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00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:03,820

This episode is brought to you by Thorne and I have some incredible news for any of you

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00:00:03,820 --> 00:00:07,960

that are in the military, first responder or medical professions.

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00:00:07,960 --> 00:00:15,860

In an effort to give back, Thorne is now offering you an ongoing 35% off each and every one

4

00:00:15,860 --> 00:00:19,780

of your purchases of their incredible nutritional solutions.

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Now Thorne is the official supplement of CrossFit, the UFC, the Mayo Clinic, the Human Performance

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00:00:27,280 --> 00:00:31,480

Project and multiple special operations organizations.

7

00:00:31,480 --> 00:00:36,420

I myself have used them for several years and that is why I brought them on as a sponsor.

8

00:00:36,420 --> 00:00:42,080

Some of my favorite products they have are their Multivitamin Elite, their Whey Protein,

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00:00:42,080 --> 00:00:45,840

the Super EPA and then most recently, Cynaquil.

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00:00:45,840 --> 00:00:50,120

As a firefighter, a stuntman and a martial artist, I've had my share of brain trauma

11

00:00:50,120 --> 00:00:55,520

and sleep deprivation and Cynaquil is their latest brain health supplement.

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00:00:55,520 --> 00:01:02,640

Now to qualify for the 35% off, go to thorn.com, T-H-O-R-N-E dot com.

13

00:01:02,640 --> 00:01:05,460

Click on sign in and then create a new account.

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00:01:05,460 --> 00:01:09,800

You will see the opportunity to register as a first responder or member of military.

15

00:01:09,800 --> 00:01:14,680

When you click on that, it will take you through verification with GovX.

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00:01:14,680 --> 00:01:18,980

You'll simply choose a profession, provide one piece of documentation and then you are

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00:01:18,980 --> 00:01:20,920

verified for life.

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00:01:20,920 --> 00:01:26,680

From that point onwards, you will continue to receive 35% off through Thorn.

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00:01:26,680 --> 00:01:34,360

For those of you who don't qualify, there is still the 10% off using the code BTS10

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00:01:34,360 --> 00:01:36,240

for a one time purchase.

21

00:01:36,240 --> 00:01:42,040

To learn more about Thorn, go to episode 323 of the Behind the Shield podcast with Joel

22

00:01:42,040 --> 00:01:45,560

Titiro and Wes Barnett.

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00:01:45,560 --> 00:01:51,360

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

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00:01:51,360 --> 00:01:56,780

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

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00:01:56,780 --> 00:02:03,360

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

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00:02:03,360 --> 00:02:08,200

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

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00:02:08,200 --> 00:02:09,200

worked for.

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00:02:09,200 --> 00:02:13,720

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

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00:02:13,720 --> 00:02:20,000

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

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00:02:20,000 --> 00:02:21,000

project.

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00:02:21,000 --> 00:02:25,080

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

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00:02:25,080 --> 00:02:30,080

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

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00:02:30,080 --> 00:02:33,920

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

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00:02:33,920 --> 00:02:37,860

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

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00:02:37,860 --> 00:02:39,700

and mortar element.

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00:02:39,700 --> 00:02:44,400

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

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00:02:44,400 --> 00:02:47,140

100 stores all over the US.

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00:02:47,140 --> 00:02:52,200

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

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00:02:52,200 --> 00:02:55,460

you see online are applied also in the stores.

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00:02:55,460 --> 00:03:02,080

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

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00:03:02,080 --> 00:03:07,160

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

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00:03:07,160 --> 00:03:08,760

holiday times.

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00:03:08,760 --> 00:03:18,720

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

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00:03:18,720 --> 00:03:20,560

time you make a purchase.

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00:03:20,560 --> 00:03:25,880

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

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00:03:25,880 --> 00:03:34,280

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

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00:03:34,280 --> 00:03:37,520

Welcome to the Behind the Shield podcast as always my name is James Gearing and this week

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00:03:37,520 --> 00:03:42,440

it is my absolute honor to welcome on the show veteran law enforcement officer and the

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00:03:42,440 --> 00:03:46,200

man behind blue grit wellness Eric Tung.

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00:03:46,200 --> 00:03:50,880

So in this conversation we discuss a host of topics from his family's powerful immigration

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00:03:50,880 --> 00:03:57,520

story, his journey into the world of policing, his own officer involved shooting, the recruitment

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00:03:57,520 --> 00:04:05,740

crisis, creating a culture of peer support, social media, school safety and so much more.

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00:04:05,740 --> 00:04:09,960

Now before we get to this incredibly powerful conversation as I say every week please just

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00:04:09,960 --> 00:04:16,120

take a moment go to whichever app you listen to this on, subscribe to the show, leave feedback

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00:04:16,120 --> 00:04:18,340

and leave a rating.

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00:04:18,340 --> 00:04:23,680

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

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00:04:23,680 --> 00:04:32,120

others to find and this is a free library of almost one episode away almost 900 episodes

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00:04:32,120 --> 00:04:38,400

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

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00:04:38,400 --> 00:04:44,000

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

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00:04:44,000 --> 00:04:49,080

So with that being said I introduce to you Eric Tung.

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00:04:49,080 --> 00:05:08,880

Enjoy.

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00:05:08,880 --> 00:05:13,600

Well Eric I want to start by saying thank you so much for taking the time and coming

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00:05:13,600 --> 00:05:15,320

on the Behind the Shield podcast today.

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00:05:15,320 --> 00:05:18,800

Yeah man thanks so much for having me James, appreciate it.

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00:05:18,800 --> 00:05:23,440

So where on planet earth will be finding you your morning my afternoon?

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00:05:23,440 --> 00:05:28,220

Yeah you're finding me in the Seattle area but not Seattle proper so but yeah not too

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00:05:28,220 --> 00:05:32,660

far from there where I work is kind of between Seattle and Tacoma and yeah this is what I've

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00:05:32,660 --> 00:05:38,600

called home for the greater part of my life you know since kind of halfway through childhood.

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00:05:38,600 --> 00:05:42,680

I just recently interviewed Kevin Heffernan who's one of the broken lesser guys that did

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00:05:42,680 --> 00:05:49,320

the Tacoma FD have you had any sort of conversations about that show with any of the Tacoma area

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00:05:49,320 --> 00:05:50,820

firefighters?

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00:05:50,820 --> 00:05:56,440

Not a whole lot you know my initial awareness was that you know obviously those guys are

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00:05:56,440 --> 00:06:04,580

parody geniuses but as far as you know having a fire station in one of the most wet areas

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00:06:04,580 --> 00:06:10,360

in the country might be a good ground for comedy and no I haven't really but I think

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00:06:10,360 --> 00:06:15,560

my awareness to the fire culture is only increasing and increasing as I continue on in life you

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00:06:15,560 --> 00:06:20,240

know we we collaborate really well with our local fire department but then again you know

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00:06:20,240 --> 00:06:24,700

I have a couple of my best buddies that have switched and made the transition from police

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00:06:24,700 --> 00:06:29,440

work over to fireside in the recent years so I believe I'll just learn more and more

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00:06:29,440 --> 00:06:31,620

as we go.

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00:06:31,620 --> 00:06:35,200

Well we'll get to there you know when we get to that point but I'm kind of jumping ahead

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00:06:35,200 --> 00:06:40,080

now just while we're on this topic there are parts of the country maybe other places in

82

00:06:40,080 --> 00:06:45,520

the world I'm not so sure but um that I'm fully aware of where police and fire don't

83

00:06:45,520 --> 00:06:49,600

even talk to each other and that becomes super detrimental I don't know if that was a factor

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00:06:49,600 --> 00:06:56,340

in for example Ivaldi but you know that kind of ego and that lack of communication can

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00:06:56,340 --> 00:06:59,320

be so detrimental for the people we serve.

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00:06:59,320 --> 00:07:04,700

What is it about your agency that when you kind of look back now has forged that alliance

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00:07:04,700 --> 00:07:06,800

between the two professions?

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00:07:06,800 --> 00:07:10,840

Yeah I wonder what it is but I mean I think like most things things that go well in your

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00:07:10,840 --> 00:07:15,280

organization or things that don't go well you can attribute towards historic tradition

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00:07:15,280 --> 00:07:20,040

and culture and from the time I came on you know I've been a police officer for almost

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00:07:20,040 --> 00:07:25,380

17 years from the time I came on it was very partnering right it was it felt like same

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00:07:25,380 --> 00:07:30,080

team and so you know we have our jabs right like we like to make fun of them when we call

93

00:07:30,080 --> 00:07:33,240

them out in the middle of the night and all that but then they throw it right back and

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00:07:33,240 --> 00:07:38,120

so it's always been that kind of collaborative culture where we even verbalize at times hey

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00:07:38,120 --> 00:07:42,920

like we have each other's backs like something happens to us we want them there ASAP right

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00:07:42,920 --> 00:07:48,480

for for medical and then all the time as people in the fire industry know or just first responders

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00:07:48,480 --> 00:07:54,060

know you might be trying to perform aid or care but the situations are oftentimes so

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00:07:54,060 --> 00:07:58,520

volatile that it's becoming more and more routine for cops to get dispatched alongside

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00:07:58,520 --> 00:08:00,800
you rather than you know separately.

100
00:08:00,800 --> 00:08:04,600
Yeah absolutely well I would love to start the very beginning of your timeline obviously

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00:08:04,600 --> 00:08:08,680
then we'll walk through into the profession of law enforcement so tell me where you were

102
00:08:08,680 --> 00:08:14,240
born and tell me a little bit about your family dynamic what your parents did how many siblings.

103
00:08:14,240 --> 00:08:18,800
Yeah for sure so I was actually born in Memphis and there's not a whole lot of Asian Americans

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00:08:18,800 --> 00:08:24,720
there but you know my folks immigrated from Taiwan and China and you know they came to

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00:08:24,720 --> 00:08:30,760
the US for opportunity just like so many other other folks from around the world and so I

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00:08:30,760 --> 00:08:37,640
grew up in Memphis it was largely I think it's at the time it was like 48 or 49% white

107
00:08:37,640 --> 00:08:42,840
48 49% black and then everyone else was kind of you know sharing that couple of percentage

108
00:08:42,840 --> 00:08:47,960
points but I think like most people they think that your upbringing is pretty normal until

109
00:08:47,960 --> 00:08:52,880
you realize it's not the most average or not the most common but all to say I had what

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00:08:52,880 --> 00:08:57,520

I visualize as a pretty average childhood right just kind of grown up middle class it

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00:08:57,520 --> 00:09:03,240

wasn't until I moved when I was eight or nine you know to the Pacific Northwest but I think

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00:09:03,240 --> 00:09:07,760

like so many people and we talked about this a little bit before we hit the record but

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00:09:07,760 --> 00:09:12,720

I think so many people that join a life of service or a career of service whether it's

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00:09:12,720 --> 00:09:17,240

the military or first responder work they had something not so ideal right in their

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00:09:17,240 --> 00:09:23,000

lives something not so ideal in the lives of those close to them maybe something happened

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00:09:23,000 --> 00:09:28,440

to them or someone close to them and for me it was a collection of things but looking

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00:09:28,440 --> 00:09:33,160

back you know we started childhood for sure a little bit of that was the rocky home situation

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00:09:33,160 --> 00:09:38,160

you know my parents they had their share of issues and it became more and more routine

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00:09:38,160 --> 00:09:43,000

that you know there was there's chaos in the household right there was a lot of disputing

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00:09:43,000 --> 00:09:48,940

and dissension where I don't think when I reflect back it's necessarily that that led

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00:09:48,940 --> 00:09:56,020

me to police work I do think it was that sense of wanting to be an example for myself and

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00:09:56,020 --> 00:10:01,660

others right I wanted to be a figure in the community I wanted to have the literal boots

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00:10:01,660 --> 00:10:06,280

on the ground to affect a situation when things do get a little chaotic or think people do

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00:10:06,280 --> 00:10:11,160

get a little scared and I became more and more recognition for me as I progressed into

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00:10:11,160 --> 00:10:16,760

adulthood and then was in college and I really had to do that soul search of like okay now

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00:10:16,760 --> 00:10:20,680

that now that we're wrapping things up in the academic side like what are we really

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00:10:20,680 --> 00:10:25,440

going to be doing with our lives so going back a generation I'm always intrigued of

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00:10:25,440 --> 00:10:29,360

people's immigration stories whether they're first or second generation obviously I'm first

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00:10:29,360 --> 00:10:35,800

generation over here my son is you know first generation American but you know there's there's

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00:10:35,800 --> 00:10:39,520

some beautiful elements of some stories there's some obviously you know less than beautiful

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00:10:39,520 --> 00:10:46,120

elements what was your parents you know immigration story from what you heard through their mouths

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00:10:46,120 --> 00:10:52,280

yeah I mean man where do I start I think to start it's impactful to talk about my great

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00:10:52,280 --> 00:10:58,840

or sorry my grandparents and you know my grandparents were all in China and the communists took

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00:10:58,840 --> 00:11:03,940

over in the 50s and so that informed a lot of my family's trajectory as far as like my

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00:11:03,940 --> 00:11:09,700

ancestry but also a lot of how I look at the world a lot of how I reflect and how grateful

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00:11:09,700 --> 00:11:16,480

I feel to be born in the USA you know despite all the the media and the sense that we are

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00:11:16,480 --> 00:11:22,480

so polarized and I think a lot of that is really we're less so than a lot of fear mongers

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00:11:22,480 --> 00:11:27,680

and business folk would like us to think right I think we're a lot more similar than we often

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00:11:27,680 --> 00:11:32,380

give credit to you but not to deviate too much you know they all basically fled a life

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00:11:32,380 --> 00:11:38,760

of affluence and they had nothing and because freedom and ability to live your life the

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00:11:38,760 --> 00:11:43,240

way you want and not be jailed or worse is really important when you when it all comes

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00:11:43,240 --> 00:11:47,960

down to it the crux of it and so then formed a lot of how I grew up and how I look at the

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00:11:47,960 --> 00:11:54,400

world but yeah as far as my parents you know they met in Taiwan and they immigrated over

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00:11:54,400 --> 00:12:00,200

and you know without going too much down the rabbit hole you know my mom you know she was

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00:12:00,200 --> 00:12:05,800

pressured by traditional values to not get married too late in life and I think that

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00:12:05,800 --> 00:12:09,440

there's a lot that could be said about how I was raised you know with really traditional

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00:12:09,440 --> 00:12:15,700

values kind of the the second generation Asian American you know just hard work hit the books

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00:12:15,700 --> 00:12:22,560

and not a whole lot else right be obedient and do as you're told and and I was a pretty

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00:12:22,560 --> 00:12:27,320

good kid right I did stay within the lanes most of the time I did what I was told and

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00:12:27,320 --> 00:12:32,520

didn't cause too much heartache or too much trouble so that was a lot of you know my life

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00:12:32,520 --> 00:12:39,220

and growing up just the shy kid that just hit the books hard and did kind of what was

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00:12:39,220 --> 00:12:46,460

expected of me which is very uncommon for people of my culture to get into law enforcement

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00:12:46,460 --> 00:12:49,380

or first responder work.

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00:12:49,380 --> 00:12:53,720

What are the pros and cons of that kind of traditional culture that you were raised in

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00:12:53,720 --> 00:12:58,580

and the reason I asked that you know you could immediately look at a lot of our Asian professionals

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00:12:58,580 --> 00:13:03,120

now you know in medicine and some of these other areas and academically they've absolutely

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00:13:03,120 --> 00:13:08,640

crushed it you know and they've become incredible you know neurosurgeons or whatever it is but

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00:13:08,640 --> 00:13:13,360

you let's compare that for a second with you know sports these these parents that live

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00:13:13,360 --> 00:13:17,280

vicariously through their children and they you know might end up becoming a professional

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00:13:17,280 --> 00:13:22,040

sports person and then you know I'm assuming that a lot of these people hit a point in

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00:13:22,040 --> 00:13:27,200

their life where they're like oh this isn't everything I wanted to do and you so you're

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00:13:27,200 --> 00:13:32,760

being kind of driven down that path and you excel in that path but that path is very narrow

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00:13:32,760 --> 00:13:38,720

and that sense of play and childhood may have been kind of skipped as you navigated this

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00:13:38,720 --> 00:13:44,640

this career you know trailblazing that you were on so you know I've kind of totally loaded

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00:13:44,640 --> 00:13:51,020

that question but what were the pros and what were the cons of that that kind of the parenting

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00:13:51,020 --> 00:13:54,360

parameters that you found yourself within?

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00:13:54,360 --> 00:13:58,520

Yeah I love a lot of that question and it is there are a lot of parts to dissect so

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00:13:58,520 --> 00:14:03,800

I suppose to start the pros of that traditional upbringing my situation is not unique and

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00:14:03,800 --> 00:14:09,560

a lot of people speak very well and have written very well about it but it taught grind right

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00:14:09,560 --> 00:14:14,240

it taught hard work and I do think that there's an aspect of community and family that's important

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00:14:14,240 --> 00:14:21,680

when you realize it's not just you right there is a degree of living to uphold respect and

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00:14:21,680 --> 00:14:27,000

expectations of others which can be good to an extent however you you hit on it there

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00:14:27,000 --> 00:14:33,800

right whether it's parents really living vicariously for their kid to be a doctor or to be a you

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00:14:33,800 --> 00:14:39,280

know major league baseball player if the dream isn't yours it's an empty dream and the likelihood

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00:14:39,280 --> 00:14:44,460

to hit it or hit it in the way that you ought to to serve you and others in your life the

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00:14:44,460 --> 00:14:49,520

best way I think is going to be pretty shallow and it's going to be built upon a fragile

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00:14:49,520 --> 00:14:56,480

foundation so a little bit of that I you know so many times I've seen you know I think we

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00:14:56,480 --> 00:15:01,480

all have friends that are maybe pushed a little too hard in the dreams that weren't theirs

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00:15:01,480 --> 00:15:05,680

and they oftentimes it's within grasp and they could take it if they wanted to but they

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00:15:05,680 --> 00:15:10,600

don't and they pivot and they do something else and so I think that that that notion

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00:15:10,600 --> 00:15:15,200

for kids to play is so crucial I love that you hit on that because that's a frequent

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00:15:15,200 --> 00:15:19,720

reflection point for me I try not to be a rigid parent but oftentimes I find that I

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00:15:19,720 --> 00:15:26,240

am and you know I I can verbalize at the same time and interactions with my daughter where

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00:15:26,240 --> 00:15:31,640

I truly don't try to put anything on her as far as what she's going to do in life but

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00:15:31,640 --> 00:15:37,280

I try to support her and whatever is fun for her and and I get so excited whenever I see

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00:15:37,280 --> 00:15:43,720

these little aspects or skills or or passions starting to bloom what about from an emotional

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00:15:43,720 --> 00:15:48,960

point of view when I think and I got I love Chinese Asian culture so much when I was younger

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00:15:48,960 --> 00:15:53,080

I kind of found myself diving headfirst into the world of martial arts and then that was

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00:15:53,080 --> 00:15:58,800

it it was a massive rabbit hole but again you think of that and stoic is the wrong word

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00:15:58,800 --> 00:16:05,760

because I know stoic is you know is a positive thing but the impression I think you're right

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00:16:05,760 --> 00:16:10,120

you're right yeah so so was there was there space to emote because I mean so many of us

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00:16:10,120 --> 00:16:15,080

were raised with you know suck it up rub some dirt and all that stuff what was that through

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00:16:15,080 --> 00:16:19,920

a Chinese lens for you yeah there's a lot of that I think you're right on the money

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00:16:19,920 --> 00:16:25,080

in that stoicism like the philosophy is huge and positive I love that right that's a huge

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00:16:25,080 --> 00:16:32,320

tenet of how I try to live my life how I lead how I perform in a team is recognizing your

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00:16:32,320 --> 00:16:36,800

emotions and not letting them overburden you right and focusing on the locus control that

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00:16:36,800 --> 00:16:42,280

you have that's how I view stoicism like the philosophy whereas stoic to hide your emotions

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00:16:42,280 --> 00:16:46,920

I think that's what you're hitting on and there was a lot of that right I was a pretty

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00:16:46,920 --> 00:16:50,800

emotional kid you know looking back as I said I was I was shy but I was always in touch

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00:16:50,800 --> 00:16:55,360

with my feelings you know I'd watch a I remember watching like all dogs go to heaven when I

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00:16:55,360 --> 00:16:58,800

was four and I was just bawling at the end I was like why do you have to die and my mom

202

00:16:58,800 --> 00:17:05,120

had no like she did not recognize that I have such a reaction to you know this cartoon but

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00:17:05,120 --> 00:17:08,600

that was always me right I was always in my thoughts I was pretty introverted but I and

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00:17:08,600 --> 00:17:14,480

I was very in tune with certain things that would trigger certain feelings and yeah growing

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00:17:14,480 --> 00:17:21,080

up that was definitely not it wasn't supported it wasn't fostered and while my mom was pretty

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00:17:21,080 --> 00:17:26,280

sensitive to me it was definitely something that I had to grapple with as I was coming

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00:17:26,280 --> 00:17:32,080

into adolescence right because I had big feelings you know I'd be called a sissy and you know

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00:17:32,080 --> 00:17:38,960

that was something that would only exacerbate as I felt this divide and this lack of relationship

209

00:17:38,960 --> 00:17:45,560

with my dad growing up in general you know to the point where that became pretty catabolic

210

00:17:45,560 --> 00:17:50,560

relationship that in adulthood you know I went about eight years without speaking to

211

00:17:50,560 --> 00:17:54,360

him just because I didn't want to give him the satisfaction I was truly angry you know

212

00:17:54,360 --> 00:17:57,480

from things as a younger kid.

213

00:17:57,480 --> 00:18:02,880

I listened to you on the enduring the badge podcast let me get that right and I got a

214

00:18:02,880 --> 00:18:08,800

sense of empathy and compassion which I would like I hope that the people that were around

215

00:18:08,800 --> 00:18:12,600

me saw this you know that was something that I carried on was it was it flawless no I had

216

00:18:12,600 --> 00:18:17,640

good days and bad days in uniform of course but that managed to stay I never really you

217

00:18:17,640 --> 00:18:24,240

know totally succumbed to the compassion fatigue for example you have this kind of environment

218

00:18:24,240 --> 00:18:28,160

where you're not as encouraged to show emotion I didn't you know I was definitely allowed

219

00:18:28,160 --> 00:18:33,360

to show emotion in my upbringing when you look back now what was it you think that fostered

220

00:18:33,360 --> 00:18:38,520

and nurtured that compassion that you cat you was able to hang on to you know 17 years

221

00:18:38,520 --> 00:18:41,200

later in uniform.

222

00:18:41,200 --> 00:18:46,060

Yeah I'd say I wasn't able to really hang on to it too well it's kind of ebbed and flowed

223

00:18:46,060 --> 00:18:49,160

through my career and that's something I do like to reflect upon and share with others

224

00:18:49,160 --> 00:18:56,000

in that you know as a kid it's not it wasn't valued as far as what I was taught and how

225

00:18:56,000 --> 00:19:00,200

I was raised and I know that's common with a lot of men regardless of you know cultural

226

00:19:00,200 --> 00:19:03,740

upbringing is that you know there's these traditional senses of what it takes to be

227

00:19:03,740 --> 00:19:09,960

manly or have masculinity which is generally to be strong whatever that means right and

228

00:19:09,960 --> 00:19:15,200

it's comforting for me in my late 30s as I raise a daughter and I interact with kids

229

00:19:15,200 --> 00:19:20,080

and I interact with other parents and friends and co-workers to feel very comfortable publicly

230

00:19:20,080 --> 00:19:26,280

saying that you know my compassion my ability to feel for others and deeply care you know

231

00:19:26,280 --> 00:19:31,120

like really truly give a damn makes me a better man right it makes me a stronger man it makes

232

00:19:31,120 --> 00:19:40,420

me more dynamic it really took some time to come into my own with that as far as the compassion

233

00:19:40,420 --> 00:19:44,480

fatigue for sure it hit me right the cynicism hit me and all these things hit me at different

234

00:19:44,480 --> 00:19:51,240

times in my career even as early like as one to two years on where I felt so negative and

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00:19:51,240 --> 00:19:57,000

I felt so cynical and looking back you know cynicism really only can exist when resilience

236

00:19:57,000 --> 00:20:01,960

is super low when you're not when you're not well and you're so impressionable to this

237

00:20:01,960 --> 00:20:07,400

negative influence but for me and a lot of what I do through social media and my podcast

238

00:20:07,400 --> 00:20:11,880

is really to enhance and and support this notion that we need to take care of ourselves

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00:20:11,880 --> 00:20:16,240

so that we can take care of other people and with that is it's resilience it's wellness

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00:20:16,240 --> 00:20:20,360

it's being positive and sometimes you have to fake it till you make it like you sometimes

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00:20:20,360 --> 00:20:25,560

you have to force that positivity because it is so overwhelming at times if you don't

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00:20:25,560 --> 00:20:31,080

if you don't conscientiously intentionally have that now back to your early life what

243

00:20:31,080 --> 00:20:37,680

were you playing as far as sports well to fulfill stereotypes I was not playing sports

244

00:20:37,680 --> 00:20:45,120

I was playing piano right and especially before the move like it was very locked down to you

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00:20:45,120 --> 00:20:50,800

know the traditional I say you know but really don't so like the traditional Asian upbringing

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00:20:50,800 --> 00:20:56,880

it's like very common to go to Saturday school so I went to Chinese school on Saturdays and

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00:20:56,880 --> 00:21:01,120

so you know when all your weekdays are already tied up with normal school and you're expected

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00:21:01,120 --> 00:21:06,680

to go above and beyond and have straight A's like A minus is a is a hit like that is you

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00:21:06,680 --> 00:21:11,560

have failed and there's going to be consequences with that but then Saturdays like you'd be

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00:21:11,560 --> 00:21:15,580

going just to learn Mandarin you know I'd be learning to read and write and so your

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00:21:15,580 --> 00:21:22,120

weekends kind of evaporating music was culturally acceptable I did have a couple friends that

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00:21:22,120 --> 00:21:26,400

they could play some sport like tennis or what have you but it's really come up a lot

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00:21:26,400 --> 00:21:30,840

more more recently you know as far as Asian American culture but at the time there was

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00:21:30,840 --> 00:21:37,240

no emphasis or support for for sports it wasn't until I was 10 or 11 that I joined you know

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00:21:37,240 --> 00:21:43,000

a local club soccer team and man how deficient I was you know from not having all the reps

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00:21:43,000 --> 00:21:48,960

that that muscle memory and hand eye or hand foot or foot eye coordination you know just

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00:21:48,960 --> 00:21:54,320

really wasn't there it's funny you said about the A minus I literally just saw a kind of

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00:21:54,320 --> 00:21:59,080

funny video on Instagram the other day and it was a said what it's like and you know

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00:21:59,080 --> 00:22:03,640

in an Asian family and it was a little boy and he got in from school and he showed his

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00:22:03,640 --> 00:22:09,920

mother the the the work you know his exam and it said A plus and she's like looking

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00:22:09,920 --> 00:22:13,580

all disapproving and shaking her head and then he pulls his thumb back and it was double

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00:22:13,580 --> 00:22:19,720

plus and she was like oh good so but it's funny as well you mentioned about the the

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00:22:19,720 --> 00:22:26,560

music my wife is half Filipina and you know she kind of fumbled around earlier in her

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00:22:26,560 --> 00:22:33,320

life and again kind of low self-esteem not really believing that she you know her own

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00:22:33,320 --> 00:22:38,280

self-worth to a point as far as the career ladder and she found herself in the optical

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00:22:38,280 --> 00:22:42,960

world so she got into kind of retail initially and then became an optician and as we speak

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00:22:42,960 --> 00:22:48,560

she's actually finishing up her doctorate so she'll be a doctor of optometry and so

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00:22:48,560 --> 00:22:52,560

I told her this is obviously a recessive Asian gene that just wasn't expressed until later

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00:22:52,560 --> 00:22:57,360

in life so I bore a violin yeah I'm like all right that's the next thing we're gonna do

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00:22:57,360 --> 00:23:01,720

yeah well it's so cool that she you know in adulthood right is finding that and building

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00:23:01,720 --> 00:23:07,080

that whereas you know I getting straight A's through most of my childhood and then getting

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00:23:07,080 --> 00:23:12,400

to college where I could make my own decisions like the the fire wasn't there and I think

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00:23:12,400 --> 00:23:17,160

something I was exposed to recently is this thought of three P's and their purpose passion

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00:23:17,160 --> 00:23:22,040

and performance and so the performance was pushed upon me but I didn't feel the purpose

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00:23:22,040 --> 00:23:25,760

and I certainly didn't have the passion you know that was just kind of put upon me and

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00:23:25,760 --> 00:23:30,360

so it just doesn't gel or it didn't gel for me and you know you frequently see that amongst

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00:23:30,360 --> 00:23:35,640

a lot of people well those are interrelated as well and this is my own personal example

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00:23:35,640 --> 00:23:42,040

I was a straight C student in school and it was kind of ironic I'd wanted to be a doctor

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00:23:42,040 --> 00:23:47,440

academically I definitely didn't have that burning desire and then I'd wanted to be a

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00:23:47,440 --> 00:23:52,000

firefighter and then early when I was about 11 they told me that my color vision wasn't

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00:23:52,000 --> 00:23:56,320

good I was supposedly colorblind which is the blanket statement they use for failing

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00:23:56,320 --> 00:24:01,680

one or two pages in those books and it took me a long time to circle around I finally

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00:24:01,680 --> 00:24:06,600

had an aha moment literally in my late 20s went to fire school and then went to medic

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00:24:06,600 --> 00:24:11,280

school and became a straight A student the only thing that had changed is like you said

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00:24:11,280 --> 00:24:18,920

the passion now I wanted to learn about this thing I was driven to be a firefighter a paramedic

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00:24:18,920 --> 00:24:24,480

and so there's a definitely an interrelation between grades and passion and purpose so

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00:24:24,480 --> 00:24:28,820

if you've got a kid who's struggling maybe that's the wrong environment for them maybe

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00:24:28,820 --> 00:24:33,560

trade school rather than college or you know who knows but but I think there's a real that's

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00:24:33,560 --> 00:24:37,200

I love the way you put the three Ps because that is something I think a lot of us are

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00:24:37,200 --> 00:24:42,040

missing initially as parents as we get so sucked into academia we forget about the big

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00:24:42,040 --> 00:24:47,920

picture yeah and I love that I love that for kids today because there are so many alternative

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00:24:47,920 --> 00:24:52,160

schools there's running start there's just more availability to these trade schools and

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00:24:52,160 --> 00:24:56,640

other paths which are I mean so crucial and you know you talk about industries that are

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00:24:56,640 --> 00:25:02,120

going to be in dire need and hands-on hand skills and trade schools is very much a big

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00:25:02,120 --> 00:25:07,720

piece of that you know but your story kind of reminded me of a kid that I grew up with

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00:25:07,720 --> 00:25:13,160

and he was kind of the the B minus C kind of kid and he's a doctor now right because

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00:25:13,160 --> 00:25:17,080

he hit his stride towards the latter part of high school and then he started taking

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00:25:17,080 --> 00:25:22,480

more seriously it's something he wanted whereas he was picking up momentum as far as academia

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00:25:22,480 --> 00:25:26,000

and when he got into college he took it super seriously because it was his choice right

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00:25:26,000 --> 00:25:31,400

his parents were pushing him his parents were engineers and he came from a good educated

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00:25:31,400 --> 00:25:36,680

background but it was his choice and then he's doing well right now right at the same

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00:25:36,680 --> 00:25:41,600

time you know I look at that parallel to me because we're all hanging out back when and

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00:25:41,600 --> 00:25:46,640

just saw him at the 20-year reunion but it was very different whereas I was you know

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00:25:46,640 --> 00:25:51,680

I was pushed so hard and then once once the training wheels came off it's almost like

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00:25:51,680 --> 00:25:56,680

I just set the bike down rather than continue to pedal yeah my wife has blown me away she's

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00:25:56,680 --> 00:26:01,280

a straight a student in med school and she's just that's phenomenal yeah that's so cool

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00:26:01,280 --> 00:26:06,320

all these sororities now and you know fraternities that she's in one's called Pi Kappa Pi I mean

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00:26:06,320 --> 00:26:12,000

that sounds more like a bakery than a you know organization but whatever but no but

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00:26:12,000 --> 00:26:18,280

it is it's again it's just finding that that thing and she's so driven that you know she's

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00:26:18,280 --> 00:26:22,640

kind of slipped into that you know the mentality that you were talking about so I think it

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00:26:22,640 --> 00:26:27,000

absolutely has a place when you're driven and you want to be the best artist or dancer

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00:26:27,000 --> 00:26:32,500

or whatever it is but that has to come ahead that has to become first and then the grades

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00:26:32,500 --> 00:26:36,800

will follow not the other way around yeah and I try to be grateful and I think it's

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00:26:36,800 --> 00:26:41,160

worth recognizing you know you asked earlier on about the the good characteristics that

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00:26:41,160 --> 00:26:46,080

were instilled from my upbringing for sure hard work and grit and character those were

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00:26:46,080 --> 00:26:53,000

tenants that were undeniable and it certainly helped me in my career I when I did get into

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00:26:53,000 --> 00:26:58,960

law enforcement I dove in and I tried to approach it with a studious mind from every angle from

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00:26:58,960 --> 00:27:05,440

book work to what I could get exposed to online content to picking brains and seeking mentorship

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00:27:05,440 --> 00:27:09,440

I think that that tenacity is what's helped me and what I try to encourage others to do

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00:27:09,440 --> 00:27:14,200

not just be a bystander to their life or career it's hey you can take this by the horns and

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00:27:14,200 --> 00:27:18,280

you can you can craft it the way you want you can think creatively about that especially

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00:27:18,280 --> 00:27:23,560

as it aligns your talents and skills so while you were in school were you already thinking

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

of law enforcement or was there something else no it was it was something else there

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00:27:28,560 --> 00:27:33,880

was a lot of continuing to pivot so traditional paths that were put in front of me that you

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00:27:33,880 --> 00:27:38,600

know I had extended family doing that was late in high school computer science so I

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00:27:38,600 --> 00:27:43,320

took an AP as it's called kind of a college level computer science class utterly hated

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00:27:43,320 --> 00:27:49,000

it could not resonate with it and so when I started college University of Washington

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00:27:49,000 --> 00:27:53,700

my thought was to do pre-med and it's a pretty no joke kind of school for pre-med so they

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00:27:53,700 --> 00:28:00,200

have a very robust weed out class entry to chemistry and I took it and I was robustly

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00:28:00,200 --> 00:28:05,560

weeded out and so right away I was like yeah okay medicine is not the thing the same time

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00:28:05,560 --> 00:28:10,420

I was doing college painting there was there were a different number of kind of franchise

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00:28:10,420 --> 00:28:14,360

companies where not like you're just painting houses during the summers but you're actually

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00:28:14,360 --> 00:28:18,960

actively marketing and doing the hiring and project management through the school year

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00:28:18,960 --> 00:28:24,880

so you can gear up for production and so I did build a lot of confidence in doing that

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00:28:24,880 --> 00:28:29,620

right running a small business we were it was a sole proprietor where truly it was my

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00:28:29,620 --> 00:28:35,600

business to run I just had to pay royalties to the company and got a lot of confidence

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00:28:35,600 --> 00:28:41,360

with that right interacting in the real world and seeing what my earning potential could

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00:28:41,360 --> 00:28:47,500

be based on how hard I worked and how successful I was in these interactions and operations

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00:28:47,500 --> 00:28:52,240

what I found in initially you know kind of going back to your question about college

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00:28:52,240 --> 00:28:57,400

I thought that maybe I would finish out with a generic undergrad degree and maybe go back

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00:28:57,400 --> 00:29:03,320

to business school again because that would be a certain level of success and maybe more

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00:29:03,320 --> 00:29:10,720

more acceptable or prestigious if you would and but then I found that those things didn't

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00:29:10,720 --> 00:29:14,640

motivate me right there are there are times I worked harder and I got more money and my

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00:29:14,640 --> 00:29:19,120

lifestyle changed zero I just filed it away which is great at the same time I just didn't

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00:29:19,120 --> 00:29:25,960

see how whether it was painting or any other enterprise how sales or marketing or project

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00:29:25,960 --> 00:29:29,880

management would really resonate with me and so I really went down the rabbit hole as far

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00:29:29,880 --> 00:29:36,520

as soul searching and I always had an affinity towards service and even military service

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00:29:36,520 --> 00:29:43,440

I remember being in high school and the ROTC or junior ROTC program really excited me but

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00:29:43,440 --> 00:29:47,260

it wasn't something that was supported with my family so I kind of just let it go and

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00:29:47,260 --> 00:29:53,180

thought about it here and there but when I was in college and I was really at this this

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00:29:53,180 --> 00:29:58,360

crux of man what am I gonna do when I actually graduate and go into quote unquote the real

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00:29:58,360 --> 00:30:04,880

world I really had this affinity to look into public service and that was law enforcement

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00:30:04,880 --> 00:30:11,780

and firefighting so I did what my nature would do and I started just looking up everything

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00:30:11,780 --> 00:30:16,720

I could online I bought a firefighting manual you know as far as prepping for the test and

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00:30:16,720 --> 00:30:22,560

I started just trying to soak up every information bit I could I knew one guy that was older

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00:30:22,560 --> 00:30:26,720

that had become a police officer but he didn't succeed in that career so he wasn't the best

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00:30:26,720 --> 00:30:33,400

resource and I also knew a firefighter that was pretty new but he was a couple years older

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00:30:33,400 --> 00:30:39,240

and so he wasn't as accessible to kind of interact with but I just kind of threw myself

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00:30:39,240 --> 00:30:45,580

at it and I tested in the springtime before I graduated and a lot of doors open with police

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00:30:45,580 --> 00:30:54,080

testing my 93% on the written test for fire got me zero interviews and my 81 or 82 with

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00:30:54,080 --> 00:30:59,600

law enforcement got me just about every interview I could want and so then it was yeah for sure

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00:30:59,600 --> 00:31:05,300

we can just end the interview here we're done yeah yeah so you win it's harder it's more

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00:31:05,300 --> 00:31:10,180

desirable job although man everyone's having struggles these days which is mind-boggling

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00:31:10,180 --> 00:31:14,720

to me as far as police and fire and just every every bit of public service which is a bit

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00:31:14,720 --> 00:31:21,760

sad but not to go on a tangent yeah so I just ended up testing and interviewing and refining

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00:31:21,760 --> 00:31:27,880

my interview skills and I got hired the summer after I graduated from UW Kent Police where

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00:31:27,880 --> 00:31:33,380

I'm still working today let's go on that tangent now because obviously we're in the law enforcement

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00:31:33,380 --> 00:31:36,880

world now but it's I think it's an interesting perspective and I just had a few conversations

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00:31:36,880 --> 00:31:42,520

with people recently because I I entered the fire service in 2004 and then less than a

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00:31:42,520 --> 00:31:46,680

year later I was in the way the East Coast in Miami area then I went to California so

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00:31:46,680 --> 00:31:51,760

your side of the country and this is I think what a lot of people have forgotten when it

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00:31:51,760 --> 00:31:56,280

comes to the recruitment conversation we're just talking about trying to fill seats but

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00:31:56,280 --> 00:32:00,640

just like you underlined and then to be very fair there are more police vacancies in our

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00:32:00,640 --> 00:32:07,360

our fire firefighter vacancies that factors into but for example if anaheim I tested against

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00:32:07,360 --> 00:32:15,720

a thousand certified firefighter EMT or paramedics with experience in wildland firefighting
volunteer

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00:32:15,720 --> 00:32:20,760

firefighting explorer programs I mean their resumes were fat and that's what the entire

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00:32:20,760 --> 00:32:27,880

I forget which one the conference centers in anaheim was full and so this is how far

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00:32:27,880 --> 00:32:33,200

we've come it's not like oh why can't we fill seats we used to have to compete and I think

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00:32:33,200 --> 00:32:39,440

the big thing that's missing from this conversation is then you know you and I and this is again

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00:32:39,440 --> 00:32:45,640

not saying wow we're amazing it's not it's just that we clearly were taken from the upper

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00:32:45,640 --> 00:32:50,960

percentile of that large group of people which then in turn you're getting the fitter people

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00:32:50,960 --> 00:32:56,040

the more driven people the more resilient people ultimately and you're kind of filtering

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00:32:56,040 --> 00:32:59,400

out just like with intro to chem which is what happened to me in my med school journey

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00:32:59,400 --> 00:33:04,400

by the way I hit academics and I'm like oh okay I'm not supposed to be a doctor so that's

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00:33:04,400 --> 00:33:09,120

my you know my failures but everything happens for a reason absolutely but so it's not that

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00:33:09,120 --> 00:33:14,800

you're just looking for a person in a seat we're looking for the best person we can possibly

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00:33:14,800 --> 00:33:20,920

find for that seat and obviously we'll get into all those conversations too so talk to

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00:33:20,920 --> 00:33:26,760

me about the contrast with what you experienced testing in 2007 and what you're seeing now

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00:33:26,760 --> 00:33:35,880

in 2024 yeah man there's a lot to unpack there so it was a lot of I guess to summarize some

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00:33:35,880 --> 00:33:41,840

of these points because I do have a very intimate relationship with both in that my most recent

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00:33:41,840 --> 00:33:46,660

assignment that I came out of prior to promotion was being the sergeant of our recruiting and

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00:33:46,660 --> 00:33:51,360

hiring unit right totally revamped because of the challenge that we've seen in the last

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00:33:51,360 --> 00:33:57,480

few years that is going to make sense to everyone listening whether they're a cop or not but

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00:33:57,480 --> 00:34:03,360

to summarize and simplify I suppose the biggest difference was what most people remember for

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00:34:03,360 --> 00:34:10,320

those that are in the service for more than a few years is that there was this this vying

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00:34:10,320 --> 00:34:17,640

and this testing for a very selective process for the candidate whereas now today it's essentially

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00:34:17,640 --> 00:34:23,800

free agency for your capable competent people your candidates that maybe have no experience

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00:34:23,800 --> 00:34:29,760

they have no firefighting or EMT experience or volunteer work but if they're sharp and

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00:34:29,760 --> 00:34:33,920

they have good character and they present well they're probably going to get a decent

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00:34:33,920 --> 00:34:39,680

shot at a decent agency same for police right you had people that really had to show up

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00:34:39,680 --> 00:34:46,880

well right it to stand out you needed to be college educated or have legitimate work experience

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00:34:46,880 --> 00:34:52,680

or life experience or have military service and then you had to pass the rigorous background

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00:34:52,680 --> 00:34:58,760

in all these things whereas now because I keep such such an eye on all these things

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00:34:58,760 --> 00:35:03,560

and headlines you have a lot of agencies that are really sacrificing quality and that's

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00:35:03,560 --> 00:35:09,960

not subjective quality that's that's a lot of physical standards that's a lot of written

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00:35:09,960 --> 00:35:17,160

standards that is that are actual background component issues as far as how much criminal

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00:35:17,160 --> 00:35:22,240

history and what type of criminal history you allow I do want to caveat that there is

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00:35:22,240 --> 00:35:26,480

subjective nature to that but some of these headlines and some of the candidates I even

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00:35:26,480 --> 00:35:31,880

seen hired in my region are a little concerning because I've looked at some of these people's

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00:35:31,880 --> 00:35:37,120

background packets and we've made an assessment for my agency to say hey I'm there's some

411

00:35:37,120 --> 00:35:41,680

integrity issues I'm a little concerned the stories aren't driving and then I see them

412

00:35:41,680 --> 00:35:48,160

at the academy in the state and that's a little concerning right and I know that it's a it's

413

00:35:48,160 --> 00:35:52,840

pretty dire at some places but we can't we can't sacrifice that quality as far as what

414

00:35:52,840 --> 00:35:59,040

we're going to depend on these folks for I have worked for arguably one of what I would

415

00:35:59,040 --> 00:36:03,560

consider the best fire departments in America I would I have also worked for what I would

416

00:36:03,560 --> 00:36:08,160

consider one of the worst fire departments for America and I say that because they had

417

00:36:08,160 --> 00:36:14,200

an incredibly large budget and yet complacency was you know a cancer through the whole thing

418

00:36:14,200 --> 00:36:19,440

and there's I always say there's some incredible people in that department but it's despite

419

00:36:19,440 --> 00:36:28,720

it not because of it but with that I got to see a very glaring commonality the best one

420

00:36:28,720 --> 00:36:35,360

had an incredibly high standard the bar was set and they would happily get rid of 25%

421

00:36:35,360 --> 00:36:39,600

through attrition of every single probationary class by the end of that first year so you

422

00:36:39,600 --> 00:36:43,560

know if everyone met the bar they weren't going to just cut them for no reason but usually

423

00:36:43,560 --> 00:36:48,460

about the top you know quarter or you know a quarter would would would kind of not make

424

00:36:48,460 --> 00:36:54,380

it through that year what you ended up then after that crucible was not only incredibly

425

00:36:54,380 --> 00:36:59,800

motivated firefighters who became engineers who became captains etc etc but also even

426

00:36:59,800 --> 00:37:05,720

this kind of um the knowledge in other areas like I tested when I came back to the east

427

00:37:05,720 --> 00:37:09,520

coast with just at a c pat one of the guys said I've never met anyone that's left and

428

00:37:09,520 --> 00:37:15,080

it was anaheim left anaheim fire department before and that's the one I had to test against

429

00:37:15,080 --> 00:37:19,720

all those people conversely and it wasn't that much longer we're talking when I left

430

00:37:19,720 --> 00:37:27,280

anaheim now I'm only five years later I work for orange county and then the last place

431

00:37:27,280 --> 00:37:33,200

better better benefits than where I was working before you know better pay um a kelly day

432

00:37:33,200 --> 00:37:40,220

so a little bit more time off they weren't um you know understaffed horrifically but

433

00:37:40,220 --> 00:37:45,600

my class and before when we got hired there was no physical you know training whatsoever

434

00:37:45,600 --> 00:37:50,600

in their orientation there was no real training at all you did hr paperwork you went around

435

00:37:50,600 --> 00:37:57,520

and rode theme park rides and and that was it and I saw the complete opposite so to me

436

00:37:57,520 --> 00:38:03,800

this lower the standards to get more people in is completely backwards in my opinion if

437

00:38:03,800 --> 00:38:09,120

you want to get good firefighters and police officers you have to keep those standards

438

00:38:09,120 --> 00:38:14,400

up and let people know about that and the candidates will rise up they will look for

439

00:38:14,400 --> 00:38:20,360

places to prepare so what are your thoughts on that um concept yeah absolutely I think

440

00:38:20,360 --> 00:38:24,400

there's a degree of simple economics right we look at the last few years and police have

441

00:38:24,400 --> 00:38:28,720

come under a lot of scrutiny and some of it was deserved right I think there's a lot of

442

00:38:28,720 --> 00:38:34,440

opportunity to say hey yeah we're not perfect and we have work to do and we want you aka

443

00:38:34,440 --> 00:38:38,360

all of us the community to do that work together I think there's a lot of value in that and

444

00:38:38,360 --> 00:38:43,040

I think that it's not helpful to get super defensive we have an opportunity if we want

445

00:38:43,040 --> 00:38:49,760

to prove our worth with that it is one of the most complicated jobs I think even a lot

446

00:38:49,760 --> 00:38:56,560

of police antagonists or um I said just I guess haters or critics would say that yeah

447

00:38:56,560 --> 00:39:02,280

it is a difficult job to do right the way we want it all the time or most of the time

448

00:39:02,280 --> 00:39:07,480

even and so with that if we're going to expect a lot we have to compensate a lot and that's

449

00:39:07,480 --> 00:39:12,080

not all monetary but I think that's a piece I also think that's support where you've

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00:39:12,080 --> 00:39:16,360

lacked support is where you've had the biggest attrition issues and the biggest cultural

451

00:39:16,360 --> 00:39:22,960

and morale issues is people leave those agencies because it is free agency right and so it's

452

00:39:22,960 --> 00:39:27,400

not even like a state like red state blue state thing but it's just hey I'm gonna go

453

00:39:27,400 --> 00:39:33,000

five miles that way to where the administration and the city leadership is much more supportive

454

00:39:33,000 --> 00:39:36,920

in us doing the job with the way we need to and that's with training that's with funding

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00:39:36,920 --> 00:39:41,560

that's all these things community support is a piece right but I think absolutely when

456

00:39:41,560 --> 00:39:46,560

you talk about lowering standards and you're opening it up and you're opening up risk and

457

00:39:46,560 --> 00:39:53,200

I think that again even if you're a critic to public service or how much money it costs

458

00:39:53,200 --> 00:39:58,880

you have to recognize the huge risk when you're taking in people haphazardly to that degree

459

00:39:58,880 --> 00:40:05,160

100 percent the reason why I went to the last one was the one I worked before before was

460

00:40:05,160 --> 00:40:10,080

a 56 hour work week so there's a big kind of misunderstanding of how many hours the

461

00:40:10,080 --> 00:40:14,400

firefighters actually work and it's the biggest fairy tale we tell is that we have this incredible

462

00:40:14,400 --> 00:40:19,880

schedule because we don't it's smoker mirrors it's bullshit but then you add in mandatory

463

00:40:19,880 --> 00:40:25,680

overtime I'm going through a divorce I'm a single father and I'm being told after 56

464

00:40:25,680 --> 00:40:30,400

hours that week that I got to stay another 24 and can't go and see my son so this is

465

00:40:30,400 --> 00:40:35,560

the other thing I think that is not really being discussed about the the recruitment

466

00:40:35,560 --> 00:40:41,920

crisis we have in 2024 a young man or woman that's looking to join our profession is going

467

00:40:41,920 --> 00:40:46,320

to google what's it like being a cop what's it like being a firefighter and they're going

468

00:40:46,320 --> 00:40:51,360

to see all these things too and then they're going to go to ups or amazon or whatever their

469

00:40:51,360 --> 00:40:56,600

alternative was and go well I could be home in my bed every night actually make the same

470

00:40:56,600 --> 00:41:00,840

if not more you know and not have to deal with all these other issues that I'm seeing

471

00:41:00,840 --> 00:41:05,540

about so I think this is and you said it perfectly like the environment if we're going to ask

472

00:41:05,540 --> 00:41:11,600

our men and women to leave their families and go and protect a community of complete

473

00:41:11,600 --> 00:41:17,120

strangers you know arguably then we've got to give them the environment financially you

474

00:41:17,120 --> 00:41:22,040

know emotionally and then the rest and recovery because a lot of these people are going to

475

00:41:22,040 --> 00:41:26,200

be up through the night whether they're you know night shift in the police or any shift

476

00:41:26,200 --> 00:41:31,200

in in the fire service that requires more rest and recovery than the person who bags

477

00:41:31,200 --> 00:41:34,800

your groceries and no disrespect to that person but they sleep every night and they work 40

478

00:41:34,800 --> 00:41:40,400

hours a week so that is another thing that I'm seeing now is that we now we're at a point

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00:41:40,400 --> 00:41:45,640

where we have to fix it there's so you know such incredible access to knowledge now that

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00:41:45,640 --> 00:41:50,120

a young person can learn exactly what it's like to be a firefighter or a police officer

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00:41:50,120 --> 00:41:55,160

and now that's out for everyone to see we're having a recruitment process because we refuse

482

00:41:55,160 --> 00:42:01,040

to fix those things when we fix those that's the good news if we just have the actual balls

483

00:42:01,040 --> 00:42:04,680

to step up and address some of these issues that have been killing our first responders

484

00:42:04,680 --> 00:42:09,960

for decades we will see people line up out the door again but until we do that in my

485

00:42:09,960 --> 00:42:14,160

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

486

00:42:14,160 --> 00:42:19,440

yeah it's such a big deal and I love that you went there and we look at the younger

487

00:42:19,440 --> 00:42:26,960

generation right let's let's say the Z's where they are wise beyond their years is recognizing

488

00:42:26,960 --> 00:42:32,440

the personal agency and the importance of their own personal health and well-being and

489

00:42:32,440 --> 00:42:36,360

how that will manifest into things like their relationships and their quality of life and

490

00:42:36,360 --> 00:42:43,360

their families and all these things right you have the 40 sorry the the 24 25 year old

491

00:42:43,360 --> 00:42:48,600

and a lot of them might say hey that does not sound fun my neighbor down the street

492

00:42:48,600 --> 00:42:53,760

or my uncle is a first responder and he talks about how prevalent divorce is he talks about

493

00:42:53,760 --> 00:42:58,080

how he has insomnia he talks about all these things on while I respect the crud out of

494

00:42:58,080 --> 00:43:03,400

him I don't want that for me right and then you have the the young somethings whether

495

00:43:03,400 --> 00:43:08,600

it's 20s 30s whatever even for you all right that is saying hey no I want to do this job

496

00:43:08,600 --> 00:43:15,520

and because some of these notions and these trends are so prevalent they may be accepting

497

00:43:15,520 --> 00:43:21,080

this degree of yeah it's gonna really suck and I hope my marriage can sustain it but

498

00:43:21,080 --> 00:43:24,400

we're gonna roll the dice because I want to do this really important thing they might

499

00:43:24,400 --> 00:43:30,120

not verbalize in that way but I think as some some of the culture recognizes that risk and

500

00:43:30,120 --> 00:43:36,240

that's a super sad thing too where we need to have these conversations and support the

501

00:43:36,240 --> 00:43:41,000

first responders being the type of healthy individuals they need to be you know I work

502

00:43:41,000 --> 00:43:46,400

graves and I my body never responded well to it even in my early 20s and when I went

503

00:43:46,400 --> 00:43:50,840

back electively to try to lead from the front with a group of you know my officers that

504

00:43:50,840 --> 00:43:57,640

were going back to graves I seriously regretted it when I was in my mid 30s and the new dad

505

00:43:57,640 --> 00:44:03,600

that couldn't end quickly enough but I say all that to say I have extreme respect for

506

00:44:03,600 --> 00:44:08,960

the fire industry when I was coming in as a young cop I was alongside all the jokes

507

00:44:08,960 --> 00:44:12,680

and I'll still make the jokes here and there right about oh you get to sleep at work and

508

00:44:12,680 --> 00:44:17,640

I got a buddy in a quiet agency he gets to sleep at work and he'll he'll own that right

509

00:44:17,640 --> 00:44:23,840

but my partners my you know my brothers and sisters in red in my agency they wake up all

510

00:44:23,840 --> 00:44:30,040

the dang time for shootings for you know mental health subjects that are on substance use

511

00:44:30,040 --> 00:44:35,080

disorder all that right like they're always awake and I I'm a curmudgeon with my sleep

512

00:44:35,080 --> 00:44:39,840

and I get thrown off just working swings to cover my night my night crews as watch commander

513

00:44:39,840 --> 00:44:49,680

now and I cannot relate to like I you couldn't give me that job now to be working 24 48 72

514

00:44:49,680 --> 00:44:54,200

hours and woken up however many times that we know is taking years off the end of their

515

00:44:54,200 --> 00:45:00,400

lives and so I I fully respect it and I did want to take a moment just to say that because

516

00:45:00,400 --> 00:45:03,840

I think there's a lot of cops that will keep throwing shade and they might actually believe

517

00:45:03,840 --> 00:45:08,640

that that's a better that's a better gig for health and I'm gonna say hey like it's not

518

00:45:08,640 --> 00:45:12,720

that simple absolutely and it's the same because people will have the conversation the fire

519

00:45:12,720 --> 00:45:17,520

like oh you know should we should go to to 12 so I'm like no I mean this is why law enforcement

520

00:45:17,520 --> 00:45:22,320

struggles go look at your er physicians and nurses like a lot of them are you know in

521

00:45:22,320 --> 00:45:27,880

terrible shape so it to me it's about we've got to fight to give them more time off between

522

00:45:27,880 --> 00:45:33,440

shifts if I'm gonna ask a police officer to be awake while I asleep while I'm asleep that

523

00:45:33,440 --> 00:45:39,120

maybe will you know stop my teenage son from being attacked or you know whatever they're

524

00:45:39,120 --> 00:45:44,040

gonna you know whatever potential there is I want that person to be the fittest most

525

00:45:44,040 --> 00:45:49,040

well trained and most well rested before that incident the same way as I always say with

526

00:45:49,040 --> 00:45:53,280

the gray areas and no one ever talks about sleep deprivation in some of these gray area

527

00:45:53,280 --> 00:45:59,560

police videos that we stay but when my son is pulled over and he reaches for his insurance

528

00:45:59,560 --> 00:46:02,680

and the officer thinks he's going for a gun because of everything that's happened and

529

00:46:02,680 --> 00:46:06,840

we have someone murdered almost every day in blue at the moment you know that conversation

530

00:46:06,840 --> 00:46:12,580

too so the rest and recovery I think is absolutely imperative yeah absolutely I mean you look

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00:46:12,580 --> 00:46:19,580

at high stakes jobs and airline pilots right that's one where the standards man I know

532

00:46:19,580 --> 00:46:26,640

an airline pilot and just the amount of consequence if they have any degree of substance in their

533

00:46:26,640 --> 00:46:31,160

bodies because the stakes are high right and but we have to recognize that lives are on

534

00:46:31,160 --> 00:46:35,920

the line with first responders whether you wear blue or red or you're a medic like these

535

00:46:35,920 --> 00:46:39,200

these things are crucial you know you have medics driving around the country or sorry

536

00:46:39,200 --> 00:46:44,600

the county and it's it's gonna be life or death and that second save lives and they're

537

00:46:44,600 --> 00:46:49,880

cruising and they're gonna be fatigued right and they're they're driving at 80 90 100

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00:46:49,880 --> 00:46:54,080

miles an hour trying to get there to save someone's life like these things are extremely

539

00:46:54,080 --> 00:46:57,240

crucial and I don't know I'm curious is a is dr.

540

00:46:57,240 --> 00:47:02,600

Gill Martin's work socialized in the fire industry as far as the hypervigilance curve

541

00:47:02,600 --> 00:47:05,960

I am aware of it because of this podcast and though it's funny I've known his name comes

542

00:47:05,960 --> 00:47:09,800

up all the time I still haven't reached out to him to get him on the show yet but I don't

543

00:47:09,800 --> 00:47:14,040

think it's very well known certainly in your community in the wellness and mental health

544

00:47:14,040 --> 00:47:19,720

side but I haven't heard his name mentioned a huge amount on the fire side yeah but just

545

00:47:19,720 --> 00:47:24,120

for you know some of the listeners that might not be familiar he talks about the amount

546

00:47:24,120 --> 00:47:29,440

of time it takes for our sympathetic systems to come out and you know back to parasympathetic

547

00:47:29,440 --> 00:47:35,920

which is rest and recovery and usually you're not really it don't quote me but usually by

548

00:47:35,920 --> 00:47:40,600

the time you finish your days off you really barely got there right and then you're going

549

00:47:40,600 --> 00:47:46,000

back into the fray and so you're operating at this completely constantly hypervigilance

550

00:47:46,000 --> 00:47:51,680

state which is just wrecking wrecking your body as far as stress hormones and and all

551

00:47:51,680 --> 00:47:58,440

that and even interacting with these other restorative factors of your life which is

552

00:47:58,440 --> 00:48:05,520

you know your physical health absolutely on the enduring the badge podcast I heard you

553

00:48:05,520 --> 00:48:11,280

just touch on the officer involved shooting and I'd obviously love to hear kind of your

554

00:48:11,280 --> 00:48:16,000

perspective of that but I think what was even more interesting is you mentioned that it

555

00:48:16,000 --> 00:48:20,100

was the near shootings that actually bothered you more so I don't know if there's a kind

556

00:48:20,100 --> 00:48:24,920

of chronological pattern to those you know near and the one that you actually got involved

557

00:48:24,920 --> 00:48:30,880

with but kind of walk me through that because again you know it gets so politicized again

558

00:48:30,880 --> 00:48:35,080

more often than not depending on the ethnicity of the person that was shot and the ethnicity

559

00:48:35,080 --> 00:48:39,400

of the officer that was involved blah blah blah but the reality is and I've said this

560

00:48:39,400 --> 00:48:44,760

on here there's no one I mean there might be one sociopath out the what two million

561

00:48:44,760 --> 00:48:48,560

cops but no one is waking up in the morning hoping that they're going to shoot someone

562

00:48:48,560 --> 00:48:53,560

that day so talk to me about that kind of combination of the the near shooting and shooting

563

00:48:53,560 --> 00:48:59,600

that you had in your career so far yeah and just you know for my officer involved shooting

564

00:48:59,600 --> 00:49:05,840

the the quick dirty the quick and dirty is that I was called in I was off I was working

565

00:49:05,840 --> 00:49:11,840

as a canine officer and there was a subject that an officer tried to stop for suspected

566

00:49:11,840 --> 00:49:16,080

drug deal like a hand-to-hand and then he started playing the name game as it were right

567

00:49:16,080 --> 00:49:21,480

his names all spelled weird and it's coming back no record which is a telltale sign that

568

00:49:21,480 --> 00:49:25,720

he's lying about his name because he's got warrants and all these things and so he actually

569

00:49:25,720 --> 00:49:30,440

tries to swing on the officer and assault him luckily the officer dodges him and he

570

00:49:30,440 --> 00:49:35,600

takes off and it's a foot chase he and another officer try to engage them on the foot chase

571

00:49:35,600 --> 00:49:41,960

and the guy starts reaching his waistband which fortunately created a reaction for the

572

00:49:41,960 --> 00:49:47,920

officers to kind of peel off and as the suspects passing some bystanders they are able to verify

573

00:49:47,920 --> 00:49:53,240

yeah he is pulling a gun out of his waistband so they locked down the area you know Sunday

574

00:49:53,240 --> 00:49:59,480

midday bunch of shoppers everything in the area and we got called in to to track for

575

00:49:59,480 --> 00:50:05,700

this guy and in the in the dead of the summer and after a couple hours past we basically

576

00:50:05,700 --> 00:50:11,080

honed down to one area which was a closed landscaping business so there was this outdoor

577

00:50:11,080 --> 00:50:18,040

yard and essentially when my dog got in descent he got super animated and then we realized

578

00:50:18,040 --> 00:50:24,360

that the guy might be near or he had just been there my dog Kato found the guy's jacket

579

00:50:24,360 --> 00:50:28,840

under like a riding mower and then that just sent shills down all of our spines because

580

00:50:28,840 --> 00:50:35,160

we're like okay he was definitely here he dropped his jacket or he's still here and

581

00:50:35,160 --> 00:50:41,240

what happened essentially was one of the officers I was with tried to move like this barrel

582

00:50:41,240 --> 00:50:46,760

out of the way for Kato to get back to access where the guy probably was and at that time

583

00:50:46,760 --> 00:50:51,600

the guy popped up we saw his head and he ducked and he actually took a shot at one of the

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00:50:51,600 --> 00:51:02,160

officers so that became a reaction of just a barrage of gunfire towards that guy and

585

00:51:02,160 --> 00:51:06,680

talking about that it never really bothered me I got to the point where I was telling

586

00:51:06,680 --> 00:51:12,840

the story so frequently and it was you know quote unquote righteous I suppose anything

587

00:51:12,840 --> 00:51:19,360

I say can be inflammatory but the guy popped out and tried to kill a cop after trying to

588

00:51:19,360 --> 00:51:27,480

assault a cop and these things for the fabric society you can't do however luckily he didn't

589

00:51:27,480 --> 00:51:35,400

hit the officer and he was hit multiple times he was actually hiding behind this like cabinet

590

00:51:35,400 --> 00:51:40,800

that in my head was like oh it's just like sheet metal I should shoot through this because

591

00:51:40,800 --> 00:51:44,680

I can't see him and that's what our training would say to do is like hey just recognize

592

00:51:44,680 --> 00:51:51,320

what a bullet can pass through you have lethal force all these things what happened was the

593

00:51:51,320 --> 00:51:56,840

cabinets held all these propane tanks and contrary to mythbusters gunfire can actually

594

00:51:56,840 --> 00:52:02,680

rupture propane tanks and cause this leak and while as mythbusters has pointed out

595

00:52:02,680 --> 00:52:08,160

and a fire investigator later verified propane is extremely hard to ignite from something

596

00:52:08,160 --> 00:52:14,080

like gunfire however at this this landscaping business there was kind of this enclosed quonset

597

00:52:14,080 --> 00:52:18,240

hut so it's like a tarpaulin structure closed on the back and the sides and the roof and

598

00:52:18,240 --> 00:52:24,680

then the front was open what happened in the gunfight was that enough propane leaked out

599

00:52:24,680 --> 00:52:29,640

that it created just the right density where someone's muzzle flash or a bullet or some

600

00:52:29,640 --> 00:52:35,560

sort of spark ignited that and this these flames just you know passed over me and us

601

00:52:35,560 --> 00:52:40,120

and I remember just being so intensely hot and thinking like this is it like this is

602

00:52:40,120 --> 00:52:48,960

the end and I go into that degree of the story because I think that's what helped me recognize

603

00:52:48,960 --> 00:52:54,720

how grateful I was for everything you know we came out of that situation I thought I

604

00:52:54,720 --> 00:52:59,760

was done and then once the moment passed and some of the pain had passed I realized we

605

00:52:59,760 --> 00:53:03,680

weren't done and we got we had to get out of here and everything's on fire and there's

606

00:53:03,680 --> 00:53:08,520

all this popping and hissing of all the unknown chemicals and accelerants and all the things

607

00:53:08,520 --> 00:53:13,560

around us and we start kind of evacing out but one of the officers you know I'm seeing

608

00:53:13,560 --> 00:53:19,100

is crawling out and we think he'd got hit so we pull him out of there and we start stripping

609

00:53:19,100 --> 00:53:24,500

his uniform and checking under his vest and I remember it went from me saying hey man

610

00:53:24,500 --> 00:53:30,520

are you okay are you okay are you okay frantically to you're okay you're okay it'll be okay and

611

00:53:30,520 --> 00:53:34,520

just doing you know our combat first aid just raking his body trying to see if he has any

612

00:53:34,520 --> 00:53:39,800

bullet wounds you know right around that time someone asked me hey where's your dog and

613

00:53:39,800 --> 00:53:44,440

I didn't even give it a thought I just I assumed he was gone I assumed he was just in the gunfire

614

00:53:44,440 --> 00:53:49,920

and in the blaze and I kind of haphazardly called for him but I felt like there was no

615

00:53:49,920 --> 00:53:56,800

point in doing so but as we continued to evac out the suspect actually got up out of the

616

00:53:56,800 --> 00:54:02,960

fire and he starts coming out towards us and trying to flee and so a couple of us engaged

617

00:54:02,960 --> 00:54:08,280

him in gunfire and then he was he was I suppose neutralized I'm not trying to sound cold

618

00:54:08,280 --> 00:54:16,040

I'm just trying to say it as it is but I say all that to say that when I look at that situation

619

00:54:16,040 --> 00:54:20,400

and my dog's okay so for all the dog people out there like you can breathe a breath of

620

00:54:20,400 --> 00:54:27,600

refreshing air we all made it out of there except for the suspect right a handful of

621

00:54:27,600 --> 00:54:33,200

officers even my canine like he had some burnt hair I had second-degree burns of both my

622

00:54:33,200 --> 00:54:39,560

forearms it's pretty gnarly it's pretty gross but all in all like I came out of that feeling

623

00:54:39,560 --> 00:54:46,480

like I was I had a second lease at life right I came out feeling so euphoric which is a

624

00:54:46,480 --> 00:54:53,440

very common response but I wasn't the you know that wasn't the case for everyone and

625

00:54:53,440 --> 00:54:58,020

that was the beginning of the end for someone else's career as far as post-traumatic stress

626

00:54:58,020 --> 00:55:03,040

and I won't get into the details of that but I think it is important to illustrate for

627

00:55:03,040 --> 00:55:08,440

everybody listening like there is such a range of response I thought so frequently about

628

00:55:08,440 --> 00:55:14,640

why I responded the way I did and the best I can come up with was just that my brain

629

00:55:14,640 --> 00:55:19,720

went that way and I think there's a lot of things that we can and can't control and oftentimes

630

00:55:19,720 --> 00:55:23,840

our outlook is one thing that we might not be able to control in the moment but we can

631

00:55:23,840 --> 00:55:31,780

do our best and we can do what we can prior to these these situations of intense stress

632

00:55:31,780 --> 00:55:38,920

so that's my not so short version of the shooting where I reflected so much and yes there's

633

00:55:38,920 --> 00:55:43,160

a lot of stress and there's potential litigation and are you going to get charged and all these

634

00:55:43,160 --> 00:55:47,140

things for doing the right thing and saving your life and your buddy's life but really

635

00:55:47,140 --> 00:55:53,120

I never felt like that was an extreme risk I felt you know I was I was not alone I felt

636

00:55:53,120 --> 00:55:58,040

supported by my agency all these things whereas fast forward a couple years after I promoted

637

00:55:58,040 --> 00:56:03,240

as sergeant and I retired my my police dog there was a situation that is probably the

638

00:56:03,240 --> 00:56:07,960

most significant not the only one where I almost shot someone but the most clear and

639

00:56:07,960 --> 00:56:13,200

the farthest I'd got to you know putting my finger on the trigger but essentially this

640

00:56:13,200 --> 00:56:19,200

was a domestic order violation subject where another agency's canine was tracking and I

641

00:56:19,200 --> 00:56:23,000

was there on what you call containment or perimeter right I was in my marked car trying

642

00:56:23,000 --> 00:56:28,440

to help the help contain the area and hope that the guy beds down it doesn't escape

643

00:56:28,440 --> 00:56:34,040

where we've kind of cordoned off and it just so happened that the dog located the guy really

644

00:56:34,040 --> 00:56:39,340

close to me so when I got out of my car I actually grabbed my rifle and I ran over towards

645

00:56:39,340 --> 00:56:45,520

where they were and this guy was doing everything to try to get shot and he was put put you

646

00:56:45,520 --> 00:56:51,020

know putting his hand in his pocket he was making threats towards us and he was pulling

647

00:56:51,020 --> 00:56:56,560

it out so violently and punching it out and this is one of those I feel like it was like

648

00:56:56,560 --> 00:57:03,200

a Jesus take the wheel moment where I was like everything in my training and gut is

649

00:57:03,200 --> 00:57:07,160

telling me I need to shoot him to save my buddy's life because he was punching out

650

00:57:07,160 --> 00:57:14,720

his fist directly towards my buddy who was off in the distance but for whatever reason

651

00:57:14,720 --> 00:57:20,120

in that fraction of a second which felt like an eternity I was you know putting the aim

652

00:57:20,120 --> 00:57:25,580

of the rifle up and I was pulling slack out of the trigger but I was like that guy's closer

653

00:57:25,580 --> 00:57:31,180

and he has more lighting in this you know in this dark parking area I have to trust

654

00:57:31,180 --> 00:57:36,960

that he knows what he's doing and he's not shooting and so I shouldn't and and he didn't

655

00:57:36,960 --> 00:57:40,520

what he what the suspect was doing was he was creating this finger gun right and he

656

00:57:40,520 --> 00:57:45,560

was reaching his pocket again he started doing it to all of us and increasingly I was like

657

00:57:45,560 --> 00:57:50,440

man is he building up his resolve does he actually have a gun is he just goading us

658

00:57:50,440 --> 00:57:56,880

the first time so then the third time or the fourth time he can take pop shots but in the

659

00:57:56,880 --> 00:58:03,560

end the canine was released and he helped arrest the guy but I had so much consternation

660

00:58:03,560 --> 00:58:07,840

I had so much stress over not just the fact that I didn't shoot but I felt like I had

661

00:58:07,840 --> 00:58:14,440

to but also the continued times that he did that that I questioned man was I irresponsible

662

00:58:14,440 --> 00:58:20,040

was I poorly trained to not do what I should have done categorically at the same time

663

00:58:20,040 --> 00:58:26,680

there is this element where I realized that if I had shot him he was an unarmed man of

664

00:58:26,680 --> 00:58:31,760

color at the end of the day and I was like man everything including the threats and we

665

00:58:31,760 --> 00:58:36,560

didn't have body cam at the time but everything would have supported my shooting him but would

666

00:58:36,560 --> 00:58:42,060

I be getting charged would I be getting arrested and this is the type of complicated feelings

667

00:58:42,060 --> 00:58:49,840

that non-shooters frequently interact with and more than ever it introduces these different

668

00:58:49,840 --> 00:58:53,960

intersections between moral injury should I have shouldn't I have and then you feel

669

00:58:53,960 --> 00:59:00,000

guilty for feeling guilty all these layers that are pretty complicated to unpack but

670

00:59:00,000 --> 00:59:09,160

yeah those are some dynamics of the non-shooting that was really close for me and yeah it's

671

00:59:09,160 --> 00:59:13,680

definitely kept me up in subsequent years less so now I can't think about the last time

672

00:59:13,680 --> 00:59:18,760

it's really caused this strain in me but I know that's a very real concern for officers

673

00:59:18,760 --> 00:59:23,840

out there you know today more than ever where a lot of times officers are doing as they

674

00:59:23,840 --> 00:59:28,840

should as they're trained as their policies and laws allow but we recognize we're in this

675

00:59:28,840 --> 00:59:34,600

perception is reality type of world where that can be a super scary thing.

676

00:59:34,600 --> 00:59:39,320

With that particular call was that ultimately an attempted suicide by cop?

677

00:59:39,320 --> 00:59:44,560

Yeah, yeah he was a he didn't have anything in his pockets but like a cell phone but he

678

00:59:44,560 --> 00:59:48,320

just kept doing it over and over and he he didn't want to go to jail and that was the

679

00:59:48,320 --> 00:59:53,840

thing he kept violating this order he had gotten to the point of a felony and robbery

680

00:59:53,840 --> 00:59:58,800

like he took her purse with force and all that that night but but yeah it was it was

681

00:59:58,800 --> 01:00:03,340

definitely a thing where that was what he was trying to generate out of our interaction

682

01:00:03,340 --> 01:00:04,420

that night.

683

01:00:04,420 --> 01:00:10,060

One of the most irresponsible elements of the way a lot of these incidents are reported

684

01:00:10,060 --> 01:00:15,080

is it's always on the police should have done better and we're never asking the question

685

01:00:15,080 --> 01:00:20,840

why are the streets of America so dangerous when for example the streets of Reykjavik

686

01:00:20,840 --> 01:00:27,080

or Lisbon aren't you know what are we doing to our population that's creating gangs and

687

01:00:27,080 --> 01:00:31,640

homelessness and sex work and all the things that you and I saw you know over and over

688

01:00:31,640 --> 01:00:35,000

and over and over again you know I worked in an area where there's lots of theme parks

689

01:00:35,000 --> 01:00:38,760

where people had no idea what was going on in the darker sides of Orlando for example

690

01:00:38,760 --> 01:00:43,920

but you know you're talking about this one you know near suicide by cop you're talking

691

01:00:43,920 --> 01:00:49,920

about you know the gang members you're talking about all the violence that has devolved our

692

01:00:49,920 --> 01:00:53,960

law enforcement I use that term deliberately because devolved to the point where we look

693

01:00:53,960 --> 01:00:57,920

like we're in Fallujah or you guys look like you're in Fallujah when you're out which then

694

01:00:57,920 --> 01:01:03,220

adds more kind of fuel to the fire as far as trying to interact with the population

695

01:01:03,220 --> 01:01:09,960

that you serve so I this is my personal perspective I think for example the prohibition of drugs

696

01:01:09,960 --> 01:01:14,100

has been an epic failure and what I mean by that is not that we should have it now available

697

01:01:14,100 --> 01:01:20,040

in all the grocery stores but the arrest and incarceration of addicts specifically found

698

01:01:20,040 --> 01:01:25,260

within the addicts users amount of drugs I mean it was alcohol prohibition was an epic

699

01:01:25,260 --> 01:01:30,280

failure in the 30s and then drug prohibition began right after that based on racism and

700

01:01:30,280 --> 01:01:36,720

job justification so as a firefighter paramedic who's pulled yellow blankets over you know

701

01:01:36,720 --> 01:01:41,600

numerous people that have died all from the ripple effect of this this is my personal

702

01:01:41,600 --> 01:01:49,000

perspective talk to me about the mental health element of a lot of the problems that you

703

01:01:49,000 --> 01:01:53,280

see through a police officer's eyes.

704

01:01:53,280 --> 01:01:57,160

There's lots of impact there.

705

01:01:57,160 --> 01:02:05,600

I suppose it's where my mind goes is that it's so complicated to you know dissect I

706

01:02:05,600 --> 01:02:11,640

ended up majoring in political science in college and whereas I wanted to learn so much

707

01:02:11,640 --> 01:02:16,640

about the government it ended up making me feel so dejected and so disillusioned with

708

01:02:16,640 --> 01:02:24,160

how politics work and with that you know I think I'm not alone and there's so many police

709

01:02:24,160 --> 01:02:29,440

officers I personally know that they don't really have a strong opinion with drugs they

710

01:02:29,440 --> 01:02:36,280

just know that extreme enforcement to incarcerate everybody is not the answer and you know opening

711

01:02:36,280 --> 01:02:38,160
up everything also is not the answer.

712
01:02:38,160 --> 01:02:43,720
We see that in our region now as far as the the de-policing or the lack of enforcement

713
01:02:43,720 --> 01:02:48,480
of drugs and the fentanyl epidemic is just off the charts right.

714
01:02:48,480 --> 01:02:53,600
When you started kind of doing this intro leading into the question in all societies

715
01:02:53,600 --> 01:03:00,400
ills and gang culture and violence and trafficking and drugs where I was supposing it would go

716
01:03:00,400 --> 01:03:09,360
is kind of a discussion on like community and how fatherhood is is an absolute lack

717
01:03:09,360 --> 01:03:14,520
thereof is an absolute social ill that's contributing to all these things in my humble

718
01:03:14,520 --> 01:03:22,600
opinion and so how is my experience as a police officer shaped a lot of that I think something

719
01:03:22,600 --> 01:03:27,720
I've said before is that first responder work is an accelerant to a lot of things right

720
01:03:27,720 --> 01:03:31,340
it's an accelerant for you to look at the human condition and you're going to experience

721
01:03:31,340 --> 01:03:38,000
life at this much rapid much more rapid pace you're going to be exposed to so many significant

722

01:03:38,000 --> 01:03:44,040

events and so many traumatic experiences either primary, secondarily or tertiary through being

723

01:03:44,040 --> 01:03:52,960

a first responder and it's going to it's going to allow your condition to be heightened

724

01:03:52,960 --> 01:03:58,400

whether it's positive or negative and so in a lot of ways it's done both you know it made

725

01:03:58,400 --> 01:04:04,640

me like I said really jaded and cynical about the systems or system as far as like criminal

726

01:04:04,640 --> 01:04:10,800

justice but also other systems that we interact with like child protective services like it

727

01:04:10,800 --> 01:04:18,400

is so heartbreaking to see and be interacting with kids that are pulled out of you know

728

01:04:18,400 --> 01:04:24,560

drug-afflicted homes and they're exposed to drugs and the inhalation of some of these

729

01:04:24,560 --> 01:04:31,080

opiates and similar and the you know CPS isn't taking these kids and it just boggles your

730

01:04:31,080 --> 01:04:35,440

mind and I don't presume to know everything about what CPS does or doesn't do but I know

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01:04:35,440 --> 01:04:41,040

that this is not the answer right and again I'm not trying to point fingers at like one

732

01:04:41,040 --> 01:04:48,760

agency but it's just to say it's made me and so many officers so dejected at times but

733

01:04:48,760 --> 01:04:54,160

again kind of going back to stoicism is like hey we got to just do what we can and recognize

734

01:04:54,160 --> 01:04:58,920

that when we're here in this moment there are so many forces and so many organizations

735

01:04:58,920 --> 01:05:04,960

and so many people that have to be involved in creating the solution and it's just not

736

01:05:04,960 --> 01:05:08,400

sustainable to take that on.

737

01:05:08,400 --> 01:05:12,320

Take that on yourself in the moment right you can be interacting with this kid and you

738

01:05:12,320 --> 01:05:17,080

can think hey for the next six hours I'm going to try to be the best thing that happened

739

01:05:17,080 --> 01:05:22,440

to this kid and you might be the best thing that's happened to that kid that day that

740

01:05:22,440 --> 01:05:28,880

year his or her whole life which is absolutely just saddening to even fathom but you know

741

01:05:28,880 --> 01:05:31,520

I don't even know if I answered your question man.

742

01:05:31,520 --> 01:05:36,520

No you did and it's funny because in actually that is the answer that I was talking about

743

01:05:36,520 --> 01:05:42,600

even though you know the legality of addiction is a big part of it and where I think for

744

01:05:42,600 --> 01:05:49,200

example the Pacific Northwest has dropped the ball is like you said you know reducing

745

01:05:49,200 --> 01:05:53,440

the level of policing in that area which I think is part of it but if you look at for

746

01:05:53,440 --> 01:05:58,840

example Portugal and I had the guy that spearheaded this in Portugal on the show twice now and

747

01:05:58,840 --> 01:06:06,560

they took the money from the quote unquote war on drugs and they slid it over to that

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01:06:06,560 --> 01:06:11,280

preventative element so they created you know addiction counseling they created mental health

749

01:06:11,280 --> 01:06:15,720

counseling they created job creation so they took someone and okay well if I'm looking

750

01:06:15,720 --> 01:06:20,600

at this as a medical patient who is suffering what's the equal and opposite version of that

751

01:06:20,600 --> 01:06:24,600

where does the money need to go that's what we haven't done so people say oh we tried

752

01:06:24,600 --> 01:06:29,160

that it didn't work well we didn't try that we decriminalized or you know legalized a

753

01:06:29,160 --> 01:06:33,680

couple of things that was it so all your meth heads and you know heroin addicts you can

754

01:06:33,680 --> 01:06:36,840

you know you're still going to prison but if you like cannabis you're fine you know

755

01:06:36,840 --> 01:06:40,720

what I mean it's it's what is filling that void and we see it in the uniform it's the

756

01:06:40,720 --> 01:06:45,880

same exact thing behind closed doors with alcohol and opiates and all this stuff in

757

01:06:45,880 --> 01:06:52,840

fire and police as well so community is the answer but people point at broken homes why

758

01:06:52,840 --> 01:06:59,240

are these homes broken it's this multi-generational trauma if let's pick on dad for a second if

759

01:06:59,240 --> 01:07:05,600

dad isn't around maybe he's an alcoholic maybe he's in prison maybe he didn't have

760

01:07:05,600 --> 01:07:11,240

was wasn't raised with that nurturing environment where he felt an understanding the loyalty

761

01:07:11,240 --> 01:07:15,680

to be with a child and raise him even if the partner was not the right person then you

762

01:07:15,680 --> 01:07:21,080

co-parent as a divorced couple whatever it is so this still circles around to healing

763

01:07:21,080 --> 01:07:26,320

broken people and I mean that you know compassionately this is the part of the conversation that

764

01:07:26,320 --> 01:07:30,760

we don't have when he talks about politics for the last eight years I haven't seen a

765

01:07:30,760 --> 01:07:35,440

fucking ounce of compassion and community from either of the two last shitbags that

766

01:07:35,440 --> 01:07:40,240

we've had supposedly running this country nothing to pull people together bring us together

767

01:07:40,240 --> 01:07:45,800

talk about healing talk about community so that's what we're missing and it's glaring

768

01:07:45,800 --> 01:07:50,560

you know should we throw addicts in prison no but should we just ignore them then also

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01:07:50,560 --> 01:07:55,300

no these are people that are hurting and they're you know that lack of mentorship then leads

770

01:07:55,300 --> 01:08:01,640

to gang membership and all the other things that we see and then the the fact that our

771

01:08:01,640 --> 01:08:07,800

we have drug prohibition empowers the underworld to make a shitload of money off addicts you

772

01:08:07,800 --> 01:08:12,320

put those addicts in the hands of the medical community like Portugal does you cut the head

773

01:08:12,320 --> 01:08:17,720

off the snake now our law enforcement can focus on the sellers and the smugglers and

774

01:08:17,720 --> 01:08:23,080

the judicial system will be opened up so the real criminals of the world can feel the full

775

01:08:23,080 --> 01:08:28,960

effect of the law so I it's interesting having these conversations and it's just the answer

776

01:08:28,960 --> 01:08:33,880

is yes community can you know replay you know building these homes again but how do we do

777

01:08:33,880 --> 01:08:38,360

that if we don't address the underlying mental health issues that are multi-generational

778

01:08:38,360 --> 01:08:43,480

in our country yeah and that's where I like about you know my region a lot of the west

779

01:08:43,480 --> 01:08:49,560

coast and the pacific northwest is recognizing these other tools right if if law enforcement

780

01:08:49,560 --> 01:08:54,280

is the hammer then yeah sometimes you have screws you don't it's not just nails you're

781

01:08:54,280 --> 01:08:58,440

you're dealing with right so you might need a screwdriver you might need these other tools

782

01:08:58,440 --> 01:09:03,840

at the same time I think that where a lot of agencies or regions or departments cities

783

01:09:03,840 --> 01:09:08,080

have flopped is that thinking that's either or and I love how you said and right and is

784

01:09:08,080 --> 01:09:14,160

like one of my new favorite words in the last couple years because I like to say and rather

785

01:09:14,160 --> 01:09:20,520

than but because defund where that went wrong is just trying to shutting down this one machine

786

01:09:20,520 --> 01:09:25,560

and trying to rebuild something totally different but kind of the same but also right like essentially

787

01:09:25,560 --> 01:09:31,080

we just need more and I know that it's not it might sound too simplistic to say yeah

788

01:09:31,080 --> 01:09:36,900

just not more money yep I know that things cost money but we can't shut down something

789

01:09:36,900 --> 01:09:42,640

like the criminal justice system because there's just still so much violence and there are

790

01:09:42,640 --> 01:09:46,240

people that need to be arrested right but not everyone needs to go to jail right there

791

01:09:46,240 --> 01:09:51,360

are diversion programs I like seeing things like that there are a lot of successes I'm

792

01:09:51,360 --> 01:09:56,480

aware of that co-responder units whether they're built through the local fire department

793

01:09:56,480 --> 01:10:01,520

or ancillary thereof with mental health professionals responding alongside or being able to get

794

01:10:01,520 --> 01:10:06,040

called out by law enforcement I think those are a lot of the right answers or diversifying

795

01:10:06,040 --> 01:10:11,960

some of your law enforcement to do some of those types of roles because again it's not

796

01:10:11,960 --> 01:10:17,800

either or some people say police aren't social workers okay all first responders have a degree

797

01:10:17,800 --> 01:10:22,880

of the social worker heart and service you you can't reconcile that we're in the people

798

01:10:22,880 --> 01:10:27,240

business right I always say it's people taking care of people so if you want to be a first

799

01:10:27,240 --> 01:10:32,000

responder and that just that that's you have an aversion to that then you're in the wrong

800

01:10:32,000 --> 01:10:38,520

line of work but yeah going back to these complicated issues they're going to take complicated

801

01:10:38,520 --> 01:10:43,920

solutions and that's to be adaptable and that's to think creatively and just really look at

802

01:10:43,920 --> 01:10:50,280

the problem from multiple angles when we talk about community involvement I think that's

803

01:10:50,280 --> 01:10:57,760

another great solution is and you know how do we for example increase diversity in uniform

804

01:10:57,760 --> 01:11:03,920

and rebrand ourselves we brand ourselves better it's funny you obviously get pulled through

805

01:11:03,920 --> 01:11:08,160

the meat grinder depending on you know if it's a horrific event like the George Floyd

806

01:11:08,160 --> 01:11:13,720

or whether it's a as we said a gray area event that actually you know it's you could argue

807

01:11:13,720 --> 01:11:18,560

either way and this this person was doing the best at that moment but you know the fire

808

01:11:18,560 --> 01:11:22,600

service has done a terrible job of branding because no one knows what the hell we do like

809

01:11:22,600 --> 01:11:28,120

no one and then you know you could watch Chicago fire or to come where FD you know you're not

810

01:11:28,120 --> 01:11:32,040

going to really see what fire firefighters do and even someone made a point very good

811

01:11:32,040 --> 01:11:36,360

point recently like if you watch even the reality shows on the fire service they're

812

01:11:36,360 --> 01:11:42,120

always saves you know I've worked 14 years I never had a code save my whole career that's

813

01:11:42,120 --> 01:11:46,340

the reality of cardiac arrest most of them don't come back I was a black cloud so none

814

01:11:46,340 --> 01:11:51,200

of mine came back but you know so we're painting this false story but we're also kind of painting

815

01:11:51,200 --> 01:11:56,520

this you know firehouse jovial nature they sleep all night kind of thing and of course

816

01:11:56,520 --> 01:12:00,720

there are elements of truth in all of those but the reality is very different where I

817

01:12:00,720 --> 01:12:06,420

think there's so much value and power is mentorship programs and one of my friends started one

818

01:12:06,420 --> 01:12:12,760

here that's phenomenal because you're basically removing the barriers to entry you're immersing

819

01:12:12,760 --> 01:12:17,360

yourself in cultures that are underserved communities and you're telling these young

820

01:12:17,360 --> 01:12:21,760

boys and girls hey all you've got to do is show up to this fire station we will give

821

01:12:21,760 --> 01:12:25,500

you the equipment we will give you the training in this this area there are scholarships of

822

01:12:25,500 --> 01:12:30,780

fire academy there are departments they're looking to hire you on the other end now you're

823

01:12:30,780 --> 01:12:35,840

exposing these young people to this profession some of them will be drawn and absolutely

824

01:12:35,840 --> 01:12:40,600

excel some of them will enter and go oh like my stepson actually it's not what I want to

825

01:12:40,600 --> 01:12:45,360

do beautiful now you've figured out you know one thing that you don't want to do anymore

826

01:12:45,360 --> 01:12:50,560

but that to me is also how you really kind of extend into the community because now you're

827

01:12:50,560 --> 01:12:55,040

educating young people not in the show and tell look at my swap vehicle type way but

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01:12:55,040 --> 01:13:00,560

actually given an experience and and really understanding what it is you do and empowering

829

01:13:00,560 --> 01:13:04,760

them that that is one of the options that they could choose to serve their community

830

01:13:04,760 --> 01:13:11,400

as well yeah I think that's a huge opportunity and you hit them from different generations

831

01:13:11,400 --> 01:13:16,660

different stages of life we have community academies where a lot of adults come in they

832

01:13:16,660 --> 01:13:20,660

learn about the police right and sometimes they are some people that are a little bit

833

01:13:20,660 --> 01:13:25,800

critical of the police they get invited in right members of the community and generally

834

01:13:25,800 --> 01:13:30,480

I have I've not heard otherwise but people leave as advocates because they see how strapped

835

01:13:30,480 --> 01:13:35,980

we are they learn so many dynamics of the the police department that even our new officers

836

01:13:35,980 --> 01:13:40,120

don't know right they get to meet different units and hear about civilian roles and all

837

01:13:40,120 --> 01:13:45,120

these competing interests and at the end of the day you have something like that you have

838

01:13:45,120 --> 01:13:49,400

coffee with the chief you have community meetings but then you hit it from younger generations

839

01:13:49,400 --> 01:13:55,280

right so you have things like explorers one of the successes that we had in recruiting

840

01:13:55,280 --> 01:14:00,640

was recognizing that community engagement recruiting were the same thing and so whereas

841

01:14:00,640 --> 01:14:06,360

throughout the nation a lot of community engagement units were dismantled because staffing was

842

01:14:06,360 --> 01:14:12,040

so poor we took it on our own role as far as recruiters to say hey we're just going

843

01:14:12,040 --> 01:14:16,080

to be everywhere in the community that we can be and if we're talking to 10 year old

844

01:14:16,080 --> 01:14:20,660

kids and helping them be less scared of the police that's fantastic maybe we don't get

845

01:14:20,660 --> 01:14:25,080

any names on the clipboard that I want to test next month that's okay just because by

846

01:14:25,080 --> 01:14:30,040

virtuous being out there and engaging that is the same goal and we're going to put it

847

01:14:30,040 --> 01:14:33,920

on social media and we're going to show people that we're out here and people should come

848

01:14:33,920 --> 01:14:39,320

to us if they have questions I've had people come to me in a recruiting type of booth and

849

01:14:39,320 --> 01:14:44,480

ask some pretty critical poignant questions about law enforcement and to give them a pretty

850

01:14:44,480 --> 01:14:49,600

candid honest answer as a human being rather than I'm a representative of blah blah blah

851

01:14:49,600 --> 01:14:54,800

and this is the kind of note card that I'm supposed to read off of people get that like

852

01:14:54,800 --> 01:15:01,180

that authenticity is so important and essentially humanizing the experience is the biggest thing

853

01:15:01,180 --> 01:15:06,800

that we can do just to build some connection with the community and I'd be remiss if I

854

01:15:06,800 --> 01:15:11,120

didn't mention cops in schools programs where we used to be a lot better about it I'd love

855

01:15:11,120 --> 01:15:15,880

to see a return to that and sometimes it is a two-way street where public schools aren't

856

01:15:15,880 --> 01:15:21,360

very accepting or inviting to police officers we see that in the area in the region in recent

857

01:15:21,360 --> 01:15:27,960

years but for years I was on day shift and I was loosely assigned to one elementary school

858

01:15:27,960 --> 01:15:33,040

and every week at least once or twice I would swing by at lunchtime although I worked at

859

01:15:33,040 --> 01:15:38,120

a busy agency like I made it a priority but I'd swing by during lunchtime or recess I

860

01:15:38,120 --> 01:15:43,480

would just hang out I would kick you know kick the ball I would you know swing from

861

01:15:43,480 --> 01:15:47,200

the monkey bars I'd be sitting down with kids as they're having lunch asking them what they're

862

01:15:47,200 --> 01:15:53,400

eating and just having those organic interactions where we're not taking someone to jail I mean

863

01:15:53,400 --> 01:15:57,920

that's so critical just to build that build that relationship with them at a different

864

01:15:57,920 --> 01:15:59,360

age.

865

01:15:59,360 --> 01:16:01,680

What is your perspective on school safety?

866

01:16:01,680 --> 01:16:06,400

I you know had all kinds of guests on here and there's been some incredibly brilliant

867

01:16:06,400 --> 01:16:11,880

ideas you know put there but it seems like one of the again if you got a Venn diagram

868

01:16:11,880 --> 01:16:17,560

where they all intersect is having an officer in the school now we do here I want to preface

869

01:16:17,560 --> 01:16:23,760

that that's the right officer in the school I had a really horrendous experience with

870

01:16:23,760 --> 01:16:29,960

my son in middle school with an SRO and the principal and I discovered tripped over a

871

01:16:29,960 --> 01:16:34,480

fact that this would be going on for a while and it's actually been remedied and laws have

872

01:16:34,480 --> 01:16:41,440

changed here and if that officer did the same thing now she would be in prison for it so

873

01:16:41,440 --> 01:16:47,140

you know again so I when I'm very supportive of obviously my brothers and sisters in blue

874

01:16:47,140 --> 01:16:50,840

I have some police horror stories myself you know and it's despite that because I know

875

01:16:50,840 --> 01:16:56,920

that that was that individual not the profession but so talk to me about your perspective of

876

01:16:56,920 --> 01:17:03,400

school safety in general and then if you are behind having SROs in schools what kind of

877

01:17:03,400 --> 01:17:06,720

person needs to be in that role?

878

01:17:06,720 --> 01:17:11,520

Yeah I love I love the idea and I love that you added on it has to be the right person

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01:17:11,520 --> 01:17:19,760

I think that that is a great theme for everything but it needs ultimately I love the the friendly

880

01:17:19,760 --> 01:17:26,600

interaction I love the lack of rigidity I love an approachable officer but as a parent myself

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01:17:26,600 --> 01:17:30,880

and seeing the world today I want someone that's tactically proficient and able to

882

01:17:30,880 --> 01:17:36,720

handle the ultimate threat which is the ultimate priority in our society everyone needs to

883

01:17:36,720 --> 01:17:41,960

be united in this is the safety of our children like they are the literal future if not for

884

01:17:41,960 --> 01:17:46,840

them what is this all for and so whether it's this conversation or whether it's us going

885

01:17:46,840 --> 01:17:52,240

to work every day that is the point that is why we put our lives on the line now with

886

01:17:52,240 --> 01:17:58,640

that said I love the idea of like an officer friendly like I love the idea of separating

887

01:17:58,640 --> 01:18:05,720

the discipline aspect a lot of schools handle that on their own or they have school security

888

01:18:05,720 --> 01:18:10,200

to have the officer be an extension of the boogeyman archetype is not helpful for our

889

01:18:10,200 --> 01:18:15,880

developing kids it's not helpful for relationships with police as they grow into adolescence

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01:18:15,880 --> 01:18:21,560

as they have these trivial issues whether it's drinking or truancy all these things

891

01:18:21,560 --> 01:18:27,280

and it's not helpful to their adulthood either so I think that the best benefit is where

892

01:18:27,280 --> 01:18:32,580

you have someone that is approachable they are like a staff member and a mentor for those

893

01:18:32,580 --> 01:18:37,180

that might be interested in the job but moreover just because everyone is going to be interacting

894

01:18:37,180 --> 01:18:43,200

with the police officer at some point and that's where the dare officers a lot of people

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01:18:43,200 --> 01:18:48,640

have personal anecdotes contrary to the quote unquote perceived failure or the documented

896

01:18:48,640 --> 01:18:55,100

failure of the dare program with drug enforcement or drug awareness is that so many people can

897

01:18:55,100 --> 01:19:00,280

cite their dare officer and their dare officers name and recognize that it was a positive

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01:19:00,280 --> 01:19:05,560

influence just as this teacher kind of coach mentorship.

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01:19:05,560 --> 01:19:09,960

I love that don't make the cop the boogeyman that's again another layer that you've just

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01:19:09,960 --> 01:19:15,320

added to this beautiful tapestry that I've got now when it comes to school security and

901

01:19:15,320 --> 01:19:21,360

I think 100% some of the things I've heard is yes you need to have exactly that you need

902

01:19:21,360 --> 01:19:25,540

to have someone that can interact with the kids that maybe inspire them to put a uniform

903

01:19:25,540 --> 01:19:31,480

on themselves but if nothing else humanize the world of policing and be there you know

904

01:19:31,480 --> 01:19:36,360

maybe a kid will open up to them so be that yin yang and going back to Asian culture and

905

01:19:36,360 --> 01:19:41,640

my love of it I've talked about this a lot the problem is men quote unquote have kind

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01:19:41,640 --> 01:19:45,480

of found themselves as a white circle and forget that we're soft and hard you know and

907

01:19:45,480 --> 01:19:51,600

the police officer in credit to Ocala here we had a shooting I was actually in a code

908

01:19:51,600 --> 01:19:56,640

red and it ended up being a false alarm they'd never had a code red before in elementary

909

01:19:56,640 --> 01:20:00,200

school with my son I was dropping him off on a medical after a medical appointment and

910

01:20:00,200 --> 01:20:06,840

I got to see firsthand from the inside the school how vulnerable how you know how disconnected

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01:20:06,840 --> 01:20:12,200

these children and teachers are when this is going on now Parkland you know we had an

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01:20:12,200 --> 01:20:18,520

avaldee we have one side forest high school the teacher actually talked the kid down and

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01:20:18,520 --> 01:20:24,720

then the SRO ran towards the danger and ended up detaining the kid and it was a slightly

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01:20:24,720 --> 01:20:28,400

different scenario I think he shot once and I think it shook him out of it and then he

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01:20:28,400 --> 01:20:34,760

but regardless it's irrelevant so having that yin and yang having that police officer that

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01:20:34,760 --> 01:20:39,920

people feel comfortable going to maybe might prevent them ever going down the world of

917

01:20:39,920 --> 01:20:44,240

addiction because they're that kind compassionate big brother or sister but at the same time

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01:20:44,240 --> 01:20:49,400

as you said now you've got you know someone with extreme psychosis walking towards the

919

01:20:49,400 --> 01:20:53,960

school with automatic weapons now they're able to switch in a completely different mode

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01:20:53,960 --> 01:21:01,240

yeah and I'll inject I think that it's very relevant to say hey when you when you select

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01:21:01,240 --> 01:21:06,980

people for these roles it shouldn't be seniority based it should be merit based it should be

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01:21:06,980 --> 01:21:12,600

tenacity based right you might presume that a school resource officer is kind of like

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01:21:12,600 --> 01:21:19,200

a past out to pasture retirement gig and it shouldn't be it should be a tiring job it

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01:21:19,200 --> 01:21:25,000

should be a hard job it should be a job where that officer is learning everything they can

925

01:21:25,000 --> 01:21:29,120

they should probably go to the SWAT trainings you know so they are up to date on tactics

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01:21:29,120 --> 01:21:33,280

they should probably be extremely physically prepared they should probably be going to

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01:21:33,280 --> 01:21:40,920

all these after hours meetings with teachers with staff with parents right it's it's this

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01:21:40,920 --> 01:21:46,760

community engagement aspect they should be intertwined and interacting with criminal

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01:21:46,760 --> 01:21:52,800

intelligence units in your department because there are those kids and I'm not saying they

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01:21:52,800 --> 01:21:57,520

need to be like hunted but no like a lot of times the SRO will be engaged and know what's

931

01:21:57,520 --> 01:22:02,560

going on and know who kids are hanging out with if a kid shoots another kid that SRO

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01:22:02,560 --> 01:22:08,520

should be the first and most prolific resource to access in those times of need and so it's

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01:22:08,520 --> 01:22:15,960

not a it should not be a chill relaxed job it should be an engaging probably exhausting

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01:22:15,960 --> 01:22:21,400

job because the stakes are high and the opportunities are so huge if someone does that job right

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01:22:21,400 --> 01:22:25,520

I couldn't agree more I want to hit one more area can operation side and then we'll go

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01:22:25,520 --> 01:22:31,960

to peer support I had numerous people now that are canine handlers on the show Mike

937

01:22:31,960 --> 01:22:39,720

Goosby was on one of the canine kind of gurus from LA I had Billy Cushing on and when you

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01:22:39,720 --> 01:22:46,280

hear again the way that canines are projected to the public you know used as a kind of political

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01:22:46,280 --> 01:22:53,840

tool versus the reality of the canine world and how infrequently they even bite it seems

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01:22:53,840 --> 01:23:00,240

insanity to fight to remove a tool that ultimately is going to save lives not only of the people

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01:23:00,240 --> 01:23:04,520

you know that are committing the crime but also our officers and civilians so talk to

942

01:23:04,520 --> 01:23:11,880

me about the canine program through your lens yeah it's just a very unique tool and when

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01:23:11,880 --> 01:23:17,240

I was in canine one thing I used to describe it was that the community meetings or what

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01:23:17,240 --> 01:23:22,400

have you is that as technology is growing and growing and advancing and doing all these

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01:23:22,400 --> 01:23:26,640

things that we wouldn't have been able to recognize them doing there's still no tech

946

01:23:26,640 --> 01:23:33,280

that can do what a canine can do that can that dog those dogs can actually exercise

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01:23:33,280 --> 01:23:38,680

judgment right they they can read a situation but beyond that because some people might

948

01:23:38,680 --> 01:23:43,800

think that that's a little you know I'm over my skis right now but they're not robots right

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01:23:43,800 --> 01:23:50,400

they and there's no robot that can program right now to detect individualized scent and

950

01:23:50,400 --> 01:23:56,040

so when a canine is tracking a suspect they're tracking nuances of that person's unique

951

01:23:56,040 --> 01:24:03,720

fingerprint of odor which is everything from their their their family background to what

952

01:24:03,720 --> 01:24:08,840

they eat what they bathe with what they're wearing you know how stressed they are and

953

01:24:08,840 --> 01:24:15,240

this apocrine scent that comes out like all these super specific nuances and there's no

954

01:24:15,240 --> 01:24:21,360

tech that can do that right so if you have someone that is a bad bad dude or bad bad

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01:24:21,360 --> 01:24:27,200

gal that's committed a very violent thing and very determined to escape law enforcement

956

01:24:27,200 --> 01:24:31,640

that's who you're using utilizing a canine for to seek them out to find them whether

957

01:24:31,640 --> 01:24:36,360

they're in an attic or whether they're in the woods somewhere these are the people that

958

01:24:36,360 --> 01:24:42,000

would otherwise have gotten away because they avoided detection and just a drone just a

959

01:24:42,000 --> 01:24:46,520

chopper sometimes that's enough not enough sometimes it is a collaboration of so many

960

01:24:46,520 --> 01:24:52,240

things and then ultimately yes there is that degree of these dogs are gonna be out there

961

01:24:52,240 --> 01:24:59,280

and they might catch a knife like mine did instead of an officer and you know he recovered

962

01:24:59,280 --> 01:25:03,520

from that so he's kind of we would joke that he had nine lives and I think he spent them

963

01:25:03,520 --> 01:25:09,640

all when I recounted them back and the different incidents he was involved in but yeah he might

964

01:25:09,640 --> 01:25:15,360

catch a knife she might catch a bullet and that's part of the gig right to protect someone

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01:25:15,360 --> 01:25:21,420

else and I like how you even pointed out sometimes because protecting the suspect because catching

966

01:25:21,420 --> 01:25:26,520

a dog bite is a lot better than catching a bullet and that's use of force continuum our

967

01:25:26,520 --> 01:25:32,160

prerogative is always to use the lowest level of force that we need to use to affect the

968

01:25:32,160 --> 01:25:37,880

situation to affect the arrest well I know in Billy Cushing's story his dog I think it

969

01:25:37,880 --> 01:25:43,860

was Kit I believe was killed but he discovered a guy hiding behind a kind of rain barrel

970

01:25:43,860 --> 01:25:48,280

if memory serves me right and that allowed you know the other officers to see him in

971

01:25:48,280 --> 01:25:52,920

time and shoot him and we just lost a canine I think it was canine Leo here in Marion

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01:25:52,920 --> 01:25:58,960

County that was killed it was a beautiful story actually tragic the way it ended but

973

01:25:58,960 --> 01:26:04,280

our local paramedics in Marion County had just gone through a canine first aid class

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01:26:04,280 --> 01:26:11,920

so after the canine was shot the actual the other the human paramedics worked on the dog

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01:26:11,920 --> 01:26:18,520

and from what I understand Gainesville Marion and Alachua counties all cleared the roads

976

01:26:18,520 --> 01:26:23,320

while this you know ambulance took the canine all the way up to the the UF Shands here in

977

01:26:23,320 --> 01:26:28,040

Gainesville and sadly he passed away but he was given every single chance you know they

978

01:26:28,040 --> 01:26:31,760

were able to at least stabilize him up to that point but this you know these are the

979

01:26:31,760 --> 01:26:36,600

incredible you know dogs that serve in law enforcement and obviously in our military

980

01:26:36,600 --> 01:26:42,440

as well and you know to disband them because of you know comparing them to kind of Nazi

981

01:26:42,440 --> 01:26:46,240

Germany when when it's the opposite when you actually understand what they do they've saved

982

01:26:46,240 --> 01:26:51,600

so many you know criminals lives that given them a chance to you know to rehabilitate

983

01:26:51,600 --> 01:26:56,760

and hopefully have a full life versus as you said you know they just end up shooting because

984

01:26:56,760 --> 01:27:01,800

that's the only tool they've got yeah and I'd like to add to there it is the one use

985

01:27:01,800 --> 01:27:07,120

the force here to date that you can recall you know you can't you can't shoot a taser

986

01:27:07,120 --> 01:27:11,160

in midair the barbs you just retract them back because someone's hands go up in the

987

01:27:11,160 --> 01:27:17,080

air and so that is a unique factor of something where you can evaluate that is that is a good

988

01:27:17,080 --> 01:27:21,360

thing people should be able to surrender and they do all the time.

989

01:27:21,360 --> 01:27:25,880

One more tangent before we go to mental health what about fitness standards does your department

990

01:27:25,880 --> 01:27:33,080

actually hold a fitness standard no it's one of the one of my struggles and kind of pet

991

01:27:33,080 --> 01:27:40,640

peeves is I have a love hate relationship with unions and I while I would be terrified

992

01:27:40,640 --> 01:27:44,520

of working in a right to work kind of state where there's no union protection because

993

01:27:44,520 --> 01:27:52,360

of the things that those officers or firefighters may face is it allows this degree of protection

994

01:27:52,360 --> 01:27:57,000

for people that can't do the job honestly the way that they ought to do it and this

995

01:27:57,000 --> 01:28:02,980

is not to inject shame I know that there are those folks that kind of do put out shame

996

01:28:02,980 --> 01:28:10,520

and guilt from a first responder perspective my goal would be to to elevate it and provide

997

01:28:10,520 --> 01:28:17,280

all the resources to help people through that I love that my department has has pure fitness

998

01:28:17,280 --> 01:28:23,120

program right there's a group of us that are basic strength and conditioning coaches where

999

01:28:23,120 --> 01:28:28,820

we can meet with officers one on one we can meet them in small groups we can lead workouts

1000

01:28:28,820 --> 01:28:34,000

I think it's providing all the necessary resources to get people well but at the same time you

1001

01:28:34,000 --> 01:28:38,620

can look across the country and we know that there's a lot of people that are not ready

1002

01:28:38,620 --> 01:28:45,480

not fit for duty as it were from any first responder role and it's rolling the dice every

1003

01:28:45,480 --> 01:28:49,200

single day that they go out and that's not again to disparage them but that's just to

1004

01:28:49,200 --> 01:28:53,560

recognize like these are really high-stakes situations and we need to support our folks

1005

01:28:53,560 --> 01:28:59,280

to do that and peer support's a great segue into that I have the same relationship with

1006

01:28:59,280 --> 01:29:05,920

unions I was a union member of my whole career but 14 years I look back and when what's really

1007

01:29:05,920 --> 01:29:13,640

changed the workweek still absolutely blows we still don't have a nationwide fitness standard

1008

01:29:13,640 --> 01:29:17,600

you know the the mental health and the fire yes there are some people within our unions

1009

01:29:17,600 --> 01:29:23,640

that travel the country and do good things but as far as facilities we have one one facility

1010

01:29:23,640 --> 01:29:29,760

in the northeast of the country for a million firefighters so you know I I love the union

1011

01:29:29,760 --> 01:29:34,640

philosophy I do I think it makes perfect sense but I think there's a lot of self-serving

1012

01:29:34,640 --> 01:29:43,000

in unit unions and I have seen with my own eyes union you know leadership obviously opposing

1013

01:29:43,000 --> 01:29:47,920

fitness standards because they themselves couldn't fucking pass it you know in a year

1014

01:29:47,920 --> 01:29:53,480

from now if they train they're so fucking far from it so they've gone from serving the

1015

01:29:53,480 --> 01:29:58,640

people to serving themselves so that's where I have an issue with it the the crazy thing

1016

01:29:58,640 --> 01:30:03,820

is I've had numerous people from you know special forces special operations they clearly

1017

01:30:03,820 --> 01:30:08,120

have their own standards and you know once you fall below that you're off the team but

1018

01:30:08,120 --> 01:30:11,760

also ocean lifeguards you know and I was a lifeguard for a while not in the ocean but

1019

01:30:11,760 --> 01:30:16,920

in open water in pools and you know if you fail your swim test as a lifeguard that's

1020

01:30:16,920 --> 01:30:23,360

it you don't have your your certification anymore so it blows me away because they have

1021

01:30:23,360 --> 01:30:27,720

this all you're trying to take our jobs thing now I'm not saying about implementing a standard

1022

01:30:27,720 --> 01:30:32,040

tomorrow and everyone that can't cut it you just fire of course you have an on ramp of

1023

01:30:32,040 --> 01:30:38,760

fitness again but in a profession where lives are at stake in a profession where people

1024

01:30:38,760 --> 01:30:44,120

put punch three numbers on the telephone and whatever the hell it is we're going to show

1025

01:30:44,120 --> 01:30:49,040

up for them not to have fitness standards well I'm gonna have to strap a hundred pounds

1026

01:30:49,040 --> 01:30:55,320

of gear on me you know clothing and equipment and climb tens and tens of stairs before we

1027

01:30:55,320 --> 01:31:01,840

even go to work that I'm not held to a fitness standard is absolute insanity to me and then

1028

01:31:01,840 --> 01:31:07,000

in law enforcement these videos where you see these deconditioned officers you don't

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01:31:07,000 --> 01:31:10,640

have to be a genius to see how that then is a domino effect of mistakes that could be

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01:31:10,640 --> 01:31:17,120

fatal for themselves or someone they serve but also just layering this fitness conversation

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01:31:17,120 --> 01:31:21,700

the officers I've had on the show that are in great shape that you know are whatever

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01:31:21,700 --> 01:31:26,640

belt in jujitsu or you know whatever their thing is they're the ones that have the least

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01:31:26,640 --> 01:31:31,800

hand on hands-on interactions because there's also then that deterrent element to it as

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01:31:31,800 --> 01:31:35,360

well yeah yeah you keep your cool you're emotionally

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01:31:35,360 --> 01:31:39,880

regulated when you take care of things like exercise so yeah even beyond grappling and

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01:31:39,880 --> 01:31:46,040

these things that are so necessary and so beneficial if you just have some pretty decent

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01:31:46,040 --> 01:31:51,280

cardio you know you do a metcon every other week or you do some intervals or you lift

1038

01:31:51,280 --> 01:31:56,020

some weights casually right if it's social hour you will be more emotionally regulated

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01:31:56,020 --> 01:32:00,520

which is exactly the goal right for de-escalation talking people down and you're gonna have

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01:32:00,520 --> 01:32:04,120

a presence you're gonna have a confidence that you can handle yourself people won't

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01:32:04,120 --> 01:32:09,520

feel like they need to take a shot at the title which is a good thing and so yeah unions

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01:32:09,520 --> 01:32:14,320

are tough because yeah I agree like there's a way to maybe grandfather people in you have

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01:32:14,320 --> 01:32:19,360

this transitional period but even at least for law enforcement there's a lot of roles

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01:32:19,360 --> 01:32:24,260

especially medium to large-sized departments where you shouldn't have to do like let's

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01:32:24,260 --> 01:32:29,340

say you're 45 and you have a bum knee I'm not saying that you can't be a cop you could

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01:32:29,340 --> 01:32:33,000

be an investigator you could be all these things there should be some level of fitness

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01:32:33,000 --> 01:32:37,760

right because you never know what your job may entail but there truly are some roles

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01:32:37,760 --> 01:32:42,280

especially the bigger the departments go where you might not have to do exactly what the

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01:32:42,280 --> 01:32:49,200

20 24 to 28 year old patrol officer is doing however in my experience even unions will

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01:32:49,200 --> 01:32:53,760

fight that notion yeah you could do so much hiring civilians to do some of

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01:32:53,760 --> 01:32:59,600

this back office work but no that's police officer work right but so often in the nation

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01:32:59,600 --> 01:33:05,040

we're having such a shortage of police officers and yet we're fighting ourselves to relinquish

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01:33:05,040 --> 01:33:11,360

that work that we truly don't want to do anyway or have the bandwidth to do yeah no exactly

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01:33:11,360 --> 01:33:14,960

and I always I always frame it this way there's a phrase that's got knocked around the the

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01:33:14,960 --> 01:33:20,640

fire service a lot would you want you rescuing you and I totally understand that concept

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01:33:20,640 --> 01:33:26,000

but that's that's me I'm less worried about me how would you feel if your family died

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01:33:26,000 --> 01:33:31,280

because the rescuer hadn't trained so your family you live in a 10-story apartment building

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01:33:31,280 --> 01:33:35,480

and the firefighter tapped out on the fifth floor and your child died well the medic tapped

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01:33:35,480 --> 01:33:40,200

out and your child choked that's what we're talking about it's not about oh you're trying

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01:33:40,200 --> 01:33:45,240

to take our job this fucking job requires an elite level of fitness you are tactical

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01:33:45,240 --> 01:33:51,400

athletes so if it's not the right job for you beautiful fire prevention investigation

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01:33:51,400 --> 01:33:56,520

whatever your thing is I agree with you a thousand percent but you've got no business

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01:33:56,520 --> 01:34:02,000

being a frontline personnel in a profession where you might need to do a foot chase you

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01:34:02,000 --> 01:34:06,440

couldn't you couldn't track down that person then they walked into a school and shot 20

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01:34:06,440 --> 01:34:10,860

children just because you didn't fucking take your job seriously that is where the line

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01:34:10,860 --> 01:34:15,520

is between you know oh they're trying to take our jobs and is this the right person for

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01:34:15,520 --> 01:34:20,400

the job in the first place and this circles fully around to the recruitment now we're

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01:34:20,400 --> 01:34:25,320

letting the wrong person in the front door which is terrifying yeah and I think that

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01:34:25,320 --> 01:34:30,040

there's ways to build a culture and yes it won't be overnight but you should have abilities

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01:34:30,040 --> 01:34:35,920

to work out on duty and whereas some firefighters able to do that easier not all right if you're

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01:34:35,920 --> 01:34:40,400

in a busy department that's going to be an issue so really truly carving that out where

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01:34:40,400 --> 01:34:45,520

in your day to day or your week to week you are working out you're not accountable for

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01:34:45,520 --> 01:34:50,600

the radio you're not accountable to grab a call and truly if it's talking about rest

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01:34:50,600 --> 01:34:57,040

and rehabilitation it's shorter shorter shift work and it's true protected sleep for firefighters

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01:34:57,040 --> 01:35:01,920

and it's and it's more training and it's wrapping up all these things are going to help people

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01:35:01,920 --> 01:35:10,280

actually function well and be able to do all these things that are are expected of the

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01:35:10,280 --> 01:35:14,400

job and they won't be unreasonable asks right because you're providing them the time and

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01:35:14,400 --> 01:35:21,000

the resource and the support to do them one of my friends said blah blah who's a Canadian

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01:35:21,000 --> 01:35:26,720

Royal Man at least and he was said yeah amazing guy yeah he was saying you know say you have

1080

01:35:26,720 --> 01:35:31,680

a five day cycle of you know of shifts in law enforcement day five should be a training

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01:35:31,680 --> 01:35:37,200

day I love that that should be completely woven in now you don't have to think about

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01:35:37,200 --> 01:35:42,160

your combatives or defensive tactics or your fitness because every week you're going to

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01:35:42,160 --> 01:35:48,360

be doing you know exercise A and then operational skill B and it's just completely infused and

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01:35:48,360 --> 01:35:53,240

then again if that's from day one it becomes a culture and I think that's amazing but again

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01:35:53,240 --> 01:35:58,440

that involves proactively investing in the department and then we're talking about the

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01:35:58,440 --> 01:36:03,280

funding for the addiction element well think about how much money this country bleeds because

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01:36:03,280 --> 01:36:07,120

of the problems with all the crimes that we see on the street what if we took some of

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01:36:07,120 --> 01:36:12,080

that money put it on the front end we would save money hand over fist if we address some

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01:36:12,080 --> 01:36:17,200

of the you know the issues that our population suffers from same with law enforcement take

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01:36:17,200 --> 01:36:22,600

some of that money proactively build you know one of those days training day obviously again

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01:36:22,600 --> 01:36:27,640

needing to hire a few more people and now every single week or every single 10 days

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01:36:27,640 --> 01:36:32,520

or whatever it is those officers are getting that and it's it's part of the work week it's

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01:36:32,520 --> 01:36:39,120

what you do every single you know cycle yeah I love it and shout out to Seb I'm going to

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01:36:39,120 --> 01:36:45,200

do a little plug because it's just as much about Seb and Marc Bouchard but my recent episode 68 on

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01:36:45,200 --> 01:36:49,760

blue grit radio but we talk about agency culture leadership and wellness and where they all

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01:36:49,760 --> 01:36:56,000

intersect and I it is one of the episodes I'm most proud of truly as far as listening to it back and

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01:36:56,000 --> 01:37:00,480

going through it and they agreed I think it was such a collaborative effort for the three of us

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01:37:00,480 --> 01:37:05,760

to talk through these issues and take the gloves off a little bit but I drew do truly think that

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01:37:05,760 --> 01:37:11,360

it'd be so helpful for people regardless of their organization really all these all these things

1100

01:37:11,360 --> 01:37:16,720

that intersect and we need to talk about them absolutely well I want to go to mental health

1101

01:37:16,720 --> 01:37:22,400

then so again on the on the enduring the badge podcast I'm giving a lot of shout out today

1102

01:37:23,120 --> 01:37:27,520

you talked about peer support but I loved again a phrase it's just something that you said in

1103

01:37:27,520 --> 01:37:33,120

passing you were talking more about building a peer culture now that I think is is again

1104

01:37:33,120 --> 01:37:38,640

sometimes absent from this conversation we assign eight firefighters as our peer support people

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01:37:38,640 --> 01:37:44,080

all right let's check that box now we can move on Dana Ali was one of the the firefighters I have

1106

01:37:44,080 --> 01:37:48,560

from North Carolina she said the goal of you know the mental health conversation is one day you know

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01:37:48,560 --> 01:37:53,520

we won't need a peer support team anymore that everyone will be that and I think that's the

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01:37:53,520 --> 01:37:57,760

beautiful goal and I agree with her a thousand percent so talk to me about your perspective of

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01:37:57,760 --> 01:38:03,920

the peer support element yeah it's exactly that you build a culture of peer support so it's not

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01:38:03,920 --> 01:38:09,680

just who has peer next to their name or they have a little extra training but when you know

1111

01:38:09,680 --> 01:38:14,800

it's happening right people are checking in and it becomes irrelevant and that is the goal right

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01:38:14,800 --> 01:38:21,200

where kind of like you said everyone is just doing it I think we're getting to the point where I see

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01:38:21,200 --> 01:38:26,560

some agencies doing it and I see this happening in my own agency where I read about something in

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01:38:26,560 --> 01:38:31,280

an email when I'm off and I'm like man that's a significant incident just for the leadership that

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01:38:31,280 --> 01:38:37,040

you know we're kind of brought in for awareness and then I reach out to the peer support contacts

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01:38:37,040 --> 01:38:42,000

on that crew or the sergeant I'm like hey how's everyone doing like oh we hashed it out we talked

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01:38:42,000 --> 01:38:46,880

about in the briefing it was really good like I don't need to know details but just the fact that

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01:38:46,880 --> 01:38:51,040

I know that there's a couple peer representatives in the room and they're talking about it at their

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01:38:51,040 --> 01:38:57,280

daily roll call and these officers are a little bit more tenured and there's a bunch of new people

1120

01:38:57,280 --> 01:39:02,560

in the room and they're simply unpacking it they're simply bringing awareness and acknowledgement to

1121

01:39:02,560 --> 01:39:09,280

this thing this call was really crappy that thing with the kid is super depressing and I'm kind of

1122

01:39:09,280 --> 01:39:15,600

messed up over it just saying that in a small group or individually or in a room it removes the

1123

01:39:15,600 --> 01:39:20,480

stigma right it's exactly what Mark Bouchard talks about in our episode right he just really

1124

01:39:20,480 --> 01:39:24,560

right he just released a book called setting my sights on stigma and he comes from an emergency

1125

01:39:24,560 --> 01:39:29,200

response team background right so it's like literally put it in your sniper sights to destroy

1126

01:39:29,200 --> 01:39:35,040

that stigma so the more we beat the drum and just we just socialize it we have more and more and more

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01:39:35,040 --> 01:39:40,000

conversations about it we have more and more and more conversations about how we need to have

1128

01:39:40,000 --> 01:39:46,080

conversations my goal is it for it to be redundant where I bring a peer support right just check in

1129

01:39:46,080 --> 01:39:50,320

they're like oh yeah thanks boss like eight people have already checked in on me and I got to talk to

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01:39:50,320 --> 01:39:55,920

my therapist this friday I'm like cool awesome right you know I'm wearing my hat and it says

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01:39:55,920 --> 01:40:00,560

Ken it has it's not really affiliated with my workplace but it is directly intertwined but it's

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01:40:00,560 --> 01:40:08,240

for my buddy who was killed in duty and Diego and so that that informed so much of my story

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01:40:08,240 --> 01:40:14,720

and why I look at peer support the way I do and I was a member of the team of my department for

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01:40:14,720 --> 01:40:20,800

years and I like to think that's because I'm an approachable guy I you know like I said earlier

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01:40:20,800 --> 01:40:25,200

I'm not I don't run from my feelings but the same time it wasn't until Diego's death that

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01:40:25,760 --> 01:40:31,120

I was really having to go under the microscope where I was such an advocate for mental health

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01:40:31,120 --> 01:40:36,240

awareness I was such an advocate for seeking resources but I never went to talk to a therapist

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01:40:36,240 --> 01:40:43,600

outside of getting hired on for my psych exam like a psychiatrist so really it was just over

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01:40:43,600 --> 01:40:48,960

and over you know I was revisiting this this process and losing a friend talking through it

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01:40:48,960 --> 01:40:55,520

daily with my wife and it was my close friends that said hey I think you should talk to somebody

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01:40:55,520 --> 01:41:01,120

and I'm like yeah I appreciate that I'm good they're like no no like you really need to talk

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01:41:01,120 --> 01:41:08,640

to somebody so I share that story because it might be the advocate that's saying all these things and

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01:41:08,640 --> 01:41:14,480

beating the drum but oftentimes we do see in the peer support circles a lot of folks aren't taking

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01:41:14,480 --> 01:41:19,520

care of themselves they're so focused on others which is exactly in line with the caretaker

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01:41:20,320 --> 01:41:26,640

caregiver culture in first responder work and so it is to say we all need it and we just need to

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01:41:26,640 --> 01:41:33,200

be having the conversation more and more. If you want to tell me who Diego was let's kind of share

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01:41:33,200 --> 01:41:41,680

his story a little bit. Yeah Diego is kind of a legend at this point he's he was larger than life

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01:41:41,680 --> 01:41:49,200

but he was he was the cop that when he was killed laying out spike strips in our city after

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01:41:50,560 --> 01:41:55,120

there was a group that was shooting at another group and they're trying to get that car but

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01:41:55,920 --> 01:42:01,520

he found himself in the road it wasn't clear traffic which is a very deadly thing. I hate

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01:42:01,520 --> 01:42:05,440

spike strips I was close to telling my guys I didn't want them to put them out when I was a

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01:42:05,440 --> 01:42:12,720

sergeant but that's not right either right but a lot of cops get killed laying out spike strips

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01:42:12,720 --> 01:42:20,000

in the road but essentially you know we were super close friends for years you know he was

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01:42:20,000 --> 01:42:26,800

at my wedding we went to bachelor parties together we traveled we our families interacted we saw

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01:42:26,800 --> 01:42:33,120

movies we went to breweries we did all the things right and there was a really close group of us but

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01:42:33,120 --> 01:42:39,040

he was one of those guys that when he was lost like a bunch of people felt like they lost their

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01:42:39,040 --> 01:42:43,280

best friend because he was the guy that made everyone feel like they were his best friend

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01:42:45,440 --> 01:42:50,960

but a lot of what I look at Diego's legacy and how what it's meant for my career is

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01:42:50,960 --> 01:42:57,840

doing the things that I didn't feel comfortable with or competent in which were things like

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01:42:57,840 --> 01:43:02,880

community engagement which are things like public speaking which are things like spending time with

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01:43:02,880 --> 01:43:07,120

kids at schools like all these things that I talk about and I try to make so much about

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01:43:07,440 --> 01:43:12,240

how I want to do the job and how I want to be a member of the community and how I want to be a dad

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01:43:12,240 --> 01:43:18,400

are inspired by him they're inspired by his legacy and his inspiration and there are things that I

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01:43:18,400 --> 01:43:25,600

just truly recognized how significant they were how inspiring and how important they are how

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01:43:25,600 --> 01:43:31,040

crucial they are even though I wasn't that kind of cop you know when we lost him I was like man we

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01:43:31,040 --> 01:43:36,640

need more cops like that and the little I can do is try to measure up to a little piece of that

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01:43:37,360 --> 01:43:43,360

and it's directly related with you know me doing what I'm doing on social media like that wasn't me

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01:43:43,360 --> 01:43:48,880

I didn't interact with cops on social media and now it's become such a rewarding thing to be

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01:43:49,680 --> 01:43:56,400

connecting with people like yourself that are in this but for him he loved to network and he knew

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01:43:56,400 --> 01:44:03,280

so many cops outside the region whereas I was just kind of in my little bubble so to speak a little

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01:44:03,280 --> 01:44:12,320

bit more personally about about him yeah it was such a it was such a surreal thing but you know I

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01:44:12,320 --> 01:44:18,480

actually posted a picture of selfie with the two of us just yesterday and I got a couple messages

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01:44:18,480 --> 01:44:23,760

which were very very warming and very supportive but people like oh praying for you thinking about

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01:44:23,760 --> 01:44:30,640

you I was like now I think about him it's it's all positive right it's when I post a picture I'm not

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01:44:30,640 --> 01:44:37,600

in a sad place I'm in a very happy place in a very grateful place well thank you for sharing that I

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01:44:37,600 --> 01:44:42,320

mean this is this is a great opportunity when we we have conversations like this is to just you know

1177

01:44:42,320 --> 01:44:48,080

story tell about who someone was and then carry on that legacy a little bit talk to me about

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01:44:48,880 --> 01:44:53,120

your social media just talked about instagram a second ago because obviously we've pulled some

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01:44:53,120 --> 01:44:58,240

issues out of the shadows into the light but this show is all about solutions it's not about just

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01:44:58,240 --> 01:45:04,320

talking shit and then walking away and you've managed to curate your social media in a very

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01:45:04,320 --> 01:45:08,240

positive way and I think this is the issue when people say oh it's so negative that well you're

1182

01:45:08,240 --> 01:45:11,840

you know you're looking in the wrong places you're putting the wrong things in the funnel

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01:45:11,840 --> 01:45:16,000

in the beginning you know so when I scroll through mine you know it's obviously a lot of

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01:45:16,000 --> 01:45:21,360

first responder stories but it's you know kind of stories and you know charitable things and it's

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01:45:21,360 --> 01:45:25,760

beautiful you know and it's not an echo chamber I'm just choosing to to look at the good things

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01:45:25,760 --> 01:45:30,880

in the world that are that are human beings so what was your introduction to create in

1187

01:45:30,880 --> 01:45:35,760

initially the page and then I think it's interesting as well we talked a while ago

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01:45:35,760 --> 01:45:39,600

talk to me about the support from your department because a lot of departments will shut down

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01:45:39,600 --> 01:45:45,280

social media which again branding the fire service now you know a lot of our voices are

1190

01:45:45,280 --> 01:45:51,600

are not able to get out there and show the good that we do in uniform yeah so my social media

1191

01:45:51,600 --> 01:45:59,040

really took off you know Diego died in 2018 and it made me a little bit more comfortable posting on

1192

01:45:59,040 --> 01:46:05,680

my own social media so that was my own personal page my facebook and in 2020 the type of adversity

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01:46:05,680 --> 01:46:12,560

we faced I just found myself using it as an outlet and a sharing of my own anecdote and

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01:46:12,560 --> 01:46:19,440

speaking from the place where a lot of cops felt which was equally frustrated with the state of

1195

01:46:19,440 --> 01:46:25,840

the nation and equally hurting and wanting to say hey the majority of us are here for you we're here

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01:46:25,840 --> 01:46:31,440

for each other and we're just trying to do the best we can and I found a lot of comfort in sharing

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01:46:31,440 --> 01:46:36,720

that in a public way and I got a lot of positive response right I had really positive response from

1198

01:46:36,720 --> 01:46:40,880

people that I grew up with people that I went to college with that either didn't know I was a cop

1199

01:46:40,880 --> 01:46:46,080

or just kind of wrote me off because they didn't like cops and they're like man like you're you're

1200

01:46:46,080 --> 01:46:50,400

a good dude I've known you for so many years and I knew what you're about I remember you from you

1201

01:46:50,400 --> 01:46:57,200

know back when you're scrawny little shy eric and like we need more cops like you and that felt like

1202

01:46:57,200 --> 01:47:01,440

nice for a second but then it really just got me more frustrated because I was like if you only knew

1203

01:47:01,440 --> 01:47:06,960

if you only knew what most police officers were like because I'm just me like I'm I'm good at a

1204

01:47:06,960 --> 01:47:10,800

couple things but I'm pretty mediocre cop but there are some of these people that would never

1205

01:47:10,800 --> 01:47:15,440

be on social media because they're too busy working overtime cracking cases trying to get justice for

1206

01:47:15,440 --> 01:47:21,520

family with a murdered loved one like I'm not that guy that's that guy or that gal and so then I felt

1207

01:47:21,520 --> 01:47:28,160

emboldened to explore a little bit more on social media I started a blog blue grit wellness.com

1208

01:47:28,160 --> 01:47:33,680

which is pretty inactive now because the instagram is where I'm at most of the time but yeah just

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01:47:33,680 --> 01:47:40,560

blue grit wellness and it started from a place of just wanting to put positive content out and where

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01:47:40,560 --> 01:47:45,760

I felt that it can make the most difference was just trying to inspire first responders and non

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01:47:45,760 --> 01:47:52,000

just to adopt slightly healthier lifestyles you know where I reflect on my own career my points

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01:47:52,000 --> 01:47:58,160

of cynicism or loneliness were when my health practices weren't great and so learning about so

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01:47:58,160 --> 01:48:04,960

much of that in the grind learning about sleep issues or sleep habits that are helpful because

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01:48:04,960 --> 01:48:09,920

of my sleep issues was a thing and so I try to share that out and fitness and nutrition these

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01:48:09,920 --> 01:48:15,120

are all things that I learned from being a cop and having to learn them or else I would not be

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01:48:15,920 --> 01:48:19,280

functioning well I would not be optimized and I feel like I'm pretty close to that

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01:48:20,000 --> 01:48:24,880

in the last handful of years although I do have my dips right and sometimes that's stress sometimes

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01:48:24,880 --> 01:48:30,480

that interacts with different facets of my life you know I've been a dad for going on five years

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01:48:30,480 --> 01:48:34,960

now and so fatherhood and being a parent and showing up and not being distracted like that's

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01:48:35,520 --> 01:48:38,800

that's part of the things I'm constantly reflecting on working on so I share that out

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01:48:38,800 --> 01:48:45,280

and also intersections with my job so being in hiring recruiting for almost two years until the

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01:48:45,280 --> 01:48:49,680

last few months like that's what I was posting about all the time right hiring standards lowering

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01:48:49,680 --> 01:48:54,560

I post about it seeing people doing things the right way like hosting classes essentially that

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01:48:54,560 --> 01:48:59,200

mentorship we talked about earlier I talk about it and I post about it at the same time just

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01:48:59,200 --> 01:49:04,800

sharing a little bit about what that perspective is like for a cop and then starting the podcast

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01:49:04,800 --> 01:49:10,320

a little bit more than a year ago a blue grit radio which is just to have these types of quality

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01:49:10,320 --> 01:49:15,760

conversations right so long form you can really dive into these things that we just need more of

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01:49:15,760 --> 01:49:21,760

which is wellness but it leads directly into leadership and culture and first responder work

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01:49:21,760 --> 01:49:26,320

and then without right so there's industry professionals from the healthcare space or just

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01:49:26,320 --> 01:49:32,560

from mindset or from self-care what have you because it's all important it's all some stuff

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01:49:32,560 --> 01:49:39,360

that we need a lot more of absolutely no it's that's just it I mean there are so many people

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01:49:39,360 --> 01:49:44,320

that are needing help and I've talked about this in the past a couple of times people have said

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01:49:44,320 --> 01:49:48,720

they wanted to start podcasts and they say to me I don't want to tread on your toes and you know I

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01:49:48,720 --> 01:49:53,760

tell them oh firstly I didn't invent the podcast so that in itself is ridiculous but secondly

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01:49:54,640 --> 01:49:58,880

the more there are out there the more people are going to find the right fit they might want to you

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01:49:58,880 --> 01:50:03,440

know they might want to hear someone with this background or you know small agency a large agency

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01:50:03,440 --> 01:50:09,600

or this ethnicity or whatever it is you know the fact that there's more and more and more podcasts

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01:50:09,600 --> 01:50:15,760

and documentaries and you know knowledge sharing without any kind of ulterior motive I think is

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01:50:15,760 --> 01:50:20,640

incredible and so I commend you on starting the podcast too because I mean Seb Lavoie for example

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01:50:20,640 --> 01:50:26,960

an amazing human being but you are then able to disseminate all this information and it's not just

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01:50:26,960 --> 01:50:30,400

your area I mean people around the world can listen to your podcast and access it.

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01:50:31,520 --> 01:50:37,440

No I appreciate that and I did have that degree of I think it was one part imposter syndrome and

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01:50:37,440 --> 01:50:41,360

then another part because I am in the space so I'm like man there's so many people I admire the

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01:50:41,360 --> 01:50:46,960

crap out of that are doing this work such as yourself right but going back to Mark he was

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01:50:46,960 --> 01:50:52,080

working on his book that's not finished when we initially connected and chatted a couple years ago

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01:50:52,080 --> 01:50:57,440

but he was like man it doesn't matter whether it's your blog or my book or your Instagram or

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01:50:57,440 --> 01:51:02,640

your podcast like someone might read my words and have like nothing to do with it and someone might

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01:51:02,640 --> 01:51:08,800

hear you and be all about it and conversely the same right I like to think that maybe I can help

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01:51:08,800 --> 01:51:14,640

distill down what Seb says into like more normal brain because half the stuff he says I gotta listen

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01:51:14,640 --> 01:51:19,840

to it again because I was like you're blowing my mind with the level of the level of genius I just

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01:51:19,840 --> 01:51:24,320

called him that and he's of course so humble to kind of swat it away but I'm like no literally

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01:51:24,320 --> 01:51:29,760

like what you say is like truth bombs and I'm just trying to catch up in this conversation so

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01:51:29,760 --> 01:51:35,760

yeah we just need more and again if we can help this goal to be redundant then we'll succeed but

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01:51:35,760 --> 01:51:42,160

we got a long way to go. Absolutely well speaking of books you mentioned about Mark's book is there

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01:51:42,160 --> 01:51:46,240

a book or are there books that you love to recommend it can be related to our discussion

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01:51:46,240 --> 01:51:55,600

today or completely unrelated? Yeah there is one of the ones that I'm revisiting a lot is

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01:51:56,880 --> 01:52:03,680

the daily stoic and I just got the dad version of that right so Ryan Holliday and it just focuses

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01:52:03,680 --> 01:52:09,600

again on stoic philosophy because I think that those are some of the most tangible things where

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01:52:09,600 --> 01:52:14,320

you could read a line or passage you know whether it's a day or every couple days or you read a

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01:52:14,320 --> 01:52:21,200

couple but it's such a tangible low-hanging fruit to focus on and I love reading you know truly I

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01:52:21,200 --> 01:52:26,880

love reading things outside of our industry too. I'm trying to get more into fiction because I'm

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01:52:26,880 --> 01:52:31,280

typically the type that's like no I gotta I gotta learn something right now but whether it's

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01:52:31,280 --> 01:52:37,200

consuming podcasts across industries learning from leadership in the private sector has been

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01:52:37,200 --> 01:52:42,240

really helpful for me to adopt into police culture because we just see things differently

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01:52:42,240 --> 01:52:47,040

but at the end of the day it's just people right we're just we're just learning to work better and

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01:52:47,040 --> 01:52:52,160

communicate better with people so that's what I try to do as far as what I write about in Police

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01:52:52,160 --> 01:52:59,200

One and try to put out for those that are wanting to kind of take take things in from a different

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01:52:59,200 --> 01:53:04,400

angle. Brilliant what about movies and documentaries any of those that you love?

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01:53:04,400 --> 01:53:13,440

So many so many you know I really love movies with you know that sense of sacrifice right

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01:53:13,440 --> 01:53:19,840

brotherhood I was just talking about this recently with somebody Luke Goodish so shout out to him but

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01:53:20,640 --> 01:53:25,280

you know Banda Brothers, Saving Private Ryan I think that they just have this call to

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01:53:25,280 --> 01:53:29,360

service and being about something bigger than yourself and sacrifice and brotherhood.

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01:53:29,360 --> 01:53:36,480

I have a soft spot for any any story with some family adversity you know of course there's so

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01:53:36,480 --> 01:53:44,880

many because so many people have experienced that. As far as documentaries I didn't grow up playing

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01:53:44,880 --> 01:53:51,280

sports but I'm so fascinated with sports psychology and looking at the difference between winners and

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01:53:51,280 --> 01:53:56,880

those that don't win right like in what it takes to build a team through coaching and so that it's

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01:53:56,880 --> 01:54:02,880

such a great time as supposed to be alive and have access to documentaries about athleticism

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01:54:02,880 --> 01:54:09,360

because you really see how mindset informs that and how communication makes the difference or the

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01:54:09,360 --> 01:54:13,360

team right behind the team behind the cyclists like it's not just the guy on the bike it's

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01:54:13,360 --> 01:54:20,240

everyone else around them. Absolutely what about great people is there a person that you'd recommend

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01:54:20,240 --> 01:54:25,360

to come on this podcast as a guest to speak to the first responders military and associated

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01:54:25,360 --> 01:54:34,160

professions of the world? That's good that's a good question you got Seb. Oh you have you've had

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01:54:34,160 --> 01:54:42,320

Sean Taylors too right? Yes. Yeah I just I found that with Satch and oh man like that introduced

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01:54:42,320 --> 01:54:46,880

such a different angle to two gentlemen that I've I've heard and I've spoken to and I've

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01:54:46,880 --> 01:54:51,600

interviewed myself and you're putting me on the spot because people are like why are you saying me?

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01:54:51,600 --> 01:54:57,440

Why are you saying me? You can get back to me down the road a lot of people do. I will I will.

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01:54:57,440 --> 01:55:01,600

All right then last question before we make sure everyone knows where to find all the platforms

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01:55:01,600 --> 01:55:10,320

that you have what do you do to decompress? That's great what I've been doing to decompress

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01:55:10,320 --> 01:55:16,320

is going out in nature I think that's one of the sometimes someone like myself it's hard

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01:55:16,320 --> 01:55:20,720

especially building social media and all these platforms right where it feels like another job

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01:55:20,720 --> 01:55:27,120

and it's directly related to the job so taking my dog out and leaving the phone if I'm not going

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01:55:27,120 --> 01:55:33,440

super far that's that's kind of a struggle but having some boundaries or limits saying say hey

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01:55:33,440 --> 01:55:38,880

I'm not I don't need to be anywhere right now so I'm having this phone literally for emergency but

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01:55:38,880 --> 01:55:44,560

also the new challenge is not listening to something right because there's so many awesome

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01:55:44,560 --> 01:55:51,920

podcasts and so much to learn or even music but just to be is the new challenge. I'm gonna do one

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01:55:51,920 --> 01:56:00,480

more shout out Joey 9mm Musashi but his challenge was to throw in journaling right and even use a

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01:56:00,480 --> 01:56:05,680

fountain pen because it forces you to slow down and focus on calligraphy and I'm like a chicken

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01:56:05,680 --> 01:56:10,960

scratch guy like so if I have thoughts and I can't I can't even read my notes so just to slow down

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01:56:10,960 --> 01:56:18,400

slow down in whatever way you can hang out with my family my wife and my daughter that's that's the

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01:56:18,400 --> 01:56:25,600

stuff. Brilliant what about places to find you so where can people find the Instagram page where

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01:56:25,600 --> 01:56:32,080

can they find the podcasts and are there any other areas? Yeah the big thing is blue grit wellness

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01:56:32,080 --> 01:56:38,320

one word on Instagram blue grit radio that's on all your major players YouTube's just the audio

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01:56:38,320 --> 01:56:46,240

but if you can subscribe subscribe that's fantastic blue grit radio sorry blue grit wellness.com is the

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01:56:46,240 --> 01:56:51,920

blog and it has links to the other things how you can get in contact with me and my emails on there

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01:56:53,200 --> 01:56:57,760

brilliant well Eric I want to say thank you so much we've been all over the place like when I

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01:56:57,760 --> 01:57:03,840

listened to you in the in the podcast that I did listen to I could see yeah the compassion and the

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01:57:03,840 --> 01:57:07,760

empathy in there and it was interesting because you know you were very adamant on the fact that

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01:57:07,760 --> 01:57:14,000

you had highs and lows when it came to that area too but going from the mental health to you know

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01:57:14,000 --> 01:57:18,960

addiction and the physical standards in our professions it's been an incredible conversation

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01:57:18,960 --> 01:57:23,200

so I want to thank you so much for being so generous with your time and coming on the podcast

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01:57:23,200 --> 01:57:28,400

today. No thank you man I really appreciate it I love the work you're doing and I'm I'm

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01:57:28,400 --> 01:57:40,880

very grateful that we're able to connect.