Notes from the Village

Building the trust network around your health data, one update at a time.

TrustMyOwn.Health Newsletter 017: Middle Seat

I sat in a middle seat last week. I hate middle seats.

"Going home?" asked the woman on my left.
"Yes, from a conference."
"Me, too."

Apropos of nothing, she pulled out her phone and showed me a mood tracking app from Yale. Attractive interface, colors and shapes that shift as your week goes. Then the person on my right leaned in with a menstrual cycle app. I must have looked receptive. Suddenly the three of us were swapping stories across the armrests.

"I heard that app data can be used against you."
"I tried to download my data once. I couldn't."

Full disclosure: my wife says my stories aren't true. She's literally correct. They're stitched together from moments that happened at different times, shaped to make a point. The middle seat, the two apps, and that conversation all happened. The rest is seasoning.

Here's the nut. Two people, two apps they liked, and the same two worries. Who else sees this? And can I get it back?

That's reasonable. Many health apps share what you enter with advertisers, data brokers, employers, or the investors who fund them. Something like cycle data, can feel personal in a way a step count doesn't.

Your health data belongs to you. That's the whole idea behind the vault we're building. But a vault is only as useful as what you can put in it. If your mood history or your cycle data is locked inside an app, it can't sit next to your medical records and wearable data when you or your care team need the whole picture.

So we're looking for partners. Apps that already behave the way our Data Sovereignty Covenant promises: nothing sold without your permission, and your data fully downloadable whenever you want it. Partnering with them is good for you, good for them, and good for us.

This is where you come in. Hit reply and tell me:

1. Which health app do you use and love?
2. How do you know it doesn't share or sell your data? Did you read the policy, hear it from someone, or take it on faith?
3. Have you ever tried to download your data? How did it go?

The good, the bad, and the ugly. All of it helps.

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One more small ask: when you read "Data Sovereignty Covenant" above, did it make sense? Tell me if it landed, confused you, or sounded too formal. We're still testing the name.

From seat 9B,
Danny