my intention, but jumped into a different position, and from that, pushed the needle further into it.

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**Michael:** Lucien, one of my favorite things about you is your passion. Just to hear you speaking about all these initiatives and just getting people excited, getting me excited about what the future could hold and what we can do. So, talk a little bit about what's driving that. Why are you so passionate about all of these trends and of the problems we're trying to solve here, right? There's gotta be something in you that's just making this all come to light.

**Lucien:** Wow. That's a really tough question. Well, first of all, it's not about me wanting to become a doctor, because I didn't want to become a doctor. I have to admit I wanted to become a nurse, to be honest. And I actually admitted to nursing school, but my dad back in the days decided to do differently because at our family business, we also had automotive companies and others, and I had to go to the automotive university in the Netherlands for that. And never regret that, by the way, but within our company where we had automotive companies, gas stations, funeral undertakings, but also ambulance services, EMS, Emergency Medical Services, and that always had caught my passion to see how we could help people in

the most vulnerable moments of their life and to make sure that we...to bring that as far as possible in the good sense of the word, of course.

That also brought in for me the opportunity to combine one of my other passions, technology, to see what technology could do to improve the systems of health and healthcare into it. And that gradually turned out to be my corner, so to speak, where I was able within ambulance services to create all kinds of new systems that also went nationally, in the end of the day, created new, big ambulance services through mergers and acquisitions, dispatch centers. And then after five years being the CEO, I went out to my control board and said, "I want to quit my job because I think what I can do for this organization has been done, and I now want to really spread it."

And that was where I joined Radboud University Medical Center for, originally I thought like 5 years, turned out to become 12 great years with a great ride with all kinds of very interesting peaks, upward and downwards, and lots of lessons learned to it. And so, basically, it's my way to contribute to maybe even to humanity. I don't want to make it sound too big, but I think everybody wants to create impact. And for me, this is the way that I can deliver impact combined with the impact that physicians and nurses, administrators, and people in supporting staff positions in healthcare, across the healthcare spectrum can do.

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**Michael:** That's amazing. That's amazing to hear that story and that flow. I guess what I'm wondering is knowing that that was your journey, what advice would you give to future leaders? To have the success and the passion that you've had?

**Lucien:** I think the best answer that I could give is one of the things that I had the opportunity to arrange during my tenure at Radboud University. When we've learned in a couple of projects that the answers and the needs that patients gave back to us that they had were almost totally different than the ones that professionals thought, I appointed the very first Chief Listening Officer in healthcare, Corine Jansen. Great woman. I still have great memories with all the time that we collaborated. And what she did is that from a non-professional medical background, she had the gift of listening to people unconditionally. And we started to do that at kitchen tables, and in the end of the day, in workshops. And what that learns to us is that next to all the medical advice and all the knowledge that you have as a professional, there's also these, maybe even, sometimes, needs that patients have, that seems not very important, but to the patient they are.

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So, combining those two to me always was the biggest lesson. The same I also learned to see what happens across the world. Listen to what is happening, for instance, on social media. You can listen in in tons of discussions, and I also have to be honest, it's getting tougher by the day with all this polarization that we see happening over and over again, but with the technology that is giving us, by social media, if you tweak it in a good sense, you're able to listen to the

needs of patients, family, informal care, the needs of staff, like nurses and physicians and other ones, and to combine that. So combining that with also the needs of listening to business, for instance, combining those three ways of listening to what's happening, gives you, in the end of the day, with some experience that you need to get up and running in a couple of years, for instance.

I would say the last listen would be the most important one. Listen to your gut. You can do tons of math and calculations and predictions and trend lines, and in the end of the day, to me, at least my gut feeling has steered me on the path that I've taken. Twice I've quit my job where I didn't have another job and look where it brought me. In your podcast show. So, the thing is that, be open for that, listen to your target audience, listen to the companies that are needed, but also listen to what's needed for yourself.

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**Shawn:** Thanks for all that tons of nuggets in there. So, thanks, Michael, for digging in with that.

**Shawn:** So, Lucien, you just recently wrote a blog called "Never before I've been so puzzled by the things I see happening in the world."

**Lucien:** Yeah.

[00:21:43]

**Shawn:** You want to tell us what the purpose and what you were thinking behind that? Because I read it this morning and there's some pretty powerful stuff in there.

**Lucien:** Well, like I just said, in terms of, I also tend to listen a lot in what's happening in social media, on all the aspects that come with my profession, and the projects, and the advisories that I can bring, and also to mold that into my keynotes, that I'm able to deliver globally. What happened to me at least over the course of the past, I'd say two months, I don't think it's related to COVID, but it's more like this is happening that I think many of those discussions started to become sour. And it seems like there's no middle ground anymore. It's like either-or, it's black or white, it's red or blue. And there is no nuances anymore. And that combined with all the discussions and debate about fake news and everything that goes with it, for me at one point turned me to register as one of the members of Snopes, the bunch of people that try to debunk fake news, whether or not.

And for me, that was a kind of a turning point, not because of becoming a member but more like, I said, "I can be taken away by everything that's happening, but what can I do?" And one of the things that I can do is I can get grumpy about the things that I see but maybe I also could help embrace and enlarge the good things that are happening. And that was also why in that blog I written, "If you see something that might not be out of the ordinary or might be evil, think twice too before you would try to share that." But if you see some of those great sharing examples and people reaching out to each other and helping with very small things, things that we see specifically in this COVID pandemic right now where a lot of things go back to humanity,

I really think that we also should think twice, but more like to share those twice. It really boggles me.

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How would our kids be able to discriminate what's real, or what's not real? It's getting tougher by the month. And actually in as all some other things that are written down, if we would be in the position as a couple, me and my wife, we would be, like, tens of years younger than we are right now and would be able to think about trying to get kids, maybe I would think twice. And that kind of share depends out of me when I got that thought on that. And that's why I written that blog about...at the end of the day, it should be about humanity and respect for everything that lies ahead. And we really should embrace all that.

[00:24:28]

**Shawn:** Yeah. And as you were just sharing that, Lucien, I've got the blog pulled up here and I really want the listeners to hear this last part you wrote, "On a daily basis, you can find and see great examples of loving people taking care of each other and awesome examples of kindness. Humanity and kindness still exist out there. Share those without blinking. Think twice before sharing evil, disrespectful, or polarized content. We will need humanity and respect for whatever lies ahead of us. Stay safe and remember, a small act of kindness can be a giant leap for humanity." Those are some amazing words for our listeners to hear, for the world to hear, and so appreciate that you shared your heart there. And what excites me, looking as you, as a global leader is you are writing what I've been writing in my heart in other words, but I see us as leaders in this space standing up and saying it's not about all the bullshit, it's not about all the rhetoric that's happening in the world. Like, fuck all that. But it's really about getting back to humanity and respect and people.

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**Lucien:** Yes. And that's also why the last sentence that I wrote in that blog as well, which is also a bit tongue in cheek, where I've written down, "May Darwin be right." And this is on purpose, because I also think that in the end of the day, if we as a species are able to adapt to all those new things, in the end of the day, with this respect and also humanity aspect of it, we will not only survive, but we will become better and we can leave a better place. And maybe this is just a glitch in history. I really hope so. And again, like I said, I see tons of great stuff happening and let's not forget that that's also true. And once you step into this social media arena, you easily could think about that that is representative for everything that happens in the world. Guess what? It's not. Social media is not representative for the things that are happening out there. They're emphasized in a totally different way, sometimes also in a wrong way into it. And that's also, for me, stepping out of that and taking social media blocking hours, and to go out and talk to people where you see that respect that still exists. And I thought that was appropriate enough to share.

[00:27:03]

**Shawn:** Awesome stuff. Before we get to our closing section here, I want to remind our listeners that Lucien also wrote an amazing book called "Augmented Health(care)" so get your pens out, write that down, "Augmented Health(care)." I remember reading that book and just the powerful look and revolutions that are coming in healthcare, so appreciate your thoughts there. So, Lucien, we've come to the last section of the podcast and we've made a little bit of a different section. We start this section called, "The Combustion Questions." You're going to get asked three questions, and being a digitalist, we use this amazing algorithm back there and that algorithm is Michael's brain. And so as we've been sitting here, he's jotted down three questions that we're going to ask you, and just want to hear your response, first thing that comes to your head as we go through these. And then I'll wrap up. So, Michael, "The Combustion Questions."

[00:28:06]

**Michael:** All right, Lucien, here are your combustion questions. Number one, if you had a pet turtle, what would you name it?

**Lucien:** Hmmm, Juvern.

**Michael:** That's a good name.

**Shawn:** Yeah. Tell us what that means now, Lucien.

[00:30:52]

**Lucien:** Well, I think Juvern was one of the people that explored, although it was in novels, the world and even a turtle with all the slow speed is able also to explore the world. For me, the meaning is more like, it's not about how fast you are. It's more like how good you are in adapting and absorbing everything that goes around you. And maybe even a turtle has a better way to absorb everything that's going around you.

**Michael:** Fantastic. All right, number two. What is your favorite smell?

**Lucien:** Spring in all its breadth. Seeing, hearing, smelling, feeling, new life coming about after a season that we all have to go through, which I also love by the way, winter. But my most favorite season is spring and smelling that always brings me great joy.

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**Michael:** Fantastic. And finally, number three, what do you think about snow cones?

**Lucien:** I sometimes have them and then I look to my belly and I think, "Hmm, maybe not the next time." (Michael and Shawn laugh)

**Michael:** Perfect answer.

**Shawn:** Perfect answer, Lucien. Well, thank you so much for being with us.

**Lucien:** Thank you, guys.

[00:29:36]

**Shawn:** You know, we could go on and on with your knowledge.

**Lucien:** We should.

**Shawn:** But we're looking forward to talking to you again, Lucien.

**Lucien:** Thank you very much. Stay safe and keep up the good work. Thanks very much, guys.

[00:29:46]

**Shawn:** Thanks.

**Shawn:** Thank you so much for listening to this episode of "The Combustion Chronicles." None of this is possible without you the listener. If you'd like to keep the conversation going, look up Man on Fire on Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, and at [manonfire.co](http://manonfire.co). Give us a shout. Let us know what you think. And please, subscribe, rate, and review if you like what we're doing and if you don't do it anyways. And remember, always stay safe and be well.