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I'm extremely excited to announce a brand new sponsor for the Behind the Shield podcast

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00:00:04,220 --> 00:00:06,540

that is Transcend.

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00:00:06,540 --> 00:00:10,560

Now for many of you listening, you are probably working the same brutal shifts that I did

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00:00:10,560 --> 00:00:12,520

for 14 years.

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00:00:12,520 --> 00:00:18,840

Suffering from sleep deprivation, body composition challenges, mental health challenges, libido,

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00:00:18,840 --> 00:00:20,540

hair loss, etc.

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00:00:20,540 --> 00:00:23,800

Now when it comes to the world of hormone replacement and peptide therapy, what I have

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00:00:23,800 --> 00:00:28,220

seen is a shift from doctors telling us that we were within normal limits, which was definitely

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00:00:28,220 --> 00:00:32,920

incorrect all the way to the other way now where men's clinics are popping up left,

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00:00:32,920 --> 00:00:34,560

right and center.

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00:00:34,560 --> 00:00:40,120

So I myself wanted to find a reputable company that would do an analysis of my physiology

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00:00:40,120 --> 00:00:45,320

and then offer supplementations without ramming, for example, hormone replacement therapy down

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00:00:45,320 --> 00:00:46,460

my throat.

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00:00:46,460 --> 00:00:50,780

Now I came across Transcend because they have an altruistic arm and they were a big reason

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00:00:50,780 --> 00:00:56,800

why the 7X project I was a part of was able to proceed because of their generous donations.

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00:00:56,800 --> 00:01:00,820

They also have the Transcend foundations where they are actually putting military and first

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00:01:00,820 --> 00:01:05,440

responders through some of their therapies at no cost to the individual.

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00:01:05,440 --> 00:01:11,000

So my own personal journey so far filled in the online form, went to Quest, got blood

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00:01:11,000 --> 00:01:14,720

drawn and a few days later I'm talking to one of their wellness professionals as they

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00:01:14,720 --> 00:01:19,140

guide me through my results and the supplementation that they suggest.

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00:01:19,140 --> 00:01:23,640

In my case specifically, because I transitioned out the fire service five years ago and been

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00:01:23,640 --> 00:01:28,800

very diligent with my health, my testosterone was actually in a good place.

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00:01:28,800 --> 00:01:33,320

So I went down the peptide route and some other supplements to try and maximize my physiology

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00:01:33,320 --> 00:01:37,760

knowing full well the damage that 14 years of shift work has done.

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00:01:37,760 --> 00:01:41,680

Now I also want to underline because I think this is very important that each of the therapies

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00:01:41,680 --> 00:01:45,080

they offer, they will talk about the pros and cons.

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00:01:45,080 --> 00:01:49,520

So for example, a lot of first responders in shift work, our testosterone will be low,

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00:01:49,520 --> 00:01:54,360

but sometimes nutrition, exercise and sleep can offset that on its own.

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00:01:54,360 --> 00:01:58,680

So this company is not going to try and push you down a path, especially if it's one that

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00:01:58,680 --> 00:02:00,360

you can't come back from.

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00:02:00,360 --> 00:02:07,760

So whether it's libido, brain fog, inflammation, gut health, performance, sleep, this is definitely

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00:02:07,760 --> 00:02:10,880

one of the most powerful tools in the toolbox.

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00:02:10,880 --> 00:02:17,800

So to learn more, go to [transcendcompany.com](https://transcendcompany.com) or listen to episode 808 of the Behind the

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00:02:17,800 --> 00:02:22,120

Shield podcast with founder Ernie Colling.

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00:02:22,120 --> 00:02:24,400

This episode is sponsored by InsideTracker.

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00:02:24,400 --> 00:02:30,020

And what makes me smile is before I even started my podcast seven years ago, when listening

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00:02:30,020 --> 00:02:34,880

to other wellness conversations, InsideTracker was always the company they recommended for

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00:02:34,880 --> 00:02:36,960

comprehensive blood work.

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00:02:36,960 --> 00:02:43,340

Well now in 2024, they have begun to offer a brand new first responder panel, which will

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00:02:43,340 --> 00:02:49,720

cover nine biomarkers hitting several of the pillars of health that affect us in uniform,

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00:02:49,720 --> 00:02:54,320

stress, heart health, metabolism and gut health.

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00:02:54,320 --> 00:02:59,640

Now after a very simple intake form, a blood draw, you will get the results sent to your

43

00:02:59,640 --> 00:03:06,720

computer, smartwatch, phone, not only detailing where you are on the scale from poor to optimized,

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00:03:06,720 --> 00:03:10,820

but also tips on how you can improve each of these markers.

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00:03:10,820 --> 00:03:17,060

Now this panel is usually \$310, but they are also offering first responders 30% off any

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00:03:17,060 --> 00:03:18,920

of their blood panels.

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00:03:18,920 --> 00:03:23,680

So that brings this specific panel down to only \$217.

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00:03:23,680 --> 00:03:28,120

Now I myself went through their ultimate, which is their comprehensive blood work, which

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00:03:28,120 --> 00:03:33,460

also includes micronutrients, hormones and other areas of overall health.

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00:03:33,460 --> 00:03:38,640

And I have to say I was absolutely amazed at firstly how easy it was, but secondly,

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00:03:38,640 --> 00:03:43,880

the comprehensive information I got and the actionable information on how to improve each

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00:03:43,880 --> 00:03:45,900

of my own biomarkers.

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00:03:45,900 --> 00:03:50,400

Now as with all my sponsors, if you want to hear more about InsideTracker, you can hear

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00:03:50,400 --> 00:03:57,020

my conversation with senior sales executive Jonathan Levitt on episode 887 of the Behind

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00:03:57,020 --> 00:03:58,540  
the Shield podcast.

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So to sign up or simply learn more, go to [insidetracker.com](http://insidetracker.com) and for the first responder

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00:04:04,200 --> 00:04:10,040

panel, the easiest way is to Google InsideTracker first responder panel.

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00:04:10,040 --> 00:04:15,840

This episode is sponsored by a company I've used for well over a decade and that is 511.

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00:04:15,840 --> 00:04:21,260

I wore their uniforms back in Anaheim, California and have used their products ever since.

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00:04:21,260 --> 00:04:27,440

From their incredibly strong yet light footwear to their cut uniforms for both male and female

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00:04:27,440 --> 00:04:32,680

responders, I found them hands down the best workwear in all the departments that I've

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00:04:32,680 --> 00:04:33,680

worked for.

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00:04:33,680 --> 00:04:38,200

Outside of the fire service, I use their luggage for everything and I travel a lot and they

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are also now sponsoring the 7X team as we embark around the world on the Human Performance

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00:04:44,440 --> 00:04:45,440

project.

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00:04:45,440 --> 00:04:49,560

We have Murph coming up in May and again I bought their plate carrier.

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00:04:49,560 --> 00:04:54,560

I ended up buying real ballistic plates rather than the fake weight plates and that has been

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00:04:54,560 --> 00:04:58,400

my ride or die through Murph the last few years as well.

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00:04:58,400 --> 00:05:02,340

One area I want to talk about that I haven't in previous sponsorship spots is their brick

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00:05:02,340 --> 00:05:04,180

and mortar element.

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00:05:04,180 --> 00:05:08,880

They were predominantly an online company up till more recently but now they are approaching

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00:05:08,880 --> 00:05:11,620

100 stores all over the US.

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00:05:11,620 --> 00:05:16,680

My local store is here in Gainesville Florida and I've been multiple times and the discounts

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00:05:16,680 --> 00:05:19,940

you see online are applied also in the stores.

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00:05:19,940 --> 00:05:26,560

So as I mentioned 511 is offering you 15% off every purchase that you make but I do

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00:05:26,560 --> 00:05:31,640

want to say more often than not they have an even deeper discount especially around

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00:05:31,640 --> 00:05:33,240

holiday times.

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00:05:33,240 --> 00:05:43,200

But if you use the code SHIELD15 you will get 15% off your order or in the stores every

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00:05:43,200 --> 00:05:45,040

time you make a purchase.

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00:05:45,040 --> 00:05:50,360

And if you want to hear more about 511, who they stand for and who works with them, listen

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00:05:50,360 --> 00:05:58,280

to episode 580 of Behind the Shield podcast with 511 regional director Will Ayers.

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00:05:58,280 --> 00:05:59,840

Welcome to the Behind the Shield podcast.

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00:05:59,840 --> 00:06:03,320

As always my name is James Gearing and this week it is my absolute honor to welcome on

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00:06:03,320 --> 00:06:10,360

the show EMT and the author of Becoming a Mental Health Warrior, Bruce Schutter.

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00:06:10,360 --> 00:06:15,440

Now in this conversation we discuss a host of topics from Bruce's journey into volunteer

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00:06:15,440 --> 00:06:22,200

rescue at a very early age, the impact of trauma on a young mind, his addiction journey

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00:06:22,200 --> 00:06:29,160

through both consumerism and alcohol, his arrests and psychiatric holds, the powerful



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00:06:29,160 --> 00:06:35,280

paradigm shift that he himself experienced, his journey of post-traumatic growth, how

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00:06:35,280 --> 00:06:41,080

he developed programs to help other people overcome their addictions and so much more.

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00:06:41,080 --> 00:06:45,520

Now before we get to this incredibly important and powerful conversation as I say every week

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00:06:45,520 --> 00:06:50,320

please just take a moment, go to whichever app you listen to this on, subscribe to the

92

00:06:50,320 --> 00:06:54,200

show, leave feedback and leave a rating.

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00:06:54,200 --> 00:06:59,140

Every single 5 star rating truly does elevate this podcast therefore making it easier for

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00:06:59,140 --> 00:07:06,020

others to find and this is a free library of almost 900 episodes now.

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00:07:06,020 --> 00:07:11,600

So all I ask in return is that you help share these incredible men and women stories so

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00:07:11,600 --> 00:07:17,040

I can get them to every single person on planet earth who needs to hear them.

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00:07:17,040 --> 00:07:22,040

So with that being said I introduce to you Bruce Schutter.

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00:07:22,040 --> 00:07:41,480

Enjoy.

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00:07:41,480 --> 00:07:46,280

Well Bruce I want to start by saying firstly thank you to your wife Lee who I think originally

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00:07:46,280 --> 00:07:51,140

reached out to kind of educate me on some of the stuff that you were doing, your story

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00:07:51,140 --> 00:07:55,840

and your books and secondly of course I want to welcome you to the Behind the Shield podcast

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00:07:55,840 --> 00:07:56,960

today.

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00:07:56,960 --> 00:08:00,840

Thank you very much and yes I do depend on her, she is very good at all the details,

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00:08:00,840 --> 00:08:04,200

she's a marketing manager so she hits all those details.

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00:08:04,200 --> 00:08:09,040

I always come up with the ideas so we work well together but thank you for working with

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00:08:09,040 --> 00:08:10,560

her to set all this up.

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00:08:10,560 --> 00:08:12,120

Yeah no I'm glad to have you.

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00:08:12,120 --> 00:08:15,480

So where on planet earth are we finding you today?

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00:08:15,480 --> 00:08:21,680

We are in Charlotte, North Carolina and it is actually cold today which is an anomaly.

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00:08:21,680 --> 00:08:27,040

Now I say that with a little bit of a chuckle because prior to this in the last year we

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00:08:27,040 --> 00:08:31,040

were out in Wisconsin where this wouldn't even be a blip on the radar, it would be like

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00:08:31,040 --> 00:08:35,600

let's go out in shorts but for North Carolina everybody's shutting down the schools and

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00:08:35,600 --> 00:08:36,600

it's cold.

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00:08:36,600 --> 00:08:38,800

Yeah, yeah I know we've got a cold band coming our way.

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00:08:38,800 --> 00:08:43,120

I think the windchill which is Florida so even further south is supposed to be like

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00:08:43,120 --> 00:08:44,120

15 degrees tonight.

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00:08:44,120 --> 00:08:48,760

So yeah I don't think people realize some of our warm states can get a little chilly

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00:08:48,760 --> 00:08:49,760

sometimes.

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00:08:49,760 --> 00:08:51,880

Exactly, exactly.

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00:08:51,880 --> 00:08:55,120

So I would have to start at the very beginning of your story.

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00:08:55,120 --> 00:08:58,680

So tell me where you were born and tell me a little bit about your family dynamic, what

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00:08:58,680 --> 00:09:01,080

your parents did, how many siblings.

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00:09:01,080 --> 00:09:07,080

Okay, well I was born in Millsville, Pennsylvania so outside of Lancaster's really the biggest

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00:09:07,080 --> 00:09:09,040

town.

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00:09:09,040 --> 00:09:13,180

Mom and dad, mom was a nurse and worked in the medical field, different areas of being

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00:09:13,180 --> 00:09:16,000

a nurse at a hospital and different things.

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00:09:16,000 --> 00:09:21,680

My dad was a chemical engineer and worked at Armstrong actually in Millsville and have

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00:09:21,680 --> 00:09:26,740

a sister also and she's now a school teacher outside of Raleigh.

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00:09:26,740 --> 00:09:31,840

So we've somehow all managed and my parents retired on the western part of North Carolina

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00:09:31,840 --> 00:09:35,720

so somehow after traveling around and being in all these different states we all ended

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00:09:35,720 --> 00:09:41,440

up together in North Carolina now which is kind of interesting.

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00:09:41,440 --> 00:09:49,480

Really a kind of small town, raised up, this is going to be in the born in 67 so 60's,

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00:09:49,480 --> 00:09:53,040

70's really, going to high school there.

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00:09:53,040 --> 00:09:56,920

We moved in 6th grade and that was probably like a biggest life change and I say that

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00:09:56,920 --> 00:09:59,160

because we moved to north of Philly.

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00:09:59,160 --> 00:10:05,840

So went from this small rural area, lots of farms, very slow pace of life to a more hectic

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00:10:05,840 --> 00:10:10,840

pace of life but also a lot more opportunities and I think that's where all of us started

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00:10:10,840 --> 00:10:18,600

to do different things and explore different things which kind of I feel like I had my

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00:10:18,600 --> 00:10:23,360

early childhood where you start out and you're in first through 6th grade and then all of

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00:10:23,360 --> 00:10:29,200

a sudden everything is uprooted and you have to learn a new area, you face all these challenges

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00:10:29,200 --> 00:10:34,240

but at the same time the interesting part is throughout all of this I always felt like

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00:10:34,240 --> 00:10:36,760

there was something different going on.

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00:10:36,760 --> 00:10:42,040

I kind of always was swinging with my emotions, I was always anxious and nervous about a lot

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00:10:42,040 --> 00:10:47,160

of things but it's not that anybody is following, there wasn't even the information there is

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00:10:47,160 --> 00:10:51,720

today and it was just like you just thought maybe that's just the way the kid is for

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00:10:51,720 --> 00:10:56,520

now and it's just interesting because when I look back at so many things you realize

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00:10:56,520 --> 00:11:02,680

boy it was starting earlier, the mental health challenges, disorders that I have and at the

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00:11:02,680 --> 00:11:08,160

same time I don't think anybody in any of these areas really knew or had the information

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00:11:08,160 --> 00:11:13,960

we have today so it was a lot of guesswork, things like that.

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00:11:13,960 --> 00:11:18,760

So I want to get to other areas of your early life but while we're on the subject and obviously

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00:11:18,760 --> 00:11:25,860

your work now is completely involved when it comes to the mental health, I have been

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00:11:25,860 --> 00:11:33,060

educated to the power of elements of childhood trauma when it comes to people struggling

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00:11:33,060 --> 00:11:38,200

in adulthood and obviously a lot of people listening to this were wearing uniforms so

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00:11:38,200 --> 00:11:44,160

our struggles are attributed to our time deployed in whatever battle zone it was or our time

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00:11:44,160 --> 00:11:49,920

as a first responder or a police officer and we kind of forget about the formative years,

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00:11:49,920 --> 00:11:54,160

the first 18, 20, 25 whatever it was until we put that uniform on.

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00:11:54,160 --> 00:12:00,720

When you look back now, were there any elements of your upbringing that you think were precursors

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00:12:00,720 --> 00:12:03,440

to some of the struggles that you had later in life?

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00:12:03,440 --> 00:12:10,380

Oh absolutely, that's where I'm trying to, it's not a blame thing, it's looking back

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00:12:10,380 --> 00:12:14,880

in that introspection and there were things that you did as a kid in both places, I was

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00:12:14,880 --> 00:12:20,280

in Scouts and I got selected to be part of this honor guard with the Scouts and we would

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00:12:20,280 --> 00:12:24,280

present and carry in flags at the beginning of all these events for all these different

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00:12:24,280 --> 00:12:29,400

places, there's lots of camps and things and we made a mistake a couple times but to

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00:12:29,400 --> 00:12:34,880

me I was horrified and the reliving of that, the anxiety almost stopped me from wanting

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00:12:34,880 --> 00:12:36,200

to be part of things.

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00:12:36,200 --> 00:12:41,240

I faced big crowds and you'd go to things like going to church or going to a youth group

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00:12:41,240 --> 00:12:47,000

and the size of the groups or sometimes the size of the congregation or something small,

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00:12:47,000 --> 00:12:50,920

I didn't realize it at the time but I was always on edge if you will, I was always that

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00:12:50,920 --> 00:12:56,960

nervousness but I combined it with, I was always growing up with people and people like

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00:12:56,960 --> 00:13:02,680

for example my mom was in the medical field and nurse so I got comfortable with learning

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00:13:02,680 --> 00:13:07,040

some of those lessons and hearing stories from working in a hospital or being in a hospital

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00:13:07,040 --> 00:13:08,880

and treating sick people.

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00:13:08,880 --> 00:13:14,080

So you learn a little bit but you weren't sure what to do with it and at the same time

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00:13:14,080 --> 00:13:18,760

I could see these things happening, I knew nothing but the emotional extremes.

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00:13:18,760 --> 00:13:25,100



Even once we moved I think I became more aware so 8th, 9th grade I'm seeing all I am is

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00:13:25,100 --> 00:13:29,760

completely happy and everything's perfect or I'm completely depressed even for no reason,

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00:13:29,760 --> 00:13:33,720

could have had the greatest weekend but then I turn on a dime and I'm depressed.

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00:13:33,720 --> 00:13:37,480

At that time I thought boy I am just really wired different.

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00:13:37,480 --> 00:13:42,440

Now there's some truth to it but I also didn't realize why or what I could do about it so

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00:13:42,440 --> 00:13:47,280

it was a bit debilitating I guess is what I'm trying to say and I started to see those

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00:13:47,280 --> 00:13:53,920

precursors where I'm like boy it's limiting some of the things I want to do but I'm also

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00:13:53,920 --> 00:13:55,360

still going after things.

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00:13:55,360 --> 00:13:59,580

So I'm pushing it and I'm actually fighting those things and I guess I'm building up my

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00:13:59,580 --> 00:14:03,560

own tools and solutions without realizing it but they're not very good ones at that

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00:14:03,560 --> 00:14:04,560

point.

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00:14:04,560 --> 00:14:07,640

Now did you have any acute events when you were early?

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00:14:07,640 --> 00:14:14,320

The reason I ask, it was funny I wrote a book about 3 years ago and as I did I literally

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00:14:14,320 --> 00:14:18,000

unlocked a little door in my mind that I had forgotten that I was in a house fire when

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00:14:18,000 --> 00:14:23,960

I was a little boy at 4 years old and my sister who was 8 basically got us out and as a fireman

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00:14:23,960 --> 00:14:28,240

now looking back we would have died in that fire, there's no question that she hadn't

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00:14:28,240 --> 00:14:31,440

got us out at that moment and so there was that event.

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00:14:31,440 --> 00:14:36,520

We discovered later that my parents marriage was far from idyllic so I'm sure there was

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00:14:36,520 --> 00:14:42,120

some subconscious stuff going there but I became a very anxious child when I look back

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00:14:42,120 --> 00:14:46,320

now I didn't realize at the time but I was a bed wearer until quite late.

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00:14:46,320 --> 00:14:51,040

I would have night terrors from hell, I'd wake up covered in plastic because I'd been

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00:14:51,040 --> 00:14:55,400

punching the angled ceiling because I was in the loft.

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00:14:55,400 --> 00:15:00,360

So now when I look back it's plain as day but I could definitely factor in some of those

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00:15:00,360 --> 00:15:05,340

that were probably when they were left unaddressed were haunting me and then obviously they became

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00:15:05,340 --> 00:15:06,800

a dress later in life.

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00:15:06,800 --> 00:15:10,920

Were there any acute events or was it more kind of death by a thousand cuts or what was

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00:15:10,920 --> 00:15:11,920

your perspective now?

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00:15:11,920 --> 00:15:16,160

No, no, no it's interesting you bring that up because you actually just triggered in

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00:15:16,160 --> 00:15:21,840

myself thinking about that that before we moved I always had trouble sleeping and I

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00:15:21,840 --> 00:15:28,000

did have these horrible night terrors not associating that with bipolar or even anxiety

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00:15:28,000 --> 00:15:32,960

and at the time it drove my parents almost crazy because they didn't know what to do

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00:15:32,960 --> 00:15:40,160

and it was almost at that point too a psychiatrist therapy was looked at a last resort and it

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00:15:40,160 --> 00:15:44,040

wasn't anybody doing it intentionally saying well we're going to send you to that it's

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00:15:44,040 --> 00:15:47,700

horrible but it wasn't treated like you could go there and get some help it was more

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00:15:47,700 --> 00:15:52,560

like the final resort so of course we didn't do it I viewed it more like a threat at the

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00:15:52,560 --> 00:15:57,680

time but you're right what happened was I had all these nightmares all these problems

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00:15:57,680 --> 00:16:02,640

sleeping and then the anxiety just kept building and by the time we moved and then I got into

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00:16:02,640 --> 00:16:07,800

like a middle school you're right I could definitely see it was shaping things and there

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00:16:07,800 --> 00:16:13,160

were a lot of events they were those small ones where you know when I'd get very depressed

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00:16:13,160 --> 00:16:17,700

or fly off the handle if you will the emotions just didn't have control so there were lots

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00:16:17,700 --> 00:16:22,800

of little fights that I got into with even friends sometimes and things where I just

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00:16:22,800 --> 00:16:26,960

never knew how to work through things and it would just spiral out of control you know

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00:16:26,960 --> 00:16:32,720

and I look back now and you're right these are definitely signs but at the time there

218

00:16:32,720 --> 00:16:37,560

was nothing to look it up in you know I mean the closest we had and again even with my

219

00:16:37,560 --> 00:16:42,240

mom being in the medical field you had the PDR the physician's desk reference book

220

00:16:42,240 --> 00:16:45,960

there's about this big you know this thick and you could look something up then that

221

00:16:45,960 --> 00:16:50,120

was a real secret if you knew somebody in the medical field whereas today you know you

222

00:16:50,120 --> 00:16:55,680

could go online and get about a thousand pages information so yes it definitely affected

223

00:16:55,680 --> 00:17:01,000

a lot of things but you're right I didn't see any of them in a total picture until much

224

00:17:01,000 --> 00:17:08,160

later so what were you playing as far as sports or were there other things that you found

225

00:17:08,160 --> 00:17:12,320

that were the kind of the healthy outlet for you as you were growing through the school

226

00:17:12,320 --> 00:17:20,160

ages well then what I did was so I was in track and field I tried wrestling I love sports

227

00:17:20,160 --> 00:17:26,000

but I tended to gravitate towards more the singular ones I played tennis but I also loved

228

00:17:26,000 --> 00:17:31,640

a bike ride and I got into biking and throughout all of high school and then even into college

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00:17:31,640 --> 00:17:38,360

I got into the triathlons and biathlons so it was a great outlet because when I would

230

00:17:38,360 --> 00:17:44,480

get so frustrated or so wired up I could go on a 20 mile bike ride I could use those sports

231

00:17:44,480 --> 00:17:48,720

now they weren't a lot of the high school ones I tried some of the high school sports

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00:17:48,720 --> 00:17:53,020

and I did do like track and field obviously I was on a runner but I was doing the shot

233

00:17:53,020 --> 00:17:58,440

put and doing some of the things like the high jump things like that but I used them

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00:17:58,440 --> 00:18:03,800

as the outlet not even realizing how important that was I just knew I really loved it and

235

00:18:03,800 --> 00:18:10,200

found that peace and solitude doing that the reason I say that is that a lot of what you're

236

00:18:10,200 --> 00:18:16,280

talking about it was like here I am at ninth grade going into tenth and that's when I

237

00:18:16,280 --> 00:18:20,760

found somebody who was on the rescue squad and that's when I went and signed up and

238

00:18:20,760 --> 00:18:27,960

joined so I was in first year of tenth grade and I went into this whole new world and it

239

00:18:27,960 --> 00:18:34,040

was kind of like suddenly I have two worlds you know and I'm up here in this really professional

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00:18:34,040 --> 00:18:40,080

life and death type world and I'm in high school still in middle school and so I guess

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00:18:40,080 --> 00:18:45,000

the long answer I'm giving is I like to be involved I'm very interested in learning

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00:18:45,000 --> 00:18:49,720

things and doing things so I was involved in a million things and I never did anything

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00:18:49,720 --> 00:18:57,220

halfway and at the same time with my bipolar disorder anxiety they also didn't do things

244

00:18:57,220 --> 00:19:01,720

halfway and they were always pushing me to that extreme too which sometimes was a good

245

00:19:01,720 --> 00:19:04,360

push and sometimes wasn't.

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00:19:04,360 --> 00:19:08,680

So talk to me about that you're only 15 16 years old and you find yourself in the world

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00:19:08,680 --> 00:19:13,000

of the volunteer rescue service so firstly normally when you hear volunteer they say

248

00:19:13,000 --> 00:19:19,000

fire service specifically so what did that role entail and then walk me through your

249

00:19:19,000 --> 00:19:21,160

journey through the front door?

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00:19:21,160 --> 00:19:26,520

So I knew somebody that knew somebody else who was a year older so I'm in tenth grade

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00:19:26,520 --> 00:19:30,160

they knew somebody who was in eleventh and they were part of the volunteer rescue squad

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00:19:30,160 --> 00:19:34,320

now definitely you're right most places it's together it's the fire department and the

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00:19:34,320 --> 00:19:39,240

ambulance but in Yardley there were two separate groups and they were literally like three

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00:19:39,240 --> 00:19:44,960

streets away so there was the ambulance place it was a small building with about five ambulances

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00:19:44,960 --> 00:19:49,040

in total and then there's the fire department with all the fancy toys and all the bigger

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00:19:49,040 --> 00:19:53,680

equipment and I'm just saying as a joke because it was a big kind of competition always we

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00:19:53,680 --> 00:19:58,880

worked together but because we were literally separate I focused and I joined the rescue

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00:19:58,880 --> 00:20:03,960

squad and I started to know people there who are also in high school in some of the various

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00:20:03,960 --> 00:20:10,000

schools so at 16 I went in and I got certified with the basic first aid CPR and I started

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00:20:10,000 --> 00:20:15,920

riding as a tech so there'd be the EMT the driver and then two techs if you could to

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00:20:15,920 --> 00:20:21,360

have a full crew and so here I go I sign up I get all trained and it started out with

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00:20:21,360 --> 00:20:25,240

a bang and never slowed down for the next five years.



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00:20:25,240 --> 00:20:30,960

My first call we went out on and it was somebody I had a heart attack we had to do CPR and

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00:20:30,960 --> 00:20:37,800

to this day I can still remember the poor woman was in her 90s and I broke her rib and

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00:20:37,800 --> 00:20:42,920

this was my very first call very first experience and it was kind of like I was so worried about

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00:20:42,920 --> 00:20:47,520

hurting her and people had to remind me you're doing CPR to save her life a broken rib is

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00:20:47,520 --> 00:20:51,680

going to be the least of her concerns you know and as a kid or even starting this you're

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00:20:51,680 --> 00:20:57,720

like boy I really don't have the perspective but it was like it was so interesting and

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00:20:57,720 --> 00:21:02,440

so fascinating and so real and again I'm always looking for the experiences and always

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00:21:02,440 --> 00:21:06,920

looking to try things and I had some other friends as I got to know them that were all

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00:21:06,920 --> 00:21:12,200

in high school in the fire department and in the ambulance and sometimes on both so

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00:21:12,200 --> 00:21:15,840

you know how it is you get hooked into that group and the next thing you know your focus

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00:21:15,840 --> 00:21:18,840

is completely on that.

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00:21:18,840 --> 00:21:23,480

It was really interesting because I just kept learning and growing within that while at

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00:21:23,480 --> 00:21:29,360

the same time I'm going through high school and I'm living that dual world where I'm splitting

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00:21:29,360 --> 00:21:34,160

weekends or nights you know depending on if in the quote unquote real world or in the

277

00:21:34,160 --> 00:21:37,640

high school world it was quite interesting.

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00:21:37,640 --> 00:21:41,920

Now what about the age it's funny I've just been doing some research for the book I'm

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00:21:41,920 --> 00:21:49,320

writing now and the age to enroll in the military in the UK is only 16 we graduate high school

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00:21:49,320 --> 00:21:55,400

in 16 and you know which I think is the only country in the world or maybe in the western

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00:21:55,400 --> 00:22:00,040

world that has it that low and then when you start to learn more and more about neurosciences

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00:22:00,040 --> 00:22:05,840

excuse me neuroscience we're realizing that these young brains even 18, 19, 20 are still

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00:22:05,840 --> 00:22:09,960

developing and therefore you know some of the trauma that we're exposed to can be more

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00:22:09,960 --> 00:22:13,280

detrimental to these young minds.

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00:22:13,280 --> 00:22:17,580

What's your perspective now on how old you were when you started being exposed to a lot

286

00:22:17,580 --> 00:22:19,240

of these calls?

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00:22:19,240 --> 00:22:26,000

Well I like to so I started at 16 and within a year I knew I wanted to become an EMT and

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00:22:26,000 --> 00:22:30,920

in Pennsylvania had to be 18 but we were right on the border literally the river that divides

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00:22:30,920 --> 00:22:35,720

New Jersey and Pennsylvania was the end of the street and so you could be certified as

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00:22:35,720 --> 00:22:41,240

an EMT in New Jersey at 17 so myself and two others went over there because we knew we

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00:22:41,240 --> 00:22:47,200

kept reciprocity to then be an EMT on the squad at 17 so I thought well this would be

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00:22:47,200 --> 00:22:53,680

fantastic literally did I not realize I am jumping full on into this what I call the

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00:22:53,680 --> 00:23:00,600

deep end of the life pool and yes I was completely unprepared and the funny thing was now looking

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00:23:00,600 --> 00:23:06,080

back but even then people that were older in their 20s and 30s doing this or had a more

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00:23:06,080 --> 00:23:11,560

stable base even you know we're still developing and all of that I just realized how ill prepared

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00:23:11,560 --> 00:23:18,600

we all were and especially even at that time and it was like we focused on and I guess

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00:23:18,600 --> 00:23:22,520

it was kind of correlated to the military stuff they teach you all the skills and you

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00:23:22,520 --> 00:23:28,780

focus on all the skills and you focus on handling the scenes you focus on all those pieces but

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00:23:28,780 --> 00:23:33,640

nobody even thought to talk about what you do afterwards the emotions you know or how

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00:23:33,640 --> 00:23:38,800

to handle the outcome of that call all that mattered was you know was it successful did

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00:23:38,800 --> 00:23:46,000

you do the skills right could you save the person and looking back I'm like it's that

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00:23:46,000 --> 00:23:50,720

fantastic experience but the missing piece was I didn't know what to do with those life

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00:23:50,720 --> 00:23:55,320

lessons and I would imagine that some of the same stuff you find you know you stick somebody

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00:23:55,320 --> 00:24:02,520

out there at 16 going into real life events that a lot of people may not even run into

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00:24:02,520 --> 00:24:07,880

it not only are you ill prepared but sometimes it I don't want to say it alienated but it

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00:24:07,880 --> 00:24:13,780

made it tough to talk to my peers or friends because they had no base of this experience

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00:24:13,780 --> 00:24:17,840

you know I'm over here on this plane and I'm up here doing things that when I try to talk

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00:24:17,840 --> 00:24:21,840

to them about it even when I went to college you know there are people that literally never

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00:24:21,840 --> 00:24:28,680

saw somebody pass away and die and I'm like wow that happened a lot in my hands you know

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00:24:28,680 --> 00:24:32,960

and I can give you excuse me all these stories and they're just like oh my god this is the

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00:24:32,960 --> 00:24:38,160

first time I left home to go to school you know I feel like what happens is it kind of

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00:24:38,160 --> 00:24:44,560

puts you on a path that can be kind of lonely and in a way it's very hard even then to figure

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00:24:44,560 --> 00:24:50,240

out who you can talk to and what level you can talk about it those are all those lessons

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00:24:50,240 --> 00:24:56,400

I mean it's it's I guess it's you have the experiences again why you bond with the people

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00:24:56,400 --> 00:25:01,120

with the fire department and the rescue squad because once you share that experience well

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00:25:01,120 --> 00:25:06,040

then you can talk to them you know it's it's like no holds barred so that was my safety

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00:25:06,040 --> 00:25:10,880

net at the same time and I'm talking to people of all ages and I'm getting super involved

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00:25:10,880 --> 00:25:18,180

with it and it was it was fantastic experience but my goal kind of today based on all that

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00:25:18,180 --> 00:25:24,480

was to see how many people are not prepared you know for these things in life with their

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00:25:24,480 --> 00:25:32,240

mental health and handling emotions sorry that's that's the long-winded to your to

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00:25:32,240 --> 00:25:38,720

your short question but um it it just like you said it it has all these positives and

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00:25:38,720 --> 00:25:45,000

then there were these negatives and it was so challenging but it was so rewarding but

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00:25:45,000 --> 00:25:49,560

the biggest thing is without direction and that's what kind of started me on this whole

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00:25:49,560 --> 00:25:55,240

path is I feel people they have so much information these days and they get thrown into so many

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00:25:55,240 --> 00:26:00,040

situations and again with the internet and all of the information available you've got

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00:26:00,040 --> 00:26:05,080

people self-diagnosing themselves people figuring out all these problems at ages you know 13

327

00:26:05,080 --> 00:26:09,800

14 15 years old and that might be good and helpful but you still need some direction

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00:26:09,800 --> 00:26:16,920

on what to do with it you know what to make of it one thing that a lot of us in the municipal

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00:26:16,920 --> 00:26:22,880

uh career fire departments I think don't experience as much as volunteer is running on people

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00:26:22,880 --> 00:26:29,120

we know or living in the same community that we served so I've moved you know from obviously

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00:26:29,120 --> 00:26:35,400

the UK to Orlando did my training first department in Miami area second in California third um

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00:26:35,400 --> 00:26:40,600

and fourth around the Orlando area but the last one was around theme parks so constantly

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00:26:40,600 --> 00:26:44,960

moving usually lived about an hour and 15 minutes away from where I worked you know

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00:26:44,960 --> 00:26:49,400

like a lot of firefighters can't afford to live where they work um and so the upside

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00:26:49,400 --> 00:26:53,520

though is you're not you're not running on people I've never I've never ever run a call

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00:26:53,520 --> 00:26:59,000

on someone that I know um and if I go to those cities of course I'm like okay there's where

337

00:26:59,000 --> 00:27:04,080

we found that person there's where that pedestrian was was killed you know etc etc etc but it's

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00:27:04,080 --> 00:27:11,560

not in my hometown so what you know are there any calls that really kind of stuck out as

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00:27:11,560 --> 00:27:17,200

far as that element of being in the volunteer fire service and working in your own area

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00:27:17,200 --> 00:27:21,000

yeah it's interesting we're in this small town but we're north of Philly so there's

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00:27:21,000 --> 00:27:25,180

a lot of towns around us they were growing all the time they've grown even more since

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00:27:25,180 --> 00:27:30,160

we've left so we absolutely saw all these things you wouldn't expect first off in the

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00:27:30,160 --> 00:27:35,720

town we saw accidents because route 95 ran right into Philly and cut through our town

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00:27:35,720 --> 00:27:39,600

so there were accident scenes on on a major interstate we had all of the scenes where

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00:27:39,600 --> 00:27:42,600

you're going to places around the friends you know your friend's house is right down

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00:27:42,600 --> 00:27:47,080

the street you're going to a call that they may know things like that but you're right

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00:27:47,080 --> 00:27:53,760

there were there were some calls that were so impactful and again we would also see the

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00:27:53,760 --> 00:27:57,600

people after the calls or maybe see some of the people that didn't make it through the

349

00:27:57,600 --> 00:28:03,240

calls the family members and things so it definitely was quite interesting um there

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00:28:03,240 --> 00:28:08,960

were definitely two that were one being a very positive and that was in the middle of

351

00:28:08,960 --> 00:28:12,800

town there was a little lake it was called afton pond and it was one of those lakes gets

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00:28:12,800 --> 00:28:16,520

water in from rainwater but basically has no water flowing through it so it builds up

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00:28:16,520 --> 00:28:21,360

there's streets going around builds up about five feet of mud and so a lot of times people

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00:28:21,360 --> 00:28:25,840

lose control and they drive into this lake or this pond and it would happen once a year

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00:28:25,840 --> 00:28:31,320

or so and i remember the call going in there and it was people we knew you know and we

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00:28:31,320 --> 00:28:35,000

go in and we're of course jumping in with the fire department because again there weren't

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00:28:35,000 --> 00:28:40,320

a lot of lines drawn like we would go in and help out everybody respected each other so

358

00:28:40,320 --> 00:28:44,600

we're all out there attending to the patient we're trying to stabilize the car and it's

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00:28:44,600 --> 00:28:50,040

sinking and at the same time we know the people inside and we're trying to keep calm and

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00:28:50,040 --> 00:28:54,440

you're trying to do your professional but you're also realizing the car is sinking

361

00:28:54,440 --> 00:28:59,120

in that mud and your feet are underneath and at one point we were like we got to watch

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00:28:59,120 --> 00:29:03,560

out for ourselves even because it keeps sinking slowly slowly we don't get anybody stuck

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00:29:03,560 --> 00:29:08,560

and again the interesting part that i'm trying to say on the story is it wasn't just the

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00:29:08,560 --> 00:29:13,480

people in the car we knew i knew all these people that volunteered and were part of the

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00:29:13,480 --> 00:29:17,420

fire department and the ambulance company and also all the police force we all became

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00:29:17,420 --> 00:29:21,760

friends and we all knew each other and a lot of these people are in high school with me

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00:29:21,760 --> 00:29:25,960

or a lot of these people are going to neighboring schools but we're all in the high school level

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00:29:25,960 --> 00:29:30,660

or you know then you have people that are in careers and things so it's like everything

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00:29:30,660 --> 00:29:38,460

you did was with people you know and it was it was quite an odd situation now that one

370

00:29:38,460 --> 00:29:42,060

was fine because we get them out you know we had to they had to cut some of the car

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00:29:42,060 --> 00:29:47,360

apart and we we get them out we rescue it you know and everybody can share that experience

372

00:29:47,360 --> 00:29:54,080

that was a good one now on the flip side the one that i wanted to talk about was there's

373

00:29:54,080 --> 00:29:57,740

a neighboring high school and so we have the main high school i'm in and this neighboring

374

00:29:57,740 --> 00:30:02,140

one and in between the towns there's a crossroads in this out of the way place where there's

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00:30:02,140 --> 00:30:06,380

a lot of rural towns and i'm there on a two o'clock in the morning on a saturday night

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00:30:06,380 --> 00:30:11,280

call because i always did like saturday you'd be at the shift from seven to seven in the

377

00:30:11,280 --> 00:30:16,340

morning you know volunteering and we get called out and it's two cars that ran ahead on into

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00:30:16,340 --> 00:30:21,880

each other and the one car was filled with four kids my exact age from the neighboring

379

00:30:21,880 --> 00:30:27,120

high school and there was some drinking involved and there was a head-on and they you know

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00:30:27,120 --> 00:30:32,060

out two in the morning you can kind of do the math on what happened and everybody's

381

00:30:32,060 --> 00:30:36,900

all across the street and some came got thrown out of the car we're trying to do cpr trying

382

00:30:36,900 --> 00:30:43,540

to rescue them and sorry it still affects me because it was it was like seeing a mirror

383

00:30:43,540 --> 00:30:49,100  
of what could be because these are what could have been me driving on that road it could

384  
00:30:49,100 --> 00:30:52,480  
have been and it literally the same age and a neighboring high school and you're seeing

385  
00:30:52,480 --> 00:30:58,140  
this and what happened was we were we did cpr on two of them the other two had gotten

386  
00:30:58,140 --> 00:31:04,980  
thrown from the car none of them made it was the long story of it the result of it but

387  
00:31:04,980 --> 00:31:13,760  
the the story was that it affected our whole crew because on that call on the first ambulance

388  
00:31:13,760 --> 00:31:21,140  
none of us were over 18 and we were all basically seeing the mirror of what could be on a  
typical

389  
00:31:21,140 --> 00:31:25,980  
friday night when we had been hanging out with our high school friends and it was it

390  
00:31:25,980 --> 00:31:31,260  
was devastating it was a life lesson that hit you in the chest and and made it hard

391  
00:31:31,260 --> 00:31:35,820  
to breathe and didn't know what to do you know even talk about today it still brings

392  
00:31:35,820 --> 00:31:43,080  
us up where i still remember after the call going back to the squad in utter silence and

393  
00:31:43,080 --> 00:31:49,060  
sitting there for hours this table we had outside not knowing what to say not even know

394

00:31:49,060 --> 00:31:54,380

how to process it let alone that but not even know what to say to each other and i think

395

00:31:54,380 --> 00:32:00,380

we walked away that morning basically having experienced that with like the most deepest

396

00:32:00,380 --> 00:32:06,020

bond and connection we ever had and at the same time and understanding that you know

397

00:32:06,020 --> 00:32:12,780

there's some hard life lessons and we tried to make sense of them now we personally i

398

00:32:12,780 --> 00:32:16,200

made sense of some of them that you want to go out and live life but i also took it from

399

00:32:16,200 --> 00:32:20,300

life is short and can be tragically ended and maybe maybe we shouldn't fight so hard

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00:32:20,300 --> 00:32:24,260

and we should just go and just experience things and not worry at all which is not a

401

00:32:24,260 --> 00:32:30,420

good lesson you know it fed into the bipolar and the anxiety disorder and everything and

402

00:32:30,420 --> 00:32:36,460

it just it gave me an attitude that was said go after things but i almost didn't care

403

00:32:36,460 --> 00:32:41,540

and i stopped caring about myself because i got so affected by calls like that that

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00:32:41,540 --> 00:32:49,180

it just really like you said it traumatized me it it did a number and it only took me

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00:32:49,180 --> 00:32:53,380

it took me till 20 years later till i started taking care of this and starting this whole

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00:32:53,380 --> 00:32:57,300

mental health warrior program and learning about myself to even finally figure out the

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00:32:57,300 --> 00:33:04,940

lessons on that and the thing i take from it today is that experience is not something

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00:33:04,940 --> 00:33:10,560

to be wiped away it's something to be built on and today i want to help people who go

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00:33:10,560 --> 00:33:15,180

through things like that or you know experience this and show them what it can do if you don't

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00:33:15,180 --> 00:33:19,940

take care of your mental health and you don't process the emotions and how you can do it

411

00:33:19,940 --> 00:33:28,100

and still take the good lessons so there were absolutely calls that were again up on the

412

00:33:28,100 --> 00:33:35,260

high of a good one and some of the ones that were to this day still haunt me type things

413

00:33:35,260 --> 00:33:39,380

i mean it's i think i was just telling uh having a conversation with the police officer yesterday

414

00:33:39,380 --> 00:33:43,360

greg grogan from the overwatch collective and we were talking about this because one

415

00:33:43,360 --> 00:33:48,420

of his specialties in law enforcement is a major scene invest or crash scene investigation

416

00:33:48,420 --> 00:33:54,240

i think exactly but traffic accidents and when i was reading your book you've got some

417

00:33:54,240 --> 00:33:59,260

statistics kind of towards the beginning and i think it was that suicide is the second

418

00:33:59,260 --> 00:34:04,140

leading cause of death i think it was especially i think he said males or just people from

419

00:34:04,140 --> 00:34:10,000

10 till i want to say it was like 30 35 um and i'm assuming the first one is traffic

420

00:34:10,000 --> 00:34:15,020

accidents traumatic death and so this is what's so heartbreaking is and i've talked about

421

00:34:15,020 --> 00:34:21,820

this a lot you know we have done nothing to change elements of driver safety we'll put

422

00:34:21,820 --> 00:34:26,780

speed bumps up we'll put signs we'll obviously have numerous memorials for all the people

423

00:34:26,780 --> 00:34:33,440

that are dead but you know when it comes to education again maybe even the age but understanding

424

00:34:33,440 --> 00:34:37,940

the danger on the roads i mean of course alcohol is going to be another element but that in

425

00:34:37,940 --> 00:34:44,860

itself could also be attributed to education on alcohol mental health but it really it's

426

00:34:44,860 --> 00:34:51,300

i struggle with the fact that we lose so many people usually young people on the roads and

427

00:34:51,300 --> 00:34:56,300

yet you hardly ever hear that conversation at all and it's the first responders out there

428

00:34:56,300 --> 00:35:01,700

that have to see this horror and it reminds them of their own children but you know it's

429

00:35:01,700 --> 00:35:05,540

the whole insanity piece it's doing doing the same thing expecting different results

430

00:35:05,540 --> 00:35:10,140

you know oh we'll you know we'll we'll have apps so it turns off the cell phones and things

431

00:35:10,140 --> 00:35:17,020

like that yeah that's absolutely a tool but what are we doing wrong that's not educating

432

00:35:17,020 --> 00:35:21,700

our drivers to the level that they should be where they understand the danger of this

433

00:35:21,700 --> 00:35:27,500

we're always going to lose some people but we lose 40 000 people die hundreds of thousands

434

00:35:27,500 --> 00:35:32,060

you know maimed every year every single year and we just kind of shrug our shoulders and

435

00:35:32,060 --> 00:35:36,300

go oh well well the first responders of the world it's not oh well because every single

436

00:35:36,300 --> 00:35:42,460

one of those horrendous wrecks lives rent rent free in our minds yeah absolutely and

437

00:35:42,460 --> 00:35:48,060

thing is it teaches you that lesson and so you become hyper aware you become very cautious



438

00:35:48,060 --> 00:35:52,020

you try and explain that to friends and family and people you try to tell them you know the

439

00:35:52,020 --> 00:35:55,420

things with the phones and you see people putting their phone in front of a steering

440

00:35:55,420 --> 00:35:58,700

wheel while they're texting so they can drive and text and you're saying it is not that

441

00:35:58,700 --> 00:36:03,700

important you know back then it wasn't even that and that's what threw me i completely

442

00:36:03,700 --> 00:36:08,900

agree it's almost it parallels what happens with mental health disorders because i feel

443

00:36:08,900 --> 00:36:13,700

like the word isn't out about how serious some of these can be and people kind of shrug

444

00:36:13,700 --> 00:36:18,100

them off maybe they see it on tv and they're like oh well isn't that quirky person's bipolar

445

00:36:18,100 --> 00:36:22,300

and they don't realize the struggle they go through that it throws you into depression

446

00:36:22,300 --> 00:36:27,040

three quarters of the time and it's much like seeing stuff like this you kind of uncover

447

00:36:27,040 --> 00:36:33,300

the truths of what can happen because as i was mentioning with the the experience and

448

00:36:33,300 --> 00:36:37,620

i don't know if it's because i threw a lot of time into it i mean i put in hundreds i

449

00:36:37,620 --> 00:36:42,860

put in over thousands of hours each year volunteering there because we were so gung-ho about it

450

00:36:42,860 --> 00:36:46,800

and so in turn i would spend a friday night doing high school stuff and every saturday

451

00:36:46,800 --> 00:36:51,420

night i spent 12 hours on calls and sometimes we had back-to-back calls and you would think

452

00:36:51,420 --> 00:36:55,700

a little town but there was a lot of tragedy a lot of accidents and i saw things like you

453

00:36:55,700 --> 00:37:01,540

said there were major scenes on 95 where you had to pull out the triage tags and you had

454

00:37:01,540 --> 00:37:07,780

to make those decisions and today i think oh my god you know i i did them but it was

455

00:37:07,780 --> 00:37:12,860

almost like a robot because you have to protect yourself but then when you walk away you can't

456

00:37:12,860 --> 00:37:17,420

protect yourself it's kind of like with the mental health challenges you can go and get

457

00:37:17,420 --> 00:37:22,060

help and there's all sorts of professional help and things but i always like to say both

458

00:37:22,060 --> 00:37:26,820

the emt and the mental health at two in the morning when you wake up and you're in your

459

00:37:26,820 --> 00:37:30,580

house or you're sitting in a chair somewhere and you're all by yourself that's where you

460

00:37:30,580 --> 00:37:35,180

have to learn to handle it because you just can't there's nobody to call there's nobody

461

00:37:35,180 --> 00:37:39,660

to go to at that point you know and that's the piece that's it's not being tragic it's

462

00:37:39,660 --> 00:37:43,180

just saying there will be a time in your life where you have to be by yourself and you're

463

00:37:43,180 --> 00:37:48,300

on your own and again if we can make sense of the lessons from things first responders

464

00:37:48,300 --> 00:37:52,300

see and all the people but also same with mental health there's times if you can be

465

00:37:52,300 --> 00:37:57,900

empowered i guess is what i'm trying to say hence the whole idea of the warrior project

466

00:37:57,900 --> 00:38:03,580

and program is to empower people and not view all these as negatives i mean it's like what

467

00:38:03,580 --> 00:38:09,660

you're saying you see all the accidents and you want to educate people but you also know

468

00:38:09,660 --> 00:38:15,420

they're only going to listen so much and sometimes it's really sad because you know there's lessons

469

00:38:15,420 --> 00:38:21,180

that you wish people had learned or seen you know and then you see the results with the

470

00:38:21,180 --> 00:38:27,740

accidents or with the situations or even the tragedies that happen out of the blue you

471

00:38:27,740 --> 00:38:34,900

know in some of these calls where things would strike and occur and it was almost like you

472

00:38:34,900 --> 00:38:38,500

tend to think and this is a little bit of humor a little bit not but you tend to think

473

00:38:38,500 --> 00:38:41,220

like accidents you think well it's on the street or something you know or there was

474

00:38:41,220 --> 00:38:45,300

a car wreck well it's on the street or somebody gets sick maybe they're at home but i have

475

00:38:45,300 --> 00:38:51,180

this list of tales of things that occurred in the most unusual places and it wakes you

476

00:38:51,180 --> 00:38:58,100

up to that life doesn't protect you if you're out somewhere else you know i just find that

477

00:38:58,100 --> 00:39:04,620

interesting that sometimes people don't realize probably too what first responders see and

478

00:39:04,620 --> 00:39:10,700

where they have to go sometimes you know and what i'm referencing on that one is and it

479

00:39:10,700 --> 00:39:15,140

was a good call because we saved the person but somebody had a heart attack on the golf

480

00:39:15,140 --> 00:39:19,740

course at the yardley country club now not a super fancy place but a big golf course

481

00:39:19,740 --> 00:39:23,980

on the fifth hole and in order to get them fast and to help them we had to drive the

482

00:39:23,980 --> 00:39:28,420

ambulance across the golf course and then we had to cut through and cut through their

483

00:39:28,420 --> 00:39:32,700

shrubs that were blocking it to the next street in order to get to the hospital fastest and

484

00:39:32,700 --> 00:39:36,300

it was kind of like yeah we know we're going to take some grief for all this and yes we're

485

00:39:36,300 --> 00:39:41,460

driving an ambulance up and down a golf course but for the greater good you know it was it

486

00:39:41,460 --> 00:39:47,420

was one of those interesting kind of mind-blowing experiences and you're like it kind of shows

487

00:39:47,420 --> 00:39:52,620

you that life will life will occur wherever you're at and i always find that interesting

488

00:39:52,620 --> 00:39:58,320

absolutely i think where i saw that frustration manifest was in you know a version of road

489

00:39:58,320 --> 00:40:04,340

rage to be honest you know when i was on shift and so tired so sleep deprived you know possibly

490

00:40:04,340 --> 00:40:10,960

having come off you know one of many horrendous wrecks and then you see someone driving like

491

00:40:10,960 --> 00:40:16,180

an a-hole in your own town and i mean i would just get so angry i didn't ever do this but

492

00:40:16,180 --> 00:40:22,220

i would want to literally put my fist through their window and drag them out the car and

493

00:40:22,220 --> 00:40:26,540

beat them until they would listen and then you know put them back in their car now again

494

00:40:26,540 --> 00:40:32,580

that's a kind of macabre fantasy but when you have seen the result when you know that

495

00:40:32,580 --> 00:40:37,900

the person who caused these accidents almost never dies they're almost unscathed and that

496

00:40:37,900 --> 00:40:44,020

family is completely decimated you know it's it's a hard emotion to to harbor you know

497

00:40:44,020 --> 00:40:52,100

and it takes a lot of diligent practice to turn that frustration and disgust into okay

498

00:40:52,100 --> 00:40:57,660

how can i move the needle without coming across like a complete raving psychopath right right

499

00:40:57,660 --> 00:41:02,500

i mean we we had an experience like that that that showed me that we were responding to

500

00:41:02,500 --> 00:41:06,300

a call and there was a full crew and at that point i was in the back there was another

501

00:41:06,300 --> 00:41:10,940

emt and the driver and somebody wouldn't pull over and we're flying along this one road

502

00:41:10,940 --> 00:41:15,180

where you get up to about 50 60 because it's a long road and that person wouldn't pull

503

00:41:15,180 --> 00:41:19,280

over and i was in the back with this other woman and we're gathering the gear and i hear

504

00:41:19,280 --> 00:41:24,980

from the front oh my god hang on because we smashed into that car because they kept weaving

505

00:41:24,980 --> 00:41:29,660

a wooden pull away for the ambulance to move past they just didn't want to let us go by

506

00:41:29,660 --> 00:41:34,860

and we ended up hitting them so hard we tore the axon of their car but then in the back

507

00:41:34,860 --> 00:41:38,860

as you know with the ambulance of all the equipment this stuff started flying and we're

508

00:41:38,860 --> 00:41:42,380

talking oxygen bottles flying around and we had one of these huge ones that came out of

509

00:41:42,380 --> 00:41:47,140

the cabinet that it's the giant tank and i grabbed the other woman we grabbed her because

510

00:41:47,140 --> 00:41:52,460

i was in the seat where i could pull her away from it you know we almost all got killed

511

00:41:52,460 --> 00:41:57,620

in that accident and the ambulance was totaled and then we get another ambulance to bring

512

00:41:57,620 --> 00:42:02,100

us to the hospital you know and so we have to be on the patient side now and we're in

513

00:42:02,100 --> 00:42:06,780

these rooms next to each other and like you said we're listening to the guy screaming

514

00:42:06,780 --> 00:42:12,820

yell about why we didn't get out of his way and how he's going to sue us and it was so

515

00:42:12,820 --> 00:42:17,340

crazy you're sitting there and you're trying to tend your own wounds and you're trying

516

00:42:17,340 --> 00:42:21,020

to put some thing in like thinking well there was a second crew sent out i hope they're

517

00:42:21,020 --> 00:42:25,100

okay to get to the next person because that's where we were headed and you're listening

518

00:42:25,100 --> 00:42:31,780

this person rant and rave about it it was insane like you were saying and at the same

519

00:42:31,780 --> 00:42:36,820

time we were just stunned because we couldn't imagine why somebody wouldn't get out of the

520

00:42:36,820 --> 00:42:40,960

way it wasn't like they couldn't pull back into the street you know i'm sure you've experienced

521

00:42:40,960 --> 00:42:46,260

that you think what were they doing that they literally fought us i mean they apparently

522

00:42:46,260 --> 00:42:49,780

we back and forth so much that when they hit them that's why we hit them and tore the axle

523

00:42:49,780 --> 00:42:56,420

out because they came around the angle to us but it's just a crazy circumstance but

524

00:42:56,420 --> 00:43:01,100



it also gave me a look into the other side you know of dealing with some people that

525

00:43:01,100 --> 00:43:06,420

just didn't get it like you're saying and you just wonder what they're thinking and

526

00:43:06,420 --> 00:43:11,820

why they don't see what people are trying to do you know or trying to pay attention

527

00:43:11,820 --> 00:43:18,900

more that type of thing i was driving when i was still in the mt i was driving a pediatric

528

00:43:18,900 --> 00:43:24,660

code we was one of those calls or if i'm remembering right we were literally handed you know a

529

00:43:24,660 --> 00:43:30,340

limp baby at the door and sadly i think that ended up being a child abuse call all my all

530

00:43:30,340 --> 00:43:36,780

my infant deaths were all child abuse which is heartbreaking but so you know my medic's

531

00:43:36,780 --> 00:43:42,380

in the back now i'm driving code three and there's one area in orlando where it's single

532

00:43:42,380 --> 00:43:46,500

single lane where it kind of the road splits and it comes together again and there's this

533

00:43:46,500 --> 00:43:52,100

white car just will not yield and we're you know again pediatric cardiac arrest in the

534

00:43:52,100 --> 00:43:58,500

back and anyway when i passed them they finally you know gets to two lanes it says orange

535

00:43:58,500 --> 00:44:03,340

county fire prevention so it was one of our own fire prevention people wouldn't get out

536

00:44:03,340 --> 00:44:08,420

of the way and it wasn't you know even a low acuity call it was a pediatric cardiac arrest

537

00:44:08,420 --> 00:44:13,060

we're trying to get to the children's hospital there so you know i mean but it's that it's

538

00:44:13,060 --> 00:44:17,780

that community and that selflessness versus a selfishness and i think there's a lot of

539

00:44:17,780 --> 00:44:22,580

selfishness on the roads you know in in society at the moment i think people are inherently

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00:44:22,580 --> 00:44:27,720

good but the way that we're uh you know some of the messaging they're getting from politicians

541

00:44:27,720 --> 00:44:33,620

and other things it's it's fertilizing that selfishness and that manifests even in life-saving

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00:44:33,620 --> 00:44:39,300

you know yeah stories that we're talking about that selfishness and that driver almost killed

543

00:44:39,300 --> 00:44:43,380

all of you and was detrimental to who you were responding to and the selfishness of

544

00:44:43,380 --> 00:44:47,980

the woman that i was behind you know would we have saved that child's life you know probably

545

00:44:47,980 --> 00:44:53,020

not but could we have possibly and she may well have been the person that was between

546

00:44:53,020 --> 00:44:58,420

that child living and that child dying right and people are so distracted i mean i i saw

547

00:44:58,420 --> 00:45:01,780

it a lot with the rescue squad and things like that and eventually i got to drive the

548

00:45:01,780 --> 00:45:06,380

ambulance when i was 18 and experienced it from behind the wheel like you're saying but

549

00:45:06,380 --> 00:45:10,140

also with all those bike rides and all the bike racing i can't tell you the number of

550

00:45:10,140 --> 00:45:14,420

times that i would be clipped by a pickup truck's mirror and be flipped right on the

551

00:45:14,420 --> 00:45:19,900

side of the river road there was a boundary it went down to the river and three or four

552

00:45:19,900 --> 00:45:24,140

times i got clipped because the road was a little narrow but nobody paid attention it

553

00:45:24,140 --> 00:45:28,760

was like bikes were invisible you know and again anybody in the first responder stuff

554

00:45:28,760 --> 00:45:33,020

kind of knows a lot of stories with motorcycles and stuff that's the biggest thing but on

555

00:45:33,020 --> 00:45:37,640

bicycles too and it always drove me crazy because i'm like how can you not be aware

556

00:45:37,640 --> 00:45:42,300

when you're in these cars how can you be so unaware of seeing people and you're you're

557

00:45:42,300 --> 00:45:47,660

clipping people and knocking them off bikes and uh yeah it really is something that hasn't

558

00:45:47,660 --> 00:45:52,260

changed you know it's only gotten worse with all the distractions we have in the cars and

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00:45:52,260 --> 00:45:56,620

all sorts of things that are beeping and wanting our attention you would think it would make

560

00:45:56,620 --> 00:46:03,340

it safer maybe some of it does but a lot of it is do people pay attention and it's amazing

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00:46:03,340 --> 00:46:08,980

how people don't and a lot of that though i think sometimes i also found maybe it feels

562

00:46:08,980 --> 00:46:14,140

way sometimes it's like they just don't know what to do and that's that's kind of a big

563

00:46:14,140 --> 00:46:19,860

thing with mental health and even my own family with the struggles i went through people just

564

00:46:19,860 --> 00:46:24,340

didn't know even my own wife had trouble you know when i'm in the throes of alcoholism

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00:46:24,340 --> 00:46:28,860

and using that as my short-term solution to deal with all this trauma all these emotions

566

00:46:28,860 --> 00:46:34,180

i do not want to face including stuff like the bipolar depression and i didn't realize

567

00:46:34,180 --> 00:46:37,700

at the time because when you're in the middle of it you think well sure why didn't they

568

00:46:37,700 --> 00:46:43,000

just talk to me and it wasn't they didn't want to but nobody knew how and and that's

569

00:46:43,000 --> 00:46:48,540

why a lot of why i'm started too is to just stand up and talk kind of like you're raising

570

00:46:48,540 --> 00:46:53,860

awareness now on certain topics and it's so important because sometimes the most obvious

571

00:46:53,860 --> 00:46:58,660

is there but we need somebody to state it or point it out you know and then then you

572

00:46:58,660 --> 00:47:05,220

can get more awareness you can get some people to take action 100 well you touched on alcoholism

573

00:47:05,220 --> 00:47:10,500

obviously so there was a you know a downward spiral of sorts what made you transition out

574

00:47:10,500 --> 00:47:16,260

of ems and then walk me through again if i'm understanding the book the kind of pursuit

575

00:47:16,260 --> 00:47:22,260

of finance that followed that well so i i kept doing this through high school and then

576

00:47:22,260 --> 00:47:25,980

i also worked at an ambulance company at the same time there were several other people

577

00:47:25,980 --> 00:47:31,220

were emts so in summers and fall and things like that spring breaks i worked at an ambulance

578

00:47:31,220 --> 00:47:36,080

company so it was non-emergency calls so i was always involved with that went to college

579

00:47:36,080 --> 00:47:41,380

was thinking of going to the medical field honestly my attention and different things

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00:47:41,380 --> 00:47:45,300

i didn't have the aptitude to make it through medical school with the paying attention in

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00:47:45,300 --> 00:47:50,600

school i could do a lot better today but i didn't then and so i transitioned i was looking

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00:47:50,600 --> 00:47:55,620

for answers i at one point started studying religion at the school i was at then i found

583

00:47:55,620 --> 00:48:00,660

i needed more structure i went to information technology i liked the idea of finding solutions

584

00:48:00,660 --> 00:48:05,020

so i graduated that degree go through all sorts of things at college and what i did

585

00:48:05,020 --> 00:48:12,700

then was threw myself into an it career but it was all sorts of i had jobs but they were

586

00:48:12,700 --> 00:48:18,880

always somewhat fringe jobs they kind of fit me i worked for unisys and i was a contractor

587

00:48:18,880 --> 00:48:24,660

but i was on a coast guard base and so i started out my first it job living down on a shore

588

00:48:24,660 --> 00:48:30,080

on the jersey shore and working on a coast guard base and going and setting up computer

589

00:48:30,080 --> 00:48:34,360

systems and doing support on all these travel around the country visit all the bases things

590

00:48:34,360 --> 00:48:40,880

like that so again i think it's kind of just me i always look for those situations so i

591

00:48:40,880 --> 00:48:44,900

transitioned out of the emt and all of that just looking for the next adventure if you

592

00:48:44,900 --> 00:48:50,180

will i never wasn't so much i thought like i'm going to give this up because i couldn't

593

00:48:50,180 --> 00:48:54,900

handle it it was more i just sort of started falling like i need to move on with a career

594

00:48:54,900 --> 00:49:01,700

with the college and it and things like that and then what happened was i feel like as

595

00:49:01,700 --> 00:49:06,980

i got to be more and more involved in things i like to write in the books i had more adventures

596

00:49:06,980 --> 00:49:10,820

and more things i was interested in and maybe even the funds to do some of these which led

597

00:49:10,820 --> 00:49:17,000

to greater misadventures and so yes i got into the to workforce but then i was pulling

598

00:49:17,000 --> 00:49:22,420

stunts that really were horrible and i have all these problems in the background and a

599

00:49:22,420 --> 00:49:28,620

lot of it is what's happening is i'm letting my challenges so i'm i'm there at this point

600

00:49:28,620 --> 00:49:33,500

diagnosed with anxiety disorder i'm definitely using alcohol to treat it all the time and

601

00:49:33,500 --> 00:49:38,340

to treat some of the past trauma and again i'm just trying to like make my way through

602

00:49:38,340 --> 00:49:42,900

and i'm letting it kind of tell me what to do you know work some weird jobs work weird

603

00:49:42,900 --> 00:49:48,060

hours is that the best for me i'm not really sure but i love the adventure of it keep going

604

00:49:48,060 --> 00:49:53,820

keep pushing so i'm succeeding but i'm falling apart in the background and so i think whichever

605

00:49:53,820 --> 00:49:58,660

course i took i would have still been doing that moving up just like we do with the rescue

606

00:49:58,660 --> 00:50:03,900

squad keep moving up getting more and more in depth and things and what happened was

607

00:50:03,900 --> 00:50:10,380

i get to a point where on the surface i should have felt like a great success and i'm married

608

00:50:10,380 --> 00:50:15,700

we have a house we got into real estate and rental properties you know this is 2008 everybody's

609

00:50:15,700 --> 00:50:20,500

doing that they have the ability to buy cars i thought you needed multiple cars in order

610

00:50:20,500 --> 00:50:26,820

to be happy you know i went full on into consumerism and the reason i say that and i laugh about

611

00:50:26,820 --> 00:50:32,380

today is because all of these things were really driven by my challenges because when



612

00:50:32,380 --> 00:50:36,700

i was in the throes of depression and bipolar depression which i didn't even still know

613

00:50:36,700 --> 00:50:41,540

i had i would try to buy my way out of it so you want to you want to not be depressed

614

00:50:41,540 --> 00:50:46,780

you go out and get something you go out and buy some crazy stereo system or do something

615

00:50:46,780 --> 00:50:55,180

and i feel like i was sort of setting the direction but a lot of what i did was dictated

616

00:50:55,180 --> 00:51:01,420

by my challenges by my past experiences by these mental health challenges and and that's

617

00:51:01,420 --> 00:51:06,740

where they start taking control i mean i had relinquished so much control at that point

618

00:51:06,740 --> 00:51:11,900

that my ordinary experiences were things that should have stopped and would have stopped

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00:51:11,900 --> 00:51:16,900

most people you know i'm spending time while i'm working a professional job and traveling

620

00:51:16,900 --> 00:51:21,660

around the country and then i'm spending a weekend in jail because i let alcohol take

621

00:51:21,660 --> 00:51:27,500

over you know i'm i'm at points where people are calling the police and here i am on the

622

00:51:27,500 --> 00:51:33,180

other side and i'm getting committed for 72 hour holds because i they don't know what

623

00:51:33,180 --> 00:51:39,080

is going on with me and i don't know what's going on and and that's where this went on

624

00:51:39,080 --> 00:51:44,220

and literally one of the things i like to tell is it went on for like 20 years and i'm

625

00:51:44,220 --> 00:51:49,580

building all these successes on the surface and and the behind that is completely a mess

626

00:51:49,580 --> 00:51:54,940

and i have relinquished so much control to me that this is normal you know it's almost

627

00:51:54,940 --> 00:52:00,980

like i go back to once you've been and done some of the stuff at the emt you're not thrown

628

00:52:00,980 --> 00:52:04,860

by the first time you see an accident the next time it becomes a little more normal

629

00:52:04,860 --> 00:52:09,500

a little more normal and it's a good thing because you can protect yourself but you also

630

00:52:09,500 --> 00:52:14,180

have to be careful that you don't become so detached you know and so clinical about it

631

00:52:14,180 --> 00:52:20,020

that you forget there's an emotional angle and and that's where like we're talking at

632

00:52:20,020 --> 00:52:26,380

that point i'm struggling i'm full-blown alcoholic i'm drinking all the time i have these undiagnosed

633

00:52:26,380 --> 00:52:30,440

problems some diagnosed and i got to the point where i didn't want to be part of this world

634

00:52:30,440 --> 00:52:35,100

anymore and you get to that point like you talked about i'd had enough i didn't think

635

00:52:35,100 --> 00:52:40,900

there was any hope at all and i just rolled the dice one day and i just drank and took

636

00:52:40,900 --> 00:52:45,100

pills and i said if i wake up then maybe there was something out of this maybe there was

637

00:52:45,100 --> 00:52:50,980

a reason and i literally rolled the dice which i can't even you know today i say that and

638

00:52:50,980 --> 00:52:55,700

like oh it's not nonchalant it is like wow i that was at the point i was at there was

639

00:52:55,700 --> 00:53:01,740

that cry for help even to myself and when i got a second chance that's when i've changed

640

00:53:01,740 --> 00:53:06,540

and turned my whole life in a different direction and that's why today when we're talking about

641

00:53:06,540 --> 00:53:09,940

it it's like sometimes i go over the top and people tell me to calm down because i'm so

642

00:53:09,940 --> 00:53:15,880

passionate about it because i have rescued myself found direction found this this thing

643

00:53:15,880 --> 00:53:20,180

i want to talk about with everybody you know want to share all these experiences i'm okay

644

00:53:20,180 --> 00:53:25,020

with telling these people this because again when i start talking and this is one of the

645

00:53:25,020 --> 00:53:31,180

most amazing things you know all these places i run into so many conversations i can't believe

646

00:53:31,180 --> 00:53:35,380

that are happening and i'm sure you find that too i mean you you get guests on or but then

647

00:53:35,380 --> 00:53:38,480

you might be talking to somebody about a show somewhere and then all of a sudden they open

648

00:53:38,480 --> 00:53:43,320

up and i think that's the amazing part of being able to talk about all this whether

649

00:53:43,320 --> 00:53:49,100

it's the first responder stuff or even again talking about emotions you know even the people

650

00:53:49,100 --> 00:53:53,580

like what my wife went through on the outside of these things you know and understanding

651

00:53:53,580 --> 00:53:59,340

her emotions and trying to put all that together to help people i want to get to the consumerism

652

00:53:59,340 --> 00:54:03,900

in a second before we progress through to to the solutions that you found um but before

653

00:54:03,900 --> 00:54:10,420

we do and i i always like to ask this anyone who's been in that dark place who's who's

654

00:54:10,420 --> 00:54:16,100

basically planned their own you know suicide and i've had people on here that have executed

655

00:54:16,100 --> 00:54:20,860

it and survived and a lot of people that were almost there um or i mean like yourself you

656

00:54:20,860 --> 00:54:27,580

mean you did execute and you survived yep when we were all younger there was a very

657

00:54:27,580 --> 00:54:33,060

judgmental look at suicide it's cowardly it's selfish how can you do that to your family

658

00:54:33,060 --> 00:54:39,380

etc etc and what i've realized as i've become this you know perpetual student now of all

659

00:54:39,380 --> 00:54:45,780

all these things including mental health and hearing these first-hand accounts is that

660

00:54:45,780 --> 00:54:50,980

you cannot understand a broken mind with a healthy mind trying to understand that is

661

00:54:50,980 --> 00:54:54,300

like trying to think you know oh i wonder what it's like to break my femur when your

662

00:54:54,300 --> 00:54:58,820

leg isn't broken you know what i mean you can't you can't put your mind there and so

663

00:54:58,820 --> 00:55:02,860

when you listen to these men and women and children i mean i had you know a young high

664

00:55:02,860 --> 00:55:09,900

school student on here um you realize that at that moment their brain is telling them

665

00:55:09,900 --> 00:55:15,860

this this is the end to the pain but also i think this is not really um discussed is

666

00:55:15,860 --> 00:55:22,220

for almost all of them there's also a feeling of being a burden so when they say oh think

667

00:55:22,220 --> 00:55:26,820

about your loved ones like they are they feel like they are the problem to their children

668

00:55:26,820 --> 00:55:32,420

their their spouse whatever it is and so in their mind it's a selfless act it's a terrifying

669

00:55:32,420 --> 00:55:37,500

act but they're doing it for the greater good with that broken mind and i say broken with

670

00:55:37,500 --> 00:55:42,340

with compassion you know it's something that's happened to them when you got to that point

671

00:55:42,340 --> 00:55:47,540

two decades of battling with your mental health and then ultimately addiction was there an

672

00:55:47,540 --> 00:55:53,900

element of that in your perception yeah there was it was i mean i can remember to this day

673

00:55:53,900 --> 00:56:00,220

it wasn't it was more like it occurred it was like one of those thoughts you have in

674

00:56:00,220 --> 00:56:04,500

the back of your head for years and you start to think you know i'm not getting anywhere

675

00:56:04,500 --> 00:56:09,980

this is all it's ever going to be you know i can't control anything and i still remember

676

00:56:09,980 --> 00:56:17,700

that day i was working remote and i just like snapped i just had enough and it was almost

677

00:56:17,700 --> 00:56:22,940

like it's kind of one of those quirky sayings but it was almost like the pain of living

678

00:56:22,940 --> 00:56:28,820

was too great and the pain of not living seemed better which is that like you're saying it's

679

00:56:28,820 --> 00:56:35,820

that broken mind thinking but it's i reached a point where i thought rolling the dice a

680

00:56:35,820 --> 00:56:42,540

cry for help and and the thing that i remember though was it was in my case i was executing

681

00:56:42,540 --> 00:56:46,380

i was going through it i mean i i took the pills and enough that if somebody hadn't

682

00:56:46,380 --> 00:56:51,020

come but i made a phone call at the same time and i i tried to rescue myself at the same

683

00:56:51,020 --> 00:56:56,740

time and i was i was so conflicted you know i i just i knew i didn't want to do it but

684

00:56:56,740 --> 00:57:03,180

i knew i didn't want to be alive and at the same time what i found was that i just didn't

685

00:57:03,180 --> 00:57:09,220

know how to process anything anymore you know the emotions are what broke me and it's funny

686

00:57:09,220 --> 00:57:14,660

because today i will tell you the number one thing that has saved me is the emotions and

687

00:57:14,660 --> 00:57:19,620

being able to handle our emotions and that's hence the whole mental health but it's funny

688

00:57:19,620 --> 00:57:25,760

it it wasn't a specific event it wasn't even sometimes the thoughts it was just that feeling

689

00:57:25,760 --> 00:57:31,820

like you're describing that there is no better solution you know and and again you're right

690

00:57:31,820 --> 00:57:37,460

it's not viewed as a positive you're not you know you you don't think it doesn't stop you

691

00:57:37,460 --> 00:57:43,700

because you know things i mean at that point i'd already if you will embarrass myself i'd

692

00:57:43,700 --> 00:57:47,260

already done so many horrible things being under the influence of alcohol drinking all

693

00:57:47,260 --> 00:57:53,060

the time i'd pull some outrageous stunts you know things like that i i had lost all self-worth

694

00:57:53,060 --> 00:57:59,820

i had lost that direction and that was i think that was really what drove me to this and

695

00:57:59,820 --> 00:58:03,780

what i see in a lot of people when i talk to them about this and people that have fought

696

00:58:03,780 --> 00:58:09,440

about it in that is you lose two things a sense of control and you lose a sense of direction

697

00:58:09,440 --> 00:58:13,760

and without those two things it's like saying you can manage your emotions you know be positive

698

00:58:13,760 --> 00:58:17,560

all the time but if you don't have a reason to be positive for if you're not going somewhere

699

00:58:17,560 --> 00:58:21,220



in your life if you can't tie it into something you know in your life to bring that happiness

700

00:58:21,220 --> 00:58:30,460

each day it's kind of like hollow advice so yeah it was it was a it was uh it was something

701

00:58:30,460 --> 00:58:36,380

it's very hard to understand but it's also much like mental health or being part of these

702

00:58:36,380 --> 00:58:41,740

challenges and things or these experience being first responder the amazing part is

703

00:58:41,740 --> 00:58:46,580

is if somebody else has been through it you have that unspoken language and you can talk

704

00:58:46,580 --> 00:58:51,140

about it so openly that i think sometimes i stun people around me who don't have that

705

00:58:51,140 --> 00:58:54,580

and you're talking to somebody else in the middle of anywhere you know in the middle

706

00:58:54,580 --> 00:58:58,220

of line at the grocery store and you start talking about something like being bipolar

707

00:58:58,220 --> 00:59:03,460

or being an alcoholic and people are just stunned because you just don't hear that conversation

708

00:59:03,460 --> 00:59:08,220

but the two of you are speaking the same language and you're totally okay with it which is i

709

00:59:08,220 --> 00:59:14,180

think a testament to the power of bringing all this stuff out into the light i was listening

710

00:59:14,180 --> 00:59:19,740

to an interview that i did with a fire chief pat kenney and we just did a third episode

711

00:59:19,740 --> 00:59:24,740

and so i listened to the first one that we did and it was something that i hadn't really

712

00:59:24,740 --> 00:59:31,620

brought up again recently but he's a you know he has a devout faith and it made me realize

713

00:59:31,620 --> 00:59:38,980

that this is how strong this miswiring becomes in our mind how many people who are deeply

714

00:59:38,980 --> 00:59:44,580

embedded in their faith and their particular text tells them that suicide is a sin ultimately

715

00:59:44,580 --> 00:59:51,060

you're going to go to hell and they still do it if there's no better example of that

716

00:59:51,060 --> 00:59:57,900

miswiring and how strong that pull is the wrong way that you would still make that decision

717

00:59:57,900 --> 01:00:03,180

even though you might in your mind in your belief be you know experiencing eternal damnation

718

01:00:03,180 --> 01:00:07,780

or whatever it is so i think that was a powerful kind of way looking at it too i mean this

719

01:00:07,780 --> 01:00:14,100

is we you know conversely there's a lot of judgment shame and guilt around mental health

720

01:00:14,100 --> 01:00:20,540

around suicide but these holy texts i would argue talk about kindness and compassion which

721

01:00:20,540 --> 01:00:26,160

is actually what we need to apply to these men and women that are suffering absolutely

722

01:00:26,160 --> 01:00:33,580

and that's that's the other side that's interesting you bring that up because after after i tried

723

01:00:33,580 --> 01:00:38,580

to do that and then i'm trying to rebuild my life basically the direction and a lot

724

01:00:38,580 --> 01:00:42,100

of what doctors are saying and people are saying was to get back to normal you know

725

01:00:42,100 --> 01:00:46,900

get back to work that'll give you a purpose go back to things and nobody wanted to even

726

01:00:46,900 --> 01:00:50,780

ask if it was right you know nobody wanted to ask is this the right direction for your

727

01:00:50,780 --> 01:00:55,660

life or have you dealt with any of those things it was like let's just restore things back

728

01:00:55,660 --> 01:01:00,540

to that normal again and it's it's kind of like what you're saying i mean it's like

729

01:01:00,540 --> 01:01:05,820

there are certain lines you think once you've done something under the influence and you've

730

01:01:05,820 --> 01:01:10,080

you've caused some you've been sent to jail for a weekend you would think that'd be enough

731

01:01:10,080 --> 01:01:14,060

to wake you up and stop you but by monday or tuesday you're already thinking well i

732

01:01:14,060 --> 01:01:18,980

can get that escape again with another drink or again you're thinking my god my life is

733

01:01:18,980 --> 01:01:25,820

so horrible here's an out and even if it violates what you believe in faith even if you think

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01:01:25,820 --> 01:01:31,700

maybe this is going to help everybody that misguided idea but then even and this is interesting

735

01:01:31,700 --> 01:01:37,140

even the people that have tried and then you're told to get back to normal and again it's

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01:01:37,140 --> 01:01:41,300

to me it's the opposite you need to explore you need to get in touch with what caused

737

01:01:41,300 --> 01:01:46,020

it you need to be able to talk about it because otherwise you're going to end up going back

738

01:01:46,020 --> 01:01:53,260

towards it absolutely well just one more area before we talk about the becoming a mental

739

01:01:53,260 --> 01:01:59,980

health warrior let's check my notes out for a second consumerism this is another area

740

01:01:59,980 --> 01:02:05,220

i mean there's no better example than the u.s and don't get me wrong you know capitalism

741

01:02:05,220 --> 01:02:09,420

has its place of course a lot of us enjoy the creature comforts that we have and would

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01:02:09,420 --> 01:02:13,340

be a hypocrite unless i was living off the grid somewhere to say otherwise we're literally

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01:02:13,340 --> 01:02:18,680

having a conversation through a computer now but that being said i remember coming from

744

01:02:18,680 --> 01:02:25,360

england and after a couple of years i found myself working for a fire department in california

745

01:02:25,360 --> 01:02:31,820

and when i got there as you were just alluding to it was pre 2008 everyone was paying i mean

746

01:02:31,820 --> 01:02:38,460

just insane amounts for their houses everyone had winnebago's jet skis you know motocross

747

01:02:38,460 --> 01:02:44,140

bikes all the toys and one of the guests i had on recently said that particular area

748

01:02:44,140 --> 01:02:49,140

orange county there's a lot of that kind of keeping up with the jones's philosophy in

749

01:02:49,140 --> 01:02:53,420

in that area in general but when i look at it too there was a lot of overtime at the

750

01:02:53,420 --> 01:02:57,660

time a lot of forced overtime in my class and the class after me were the ones that

751

01:02:57,660 --> 01:03:03,060

kind of finally filled all the seats so that they were able to work more even though it

752

01:03:03,060 --> 01:03:09,060

was detrimental to their health but again it was so much i mean it was something that

753

01:03:09,060 --> 01:03:15,020

you know 20 years prior we only would have seen on mtv cribs you know the basketball

754

01:03:15,020 --> 01:03:19,660

players and the rappers and everything and now firefighters are doing it and then fast

755

01:03:19,660 --> 01:03:25,060

forward a few years a lot of those guys lost the house the winnebago the truck you know

756

01:03:25,060 --> 01:03:31,660

everything they lost almost everything because of the crash but you know whether it's children

757

01:03:31,660 --> 01:03:37,060

that grew up in the ghetto that ended up becoming mma fighters or football players and then

758

01:03:37,060 --> 01:03:41,380

are persuaded by the consumerist world that you need this diamond jewelry and you need

759

01:03:41,380 --> 01:03:48,860

this bentley and etc etc or whether it's you know the the the person who's a lawyer who's

760

01:03:48,860 --> 01:03:52,620

also being persuaded that you need the bentley and you know what i mean all of us are being

761

01:03:52,620 --> 01:03:57,320

told that we never have enough you know when it comes to buying things and i think now

762

01:03:57,320 --> 01:04:01,780

with amazon and things it's so easy just to click just like the qvc used to be addicted

763

01:04:01,780 --> 01:04:09,580

to some people you know 20 plus years ago so what is your perspective of that need to

764

01:04:09,580 --> 01:04:13,780

fill a void with purchasing because i think most of us if we put our hand on our heart

765

01:04:13,780 --> 01:04:18,140

would say that we do get a little dopamine hit whether it's a ten dollar amazon purchase

766

01:04:18,140 --> 01:04:23,700

or you know a twenty thousand dollar car but each of those are temporary i don't think

767

01:04:23,700 --> 01:04:29,180

there's anyone five years later still just you know buzzing about their new car purchase

768

01:04:29,180 --> 01:04:35,700

right and and that's i will wholeheartedly admit i threw myself into that and i took

769

01:04:35,700 --> 01:04:39,900

us into that where at one point there's just my wife and i so there's we don't have any

770

01:04:39,900 --> 01:04:45,180

kids there's some pets but they're not driving and uh we had five cars because you need a

771

01:04:45,180 --> 01:04:49,460

choice every morning and various cars you know you need a you need a high-end car you

772

01:04:49,460 --> 01:04:53,700

need a rough and ready suv of course you need all these things then we got into the real

773

01:04:53,700 --> 01:04:58,860

estate investing and we had several rental properties all around and so we have all this

774

01:04:58,860 --> 01:05:02,580

stuff and then the house we had had seven acres and you've got to have a huge lawn

775

01:05:02,580 --> 01:05:08,060

to cut you know and make it all look nice and an extra space and we kept buying bigger

776

01:05:08,060 --> 01:05:12,860

so first of all i'll just come clean i'm completely guilty of falling into that trap

777

01:05:12,860 --> 01:05:17,340

the reason and i think that's so detrimental and the reason that is even part of what i'm

778

01:05:17,340 --> 01:05:23,140

doing today is to recognize that is because a lot of people use that to fill the gaps

779

01:05:23,140 --> 01:05:28,180

like i did when you fall into a depression or you fall into anxiety or something you

780

01:05:28,180 --> 01:05:32,860

can use things to fill those gaps and you can also use things to fill the gaps when

781

01:05:32,860 --> 01:05:36,620

you don't have the self-confidence because maybe you're anxious about everything and

782

01:05:36,620 --> 01:05:39,860

you're you're doing a good job but you don't recognize it because you're so fearful all

783

01:05:39,860 --> 01:05:45,340

the time and so i think consumerism is that quick i call them the short-term answers the

784

01:05:45,340 --> 01:05:50,780

short-term solutions i liken it to i always knew i could go and get a drink and instantly

785

01:05:50,780 --> 01:05:54,660

be transported to you know life's a lot better after a few drinks and all of a sudden

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01:05:54,660 --> 01:05:58,380

everything looks prettier well you go out and look out and your yard's bigger and your

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01:05:58,380 --> 01:06:03,860



house is big and all these things what i didn't realize was how much it was costing me and

788

01:06:03,860 --> 01:06:10,340

today i see that completely and it's funny one of the things that happened was we did lose

789

01:06:10,340 --> 01:06:13,780

that house of cards you know we had every house stacked on the next one to get all these

790

01:06:13,780 --> 01:06:18,300

rentals and the cars we had them but we certainly couldn't afford them you know and we couldn't

791

01:06:18,300 --> 01:06:23,260

do us so again they started falling apart and we ended up having to declare bankruptcy

792

01:06:23,260 --> 01:06:29,420

and we lost the whole house of dominoes and we were down to things but today we are making

793

01:06:29,420 --> 01:06:34,300

choices that my old self would have scoffed at wouldn't even be in the room to listen to

794

01:06:34,300 --> 01:06:39,740

you know we have one car and we make it work because we like to do things and we like to

795

01:06:39,740 --> 01:06:43,060

do things together and then when we're out we might go and do things at a park like a

796

01:06:43,060 --> 01:06:47,540

workout and we might meet other people there you obviously don't care what car you bring

797

01:06:47,540 --> 01:06:50,580

to the park when you're doing a workout you know or if you're going on a trip somewhere

798

01:06:50,580 --> 01:06:55,700

and taking a little trip again i've changed this whole perspective and i think when people

799

01:06:55,700 --> 01:07:01,060

realize why they were using it or what they think it might have brought to them i think

800

01:07:01,060 --> 01:07:05,100

that's when you poke the holes in the consumerism and you start to realize and my biggest thing

801

01:07:05,100 --> 01:07:09,220

is and i'm not trying to tout it but one of the books was i wrote this book called one

802

01:07:09,220 --> 01:07:13,740

bag life because that premise suddenly hit me as i was getting better mental health was

803

01:07:13,740 --> 01:07:18,700

what if everything that made me happy could fit in one bag and i said really it's about

804

01:07:18,700 --> 01:07:23,700

less stuff more experiences and i say that because that had a huge impact on my mental

805

01:07:23,700 --> 01:07:29,860

health and it also helped me kind of stop the nonsense and deal with some of those past

806

01:07:29,860 --> 01:07:34,980

traumas deal with some of the situations and realize you know i was actually causing a

807

01:07:34,980 --> 01:07:39,220

lot of it you know some of it was genetic some of it's certain conditions i had but

808

01:07:39,220 --> 01:07:44,260

by having all these requirements are always needing more i was putting myself on a hamster

809

01:07:44,260 --> 01:07:49,340

wheel of anxiety and stress and if i didn't have them like you said then i must be doing

810

01:07:49,340 --> 01:07:54,660

something wrong you know everybody else is succeeding and yet it's really just like

811

01:07:54,660 --> 01:08:00,380

ours was a facade and it turns out you know when you just become a real person and you

812

01:08:00,380 --> 01:08:04,020

do with real life experiences and you start to connect with others again and do those

813

01:08:04,020 --> 01:08:08,780

things it's amazing it's like seeing the other side of like wow how could we be so

814

01:08:08,780 --> 01:08:15,620

wrong and i do see because i'm giving some talks these days and stuff and i it's funny

815

01:08:15,620 --> 01:08:19,300

when i talk to teenagers and things like that they're so caught up in it because like you

816

01:08:19,300 --> 01:08:23,220

said it's everywhere on on all the social media sites and it's like if you don't have

817

01:08:23,220 --> 01:08:27,980

all these things you're not doing something right and i'm like you can have all those

818

01:08:27,980 --> 01:08:31,660

and it won't bring any of that happiness you have to like make them aware and show them

819

01:08:31,660 --> 01:08:35,180

hey think about what you really do when you hang out with your friends it's about hanging

820

01:08:35,180 --> 01:08:38,780

out with your friends nobody really cares what car you came in or where you know how

821

01:08:38,780 --> 01:08:43,340

you got there it's the experience it's a it's an interesting quirky concept but you know

822

01:08:43,340 --> 01:08:48,820

it it's like i look at the way we live today and everything has a little purpose because

823

01:08:48,820 --> 01:08:54,580

most of the time we spend doing things we're engaging in life and before it was all about

824

01:08:54,580 --> 01:08:59,060

you know if you're going on a trip it has to be so over the top and yet today you can

825

01:08:59,060 --> 01:09:04,340

take the simplest trip or the simplest experience and it becomes i like to call extraordinary

826

01:09:04,340 --> 01:09:09,220

you know i can go out in the morning and get coffee and actually have time to have coffee

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01:09:09,220 --> 01:09:13,820

where i'm not running frantic or recovering from all my mistakes from the night before

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01:09:13,820 --> 01:09:18,580

and i'm like i am so over the top for that 15 minutes i can't believe i missed it all

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01:09:18,580 --> 01:09:25,340

these years and today i'm like this is fantastic so i agree 100 i traveled around the world

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01:09:25,340 --> 01:09:32,740

with a backpack and a guitar and a girlfriend at the time around 2000 and it was amazing

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01:09:32,740 --> 01:09:37,140

because it was eventually i got hired and ended up working in japan so then i had a

832

01:09:37,140 --> 01:09:42,000

little apartment i'd start buying things again but for months and months and months it was

833

01:09:42,000 --> 01:09:45,900

everything was in that backpack and you realize what you can get by with a couple pairs of

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01:09:45,900 --> 01:09:50,540

shoes or pair of shoes and pair of flip flops and a couple pairs of jeans shorts and a hoodie

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01:09:50,540 --> 01:09:55,300

you know and then a guitar and so you know you go into places and hostels and you start

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01:09:55,300 --> 01:10:01,020

jamming with other people and it was it was really eye-opening how little we need and

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01:10:01,020 --> 01:10:06,540

then when i was in california i when i moved to the u.s i bought a nissan centra for cash

838

01:10:06,540 --> 01:10:11,780

um little stick shift which made it all the way from florida to california when i was

839

01:10:11,780 --> 01:10:15,620

there they used to call it my cream puff and they all had all the big trucks and everything

840

01:10:15,620 --> 01:10:20,700

but then you know a few years later i ended up having to move back to the east coast drove

841

01:10:20,700 --> 01:10:26,620

it all the way back and and traded it in with 309 000 miles on the clock still working yeah

842

01:10:26,620 --> 01:10:31,540

but no car payments and it got me from a to b the same as all these other vehicles that

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01:10:31,540 --> 01:10:36,460

these guys had so despite the resistance and the push to get on the property ladder and

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01:10:36,460 --> 01:10:40,900

all the things because i was fortunate enough to have that baseline and that kind of firstly

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01:10:40,900 --> 01:10:45,460

growing up on a farm and not being exposed to a lot of you know materialism but then

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01:10:45,460 --> 01:10:50,860

this kind of humbling journey with a backpack it really did help calibrate and give you

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01:10:50,860 --> 01:10:55,860

a little bit more strength to push against this bombardment of you don't have enough

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01:10:55,860 --> 01:10:59,980

and kind of have this well i don't care you know i don't i just i don't care so you go

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01:10:59,980 --> 01:11:04,560

buy your stuff but i'm happy and then like you said then you have the funds to travel

850

01:11:04,560 --> 01:11:09,060

and you have the ability to be a little bit more present which i think is so much more

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01:11:09,060 --> 01:11:13,620

valuable than stuff to the point where there's people that have you know storage units full

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01:11:13,620 --> 01:11:18,740

of stuff and the house like that's really a red flag just in itself right absolutely

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01:11:18,740 --> 01:11:23,700

and then we moved out of the house down to tennessee my wife got a job there and we were

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01:11:23,700 --> 01:11:27,620

going to an apartment after being in a house for 20 years and then having all this stuff

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01:11:27,620 --> 01:11:32,180

and at first i thought it was the end of the world and after a few weekends there we'd

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01:11:32,180 --> 01:11:36,540

go out bike riding over at this park and we'd do some rock climbing bike bike riding and

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01:11:36,540 --> 01:11:41,400

i realized every house we drove by somebody's out doing yard work raking the leaves taking

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01:11:41,400 --> 01:11:45,500

out the trash you know taking things and taking care of the house and i'm like that's what

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01:11:45,500 --> 01:11:49,540

we used to be we would never have time to do this you know it suddenly struck me i'm

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01:11:49,540 --> 01:11:54,320

like this is one of the greatest things like you said taking a chance moving to an apartment

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01:11:54,320 --> 01:11:57,860

and suddenly finding i don't have all those responsibilities when there's something wrong

862

01:11:57,860 --> 01:12:02,180

you call somebody and it was like at first that sounds terrible because you don't own

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01:12:02,180 --> 01:12:07,220

it but then you own your time and i was able to do we were able to do so much and have

864

01:12:07,220 --> 01:12:12,860

in the last years then too it's it's like the weekends don't become chore time and task

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01:12:12,860 --> 01:12:20,020

time they become time to do the things you really value i had a divorce and then ultimately

866

01:12:20,020 --> 01:12:24,740

that led to a foreclosure and a bankruptcy um you know the house that we bought was going

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01:12:24,740 --> 01:12:29,520

to be a two-income house you know the family dynamic changed actually got the mortgage

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01:12:29,520 --> 01:12:33,940

kind of reconfigured and still ended up losing it which was a shame but i did at least get

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01:12:33,940 --> 01:12:39,460

some equity in that house um but then we went to an apartment so firstly i had to tell my

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01:12:39,460 --> 01:12:44,660

family that i'd failed that we were losing the house um and then that we downsized to

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01:12:44,660 --> 01:12:51,660

an apartment just like you said once you shirk off those useless emotions of shame and guilt

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01:12:51,660 --> 01:12:56,060

it was awesome it was liberating we got rid of the stuff that we didn't need we got back

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01:12:56,060 --> 01:13:00,260

down and we did end up you know going then six months later and buying a house again

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01:13:00,260 --> 01:13:05,660

but it was around the corner from a little strip mall um you know the the boys had to

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01:13:05,660 --> 01:13:11,380

share a room but it also made you realize that when you think the world is collapsing

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01:13:11,380 --> 01:13:16,860

when the world is ending again it's a reminder like you just need clothes you need shelter

877

01:13:16,860 --> 01:13:22,160

and you need your family that's it everything else is fluff and so just like you coming

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01:13:22,160 --> 01:13:26,140

back down and being forced to a two-bedroom apartment for a while with a german shepherd

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01:13:26,140 --> 01:13:31,860

um you know for six months we ended up really enjoying it and we look back fondly at that

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01:13:31,860 --> 01:13:35,180

and i love where i live now we did get a you know a home with a little bit more space again

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01:13:35,180 --> 01:13:41,600

but um but yeah i think it's it's terrifying at first but it's actually liberating once

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01:13:41,600 --> 01:13:47,020

you let some of those superfluous emotions just come and go yeah absolutely and we did

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01:13:47,020 --> 01:13:50,600

it and we've gone through some struggles in the last years and we've moved to several

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01:13:50,600 --> 01:13:55,580

states like i mentioned uh with my wife working remote and all that and at one point we had

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01:13:55,580 --> 01:14:00,740

the two cars and we sold one and we were fully intending we'd do it as a short-term fix and

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01:14:00,740 --> 01:14:05,400

now we're like no we can do one car and the funny thing is you tell people about they

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01:14:05,400 --> 01:14:09,540

first get a little quizzical and then they start asking how do you do it you know how

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01:14:09,540 --> 01:14:13,340

does that work and then what you go out on the weekends and do stuff too you know how

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01:14:13,340 --> 01:14:16,900

do you not have all these like you said all these other responsibilities that didn't help

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01:14:16,900 --> 01:14:23,660

me so i find it interesting too because there's a lot of people that are um intrigued by it

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01:14:23,660 --> 01:14:27,720

and sometimes you wouldn't expect that you know here you're like we're talking about

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01:14:27,720 --> 01:14:31,120

something we thought was terrible we find it great but what i also find interesting

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01:14:31,120 --> 01:14:37,300

is other people are asking us about it now and i'm hoping we can tune them into some

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01:14:37,300 --> 01:14:41,340

of these ideas you know and help them with some of these ideas that maybe will change

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01:14:41,340 --> 01:14:46,760

and help their mental health you know it helps you being able to feel different about things

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01:14:46,760 --> 01:14:51,620

absolutely well speaking of mental health then you kind of left us you know 20 years

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01:14:51,620 --> 01:15:00,500

deep a um a suicide attempt that thank goodness you survived so walk me through your kind

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01:15:00,500 --> 01:15:06,340

of um metamorphosis from that and how you came up with the concept of the mental health

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01:15:06,340 --> 01:15:14,680

warrior so i i knew at that point and this is what's interesting so we we have the attempted

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01:15:14,680 --> 01:15:19,820

suicide and we have this new bruce coming out but he didn't come out right away i even

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01:15:19,820 --> 01:15:25,420

went back to some old habits and i just couldn't make anything stick and it was at that point

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01:15:25,420 --> 01:15:31,340

i realized you know okay you've been through all of this and nothing's changing and that

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01:15:31,340 --> 01:15:36,660

was when i came to this realization because what happened was i wanted to help people

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01:15:36,660 --> 01:15:40,420

so i got certified as a personal trainer you know i didn't want to go back to corporate

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01:15:40,420 --> 01:15:44,900

day school as i'm saying and i we had like a small antiques business and i'm going to

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01:15:44,900 --> 01:15:49,420

get personal trainer then a health coach then i got into became a nutrition coach and i'm

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01:15:49,420 --> 01:15:53,980

thinking i'm going to help people on that but all along i realized and i realized by

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01:15:53,980 --> 01:15:59,340

looking at myself and all the challenges that the emotions were what stopped me all in the

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01:15:59,340 --> 01:16:04,340

past what it caused all these problems not being able to handle fearing my own emotions

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01:16:04,340 --> 01:16:09,740

and i suddenly realized well these other things are all good it's still emotions because emotions

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01:16:09,740 --> 01:16:12,820

and like to challenge people you know it's involved in every aspect of life you can't

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01:16:12,820 --> 01:16:17,300

think of anything you do in a day where you don't have emotions involved and sometimes

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01:16:17,300 --> 01:16:20,500

they'll propel you you know to be able to do them but sometimes they just come with

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01:16:20,500 --> 01:16:24,180

the basic like i'm saying getting a cup of coffee and the emotions of contentment and

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01:16:24,180 --> 01:16:30,100

your emotions of i'm enjoying this landing on that is what started all this and i realized

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01:16:30,100 --> 01:16:36,420

mental health is to me is the most powerful thing out there and it had the power to take

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01:16:36,420 --> 01:16:42,140

me down all those years which meant if it is that powerful it has the power to do amazing

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01:16:42,140 --> 01:16:47,500

things for people when we learn to manage it and then what do you do with that i kind

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01:16:47,500 --> 01:16:52,100

of go back to when i was the emt and learning all this stuff as a kid the first thing you

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01:16:52,100 --> 01:16:57,500

go in is manage the scene and the first thing you do is don't rush in either you know because

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01:16:57,500 --> 01:17:01,940

you don't end up being another wreck on a wreck or something but you have to manage

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01:17:01,940 --> 01:17:06,740

the scene and i'm like that means a little structure so i came up with this idea of the

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01:17:06,740 --> 01:17:09,980

mental health warrior because rather than just say hey we're gonna take care of our

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01:17:09,980 --> 01:17:14,580

mental health and have that associated it's kind of a weakness like you were saying it's

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01:17:14,580 --> 01:17:19,180

looked down upon all that i'm like let's break the stigma we're gonna be warriors and we're

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01:17:19,180 --> 01:17:23,780

gonna be mental health warriors and that right alone says to people hey we're gonna take

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01:17:23,780 --> 01:17:28,420

this in a positive direction in a powerful direction and it just started snowballing

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01:17:28,420 --> 01:17:33,380

because i started saying well how can i help people and what i need to do is create a program

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01:17:33,380 --> 01:17:38,340

which gives people some elements of what a warrior is and so i created there's four

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01:17:38,340 --> 01:17:44,500

components of it and i took all those 20 years of lessons and even other lessons and poured

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01:17:44,500 --> 01:17:49,940

them in and the four components match up to a lot of what we've been talking about you

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01:17:49,940 --> 01:17:54,380

have a creed which is bend not break and so you say right away i'm not going to let life

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01:17:54,380 --> 01:17:58,140

just break me just like when you're on a scene you know you can't break because then you

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01:17:58,140 --> 01:18:03,700

can't help somebody if they're struggling and then i said well values everybody talks

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01:18:03,700 --> 01:18:08,100

about mental health and take care of your emotions but again if you don't set your values

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01:18:08,100 --> 01:18:13,460

and what's important and pick your direction for your life you won't go in the right place

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01:18:13,460 --> 01:18:18,780

and you will just be unhappy and i found this because at one point i'm trying to get sober

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01:18:18,780 --> 01:18:22,540

and i think i wrote about in the book in that first one where i switched over i said well

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01:18:22,540 --> 01:18:25,940

i'll take some value to calm my nerves you know i'll just take pills and you can get

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01:18:25,940 --> 01:18:30,420

them online it's no big deal and next thing i know i'm not drinking and i've achieved

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01:18:30,420 --> 01:18:35,540

my goal but all i've done is switch to another addiction all i've done is bring in more problems

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01:18:35,540 --> 01:18:40,500

so i said values have to be an important part and it tells you how do you want to live and

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01:18:40,500 --> 01:18:44,220

what are you trying to go after in life and that's going to play a huge role in your mental

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01:18:44,220 --> 01:18:50,700

health which like we were saying the one bag life is part of that values it's part of less

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01:18:50,700 --> 01:18:56,220

stuff more experiences and that has that positive mental health and then the last two pieces

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01:18:56,220 --> 01:19:01,340

were mindset rules and mental health warrior tools and mindset rules are certain truths

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01:19:01,340 --> 01:19:04,940

i see out there we need to remind ourselves on and there are guidance they're the things

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01:19:04,940 --> 01:19:10,340

that can keep us out of trouble and keep us get us out of trouble and i put all that together

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01:19:10,340 --> 01:19:15,660

with a series of tools and all these things that i believe we can do so much throughout

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01:19:15,660 --> 01:19:20,940

the day without disrupting our life to take care of mental health and the warriors is to position

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01:19:20,940 --> 01:19:25,340

it as we always know there's the advanced help you know there's the doctors and the medicines

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01:19:25,340 --> 01:19:29,340

and things but what can you do every day you know what are the powerful things you can do

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01:19:29,340 --> 01:19:38,140

and so that's kind of the how it came together and then today it's it just keeps spinning into

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01:19:38,140 --> 01:19:42,300

more things um you know additional books and trying to bring this message out to people

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01:19:42,300 --> 01:19:48,220

so from your personal journey of you end up you know uh teaching with these tools that you use

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01:19:48,220 --> 01:19:55,420

but what was your personal experience how are you able to apply this to yourself so so i had to look

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01:19:55,820 --> 01:20:02,300

and decide things like what did what makes up bruce shooter you know what what does he want to

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01:20:02,300 --> 01:20:07,820

stand for do i want to go after something or fall back and just you know go back to what i had before

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01:20:07,820 --> 01:20:15,020

do i want to work in it again do i want to try and help people and do all this stuff and my journey

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01:20:15,020 --> 01:20:21,100

was i kind of went back to like we started this whole conversation back when i was 16 17 18 being

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01:20:21,100 --> 01:20:26,540

an emt and seeing the value and and the power of helping people in a life or death situation

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01:20:27,100 --> 01:20:32,460

well i want to bring my experiences and help people because i've changed i view things

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01:20:32,460 --> 01:20:37,820

completely different you know the the bruce has come around in those 20 years and found

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01:20:37,820 --> 01:20:42,380

themselves again if you will and i'm back to wanting to do something that has that meaning

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01:20:42,940 --> 01:20:49,500

and i also want to stand up and make that mark with mental health and alcoholism and suicide

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01:20:49,500 --> 01:20:54,380

awareness and all those things because i just feel like somebody needs to talk about those things

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01:20:54,380 --> 01:21:01,740

and it has become it has become my passion obsession you know like like you do on any good

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01:21:01,740 --> 01:21:09,420

career or anything and it has changed who i am which has changed how i act and changed well how

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01:21:09,420 --> 01:21:18,060

i view success or how i view the day and and i just find it i don't know how to describe it

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01:21:18,060 --> 01:21:27,180

sometimes in words but i find it it's a amazing new path where i find myself so in awe of some

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01:21:27,180 --> 01:21:32,220

of the things in life you know because i'm actually living life today is the best way i can describe

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01:21:32,220 --> 01:21:36,700

it before i was just going through life you know and and that's something makes me want to share

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01:21:36,700 --> 01:21:42,940

it with everybody well earlier you touched on kind of not being aware and no one really having the

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01:21:42,940 --> 01:21:48,860

conversations when it came to the bipolar the anxiety depression when when did you have a

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01:21:48,860 --> 01:21:53,980

realization that that was actually you know a mental health diagnosis and again how have you been

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01:21:53,980 --> 01:22:01,980

able to to stabilize the extremes that you were experiencing before so i didn't get diagnosed with

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01:22:01,980 --> 01:22:08,300

the bipolar until i was 40 so i got diagnosed early on the anxiety disorders social anxiety

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01:22:08,300 --> 01:22:14,380

the anxiety disorders social anxiety generalized anxiety the alcohol problem was kind of unknown

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01:22:14,380 --> 01:22:19,740

you know and when i finally went and ended up in a facility for this outpatient treatment after

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01:22:19,740 --> 01:22:25,660

trying to kill myself the doctor came and told me hey you ever heard of word bipolar boy you fit this

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01:22:25,660 --> 01:22:31,820

to a t you know after talking with him and i said oh my god that was a turning point because what he

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01:22:31,820 --> 01:22:37,500

gave me was information and gave me a starting point and it was like it was like the the doors

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01:22:37,500 --> 01:22:43,580

opened up and i was like oh my god i can put a name to it now i can learn about it and what it

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01:22:43,580 --> 01:22:50,300

helped me do then was to take action and not feel like i have zero control you know you're going to

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01:22:50,300 --> 01:22:55,420

go talk to specialists you're going to talk to a therapist and i took the tact of working together

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01:22:55,420 --> 01:23:03,660

with them and trying to work with them it really changed how i wanted to stabilize everything

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01:23:03,660 --> 01:23:10,140

because i i worked with all the traditional routes but i ran into so many problems that i got to the

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01:23:10,140 --> 01:23:15,580

point where i wanted to show people you can do yourself i'm not saying meds didn't play a role

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01:23:15,580 --> 01:23:19,820

they helped get me some clarity of thought but there were so many side effects in my case and so

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01:23:19,820 --> 01:23:24,700

many problems and i switched through like 20 30 meds never getting one to really work and then i

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01:23:24,700 --> 01:23:28,300

found there were so many lifestyle changes and so many things i could do as this mental health

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01:23:28,300 --> 01:23:34,540

warrior that i found i could actually move forward that way you know i could i could find other

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01:23:34,540 --> 01:23:40,140

routes i i'm not saying i wouldn't go back and need help at times um but it opens the door because

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01:23:40,140 --> 01:23:44,780

you're not limited anymore and you're not limited to just here's all you can do about it you know

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01:23:44,780 --> 01:23:51,980

here's the only choice that you have it's there's some people that have had good experiences with

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01:23:51,980 --> 01:23:56,620

meds but i would argue they're few and far between at least the people that come on the show and it

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01:23:56,620 --> 01:24:03,100

it makes perfect sense to me if there's purely some sort of neurochemical imbalance and that is it so

998

01:24:03,100 --> 01:24:10,780

for example it seems like schizophrenia is one that tends to be more reliant on meds but it the

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01:24:10,780 --> 01:24:17,100

rest of us the other 90 whatever percent it's about the traumas you know it's about you know the

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01:24:17,660 --> 01:24:23,020

the nucleus the the kind of p beneath all the mattresses as it were and so if you just simply

1001

01:24:23,020 --> 01:24:27,980

medicate in someone you're never addressing the origin the same way as you know people that do

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01:24:29,020 --> 01:24:34,060

psilocybin or ketamine but there's no council or no shaman along with them and they don't have a

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01:24:34,060 --> 01:24:39,100

very good response it's because you haven't unpacked the things that you need to unpack so

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01:24:39,740 --> 01:24:44,460

you know then you add in the side effects as you said and sometimes you know suicide ideation is

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01:24:44,460 --> 01:24:51,740

one of the side effects um i hope that the more holistic um tools whether it's you know your

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01:24:51,740 --> 01:24:56,540

program and all the other ones are out there everything from emdr to the good psychedelic

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01:24:56,540 --> 01:25:03,260

therapies um the one day you know meds will be in that toolbox but there'll be just one small piece

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01:25:03,260 --> 01:25:09,180

of a much bigger puzzle because i don't think people realize how many options are available to

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01:25:09,180 --> 01:25:15,100

them but the thing is as you said there's that quick fix element which i think psych meds more

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01:25:15,100 --> 01:25:20,460

often than not fit you know ritalin and all these other things that we throw at our men women and

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01:25:20,460 --> 01:25:25,420

children and you know i think you have to ask yourself am i actually getting to the root cause

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01:25:25,420 --> 01:25:30,940

of my problem whether it's a blood pressure med or a psych med am i fixing the thing that caused

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01:25:30,940 --> 01:25:37,260

us in the first place yeah absolutely and i went through that with i was such a wreck physically

1014

01:25:37,260 --> 01:25:42,220

from the drinking and from all the bad behaviors that i was pre-diabetic overweight having all

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01:25:42,220 --> 01:25:45,820

these blood pressure issues and i went to the doctor and they were like you got to go on

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01:25:45,820 --> 01:25:49,820

statins you got to go on all these other meds and i said no i'm gonna do lifestyle changes and i

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01:25:49,820 --> 01:25:54,780

guess they don't hear that a lot so i fought with them for a while and we made a deal six months i

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01:25:54,780 --> 01:26:00,060

get to prove it if it doesn't work then i'll take your choice i proved it to them i never even had

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01:26:00,060 --> 01:26:04,700

to go on the meds i fixed all these things with lifestyle and i started thinking well wait what

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01:26:04,700 --> 01:26:08,780

about all these lifestyle things you can do for your mental health and that's where i'm trying to

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01:26:08,780 --> 01:26:13,980

take some of my background and i've one of the books out now is the three food rules for mental

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01:26:13,980 --> 01:26:19,660

health because again the foods we eat have a correlation to our mental health they they affect

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01:26:19,660 --> 01:26:24,460

the physiological part of our body which in turn affects our mental health the processing of things

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01:26:25,340 --> 01:26:29,420

how well your blood's flowing is going to affect how well you're thinking and clarity you know and

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01:26:29,420 --> 01:26:34,540

if you're feeding it it was sugar all the time and i kept them simple but they're all simple

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01:26:34,540 --> 01:26:40,300

lifestyle changes that have so many powerful you know results that i just love exploring that with

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01:26:40,300 --> 01:26:44,380

people and that's that's where things like we're talking about you have things like the one bag

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01:26:44,380 --> 01:26:48,780

life which is like a mindset and that is a mental health benefit we have these three food rules as

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01:26:48,780 --> 01:26:53,580

part of the program to help people see you know because i'm as guilty as especially back when

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01:26:53,580 --> 01:26:57,820

you're a first responder and stuff everything's on the go and you grab whatever you can and then

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01:26:57,820 --> 01:27:03,980

you leave it and come back to it you know 20 times over but it's just amazing what you can do and i'd

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01:27:03,980 --> 01:27:09,340

like to see that i'd like to see more people take ownership of what they can do knowing that you have

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01:27:09,340 --> 01:27:14,460

these advanced things if you need them you know knowing that if you need to go in for some therapy

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01:27:15,100 --> 01:27:20,380

my hope is that then you take your ownership with you and you go in and work with a therapist as

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01:27:20,380 --> 01:27:25,420

opposed to going in and saying i don't know what to do and i have no ownership again you know because

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01:27:25,420 --> 01:27:31,260

that'll bring you back to where i felt at that day i have no choices i have no forward momentum i

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01:27:31,260 --> 01:27:37,820

can't go anywhere so what's the point and i'm just really hoping we can keep inspiring people

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01:27:37,820 --> 01:27:43,020

showing them what they can do yeah well i mean it's a very unique perspective that you have as well

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01:27:43,020 --> 01:27:48,540

so i would love to kind of educate people on you know the books and then obviously the the site as

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01:27:48,540 --> 01:27:53,340

well so so tell people the the spectrum of books that you have out there and where are the best

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01:27:53,340 --> 01:27:59,900

places to find them and the courses so everything is centered right now the website is bruce shooter



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01:27:59,900 --> 01:28:05,500

dot com and that's kind of the kickoff point because what we have is we've got nine books out

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01:28:05,500 --> 01:28:10,780

so we've got the one book that talks about how it's it's i triumphed over bipolar alcoholism

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01:28:10,780 --> 01:28:15,340

and anxiety disorders by coming a mental health warrior and it lays out my story that we've been

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01:28:15,340 --> 01:28:19,900

talking about and lays out those four components then there's the other eight books that really

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01:28:19,900 --> 01:28:25,500

get into taking action in specific areas and you can find all these with the website and then they're

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01:28:25,500 --> 01:28:29,660

all up on amazon so you can get the ebooks and the you know we're trying to get them up on some other

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01:28:29,660 --> 01:28:36,300

sites each of the books it's got my quirky writing style you're not going to find textbooks you're

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01:28:36,300 --> 01:28:42,860

not going to find a lot of super complicated discussions even in the food areas i created that

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01:28:42,860 --> 01:28:48,140

one for for example with three food rules because i got so tired of trying to follow some of the

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01:28:48,780 --> 01:28:52,620

diets that can help you out there but are so restrictive there's no way to sustain them you

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01:28:52,620 --> 01:28:59,260

know and i tried to keep things simple but real some of the other books there's a journal there's

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01:28:59,260 --> 01:29:05,420

a journal there's also one that came a big part from my emt experience and the whole experience

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01:29:05,420 --> 01:29:11,340

it's called euphoria of today and what it is is its mindfulness of today practice of mindfulness

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01:29:11,340 --> 01:29:17,500

of today i call it and the idea was when you have wreckage of the past whether it's mental health

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01:29:17,500 --> 01:29:23,420

issues or other things and you also then have a fear of the future what if we focus on today

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01:29:23,420 --> 01:29:29,020

what if we really live in today because that's the only place we really have control and yet

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01:29:29,020 --> 01:29:33,740

everything you do today if you take control and manage those emotions well you just build a great

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01:29:33,740 --> 01:29:38,300

tomorrow because you don't bring any problems into it and if you're doing things different today like

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01:29:38,300 --> 01:29:43,820

i am i put to rest all those mistakes yes i can talk openly yes we had a whole bunch of houses in

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01:29:43,820 --> 01:29:49,180

these cars and yes i was an idiot but i'm also not really sad they're all gone and i can talk about

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01:29:49,180 --> 01:29:55,100

it so you'll find a bunch of different books like that you'll find there's with those mindset rules

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01:29:55,100 --> 01:30:00,220

there's 53 of them and they're little one-off things that will help remind you and keep you

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01:30:00,220 --> 01:30:06,140

on a straight and narrow and what i did then was one of the biggest things i saw and was missing

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01:30:06,140 --> 01:30:11,340

out there is you need something to be able to carry with you all the time how do you stay motivated

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01:30:11,340 --> 01:30:15,820

throughout the day sometimes you know sometimes you just by yourself and so i created a mental

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01:30:15,820 --> 01:30:20,460

health warrior challenge coin and people in the service you know they're familiar with that it

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01:30:20,460 --> 01:30:25,100

commemorates like a place you've served or an event you've been through and so i created this

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01:30:25,100 --> 01:30:31,260

challenge coin and funny enough like the one coin on the back has mindset rule two which is learn to

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01:30:31,260 --> 01:30:37,180

respond not react to life's challenges which can save you all the time and we've handed them out

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01:30:37,180 --> 01:30:42,780

we're selling to people and they're finding it so useful so again i'm trying to have the books but

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01:30:42,780 --> 01:30:48,140

also have some daily things because i know when i was in like any of the self-help groups you know

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01:30:48,140 --> 01:30:52,060

you need some of that reassurance something to carry with you that's in your hand you may not even

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01:30:52,060 --> 01:30:57,740

want to talk to other people about it but you can you know you can have those things so you'll find

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01:30:57,740 --> 01:31:04,380

all that stuff there and i'll just throw one last thing because i i just wore it but i because i was

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01:31:04,380 --> 01:31:09,420

doing the designs and all that stuff i threw them on clothing and the reason being is i do it mostly

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01:31:09,420 --> 01:31:15,500

for us but it kick starts the conversation and whether you have the book or the coin or one of

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01:31:15,500 --> 01:31:19,900

the clothing you can kick start a conversation anywhere and like we've talked i've gotten into

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01:31:19,900 --> 01:31:25,420

so many interesting conversations it's like i encourage people to open that door it's scary

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01:31:25,420 --> 01:31:29,100

you don't want to admit you have any problems you don't want to admit you're struggling but boy when

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01:31:29,100 --> 01:31:34,380

you open up man people open up around you because they've been waiting for somebody to say that so

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01:31:35,180 --> 01:31:41,180

it's pretty neat it's definitely exciting absolutely well i want to thank you so much like i said it's

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01:31:41,180 --> 01:31:46,460

a very unique perspective you've got a very interesting journey and again are very courageously

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01:31:46,460 --> 01:31:51,580

vulnerable on on your highs your lows and this journey has taken you through but i urge people

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01:31:51,580 --> 01:31:57,820

to go to the site and look at some of the books thank you again for sending me the the first book

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01:31:57,820 --> 01:32:04,140

that you wrote and yeah i think it's it's it's again it's that immersive element i think people

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01:32:04,140 --> 01:32:08,380

can dive in and see there's so many different things and find the thing that really resonates

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01:32:08,380 --> 01:32:12,780

with them you know and then move forward with it so i want to thank you so so much for being

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01:32:12,780 --> 01:32:18,060

so generous and coming on the behind the shield podcast today no thank you and thanks for being

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01:32:18,060 --> 01:32:23,260

so open to talk about this stuff you know i wasn't quite sure how far to go on some of my stories

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01:32:23,260 --> 01:32:28,460

and as you know sometimes you're a little wary on some of these but um i appreciate and it's

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01:32:29,420 --> 01:32:33,740

cathartic if you will but being able to share that story about that experience with the neighboring

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01:32:33,740 --> 01:32:38,060

high school kids and all of that because it reinforces in me today and i hope other people

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01:32:38,060 --> 01:32:43,580

take from that that we can learn and to celebrate every day and to put our effort into today you

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01:32:43,580 --> 01:32:50,140

know that's i feel like what we owe when we see people that we've lost and and it's kind of a

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01:32:50,140 --> 01:32:54,300

neat perspective that you could take any time you don't have to be a first responder but

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01:32:54,860 --> 01:33:00,140

it's one of those life lessons that today i just hold tightly to you know it took me

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01:33:00,140 --> 01:33:13,020

20 years to learn it but i hold tightly to it today