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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 --> 00:00:06,560

that is Transcend.

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00:00:06,560 --> 00:00:10,600

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

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00:00:10,600 --> 00:00:12,560

for 14 years.

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00:00:12,560 --> 00:00:18,840

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

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00:00:18,840 --> 00:00:20,560

hair loss, etc.

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00:00:20,560 --> 00:00:23,840

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

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00:00:23,840 --> 00:00:28,240

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

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00:00:28,240 --> 00:00:33,200

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

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00:00:33,200 --> 00:00:34,600

and center.

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00:00:34,600 --> 00:00:40,160

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

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00:00:40,160 --> 00:00:45,360

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

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00:00:45,360 --> 00:00:46,500

my throat.

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00:00:46,500 --> 00:00:50,820

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

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00:00:50,820 --> 00:00:56,840

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

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00:00:56,840 --> 00:01:00,840

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

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

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00:01:05,480 --> 00:01:11,040

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

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00:01:11,040 --> 00:01:14,760

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

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00:01:14,760 --> 00:01:19,180

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

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00:01:19,180 --> 00:01:23,680

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

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00:01:23,680 --> 00:01:28,840

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

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00:01:28,840 --> 00:01:33,360

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

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00:01:33,360 --> 00:01:37,800

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

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00:01:37,800 --> 00:01:41,720

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

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00:01:41,720 --> 00:01:45,120

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

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00:01:45,120 --> 00:01:49,560

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

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00:01:49,560 --> 00:01:54,400

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

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00:01:54,400 --> 00:01:58,720

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

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00:01:58,720 --> 00:02:00,380

you can't come back from.

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00:02:00,380 --> 00:02:07,780

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

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00:02:07,780 --> 00:02:10,900

one of the most powerful tools in the toolbox.

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00:02:10,900 --> 00:02:17,840

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

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00:02:17,840 --> 00:02:22,400

Shield podcast with founder Ernie Colling.

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00:02:22,400 --> 00:02:24,080

This episode is sponsored by New Calm.

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00:02:24,080 --> 00:02:29,720

And as many of you know, I only bring sponsors onto this show whose products I truly swear

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00:02:29,720 --> 00:02:30,720

by.

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00:02:30,720 --> 00:02:36,280

Now we are an overworked and under slept population, especially those of us that wear uniform for

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00:02:36,280 --> 00:02:42,400

a living and trying to reclaim some of the lost rest and recovery is imperative.

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00:02:42,400 --> 00:02:46,520

Now the application of this product is as simple as putting on headphones and a sleep

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00:02:46,520 --> 00:02:47,560

mask.

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00:02:47,560 --> 00:02:53,200

As you listen to music on each of the programs, there is neuroacoustic software beneath that

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00:02:53,200 --> 00:02:58,960

is tapping into the actual frequencies of your brain, whether to up-regulate your nervous

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00:02:58,960 --> 00:03:01,680  
system or down-regulate.

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00:03:01,680 --> 00:03:06,220  
Now for most of us that come off shift, we are A, exhausted and B, do not want to bring

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00:03:06,220 --> 00:03:10,480  
what we've had to see and do back home to our loved ones.

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00:03:10,480 --> 00:03:16,560  
So one powerful application is using the program Powernap, a 20 minute session that will not

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00:03:16,560 --> 00:03:22,460  
only feel like you've had two hours of sleep, but also down-regulate from a hypervigilant

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00:03:22,460 --> 00:03:27,560  
state back into the role of mother or father, husband or wife.

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00:03:27,560 --> 00:03:31,760  
Now there are so many other applications and benefits from this software.

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00:03:31,760 --> 00:03:39,600  
So I urge you to go and listen to episode 806 with CEO Jim Poole, then download New

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00:03:39,600 --> 00:03:47,400  
Calm N-U-C-A-L-M from your app store and sign up for the seven day free trial.

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00:03:47,400 --> 00:03:51,720  
Not only will you have an understanding of the origin story and the four decades this

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00:03:51,720 --> 00:03:58,880  
science has spanned, but also see for yourself the incredible health impact of this life-changing

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00:03:58,880 --> 00:04:00,120  
software.

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00:04:00,120 --> 00:04:05,360  
And you can find even more information on [newcalm.com](http://newcalm.com).

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00:04:05,360 --> 00:04:06,960  
Welcome to the Behind the Shield podcast.

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00:04:06,960 --> 00:04:10,640  
As always, my name is James Gearing and this week it is my absolute honor to welcome on

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00:04:10,640 --> 00:04:16,880  
the show veteran volunteer and career firefighter Chris Moore.

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00:04:16,880 --> 00:04:22,340  
Now in this conversation, we discuss a host of topics from his journey into the fire service,

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00:04:22,340 --> 00:04:30,400  
some career calls, his powerful mental health story, save a warrior, brothers helping brothers,

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00:04:30,400 --> 00:04:32,760  
leadership and so much more.

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00:04:32,760 --> 00:04:36,920  
Now before we get to this incredible conversation, as I say every week, please just take a moment

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00:04:36,920 --> 00:04:42,600  
to go to whichever app you listen to this on, subscribe to the show, leave feedback

65  
00:04:42,600 --> 00:04:44,680  
and leave a rating.

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00:04:44,680 --> 00:04:49,920

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

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00:04:49,920 --> 00:04:51,480

others to find.

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00:04:51,480 --> 00:04:56,280

And this is a free library of almost 900 episodes now.

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

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00:05:01,880 --> 00:05:07,120

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

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00:05:07,120 --> 00:05:11,960

So with that being said, I introduce to you Chris Moore.

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00:05:11,960 --> 00:05:12,960

Enjoy.

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00:05:12,960 --> 00:05:38,760

Well, Chris, I want to start firstly to say thank you to Jim for bringing us together

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00:05:38,760 --> 00:05:43,220

in Ohio for the Brothers Helping Brothers Conference and secondly, I want to welcome

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00:05:43,220 --> 00:05:47,280

you personally to the Behind the Shield podcast today.

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00:05:47,280 --> 00:05:49,280

Thank you for having me.

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Amazing conference where we finally got to have our paths crossed in Ohio.

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00:05:55,360 --> 00:06:01,680

And it was a pleasure meeting you and spending a few days together with you and getting to

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00:06:01,680 --> 00:06:05,720

see the man behind the podcast and everything that you're doing.

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00:06:05,720 --> 00:06:13,760

So that was such an honor and it's a huge honor to be a part of your podcast right now.

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00:06:13,760 --> 00:06:14,760

Thank you.

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00:06:14,760 --> 00:06:17,200

Yeah, well, I mean, it was it was such a powerful conference too.

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00:06:17,200 --> 00:06:21,600

I mean, there was a lot of people I interviewed that I haven't met some local guys that I

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00:06:21,600 --> 00:06:22,600

already had.

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00:06:22,600 --> 00:06:26,680

So for example, interviewing Rowell and Jeff and their perspective on the the Pulse shoot

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00:06:26,680 --> 00:06:28,880

in live was was incredible.

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00:06:28,880 --> 00:06:29,880

So powerful.



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00:06:29,880 --> 00:06:33,720

But then also me and Ben and some of the other guys that had on the show and watching their

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00:06:33,720 --> 00:06:40,920

presentations and, you know, the the love in that conference space was incredible.

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00:06:40,920 --> 00:06:46,240

It was the people that really understood vulnerability, but also that brotherhood and sisterhood piece.

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00:06:46,240 --> 00:06:51,320

So it it reignited my fire and a belief that that's what the fire service really is.

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00:06:51,320 --> 00:06:53,320

Yeah, me too.

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00:06:53,320 --> 00:06:58,280

So amazing conference for anybody who hasn't been out there to the Brothers Helping Brothers

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00:06:58,280 --> 00:07:03,800

Conference and what do they call it, Exotic Beaver Creek, Ohio.

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00:07:03,800 --> 00:07:07,080

If you ever get a chance, it's every year in October.

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00:07:07,080 --> 00:07:08,200

Definitely get out there and check them out.

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00:07:08,200 --> 00:07:09,400

They're doing great things.

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00:07:09,400 --> 00:07:14,120

Those guys that put that on truly have that servant's heart and they want to give back

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00:07:14,120 --> 00:07:18,840

to the brother and sisterhood of the fire service and public safety.

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00:07:18,840 --> 00:07:19,840

Absolutely.

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00:07:19,840 --> 00:07:21,820

Well, I know you're not in Ohio now.

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00:07:21,820 --> 00:07:24,640

So where are we finding you today?

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00:07:24,640 --> 00:07:25,900

Virginia Beach, Virginia.

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00:07:25,900 --> 00:07:34,240

So probably takes me about 17 minutes to do the math to get from my door to the beach.

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00:07:34,240 --> 00:07:36,320

I was just there earlier today.

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00:07:36,320 --> 00:07:37,320

That's my happy place.

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00:07:37,320 --> 00:07:39,460

It's cold here.

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00:07:39,460 --> 00:07:41,640

Not as warm as where you're at down in Florida.

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00:07:41,640 --> 00:07:44,880

But I think today we're right around 40 degrees.

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00:07:44,880 --> 00:07:47,920

So a little nippy down at the ocean front.

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00:07:47,920 --> 00:07:50,560

But regardless, it's still my happy place.

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00:07:50,560 --> 00:07:59,600

I like to go there and do self-care, meditation, any chance that I get to partake in that.

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00:07:59,600 --> 00:08:03,040

So many of the people that have come on the show that have been attached to Virginia Beach

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00:08:03,040 --> 00:08:04,360

are wearing a trident.

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00:08:04,360 --> 00:08:08,020

So obviously there's a strong SEAL community there and even DevGru.

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00:08:08,020 --> 00:08:13,320

So with you working in the fire service, have you had any interaction with that community

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00:08:13,320 --> 00:08:17,000

in general and or your local law enforcement agency?

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00:08:17,000 --> 00:08:19,280

Oh, yeah.

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00:08:19,280 --> 00:08:21,360

Lots of interactions.

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00:08:21,360 --> 00:08:26,840

It's kind of hard to go anywhere in this area, even as a civilian, without interacting with

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00:08:26,840 --> 00:08:34,120

somebody in the military or law enforcement and even the SEAL teams and DevGru.

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00:08:34,120 --> 00:08:43,000

But yeah, we have lots of positive interactions all around.

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00:08:43,000 --> 00:08:49,800

Just a fellowship and the brotherhood, the camaraderie with them as well.

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00:08:49,800 --> 00:08:53,160

Well, this would be a good question to ask you.

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00:08:53,160 --> 00:09:00,640

I was blown away as I started, you know, on what's the right word, accumulating episodes

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00:09:00,640 --> 00:09:03,640

and getting more and more conversations with people.

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00:09:03,640 --> 00:09:10,660

How high the special operations, special forces communities hold us, the first responders.

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00:09:10,660 --> 00:09:11,660

And it makes perfect sense.

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00:09:11,660 --> 00:09:15,040

While they're deployed, we are protecting their loved ones.

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00:09:15,040 --> 00:09:18,480

But you literally are living side by side with some of these.

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00:09:18,480 --> 00:09:21,840

So have you had any of those kind of conversations or perceptions?

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00:09:21,840 --> 00:09:26,040

Because the reason why I think it's so important is not for us to be our chest, but to then

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00:09:26,040 --> 00:09:32,920

parallel resources, you know, training, fitness requirements, etc. with those men in this

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00:09:32,920 --> 00:09:37,720

case, who hold us to the same position as themselves.

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00:09:37,720 --> 00:09:41,400

Yeah, absolutely.

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00:09:41,400 --> 00:09:44,160

You hit the nail on the head.

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00:09:44,160 --> 00:09:54,080

Those guys, as badass as they are, super, super humble in what they do.

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00:09:54,080 --> 00:09:59,200

And I can't thank the I put the military up here.

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00:09:59,200 --> 00:10:02,720

And I can't thank them enough for everything that they do.

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00:10:02,720 --> 00:10:08,960

But the the military that I've interacted with across the board, but since we're talking

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00:10:08,960 --> 00:10:14,680

about special forces, the the seals that I've interacted with and everything.

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00:10:14,680 --> 00:10:19,640

They do hold us in very high standards for the exact reasons that you said, because we're

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00:10:19,640 --> 00:10:24,520

holding the fort down here, while they're taking care of business overseas, whether

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00:10:24,520 --> 00:10:30,840

it be Africa or the Middle East or Afghanistan, whatever.

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00:10:30,840 --> 00:10:40,040

But to me, my response always to these guys is they afford us the luxury to do what we

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00:10:40,040 --> 00:10:45,440

do here, by them doing what they're doing over there.

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00:10:45,440 --> 00:10:49,800

They're securing, defending and securing our freedom.

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00:10:49,800 --> 00:10:54,840

And without that, we couldn't be on this podcast right now, we couldn't be on the rigs or the

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00:10:54,840 --> 00:10:57,160

patrol cars or whatever it may be.

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00:10:57,160 --> 00:11:00,960

So to me, they're they're well above.

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00:11:00,960 --> 00:11:04,360

But they they they don't accept that from me.

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00:11:04,360 --> 00:11:07,840

Because like I said, they're they're so humble, even as as badass as they are.

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00:11:07,840 --> 00:11:15,940

And for those of you out there who have never met our any of our elite special forces.

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00:11:15,940 --> 00:11:23,240

It seems like a lot of people think that they're kind of like us.

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00:11:23,240 --> 00:11:27,960

People think we're superheroes, that we have an S on our chest or whatever.

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00:11:27,960 --> 00:11:29,520

And that's that's just not the case.

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00:11:29,520 --> 00:11:38,560

I mean, we are all just everyday men and women who are doing an exceptional job at what we

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00:11:38,560 --> 00:11:43,440

do, providing a service to our communities and our country.

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00:11:43,440 --> 00:11:50,000

So it's it's really cool, man, just to sit down and have a regular conversation with

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00:11:50,000 --> 00:11:52,120

these guys.

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00:11:52,120 --> 00:11:58,040

What I found is that they because again, it's it's like I said, it's not apples to apples.

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00:11:58,040 --> 00:12:02,240

Each of us do our profession and we're always in awe of other professions that do it at

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00:12:02,240 --> 00:12:03,240

such a high level.

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00:12:03,240 --> 00:12:08,400

And I think the the closest comparison I can think of is wildland and structural like the

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00:12:08,400 --> 00:12:09,640

wildland firefighters.

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00:12:09,640 --> 00:12:11,520

You guys are crazy running into a burning building.

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00:12:11,520 --> 00:12:12,520

Why would you do that?

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00:12:12,520 --> 00:12:17,600

We're like you you stand in the middle of burning mountains with a shovel.

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00:12:17,600 --> 00:12:23,680

So I think there is that admiration, but where the value is, apart from that mutual respect,

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00:12:23,680 --> 00:12:26,640

is OK, which of these organizations are doing it best?

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00:12:26,640 --> 00:12:32,320

OK, the SEALs and some of the other communities, they get good training, everything from the

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00:12:32,320 --> 00:12:38,520

mental health and the resilience to the fitness training, nutrition to the the knowledge sharing

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00:12:38,520 --> 00:12:41,320

with special forces from other countries.

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00:12:41,320 --> 00:12:45,800

And then you side by side compare the thing that I know, which is the fire service.

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00:12:45,800 --> 00:12:49,640

There are some departments that do that very well, but there's a lot where we're asking



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00:12:49,640 --> 00:12:55,160

men and women to do so much with so little, which is absolutely the polar opposite of

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00:12:55,160 --> 00:12:58,680

how a lot of the special operations communities are treated.

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00:12:58,680 --> 00:13:06,320

Yeah, that's very spot on analogy of that right there.

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00:13:06,320 --> 00:13:13,000

There's so many organizations and departments that are ahead of their time.

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00:13:13,000 --> 00:13:17,520

They are they're cutting edge and they're they're doing all the right things.

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00:13:17,520 --> 00:13:24,200

Then you have another tier of organizations and departments that they say the right thing,

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00:13:24,200 --> 00:13:26,440

but they don't always do the right thing.

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00:13:26,440 --> 00:13:30,960

And then you have that bottom tier that just they don't put all of the pieces of the puzzle

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00:13:30,960 --> 00:13:39,040

together and put out the I guess the best possible product if you want to call us a

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00:13:39,040 --> 00:13:48,560

product, but the best possible scenario for success in the field, but at home also for

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00:13:48,560 --> 00:13:51,040

their members.

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00:13:51,040 --> 00:13:58,320

We always talk about ourselves in within this community as being a family, family oriented,

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00:13:58,320 --> 00:14:01,200

family geared and everything.

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00:14:01,200 --> 00:14:06,880

And kudos to the departments that truly follow through with that.

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00:14:06,880 --> 00:14:10,360

But the ones that don't, Godspeed to them.

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00:14:10,360 --> 00:14:16,960

I hope that they pick it up and elevate their game and start putting that total package

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00:14:16,960 --> 00:14:23,880

together to take care of their members, not only while they're on that 24 hour shift or

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00:14:23,880 --> 00:14:28,760

getting back to our military as well while they're deployed and everything, but when

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00:14:28,760 --> 00:14:34,760

everybody is back at home and you're off shift with your family, we need departments to take

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00:14:34,760 --> 00:14:39,320

care of those members at that time as well.

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00:14:39,320 --> 00:14:42,520

Which workweek schedule do you guys have where you work?

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00:14:42,520 --> 00:14:44,280

Oh man, that's a bad question.

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00:14:44,280 --> 00:14:49,040

I'm going to confuse the hell out of you and everybody out there listening.

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00:14:49,040 --> 00:14:55,280

So 56 hour workweek, but we're on, it's called a 21 day cycle.

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00:14:55,280 --> 00:15:00,040

Everywhere I go, people ask me that question when I start explaining it, their mind is

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00:15:00,040 --> 00:15:01,700

just blown.

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00:15:01,700 --> 00:15:05,560

So they're 24 hour shifts, it starts on a Tuesday.

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00:15:05,560 --> 00:15:10,040

So we go Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Monday.

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00:15:10,040 --> 00:15:13,240

So it's every other day for roughly a week.

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00:15:13,240 --> 00:15:16,960

Then we get off that Tuesday morning, we're off Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.

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00:15:16,960 --> 00:15:20,560

We come back and work Friday and then we work Sunday.

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00:15:20,560 --> 00:15:22,440

We're off for two days.

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00:15:22,440 --> 00:15:26,920

We work Wednesday and then we have a five day break and that'll bring us back to a Tuesday

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00:15:26,920 --> 00:15:28,640

again and it starts all over.

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00:15:28,640 --> 00:15:33,840

Well, the most important thing you said was 56 hour workweek.

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00:15:33,840 --> 00:15:39,400

Because Anaheim was one on one off for four shifts and then it was a four or six after.

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00:15:39,400 --> 00:15:43,040

So that's the closest thing that I've heard to what you're doing.

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00:15:43,040 --> 00:15:47,880

But that 24 on 24 off was brutal for that tour.

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00:15:47,880 --> 00:15:52,420

And I've done a call to action to the fire service in general.

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00:15:52,420 --> 00:15:58,040

And the preface is this, we have so much courage operationally.

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00:15:58,040 --> 00:16:03,480

I can't even recall really an event where someone refused to go into a fire or whatever

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00:16:03,480 --> 00:16:04,480

because they were scared.

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00:16:04,480 --> 00:16:08,040

I won't use the word coward, but they were scared, they were ill prepared, whatever it

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00:16:08,040 --> 00:16:09,620

was.

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00:16:09,620 --> 00:16:13,960

So we're a pretty courageous bunch overall operationally.

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00:16:13,960 --> 00:16:17,200

But the number of times I've heard, oh, you'll never change that.

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00:16:17,200 --> 00:16:18,200

You'll never change that.

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00:16:18,200 --> 00:16:19,360

Oh, they'll never go for that.

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00:16:19,360 --> 00:16:24,720

And I realized that we're courageous in uniform, but absolutely cowards when it comes to advocating

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00:16:24,720 --> 00:16:29,160

for our own health, mental health, physical health and relationships at home.

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00:16:29,160 --> 00:16:33,000

So this is something that I'm asking now, not just with the workweek, because I've talked

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00:16:33,000 --> 00:16:34,120

that subject to death.

228

00:16:34,120 --> 00:16:40,360

We all know now that the 24 72 is probably what should be ultimately the industry standard

229

00:16:40,360 --> 00:16:43,360

to give our men and women the rest and recovery.

230

00:16:43,360 --> 00:16:45,660

And so now it's not, oh, what's the best?

231

00:16:45,660 --> 00:16:46,660

We know what the best is.

232

00:16:46,660 --> 00:16:48,360

Now it's like, how do we make that happen?

233

00:16:48,360 --> 00:16:50,760

The money is there because it's a false economy.

234

00:16:50,760 --> 00:16:54,440

The way that we work, save money if you actually have a healthier department.

235

00:16:54,440 --> 00:17:00,240

It's now a case of everyone from members to unions to chiefs to counties and cities to

236

00:17:00,240 --> 00:17:04,240

all have the courage to stand up and say, it's not working anymore.

237

00:17:04,240 --> 00:17:07,680

We need to change the way we're doing it.

238

00:17:07,680 --> 00:17:09,840

Yeah.

239

00:17:09,840 --> 00:17:16,560

We actually, you and I had a good portion of that conversation.

240

00:17:16,560 --> 00:17:21,400

And that that's definitely the best thing for the departments.

241

00:17:21,400 --> 00:17:30,320

Like you said, we have our one week of 24 on 24 off and that's, that's tough.

242

00:17:30,320 --> 00:17:35,360

And there are still departments that do 24 48 and even those departments that that's

243

00:17:35,360 --> 00:17:41,800

tough when you only have two days because the reality is nobody's doing this job to

244

00:17:41,800 --> 00:17:44,360

get rich.

245

00:17:44,360 --> 00:17:55,160

But we do need the money and it doesn't necessarily support us with a, in all municipalities where

246

00:17:55,160 --> 00:17:57,940

when we have a family or whatever.

247

00:17:57,940 --> 00:18:03,120

So you know, most of us, we have part time jobs.

248

00:18:03,120 --> 00:18:07,720

So it's not like you can get off from your 24 hour shift in the morning where you just

249

00:18:07,720 --> 00:18:12,240

got your butt handed to you and you get to go home and catch up on the sleep.

250

00:18:12,240 --> 00:18:16,800

Most of the time people get off, they might go home and see their significant other or

251

00:18:16,800 --> 00:18:19,680

whoever for a few minutes.

252

00:18:19,680 --> 00:18:25,000

But then you got to get back off to work a second job doing landscaping or painting or

253

00:18:25,000 --> 00:18:28,520

whatever it may be.

254

00:18:28,520 --> 00:18:30,480

So you're, we're already behind the eight ball.

255

00:18:30,480 --> 00:18:37,040

Then we're coming home and we're just, we're, we're beating ourselves up more and more

256

00:18:37,040 --> 00:18:38,480

because of these schedules like that.

257

00:18:38,480 --> 00:18:45,080

So yeah, the most ideal is to have that 72 hour break between shifts, do those, the four

258

00:18:45,080 --> 00:18:52,560

shifts an A, B, C and D shift and give your, your companies the, I don't even want to call

259

00:18:52,560 --> 00:19:02,480

it a luxury, but more of, I guess the necessity of having that 72 hours off to recover.

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00:19:02,480 --> 00:19:08,800

And sometimes some of us are our own worst enemies though, when it comes to this, we

261

00:19:08,800 --> 00:19:13,680

could give guys and girls that 72 hours, but what are they going to do?

262

00:19:13,680 --> 00:19:18,440

They're going to sign up and they're going to work overtime half of that time or work

263



00:19:18,440 --> 00:19:21,360  
a part time job all of that time or whatever.

264  
00:19:21,360 --> 00:19:29,000  
So we really got to, if we're afforded that benefit of going to a schedule like that,

265  
00:19:29,000 --> 00:19:36,040  
we got to utilize it to our best ability or our mental health.

266  
00:19:36,040 --> 00:19:42,680  
Was education and it's also the organizational side as well as staffing the department properly.

267  
00:19:42,680 --> 00:19:46,080  
So one of the things that I've realized a lot of people and you've, you've been on longer

268  
00:19:46,080 --> 00:19:52,500  
than I have, but when I tested about 20 years ago, I was testing against a thousand certified

269  
00:19:52,500 --> 00:19:57,920  
candidates with resumes, the size of a fricking yellow pages in California, for example, that's

270  
00:19:57,920 --> 00:20:00,720  
how the fire service should look.

271  
00:20:00,720 --> 00:20:03,680  
It's a job where you just want to take the top 10%.

272  
00:20:03,680 --> 00:20:10,400  
I'm not saying I was a top, but you vie to be that candidate that's worthy of that uniform.

273  
00:20:10,400 --> 00:20:13,200  
And then that ethos stays through your department.

274

00:20:13,200 --> 00:20:19,840

And now we're on the other side, where we've devolved as far as the work week and the amount

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00:20:19,840 --> 00:20:24,680

of calls and the amount of things that we ask our responders to do now that we don't

276

00:20:24,680 --> 00:20:26,900

have that line outside the front anymore.

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00:20:26,900 --> 00:20:32,000

So I, you know, my whole thing is if you put back the things that need to be there, and

278

00:20:32,000 --> 00:20:37,160

this is the irony is that we, we do believe that a 24 72 would be a luxury.

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00:20:37,160 --> 00:20:39,040

That's a 42 hour work week.

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00:20:39,040 --> 00:20:41,400

Most civilians work 40 and they go to bed every night.

281

00:20:41,400 --> 00:20:43,000

There's nothing luxurious about it.

282

00:20:43,000 --> 00:20:45,800

You're trying to get back to at least their baseline.

283

00:20:45,800 --> 00:20:47,640

That's all you're asking.

284

00:20:47,640 --> 00:20:51,720

But I, you know, I think then you would have people vying for the apartment.

285

00:20:51,720 --> 00:20:53,120

All the seats would be full.

286

00:20:53,120 --> 00:20:55,360

So then you can take that out.

287

00:20:55,360 --> 00:20:58,760

There won't be the overtime to drag people into in the first, but there'd be an occasional

288

00:20:58,760 --> 00:20:59,760

overtime fine.

289

00:20:59,760 --> 00:21:01,720

You know, you work a shift once in a while.

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00:21:01,720 --> 00:21:03,440

No one's going to have an issue with that.

291

00:21:03,440 --> 00:21:05,840

But then you want the extra money.

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00:21:05,840 --> 00:21:10,440

As you touched on earlier, you hang drywall, you landscape, you paint walls, you do, you

293

00:21:10,440 --> 00:21:13,880

know, whatever you start your, you have a side business, which is beautiful because

294

00:21:13,880 --> 00:21:16,720

then you can transition when you retire as well.

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00:21:16,720 --> 00:21:20,880

Those are all great, but educating the people to understand that whatever you do on the

296

00:21:20,880 --> 00:21:24,320

side, make sure you're asleep in your own bed every night.

297

00:21:24,320 --> 00:21:26,040

That's the secret sauce.

298

00:21:26,040 --> 00:21:27,240

Yeah.

299

00:21:27,240 --> 00:21:35,680

And one of the terms I've heard many years ago, I can't remember who it was to credit

300

00:21:35,680 --> 00:21:37,120

them properly.

301

00:21:37,120 --> 00:21:45,720

I'm sure they're probably a follower and listener of James Gearing in your podcast, but is addicted

302

00:21:45,720 --> 00:21:47,960

to awake.

303

00:21:47,960 --> 00:21:57,080

And that's another thing also, even if we go with the proper days off that we could

304

00:21:57,080 --> 00:22:07,040

better help ourselves, we still need to educate ourselves better and our members as a whole.

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00:22:07,040 --> 00:22:12,560

Just about any firehouse you go into, any time of the day or night, there's a pot of

306

00:22:12,560 --> 00:22:16,960

coffee that's going in the kitchen.

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00:22:16,960 --> 00:22:24,960

I'm sure the same for police precincts and sheriff's offices, dispatch call centers,

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00:22:24,960 --> 00:22:25,960

EMS.

309

00:22:25,960 --> 00:22:31,320

Hell, one of the fire stations that I was assigned to for quite a while, we had our

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00:22:31,320 --> 00:22:33,840

own refrigerator designated.

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00:22:33,840 --> 00:22:38,400

It was just monster energy drinks that we would sell.

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00:22:38,400 --> 00:22:39,400

And we're hurting.

313

00:22:39,400 --> 00:22:45,840

We're our own best friend, but we're also our own worst enemy when it comes to a lot

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00:22:45,840 --> 00:22:47,640

of the stuff.

315

00:22:47,640 --> 00:22:55,680

And just like you said, the education, our administration educating them to implement

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00:22:55,680 --> 00:23:01,440

a lot of the things in our city councils, but it's got to trickle down and we got to

317

00:23:01,440 --> 00:23:04,600

educate the members and do the best things for ourselves.

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00:23:04,600 --> 00:23:09,800

If we have people willing to work with us and help us out and accommodate us, we need

319

00:23:09,800 --> 00:23:11,960

to work on all of the other things.

320

00:23:11,960 --> 00:23:17,280

A couple of years ago, I completely cut caffeine out of my life.

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00:23:17,280 --> 00:23:24,320

I stay away from caffeine and I thought that was going to be a super hard task to do.

322

00:23:24,320 --> 00:23:27,920

It really wasn't.

323

00:23:27,920 --> 00:23:36,080

And I tell you, just from doing that in the beginning, my sleep improved tremendously

324

00:23:36,080 --> 00:23:37,680

from cutting that out.

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00:23:37,680 --> 00:23:42,120

Once then I have learned and done other things to assist with my sleep as well.

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00:23:42,120 --> 00:23:47,000

But that's one of the key things right there is just cutting a lot of that stuff out.

327

00:23:47,000 --> 00:23:51,240

Well, I'm sitting here drinking a cup of coffee, so I'm not completely caffeine free.

328

00:23:51,240 --> 00:23:57,400

But what I've noticed is I've again abstained from alcohol since the 29th or 30th, I think

329

00:23:57,400 --> 00:23:59,000

it was.

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00:23:59,000 --> 00:24:04,920

And so I'm in another period now of not drinking because for me, I mean, there's so many negatives,

331

00:24:04,920 --> 00:24:06,520

as I've said on here before.

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00:24:06,520 --> 00:24:11,640

I've never woken up wishing I had drank the night before, but the converse is very true.

333

00:24:11,640 --> 00:24:17,280

So I've not been drinking, I'm not trying to drown out memories, anything like that.

334

00:24:17,280 --> 00:24:19,820

It's more habitual, cultural, et cetera.

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00:24:19,820 --> 00:24:25,240

But I would lean into it as a really awful decompressor.

336

00:24:25,240 --> 00:24:27,120

It's not, it does the opposite.

337

00:24:27,120 --> 00:24:31,080

But what I found is when I don't drink, I don't drink as much coffee because the coffee

338

00:24:31,080 --> 00:24:35,120

for me was trying to offset the foginess from the drinking the night before.

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00:24:35,120 --> 00:24:37,840

Yeah, yeah, me too.

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00:24:37,840 --> 00:24:46,080

And that's another thing that we haven't until recently at the Ohio conference back in October,

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00:24:46,080 --> 00:24:54,360

the first time that I've ever seen a presenter actually speak out about alcohol and its effects

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00:24:54,360 --> 00:25:00,960

on people and how we accept it as part of our culture.

343

00:25:00,960 --> 00:25:03,040

You go to a funeral.

344

00:25:03,040 --> 00:25:07,160

Oh, let's raise a glass to so-and-so.

345

00:25:07,160 --> 00:25:09,280

And you go to a union meeting.

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00:25:09,280 --> 00:25:14,880

You're like, hey, after the meeting, let's have some beers or whatever, a charity fundraiser,

347

00:25:14,880 --> 00:25:17,960

golf tournament or whatever.

348

00:25:17,960 --> 00:25:22,060

We tend to center it all around drinking.

349

00:25:22,060 --> 00:25:25,720

It's become a major part.

350

00:25:25,720 --> 00:25:27,720



And we need to get away from that.

351

00:25:27,720 --> 00:25:29,360

And who it was who said that?

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00:25:29,360 --> 00:25:32,600

I know you probably know, but since you were there.

353

00:25:32,600 --> 00:25:36,920

But it was it was Brendan, Brendan McDonough, Donut.

354

00:25:36,920 --> 00:25:44,120

And I applaud him 1000% for being the first person.

355

00:25:44,120 --> 00:25:48,580

I'm not saying people haven't done that before, but he's the first one at all the conferences

356

00:25:48,580 --> 00:25:51,480

I've ever been a part of and attended.

357

00:25:51,480 --> 00:25:55,200

He's the first person I've ever seen speak out about that.

358

00:25:55,200 --> 00:25:58,200

And I think we need more awareness and attention.

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00:25:58,200 --> 00:26:00,960

And I'm not trying to be just like I'm sure you're not.

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00:26:00,960 --> 00:26:05,160

Maybe downer and say, no, don't ever drink or whatever.

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00:26:05,160 --> 00:26:13,280

But we just need to try and make it where we don't rely on it or have it be as much

362

00:26:13,280 --> 00:26:15,360

of the culture.

363

00:26:15,360 --> 00:26:21,720

It shouldn't be a cultural culturally significant thing for us.

364

00:26:21,720 --> 00:26:27,960

It can be part of events and things like that, but it shouldn't be relied on and depended

365

00:26:27,960 --> 00:26:29,600

on.

366

00:26:29,600 --> 00:26:33,960

I had a guest on here who was recommended by a friend of mine, and he wrote a book called

367

00:26:33,960 --> 00:26:36,400

The Introvert's Edge.

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00:26:36,400 --> 00:26:42,320

And it was fascinating because immediately it kind of resonated with me.

369

00:26:42,320 --> 00:26:47,720

The definition of an introvert or an extrovert is basically where you get your energy from.

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00:26:47,720 --> 00:26:54,880

So you can be totally comfortable in a crowded room, but you level up by, you know, then

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00:26:54,880 --> 00:26:58,760

when you go home to your family, your dog, whatever it is, the intimate settings, then

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00:26:58,760 --> 00:27:00,760

you're probably an introvert.

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00:27:00,760 --> 00:27:05,120

If you get your power, if you level up in a crowd, which I think is very, very few people

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00:27:05,120 --> 00:27:07,680

to be honest, then you're truly an extrovert.

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00:27:07,680 --> 00:27:12,280

And I was like, oh shit, because I've always been okay in groups, but I'm the guy that

376

00:27:12,280 --> 00:27:14,400

you'll turn around and go, you know, where the fuck did James go?

377

00:27:14,400 --> 00:27:16,400

So I just, you know, all right, peace, I'm out.

378

00:27:16,400 --> 00:27:17,400

I just hit that level.

379

00:27:17,400 --> 00:27:20,760

And then, you know, I'm going to want to go to a busy party and I'll be sitting out the

380

00:27:20,760 --> 00:27:23,960

back on the garden wall or something.

381

00:27:23,960 --> 00:27:28,560

Not because of any other reason than that's just, I'm happier out there.

382

00:27:28,560 --> 00:27:33,400

But then what it made me realize, if so many of us are introverts, alcohol is the social

383

00:27:33,400 --> 00:27:38,960

lubricant because we have this facade that everyone else is the center of the party.

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00:27:38,960 --> 00:27:41,280

And we're the one that's like, what's wrong with me?

385

00:27:41,280 --> 00:27:44,600

So this is, you think about pregame, how many times did you go out and you drank before

386

00:27:44,600 --> 00:27:47,200

you even went out to feel comfortable being out?

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00:27:47,200 --> 00:27:51,520

I mean, it's lunacy when you think about it, but when you start deconstructing that before

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00:27:51,520 --> 00:27:56,280

we ever even became firefighters for us to get in a little bit later, you know, that

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00:27:56,280 --> 00:28:02,000

that's the other thing that we're fighting is this, this, like I said, this fallacy that

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00:28:02,000 --> 00:28:07,080

other people can just slip into this social space and be fine.

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00:28:07,080 --> 00:28:10,440

And most of us can't, most of us drink so that we can even get to that point where we're

392

00:28:10,440 --> 00:28:12,000

comfortable in crowds.

393

00:28:12,000 --> 00:28:17,760

Yeah, yeah, that's definitely a great way to look at it.

394

00:28:17,760 --> 00:28:25,640

I never thought about the introvert extrovert and everything where it pertains to alcohol.

395

00:28:25,640 --> 00:28:33,760

And many of us feel like we, we need that to that liquid courage to get up and be more

396

00:28:33,760 --> 00:28:37,080

social or whatever.

397

00:28:37,080 --> 00:28:51,320

And I still partake, but I partake responsibly and it's very kind of few and far between.

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00:28:51,320 --> 00:29:02,000

As in the past, I did do a lot of drinking where I felt like I had to be social.

399

00:29:02,000 --> 00:29:11,560

I had to get, as you described it, that social lubricant and pregame and I felt like it was

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00:29:11,560 --> 00:29:18,280

a need, but since I have cut back and everything and just being more in the present and in

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00:29:18,280 --> 00:29:28,440

tune with who I'm self, who I am myself, I feel I really, I don't need it anymore to

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00:29:28,440 --> 00:29:36,120

be able to carry on a good conversation, a well-educated conversation.

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00:29:36,120 --> 00:29:38,440

I can just be me.

404

00:29:38,440 --> 00:29:44,160

I'm not trying to, or no longer am I trying to impress other people.

405

00:29:44,160 --> 00:29:45,960

I don't need to.

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00:29:45,960 --> 00:29:54,760

If somebody just feels like they need to do this to impress people or do that to impress

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00:29:54,760 --> 00:29:57,960

somebody, then they're, they're doing things for the wrong reason.

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00:29:57,960 --> 00:30:05,440

All I have to do, I want to serve other people, but at the end of the day is I need to take

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00:30:05,440 --> 00:30:12,280

care of Chris Moore and do what serves Chris Moore the best and properly.

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00:30:12,280 --> 00:30:17,240

And I'm happy with that if I do something that pisses James Gehring off or any of his

411

00:30:17,240 --> 00:30:21,680

listeners or just people in general.

412

00:30:21,680 --> 00:30:28,160

Hey, I'm sorry, but I'm living my best life now and it doesn't always have to include

413

00:30:28,160 --> 00:30:30,460

that social lubricant.

414

00:30:30,460 --> 00:30:33,120

So what you're saying is you wouldn't do a keg stand pussy.

415

00:30:33,120 --> 00:30:36,760

Am I getting that right?

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00:30:36,760 --> 00:30:38,760

I'm not saying that.

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00:30:38,760 --> 00:30:40,760

All right.

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00:30:40,760 --> 00:30:44,320

Well, speaking of Chris Moore, let's start at the very beginning of your timeline so

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00:30:44,320 --> 00:30:47,280

we can learn about your journey into the fire service.

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00:30:47,280 --> 00:30:50,720

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

421

00:30:50,720 --> 00:30:52,720

your parents did, how many siblings?

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00:30:52,720 --> 00:30:53,720

Yeah.

423

00:30:53,720 --> 00:30:59,920

So I was born and raised right here in the Virginia beach area.

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00:30:59,920 --> 00:31:06,380

And it'll be almost 51 years ago I was born here.

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00:31:06,380 --> 00:31:13,840

My father, he was a Vietnam veteran in the Marine Corps and went over and I believe he

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00:31:13,840 --> 00:31:17,680

did two tours in Vietnam.

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00:31:17,680 --> 00:31:23,160

And he came back and he joined the local police department in the neighboring city of Norfolk,

428

00:31:23,160 --> 00:31:24,440

Virginia.

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00:31:24,440 --> 00:31:30,880

And he served honorably there for over 20 years until he retired.

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00:31:30,880 --> 00:31:38,520

He had, looking back on things now, a lot of post-traumatic stress.

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00:31:38,520 --> 00:31:46,880

Didn't know anything about it at that timeframe, the 80s and everything when I was a young

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00:31:46,880 --> 00:31:49,440

terror growing up.

433

00:31:49,440 --> 00:31:58,120

But now that I'm more educated about it and I guess globally we're more educated and have

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00:31:58,120 --> 00:32:05,320

understanding of it, I see where a lot of that really affected my dad, not just the

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00:32:05,320 --> 00:32:13,040

police department, but coming back from Vietnam and everything, issues that he had.

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00:32:13,040 --> 00:32:22,180

He was a great man, but coming from that older generation and especially I guess the older

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00:32:22,180 --> 00:32:24,840

military generation and Marine Corps.

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00:32:24,840 --> 00:32:30,720



He went to boot camp at Parris Island, South Carolina.

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00:32:30,720 --> 00:32:39,120

And back in those days, they could physically abuse you in boot camp.

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00:32:39,120 --> 00:32:49,280

And he would occasionally talk about all that and he became a, he was a strict disciplinarian.

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00:32:49,280 --> 00:32:53,480

And it was tough at times.

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00:32:53,480 --> 00:32:58,560

I had a good childhood, but had some issues related to a lot of that.

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00:32:58,560 --> 00:33:00,960

My mother, she was a working class family.

444

00:33:00,960 --> 00:33:07,240

She worked over 40 hours a week and I had a, or still have an older brother.

445

00:33:07,240 --> 00:33:09,120

He's a couple of years older than me.

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00:33:09,120 --> 00:33:15,320

So it was just him and I and our folks growing up.

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00:33:15,320 --> 00:33:19,160

I remember my dad, he would take me to work with him.

448

00:33:19,160 --> 00:33:24,920

If he, I was home, we were out of school or whatever, he had to go to court.

449

00:33:24,920 --> 00:33:27,920

I remember him taking me to court.

450

00:33:27,920 --> 00:33:31,640

I remember days when he had to patrol and he didn't have court.

451

00:33:31,640 --> 00:33:35,480

He would pick me up in his patrol car and take me around with him.

452

00:33:35,480 --> 00:33:40,440

We'd go to the firehouses and police precincts, everything like that.

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00:33:40,440 --> 00:33:45,960

It was, it was a really cool experience for a kid.

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00:33:45,960 --> 00:33:56,000

You figure a lot of kids, at least back in that time period, you would just idolize the

455

00:33:56,000 --> 00:34:01,120

firefighters, the law enforcement, everything like that.

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00:34:01,120 --> 00:34:09,200

And I would just, I was in awe of my old man, but then all of his friends at the police

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00:34:09,200 --> 00:34:13,200

precinct and firehouses and everything.

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00:34:13,200 --> 00:34:21,520

So initially, even though I was in awe of all of that, I wanted to be, I think I was

459

00:34:21,520 --> 00:34:23,040

like six years old.

460

00:34:23,040 --> 00:34:26,040

I wanted to be a damn trash man.

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00:34:26,040 --> 00:34:29,360

So I wanted to ride on, instead of riding on the tailboard of a fire engine like they

462

00:34:29,360 --> 00:34:36,560

did back then, I wanted to ride on a tailboard of a trash truck and do that.

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00:34:36,560 --> 00:34:41,920

But as I got older and everything, not much older than that, probably about eight years

464

00:34:41,920 --> 00:34:42,920

old.

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00:34:42,920 --> 00:34:46,600

I just knew I wanted to be a first responder.

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00:34:46,600 --> 00:34:53,000

I wanted to emulate my old man and I wanted to give back to the community.

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00:34:53,000 --> 00:34:58,800

I remember every morning or when he worked mornings, but at night, same thing every day

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00:34:58,800 --> 00:35:04,160

when he was getting ready to go into work and just seeing the pride that he had putting

469

00:35:04,160 --> 00:35:07,920

that uniform on, polishing his shoes.

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00:35:07,920 --> 00:35:14,160

At that point had the big thick patent leather belt and everything and having that, his utility

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00:35:14,160 --> 00:35:19,040

belt all polished and shiny and just looking as square in a way as could be.

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00:35:19,040 --> 00:35:21,640

I was like, man, that's my dad.

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00:35:21,640 --> 00:35:23,360

That's my old man right there.

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00:35:23,360 --> 00:35:25,840

And I was just so proud of all that.

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00:35:25,840 --> 00:35:29,120

And I knew I wanted to do it.

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00:35:29,120 --> 00:35:37,880

Fortunately, as I graduated high school and when I hit 20 years old, I scored high enough

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00:35:37,880 --> 00:35:40,320

on the test where I didn't have to be a cop.

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00:35:40,320 --> 00:35:44,520

I was able to be a firefighter.

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00:35:44,520 --> 00:35:51,520

So that's why I got into firefighting instead of law enforcement.

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00:35:51,520 --> 00:36:02,080

In all seriousness, I just I wanted to do more of the fire side just because I think

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00:36:02,080 --> 00:36:06,680

we all know that both jobs are inherently dangerous.

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00:36:06,680 --> 00:36:12,280

I didn't want to be shot at, although firefighters nowadays can get shot at, stabbed like Ben

483

00:36:12,280 --> 00:36:16,120  
or any other forms of assault.

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00:36:16,120 --> 00:36:18,800  
They were just as dangerous.

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00:36:18,800 --> 00:36:28,880  
But I just wanted to do more positive stuff with the fire side and EMS.

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00:36:28,880 --> 00:36:37,680  
And at 20 years old, I started out as a volunteer in the city of Virginia Beach, and I volunteered

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00:36:37,680 --> 00:36:45,600  
here for seven years until I got hired by the neighboring city of Chesapeake and the

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00:36:45,600 --> 00:36:46,600  
fire department there.

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00:36:46,600 --> 00:36:49,960  
And that's where I currently serve now.

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00:36:49,960 --> 00:36:53,080  
And currently a captain.

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00:36:53,080 --> 00:36:58,840  
I've risen up through the ranks and started as a firefighter, got my paramedic and made

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00:36:58,840 --> 00:37:02,280  
lieutenant, and now I'm a captain.

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00:37:02,280 --> 00:37:07,000

And I thoroughly, thoroughly enjoy that.

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00:37:07,000 --> 00:37:12,600

The public safety was in my blood from day one.

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00:37:12,600 --> 00:37:22,000

And I wouldn't trade it for the world, although I wish I knew then a lot of the stuff that

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00:37:22,000 --> 00:37:28,960

I know now and that we're finding out about the, not just the fire service, but the public

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00:37:28,960 --> 00:37:35,280

safety sector and how things affect our mental health.

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00:37:35,280 --> 00:37:36,480

So I would have done things.

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00:37:36,480 --> 00:37:42,200

I still would have went with the career, but I would have done things a lot different.

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00:37:42,200 --> 00:37:45,260

And it's the whole, we don't know what we don't know.

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00:37:45,260 --> 00:37:47,040

My dad didn't know it.

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00:37:47,040 --> 00:37:48,840

I didn't know it.

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00:37:48,840 --> 00:37:57,440

So I currently, I have a son who just graduated high school last summer and he's a young man

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00:37:57,440 --> 00:38:01,480

now 18 years old, trying to find his way in life.

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00:38:01,480 --> 00:38:07,480

And I've never once tried to push anything on him and say, Hey, you got to go into public

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00:38:07,480 --> 00:38:12,520

safety and carry on our family legacy or anything like that.

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00:38:12,520 --> 00:38:20,600

But if he decides to go that route, dad's definitely going to have a little sit down

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00:38:20,600 --> 00:38:21,600

talk with him.

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00:38:21,600 --> 00:38:27,080

And he's seen the effects that it's had on not just myself, but the whole family dynamic

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00:38:27,080 --> 00:38:30,440

because it doesn't just affect the first responder.

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00:38:30,440 --> 00:38:32,880

It affects the entire family dynamic.

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00:38:32,880 --> 00:38:38,040

Well, speaking of that, I want to go all the way back to your dad.

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00:38:38,040 --> 00:38:46,160

I've had a few guests now that were Vietnam veterans and so conversely to the ticker tape

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00:38:46,160 --> 00:38:50,680

parades of world war II that we romanticize about, even though now I just interviewed

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00:38:50,680 --> 00:38:54,960

two world war II veterans the other day, that is a fallacy that they just rolled up their

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00:38:54,960 --> 00:38:57,560

sleeves and went to work and were fine because they weren't.

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00:38:57,560 --> 00:38:59,640

A lot of them were not fine.

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00:38:59,640 --> 00:39:04,760

And you hear this now, granddad was often drinking, abusive, that kind of thing.

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00:39:04,760 --> 00:39:06,560

And there's no disrespect to the individual.

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00:39:06,560 --> 00:39:11,040

That's what happens when you come from the horrors of war with no real mental health

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00:39:11,040 --> 00:39:15,000

conversations and you just thrust back into rebuilding your country.

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00:39:15,000 --> 00:39:22,400

But when it comes to the Vietnam era, which I think is somewhat, it's not the same, but

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00:39:22,400 --> 00:39:27,520

it's now parlaying a little bit more for our Afghan vets that suddenly we withdrew and

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00:39:27,520 --> 00:39:31,060

they were left with that kind of legs from being cut under them.

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00:39:31,060 --> 00:39:35,400

But the world, excuse me, the Vietnam veterans were literally spit on, pissed on.

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00:39:35,400 --> 00:39:37,840



All these horrific stories that I've heard.

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00:39:37,840 --> 00:39:39,240

What was his homecoming story?

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00:39:39,240 --> 00:39:45,000

Did he ever talk to you about how he was received and how that impacted him?

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00:39:45,000 --> 00:39:46,920

Exactly what you just said.

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00:39:46,920 --> 00:39:58,200

What we hear about how everybody from that was perceived just negative and it affected

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00:39:58,200 --> 00:40:01,200

him tremendously.

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00:40:01,200 --> 00:40:10,000

And from, I think that was probably, it might've started a little bit with Korea, but Vietnam

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00:40:10,000 --> 00:40:11,000

definitely.

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00:40:11,000 --> 00:40:20,000

And then Iraq and Afghanistan now, everything has just been, and I'm not trying to transition

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00:40:20,000 --> 00:40:23,800

all of this, but everything just gets politicized.

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00:40:23,800 --> 00:40:28,880

It seems like Vietnam was like the turning point where things were starting to get politicized

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00:40:28,880 --> 00:40:29,980

now and everything.

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00:40:29,980 --> 00:40:35,800

We don't think about our men and women who are over there doing the things.

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00:40:35,800 --> 00:40:41,360

We just want to choose sides and right and wrong and everything like that.

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00:40:41,360 --> 00:40:48,480

And regardless of which side that you're on, we need to, we didn't do it then and we're

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00:40:48,480 --> 00:40:50,800

still not doing it now.

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00:40:50,800 --> 00:40:53,040

We need to take care of our people.

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00:40:53,040 --> 00:40:58,040

And he definitely, none of them were taken care of.

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00:40:58,040 --> 00:41:01,640

And it affected him tremendously.

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00:41:01,640 --> 00:41:12,980

And even going back to how you spoke about World War II and we have this fallacy that,

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00:41:12,980 --> 00:41:17,440

like you said, the ticker tape parades and all that, did they have those?

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00:41:17,440 --> 00:41:18,720

Sure, they did.

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00:41:18,720 --> 00:41:27,520

But still it wasn't things to necessarily fix their mental health and their wellbeing

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00:41:27,520 --> 00:41:30,320

and everything because they got back.

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00:41:30,320 --> 00:41:32,200

Maybe they had some kind of a parade.

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00:41:32,200 --> 00:41:33,320

They rolled their sleeves up.

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00:41:33,320 --> 00:41:34,320

They went to work.

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00:41:34,320 --> 00:41:37,400

The alcohol and everything was still there.

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00:41:37,400 --> 00:41:43,440

But if we rewind even before that, and this is where it's starting to show a pattern of

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00:41:43,440 --> 00:41:49,240

almost like a, well, not almost, but of a generational type trauma, because you figure

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00:41:49,240 --> 00:41:55,520

our vets that came back from World War II, what were their fathers possibly in World

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00:41:55,520 --> 00:41:57,400

War I?

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00:41:57,400 --> 00:42:03,080

And it's just what people learn and people experience.

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00:42:03,080 --> 00:42:08,960

And they were very young men, probably a lot of them in World War I and World War II and

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00:42:08,960 --> 00:42:16,360

even partially in Vietnam were going in before they were even 18 and putting their lives

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00:42:16,360 --> 00:42:20,160

on the line and defending our country and everything.

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00:42:20,160 --> 00:42:22,360

So they come back from that.

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00:42:22,360 --> 00:42:27,120

Well, they're passing it on to the next generation, their children.

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00:42:27,120 --> 00:42:29,680

And so when those children grow up, that's all they've ever known.

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00:42:29,680 --> 00:42:32,600

So they're doing the same thing to their children.

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00:42:32,600 --> 00:42:38,880

So eventually we need to figure out and learn more about the generational trauma and we

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00:42:38,880 --> 00:42:41,360

need to stop it with us.

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00:42:41,360 --> 00:42:47,640

And I know I just took that completely around the room right there.

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00:42:47,640 --> 00:42:52,240

You were just asking me one question about my dad coming back from Vietnam.

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00:42:52,240 --> 00:42:57,480

But like I said, his father was World War II.

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00:42:57,480 --> 00:43:04,800

And so it's definitely a difference in the way they came back and were perceived, but

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00:43:04,800 --> 00:43:08,040

it's not too far off of a difference.

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00:43:08,040 --> 00:43:16,120

We tend to think that everything was glorified after World War II, but that just necessarily

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00:43:16,120 --> 00:43:18,640

wasn't the case there.

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00:43:18,640 --> 00:43:28,680

And Vietnam was just from stories that I've been told from my dad, it was a horrible,

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00:43:28,680 --> 00:43:39,160

horrible time to be coming back from horrible conditions and fighting and just we'll just

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00:43:39,160 --> 00:43:40,160

say war.

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00:43:40,160 --> 00:43:41,160

It was war.

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00:43:41,160 --> 00:43:42,560

It was a conflict or war, whatever you want to call it.

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00:43:42,560 --> 00:43:44,520

It was war.

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00:43:44,520 --> 00:43:50,040

And he was already like just about probably everybody else that was over there traumatized

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00:43:50,040 --> 00:43:55,200

by a lot of the stuff that he was seen, was exposed to and seen and did.

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00:43:55,200 --> 00:43:59,040

And then you come back to that and it just, it doesn't help.

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00:43:59,040 --> 00:44:05,400

You're set up for, I don't necessarily want to say failure, but you're just not set up

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00:44:05,400 --> 00:44:08,320

for success.

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00:44:08,320 --> 00:44:10,320

And there were a lot of stories.

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00:44:10,320 --> 00:44:18,820

I didn't experience much of it, but I heard a lot in my prior to me being born in early

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00:44:18,820 --> 00:44:28,200

years of life, like my entire life, my dad never, he never ate rice after coming back

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00:44:28,200 --> 00:44:29,200

from Vietnam.

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00:44:29,200 --> 00:44:33,160

He did leading up to that, but just through marching through the rice paddies there in

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00:44:33,160 --> 00:44:37,160

Vietnam, he wouldn't eat rice.

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00:44:37,160 --> 00:44:41,160

And the post-traumatic stress, and I guess that's probably a form of it right there,

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00:44:41,160 --> 00:44:47,920

but this is kind of ironic because he ended up becoming a police officer with sirens and

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00:44:47,920 --> 00:44:51,160

everything, but he would hear sirens when he first got back.

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00:44:51,160 --> 00:44:58,880

I remember my mother sharing this with me and he would just like go into almost like

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00:44:58,880 --> 00:45:07,880

a catatonic state or drop down and just thinking that something is happening there, having

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00:45:07,880 --> 00:45:08,880

flashbacks.

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00:45:08,880 --> 00:45:18,440

But there wasn't places, the VA wasn't set up to help those guys.

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00:45:18,440 --> 00:45:25,080

Hell, it's really not set up to help our current guys that well right now, but I wasn't set

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00:45:25,080 --> 00:45:29,080

up for them back in the day or anything like that.

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00:45:29,080 --> 00:45:41,480

So, very sad, very tragic and kind of disgusting that stuff like that happened to our men and

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00:45:41,480 --> 00:45:44,360

women who were over there doing something for us.

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00:45:44,360 --> 00:45:45,360

Yeah.

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00:45:45,360 --> 00:45:48,920

Especially as so many were drafted as well, whether you signed up or not, you know, I

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00:45:48,920 --> 00:45:54,440

mean, you were over there doing something, wearing the uniform with your nation's flag

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00:45:54,440 --> 00:45:55,440

on the shoulder.

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00:45:55,440 --> 00:45:59,880

And this is why when I ask the members of the military, I always say, regardless of

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00:45:59,880 --> 00:46:05,040

the politics that sent you there, let's talk about the atrocities and let's talk about

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00:46:05,040 --> 00:46:08,840

the kindness and compassion because we don't get the soldier's perspective a lot of the

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00:46:08,840 --> 00:46:09,840

time.

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00:46:09,840 --> 00:46:12,080

Like, let's talk about what you actually did for this country.

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00:46:12,080 --> 00:46:13,080

And that was what was lost.

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00:46:13,080 --> 00:46:17,560

And I think one of the, if I remember rightly, Vietnam, I think was the first conflict where

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00:46:17,560 --> 00:46:20,840



they actually had it embedded videographer.

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00:46:20,840 --> 00:46:24,360

So they were actually getting news feeds back of what was really going on.

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00:46:24,360 --> 00:46:30,200

It's all of a sudden, and it's obviously worse now, like every man and his dog had an opinion.

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00:46:30,200 --> 00:46:34,240

But if you want our boys to come home and men and women to come home, then bring them

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00:46:34,240 --> 00:46:35,240

home.

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00:46:35,240 --> 00:46:37,880

But, you know, they're not the ones at fault for this.

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00:46:37,880 --> 00:46:42,720

You know, it was, you know, the, the, uh, North Vietnamese initiating these atrocities

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00:46:42,720 --> 00:46:48,200

and then a decision for us to go, whether it was altruistic or more, you know, politically

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00:46:48,200 --> 00:46:54,080

minded, as far as, um, one of my guests was talking about, I forget which city it was

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00:46:54,080 --> 00:46:55,080

now.

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00:46:55,080 --> 00:46:58,280

I don't know if it was Saigon, but anyway, that was like the, the jewel in Southeast

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00:46:58,280 --> 00:46:59,880

Asia politically.

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00:46:59,880 --> 00:47:03,360

If you, if you own that, then you own all the shipping routes and all those kinds of

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00:47:03,360 --> 00:47:04,360

things.

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00:47:04,360 --> 00:47:09,520

So whatever the reason that they found themselves there, they were there wearing our flag.

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00:47:09,520 --> 00:47:15,040

So we have to support them, whether it's Afghanistan or Vietnam or Somalia, wherever they're, you

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00:47:15,040 --> 00:47:16,780

know, they're trying to do good.

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00:47:16,780 --> 00:47:20,480

Those men and women in uniform, apart from the anomalies are out there trying to serve.

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00:47:20,480 --> 00:47:25,800

So as you said, we owe it to them to support them, especially when they come home.

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00:47:25,800 --> 00:47:28,800

Yeah, right on.

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00:47:28,800 --> 00:47:33,760

So you talked, you touched on, you know, that your dad struggled.

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00:47:33,760 --> 00:47:37,760

The multi-generational story is actually something I'm trying to write in my second book.

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00:47:37,760 --> 00:47:42,560

Um, just trying to find the writer that exists somewhere in this tiny brain of mine.

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00:47:42,560 --> 00:47:45,840

I'm struggling with it at the moment, but it's so important.

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00:47:45,840 --> 00:47:49,880

And Jake, I will, I will credit Jake from Savor Warrior, which we'll get to in a minute

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00:47:49,880 --> 00:47:55,880

for opening my eyes on the element of childhood trauma in PTSD or mental health challenges

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00:47:55,880 --> 00:47:57,760

in uniform professionals.

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00:47:57,760 --> 00:48:03,200

So when you look back now, you know, as we all are starting to realize that before we

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00:48:03,200 --> 00:48:07,400

ever put the uniform on as a big part of our mental health journey, when you look back

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00:48:07,400 --> 00:48:13,040

now with the environment that you grew up in, are there elements that contributed to

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00:48:13,040 --> 00:48:15,160

trauma that you found later in life?

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00:48:15,160 --> 00:48:20,480

Yeah, and I know you said we're going to touch on it a little bit later when you referenced

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00:48:20,480 --> 00:48:29,680

Jake and the generational trauma, but things that I never realized, because a lot of times

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00:48:29,680 --> 00:48:37,120

things happen to us, even still as adults, but most notably as children, we push things

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00:48:37,120 --> 00:48:38,640

down.

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00:48:38,640 --> 00:48:42,880

We just, uh, suppress things so deep.

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00:48:42,880 --> 00:48:49,360

We think that they're, they're gone, but until, and I know this is so cliché, we start peeling

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00:48:49,360 --> 00:48:53,720

back the proverbial layers of the onion.

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00:48:53,720 --> 00:48:57,440

You got to peel more than the first couple layers.

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00:48:57,440 --> 00:49:02,640

And with, with Jake, one of the things that we've done and really helped me out was we

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00:49:02,640 --> 00:49:10,560

pulled every fricking layer back until there was no onion left and exposed everything.

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00:49:10,560 --> 00:49:24,120

And I thought that my childhood initially was perfect until we peeled that, that onion,

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00:49:24,120 --> 00:49:28,800

that onion all the way to the core.

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00:49:28,800 --> 00:49:37,000

And the, the ACEs, the adverse childhood experiences score, it's the 10 questions, yes or no, when

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00:49:37,000 --> 00:49:40,880

you don't justify it.

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00:49:40,880 --> 00:49:49,000

I ended up finding out that I did have a lot of childhood trauma and issues.

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00:49:49,000 --> 00:49:50,000

I accepted them.

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00:49:50,000 --> 00:49:59,400

I suppressed them, but I accepted that if I was in, by no means does this mean that

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00:49:59,400 --> 00:50:05,920

I'm speaking disparaging words about my, my parents or anything like that, because they

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00:50:05,920 --> 00:50:06,920

didn't know.

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00:50:06,920 --> 00:50:10,320

They didn't know either, because that's why it's called generational.

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00:50:10,320 --> 00:50:16,600

The same shit happened to them and they did it to me and it stops here because now I know

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00:50:16,600 --> 00:50:17,600

about it.

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00:50:17,600 --> 00:50:23,480

I'm aware of it, but I just felt, okay, I did wrong.

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00:50:23,480 --> 00:50:28,600

That's why I got hit.

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00:50:28,600 --> 00:50:30,640

I justified everything when I was a kid.

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00:50:30,640 --> 00:50:33,120

And like I said, I suppressed it.

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00:50:33,120 --> 00:50:41,560

And I truly believe I haven't seen any legit, actually not even legit, I haven't seen any

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00:50:41,560 --> 00:50:52,160

true studies right now to support this other than just, I guess, more smaller, smaller

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00:50:52,160 --> 00:50:55,900

studies or questionnaires or whatever.

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00:50:55,900 --> 00:51:06,440

But many of our first responders and our military are going to have a higher ACEs score.

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00:51:06,440 --> 00:51:12,880

And that's what led us to where we are right now, because we did have these adverse childhood

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00:51:12,880 --> 00:51:18,080

experiences when we were young and we felt like there was nobody there that could help

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00:51:18,080 --> 00:51:20,120

us.

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00:51:20,120 --> 00:51:26,720

And we wanted to be the rescuer, the saver of people when we got old enough, we wanted

679

00:51:26,720 --> 00:51:32,400

to get out of that bad, like I said, my environment wasn't the worst.

680

00:51:32,400 --> 00:51:37,040

I still had a good childhood, but we wanted to get to better.

681

00:51:37,040 --> 00:51:41,080

And we didn't want what happened to us in certain instances and occasions to happen

682

00:51:41,080 --> 00:51:42,640

to other people.

683

00:51:42,640 --> 00:51:48,840

So that's why we turn 18, we joined the military, we joined the police department or the fire

684

00:51:48,840 --> 00:51:54,160

department or EMS.

685

00:51:54,160 --> 00:52:00,520

I know there is a correlation around that.

686

00:52:00,520 --> 00:52:06,680

And I just want to see a very, maybe your book, I want to see a very large scale study.

687

00:52:06,680 --> 00:52:09,360

I've seen some smaller ones.

688

00:52:09,360 --> 00:52:13,720

And I'm pretty sure that this number is right.

689

00:52:13,720 --> 00:52:16,200

And you've probably heard it from Jake.

690

00:52:16,200 --> 00:52:23,680

I believe he said the average prison population, their score is a six.

691

00:52:23,680 --> 00:52:29,840

And from what I'm finding with those first responders, just in small conversations and

692

00:52:29,840 --> 00:52:33,280

little things like that, the average score I'm finding on a first responder is right

693

00:52:33,280 --> 00:52:36,640

around a six also.

694

00:52:36,640 --> 00:52:41,760

And it's eye opening.

695

00:52:41,760 --> 00:52:49,000

And I had never until I met Jake Clark, I've never heard of ACEs.

696

00:52:49,000 --> 00:52:56,840

And I think that's something we really need to start looking into a lot more and addressing.

697

00:52:56,840 --> 00:53:03,960

You can address if you have the courage, because that's another thing we'll have to talk about

698

00:53:03,960 --> 00:53:10,560

is having the courage to address our issues that we have from running these calls and

699

00:53:10,560 --> 00:53:15,160

seeing what we see and everything like that.

700

00:53:15,160 --> 00:53:18,600

You can address stuff like that all day long.

701

00:53:18,600 --> 00:53:27,120

And you can say that a lot of that causes you to self-medicate with alcohol, prescription



702

00:53:27,120 --> 00:53:39,360

drugs, porn, whatever your internal drug store for dopamine desires.

703

00:53:39,360 --> 00:53:44,440

And you utilize to find that and open up that drug store.

704

00:53:44,440 --> 00:53:46,720

You can blame it on that all day long.

705

00:53:46,720 --> 00:53:55,080

But I think we truly need to go back to the beginning, the first 18 years of life.

706

00:53:55,080 --> 00:54:02,200

And once you start addressing that, and not just addressing it and acknowledging it, but

707

00:54:02,200 --> 00:54:11,920

getting the help, the clinical help for it, then you can start moving on and doing other

708

00:54:11,920 --> 00:54:18,600

things for the rest of your life and your career and everything like that.

709

00:54:18,600 --> 00:54:27,680

And that's one thing that I've done with therapy is I started doing that.

710

00:54:27,680 --> 00:54:32,880

I've gotten away from therapy in the past, but I'm right back to it now.

711

00:54:32,880 --> 00:54:38,720

And I'll never stop going to therapy and just addressing anything.

712

00:54:38,720 --> 00:54:41,960

If I go to therapy, I do it every other week.

713

00:54:41,960 --> 00:54:44,080

I just went this morning.

714

00:54:44,080 --> 00:54:49,680

And if I don't have anything to talk about, by all means, I'll still get there.

715

00:54:49,680 --> 00:54:51,320

I'll pay my copay.

716

00:54:51,320 --> 00:54:56,640

And we'll just sit down and we'll talk for an hour about the weather, sports, whatever

717

00:54:56,640 --> 00:54:58,760

it may be.

718

00:54:58,760 --> 00:55:05,000

But yeah, I think it's very important that we address the generational aspect of it and

719

00:55:05,000 --> 00:55:14,640

what happened, potentially happened to members of the first responder community in their

720

00:55:14,640 --> 00:55:18,360

childhood, their first 18 years of life, without justifying anything.

721

00:55:18,360 --> 00:55:21,760

Either the shit happened to you or it didn't.

722

00:55:21,760 --> 00:55:24,240

Don't take blame or anything like that.

723

00:55:24,240 --> 00:55:29,800

Don't say, well, my dad did it to me because I was a little asshole or whatever.

724

00:55:29,800 --> 00:55:31,760

If it happened, it happened.

725

00:55:31,760 --> 00:55:34,120

Well, I couldn't agree more.

726

00:55:34,120 --> 00:55:39,760

Firstly, it was interesting before I get into, I think some of the reasons why there is a

727

00:55:39,760 --> 00:55:43,720

higher density of us with this element.

728

00:55:43,720 --> 00:55:47,920

How many times do you hear, I grew up in an environment and I knew it was either the military

729

00:55:47,920 --> 00:55:48,920

or prison.

730

00:55:48,920 --> 00:55:50,920

You know what I mean?

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00:55:50,920 --> 00:55:58,080

They're side by side in conversations, especially if you grew up in a poorer area or just out

732

00:55:58,080 --> 00:56:00,920

rurally somewhere and you did find yourself with a bunch of friends, it's like, I was

733

00:56:00,920 --> 00:56:03,400

either going to end up the military prison or dead.

734

00:56:03,400 --> 00:56:05,000

That's what you hear all the time.

735

00:56:05,000 --> 00:56:08,800

So therefore there's a commonality and trauma there.

736

00:56:08,800 --> 00:56:13,960

But what I also realized, because after talking to Jake, I would open the door wider for the

737

00:56:13,960 --> 00:56:19,460

first part, the zero to putting uniform on.

738

00:56:19,460 --> 00:56:22,500

And I started realizing, oh my God, there's so much there.

739

00:56:22,500 --> 00:56:28,080

Never pushing someone in, just saying, when you look back, what do you see now?

740

00:56:28,080 --> 00:56:29,080

And so many.

741

00:56:29,080 --> 00:56:33,800

So observationally, almost 900 interviews now, I can tell you hands down, because I'm

742

00:56:33,800 --> 00:56:36,400

not picking people because of trauma for this show.

743

00:56:36,400 --> 00:56:42,360

Every man and his dog from models and dancers through the Navy SEALs and firefighters.

744

00:56:42,360 --> 00:56:47,840

But even some people have come on to talk about strength and conditioning or some completely

745

00:56:47,840 --> 00:56:49,880

non-mental health conversation.

746

00:56:49,880 --> 00:56:51,200

We find ourselves there.

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00:56:51,200 --> 00:56:54,800

Dan John's a perfect example, strength and conditioning guru.

748

00:56:54,800 --> 00:56:58,880

His multi-generational trauma with his dad and his brother, World War II in Vietnam took

749

00:56:58,880 --> 00:57:03,280

up more than half of the conversation, before we even talked about barbells.

750

00:57:03,280 --> 00:57:08,400

But what really makes me understand it is like you said, there's that victim element

751

00:57:08,400 --> 00:57:11,020

that you want to be the protector.

752

00:57:11,020 --> 00:57:17,400

But then there's also the busyness, which is why I think a lot of responders start to

753

00:57:17,400 --> 00:57:21,480

struggle around the 10 year mark when the job just isn't as exciting anymore because

754

00:57:21,480 --> 00:57:23,840

you've seen so much.

755

00:57:23,840 --> 00:57:27,040

There's that tribal element being part of something.

756

00:57:27,040 --> 00:57:33,200

So there's a lot of reasons why a lot of us find ourselves going into uniform because

757

00:57:33,200 --> 00:57:36,680

it is somewhat the antidote to some of the struggles that we had.

758

00:57:36,680 --> 00:57:40,120

But the problem is, if you address it, it becomes a superpower.

759

00:57:40,120 --> 00:57:42,960

I truly believe that trauma becomes resilience.

760

00:57:42,960 --> 00:57:46,560

If unaddressed and pushed down, it becomes a cracked foundation that you're trying to

761

00:57:46,560 --> 00:57:48,640

build a house on.

762

00:57:48,640 --> 00:57:51,640

Yeah, absolutely.

763

00:57:51,640 --> 00:57:58,240

And one of the hardest things, like you said, addressing it makes you a superhero.

764

00:57:58,240 --> 00:58:00,080

It's hard to do.

765

00:58:00,080 --> 00:58:09,440

We still, no matter how far we've come through mental health warriors like yourself that

766

00:58:09,440 --> 00:58:15,760

have the podcast and give everybody the platform to discuss it and bring it up openly.

767

00:58:15,760 --> 00:58:24,960

It's still a taboo subject in many first responder communities and veteran communities.

768

00:58:24,960 --> 00:58:27,000

Nobody wants to hear about it.

769

00:58:27,000 --> 00:58:29,920

Nobody wants to talk about it.

770

00:58:29,920 --> 00:58:37,040

We are having, and this isn't to be confused with the one that was several years ago with

771

00:58:37,040 --> 00:58:41,600

all the women and politics and everything, but we're having in the first responder community

772

00:58:41,600 --> 00:58:47,560

a Me Too movement that's starting to come out now.

773

00:58:47,560 --> 00:58:55,080

When I speak at conferences and I share my story, I have so many people come up to me

774

00:58:55,080 --> 00:58:58,640

afterwards and they say the whole Me Too.

775

00:58:58,640 --> 00:59:02,280

They thought they were all alone and that they were the only ones.

776

00:59:02,280 --> 00:59:10,120

They were suffering in silence until they hear my story or your story or Ben Vernon's

777

00:59:10,120 --> 00:59:13,720

story, something like that.

778

00:59:13,720 --> 00:59:21,800

We need to get more open and have these tough candid conversations and let others know that,

779

00:59:21,800 --> 00:59:25,600

hey, we're going to see a lot of stuff and we're going to hurt.

780

00:59:25,600 --> 00:59:27,840

This job isn't easy.

781

00:59:27,840 --> 00:59:34,520

It's a fun job, but it can be very painful at times, not necessarily physically, but

782

00:59:34,520 --> 00:59:36,400

mentally it can be painful.

783

00:59:36,400 --> 00:59:41,360

It takes its toll on you, like you said, usually about that 10-year mark is when people start

784

00:59:41,360 --> 00:59:45,440

having the effects of it.

785

00:59:45,440 --> 00:59:52,840

We need to start implementing more programs where we get a good baseline of these members

786

00:59:52,840 --> 00:59:56,120

coming into our departments.

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00:59:56,120 --> 01:00:03,480

We need to do these checks, the checkup from the neck up on our members when they first

788

01:00:03,480 --> 01:00:11,000

start and yearly, if not probably quarterly, all the way through to the end of their, what

789

01:00:11,000 --> 01:00:15,960

should hopefully be a healthy career.



790

01:00:15,960 --> 01:00:20,640

I know we're going to have issues, the common stuff where people have bad knees from crawling

791

01:00:20,640 --> 01:00:26,840

around as firefighters and backs, neck issues, things like that.

792

01:00:26,840 --> 01:00:35,680

As far as the brain goes and taking care of that mental health, that's something that

793

01:00:35,680 --> 01:00:41,000

to me, I think it can be easily fixed, easily done.

794

01:00:41,000 --> 01:00:42,960

We just need to normalize it.

795

01:00:42,960 --> 01:00:48,360

We need to get to these departments and the higher ups and we need to just sit around

796

01:00:48,360 --> 01:00:54,600

the table and discuss it and tell them, this is how you should do it, this, this, this

797

01:00:54,600 --> 01:00:56,140

and this.

798

01:00:56,140 --> 01:01:00,720

It's going to cost X amount of money, but just like you were talking about with the

799

01:01:00,720 --> 01:01:06,120

sleep at the beginning of this, it's going to cost some money, but it's going to save

800

01:01:06,120 --> 01:01:12,520

you in the long term because the health insurance claims and workers comp and all that, you're

801

01:01:12,520 --> 01:01:17,400

not going to have nowhere near as much as you do right now if you just take care of

802

01:01:17,400 --> 01:01:20,920

those aspects of our men and women.

803

01:01:20,920 --> 01:01:21,920

Absolutely.

804

01:01:21,920 --> 01:01:27,120

Well, one thing that I've talked about recently having worked for so many different departments

805

01:01:27,120 --> 01:01:32,000

because it took me to the West coast and then back to the East coast was realizing that

806

01:01:32,000 --> 01:01:34,560

we waste money even in the hiring process.

807

01:01:34,560 --> 01:01:38,940

I did three polygraphs of four departments, which anyone who researched polygraphs is

808

01:01:38,940 --> 01:01:41,280

complete smoke and mirrors bullshit.

809

01:01:41,280 --> 01:01:46,200

Did the Minnesota interview personality, I can never remember the bloody name of it,

810

01:01:46,200 --> 01:01:50,280

but anyway, it's also never ever meant to be a standalone test.

811

01:01:50,280 --> 01:01:53,840

Maybe not to decide if someone's worthy of being a firefighter or not.

812

01:01:53,840 --> 01:01:58,720

Those two right there, you could literally scrap and now that gives you a budget.

813

01:01:58,720 --> 01:02:04,240

Just talking about hiring the new recruits, take that money and now put it into four,

814

01:02:04,240 --> 01:02:08,060

six sessions with a therapist, with a counselor, like you said.

815

01:02:08,060 --> 01:02:14,400

Now you open the door for people to talk about the life prior to your department and start

816

01:02:14,400 --> 01:02:16,080

dealing with that.

817

01:02:16,080 --> 01:02:20,680

You've normalized the mental health conversation at the front door and you've removed the barrier

818

01:02:20,680 --> 01:02:24,800

to entry to finding a counselor because initially this would be your person.

819

01:02:24,800 --> 01:02:30,880

I heard you talking on, I think it was a beneath the helmet podcast, which I love as well.

820

01:02:30,880 --> 01:02:37,120

Then have that and then open the door to finding a counselor that works for you specifically

821

01:02:37,120 --> 01:02:41,200

because I think that that's the danger of the single person is it not being the right

822

01:02:41,200 --> 01:02:42,200  
fit.

823  
01:02:42,200 --> 01:02:46,280  
You're normalizing at the front door saying this is what it is to be a firefighter.

824  
01:02:46,280 --> 01:02:50,320  
We're going to do PT and we're going to do PT for your mind as well.

825  
01:02:50,320 --> 01:02:53,520  
That I think is how you change it and you don't even come up with extra money.

826  
01:02:53,520 --> 01:02:56,840  
We have it built in in these bullshit hiring processes.

827  
01:02:56,840 --> 01:03:00,500  
Do your written, do your physical, do a solid background check and you'll be able to figure

828  
01:03:00,500 --> 01:03:03,480  
out if it's a good candidate or a bad candidate.

829  
01:03:03,480 --> 01:03:04,960  
Yeah.

830  
01:03:04,960 --> 01:03:13,200  
It seems like more and more you touched on it earlier the whole back in the day when

831  
01:03:13,200 --> 01:03:18,120  
you and I were trying to get in the fire service, it was, we're going up against a couple thousand

832  
01:03:18,120 --> 01:03:22,600  
people and now it's probably a few hundred.

833

01:03:22,600 --> 01:03:30,680

So for whatever reason, we're struggling with the numbers to actually sit for the process.

834

01:03:30,680 --> 01:03:36,240

We're trying to beef those numbers up and get more people, get more candidates to apply.

835

01:03:36,240 --> 01:03:42,040

But to me, I think we're to an extent, we're sugarcoating it.

836

01:03:42,040 --> 01:03:44,960

We're not letting people know exactly what they're going to see and what they're going

837

01:03:44,960 --> 01:03:45,960

to be exposed to.

838

01:03:45,960 --> 01:03:49,760

And I'm not telling you we need to scare them away, but we need to be open and honest with

839

01:03:49,760 --> 01:03:54,400

them instead of just, oh, you're only going to work 10 days a month and you're going to

840

01:03:54,400 --> 01:03:57,560

get to ride the fire truck and do this and do that.

841

01:03:57,560 --> 01:03:58,560

Okay.

842

01:03:58,560 --> 01:04:02,080

So tell them that, but also tell them the other things that they're going to see and

843

01:04:02,080 --> 01:04:04,560

that they're going to be exposed to.

844

01:04:04,560 --> 01:04:13,240

And I just think we need that complete transparency on the good and the bad.

845

01:04:13,240 --> 01:04:14,240

Absolutely.

846

01:04:14,240 --> 01:04:18,520

And even with the branding and like you said, the wording, this is the one thing, oh, we

847

01:04:18,520 --> 01:04:20,080

work a dream schedule.

848

01:04:20,080 --> 01:04:23,560

I don't know anyone in the civilian space that works 56 hours a week and doesn't sleep

849

01:04:23,560 --> 01:04:24,760

every third day.

850

01:04:24,760 --> 01:04:26,560

So where we came up with that, I don't know.

851

01:04:26,560 --> 01:04:30,640

And I'm sure a hundred years ago, petting the Dalmatian playing cards, actually waiting

852

01:04:30,640 --> 01:04:31,640

for a fire.

853

01:04:31,640 --> 01:04:32,640

Yeah.

854

01:04:32,640 --> 01:04:35,720

It was probably a cake gig, but that's not 20, 23.

855

01:04:35,720 --> 01:04:37,480

So we don't work 10 days a month.

856

01:04:37,480 --> 01:04:41,340

We work three days crammed together into a 24 hour period.

857

01:04:41,340 --> 01:04:46,720

So it's three days on one day off if you work a 24 48 or 30 days a month.

858

01:04:46,720 --> 01:04:48,880

Doesn't sound so good now.

859

01:04:48,880 --> 01:04:55,320

So it wouldn't be a dream, you know, a luxury to go to a 24 72, for example.

860

01:04:55,320 --> 01:04:57,040

But I think this is, I agree with you a hundred percent.

861

01:04:57,040 --> 01:05:00,680

We've done such a horrible job at branding ourselves.

862

01:05:00,680 --> 01:05:02,920

Why is there a fire engine on my medical call?

863

01:05:02,920 --> 01:05:04,540

It's 20, 23.

864

01:05:04,540 --> 01:05:07,280

You and I will enter the fire service where EMS was already apart.

865

01:05:07,280 --> 01:05:10,840

I had to pass EMT school to become a firefighter.

866

01:05:10,840 --> 01:05:16,360

So the fact that 20 plus 30 plus years ago, the public still asking that shows us that

867

01:05:16,360 --> 01:05:20,760

we, the fire service in general need to do a much better job of educating the people

868

01:05:20,760 --> 01:05:22,800

and what we actually do.

869

01:05:22,800 --> 01:05:23,800

Yeah.

870

01:05:23,800 --> 01:05:24,800

Exactly.

871

01:05:24,800 --> 01:05:30,840

So you talked about first entering the volunteer fire service.

872

01:05:30,840 --> 01:05:36,280

So I know it's a very unique position compared to, to career as far as living and working

873

01:05:36,280 --> 01:05:37,680

pretty much in the same place.

874

01:05:37,680 --> 01:05:42,920

So what were, what were some of the acute, acute kind of career events that you ran during

875

01:05:42,920 --> 01:05:43,920

that time?

876

01:05:43,920 --> 01:05:49,560

And then let's also bring in the contrast of the volunteer world versus the career world

877



01:05:49,560 --> 01:05:52,080  
that you entered after.

878  
01:05:52,080 --> 01:05:58,840  
So to volunteer at that time in the city of Virginia beach, they had a, they had a full

879  
01:05:58,840 --> 01:05:59,840  
Academy.

880  
01:05:59,840 --> 01:06:05,600  
So I had to go through an Academy, but it was, since most people were working regular

881  
01:06:05,600 --> 01:06:10,200  
jobs, they did it like a few nights during the week and then it was on the weekend.

882  
01:06:10,200 --> 01:06:12,720  
So I went through the Academy, graduated.

883  
01:06:12,720 --> 01:06:17,200  
And like I said, I was doing this to, to give back to the community, but also looked at

884  
01:06:17,200 --> 01:06:21,400  
it as getting my foot in the door and it was a good start.

885  
01:06:21,400 --> 01:06:26,600  
So every chance I got, I was going up to the firehouse and volunteering.

886  
01:06:26,600 --> 01:06:33,440  
I was riding with the guys and I wasn't like what we call sometimes or used to call.

887  
01:06:33,440 --> 01:06:34,800  
I think it still happens today.

888

01:06:34,800 --> 01:06:37,800

I wasn't a blister.

889

01:06:37,800 --> 01:06:40,920

That's the, they don't come out until the work's done.

890

01:06:40,920 --> 01:06:45,600

I was there doing the work and helping the paid guys out.

891

01:06:45,600 --> 01:06:48,200

Anything that they were doing, I was doing also.

892

01:06:48,200 --> 01:06:58,280

I just wanted to just soak up as much as I could about that career and profession and

893

01:06:58,280 --> 01:06:59,720

everything.

894

01:06:59,720 --> 01:07:05,080

Even though I was a volunteer, I still wanted to master the skills as a young man.

895

01:07:05,080 --> 01:07:09,840

And like I said, in, in hopes of, of getting hired.

896

01:07:09,840 --> 01:07:17,840

And it took me seven years because like you said, it was, it was thousands of people that

897

01:07:17,840 --> 01:07:23,240

were going for, for these positions and everything.

898

01:07:23,240 --> 01:07:26,280

And I would run the calls with them.

899

01:07:26,280 --> 01:07:32,240

I would on weekends, I would work nights and our work 24 hour shift and spend the night

900

01:07:32,240 --> 01:07:36,120

at the firehouse and anything that they ran, I ran.

901

01:07:36,120 --> 01:07:47,040

And that was when I was first exposed to, to death outside of, I guess, normal environments

902

01:07:47,040 --> 01:07:50,520

as a young man, as a volunteer in the fire service.

903

01:07:50,520 --> 01:08:01,880

I saw my first dead body of somebody that I didn't know and ran some, a few, I guess,

904

01:08:01,880 --> 01:08:06,840

troubling, horrific motor vehicle accidents.

905

01:08:06,840 --> 01:08:14,560

And looking back on that, we just, we never came back and we never talked about it.

906

01:08:14,560 --> 01:08:19,000

There was no, um, sizzle or anything.

907

01:08:19,000 --> 01:08:25,200

We just got back to the firehouse and went off to doing whatever we were doing prior

908

01:08:25,200 --> 01:08:27,040

to the call coming out.

909

01:08:27,040 --> 01:08:31,000

And we never discussed any of it.

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01:08:31,000 --> 01:08:37,080

And like I said, that happened for seven years until I got hired by the neighboring fire

911

01:08:37,080 --> 01:08:39,360

department.

912

01:08:39,360 --> 01:08:49,680

And it was a contrast in styles.

913

01:08:49,680 --> 01:09:00,800

The Virginia Beach fire department was, gosh, they're probably, it was an all paid department

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01:09:00,800 --> 01:09:05,240

and they just had some volunteers that would come in there and just help supplement.

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01:09:05,240 --> 01:09:06,240

And that's, that's where I was.

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01:09:06,240 --> 01:09:08,320

So they still had the camaraderie.

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01:09:08,320 --> 01:09:12,160

Those guys were always the same group of guys on each shift.

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01:09:12,160 --> 01:09:17,840

So they, they got to, to sit around and still solve the world's problems around the kitchen

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01:09:17,840 --> 01:09:20,380

table.

920

01:09:20,380 --> 01:09:27,760

But as a volunteer, um, I didn't always have that luxury.

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01:09:27,760 --> 01:09:34,700

I would come back with them and we would bullshit or, or whatever.

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01:09:34,700 --> 01:09:37,280

But like I said, they didn't talk about the, the horrific.

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01:09:37,280 --> 01:09:42,520

At least they didn't know around me and I would go home and wouldn't talk about anything.

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01:09:42,520 --> 01:09:53,440

When I became career, um, we, and that was 2000, we did start, uh, we had in Chesapeake,

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01:09:53,440 --> 01:09:57,440

we have a, um, at that point it was SISM.

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01:09:57,440 --> 01:10:04,380

And during, um, trying times and troubling calls, we would have the SISM team would come

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01:10:04,380 --> 01:10:10,280

to the firehouse afterwards or come to the scene of need be, and we would discuss things.

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01:10:10,280 --> 01:10:18,840

Um, it was, um, by some people, a mockery, they would just call it the, the need a hug

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01:10:18,840 --> 01:10:19,840

club.

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01:10:19,840 --> 01:10:23,680

Oh, we got the need a hug club is coming out to the station to talk to us about this or

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01:10:23,680 --> 01:10:25,800

that.

932

01:10:25,800 --> 01:10:33,760  
And um, that was, was awkward.

933  
01:10:33,760 --> 01:10:40,840  
We would, um, I did notice, like I said, with Chesapeake when I became career, we would

934  
01:10:40,840 --> 01:10:42,800  
sit around the kitchen table.

935  
01:10:42,800 --> 01:10:50,640  
We would talk vaguely about things, but it most notably was that, um, that dark sense

936  
01:10:50,640 --> 01:10:57,040  
of humor is what we would use to just air out our feelings, what we saw and everything

937  
01:10:57,040 --> 01:10:58,840  
like that.

938  
01:10:58,840 --> 01:11:07,760  
Um, I never once either volunteer or as career would talk about any of the stuff outside

939  
01:11:07,760 --> 01:11:10,800  
of those, uh, those walls of the fire station.

940  
01:11:10,800 --> 01:11:19,600  
Um, you would think as my life did progress and I got married in, um, 2003, you would

941  
01:11:19,600 --> 01:11:25,360  
think that, um, coming home, you're gone for 24 hours at a time and you haven't seen your

942  
01:11:25,360 --> 01:11:30,600  
significant other, uh, that you would have a lot of stuff to talk about when you got

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01:11:30,600 --> 01:11:32,120  
home.

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01:11:32,120 --> 01:11:38,280

But my normal response to my wife at the time, when she asked how my shift was, I was just

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01:11:38,280 --> 01:11:40,600

always be like, Oh, it was okay.

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01:11:40,600 --> 01:11:42,800

Or it was the norm.

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01:11:42,800 --> 01:11:52,600

I didn't tell her that I had a baby pass away in my arms or somebody's daughter.

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01:11:52,600 --> 01:11:58,080

I couldn't save in a car accident or somebody's grandfather was in cardiac arrest.

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01:11:58,080 --> 01:12:02,240

I never talked about any of that stuff and how it affected me.

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01:12:02,240 --> 01:12:08,120

And it's, I did exactly what I, we talked about earlier with the childhood traumas and

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01:12:08,120 --> 01:12:09,280

everything.

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01:12:09,280 --> 01:12:18,440

I just kept suppressing everything down and, um, that's, that's never a good thing.

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01:12:18,440 --> 01:12:25,520

And I didn't really see a whole lot of, um, uh, difference between the guys that were

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01:12:25,520 --> 01:12:30,480

career when I was a volunteer working with them and then moving to departments where

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01:12:30,480 --> 01:12:35,520

it was all career with really no volunteers other than we would sit around and we had

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01:12:35,520 --> 01:12:38,600

more of a dark sense of humor, um, at that time.

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01:12:38,600 --> 01:12:43,840

So it could have been the careers where I started as a volunteer, those guys were just

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01:12:43,840 --> 01:12:51,040

trying to shield and protect me a little bit, or, um, maybe they just didn't talk about

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01:12:51,040 --> 01:12:53,040

anything at all.

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01:12:53,040 --> 01:12:56,880

But once I became career, it was when that dark sense of humor started kind of coming

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01:12:56,880 --> 01:13:04,800

out where I hear the difference between career and volunteer is more often than not volunteers

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01:13:04,800 --> 01:13:07,840

will live and work in the city that they're also volunteering in.

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01:13:07,840 --> 01:13:12,840

So they'll have people they know a lot of times that they run on.

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01:13:12,840 --> 01:13:15,640

They'll be reminded on every street and corner that they live.

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01:13:15,640 --> 01:13:19,360

I mean, if I drive to Orlando, there's, I mean, we could go all over the place.

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01:13:19,360 --> 01:13:23,040

I can tell you, oh yeah, this, you know, this dead prostitute at dumpster here, pedestrian

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01:13:23,040 --> 01:13:25,480

versus taxi here, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera.

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01:13:25,480 --> 01:13:28,040

But where I live, I don't have any of that.

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01:13:28,040 --> 01:13:31,960

I did volunteer when I was, I ran, when I was in paramedic school with the local department

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01:13:31,960 --> 01:13:33,760

and volunteered briefly.

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01:13:33,760 --> 01:13:38,240

But, um, apart from a few deaths that we had on the ambulance, even then they weren't close

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01:13:38,240 --> 01:13:39,240

to where I live.

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01:13:39,240 --> 01:13:43,400

I don't have that, you know, Cala, which is awesome, but I just went and visited Anaheim.

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01:13:43,400 --> 01:13:45,880

Um, it was a couple of years ago now and I was like, oh shit.

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01:13:45,880 --> 01:13:46,880

Yeah.

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01:13:46,880 --> 01:13:49,600

That person was cream there and that guy's head split open there.

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01:13:49,600 --> 01:13:53,400

So when you look back now, I mean, you live and work in different places.

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01:13:53,400 --> 01:13:58,680

Now what was that element for you while he was still volunteering in your own city?

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01:13:58,680 --> 01:14:04,520

Uh, looking at it like that, very, very similar to what you just said.

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01:14:04,520 --> 01:14:08,280

Um, and where I'm at now, it's so close.

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01:14:08,280 --> 01:14:11,400

I still drive through there to go places and everything.

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01:14:11,400 --> 01:14:17,480

So I experienced that as well currently as, as a career, even though I don't technically

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01:14:17,480 --> 01:14:22,120

live in that city, but it's like I said, it's so close and so neighboring.

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01:14:22,120 --> 01:14:27,520

I still go through that city for different things, to see friends or do different things.

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01:14:27,520 --> 01:14:40,020

And, um, it's between seven years as a volunteer here and then, um, 23 going on 24 now, um,

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01:14:40,020 --> 01:14:41,020

it's kind of tough.

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01:14:41,020 --> 01:14:48,480

No matter where I drive, um, there's going to be memories that, that come up or stories

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01:14:48,480 --> 01:14:54,620

that I could tell of things that happened at various intersections or houses or parts

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01:14:54,620 --> 01:14:57,880

of the area.

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01:14:57,880 --> 01:15:02,480

And that used to be tough.

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01:15:02,480 --> 01:15:11,800

I would avoid certain, certain areas, um, because I was, um, for the longest time by

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01:15:11,800 --> 01:15:18,480

certain calls haunted by experiences and things that happened on calls.

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01:15:18,480 --> 01:15:25,800

And I would always do my best, but sometimes it was inevitable and I could not, um, avoid

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01:15:25,800 --> 01:15:29,000

going by a certain area.

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01:15:29,000 --> 01:15:37,120

And I would feel my anxiety, my pulse rate, I would start sweating and things like that.

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01:15:37,120 --> 01:15:43,120

And that was just, that was really, really tough until I learned to, um, get that help

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01:15:43,120 --> 01:15:50,960

and navigate those borders through, um, EMDR really helped me process some of the tougher

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01:15:50,960 --> 01:15:55,440

calls and driving by certain areas and everything like that.

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01:15:55,440 --> 01:16:02,760

So, um, luckily things are, are just memories now and they don't affect me like they did

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01:16:02,760 --> 01:16:03,760

in the past.

1001

01:16:03,760 --> 01:16:11,760

I got them, uh, refilled from, from right here to the back of the filing box, but, um, kind

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01:16:11,760 --> 01:16:15,520

of just another thing I'd like to point out about the volunteers.

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01:16:15,520 --> 01:16:18,840

It wasn't, this wasn't me.

1004

01:16:18,840 --> 01:16:24,560

Um, but so many are, are volunteers now.

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01:16:24,560 --> 01:16:33,120

Um, they don't always have the luxury and the more remote volunteers and everything.

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01:16:33,120 --> 01:16:38,200

They'll have a pager, they could be at work, they could be at a ball game with their children

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01:16:38,200 --> 01:16:39,880

or whatever.

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01:16:39,880 --> 01:16:45,400

That pager goes off, they have to drop what they're doing and go respond on a call.

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01:16:45,400 --> 01:16:49,720

It could be a traumatic event, could be a cardiac arrest, fatality, whatever it may

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01:16:49,720 --> 01:16:50,720

be.

1011

01:16:50,720 --> 01:16:56,480

And once they're done running that call, they don't have the luxury like we do a lot of

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01:16:56,480 --> 01:17:01,560

times when we clear the scene, we're all on that rig together.

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01:17:01,560 --> 01:17:07,420

And you know, a lot of times the, the processing does start on the rig.

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01:17:07,420 --> 01:17:12,300

We start talking about it just over our headsets while we're driving back to the firehouse.

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01:17:12,300 --> 01:17:17,680

And then we get back to the firehouse and, um, maybe we'll wash the rig and while we're

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01:17:17,680 --> 01:17:24,480

out there scrubbing it or whatever, we'll just start bullshitting or making a few comments

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01:17:24,480 --> 01:17:27,280

here and there about the call or we'll go to the kitchen table.

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01:17:27,280 --> 01:17:31,480

Well, the volunteers, they clear up from the call.

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01:17:31,480 --> 01:17:32,480

They don't have that.

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01:17:32,480 --> 01:17:35,080

They don't have the camaraderie on the rig.

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01:17:35,080 --> 01:17:36,640

They don't have the, the kitchen table.

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01:17:36,640 --> 01:17:43,240

They can always go back to, they're going back to their, their kids ball game, um, their

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01:17:43,240 --> 01:17:46,960

full-time job, whatever it may be.

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01:17:46,960 --> 01:17:51,000

And that's, that's a tough position for them to be in.

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01:17:51,000 --> 01:17:58,040

Um, and I think so many times, uh, a lot of us don't think about that.

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01:17:58,040 --> 01:18:05,000

And a lot of people are just uneducated as to how big our volunteer system is in this

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01:18:05,000 --> 01:18:11,200

country and that's, that's the main portion of the U S fire services volunteers.

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01:18:11,200 --> 01:18:12,200

Yeah.

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01:18:12,200 --> 01:18:16,640

Well, I mean, firstly, it blows me away when you hear there are volunteer organizations

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01:18:16,640 --> 01:18:20,200

in suburban areas that obviously have a good tax base.

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01:18:20,200 --> 01:18:21,640

So me, to me, that's insanity.

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01:18:21,640 --> 01:18:23,040

That should be a career department.

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01:18:23,040 --> 01:18:24,040

I get it.

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01:18:24,040 --> 01:18:28,780

If you're rural Idaho somewhere, of course, and that's a different dynamic completely,

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01:18:28,780 --> 01:18:34,720

but I actually got a, an interesting perspective having worked in the fire service for 14 years

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01:18:34,720 --> 01:18:40,360

transitioned out five years ago, um, to do this, to try and be a voice from the outside.

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01:18:40,360 --> 01:18:44,600

And I had a cardiac arrest on a flight and we hadn't taken off from London yet.

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01:18:44,600 --> 01:18:52,200

I ended up and ironically, I just saw a fucking article about two weeks later, lady has, I

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01:18:52,200 --> 01:18:53,680

think she had more like chest pain.

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01:18:53,680 --> 01:18:59,040

I think she went to a rest and 15 cardiologists were on the plane and they gave her some,

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01:18:59,040 --> 01:19:01,160

who knows what nitro or whatever it was.

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01:19:01,160 --> 01:19:02,480

And you know, she was fine.

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01:19:02,480 --> 01:19:03,480

Well, no.

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01:19:03,480 --> 01:19:07,800

And in this flight, no one but me seemed to have any emergency medical experience whatsoever.

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01:19:07,800 --> 01:19:10,800

There was a nurse who was a sweetheart, but I don't think she was an emergency nurse by

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01:19:10,800 --> 01:19:11,800

any means.

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01:19:11,800 --> 01:19:15,720

Um, so, you know, let this code and did CPR on this poor guy.

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01:19:15,720 --> 01:19:19,360

And I've been, you know, talked about this a lot in the podcast.

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01:19:19,360 --> 01:19:21,000

I'm the Reaper as a medic.

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01:19:21,000 --> 01:19:25,640

Like if you go into cardiac arrest, I have not had a single save as an EMT and or a paramedic

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01:19:25,640 --> 01:19:27,400

in my whole career.

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01:19:27,400 --> 01:19:31,160

So just, you know, that's, that's why I don't gamble.



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01:19:31,160 --> 01:19:34,640

But um, you know, and it's, it's obviously because these are hearts that don't want to

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01:19:34,640 --> 01:19:35,640

come back.

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01:19:35,640 --> 01:19:41,600

These are, you know, AAAs and brain bleeds and all the things, but, um, work this code,

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01:19:41,600 --> 01:19:45,120

you know, ended up working it with the local fire department and ultimately the paramedics

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01:19:45,120 --> 01:19:48,800

from London finally begins to switch off compressions.

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01:19:48,800 --> 01:19:50,840

And you know, and then I said, do you need me at the moment?

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01:19:50,840 --> 01:19:52,320

It was super crowded back here now.

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01:19:52,320 --> 01:19:53,680

Um, and they were like, no, no.

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01:19:53,680 --> 01:19:59,680

So I went to the bathroom in the plane, wash the blood off my hands and take a seat.

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01:19:59,680 --> 01:20:02,600

And it was jarring and I, and I, and I was funny.

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01:20:02,600 --> 01:20:07,960

I did a video about a couple of days after I got back, cause I was talking to the, um,

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01:20:07,960 --> 01:20:10,200

the flight attendants too, cause they were obviously shaken.

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01:20:10,200 --> 01:20:14,960

Some of them went home and kudos to them for having the, the courage to ask for help that

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01:20:14,960 --> 01:20:15,960

way.

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01:20:15,960 --> 01:20:18,840

And then the rest of them cleaned up and then we flew and they served everyone, which was

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01:20:18,840 --> 01:20:19,840

so admirable.

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01:20:19,840 --> 01:20:22,600

But I was, um, they ended up upgrading me.

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01:20:22,600 --> 01:20:24,460

So I ended up right by the, by the cabin.

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01:20:24,460 --> 01:20:30,200

So I got to talk to all the, all the stewards and stewardesses or flight attendants.

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01:20:30,200 --> 01:20:33,280

But the whole point was it shook me for a couple of days.

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01:20:33,280 --> 01:20:36,720

And at first I'm like, fuck, you know, did I, did I lose my mojo?

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01:20:36,720 --> 01:20:43,160

And then I realized like, Oh, this is what it's supposed to feel like when someone dies.

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01:20:43,160 --> 01:20:47,680

But when we're, especially in career, like literally we will, you know, we'll get back

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01:20:47,680 --> 01:20:51,520

to the station, the engine, you know, if I'm on the rescue that day has already put all

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01:20:51,520 --> 01:20:53,400

the EMS stuff that we use aside.

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01:20:53,400 --> 01:20:56,240

We load up and then boom, off we go again.

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01:20:56,240 --> 01:21:01,600

Sometimes I'm gonna have my super bad last day at Orange County where three people died,

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01:21:01,600 --> 01:21:02,600

three different calls.

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01:21:02,600 --> 01:21:03,600

One guy was on fire.

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01:21:03,600 --> 01:21:08,880

One was rotting in the woods and the first one was a GI bleed cardiac arrest.

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01:21:08,880 --> 01:21:12,040

But you just clean your shit and then you go back into service.

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01:21:12,040 --> 01:21:19,480

And so I think for, for the career people, we don't realize that when, you know, we're

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01:21:19,480 --> 01:21:23,320

not feeling what we're supposed to feel because we can't, but that again gets compartmentalized.

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01:21:23,320 --> 01:21:28,880

But conversely, imagining that that's how the volunteers feel the moment they go back

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01:21:28,880 --> 01:21:34,760

to their garage or their home or whatever it is that they do, that's a lot not to process

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01:21:34,760 --> 01:21:35,760

as well.

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01:21:35,760 --> 01:21:39,880

So both those two fields, you know, have challenges in two different ways.

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01:21:39,880 --> 01:21:45,480

And I was kind of, you know, gifted this, this kind of insight into this one moment

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01:21:45,480 --> 01:21:48,960

five years after taking the uniform off myself.

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01:21:48,960 --> 01:21:56,880

Yeah, that's definitely true.

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01:21:56,880 --> 01:22:12,040

And it's almost to the point where the military, when people retire from the military, we do

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01:22:12,040 --> 01:22:19,400

or they do a transitioning period, things to try and help them transition better into

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01:22:19,400 --> 01:22:22,040

civilian life.

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01:22:22,040 --> 01:22:28,640

And I know this is kind of going a little bit around or still tying into what you're

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01:22:28,640 --> 01:22:33,640

talking about, but it's almost like we should start doing, we need to do more for us while

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01:22:33,640 --> 01:22:35,280

we're, we're in there.

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01:22:35,280 --> 01:22:40,360

But also when our members start getting to that point to transition out, do something

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01:22:40,360 --> 01:22:41,800

like that and let them know.

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01:22:41,800 --> 01:22:46,360

It's like, Hey, you're going to have the time on your hands when you do see things like

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01:22:46,360 --> 01:22:48,480

this.

1103

01:22:48,480 --> 01:22:51,960

It's going to affect you because you're not in the job anymore.

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01:22:51,960 --> 01:22:53,760

You didn't arrive on that.

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01:22:53,760 --> 01:23:02,960

And I know you and I, we talked about it briefly after that, that happened, but it's different

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01:23:02,960 --> 01:23:11,040

when you show up to that person in cardiac arrest and you have at least three other partners

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01:23:11,040 --> 01:23:14,680

or at least one other partner there with you, depending on what piece of equipment you arrive

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01:23:14,680 --> 01:23:16,360

on first.

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01:23:16,360 --> 01:23:19,880

But when you're there yourself, it's like, Holy shit.

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01:23:19,880 --> 01:23:24,400

And you don't have any of your equipment or anything like that.

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01:23:24,400 --> 01:23:26,840

And people are looking at you.

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01:23:26,840 --> 01:23:28,640

Hey, what's James going to do?

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01:23:28,640 --> 01:23:30,320

Come on, do something, James.

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01:23:30,320 --> 01:23:32,280

You're like, shit, I'm by myself.

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01:23:32,280 --> 01:23:34,240

I ain't got anything.

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01:23:34,240 --> 01:23:38,680

But then like you said, when it's, it's done, it's over.

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01:23:38,680 --> 01:23:41,640

There's those firefighters, they took control of it.

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01:23:41,640 --> 01:23:43,280

They don't need you anymore.

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01:23:43,280 --> 01:23:45,560

You can step aside.

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01:23:45,560 --> 01:23:50,640

And I mean, all I could do when I first heard that story from you, and then I reached out

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01:23:50,640 --> 01:23:56,240

to you was just feel for you.

1122

01:23:56,240 --> 01:24:02,360

And just imagine, I just imagine myself in that spot, just getting away from everything

1123

01:24:02,360 --> 01:24:08,680

and just stepping aside from everybody and going into the bathroom and throwing some

1124

01:24:08,680 --> 01:24:09,880

water on my face.

1125

01:24:09,880 --> 01:24:14,320

And I mean, first of all, cleaning up, like you said, we've got bodily fluids on us and

1126

01:24:14,320 --> 01:24:16,360

everything like that.

1127

01:24:16,360 --> 01:24:27,560

But just kind of processing everything that you've just went through and how it's affecting

1128

01:24:27,560 --> 01:24:32,320

you now as opposed to five years prior.

1129

01:24:32,320 --> 01:24:36,280

And those guys, they just, they don't get that the guys that were on the plane with

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01:24:36,280 --> 01:24:41,240

you that took over the first responders there.

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01:24:41,240 --> 01:24:45,680

Just like you said, they're, they'll restock right after that.

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01:24:45,680 --> 01:24:48,240

And the tones go off, they run the next one.

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01:24:48,240 --> 01:24:52,840

It could be another cardiac arrest could be somebody had just fallen and hurt their ankle

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01:24:52,840 --> 01:24:53,840

or something.

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01:24:53,840 --> 01:24:54,840

We don't know.

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01:24:54,840 --> 01:25:01,280

But they have very little time to process the volunteers.

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01:25:01,280 --> 01:25:07,080

They don't have any time really to process because they're going back to their full time

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01:25:07,080 --> 01:25:11,600

job or their family or whatever else is going on in the community.

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01:25:11,600 --> 01:25:12,600

And it's tough.

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01:25:12,600 --> 01:25:13,600

Absolutely.



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01:25:13,600 --> 01:25:18,280

Well, I think the transition as well, as we were talking about the reasons that we get

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01:25:18,280 --> 01:25:25,360

into the uniform, when we take that uniform off, the reverse happens.

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01:25:25,360 --> 01:25:29,440

Now all those coping mechanisms, all that healthy environment that you've built is now

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01:25:29,440 --> 01:25:30,680

stripped from you.

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01:25:30,680 --> 01:25:34,560

So I think that's another reason why we need to do a better job transitioning our retirees

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01:25:34,560 --> 01:25:39,360

or if someone gets hurt or if they're, as we'll get into taking off a mental health

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01:25:39,360 --> 01:25:43,880

or whatever it is, is that was your purpose.

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01:25:43,880 --> 01:25:45,000

That was your tribe.

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01:25:45,000 --> 01:25:48,520

That was your, obviously, as we talked about your adrenaline, all the things.

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01:25:48,520 --> 01:25:52,960

And now one day your ID doesn't work and the bay doors go down and that's it.

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01:25:52,960 --> 01:25:53,960

You're done.

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01:25:53,960 --> 01:25:57,320

And that is so jarring for first responders, military, especially.

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01:25:57,320 --> 01:26:01,320

And even if you watch the documentary, like the weight of gold, these Olympians, they

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01:26:01,320 --> 01:26:03,640

stand on that podium and then they're like, all right, that's it.

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01:26:03,640 --> 01:26:05,000

You aged out for the next one.

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01:26:05,000 --> 01:26:06,000

Here's your clap.

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01:26:06,000 --> 01:26:11,060

You're on the front of a Wheaties box for a couple of weeks and then you're done.

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01:26:11,060 --> 01:26:17,680

So I think we need to do a much better job because unlike the military as well, where

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01:26:17,680 --> 01:26:21,040

they have the VA, there's no VA.

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01:26:21,040 --> 01:26:22,480

And again, our military are blown away.

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01:26:22,480 --> 01:26:24,600

There's no VA for first responders.

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01:26:24,600 --> 01:26:28,800

It's like a year of Cobra for a thousand dollars a month and then go fuck yourself.

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01:26:28,800 --> 01:26:31,780

Basically is what it is for most of us.

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01:26:31,780 --> 01:26:37,360

So you've had everything stripped and now all the mental and physical trauma that you

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01:26:37,360 --> 01:26:41,160

took out of the job, you're left with nothing to deal with it.

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01:26:41,160 --> 01:26:43,540

No health insurance, no mental health resources.

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01:26:43,540 --> 01:26:45,240

So that's another area.

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01:26:45,240 --> 01:26:50,400

I think we've got to do a much better job on top of the fact that statistically, if

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01:26:50,400 --> 01:26:55,640

I had a brain bleed and my head exploded right in front of you now, I wouldn't be a firefighter

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01:26:55,640 --> 01:27:00,480

statistic even though my whole career is that's what I did because I ceased to exist on the

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01:27:00,480 --> 01:27:02,720

spreadsheet of the fire service.

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01:27:02,720 --> 01:27:07,000

So when you look at that, what is our real mental health death toll?

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01:27:07,000 --> 01:27:10,880

What is our real cancer death toll, cardiac, et cetera, et cetera.

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01:27:10,880 --> 01:27:17,000

It's probably 10, that's being conservative times the numbers that we publish every year.

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01:27:17,000 --> 01:27:19,560

Yeah, yeah, exactly.

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01:27:19,560 --> 01:27:25,760

And getting back to the difference between the military and the first responder community,

1177

01:27:25,760 --> 01:27:33,960

how we pointed out they have the VA, which isn't necessarily the greatest right now,

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01:27:33,960 --> 01:27:35,560

but at least it's a start.

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01:27:35,560 --> 01:27:37,800

I mean, it needs a lot of work.

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01:27:37,800 --> 01:27:42,760

But there's also for them, which this could be a good thing or a bad thing, depends on

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01:27:42,760 --> 01:27:43,760

how we want to look at it.

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01:27:43,760 --> 01:27:49,640

We already talked about alcohol, but they have the VFW, the American Legion, different

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01:27:49,640 --> 01:27:55,240

things like that when they transition out, they can still go to and sit around and break

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01:27:55,240 --> 01:28:02,360

bread or have a beer or whatever it may be with other like-minded people that are veterans.

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01:28:02,360 --> 01:28:06,460

Our community, when we retire, we don't necessarily have that.

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01:28:06,460 --> 01:28:13,200

We don't have VFW for firefighters or American Legion for firefighters or anything like that.

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01:28:13,200 --> 01:28:21,120

We have union halls if you retire and you stay on as an alumni or whatever.

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01:28:21,120 --> 01:28:22,120

And that's not everywhere.

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01:28:22,120 --> 01:28:27,720

Not every department has a local or even has their own union hall or whatever.

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01:28:27,720 --> 01:28:40,280

So it's important that we build up a retirement platform and camaraderie amongst our retirees

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01:28:40,280 --> 01:28:44,640

and include them into this.

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01:28:44,640 --> 01:28:48,000

My department does a pretty good job with that.

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01:28:48,000 --> 01:28:53,760

And it's building, they're doing a lot better, keep improving it on a regular basis, but

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01:28:53,760 --> 01:29:01,700

keeping the volunteers, excuse me, the retirees involved with events that are going on.

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01:29:01,700 --> 01:29:06,640

We have quarterly breakfasts we'll host at different firehouses where all the retirees

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01:29:06,640 --> 01:29:11,920

will come in and have breakfast so they're among all of the new people.

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01:29:11,920 --> 01:29:16,760

And they just feel like they still belong within our department, within our community

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01:29:16,760 --> 01:29:17,960

and everything.

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01:29:17,960 --> 01:29:20,360

So that's pretty good.

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01:29:20,360 --> 01:29:27,460

We just did cancer screenings for all of the members of our department, but we also opened

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01:29:27,460 --> 01:29:32,160

it up and included all of our retirees that wanted to get screened as well.

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01:29:32,160 --> 01:29:33,160

That's beautiful.

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01:29:33,160 --> 01:29:41,680

Yeah, we just, for the longest time, the fire service or first responder communities, it

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01:29:41,680 --> 01:29:47,520

just seemed like when members would retire and there was no real transition, like you

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01:29:47,520 --> 01:29:53,160

said, they just swipe out, clock out or whatever you want to call it for the last time and

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01:29:53,160 --> 01:29:58,080

they walk out that door and they're just stripped of their identity.

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01:29:58,080 --> 01:30:05,840

And one other thing that we can, one of many things that we can start teaching and instilling,

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01:30:05,840 --> 01:30:16,000

and this is Chris Moore's belief, not everybody might not agree with this, but the job can't

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01:30:16,000 --> 01:30:18,080

define us.

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01:30:18,080 --> 01:30:25,520

I know my job as a firefighter, it's been my entire adult life.

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01:30:25,520 --> 01:30:27,600

I've been a firefighter.

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01:30:27,600 --> 01:30:30,360

I'm a big part of me, but that's all it is.

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01:30:30,360 --> 01:30:31,880

It's a part of me.

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01:30:31,880 --> 01:30:34,760

It doesn't define me.

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01:30:34,760 --> 01:30:39,960

It's not who Chris Moore is as a human being and as a person.

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01:30:39,960 --> 01:30:47,160

When I walk away from here, whenever that may be, will I miss it?

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01:30:47,160 --> 01:30:48,160

Absolutely.

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01:30:48,160 --> 01:30:54,440

I'm going to miss it, but there's still going to be other things that serve me.

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01:30:54,440 --> 01:30:59,000

I'll find other ways that I can still serve the community because there are other ways

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01:30:59,000 --> 01:31:01,880

and other things that I can do.

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01:31:01,880 --> 01:31:08,400

Be it like you pointed out for yourself five years ago, when you transitioned out, you

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01:31:08,400 --> 01:31:09,400

got into this.

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01:31:09,400 --> 01:31:13,840

So you're tied in with the first responder community.

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01:31:13,840 --> 01:31:18,280

You are the first responder community and you're giving back through this.

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01:31:18,280 --> 01:31:23,800

There are lots of other ways and that's where that whole transitioning platform that we

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01:31:23,800 --> 01:31:30,600

should strive to try and establish within departments, just like the military has, they

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01:31:30,600 --> 01:31:35,240

help their members try and find jobs out in the private sector.

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01:31:35,240 --> 01:31:44,200

Let's try and find the next host of the biggest podcast for first responders ever.



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01:31:44,200 --> 01:31:49,600

Let's try and find something like that or where first responders can help startups and

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01:31:49,600 --> 01:31:55,680

peer support or mental health and wellness or whatever it may be.

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01:31:55,680 --> 01:32:00,280

This might not necessarily be one of the best things because when we talk about first responders,

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01:32:00,280 --> 01:32:05,520

a lot of times people forget about our dispatchers and our communications.

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01:32:05,520 --> 01:32:11,280

To me, they are the first responders.

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01:32:11,280 --> 01:32:19,400

If we have a police officer or firefighter that is retiring, if they're eligible to,

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01:32:19,400 --> 01:32:26,760

who else would be better than them at being a call taker or dispatcher?

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01:32:26,760 --> 01:32:31,800

They know all the lingo and they have the street smarts and everything.

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01:32:31,800 --> 01:32:35,920

Might not be the best for their mental health and wellness, but if it's something that they're

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01:32:35,920 --> 01:32:40,600

stable and they're willing and able to do, that might be a great transition for them.

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01:32:40,600 --> 01:32:44,760

Go do that for a little while or to help out or to give back.

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01:32:44,760 --> 01:32:49,380

Some kind of teaching programs, recruitment and retention.

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01:32:49,380 --> 01:32:53,880

Who would be better unless you get the old salty crusty guy who just hates everything

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01:32:53,880 --> 01:32:58,440

about where the fire service has gone to or whatever.

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01:32:58,440 --> 01:33:07,200

If you have the good positive guys that had a very good and positive productive career,

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01:33:07,200 --> 01:33:11,920

transition them to a recruitment and retention position.

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01:33:11,920 --> 01:33:13,240

Let them be the ones who go out.

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01:33:13,240 --> 01:33:22,340

We talked about we need transparency and honesty when we do the recruitments now.

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01:33:22,340 --> 01:33:23,340

Utilize them for that.

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01:33:23,340 --> 01:33:27,000

They have the proper skills and everything.

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01:33:27,000 --> 01:33:33,200

But I'm really seeing now more and more where a lot of people are transitioning into this

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01:33:33,200 --> 01:33:34,880

is by their choice and they're doing.

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01:33:34,880 --> 01:33:40,480

It's not like an organization that's helping with the transition, but getting more into

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01:33:40,480 --> 01:33:43,480

the health and wellness aspect of it.

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01:33:43,480 --> 01:33:47,120

They'll leave this career where they've been helping the community and they'll go back

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01:33:47,120 --> 01:33:53,040

into a career where they are helping other first responders.

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01:33:53,040 --> 01:34:00,480

And that's pretty impressive, pretty amazing to give to your local community for so long.

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01:34:00,480 --> 01:34:05,840

And now you're transitioning out and you're able to give back to your other family that

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01:34:05,840 --> 01:34:10,720

you gave 20, 30, even 40 plus years of your life to.

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01:34:10,720 --> 01:34:11,720

Yeah.

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01:34:11,720 --> 01:34:14,400

Well, I think that purpose is so important.

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01:34:14,400 --> 01:34:20,260

And I think the one of the areas again that we don't do a very good job is even ourselves

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01:34:20,260 --> 01:34:26,200

understanding that the skill set that you develop being an American firefighter, for

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01:34:26,200 --> 01:34:30,320

example, especially if you do in the EMS as well, I mean, you're a damn Swiss army knife

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01:34:30,320 --> 01:34:32,120

of skills.

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01:34:32,120 --> 01:34:36,720

And so to then go, oh, I'm going to go teach in the academy then is very short-sighted.

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01:34:36,720 --> 01:34:37,720

You know, yes, absolutely.

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01:34:37,720 --> 01:34:41,760

If that's what you're burning desire, you're that, you know, forceful entry guru, knock

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01:34:41,760 --> 01:34:47,200

yourself out, but understand that the teamwork, the problem solving, the cool under stress,

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01:34:47,200 --> 01:34:51,120

all these elements, you can apply in a thousand different ways.

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01:34:51,120 --> 01:34:56,040

But if you can find something that also infuses giving, infuses service, because that's what

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01:34:56,040 --> 01:34:57,760

led you into the uniform.

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01:34:57,760 --> 01:35:02,760

I think that's again, the kind of magic recipe for a healthy transition, you know, rest,

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01:35:02,760 --> 01:35:06,320

recover, take some time off, do it on your terms.

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01:35:06,320 --> 01:35:10,740

But how, how can you serve in a different way, whether it's, you know, a local animal

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01:35:10,740 --> 01:35:15,000

shelter or whether it's mentorship programs or something completely different, writing

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01:35:15,000 --> 01:35:21,040

a book, whatever it is that allows you to, to take what you learned from the fire service

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01:35:21,040 --> 01:35:25,560

and do something different because, you know, same as the cops that become security guards,

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01:35:25,560 --> 01:35:29,320

you know, a police officer has the same kind of gamut of skills.

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01:35:29,320 --> 01:35:32,640

They could do so many things that selling themselves short where they simply just put

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01:35:32,640 --> 01:35:34,640

on a different uniform.

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01:35:34,640 --> 01:35:36,240

Yeah.

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01:35:36,240 --> 01:35:42,080

And, um, there, there's so many other things that we can do to give back.

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01:35:42,080 --> 01:35:44,880

Like you said, an animal shelter or whatever.

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01:35:44,880 --> 01:35:53,400

I got a, um, a friend of mine up in Ohio and he's actually utilizing his skill set and

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01:35:53,400 --> 01:35:59,960

he's gotten onto city council and now he's running for an actual state office now.

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01:35:59,960 --> 01:36:08,400

And I mean, hell, what better way to give back than to have a, uh, ally of the fire

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01:36:08,400 --> 01:36:15,680

department be part of the, uh, the city council that can help get assets for their fire department,

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01:36:15,680 --> 01:36:21,280

help change the schedule to give them the 72 hours off or whatever it may, may be somebody

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01:36:21,280 --> 01:36:27,520

who understands it understands the importance of the health and wellness of all the members.

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01:36:27,520 --> 01:36:32,920

Um, that's a, uh, one additional way to make a change that my friend is doing up there.

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01:36:32,920 --> 01:36:37,160

Um, and now he's trying to go for the state level as well.

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01:36:37,160 --> 01:36:44,000

And um, I just think there's, there's so many ways that we can, we can give back.

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01:36:44,000 --> 01:36:45,000

Absolutely.

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01:36:45,000 --> 01:36:52,320

Well, I want to lead you through to March, 2022 and then, you know, the, the post-traumatic

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01:36:52,320 --> 01:36:56,680

growth, what the tools that you found that work, but you, you, you talked about your

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01:36:56,680 --> 01:36:59,680

childhood, you had seven years in the volunteer fire service.

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01:36:59,680 --> 01:37:01,000

Then you went to the career.

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01:37:01,000 --> 01:37:04,320

Obviously you're accumulating traumatic experiences.

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01:37:04,320 --> 01:37:06,440

You've got sleep deprivation, et cetera, et cetera.

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01:37:06,440 --> 01:37:11,440

So walk me through now, as you look back, this kind of downward spiral and where was

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01:37:11,440 --> 01:37:16,120

that dark place you found yourself in March last year or two years ago now?

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01:37:16,120 --> 01:37:17,120

Yeah.

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01:37:17,120 --> 01:37:26,840

So, um, I, like I touched on earlier, would never discuss anything, um, being gone for

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01:37:26,840 --> 01:37:33,520

24 hours at a time, wouldn't discuss any calls or hurts or hangups habits, anything with

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01:37:33,520 --> 01:37:34,520

my family.

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01:37:34,520 --> 01:37:36,320

I just pushed everything aside.

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01:37:36,320 --> 01:37:42,360

Um, I don't know where it started and I know I'm not the only one that's good.

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01:37:42,360 --> 01:37:48,400

It goes back to the, the me too stuff, but, um, some reason we think at times that we

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01:37:48,400 --> 01:37:54,000

have an S on our chest and we're the, the superhero and we got to protect our family

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01:37:54,000 --> 01:37:55,200

and our loved ones.

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01:37:55,200 --> 01:38:01,600

And by sharing any of the stuff that we see here that we exposed ourselves to that it's

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01:38:01,600 --> 01:38:03,880

going to hurt them.

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01:38:03,880 --> 01:38:14,200

And boy, was I wrong with that in, um, 2017 is, um, I ran it.

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01:38:14,200 --> 01:38:16,320

It was the beginning of, of the year.

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01:38:16,320 --> 01:38:20,160

It was, um, January, well, it was the first week of January.

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01:38:20,160 --> 01:38:23,680

I don't want to give out a whole lot of specifics cause people can kind of figure things out.

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01:38:23,680 --> 01:38:31,960



Um, if I do that and I don't want to violate any laws or anything, but we had a, a pediatric

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01:38:31,960 --> 01:38:37,680

call and we didn't get this child back.

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01:38:37,680 --> 01:38:48,560

Um, I thought I pushed that down, but, um, like we said earlier, right after that, that

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01:38:48,560 --> 01:38:52,560

call, uh, cleaned up everything and it was a busy shift.

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01:38:52,560 --> 01:38:53,880

We ran several more.

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01:38:53,880 --> 01:39:01,200

Well, that evening, um, getting in my bunk at the firehouse, um, I closed my eyes and

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01:39:01,200 --> 01:39:08,120

it was very soon after that was like that call that I ran early that morning was just

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01:39:08,120 --> 01:39:10,840

like coming at me a hundred miles an hour.

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01:39:10,840 --> 01:39:15,400

Um, that little boy's face and just everything.

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01:39:15,400 --> 01:39:23,960

And then I would like open my eyes up and, um, like you in the airplane, I went to the

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01:39:23,960 --> 01:39:27,800

restroom at the firehouse and splashed water on my face and just looked at myself in the

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01:39:27,800 --> 01:39:32,600

mirror and just trying to figure out what was going on and just kind of wrote it off.

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01:39:32,600 --> 01:39:36,840

Went back to bed and, um, closed my eyes again.

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01:39:36,840 --> 01:39:44,200

Well, now another call that happened 10 years earlier popped up into my head and it was

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01:39:44,200 --> 01:39:45,200

the same thing.

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01:39:45,200 --> 01:39:46,400

Like it was just coming at me like that.

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01:39:46,400 --> 01:39:50,040

No, it was a call that I never thought twice about.

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01:39:50,040 --> 01:39:57,560

Um, and I kept having these, I had, it was probably six other calls throughout my, at

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01:39:57,560 --> 01:40:06,440

that point, I think I was at a 27 years in and, um, just these calls that I never thought

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01:40:06,440 --> 01:40:10,520

twice about were just coming right back at me a hundred miles an hour.

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01:40:10,520 --> 01:40:17,040

Every time I closed my eyes that night, um, I got off shift the next morning and went

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01:40:17,040 --> 01:40:22,640

home, didn't say anything to anybody that night in my own bed and my own surroundings.

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01:40:22,640 --> 01:40:24,840

Um, same thing happened.

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01:40:24,840 --> 01:40:29,720

And this turned into a regular, um, thing.

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01:40:29,720 --> 01:40:30,800

It was just happening.

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01:40:30,800 --> 01:40:34,760

I thought I was losing my mind and going crazy.

1342

01:40:34,760 --> 01:40:43,360

Um, I had a leader in the department in, um, 2017, um, four months later knew that something

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01:40:43,360 --> 01:40:45,240

was going wrong with me.

1344

01:40:45,240 --> 01:40:47,720

He didn't know what, but reached out to me.

1345

01:40:47,720 --> 01:40:51,560

Um, we had lunch together, talked to him, told him what was going on.

1346

01:40:51,560 --> 01:40:52,880

He gave me some advice.

1347

01:40:52,880 --> 01:40:55,280

I thought that I was good.

1348

01:40:55,280 --> 01:40:58,920

Um, everything was, was fine and dandy.

1349

01:40:58,920 --> 01:41:02,760

I started talking to my, my family about issues that I was having.

1350

01:41:02,760 --> 01:41:04,880

I started exploring my faith.

1351

01:41:04,880 --> 01:41:11,120

Um, a year later in 2018 had another traumatic event and it started spiraling me down.

1352

01:41:11,120 --> 01:41:13,640

I started doing a lot of heavy drinking.

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01:41:13,640 --> 01:41:16,920

Um, I was telling myself I wasn't doing it to get drunk.

1354

01:41:16,920 --> 01:41:21,880

I was doing it to just suppress things and to help get myself to sleep.

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01:41:21,880 --> 01:41:29,560

Um, I liken it to the, uh, the old nightmare in Elm street movies where the kids were afraid

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01:41:29,560 --> 01:41:32,280

to go to sleep because of the nightmares.

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01:41:32,280 --> 01:41:34,040

That's where I was.

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01:41:34,040 --> 01:41:38,040

Um, I, I didn't know what was going on.

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01:41:38,040 --> 01:41:44,040

I didn't know what was up, what was down, what was real, what was a dream.

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01:41:44,040 --> 01:41:51,640

Finally in 2018, I got a number of a therapist from one of my mentors in the department.

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01:41:51,640 --> 01:41:57,960

And, uh, it was not just a therapist, but a therapist that works with first responders

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01:41:57,960 --> 01:42:02,760

and, um, getting the number and using it were two different things.

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01:42:02,760 --> 01:42:06,760

I sat on that number for a few more months before I finally made the phone call.

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01:42:06,760 --> 01:42:12,080

And that's where, like we, we said earlier, um, it was like 20 or 30 seconds after I dialed

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01:42:12,080 --> 01:42:17,240

that number and the person answered before I could get the words, help me out of my mouth.

1366

01:42:17,240 --> 01:42:18,960

And I finally got those out.

1367

01:42:18,960 --> 01:42:20,800

Um, this guy said he could help me.

1368

01:42:20,800 --> 01:42:27,600

He started going to therapy, um, saw him for quite a while before he had to shut down his,

1369

01:42:27,600 --> 01:42:31,480

his practice due to unforeseen circumstances.

1370

01:42:31,480 --> 01:42:32,480

And he didn't refer me.

1371

01:42:32,480 --> 01:42:33,960

He just left me kind of high and dry.

1372

01:42:33,960 --> 01:42:36,160

I had to find another therapist.

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01:42:36,160 --> 01:42:43,920

Um, I finally, after that was probably about two months was able to find another therapist

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01:42:43,920 --> 01:42:50,040

and started getting help with, with her and was doing really good.

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01:42:50,040 --> 01:42:56,000

She introduced me to EMDR and I was doing very good with that reprocessing everything

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01:42:56,000 --> 01:42:59,000

and started not having any issues.

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01:42:59,000 --> 01:43:04,200

We started backing off from weekly to biweekly to once a month.

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01:43:04,200 --> 01:43:11,200

And then, um, she recommended to me how I, she wanted to know how I felt about going,

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01:43:11,200 --> 01:43:15,280

um, just on an as needed basis.

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01:43:15,280 --> 01:43:19,840

And I agreed to that, which to me was the dumbest thing that I've ever done.

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01:43:19,840 --> 01:43:24,720

And I've done a lot of dumb shit in my life, as hard as it was to get into therapy and

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01:43:24,720 --> 01:43:28,320

make that phone call and go to appointments.

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01:43:28,320 --> 01:43:34,720

Um, I was going to get myself right back into that spot where it was difficult to, um, make

1384

01:43:34,720 --> 01:43:37,200

that phone call again.

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01:43:37,200 --> 01:43:49,600

So, um, 2021, it was, um, March of 2021 had a really bad call pediatric again.

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01:43:49,600 --> 01:43:56,040

Most of my calls have always been pediatrics that really bothered me the most.

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01:43:56,040 --> 01:44:03,040

And I did remember to reach out to her then got some help, processed everything and then

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01:44:03,040 --> 01:44:05,680

just kind of, we figured everything was good.

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01:44:05,680 --> 01:44:11,520

I was away from that as we were coming up on the one year anniversary of that call in

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01:44:11,520 --> 01:44:15,440

March of 22.

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01:44:15,440 --> 01:44:17,920

I just started getting more and more anxious.

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01:44:17,920 --> 01:44:24,840

I started having flashbacks about that call with the, the anniversary of it coming up.

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01:44:24,840 --> 01:44:28,400

And it was, um, it was very painful.

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01:44:28,400 --> 01:44:34,480

I was drinking, started drinking a lot more than just to try and suppress those feelings

1395

01:44:34,480 --> 01:44:37,720

and everything that was going on.

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01:44:37,720 --> 01:44:43,280

Um, throughout all of this, I was spending a lot of money that I didn't have in running

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01:44:43,280 --> 01:44:45,160

up debt.

1398

01:44:45,160 --> 01:44:54,440

Um, not proud of any of this stuff, but, um, um, extramarital issues.

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01:44:54,440 --> 01:45:01,360

I was looking for that quick release outside of my marriage.

1400

01:45:01,360 --> 01:45:13,520

Long story short, I was on shift to March 15th of 2022 and, um, just decided I didn't

1401

01:45:13,520 --> 01:45:19,000

want to deal with this with life and these flashbacks and everything anymore.

1402

01:45:19,000 --> 01:45:20,400

I was, it was out of therapy.

1403

01:45:20,400 --> 01:45:22,160

It was on an as needed basis.

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01:45:22,160 --> 01:45:25,480



I didn't want to make that tough phone call again.

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01:45:25,480 --> 01:45:30,840

I laid in my bunk that night in between calls.

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01:45:30,840 --> 01:45:41,400

I had, um, I sent a lot of people text messages, nothing to tip my head or show my cards, but

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01:45:41,400 --> 01:45:45,200

it was just my way of saying goodbye to friends.

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01:45:45,200 --> 01:45:54,440

And I wrote a letter, um, I composed on my phone to my, my wife at the time that I wasn't

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01:45:54,440 --> 01:45:56,440

going to do it at work.

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01:45:56,440 --> 01:46:04,200

I thought about it, but I thought about how, um, I knew regardless, it was going to hurt

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01:46:04,200 --> 01:46:09,680

my coworkers, but I didn't want to do it at the firehouse.

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01:46:09,680 --> 01:46:11,920

I was going to wait until the next morning.

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01:46:11,920 --> 01:46:15,880

I was like, maybe we'll get a fire tonight or get something where something could happen

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01:46:15,880 --> 01:46:16,960

tonight, but I don't know.

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01:46:16,960 --> 01:46:20,720

But I just wanted to go home next morning.

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01:46:20,720 --> 01:46:22,440

My relief came in early.

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01:46:22,440 --> 01:46:28,080

Um, normally I'll sit around the station, have a cup of coffee with, uh, my crew getting

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01:46:28,080 --> 01:46:32,120

off and the crew coming in to shoot the shit with everybody for quite a while.

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01:46:32,120 --> 01:46:38,440

But that morning I gave a quick turnover to the other officer coming in to relieve me.

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01:46:38,440 --> 01:46:46,360

And um, I just walked past everybody, went out to my car and started heading home and

1421

01:46:46,360 --> 01:46:48,800

about less than a mile from my house.

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01:46:48,800 --> 01:46:56,880

I pulled over and looked at my ring doorbell, just pulled that up to see if my wife or son

1423

01:46:56,880 --> 01:46:59,100

were still there.

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01:46:59,100 --> 01:47:06,880

And once I saw they were gone, I continued home and said, I already had everything planned.

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01:47:06,880 --> 01:47:11,480

I didn't want anything messy because I knew my son would be coming home from school later

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01:47:11,480 --> 01:47:12,480

that day.

1427

01:47:12,480 --> 01:47:17,640

And um, like I said, regardless, people are going to be traumatized.

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01:47:17,640 --> 01:47:19,320

People that I love are going to be traumatized.

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01:47:19,320 --> 01:47:23,640

I just wasn't thinking in the right mind, but I just wanted to look like dad went to

1430

01:47:23,640 --> 01:47:27,880

sleep and he couldn't wake me up.

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01:47:27,880 --> 01:47:39,000

So um, I had a, um, a bottle of, um, it was probably close to about 50 Xanax.

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01:47:39,000 --> 01:47:40,000

That was the prescription.

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01:47:40,000 --> 01:47:44,480

That was probably about 42 Xanax were still in this bottle.

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01:47:44,480 --> 01:47:49,680

And I took the whole bottle and rinsed it down with a fifth of bourbon.

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01:47:49,680 --> 01:47:54,680

I sent one more text out and I sent the letter to my wife.

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01:47:54,680 --> 01:48:03,000

And um, the, I have a couple of memories of, I know, I guess a neighbor got contacted and

1437

01:48:03,000 --> 01:48:04,000

came over.

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01:48:04,000 --> 01:48:10,440

Um, one of the members of the, my department came over and the next thing I know, I'm waking

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01:48:10,440 --> 01:48:19,160

up in the hospital, um, connected to machines and um, looked to my side and my wife and

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01:48:19,160 --> 01:48:23,520

my son were at my side at that moment.

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01:48:23,520 --> 01:48:32,560

And it was then, and I know when we think things are so tough and so hard, we're just

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01:48:32,560 --> 01:48:34,880

not thinking right.

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01:48:34,880 --> 01:48:40,000

That we, there was no way out or we're going crazy or whatever it may be that we just got

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01:48:40,000 --> 01:48:41,000

to end our life.

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01:48:41,000 --> 01:48:50,720

Well, it was when I woke up and I saw them beside me that it truly struck me that, um,

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01:48:50,720 --> 01:48:53,120

I wasn't just ending my life.

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01:48:53,120 --> 01:48:55,720

I wasn't stopping the pain.

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01:48:55,720 --> 01:48:56,720

That's what I wanted to do.

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01:48:56,720 --> 01:49:03,160

I wanted to stop the pain and everything that I was feeling and experiencing and going through.

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01:49:03,160 --> 01:49:09,200

Um, I was passing, I was stopping my life and I was just passing the pain and the hurt

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01:49:09,200 --> 01:49:15,880

and everything along to my wife and my son that were right there at my bedside in the

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01:49:15,880 --> 01:49:17,440

hospital.

1453

01:49:17,440 --> 01:49:23,400

I saw that on their face, um, the hurt and everything.

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01:49:23,400 --> 01:49:29,960

Um, but I saw the love, um, from both of them also.

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01:49:29,960 --> 01:49:37,040

And I just, I told myself never again, never again.

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01:49:37,040 --> 01:49:45,920

And um, I spent several days close to a week, it was five days in the hospital before I

1457

01:49:45,920 --> 01:49:48,520

was able to get released.

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01:49:48,520 --> 01:49:57,720

And um, when I got out of the hospital, um, I had a lot of guilt and shame.

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01:49:57,720 --> 01:50:03,560

A lot of people, friends wanted to come and visit me.

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01:50:03,560 --> 01:50:09,360

And um, I just, I didn't want to, I didn't want to see people.

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01:50:09,360 --> 01:50:17,360

Um, cause like I said, I just felt so ashamed of what I did and so guilty.

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01:50:17,360 --> 01:50:21,760

But one of my, my good friends, he lives out in California.

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01:50:21,760 --> 01:50:26,680

He's a retired police officer.

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01:50:26,680 --> 01:50:32,720

He told me about a program that he had been through and that's where I learned about Jake

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01:50:32,720 --> 01:50:36,920

Clark and Save a Warrior.

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01:50:36,920 --> 01:50:49,720

And it's for veterans that have, um, post-traumatic stress and or suicidal ideations and for first

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01:50:49,720 --> 01:50:51,760

responders as well.

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01:50:51,760 --> 01:50:56,240

And he told me, he said, man, all you gotta do, you just go to their website and you just

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01:50:56,240 --> 01:51:00,840

put your information in and somebody will reach out to you and they'll have a phone

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01:51:00,840 --> 01:51:01,840

call.

1471

01:51:01,840 --> 01:51:06,580

It's just a conversation and they'll determine if it's the right program for you.

1472

01:51:06,580 --> 01:51:07,880

And it's a nonprofit.

1473

01:51:07,880 --> 01:51:10,120

If you get accepted, they're out in Ohio.

1474

01:51:10,120 --> 01:51:16,400

They originally started out in Malibu, California, but he's like, if you get accepted, all you

1475

01:51:16,400 --> 01:51:18,000

have to do is get there.

1476

01:51:18,000 --> 01:51:21,640

He said they, they take care of the rest.

1477

01:51:21,640 --> 01:51:23,120

So I did that.

1478

01:51:23,120 --> 01:51:26,240

Um, submitted all my information online.

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01:51:26,240 --> 01:51:37,360

Somebody contacted me fairly quickly and had a, um, amazing, but tough conversation.

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01:51:37,360 --> 01:51:45,400

And I was just open and honest for probably the first time ever with anything.

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01:51:45,400 --> 01:51:50,360

And I realized that that's where it at, where it's at.

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01:51:50,360 --> 01:51:57,440

If we can't be open and honest about things that we're feeling and struggling with and

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01:51:57,440 --> 01:52:02,520

dealing with, then, um, we're not going to get anything out of it.

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01:52:02,520 --> 01:52:06,760

You get out of things, what you put into it.

1485

01:52:06,760 --> 01:52:11,400

And they accepted me into the program and came up with a date.

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01:52:11,400 --> 01:52:19,000

It was the, um, the last days of April and the first couple of days of May that I got

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01:52:19,000 --> 01:52:23,720

accepted, um, attended Sable Warrior in Hillsborough, Ohio.

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01:52:23,720 --> 01:52:25,060

So flew into Cincinnati.

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01:52:25,060 --> 01:52:33,040

They picked me up and it was myself and, um, seven other first responders from all across

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01:52:33,040 --> 01:52:38,080

the country at that point were, um, were there.

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01:52:38,080 --> 01:52:47,440

And I met Jake Clark, the founder of Sable Warrior, Adam Carr, um, another, uh, another

1492

01:52:47,440 --> 01:52:48,440



great man.

1493

01:52:48,440 --> 01:52:53,800

The somebody that I've met affiliated with this program has just been top notch, just

1494

01:52:53,800 --> 01:52:54,800

amazing.

1495

01:52:54,800 --> 01:53:01,360

Um, their only skin in the game is that they want to help others.

1496

01:53:01,360 --> 01:53:05,240

And um, I learned about ACEs.

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01:53:05,240 --> 01:53:08,180

This was a, a 72 hour program.

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01:53:08,180 --> 01:53:11,600

They literally have a clock that they put in the room.

1499

01:53:11,600 --> 01:53:15,940

When it starts, they, it's set at 72 hours and they hit the button and starts the countdown

1500

01:53:15,940 --> 01:53:16,940

from 72 hours.

1501

01:53:16,940 --> 01:53:24,480

And they asked all of us, um, who has doubts?

1502

01:53:24,480 --> 01:53:27,680

And um, I wasn't being an asshole or anything like that.

1503

01:53:27,680 --> 01:53:31,680

And just being where I want it to be for, for now on the rest of my life, I wanted to

1504

01:53:31,680 --> 01:53:33,160  
be open and honest and candid.

1505

01:53:33,160 --> 01:53:37,000  
I raised my hand and I told them and they wanted to know why.

1506

01:53:37,000 --> 01:53:44,320  
And I was like, I've been in therapy off and on for, um, five years and it hasn't done

1507

01:53:44,320 --> 01:53:45,320  
a whole lot for me.

1508

01:53:45,320 --> 01:53:48,960  
I just had a suicide attempt a month ago and you think you're going to be able to help

1509

01:53:48,960 --> 01:53:53,240  
me in 72 hours and make a difference.

1510

01:53:53,240 --> 01:53:59,360  
And they said that was fair, but they just wanted me to promise them that I would lean

1511

01:53:59,360 --> 01:54:04,120  
in and play the game, be open, be honest.

1512

01:54:04,120 --> 01:54:05,120  
And I was like, you got it.

1513

01:54:05,120 --> 01:54:07,840  
Cause I, I want it to be fixed.

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01:54:07,840 --> 01:54:09,240

And I did that.

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01:54:09,240 --> 01:54:18,120

And brother at the end of that 72 hours, all of the, the, the crying and the, uh, just

1516

01:54:18,120 --> 01:54:22,920

the emotions and everything that I went through during that time period with these seven

1517

01:54:22,920 --> 01:54:29,700

other first responders, it, it fixed me.

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01:54:29,700 --> 01:54:32,320

And it's not just those 72 hours and you're done.

1519

01:54:32,320 --> 01:54:33,760

It's every day of my life.

1520

01:54:33,760 --> 01:54:39,000

After that, there's things that, that I'm doing and it's a community, um, that I believe

1521

01:54:39,000 --> 01:54:41,040

they just started today.

1522

01:54:41,040 --> 01:54:47,040

I think it was class 224 or cohort number 224 that they've done.

1523

01:54:47,040 --> 01:54:49,400

And it's just, it's amazing.

1524

01:54:49,400 --> 01:54:55,880

The community that we have of alumni that have been through that, um, me and those seven

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01:54:55,880 --> 01:55:00,240

guys, we still keep in touch every day to this day.

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01:55:00,240 --> 01:55:04,520

And we've been out over a year and a half now.

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01:55:04,520 --> 01:55:10,480

And, um, we talk about our fire academies and police academies and all that, and the

1528

01:55:10,480 --> 01:55:18,540

bonds that we make when we go through the police or fire academy, how strong those are.

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01:55:18,540 --> 01:55:24,640

The bond I made with these seven guys and 72 hours is a stronger bond than anybody I

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01:55:24,640 --> 01:55:25,840

went through the academy with.

1531

01:55:25,840 --> 01:55:30,200

And those are some pretty strong bonds that I have with those guys too.

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01:55:30,200 --> 01:55:37,920

But I'm just everything we opened up, it was a safe place for us and they're safe men that

1533

01:55:37,920 --> 01:55:43,360

we were able to share things with and experiences and talk about the childhood experiences and

1534

01:55:43,360 --> 01:55:46,640

everything else that we've seen and we dealt with.

1535

01:55:46,640 --> 01:55:56,120

And a lot of it is just about being in the present and getting unstuck when, when things

1536

01:55:56,120 --> 01:55:57,720  
get you stuck in everything.

1537  
01:55:57,720 --> 01:56:06,760  
And there's so many analogies and, um, things that we like to utilize and they utilized

1538  
01:56:06,760 --> 01:56:08,400  
in that.

1539  
01:56:08,400 --> 01:56:13,760  
But when you, you kind of sit back and you hear a lot of this stuff, it's just like,

1540  
01:56:13,760 --> 01:56:14,760  
holy shit.

1541  
01:56:14,760 --> 01:56:19,800  
And when you started looking at it, they like, like, we like to use the term our, our soil

1542  
01:56:19,800 --> 01:56:25,720  
goggles and the, these glasses, the way we see life now and look at things in a different

1543  
01:56:25,720 --> 01:56:33,000  
perspective and when you slow things down and you're not worried about things that happened

1544  
01:56:33,000 --> 01:56:37,580  
in the past, because that shit's already done, it's already over with.

1545  
01:56:37,580 --> 01:56:41,920  
That's just our memories playing tricks with us or fucking with us or whatever you want

1546  
01:56:41,920 --> 01:56:44,120  
to want to call it.

1547

01:56:44,120 --> 01:56:49,840

And the future is something, it's our imagination stuff that's never even happened yet.

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01:56:49,840 --> 01:56:52,120

And we don't even know if it's going to happen.

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01:56:52,120 --> 01:56:54,880

Nobody can predict the future or anything like that.

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01:56:54,880 --> 01:57:03,320

So it's all about just being in the present and doing more things internally for our mental

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01:57:03,320 --> 01:57:04,320

health.

1552

01:57:04,320 --> 01:57:12,960

They introduced me to warrior meditation and they, they want us to do at least one 20 minute

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01:57:12,960 --> 01:57:17,120

meditation a day, if not two.

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01:57:17,120 --> 01:57:26,480

And to this day, I can count on one finger in a year and a half now, how many times I've

1555

01:57:26,480 --> 01:57:28,280

missed a day of meditation.

1556

01:57:28,280 --> 01:57:32,480

Usually I get at least my two meditations in a day, but if not, it's always at least

1557

01:57:32,480 --> 01:57:36,680

one except for one time I, I've missed it.

1558

01:57:36,680 --> 01:57:42,120

And I didn't think that meditation was for me when they first started talking about it

1559

01:57:42,120 --> 01:57:43,520

there during the program.

1560

01:57:43,520 --> 01:57:47,240

And I was like, I can't do that shit.

1561

01:57:47,240 --> 01:57:50,880

I was like, that's what the, we had a couple of guys that were there from California.

1562

01:57:50,880 --> 01:57:53,680

I was like, that's for these California assholes here.

1563

01:57:53,680 --> 01:57:59,640

The tree huggers and granola people and all that.

1564

01:57:59,640 --> 01:58:06,160

I'm just as a first responder, we're always on guard and hyper vigilant and on point.

1565

01:58:06,160 --> 01:58:11,520

I was like, I can't get comfortable enough to just get myself in a state to clear my

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01:58:11,520 --> 01:58:15,000

mind and just free it of everything.

1567

01:58:15,000 --> 01:58:19,840

And Adam Carr told me, he said, man, he goes, there is no such thing as a bad meditation.

1568

01:58:19,840 --> 01:58:21,760

He goes, just keep at it.

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01:58:21,760 --> 01:58:26,280

He's like, usually he said it could take up to two weeks before you, you finally start

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01:58:26,280 --> 01:58:27,280

loosening up enough.

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01:58:27,280 --> 01:58:31,760

He's like just 20 minutes once a day, preferably twice.

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01:58:31,760 --> 01:58:37,320

And he goes, if you just sit there and you're still tense the whole time, oh, well, he goes,

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01:58:37,320 --> 01:58:40,400

that was still your body doing nothing for 20 minutes.

1574

01:58:40,400 --> 01:58:43,080

So it literally took me close to the two weeks.

1575

01:58:43,080 --> 01:58:46,200

I think it was about 10 days.

1576

01:58:46,200 --> 01:58:50,280

And on that day, I just fell into it.

1577

01:58:50,280 --> 01:58:55,680

My whole body just kind of was able to sit down and just relax and get into it.

1578

01:58:55,680 --> 01:59:01,000

And I'm still to that point today at the conference in Ohio.

1579

01:59:01,000 --> 01:59:05,520

They actually had meditation in the mornings leading up to the conference.

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01:59:05,520 --> 01:59:12,600

And it was really, really cool to see so many people get introduced to it and to go on.

1581

01:59:12,600 --> 01:59:18,600

But my mental health and wellness, just from doing that, I reflect on if I'm doing one

1582

01:59:18,600 --> 01:59:24,840

in the evening, reflect on things that have happened throughout the day.

1583

01:59:24,840 --> 01:59:29,440

And then even in the morning when I do those, I kind of think about the past day, anything

1584

01:59:29,440 --> 01:59:35,400

that I feel is unresolved or issues like that.

1585

01:59:35,400 --> 01:59:44,280

I've done the self-help, the meditation when I get back from a troubling call.

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01:59:44,280 --> 01:59:50,880

I'll just take myself aside and I'll just process the call in my head, just think about

1587

01:59:50,880 --> 01:59:51,880

it.

1588

01:59:51,880 --> 01:59:57,680

And then I'll just turn the lights down and I'll do my meditation for 20 minutes and just

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01:59:57,680 --> 02:00:01,720

kind of, it helps me just clear the call and just process it.

1590

02:00:01,720 --> 02:00:07,320

And dude, I'm telling you, I am living just from, I mean, there's a lot of other things

1591

02:00:07,320 --> 02:00:08,900  
that we do.

1592  
02:00:08,900 --> 02:00:13,360  
Like I said, every day it's something, you've got to do the work.

1593  
02:00:13,360 --> 02:00:22,800  
But I'm living my best life ever right now.

1594  
02:00:22,800 --> 02:00:24,600  
I know you and I discussed it.

1595  
02:00:24,600 --> 02:00:33,000  
I almost made my entire career as a firefighter without getting a divorce.

1596  
02:00:33,000 --> 02:00:43,000  
That is one of the unfortunate things about my 2022 was all of that.

1597  
02:00:43,000 --> 02:00:45,440  
It was just too much to really save my marriage.

1598  
02:00:45,440 --> 02:00:49,280  
And that's not a knock on my ex-wife or anything like that.

1599  
02:00:49,280 --> 02:00:54,080  
She was an angel throughout everything.

1600  
02:00:54,080 --> 02:00:56,920  
We knew that I had issues and stuff going on.

1601  
02:00:56,920 --> 02:01:03,560  
And once I started talking about it, she had always stood by my side and was always there

1602

02:01:03,560 --> 02:01:09,480

for me, always encouraged me, helped me, got me help that I needed.

1603

02:01:09,480 --> 02:01:13,120

Anything that I could have ever asked for, she was always there.

1604

02:01:13,120 --> 02:01:18,240

But when I talked about the internal drug store and trying to get those quick dopamine

1605

02:01:18,240 --> 02:01:22,880

releases, one of those releases for me was the extramarital stuff.

1606

02:01:22,880 --> 02:01:29,280

And that was the thing that got to be too much when that came to light for the marriage.

1607

02:01:29,280 --> 02:01:33,560

And it was just, I mean, I know it was a hard thing to accept either way, but it was a trust

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02:01:33,560 --> 02:01:35,320

thing was the main thing.

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02:01:35,320 --> 02:01:40,280

She'd be able to move on past stuff, but she would never have been able to move on past

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02:01:40,280 --> 02:01:42,200

the whole trust.

1611

02:01:42,200 --> 02:01:47,520

And we know trust, you don't have trust in any kind of relationship, be it a work relationship

1612

02:01:47,520 --> 02:01:49,920

or personal relationship or whatever.

1613

02:01:49,920 --> 02:01:52,840  
You're kind of screwed from the get go.

1614  
02:01:52,840 --> 02:02:02,000  
So once we lost that, we realized that we needed to just kind of dissolve the relationship

1615  
02:02:02,000 --> 02:02:04,120  
in our marriage.

1616  
02:02:04,120 --> 02:02:10,800  
And for what it is, we left on as good of terms as could be.

1617  
02:02:10,800 --> 02:02:16,000  
And like I said, I'll never speak bad of her because she has a great understanding of being

1618  
02:02:16,000 --> 02:02:21,000  
a first responder spouse and how it affects the whole family dynamic.

1619  
02:02:21,000 --> 02:02:28,600  
Since then, I've met another beautiful woman inside and out.

1620  
02:02:28,600 --> 02:02:30,900  
She's an alumni of Save a Warrior also.

1621  
02:02:30,900 --> 02:02:39,520  
So we have a lot in common and the whole accountability thing that I have with my cohort brothers

1622  
02:02:39,520 --> 02:02:44,080  
that I went through, her and I, we hold each other to the same standards as well.

1623  
02:02:44,080 --> 02:02:51,200  
And we recognize things and call each other out and call bullshit out or whatever.

1624

02:02:51,200 --> 02:02:54,280

And it's like, hey, I noticed you weren't meditating the other day.

1625

02:02:54,280 --> 02:02:55,280

What's up with that?

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02:02:55,280 --> 02:03:00,560

And we just put a foot in each other's ass and be sure that we're on the straight and

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02:03:00,560 --> 02:03:01,560

narrow.

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02:03:01,560 --> 02:03:11,320

But the main thing, like I said, dude, it's just the whole open and honest transparency

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02:03:11,320 --> 02:03:13,840

with everything.

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02:03:13,840 --> 02:03:17,040

There is nothing at all that is off limits.

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02:03:17,040 --> 02:03:22,400

There's nothing I'm afraid to talk about except for the possibility of marriage in the future.

1632

02:03:22,400 --> 02:03:28,120

So that gets kind of scary thinking or talking about that.

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02:03:28,120 --> 02:03:31,280

But all seriousness, there's nothing.

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02:03:31,280 --> 02:03:38,800

And I think when you can live clear and free like that, I just think it's a good place

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02:03:38,800 --> 02:03:39,800

to be.

1636

02:03:39,800 --> 02:03:43,440

It's a good place to start.

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02:03:43,440 --> 02:03:46,280

And I love it.

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02:03:46,280 --> 02:03:48,960

I share that with so many people.

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02:03:48,960 --> 02:03:53,880

I know at the conference in Ohio, since that's where Sable Warrior is, I know there was a

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02:03:53,880 --> 02:03:56,600

lot of Sable Warrior alumni that was there.

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02:03:56,600 --> 02:03:58,720

I got to connect with a lot of them.

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02:03:58,720 --> 02:04:03,040

Jim is actually Sable Warrior alumni as well.

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02:04:03,040 --> 02:04:08,000

And it's just a brother and sisterhood.

1644

02:04:08,000 --> 02:04:14,280

And we do the whole, they say it takes a tribe to help people and all that.

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02:04:14,280 --> 02:04:17,160

Well, that's our tribe is the Sable Warrior.

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02:04:17,160 --> 02:04:23,280

And we spread it on to other first responders and organizations and our military and stuff

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02:04:23,280 --> 02:04:25,320

like that.

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02:04:25,320 --> 02:04:33,520

And I'm just forever grateful and thankful to that organization and Jay Clark for him

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02:04:33,520 --> 02:04:40,600

starting it out of his trunk in California years ago with just, he just wanted to save

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02:04:40,600 --> 02:04:41,880

one person.

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02:04:41,880 --> 02:04:42,880

That's it.

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02:04:42,880 --> 02:04:47,600

Just save one is one of the mantras there.

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02:04:47,600 --> 02:04:50,640

And shit, he saved a lot more than one.

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02:04:50,640 --> 02:04:51,640

He saved this one.

1655

02:04:51,640 --> 02:04:53,120

He came back for me.

1656

02:04:53,120 --> 02:04:56,160

That's another thing he said, we came back for you.

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02:04:56,160 --> 02:05:01,880

And I text Jake, he's on a group text with me and my cohort brothers.

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02:05:01,880 --> 02:05:05,280

And I thank him often.

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02:05:05,280 --> 02:05:10,160

And when we come up on our anniversary, I'll let him know that also.

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02:05:10,160 --> 02:05:14,840

I still living in Virginia, it's kind of hard to get back to Ohio, but I want to go out

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02:05:14,840 --> 02:05:19,920

there and volunteer and help with a future cohort as well.

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02:05:19,920 --> 02:05:20,920

Beautiful.

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02:05:20,920 --> 02:05:26,760

Well, I mean, firstly, thank you for sharing that because this is the mental health conversation

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02:05:26,760 --> 02:05:27,760

needs to happen.

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02:05:27,760 --> 02:05:29,880

It's not the doom and gloom.

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02:05:29,880 --> 02:05:31,080

Oh, it's so sad.

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02:05:31,080 --> 02:05:33,640

You know, I'll live with it for the rest of my life.



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02:05:33,640 --> 02:05:38,620

I don't think that's the reality of 99% of these stories is it's that there's this post

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02:05:38,620 --> 02:05:39,920

traumatic growth.

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02:05:39,920 --> 02:05:41,600

And I think that we talk about stigma.

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02:05:41,600 --> 02:05:43,760

I think we're past the stigma.

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02:05:43,760 --> 02:05:48,160

I think most of us talking about, even as you said, if some people don't accept it,

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02:05:48,160 --> 02:05:49,980

it's out there now, whether you like it or not.

1674

02:05:49,980 --> 02:05:52,520

But what we need to infuse now is hope.

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02:05:52,520 --> 02:05:57,960

Like the solutions, the giant toolbox that is available from EMDR and save a warrior

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02:05:57,960 --> 02:06:02,120

to psychedelics and equine therapy and everything in between.

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02:06:02,120 --> 02:06:07,000

I wanted to circle back to your realization, though, when you woke up, because I think

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02:06:07,000 --> 02:06:11,440

this is an important part that you hardly ever hear when it comes to suicide.

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02:06:11,440 --> 02:06:16,860

And you know, it's not on the posters, not on most of the conversations.

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02:06:16,860 --> 02:06:20,920

When a lot of us was thinking about suicide, let's say 20 years ago, when I say thinking

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02:06:20,920 --> 02:06:27,080

about other people struggling with it, you're like, oh, how cowardly, how could they, you

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02:06:27,080 --> 02:06:31,500

know, you know, you think about your kids, all these things.

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02:06:31,500 --> 02:06:38,240

And then you actually hear hundreds of conversations just like this of people that have been there.

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02:06:38,240 --> 02:06:44,080

And there's people that survived the attempt like you, like Kevin Hines, who jumped off

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02:06:44,080 --> 02:06:45,560

the Golden Gate Bridge.

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02:06:45,560 --> 02:06:51,600

I've had a few people, Emma Benoit, who shot herself and survived.

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02:06:51,600 --> 02:06:53,920

Immediately there's regret.

1688

02:06:53,920 --> 02:06:57,880

You know, and then they're kind of snapped out of what led them there before.

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02:06:57,880 --> 02:07:04,260

And I think the shame and this judgment is coming from a somewhat healthy mind.

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02:07:04,260 --> 02:07:05,860

How could they?

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02:07:05,860 --> 02:07:10,880

And yet what I'm realizing now is that there's that wanting the suffering to stop, which,

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02:07:10,880 --> 02:07:13,160

of course, is a real part.

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02:07:13,160 --> 02:07:19,400

But almost all of them also reported a feeling of burdensome, which basically suggests that

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02:07:19,400 --> 02:07:22,400

the brain through trauma had become miswired.

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02:07:22,400 --> 02:07:24,880

So it was not a healthy brain anymore.

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02:07:24,880 --> 02:07:28,760

So you cannot understand how that person's thinking because they're not thinking the

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02:07:28,760 --> 02:07:30,960

way that they were supposed to think.

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02:07:30,960 --> 02:07:33,120

It's been miswired, misprogrammed.

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02:07:33,120 --> 02:07:37,240

And so when you tell someone who's in crisis, think about your kids, think about your wife,

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02:07:37,240 --> 02:07:39,200

they were like, I am.

1701

02:07:39,200 --> 02:07:40,240

I'm the problem.

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02:07:40,240 --> 02:07:42,360

That's why I'm going to go and do this thing.

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02:07:42,360 --> 02:07:46,600

You know, so it's actually an act of courage in a way, not cowardice.

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02:07:46,600 --> 02:07:52,600

So in that state, or when you look back now, was there an element of you truly in your

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02:07:52,600 --> 02:08:02,040

heart believing that the world would be better off without you?

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02:08:02,040 --> 02:08:11,440

That was that whole thought of that was for me, it was it was there, but it was minimal.

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02:08:11,440 --> 02:08:23,120

Mine, like I said, I just I couldn't get that shit to stop.

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02:08:23,120 --> 02:08:30,800

I was just like I literally and I know the term crazy isn't a good word to use for mental

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02:08:30,800 --> 02:08:32,920

health or whatever.

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02:08:32,920 --> 02:08:40,200

But I literally thought that something had snapped in my head with all this stuff that

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02:08:40,200 --> 02:08:47,640

was just coming on these flashbacks, being right back in that moment and everything.

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02:08:47,640 --> 02:08:57,720

But I would think about the bad things that I was doing and how it was affecting my family.

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02:08:57,720 --> 02:09:05,480

And I did think about being a burden to them and the hurt because at that point, it was

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02:09:05,480 --> 02:09:13,520

leading right up to that is when the whole thing with extra metal issues came to light.

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02:09:13,520 --> 02:09:20,560

And I knew that I had betrayed somebody who's been by my side that entire time and was doing

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02:09:20,560 --> 02:09:26,320

things to help me and truly wanted me to get better and to succeed and get the help that

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02:09:26,320 --> 02:09:27,320

I needed.

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02:09:27,320 --> 02:09:29,340

And I betrayed that.

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02:09:29,340 --> 02:09:37,920

So yeah, I did have those those thoughts and everything. And how could my son look up to

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02:09:37,920 --> 02:09:48,080

me when I did what I did to his mother? And they they would talk about at times, even

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02:09:48,080 --> 02:09:53,360

before I started getting help or knowing what was going on.

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02:09:53,360 --> 02:09:58,740

They would come home walking on eggshells because they didn't know what dad or what

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02:09:58,740 --> 02:10:03,440

husband was going to be there. Was I going to be the happy go lucky guy or was I going

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02:10:03,440 --> 02:10:10,440

to be the asshole who didn't get any sleep that night or had a bad call or whatever?

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02:10:10,440 --> 02:10:19,400

So yeah, I was worried about how I was a burden and I was no no good to them and that they

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02:10:19,400 --> 02:10:22,920

would be better off.

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02:10:22,920 --> 02:10:34,480

I would say tongue in cheek quite a bit, but I I meant it when I I would make comments

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02:10:34,480 --> 02:10:41,360

to my wife that she'd be better off without me. And I like I said, I would just play it

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02:10:41,360 --> 02:10:48,040

off as I'm joking. And I was like, oh, you you'll miss me until you get that first check,

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02:10:48,040 --> 02:10:52,800

that insurance check or whatever. I would just make stupid little remarks like that.

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02:10:52,800 --> 02:11:03,640

But my psyche, that was truly how I felt. And I knew if I was saying that, like without

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02:11:03,640 --> 02:11:10,360

saying it in a joking manner that the authorities or whatever would would come and get me or

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02:11:10,360 --> 02:11:17,240

or whatnot. But so I would I would make comments like that in a joking way. But it was it was

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02:11:17,240 --> 02:11:26,440

all seriousness. I didn't feel like I was a big part of the problem. I said I knew

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02:11:26,440 --> 02:11:33,680

the debt was in my name. So I hope that when I took care of myself or off myself that it

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02:11:33,680 --> 02:11:40,760

would take care of that. Like insurance checks would come in, does everything. So but like

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02:11:40,760 --> 02:11:49,560

said, I realized that was that wasn't me thinking properly. Yeah. Well, I think that's that's

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02:11:49,560 --> 02:11:54,880

what we need to understand is when people are in crisis, they you know, it's no different

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02:11:54,880 --> 02:12:02,440

than you know, I have a failed skydive and I shatter my legs and my you know, my pelvis.

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02:12:02,440 --> 02:12:08,040

That's an you know, reaction to an acute event. Now it could be cumulative. Maybe you know,

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02:12:08,040 --> 02:12:12,120

I'm a freaking coal miner somewhere and I'm crouched over with weight, you know, and it

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02:12:12,120 --> 02:12:17,920

took me 10 years to get to that point. But it's it's a malfunction by that point. But

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02:12:17,920 --> 02:12:21,680

so when we hear this this conversation about suicide and how could they and everything,

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02:12:21,680 --> 02:12:27,160

I mean, sadly, there's a perfect example of of this. We had a law enforcement couple in

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02:12:27,160 --> 02:12:33,560

Florida later last year. The boyfriend, the father took his own life first. I think it

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02:12:33,560 --> 02:12:39,240

was not even a week before the girlfriend had the mother and they left behind an infant.

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02:12:39,240 --> 02:12:44,640

Now how could they you know, well, exactly. A healthy mind wouldn't do that, especially

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02:12:44,640 --> 02:12:50,120

you know, the mother when she's left the only parent now. But when you look at it a completely

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02:12:50,120 --> 02:12:54,560

different way, it's it's a miswired mind. Now all of a sudden you realize, oh, we need

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02:12:54,560 --> 02:12:58,960

to be compassionate. We can't add more guilt and shame to someone who's struggling. Now

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02:12:58,960 --> 02:13:03,000

we're just going to speed up the process of them taking their own lives. We need to try

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02:13:03,000 --> 02:13:06,920

and interact and be like, look, I know you're hurting. You know, you probably feel like

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02:13:06,920 --> 02:13:11,760

a burden. You are not a burden. And that that that to me is a is one of the red flags. Of

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02:13:11,760 --> 02:13:16,720

course, the suffering is the suffering. And that's a big part of it. But this, you know,

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02:13:16,720 --> 02:13:21,640

think of your family. Don't be a coward. Don't be so you know, all this stuff that's so fucking



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02:13:21,640 --> 02:13:27,360

wrong. And now seven years for me doing this, I'm realizing that we have to completely reframe

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02:13:27,360 --> 02:13:32,740

and ultimately just put it back into that kindness and compassion element that we really

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02:13:32,740 --> 02:13:38,320

we need to find refined in all areas of life. But with this as well, when our men and women

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02:13:38,320 --> 02:13:43,520

are hurting, they're not thinking with a clear mind. And that's why sleep deprivation is

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02:13:43,520 --> 02:13:48,580

so fucking dangerous for mental health, because you're destroying the mind. Then you throw

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02:13:48,580 --> 02:13:53,940

in some alcohol, which numbs our self preservation reflexes. And now you've got the perfect storm

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02:13:53,940 --> 02:14:01,880

for a suicide. Yeah, exactly. And I was all of the above on on that, the sleep deprivation,

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02:14:01,880 --> 02:14:09,720

the alcohol, and just the mind not being wired right in that moment. So yeah, just it was

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02:14:09,720 --> 02:14:19,160

the perfect recipe for disaster, perfect storm, like you said. So but we need to need to look

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02:14:19,160 --> 02:14:30,520

at the big picture. And it's not always about having anything to say to somebody. I know

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02:14:30,520 --> 02:14:36,120

we talked about right and wrong things to say. But sometimes you have that person that's

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02:14:36,120 --> 02:14:43,120

struggling. One of the best things we can do is just I mean, obviously, if they're struggling,

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02:14:43,120 --> 02:14:49,080

we know they want to take their their life or whether we need to, to act on that. But

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02:14:49,080 --> 02:14:52,160

sometimes somebody that's just struggling, the best thing we can do is just that that

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02:14:52,160 --> 02:15:01,240

active listening and empathy. And a lot of times people they just need their feelings,

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02:15:01,240 --> 02:15:05,920

they need to know that they're honestly and openly being heard, and that their feelings

1772

02:15:05,920 --> 02:15:15,200

are valid. They're entitled to hurt and struggle. And everything everybody does. But sometimes

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02:15:15,200 --> 02:15:19,640

just just listening to somebody, we don't have to have the answers that we don't, we

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02:15:19,640 --> 02:15:24,280

don't always have the answers. But us as first responders, a lot of times we're some of the

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02:15:24,280 --> 02:15:31,880

worst for that when it comes to reaching out and helping somebody, because we in our profession

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02:15:31,880 --> 02:15:39,240

are to an extent control freaks. Think about it, what when when somebody dials 911, something

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02:15:39,240 --> 02:15:43,520

is out of control in their life. And they're calling us, it's our job to get there and

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02:15:43,520 --> 02:15:49,500

take control of it and fix it. We're used to that for 24 hours at a time, we're going

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02:15:49,500 --> 02:15:57,400

away from our families and we're fixing shit all of the time. We are pros at fixing other

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02:15:57,400 --> 02:16:04,680

people's shit. But we can't fix our own. We choose for whatever reason, we choose not

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02:16:04,680 --> 02:16:15,720

to. We don't want to talk to our partner at the firehouse or whatever about all that

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02:16:15,720 --> 02:16:20,360

to get things fixed if we're struggling or we're hurting. But we'll go and we'll talk

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02:16:20,360 --> 02:16:28,640

to Joe citizen who we don't even know to fix their problem. Because we we can control that.

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02:16:28,640 --> 02:16:37,960

We can control our stuff too. By just reaching out, we can control who we we want and how

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02:16:37,960 --> 02:16:43,760

we want things to to to go to the best of our ability. I know there is still a lot of

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02:16:43,760 --> 02:16:49,880

stuff that's out of our our hands and out of our control. But just by making that that

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02:16:49,880 --> 02:16:56,880

gesture and reaching out the act of listening, being empathetic, and not judgmental, I mean,

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02:16:56,880 --> 02:17:05,920

we were pretty cutthroat at times within our our community. And it's like we jokingly say

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02:17:05,920 --> 02:17:10,480

that there first there is the telegraph and there's telefriend and there's telephone and

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02:17:10,480 --> 02:17:17,000

telefire fighter. So we can't have these these forms of communication to telefire fighter.

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02:17:17,000 --> 02:17:25,320

I told James that hey, man, I'm hurting I'm thinking about hurting myself or whatever.

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02:17:25,320 --> 02:17:30,000

I talked to you in confidence. And then the next thing I know, I'm getting a phone call

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02:17:30,000 --> 02:17:37,800

from one of the other stations. Hey, man, would you okay? James just told me no, it's

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02:17:37,800 --> 02:17:42,920

not supposed to be like that. We got to have the confidentiality and and everything. So

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02:17:42,920 --> 02:17:52,920

but yeah, it's there's there's just so much and the whole wiring thing and stuff like

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02:17:52,920 --> 02:18:00,800

that is that's the the God's honest truth. No, but I don't think anybody nobody in their

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02:18:00,800 --> 02:18:06,400

right mind is going to want to take their life. Nobody.

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02:18:06,400 --> 02:18:11,120

It goes against our literal biology was supposed to reproduce and was supposed to protect our

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02:18:11,120 --> 02:18:17,240

offspring. Yeah. So I mean, obviously, we know that we get we got something going on

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02:18:17,240 --> 02:18:25,080

there. And so let's let's figure out what that underlying issue is. And let's let's

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02:18:25,080 --> 02:18:30,760

resolve it. Let's not let that person self medicate with the alcohol or whatever it may

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02:18:30,760 --> 02:18:39,880

be. Let's get that that ball rolling and get that definitive care and normalize it. And

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02:18:39,880 --> 02:18:41,520

let's fix this shit.

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02:18:41,520 --> 02:18:49,320

Absolutely. I want to hit one more area before we close out, which is an important thing.

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02:18:49,320 --> 02:18:55,720

After the suicide attempt, talk to me about and this isn't, you know, talking negatively

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02:18:55,720 --> 02:18:59,780

about your department because again, doing the best of what they know. But talk to me

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02:18:59,780 --> 02:19:06,080

about the position you were put in and if that was helpful tribally or if it became

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02:19:06,080 --> 02:19:08,960

a challenge tribally for you personally.

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02:19:08,960 --> 02:19:15,800

Yeah. And thanks for kind of setting the stage there about it not being negative about my

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02:19:15,800 --> 02:19:21,320

department. And let me get my disclaimer now should have gave this at the beginning. All

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02:19:21,320 --> 02:19:28,480

views are the views of Chris Moore and do not reflect or anything positive or negative

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02:19:28,480 --> 02:19:40,080

on my department. They're all my views. So it was the whole we don't know. We don't know.

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02:19:40,080 --> 02:19:49,400

Since this I'm going to touch base on it. But I did start doing some some research after

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02:19:49,400 --> 02:19:56,760

the fact. And a lot of departments we have things in place and this is nationwide and

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02:19:56,760 --> 02:20:03,560

actually extends across the border into Canada. I've talked to people. If a member completes

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02:20:03,560 --> 02:20:14,560

suicide, we have policies, directives, guidelines in place of how to handle it as a department.

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02:20:14,560 --> 02:20:19,600

We have things for line of duty deaths, whatever you want to and I know that's a discussion

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02:20:19,600 --> 02:20:24,000

for another day, whether or not a suicide of a member should be a line of duty death

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02:20:24,000 --> 02:20:35,680

or not. But we don't have I have yet to find a department with a policy in place or what

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02:20:35,680 --> 02:20:46,320

you do or how you treat a member who has a suicide attempt. So there is excuse me, NFPA

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02:20:46,320 --> 02:20:54,840

182 has a recommendation or a guideline because NFPA's guidelines that you can keep a member

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02:20:54,840 --> 02:21:06,440

out for up to a year with a suicide attempt. So with no policy in place, my department

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02:21:06,440 --> 02:21:21,480

never having experienced anything like this chose to follow the NFPA 1582 kept me offline

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02:21:21,480 --> 02:21:29,360

for just about a year. But they they they did give me they gave me a desk job and how

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02:21:29,360 --> 02:21:37,520

we talked about earlier that the job does not define me. Well, I found out in that moment,

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02:21:37,520 --> 02:21:44,600

I felt like it really did. I'm I'm a grunt. I I want to go and I want to do my 24 hour

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02:21:44,600 --> 02:21:51,040

shifts. I want to get on the rig and ride the calls and do the work and everything.

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02:21:51,040 --> 02:21:57,000

I want station life. And I just felt like my identity was stripped from me when I got

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02:21:57,000 --> 02:22:06,520

put on a desk job. And it really hurt a lot of people that I thought that I was really

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02:22:06,520 --> 02:22:18,200

close to had very little communication with with a lot of people. Some I never heard from

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02:22:18,200 --> 02:22:24,920

and I'm still to this day and heard anything from people that worked for me worked with

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02:22:24,920 --> 02:22:36,920

me. I had relationships from other parts within my department. And it's just I felt like I

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02:22:36,920 --> 02:22:49,920

was shunned. Like I told you with my friends. I had that whole I felt like I was a I was

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02:22:49,920 --> 02:22:59,680

embarrassed. I was ashamed of everything that I did. And I was made. Let me see. Let me

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02:22:59,680 --> 02:23:08,840

rephrase that. I felt even more so through my department because of all that. However,

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02:23:08,840 --> 02:23:19,480

looking back on it now, I have during all of that wrote some policy. It's nothing has

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02:23:19,480 --> 02:23:26,600

been implemented within my organization yet. But I think each person I don't think there

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02:23:26,600 --> 02:23:34,960

should be a cookie cutter policy for anything yet alone something as serious as this. I

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02:23:34,960 --> 02:23:41,560

think we should treat people as human beings. And everybody's different. It should be case

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02:23:41,560 --> 02:23:49,640

by case basis. I jumped through. I don't want to say I jumped through hoops. That's what

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02:23:49,640 --> 02:23:57,040

I was about to say. I went through a lot of steps and processes. And each time I thought

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02:23:57,040 --> 02:24:01,440

that, okay, I went through this step, I just got to get through this next step. And that's



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02:24:01,440 --> 02:24:07,160

the goal line. Well, then the goal line just when I'm about to extend and score, it gets

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02:24:07,160 --> 02:24:16,000

moved on me. And it felt like that kept happening on numerous times. I went through to different

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02:24:16,000 --> 02:24:22,560

doctors that they required and things like that. And looking at medical records, the

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02:24:22,560 --> 02:24:32,000

doctors pretty much cleared me. They thought that it would be good to get back to that

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02:24:32,000 --> 02:24:39,760

camaraderie that we had in the firehouse. But getting back to this, long story short,

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02:24:39,760 --> 02:24:45,800

I have been working with some departments on making policies to help their members because

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02:24:45,800 --> 02:24:53,840

I feel like it's not a matter of when or if this is going to happen. It's a matter of

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02:24:53,840 --> 02:25:05,160

when it might happen within another organization. I have by doing that been able to reflect

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02:25:05,160 --> 02:25:12,840

more on how my department handled the situation and the issue. And are there things they could

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02:25:12,840 --> 02:25:20,720

have done better? Absolutely. But I think they did a pretty damn good job looking back

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02:25:20,720 --> 02:25:29,800

at it now. I didn't understand it or like it that much in the very beginning. But the

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02:25:29,800 --> 02:25:34,280

whole like I said, they didn't know what they didn't know. A lot of times people don't know

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02:25:34,280 --> 02:25:41,840

how to talk to somebody who's tried to take their life. And I didn't necessarily need

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02:25:41,840 --> 02:25:48,000

somebody to come and talk about that experience. People that I thought I was closer with or

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02:25:48,000 --> 02:25:51,480

friends or whatever. It's like hell, just come over to my house and sit down and watch

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02:25:51,480 --> 02:25:55,600

a ball game or something. We don't have to discuss it. If it comes up, it comes up. Just

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02:25:55,600 --> 02:26:03,960

be my friend. Be there for me. It's the whole act of listening and empathy. But going to

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02:26:03,960 --> 02:26:13,160

the desk job, that was the right thing. Looking at hindsight right now. You got to do what's

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02:26:13,160 --> 02:26:23,200

best for the member who had the event. But also we got to think about the team as a whole.

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02:26:23,200 --> 02:26:31,640

And if I think a little bit of me and I think there's a lot of give and take on both sides.

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02:26:31,640 --> 02:26:38,440

A little bit of me was kind of selfish. Where I was like, you know what, if I want to go

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02:26:38,440 --> 02:26:44,000

back and doctors say I can go back and I can go back, but those people there don't want

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02:26:44,000 --> 02:26:50,280

me back because of what I did. I was just thinking in my head, you know what, fuck them.

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02:26:50,280 --> 02:26:56,760

And their feelings and their emotions shouldn't affect me and my livelihood. And that's where

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02:26:56,760 --> 02:27:02,680

the give and take has to be. And that was me being selfish. Because my event and what

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02:27:02,680 --> 02:27:06,880

I did, even though I wasn't, my brain wasn't wired right, I wasn't in my right mind at

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02:27:06,880 --> 02:27:17,520

that time, it affected the whole team. And I wasn't looking at it like that. And that's

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02:27:17,520 --> 02:27:27,320

why, like I said, policies now for getting people back. I think it should be a case by

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02:27:27,320 --> 02:27:37,760

case, but you involve the doctors, you involve the family. And we have to be very, very mindful

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02:27:37,760 --> 02:27:42,280

of HIPAA, what gets released out there to certain people and individuals and stuff like

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02:27:42,280 --> 02:27:49,480

that. We also know we have the gossip tree and the fire service that he said, she said

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02:27:49,480 --> 02:27:58,760

and everything. But I think you need to include in a comfortable fashion for all as many people,

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02:27:58,760 --> 02:28:06,520

you need to build that circle and try and include people in there that are trusted,

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02:28:06,520 --> 02:28:15,880

respected and have the best interest of that individual in mind. Even though the best interest

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02:28:15,880 --> 02:28:20,600

was for me, there still has to be a little bit of interest, like I said, left for the

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02:28:20,600 --> 02:28:32,520

entire team as well. And that's one thing I let people know is now of all times, the

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02:28:32,520 --> 02:28:40,360

world is watching. People are watching now how things like this are being handled, how

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02:28:40,360 --> 02:28:45,240

they're going to be handled in the future. What are we going to do? If they see is like,

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02:28:45,240 --> 02:28:50,200

you know what Captain Moore said in the end, they ended up handling his stuff better. They

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02:28:50,200 --> 02:29:00,480

did a good job. They're going to be more accepting and willing to reach out and get help. If

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02:29:00,480 --> 02:29:06,560

they completely shit on their member and they don't do what's right for that member and

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02:29:06,560 --> 02:29:13,880

let him come back accordingly, when ready, people are watching that too. And somebody

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02:29:13,880 --> 02:29:19,760

that might have been on the fence about reaching out and getting help might not reach out for

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02:29:19,760 --> 02:29:24,120

that help because they might say, you know what, the department just shit on him because

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02:29:24,120 --> 02:29:29,840

of his mental health episode or episode is probably not even a good word. It's his mental

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02:29:29,840 --> 02:29:38,560

health. Why am I going to do it? They might shit on me too. So a lot of people still to

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02:29:38,560 --> 02:29:47,680

this day are having these conversations like you and I are having because like cancer really

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02:29:47,680 --> 02:29:55,320

became the hot topic. 15 years ago, 10, 15 years ago, whatever people were talking about

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02:29:55,320 --> 02:29:59,480

that. Well, the hot topic now is mental health. They're talking about it because it's the

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02:29:59,480 --> 02:30:06,080

hot topic, but there's a big difference between Saturday night and Sunday morning already

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02:30:06,080 --> 02:30:10,880

in and then going to church the next day. There's a big difference also between talking

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02:30:10,880 --> 02:30:15,640

the talk and walking the walk. When one of your members goes through a crisis like this

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02:30:15,640 --> 02:30:22,960

and has an event, are you actually going to be there? And are you going to walk the walk

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02:30:22,960 --> 02:30:28,760

that you've been talking with your member? Are you going to take care of them? Are you

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02:30:28,760 --> 02:30:35,120

going to do the right thing? But more importantly, we shouldn't even be at that point. Let's

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02:30:35,120 --> 02:30:40,840

do it. Let's be proactive. Let's not be reactive and just walk the walk with them after the

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02:30:40,840 --> 02:30:47,960

fact. Let's walk the walk with them as a whole from the get go. Like, I mean, right back

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02:30:47,960 --> 02:30:53,000

to what we talked about at the very beginning of careers, we're already saving departments

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02:30:53,000 --> 02:31:01,360

money by changing the process of things and stuff like that. So let's do that mental health

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02:31:01,360 --> 02:31:05,440

background check in the beginning and then start doing these quarterly checks all throughout

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02:31:05,440 --> 02:31:10,880

the duration of their career. There's a lot of checks and balances that we can set up

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02:31:10,880 --> 02:31:15,760

by being proactive where we don't even get to this point, but still let's implement a

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02:31:15,760 --> 02:31:23,360

plan for how we will handle it if something does slip by and happens.

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02:31:23,360 --> 02:31:28,960

Absolutely. Yeah, I've always said the fire department, the fire service is great at burying

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02:31:28,960 --> 02:31:34,080

their own, but terrible at stopping them dying in the first place. And I think that's it.

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02:31:34,080 --> 02:31:40,440

We need to stop having these pomp and circumstance funerals and maybe take that energy and focus

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02:31:40,440 --> 02:31:44,960

it on how do we stop so many happening? We can't set and stop them all. And even just

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02:31:44,960 --> 02:31:53,400

to touch on is suicide line of duty death. If cardiac arrest or stroke during a shift

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02:31:53,400 --> 02:32:01,360

is then absolutely suicide is as well. Because again, it's partly what happened before. It's

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02:32:01,360 --> 02:32:07,000

partly what's happening outside of work hours, but obviously being exposed to what we do

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02:32:07,000 --> 02:32:13,520

is job related. So how do we stop that? And so many of these line of duty deaths happening

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02:32:13,520 --> 02:32:18,120

through suicide and overdose and the other mental health related deaths. Well, again,

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02:32:18,120 --> 02:32:24,240

it's all about the pro the proactive side as well. So I'm sure people listening would

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02:32:24,240 --> 02:32:28,680

love to learn more about you would love to reach out. I know that you like to put your

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02:32:28,680 --> 02:32:33,440

number out there as well. So what are the best avenues to contact you if people want

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02:32:33,440 --> 02:32:34,440

to?

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02:32:34,440 --> 02:32:40,720

And I give everybody I'm on Facebook, Chris, more, I'm easy to find out there. I'm not

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02:32:40,720 --> 02:32:44,640

on any of the other stuff. I'm just on the old man social media. They took away my my

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02:32:44,640 --> 02:32:51,320

space. So I got haven't gotten into the Instagram and Twitter or X or whatever it is now. But

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02:32:51,320 --> 02:32:57,680

just on Facebook is my only social media. But I blasted out there. My personal cell

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02:32:57,680 --> 02:33:03,520

phone number. People have seen me speak at conferences. Also, I put my number out there

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02:33:03,520 --> 02:33:15,320

at conferences. It's 7575363373. That's not a business number or anything like that. That

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02:33:15,320 --> 02:33:20,480

is my personal cell phone number. You can text me, you can call me. People thought I

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02:33:20,480 --> 02:33:25,320

was crazy when I started doing this almost three years ago. And they're like, you're

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02:33:25,320 --> 02:33:34,400

going to get all sorts of terrible phone calls or whatever. And if I have what what can be

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02:33:34,400 --> 02:33:38,880

worse, I'm already getting like everybody else the calls about my car's extended warranty

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02:33:38,880 --> 02:33:43,800

and shit like that. It's like somebody calls me was the whole Jake Clark thing. And this

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02:33:43,800 --> 02:33:49,600

was even before I knew Jake, I was like, if just one person calls me, and can use some

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02:33:49,600 --> 02:33:53,080

help or whatever, and I can point them in the right direction, or just do the act of

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02:33:53,080 --> 02:33:59,480

listening, then I'm making a difference. So I put that out there. Everywhere I go, I try

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02:33:59,480 --> 02:34:09,320

and plaster my number. And I am just shy of 2000 people have reached out to me to this

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02:34:09,320 --> 02:34:19,800

day. I give my disclaimer that I am not a clinician, not a therapist, I am sure as hell

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02:34:19,800 --> 02:34:27,440

I'm not a doctor. But what I am a fellow first responder that has post traumatic stress,

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02:34:27,440 --> 02:34:32,400

a suicide attempt, I have lived experiences and I can relate and a lot of people can relate

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02:34:32,400 --> 02:34:37,800

to me. And sometimes, like I said, that's all we we need. And I point people in the

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02:34:37,800 --> 02:34:44,320

right direction. I listen to people. Sometimes they just want to ask me about peer support

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02:34:44,320 --> 02:34:50,600

or behavioral health, or call and get me to come in to speak at their department or whatever.

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02:34:50,600 --> 02:34:55,040

So anything that I can help with. That's the best way to reach me. Like I said, find me

1941

02:34:55,040 --> 02:35:03,320

on Facebook, or you got my personal number right now. Call me. I do the do buddy checks

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02:35:03,320 --> 02:35:08,560

out of those almost like is it 2000 people that have reached out to me, I'll randomly

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02:35:08,560 --> 02:35:14,640

go through that. And of course, I at the end of our conversation, I asked them as a can

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02:35:14,640 --> 02:35:19,680

I reach out to you? Can we stay in touch? And I haven't had anybody yet tell me no.

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02:35:19,680 --> 02:35:24,920

So I'll randomly just reach out weekly, and just send out some messages. Hey, just thinking

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02:35:24,920 --> 02:35:30,360

of you, you matter. Or how you doing today? Just little things like that. And that's,

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02:35:30,360 --> 02:35:34,800

to me, that that makes a huge difference. And that's what people have told me when just

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02:35:34,800 --> 02:35:39,320

get a random text, they might be having a shitty day. And then just get a random text

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02:35:39,320 --> 02:35:44,880

from somebody they've never met before, other than seeing me on podcasts or at a conference

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02:35:44,880 --> 02:35:54,520

or social media. And this guy cares about me. So that's me, man.

1951

02:35:54,520 --> 02:35:58,800

Beautiful. Well, again, thank you for that. And one thing that I'm hoping that we'll see

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02:35:58,800 --> 02:36:04,500

down the road is almost like the Israeli military system where their philosophy is that you

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02:36:04,500 --> 02:36:09,440

protect your buddy. That's how they that's that's the kind of principle I believe in

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02:36:09,440 --> 02:36:14,880

that particular military. And I think that's what needs to happen is that rather than ultimately

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02:36:14,880 --> 02:36:21,400

down the road rather than Chris Moore or Dustin Hawkins or Brendan McDonald fielding hundreds

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02:36:21,400 --> 02:36:26,560

of calls that we actually wrap around our arms around, you know, our nearest and dearest.

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02:36:26,560 --> 02:36:30,840

So that way, we're all taking care of our circle now, you know, because one of us is

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02:36:30,840 --> 02:36:34,080

going to have a great day, one of us gonna have a shit day. It's just the way it works.

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02:36:34,080 --> 02:36:38,680

So, you know, I hope that not only you put in your phone call out and thank you so much

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02:36:38,680 --> 02:36:42,600

for that your phone number, but also that we could be reminded to just check in on on

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02:36:42,600 --> 02:36:48,160

our loved ones, whether it's outside of the uniform or inside the uniform, because checking

1962

02:36:48,160 --> 02:36:54,640

in on 10 people that you adore is much easier than a handful of people checking in on 2000.

1963

02:36:54,640 --> 02:36:58,160

So that's a kind of call to action for everyone listening as well.

1964

02:36:58,160 --> 02:37:02,200

Right on, man. Right on. Well, Chris, I want to say thank you so much. We've been chatting

1965

02:37:02,200 --> 02:37:06,920

for over two and a half hours and it's been an amazing conversation. As you said, you

1966

02:37:06,920 --> 02:37:12,160

not only have the firefighter career path, but you have the lived experience. And, you

1967

02:37:12,160 --> 02:37:16,480

know, I always thank people that have been courageously vulnerable because this is what

1968

02:37:16,480 --> 02:37:21,600

we need. I mean, you're a firefighter and we met in person. You're a big lad too, as

1969

02:37:21,600 --> 02:37:27,680

we'd say in England. So back 20 years ago, you'd be quote unquote, the last person that

1970

02:37:27,680 --> 02:37:34,080

we thought would be struggling. But this is what we need is the, you know, the alpha professions

1971

02:37:34,080 --> 02:37:39,800

and I mean that with compassion to stand up and talk about the struggles because that's

1972

02:37:39,800 --> 02:37:44,200

how you debunk the myth that boys don't cry, rub some dirt in it. You know, this bullshit

1973

02:37:44,200 --> 02:37:48,320

that we were raised on when we were younger, that we're all human beings. And no matter

1974

02:37:48,320 --> 02:37:52,680

whether you're a Navy SEAL or you work in a cake shop, you're going to have highs and

1975

02:37:52,680 --> 02:37:57,200

you're going to have lows. So I want to thank you so, so much for being so generous and

1976

02:37:57,200 --> 02:38:01,920

so vulnerable today and coming on the Behind the Shield podcast.

1977

02:38:01,920 --> 02:38:05,640

Thank you for having me, James. I really appreciate it. So keep doing what you're doing, man.

1978

02:38:05,640 --> 02:38:13,240

You are making a world of difference to a lot of people. So I appreciate you, your friendship

1979

02:38:13,240 --> 02:38:28,040

and your platform and everything, man. So keep it up, brother.