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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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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

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

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

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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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00:01:33,120 --> 00:01:36,240

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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

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

Titro and Wes Barnett.

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00:01:45,560 --> 00:01:46,960

Welcome to the Behind the Shield podcast.

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00:01:46,960 --> 00:01:50,720

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

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00:01:50,720 --> 00:01:58,760

the show British military veteran, conservationist and the subject of the documentary Wildcat,

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00:01:58,760 --> 00:01:59,760

Harry Turner.

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00:01:59,760 --> 00:02:05,600

Now, in this incredibly powerful conversation, we discuss a host of topics from Harry's early

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00:02:05,600 --> 00:02:12,880

life, his journey into the military, the PTSD that he brought home from Afghanistan, his

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00:02:12,880 --> 00:02:19,360

mental health struggle, his trip to Peru, the making of the documentary and so much

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00:02:19,360 --> 00:02:20,360

more.

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00:02:20,360 --> 00:02:24,760

Before we get to this incredibly powerful and important conversation, as I say every

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00:02:24,760 --> 00:02:30,040

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

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00:02:30,040 --> 00:02:33,880

show, leave feedback and leave a rating.

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00:02:33,880 --> 00:02:39,360

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

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00:02:39,360 --> 00:02:40,960

others to find.

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00:02:40,960 --> 00:02:46,320

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

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00:02:46,320 --> 00:02:52,000

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

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00:02:52,000 --> 00:02:57,640

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

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00:02:57,640 --> 00:03:02,560

So with that being said, I introduce to you Harry Turner.

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00:03:02,560 --> 00:03:22,680

Enjoy.

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00:03:22,680 --> 00:03:25,040

Well Harry, I want to start by saying two things.

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00:03:25,040 --> 00:03:29,760

Firstly, thank you to John from Silver Spear for connecting us and secondly, to welcome

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00:03:29,760 --> 00:03:32,120

you onto the Behind the Shield podcast today.

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00:03:32,120 --> 00:03:34,080

Yeah, thank you very much, James.

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00:03:34,080 --> 00:03:40,960

I just was on a podcast the other day with John and I enjoy kind of like meeting new

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00:03:40,960 --> 00:03:44,440

people just via this kind of like networking.

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00:03:44,440 --> 00:03:45,760

So it's great.

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00:03:45,760 --> 00:03:49,320

How did your paths cross in the first place, yours and John's?

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00:03:49,320 --> 00:03:55,640

So I believe that he watched the documentary, reached out to me and said, look, I watched

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00:03:55,640 --> 00:03:58,320

the film, loved it.

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00:03:58,320 --> 00:04:00,200

Do you mind coming on the podcast?

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00:04:00,200 --> 00:04:07,280

And I jumped on the podcast with him and then he was doing a tour with Shine Down and he

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00:04:07,280 --> 00:04:09,760

said, we're going to be over in Spokane.

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00:04:09,760 --> 00:04:14,440

And because I've just recently bought a house here in Washington state, he was like, if

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00:04:14,440 --> 00:04:18,120

you're, if you can get there, great, like come and hang out with the band and come and

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00:04:18,120 --> 00:04:19,120

hang out with me.

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00:04:19,120 --> 00:04:25,080

And so I went over there with my wife and he gave her a bunch of tequila and I had to

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00:04:25,080 --> 00:04:26,080

drive home.

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00:04:26,080 --> 00:04:32,880

But yeah, we met then and then just kept in touch and yeah, he's just a super great guy.

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00:04:32,880 --> 00:04:40,680

And he's got a lot of really cool stories and his background is very complicated and

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00:04:40,680 --> 00:04:45,560

there's just like so much kind of depth into him that it's just kind of like a book that

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00:04:45,560 --> 00:04:48,200

just keeps on kind of giving, you know?

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00:04:48,200 --> 00:04:49,200

Yeah.

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00:04:49,200 --> 00:04:53,320

And he is, I mean, when I reached out, it was about something else as a musician called

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00:04:53,320 --> 00:04:59,440

Jelly Roll who just did an amazing speech in DC about addiction and the fentanyl crisis.

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00:04:59,440 --> 00:05:03,480

And I reached out to him knowing he's well embedded in the music industry to see if he

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00:05:03,480 --> 00:05:04,560

had any connections.

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00:05:04,560 --> 00:05:08,160

But in our conversation, he's like, well, I know someone who you need to get on the

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00:05:08,160 --> 00:05:09,360

show and it was you.

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00:05:09,360 --> 00:05:10,360

So here we are.

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00:05:10,360 --> 00:05:13,320

It's a very generous man.

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00:05:13,320 --> 00:05:16,400

So you mentioned Washington, is that where we're finding you now?

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00:05:16,400 --> 00:05:17,400

Yes.

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00:05:17,400 --> 00:05:20,360

So I'm over in the Pacific Northwest.

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00:05:20,360 --> 00:05:24,040

Really grew up in the UK, as you can tell from my accent.

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00:05:24,040 --> 00:05:29,520

And I kind of moved over to the US a few years ago.

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00:05:29,520 --> 00:05:31,280

I got married last year.

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So I'm in actually the process of my green card at the minute, which is taking a very

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00:05:35,640 --> 00:05:37,920

long time.

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00:05:37,920 --> 00:05:41,600

It's just kind of one of the things you just got to kind of roll with the punches with

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00:05:41,600 --> 00:05:42,600

it.

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00:05:42,600 --> 00:05:50,120

But yeah, it's kind of annoying and stressful just kind of being in limbo with the US kind

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00:05:50,120 --> 00:05:51,120

of government.

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00:05:51,120 --> 00:05:56,600

But at the same time, I want to be settling my roots in the Pacific Northwest here with

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00:05:56,600 --> 00:06:01,640

my wife and with my nonprofit, we're going to be doing a lot of stuff down in Ecuador.

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00:06:01,640 --> 00:06:04,160

And so it's a good place to kind of be.

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00:06:04,160 --> 00:06:08,160

I can be in North America and super close to South America as well.

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00:06:08,160 --> 00:06:09,160

Beautiful.



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00:06:09,160 --> 00:06:12,640

Yeah, I came to the US in 2002.

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00:06:12,640 --> 00:06:16,120

And yes, my application took a lot longer.

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00:06:16,120 --> 00:06:17,920

I think people realize how expensive it is.

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00:06:17,920 --> 00:06:22,800

So when there's a lot of demonization of the illegal immigration, we came from a pretty

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00:06:22,800 --> 00:06:25,680

affluent country when you compare the entire world.

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00:06:25,680 --> 00:06:31,260

But to come here and jump through all the hoops, you need a lot of money, you need sponsors

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00:06:31,260 --> 00:06:32,400

and all these kind of things.

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00:06:32,400 --> 00:06:37,920

So it's understandable if you are in Haiti or Mexico or somewhere and are just desperate,

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00:06:37,920 --> 00:06:40,080

it gives you a little bit more compassion.

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00:06:40,080 --> 00:06:41,080

Doesn't mean it's right.

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00:06:41,080 --> 00:06:42,560

Doesn't mean that we should open up borders.

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00:06:42,560 --> 00:06:46,800

However, it does give you some compassion when you've been through it, coming from a

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00:06:46,800 --> 00:06:52,080

great foundation to the fact that it would be almost impossible if you were from a poorer

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00:06:52,080 --> 00:06:53,080

nation.

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00:06:53,080 --> 00:06:54,080

Oh, absolutely.

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00:06:54,080 --> 00:07:00,440

And I can only imagine coming in 2002 with the disaster which happened in 2001 with the

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00:07:00,440 --> 00:07:07,640

US, that application must have taken three or four times longer than usual.

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00:07:07,640 --> 00:07:14,360

The issue that I'm finding right now with my visa is that post pandemic is people are

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00:07:14,360 --> 00:07:17,400

still catching up in the system.

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00:07:17,400 --> 00:07:22,880

And so, whereas before it could have been 12 to 14 months waiting and then you might

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00:07:22,880 --> 00:07:29,880

have to go in for a few interviews and meetings, I'm coming up on 12 months now and I have

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00:07:29,880 --> 00:07:30,880

zero idea.

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00:07:30,880 --> 00:07:31,880

I don't have a work visa.

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00:07:31,880 --> 00:07:34,600

I don't have a travel visa.

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00:07:34,600 --> 00:07:39,080

I'm honestly stuck here for the time being.

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00:07:39,080 --> 00:07:45,720

And so, yeah, I'm just playing it day by day and just getting through it.

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00:07:45,720 --> 00:07:50,040

Well, we're going to get into your mental health journey, but just to jump ahead while

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00:07:50,040 --> 00:07:53,040

we're talking about now, it's funny.

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00:07:53,040 --> 00:07:57,960

The one thing that the pandemic did, whatever people's perspective and I mean, to me, the

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00:07:57,960 --> 00:07:59,800

middle ground is where the truth is.

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00:07:59,800 --> 00:08:05,040

It was a real virus, but it was also reliant on the health or ill health of the people

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00:08:05,040 --> 00:08:08,520

on how we fared with that virus.

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00:08:08,520 --> 00:08:10,960

But what ended up happening was a loss of autonomy.

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00:08:10,960 --> 00:08:13,200

A lot of people were told to stay in their homes.

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00:08:13,200 --> 00:08:18,280

The places where they would healthily decompress were closed down.

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00:08:18,280 --> 00:08:24,680

And there is a real stress from the loss of autonomy that can be very detrimental to our

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00:08:24,680 --> 00:08:25,840

mental health.

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00:08:25,840 --> 00:08:31,000

Now you find yourself in this immigration kind of middle space.

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00:08:31,000 --> 00:08:35,640

Has that had any kind of negative effect that you can't just pack up and pursue the things

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00:08:35,640 --> 00:08:38,680

that you want to pursue at the moment?

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00:08:38,680 --> 00:08:43,680

My mental health has definitely been affected in this kind of phase of limbo.

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00:08:43,680 --> 00:08:49,160

But ultimately, I'm trapped in a country which has so much diversity.

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00:08:49,160 --> 00:08:56,840

And for me, one of my main passions growing up and everything was reptiles and amphibians.

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00:08:56,840 --> 00:08:57,840

I love snakes.

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00:08:57,840 --> 00:08:58,840

I love lizards.

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00:08:58,840 --> 00:08:59,840

I love frogs.

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00:08:59,840 --> 00:09:01,620

You know, like that was like my thing.

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00:09:01,620 --> 00:09:08,720

So being in the US, I can go anywhere really and find cool animals.

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00:09:08,720 --> 00:09:10,760

And I know that you're in Florida now.

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00:09:10,760 --> 00:09:19,000

I was just in Florida at the end of last year and which was only a month and a half ago.

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00:09:19,000 --> 00:09:23,760

But the end of last year I was there and I was with one of my friends down there.

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00:09:23,760 --> 00:09:27,840

I've been there a few times now and I was helping out with different camera trap projects

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00:09:27,840 --> 00:09:35,280

and just went down there and I had that freedom to because I was still in the US.

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00:09:35,280 --> 00:09:40,280

And I've got some great friends in Arizona and I go down to Arizona as well.

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00:09:40,280 --> 00:09:47,680

So I get these breaks away from the kind of like hustle and bustle of the city.

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00:09:47,680 --> 00:09:52,760

I'm a little bit further north than Seattle, but still I'm in like there's traffic and

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00:09:52,760 --> 00:09:58,080

there's fireworks going off and there's all these different things.

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00:09:58,080 --> 00:10:03,880

And so I do to some degree feel a little bit trapped here, but at the same time I have

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00:10:03,880 --> 00:10:05,720

the mountains super close by.

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00:10:05,720 --> 00:10:11,920

In summer there's some incredible hikes and there's some just incredible scenery around

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00:10:11,920 --> 00:10:13,520

here.

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00:10:13,520 --> 00:10:19,920

And I'm making a good connection with like some good people here and friendship groups.

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00:10:19,920 --> 00:10:24,640

And it definitely has been a little bit tricky here.

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00:10:24,640 --> 00:10:25,640

Making friends.

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00:10:25,640 --> 00:10:33,040

I'm a Brit that basically loves animals more than people and I love being outdoors a lot

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00:10:33,040 --> 00:10:39,160

more than the majority of these Seahawks and Mariners fans.

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00:10:39,160 --> 00:10:45,480

It's one of these things where it is a tricky kind of thing to try and make friends at,

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00:10:45,480 --> 00:10:50,360

you know, I'm 30 years old with just, you know, kind of newer people.

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00:10:50,360 --> 00:10:56,160

But I'm fortunate that my wife, she has a very good friend group here and a very good

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00:10:56,160 --> 00:10:58,300

family unit here.

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00:10:58,300 --> 00:11:05,080

And so becoming and having fun with these friends and some of these people, it's been

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00:11:05,080 --> 00:11:06,080

fairly easy.

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00:11:06,080 --> 00:11:11,900

But I am very fortunate with being in the US, being able to travel to different states

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00:11:11,900 --> 00:11:16,960

and see different landscapes and animals and being incredible people.

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00:11:16,960 --> 00:11:18,480

I can relate to that.

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00:11:18,480 --> 00:11:23,680

When we were, when I was back home younger, I never had a football team.

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00:11:23,680 --> 00:11:27,320

I'd support the England team, of course, every two and four years.

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00:11:27,320 --> 00:11:34,040

But growing up I saw the mob mentality of the 80s and a lot of the negative sides.

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00:11:34,040 --> 00:11:35,600

So I just, I love playing footy.

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00:11:35,600 --> 00:11:39,500

I was a sportsman, but I never really got into the whole watching.

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00:11:39,500 --> 00:11:45,120

And so in the UK with football and in here with baseball, basketball, American football,

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00:11:45,120 --> 00:11:50,120

you know, if that's the topic of conversation, I'm, you know, I'm kind of out.

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00:11:50,120 --> 00:11:55,120

So it's interesting, you know, when you're finding your tribe, when you're finding that

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00:11:55,120 --> 00:12:00,360

group and you had a tribe, obviously in the UK military, and we'll get into that, but

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00:12:00,360 --> 00:12:01,920

it's finding the right kind of people.

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00:12:01,920 --> 00:12:06,120

And this is what's been so amazing about this podcast is when I have conversations with

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00:12:06,120 --> 00:12:11,120

people like you and John and other great humans, they're so nurturing.

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00:12:11,120 --> 00:12:14,720

Whereas if you talk about a football game and you know, that's absolutely fine if that's



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00:12:14,720 --> 00:12:16,440

your thing and that's your decompression.

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00:12:16,440 --> 00:12:20,480

But you know, at the end of it, you've talked about someone else playing a sport when you've

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00:12:20,480 --> 00:12:26,840

learned from, you know, a mental health practitioner or a soldier or, you know, whoever it is,

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00:12:26,840 --> 00:12:28,800

you've kind of learned a little bit, you've grown a little bit.

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00:12:28,800 --> 00:12:31,560

So that's kind of what I found myself leaning towards.

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00:12:31,560 --> 00:12:37,280

And it can be someone who's never delved deeper than that before, but if I do engage in someone,

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00:12:37,280 --> 00:12:40,280

you know, I don't want to talk politics, I want to talk sports, I want to learn about

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00:12:40,280 --> 00:12:41,280

who they are.

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00:12:41,280 --> 00:12:45,320

And you know, when people open up, it's, it's incredible the stories that human beings have

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00:12:45,320 --> 00:12:49,840

if they can get past that kind of distraction that's kind of, you know, put in front of

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00:12:49,840 --> 00:12:50,840

our eyes.

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00:12:50,840 --> 00:12:51,840

Absolutely.

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00:12:51,840 --> 00:12:52,840

No, I agree.

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00:12:52,840 --> 00:12:58,440

And there's, you know, you see, you should never judge a book by its cover, especially

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00:12:58,440 --> 00:13:01,120

with people because you never know what they've gone through.

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00:13:01,120 --> 00:13:02,840

You never know the stories that they have.

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00:13:02,840 --> 00:13:07,200

And I found, you know, when I have gone to Florida or Arizona, and we've been around

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00:13:07,200 --> 00:13:11,160

a fire, and it's been like a long day, and we've, you know, been hiking all day, like

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00:13:11,160 --> 00:13:15,280

some of the true stories really come out and you really like, even though you think you

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00:13:15,280 --> 00:13:20,880

know somebody, you really don't until you've kind of like, had a serious deep conversation

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00:13:20,880 --> 00:13:25,640

with them sat around a fire, you know, shared a meal together.

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00:13:25,640 --> 00:13:32,880

But yeah, no, it's definitely the human mind is pretty incredible.

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00:13:32,880 --> 00:13:33,880

Absolutely.

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00:13:33,880 --> 00:13:35,680

Well, you mentioned the UK.

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00:13:35,680 --> 00:13:39,440

So let's start the very beginning of your timeline then tell me where you were born

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00:13:39,440 --> 00:13:43,840

and tell me a little bit about your family dynamic, what your parents did, how many siblings.

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00:13:43,840 --> 00:13:51,720

Yeah, so I was born in Portsmouth in 1993.

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00:13:51,720 --> 00:13:56,680

I was there because my dad was in the Navy.

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00:13:56,680 --> 00:14:00,560

And so about six months into my life, we moved all the way up to Scotland.

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00:14:00,560 --> 00:14:04,800

And then we was in a naval base in Helensburgh.

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00:14:04,800 --> 00:14:07,000

And that's where my sister was born.

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00:14:07,000 --> 00:14:14,200

And so it was me and my sister for the first 13 years of growing up, my dad had kind of

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00:14:14,200 --> 00:14:19,640

like, you know, gone to the Gulf War and done a few other different bits and pieces.

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00:14:19,640 --> 00:14:23,040

And after 12 years of service, he decided to leave the Navy.

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00:14:23,040 --> 00:14:25,960

And then we moved down to Essex.

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00:14:25,960 --> 00:14:28,600

And that's where my brother was born.

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00:14:28,600 --> 00:14:33,240

And so we're kind of all dotted about the place.

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00:14:33,240 --> 00:14:38,280

And yeah, so I've got my brother and sister, my mom and dad still together, still happily

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00:14:38,280 --> 00:14:44,760

married, I honestly don't know a couple which is kind of as happy as that maybe because

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00:14:44,760 --> 00:14:49,520

my mom wears the trousers and he just says yes, like that's probably just how it works.

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00:14:49,520 --> 00:14:52,080

But yeah, I grew up in Essex.

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00:14:52,080 --> 00:14:58,640

I spent a lot of my kind of like teen life in Essex and, you know, the skateboarding,

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00:14:58,640 --> 00:15:04,920

the smoking weed, the kind of getting the fake ID and going to nightclubs and pubs before

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00:15:04,920 --> 00:15:07,240

I was old enough.

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00:15:07,240 --> 00:15:13,000

And I just didn't know what I really wanted to do with my life.

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00:15:13,000 --> 00:15:14,440

I hated school.

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00:15:14,440 --> 00:15:18,240

I just couldn't get on with the education system.

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00:15:18,240 --> 00:15:24,280

I found myself kind of like itching to just always be outside.

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00:15:24,280 --> 00:15:26,960

But you know, I was trapped in a classroom.

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00:15:26,960 --> 00:15:31,520

And so therefore I became the class clown and was always in trouble and was always getting

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00:15:31,520 --> 00:15:32,520

detentions.

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00:15:32,520 --> 00:15:39,480

And then so when I left school, I, you know, got a job in working in a kitchen.

229

00:15:39,480 --> 00:15:42,960

I love cooking and I've always kind of cooked.

230

00:15:42,960 --> 00:15:46,320

And I just thought like, what am I doing with my life?

231

00:15:46,320 --> 00:15:52,120

Like how am I going to, you know, look back in 20, 30 years and be like, oh, I'm proud

232

00:15:52,120 --> 00:15:53,120

of what I did.

233

00:15:53,120 --> 00:15:56,000

And at that moment in time, I couldn't think of anything.

234

00:15:56,000 --> 00:16:01,920

So my dad kind of said to me like, Harry, you know, you're getting a little bit older.

235

00:16:01,920 --> 00:16:07,240

You're going to be 18 in the next, you know, kind of six, seven months or whatever.

236

00:16:07,240 --> 00:16:08,240

What are you planning on doing?

237

00:16:08,240 --> 00:16:12,120

Because, you know, when you're 18, you're old enough to vote, you're old enough to do

238

00:16:12,120 --> 00:16:13,120

this.

239

00:16:13,120 --> 00:16:15,800

You're going to have to figure it out.

240

00:16:15,800 --> 00:16:18,640

I said, I just have zero idea.

241

00:16:18,640 --> 00:16:21,160

I don't know what I want to do with my life.

242

00:16:21,160 --> 00:16:27,960

I have hobbies and I have passions, but I'm not really like, I don't really know how to

243

00:16:27,960 --> 00:16:34,760

like make that career or make money from it, especially in the UK.

244

00:16:34,760 --> 00:16:36,560

And he said, just join the Navy.

245

00:16:36,560 --> 00:16:38,200

Like that's what I did.

246

00:16:38,200 --> 00:16:41,120

And I was like, I'm not fucking gay.

247

00:16:41,120 --> 00:16:43,160

Like I'm not joining the Navy.

248

00:16:43,160 --> 00:16:49,240

I've always kind of joked with him and, you know, he was on the submarines with a bunch

249

00:16:49,240 --> 00:16:50,240

of men.

250

00:16:50,240 --> 00:16:53,960

I'm like, you must have got bored at some point in your life.

251

00:16:53,960 --> 00:16:57,280

You know, we joked about it and he goes, yeah, it's okay.

252

00:16:57,280 --> 00:17:01,040

Like the Navy is obviously not for everybody.

253

00:17:01,040 --> 00:17:05,280

And so I was talking to my mom the next day and I was just like, no, dad was talking to

254

00:17:05,280 --> 00:17:06,280  
me about this.

255

00:17:06,280 --> 00:17:07,280  
I hadn't really thought about it.

256

00:17:07,280 --> 00:17:09,000  
I don't know what to do.

257

00:17:09,000 --> 00:17:11,080  
She goes, well, you don't have to join the Navy.

258

00:17:11,080 --> 00:17:16,120  
You can join the Marines or you can join, you know, the army or the air force.

259

00:17:16,120 --> 00:17:20,760  
Like if that's what you want to do, like you could do that.

260

00:17:20,760 --> 00:17:27,800  
And so the next day we went to the, um, the kind of like, uh, it was kind of like a shopping

261

00:17:27,800 --> 00:17:31,560  
center and they had like a military kind of sign up for the army there.

262

00:17:31,560 --> 00:17:35,000  
And I just went in and just spoke to someone and they're like, yeah, join up.

263

00:17:35,000 --> 00:17:38,160  
And I was like, okay, I guess.

264

00:17:38,160 --> 00:17:40,480



Like I had no idea.

265

00:17:40,480 --> 00:17:44,560

And so they said, come back in a week, you'll do a test and then we can figure out, you

266

00:17:44,560 --> 00:17:46,840

know, how clever you are and what jobs you can do.

267

00:17:46,840 --> 00:17:48,200

And it's called the bar test.

268

00:17:48,200 --> 00:17:54,920

And so I went in and I did this bar test and I got a list of like 120 jobs that I could

269

00:17:54,920 --> 00:17:55,920

do.

270

00:17:55,920 --> 00:18:01,080

And there was like things in there like dog handler and, you know, chef and mechanic and

271

00:18:01,080 --> 00:18:02,080

all these different things.

272

00:18:02,080 --> 00:18:05,000

And I was like, no, I just want to, I want to be an infantryman.

273

00:18:05,000 --> 00:18:07,080

I just want to, I want to be on the frontline.

274

00:18:07,080 --> 00:18:08,080

That's it.

275

00:18:08,080 --> 00:18:09,960

Like if I'm going to do it, I'm going to do it.

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00:18:09,960 --> 00:18:16,560

And like naive 17 year old Harry Turner was just like, you know, go out there and just

277

00:18:16,560 --> 00:18:20,840

kind of like, I don't know, make your country proud.

278

00:18:20,840 --> 00:18:24,080

I don't know what the hell I was thinking.

279

00:18:24,080 --> 00:18:29,120

And so I did a few tests, physical training tests and you know, other things like that.

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00:18:29,120 --> 00:18:35,400

And they said, right, you're going to go off to basic training September 4th.

281

00:18:35,400 --> 00:18:36,400

And I was like, okay.

282

00:18:36,400 --> 00:18:38,880

And my birthday is September 2nd.

283

00:18:38,880 --> 00:18:44,080

So I was like, I get to spend my 18th birthday with family and friends and then that's it.

284

00:18:44,080 --> 00:18:49,680

You know, so I had my 18th birthday packed my bags the next day on the 4th.

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00:18:49,680 --> 00:18:58,000

I went to I see ITC, Katarik and spent six months in training there, which was honestly

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00:18:58,000 --> 00:19:01,560

like some of the hardest training I've ever done.

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00:19:01,560 --> 00:19:04,840

I did it from, you know, September all the way through March.

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00:19:04,840 --> 00:19:10,800

And so there's some very cold months, especially up in North Yorkshire and just, you know,

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00:19:10,800 --> 00:19:14,960

bayonet training by like smashing ice with your elbows and you're just crawling through

290

00:19:14,960 --> 00:19:23,440

ice water for like, it felt like a very long time, but it was a hard training.

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00:19:23,440 --> 00:19:28,960

And then I got out of training and I went into my battalion and I spent two weeks in

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00:19:28,960 --> 00:19:33,360

my battalion and then I was shipped off to Afghanistan and I spent, you know, another

293

00:19:33,360 --> 00:19:34,360

six months there.

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00:19:34,360 --> 00:19:41,760

So that whole year of turning 18 and becoming 19 being, you know, a nobody to, you know,

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00:19:41,760 --> 00:19:46,880

being broken down to then being sent off to Afghanistan as a battle casualty replacement.

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00:19:46,880 --> 00:19:52,640

I basically just went there to replace someone who was either injured or dead and then spending

297

00:19:52,640 --> 00:19:57,000  
time there at 18 years old and then coming back.

298  
00:19:57,000 --> 00:20:02,240  
It like I never ever cried in Afghanistan.

299  
00:20:02,240 --> 00:20:03,920  
I never got upset in Afghanistan.

300  
00:20:03,920 --> 00:20:09,560  
I saw some horrific stuff, but I never emotionally felt like I had to express that.

301  
00:20:09,560 --> 00:20:14,520  
Like I had to release the pressure or something.

302  
00:20:14,520 --> 00:20:19,720  
And then as soon as I got back and work was kind of just like, oh, we don't really know

303  
00:20:19,720 --> 00:20:20,720  
what we're doing anymore.

304  
00:20:20,720 --> 00:20:25,280  
Like go back to your rooms and go play on your PlayStations or, you know, drink your

305  
00:20:25,280 --> 00:20:26,760  
life away, go do whatever you want.

306  
00:20:26,760 --> 00:20:28,920  
And I was just for four or five months.

307  
00:20:28,920 --> 00:20:30,560  
I just had no purpose.

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00:20:30,560 --> 00:20:35,200

And my head was just going and going and going and I was thinking about all the stuff I'd

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00:20:35,200 --> 00:20:36,200

seen.

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00:20:36,200 --> 00:20:38,240

I was not sleeping.

311

00:20:38,240 --> 00:20:40,240

I was drinking excessively.

312

00:20:40,240 --> 00:20:44,920

I was just, I was getting super, super sick.

313

00:20:44,920 --> 00:20:49,440

And yeah, I kind of broke down.

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00:20:49,440 --> 00:20:50,880

I just lost it.

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00:20:50,880 --> 00:20:56,740

And I only did one tour and I know a lot of people have done a lot more.

316

00:20:56,740 --> 00:20:59,400

And a lot of people will say to me like, oh, you did one tour.

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00:20:59,400 --> 00:21:02,000

Like you're that's, you know, you did it.

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00:21:02,000 --> 00:21:03,000

Like you're good.

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00:21:03,000 --> 00:21:09,480

But like I felt like I just hadn't completed what I should have completed.

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00:21:09,480 --> 00:21:14,520

I didn't do my four years, you know, after I got medically discharged, it was like more

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00:21:14,520 --> 00:21:17,760

like three years and a few months.

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00:21:17,760 --> 00:21:21,400

And so for me, like I felt like I'd failed.

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00:21:21,400 --> 00:21:23,520

I felt like I went to Afghanistan and failed.

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00:21:23,520 --> 00:21:26,240

Even though I came back alive, I felt like a failure.

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00:21:26,240 --> 00:21:30,240

And I felt like I was letting all the people in my battalion down because I was just mentally

326

00:21:30,240 --> 00:21:31,240

not there.

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00:21:31,240 --> 00:21:34,800

And then I felt like I was letting my family down because I was just like this kind of

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00:21:34,800 --> 00:21:37,680

like sad excuses, a human that kind of went to war.

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00:21:37,680 --> 00:21:42,040

And, you know, I didn't see a great deal of stuff, but the stuff I did see really tortured

330

00:21:42,040 --> 00:21:43,260  
me.

331  
00:21:43,260 --> 00:21:51,280  
And yeah, I just felt like a massive failure and just, I don't know, just, I just didn't

332  
00:21:51,280 --> 00:21:54,120  
want to live anymore.

333  
00:21:54,120 --> 00:21:59,560  
I want to go back to early life and then obviously we'll get to your homecoming and the struggles,

334  
00:21:59,560 --> 00:22:02,760  
which is not uncommon whatsoever.

335  
00:22:02,760 --> 00:22:09,000  
But while we're in the early life still, and the reason I ask this, as I interview more

336  
00:22:09,000 --> 00:22:14,080  
and more and more people, I become more educated and we're almost 900 interviews now.

337  
00:22:14,080 --> 00:22:21,920  
And I realized that first responders, military, a lot of us in uniform have some, you know,

338  
00:22:21,920 --> 00:22:26,840  
maybe a lot of trauma prior to us ever putting the uniform on that we don't think about.

339  
00:22:26,840 --> 00:22:31,440  
So if, you know, as you kind of very briefly touched on in a documentary, you know, there

340  
00:22:31,440 --> 00:22:37,440  
were some scenes that you witnessed that were extremely traumatic while you were in uniform,

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00:22:37,440 --> 00:22:40,600

but that is built on the foundation of what you brought through the door.

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00:22:40,600 --> 00:22:43,720

Now you mentioned that your parents are happily married.

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00:22:43,720 --> 00:22:49,200

When you look back now with this kind of older wiser lens, were there any elements of your

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00:22:49,200 --> 00:22:52,920

early life that you think contributed to your struggles later?

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00:22:52,920 --> 00:22:55,800

Yeah, I do.

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00:22:55,800 --> 00:23:02,800

My grandma was like a huge inspiration to me and she was a huge kind of like religious

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00:23:02,800 --> 00:23:07,680

person, a very godly person, went to church all the time and, you know, was always talking

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00:23:07,680 --> 00:23:13,640

to us about believing in God and all these things.

349

00:23:13,640 --> 00:23:18,120

She I guess she was like my rock, you know.

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00:23:18,120 --> 00:23:19,440

I loved her to pieces.

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00:23:19,440 --> 00:23:21,480

She's my mum's mum.



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

And so she was married to an Irishman and my grandparents were like, I love them to

353

00:23:29,360 --> 00:23:30,360

pieces.

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00:23:30,360 --> 00:23:39,240

And my grandma got extremely sick with, you know, several forms of cancer and just died

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00:23:39,240 --> 00:23:40,240

rapidly.

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00:23:40,240 --> 00:23:43,760

Like, I remember seeing her and then seeing her like six weeks later and she was like

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00:23:43,760 --> 00:23:45,840

half the weight she was.

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00:23:45,840 --> 00:23:52,440

And my face was just unrecognisable, like hair falling out, like I couldn't recognise

359

00:23:52,440 --> 00:23:54,880

her and it was awful.

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00:23:54,880 --> 00:24:04,120

And I remember just like thinking if there's a god and this woman truly believed there's

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00:24:04,120 --> 00:24:06,040

a god, where the hell are you?

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00:24:06,040 --> 00:24:08,920

Because this is sick, you know.

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00:24:08,920 --> 00:24:13,840

And all this crap with like, oh, God works in mysterious ways and all that.

364

00:24:13,840 --> 00:24:14,840

Maybe he does.

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00:24:14,840 --> 00:24:17,400

Maybe if there is a god, you know, I personally don't believe in God.

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00:24:17,400 --> 00:24:21,440

I believe that there's more of a spiritual thing and I'm more of a scientist.

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00:24:21,440 --> 00:24:25,240

So I kind of more believe in evolution.

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00:24:25,240 --> 00:24:30,040

And then that was just like awful.

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00:24:30,040 --> 00:24:34,440

And then like a year later, my granddad passed away from cancer as well.

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00:24:34,440 --> 00:24:40,240

And so my mum went from having, you know, two kids and both her parents to having three

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00:24:40,240 --> 00:24:42,480

kids and no parents.

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00:24:42,480 --> 00:24:48,360

And it was just like this horrible kind of traumatic time where I wasn't sure, like whilst

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00:24:48,360 --> 00:24:53,080

I was kind of becoming more of a teenager, what was kind of like hormonal and what was

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00:24:53,080 --> 00:25:06,320

kind of like, I guess, just awful life, you know, just existing and what was kind of like,

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00:25:06,320 --> 00:25:10,280

I just didn't know what was normal.

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00:25:10,280 --> 00:25:13,440

And I think that that's about it really.

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00:25:13,440 --> 00:25:18,360

Like I look back with wiser eyes and think that I put a lot of pressure on myself as

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00:25:18,360 --> 00:25:22,160

well to have a relationship like my parents.

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00:25:22,160 --> 00:25:25,680

And I just don't think it's normal.

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00:25:25,680 --> 00:25:26,680

I've never seen them fight.

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00:25:26,680 --> 00:25:30,600

And I think they've had like one argument in their life.

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00:25:30,600 --> 00:25:37,720

And to someone like me, who is very kind of, I'm very precise and exact with a lot of the

383

00:25:37,720 --> 00:25:43,320

things I do, I wouldn't really necessarily call it like OCD or anything like that.

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00:25:43,320 --> 00:25:49,120

But I'm definitely, you know, a little bit there on the spectrum.

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00:25:49,120 --> 00:25:55,160

And seeing people be so happy and then, you know, getting in your first relationship and

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00:25:55,160 --> 00:25:58,680

then having your first argument and you're like, oh, no, no, this is not the person for

387

00:25:58,680 --> 00:26:02,680

me because we have one argument and it was, you know, five minutes long.

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00:26:02,680 --> 00:26:04,720

No, this isn't right.

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00:26:04,720 --> 00:26:05,720

My parents didn't do it.

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00:26:05,720 --> 00:26:06,720

So I shouldn't do it.

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00:26:06,720 --> 00:26:14,320

And I look back on that and I just think, you know, that's not a healthy way to kind

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00:26:14,320 --> 00:26:16,840

of look at it.

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00:26:16,840 --> 00:26:22,360

But I last year got a therapist.

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00:26:22,360 --> 00:26:27,440

First time in my life I'd ever spoke to anybody about some of the stuff I'd done.

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00:26:27,440 --> 00:26:33,320

And we've been talking about pre-war and post-war.

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00:26:33,320 --> 00:26:40,040

And what were my kind of like issues and triggers and what were my issues and triggers afterwards?

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00:26:40,040 --> 00:26:47,400

And before you go into the military, you don't have a test done to see whether you have PTSD

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00:26:47,400 --> 00:26:48,720

of any kind.

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00:26:48,720 --> 00:26:50,880

You just get chucked in the deep end.

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00:26:50,880 --> 00:26:56,840

And then when you come out of it and they say, oh, you know, you got some similar traits

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00:26:56,840 --> 00:27:00,960

to PTSD, but you know, like you just, you just as a little bit depressed, you know,

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00:27:00,960 --> 00:27:02,520

get out.

403

00:27:02,520 --> 00:27:07,080

I'm trying to, you know, I'm talking to my therapist and now trying to figure out, did

404

00:27:07,080 --> 00:27:11,460

I have some of these issues before going to war?

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00:27:11,460 --> 00:27:17,620

And have they just been heightened, tweaked and made worse because of war so that now

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00:27:17,620 --> 00:27:21,000

I struggle with complex PTSD?

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00:27:21,000 --> 00:27:26,440

Or, you know, was I a normal somewhat kid going through hormonal changes and then I

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00:27:26,440 --> 00:27:30,440

went to war and then I came back and was completely, you know, messed up.

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00:27:30,440 --> 00:27:36,280

But because we don't have the data and the kind of like information to show previous,

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00:27:36,280 --> 00:27:40,080

I'm trying to work through what I was like before that.

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00:27:40,080 --> 00:27:44,400

And I definitely have some issues.

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00:27:44,400 --> 00:27:51,880

Obviously, I am way better off than a lot of people in this world, but I definitely

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00:27:51,880 --> 00:27:54,460

did struggle slightly before the military.

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00:27:54,460 --> 00:28:00,680

And then obviously afterwards I struggled severely with mental health, self-harming,

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00:28:00,680 --> 00:28:10,520

suicide attempts and just daily struggles of, I guess, just not feeling like I should

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00:28:10,520 --> 00:28:13,400

be part of this world.

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00:28:13,400 --> 00:28:19,320

Firstly it's an interesting perspective when you have parents who have an incredible relationship

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00:28:19,320 --> 00:28:21,400

because I've never thought of it in reverse.

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00:28:21,400 --> 00:28:25,600

You know, there's a lot of people out there that thought their extremely toxic family

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00:28:25,600 --> 00:28:27,200

that they grew up in was normal.

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00:28:27,200 --> 00:28:31,600

And that ended up being their baseline that they ultimately had to stop that domino from

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00:28:31,600 --> 00:28:34,640

falling and they didn't pass it on to their children too.

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00:28:34,640 --> 00:28:39,560

But when you happen to be born into a great family, and obviously we get glimpses of your

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00:28:39,560 --> 00:28:42,800

parents in the film too, I'd never thought of it that way.

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00:28:42,800 --> 00:28:46,640

That sets you up for this is what it should look like.

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00:28:46,640 --> 00:28:51,200

And you know, for anyone, anyone who has not fallen in love with their childhood sweetheart

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00:28:51,200 --> 00:28:58,080

and then married them and happily married, it is a montage of good and bad experiences.

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00:28:58,080 --> 00:29:03,440

You know, relationships that last a day, some last five years, but we're all chasing that

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00:29:03,440 --> 00:29:04,440

one.

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00:29:04,440 --> 00:29:06,160

But that only exists for a few people.

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00:29:06,160 --> 00:29:09,520

Sometimes it takes us multiple people to finally find the person.

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00:29:09,520 --> 00:29:16,720

And my second marriage is my soulmate and that was I met her at 38.

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00:29:16,720 --> 00:29:22,880

But also when I think about what you've told me, you know, the feeling trapped in school,

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00:29:22,880 --> 00:29:25,560

you know, the classroom isn't the right fit for everyone.

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00:29:25,560 --> 00:29:31,240

And then even your transition into the military, and I'm curious if this is how it felt, you

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00:29:31,240 --> 00:29:37,080

create this tribe, you're training with the men and women that you got recruited with

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00:29:37,080 --> 00:29:39,360

and that became your battalion.

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00:29:39,360 --> 00:29:43,120

And then you get plucked out and put into somewhere else as a replacement.

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00:29:43,120 --> 00:29:46,560

So you almost kind of lost your tribe in that element too.



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00:29:46,560 --> 00:29:51,640

What factor in the soul did you feel like you didn't belong initially when you found

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00:29:51,640 --> 00:29:54,360

yourself overseas in a different unit?

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00:29:54,360 --> 00:30:01,720

As I was the young looking, blue eyed, blonde haired kid that kind of like got chucked out

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00:30:01,720 --> 00:30:04,160

there, it was definitely hard.

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00:30:04,160 --> 00:30:10,640

You know, I was in a battalion with people who had been on tour before, people who were

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00:30:10,640 --> 00:30:13,880

a lot older, a lot more experienced.

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00:30:13,880 --> 00:30:19,200

And you know, I have my fair share of crude jokes.

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00:30:19,200 --> 00:30:25,120

But once you kind of get with some of these kind of more weathered and worn people, you

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00:30:25,120 --> 00:30:33,080

really start to be like, wow, like, I am nothing like these people.

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00:30:33,080 --> 00:30:42,120

And so going from training, where I had, you know, where I had a group of maybe 25, 30

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00:30:42,120 --> 00:30:49,440

people that I spent six months with, I, you know, I still talk to a lot of them.

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00:30:49,440 --> 00:30:51,400

A lot of them are great friends of mine.

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00:30:51,400 --> 00:30:52,560

A few of them are still in.

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00:30:52,560 --> 00:30:57,000

A few of them got out after a few years.

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00:30:57,000 --> 00:31:00,720

I became very close with them people because I had to, you know, I was going to bed at

455

00:31:00,720 --> 00:31:03,000

one in the morning and waking up at five in the morning.

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00:31:03,000 --> 00:31:06,520

And I was with these guys every single day.

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00:31:06,520 --> 00:31:10,520

And then when we got to a point in training where we were actually able to leave, you

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00:31:10,520 --> 00:31:16,760

know, the base, we would go out and we would go drinking and we would, you know, go paintballing

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00:31:16,760 --> 00:31:19,160

together and we would do everything together.

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00:31:19,160 --> 00:31:24,760

I think I went home in training like three times in six months.

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00:31:24,760 --> 00:31:31,320

And that was because Christmas and that was because I can't even remember what it was.

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00:31:31,320 --> 00:31:37,360

But like, it was just because I didn't have to go home and I didn't.

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00:31:37,360 --> 00:31:40,120

And so I was with these guys constantly.

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00:31:40,120 --> 00:31:46,960

And then in training, we were training for infantry, but not for battalion.

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00:31:46,960 --> 00:31:50,920

So then we get picked out of our, you know, we get to choose, okay, do you want to go

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00:31:50,920 --> 00:31:54,520

to this battalion, this battalion and, you know, okay, there's enough space for this

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00:31:54,520 --> 00:31:55,520

person, this person.

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00:31:55,520 --> 00:31:59,440

So I, you know, chose the first Royal Anglin Regiment.

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00:31:59,440 --> 00:32:04,560

And only about three of the people who I was in training with went over with me.

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00:32:04,560 --> 00:32:11,520

And then when I was there, my battalion had already, the day that I got there, they were

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00:32:11,520 --> 00:32:16,080

packing and then three days later they'd flown to Afghanistan.

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00:32:16,080 --> 00:32:20,960

And so I had to stay back to do the required training for two weeks before I could fly

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00:32:20,960 --> 00:32:22,880

out to Afghanistan.

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00:32:22,880 --> 00:32:26,420

Then I had to do more training in Afghanistan with random people.

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00:32:26,420 --> 00:32:32,600

Then I had to become, you know, part of this battalion where we're brothers, we have each

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00:32:32,600 --> 00:32:35,640

other's backs, we, you know, would do anything for them.

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00:32:35,640 --> 00:32:38,840

I had no idea who they were.

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00:32:38,840 --> 00:32:43,600

How are they going to trust me to save their life if that really came down to it?

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00:32:43,600 --> 00:32:48,120

How are they going to, you know, allow the trust of me?

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00:32:48,120 --> 00:32:56,280

And it was a, it was a really kind of like difficult time and being 18 and being kind

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00:32:56,280 --> 00:33:02,960

of like this young, I was, I looked young.

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00:33:02,960 --> 00:33:04,760

I was young mentally.

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00:33:04,760 --> 00:33:07,720

I was naive, like all of these different kinds of things.

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00:33:07,720 --> 00:33:12,800

Like I went out there and I was just very shocked about kind of what predicament I'd

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00:33:12,800 --> 00:33:13,800

got myself in.

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00:33:13,800 --> 00:33:19,360

I found myself often thinking like if I had done the bar test again and chose one of these

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00:33:19,360 --> 00:33:27,240

different professions, would I be in a different, you know, state of mind right now?

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00:33:27,240 --> 00:33:33,280

So I want to ask you about the deployment and the way I phrase it really is because

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00:33:33,280 --> 00:33:38,120

and it's not so bad in the UK, I don't think, but certainly out here in America on, on the

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00:33:38,120 --> 00:33:40,320

media, we get a very polarized view of war.

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00:33:40,320 --> 00:33:45,080

You see the very pro war, kill them all, like I'd sort them out or a very anti war.

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00:33:45,080 --> 00:33:46,080

They're all baby killers.

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00:33:46,080 --> 00:33:51,280

And in the middle are literally in this case, the children that we send overseas wearing

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00:33:51,280 --> 00:33:54,200

our flag on their shoulder.

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00:33:54,200 --> 00:33:58,480

So you know, it's getting their actual perspective boots on the grounds perspective.

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00:33:58,480 --> 00:33:59,760

And it's a two part question.

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00:33:59,760 --> 00:34:05,520

The first part, regardless of the politics that sent you to Afghanistan specifically,

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00:34:05,520 --> 00:34:09,400

was there a point where you witnessed some horrors that you realized there were some

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00:34:09,400 --> 00:34:11,960

horrific people that needed to be addressed?

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00:34:11,960 --> 00:34:16,240

That's a good question.

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00:34:16,240 --> 00:34:17,840

Yes, I did.

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00:34:17,840 --> 00:34:25,720

Probably within the first five days of being there.

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00:34:25,720 --> 00:34:28,520

This is a hard question.

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00:34:28,520 --> 00:34:34,560

I went out there because I was made to go out there.

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00:34:34,560 --> 00:34:39,560

Obviously I joined the infantry to do a job.

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00:34:39,560 --> 00:34:43,960

But when I was out there, I didn't really understand what we were out there for.

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00:34:43,960 --> 00:34:51,280

And my job in Afghanistan was to work with the Afghan national army and the Afghan national

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00:34:51,280 --> 00:35:00,920

police to train them to work better together and to understand kind of like groupings and

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00:35:00,920 --> 00:35:05,120

you know, patrols and communications between others.

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00:35:05,120 --> 00:35:14,360

So that then when the British and the US armies left Afghanistan, they were able to go about

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00:35:14,360 --> 00:35:16,760

their lives as if we were still there.

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00:35:16,760 --> 00:35:23,920

But you know, with more of a kind of like slower pace because Taliban were retaliating

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00:35:23,920 --> 00:35:30,400

to issues with foreign militaries.

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00:35:30,400 --> 00:35:36,160

And I guess like it was one of these things where when we were there, we were trying to

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00:35:36,160 --> 00:35:37,160

do good.

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00:35:37,160 --> 00:35:42,920

But ultimately, like when I was there, I was like, why am I here?

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00:35:42,920 --> 00:35:45,720

I have no idea what I'm doing here.

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00:35:45,720 --> 00:35:52,080

And I remember we were teaching people how to use an AK-47 as if they didn't already

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00:35:52,080 --> 00:35:54,640

know how to use an AK-47.

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00:35:54,640 --> 00:35:58,320

But it was, you know, we were on the firing range and we were looking at kind of like

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00:35:58,320 --> 00:36:05,320

groupings and we were looking at kind of like ways that you could kind of fire a weapon

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00:36:05,320 --> 00:36:09,440

and make sure it's safe for somebody and cover and all these different things.

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00:36:09,440 --> 00:36:14,160

And one guy just turned around with his AK and just pointed it straight in my face and

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00:36:14,160 --> 00:36:17,640

was saying something that I couldn't understand.

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00:36:17,640 --> 00:36:22,520

And I was like, you know, am I going to die?

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00:36:22,520 --> 00:36:23,520

Like I had no idea.

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00:36:23,520 --> 00:36:31,320



I'm trying to teach these people what to do and I'm literally staring down the barrel.

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00:36:31,320 --> 00:36:37,920

And then chaos breaks loose and everything kind of like is just kind of jumbled up because

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00:36:37,920 --> 00:36:41,800

people are just like trying to figure out what's going on.

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00:36:41,800 --> 00:36:47,200

And then the translator later on at dinner after we kind of settled it was like, oh,

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00:36:47,200 --> 00:36:50,560

yeah, he's Taliban.

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00:36:50,560 --> 00:36:54,160

He just wants to know what we're trying to train everybody.

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00:36:54,160 --> 00:36:56,800

And everyone was like, what?

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00:36:56,800 --> 00:37:01,280

So we're teaching the Taliban what we're meant to be teaching the Afghan National Army so

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00:37:01,280 --> 00:37:06,320

that then we can send them out so they already know what's going to happen.

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00:37:06,320 --> 00:37:07,320

So then what?

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00:37:07,320 --> 00:37:09,600

Like, why are we here?

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00:37:09,600 --> 00:37:10,600

What are we doing?

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00:37:10,600 --> 00:37:13,520

You know, and then no one said shit.

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00:37:13,520 --> 00:37:18,520

Like people were just like, oh, well, you know, they'll figure it out themselves, you know.

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00:37:18,520 --> 00:37:25,480

And it was kind of one of these things where it was like, I'm not talking badly on the

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00:37:25,480 --> 00:37:26,480

British military.

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00:37:26,480 --> 00:37:30,960

I'm talking badly on the Afghan military or the police.

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00:37:30,960 --> 00:37:37,320

But it was just a lot of people in one place not understanding what their role was, me

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00:37:37,320 --> 00:37:44,160

included, and people just wanting to be that hero.

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00:37:44,160 --> 00:37:51,600

And a lot of people in the military out there were just wanting, you know, kind of like

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00:37:51,600 --> 00:37:59,400

kill counts and just wanting kind of to feel like they can do something illegal legally.

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00:37:59,400 --> 00:38:03,360

And it didn't sit very right with me.

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00:38:03,360 --> 00:38:05,280

I've heard that from quite a few people.

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00:38:05,280 --> 00:38:08,880

And obviously, and I'm going to get to the other side of the coin, you know, there is

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00:38:08,880 --> 00:38:13,800

a lot that our men and women did in uniform, you know, that did make a difference.

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00:38:13,800 --> 00:38:19,320

They did add security and put water back in towns and reopen schools and those kind of

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00:38:19,320 --> 00:38:20,320

things.

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00:38:20,320 --> 00:38:24,160

But there's a lot of them that said we would just cycle.

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00:38:24,160 --> 00:38:26,760

You know, you get up, you do your patrol, you come back, you get it.

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00:38:26,760 --> 00:38:29,720

And they've never felt like there was a kind of, you know, a plan.

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00:38:29,720 --> 00:38:32,080

Like what is the exit strategy?

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00:38:32,080 --> 00:38:40,080

And then you add in obviously the mass exodus of Afghanistan and now all these people that

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00:38:40,080 --> 00:38:45,400

serve that did so much, some left, you know, physical health there, you know, lost limbs,

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00:38:45,400 --> 00:38:49,560

some left their mental health there, some left, you know, their men and women deceased

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00:38:49,560 --> 00:38:50,560

there.

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00:38:50,560 --> 00:38:54,880

And then we pull out and then, you know, you add to that mental health question.

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00:38:54,880 --> 00:38:58,760

But I think as people are starting to unpack some of these conflicts now, I'm hearing more

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00:38:58,760 --> 00:39:04,360

and more Afghanistan, you know, Iraq, these veterans saying usually at the beginning,

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00:39:04,360 --> 00:39:06,080

yeah, we were doing good.

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00:39:06,080 --> 00:39:08,520

But then why did we stay and stay and stay and stay?

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00:39:08,520 --> 00:39:13,560

Now again, this is a firefighter talking, I am completely outside the circle looking

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00:39:13,560 --> 00:39:14,560

in.

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00:39:14,560 --> 00:39:18,520

But hearing these same kind of conversations over and over again, these are coming from

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00:39:18,520 --> 00:39:22,120

our men and women that were out there in these countries.

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00:39:22,120 --> 00:39:30,640

Yeah, and it's I also, you know, as just one person have kind of witnessed this.

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00:39:30,640 --> 00:39:36,140

And I've also spoken to a few people who I was in Afghanistan with about similar things.

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00:39:36,140 --> 00:39:41,960

And so it's you know, is a very recurring kind of conversation.

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00:39:41,960 --> 00:39:48,120

And also, probably one of the main reasons why my mental health really did deteriorate

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00:39:48,120 --> 00:39:55,040

is because I felt like I was part of like a huge mass murder.

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00:39:55,040 --> 00:40:00,720

And I was just another number put into this kind of thing where it was like, kill, kill,

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00:40:00,720 --> 00:40:02,760

kill, let's just go for it.

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00:40:02,760 --> 00:40:13,160

And it's just, you know, I felt responsible for not the deaths of the bad people, but

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00:40:13,160 --> 00:40:22,560

the deaths of collateral damage, and people who didn't deserve it, and people who just

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00:40:22,560 --> 00:40:24,280

living their lives.

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00:40:24,280 --> 00:40:28,880

And you know, the kids throwing rocks at the mastiffs and everything like that.

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00:40:28,880 --> 00:40:33,320

It was like, these little shits that throwing rocks at us and blah, blah, blah.

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00:40:33,320 --> 00:40:37,600

But what would I have done at age 10 or 11?

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00:40:37,600 --> 00:40:43,360

If a different country had come over to the UK and were killing people like my uncle and

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00:40:43,360 --> 00:40:48,280

great uncle and cousins, and you know, didn't give a crap, and they were just rolling through

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00:40:48,280 --> 00:40:56,440

in big tanks and trucks and would just kind of like, I would have done the same, I would

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00:40:56,440 --> 00:40:58,160

have thrown rocks at them.

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00:40:58,160 --> 00:41:02,600

So looking back on it, you know, I was like, I feel terrible.

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00:41:02,600 --> 00:41:06,520

I feel sorry for these innocent people.

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00:41:06,520 --> 00:41:10,320

And yeah, a lot of my trauma is because of the kids.

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00:41:10,320 --> 00:41:13,400

Well, I mean, firstly, that's humanity.

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00:41:13,400 --> 00:41:14,920

You know, I mean, you should care.

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00:41:14,920 --> 00:41:15,920

And this is the thing.

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00:41:15,920 --> 00:41:16,920

This is it.

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00:41:16,920 --> 00:41:18,640

There shouldn't be shame in that thought.

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00:41:18,640 --> 00:41:21,240

Now, are you thinking about that in the middle of a gunfight?

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00:41:21,240 --> 00:41:22,240

Of course not.

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00:41:22,240 --> 00:41:25,200

You're trying to, you know, protect your own people and get home safe.

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00:41:25,200 --> 00:41:27,680

But you know, when you have that afterthought, absolutely.

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00:41:27,680 --> 00:41:32,320

And I've had many veterans on here that have been in tears talking about some of the collateral

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00:41:32,320 --> 00:41:35,840

damage, some of the innocents that were killed, you know, during some of the conflicts that

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00:41:35,840 --> 00:41:37,880

they were around.

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00:41:37,880 --> 00:41:40,680

But then there's also the organizational betrayal.

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00:41:40,680 --> 00:41:42,360

There's an element of trust.

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00:41:42,360 --> 00:41:46,640

If you are going to join a fire department, a police department, a military branch, that

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00:41:46,640 --> 00:41:51,360

the people above you are going to make the right decisions and minimize hopefully the

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00:41:51,360 --> 00:41:55,000

time of the conflict, minimize the collateral damage.

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00:41:55,000 --> 00:41:58,040

And then, you know, that doesn't happen.

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00:41:58,040 --> 00:42:00,960

Now you're kind of it's kind of a bait and switch.

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00:42:00,960 --> 00:42:05,240

Then you've got these men and women that signed up for the absolute right reasons, went out

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00:42:05,240 --> 00:42:07,080

there for the right reasons.

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00:42:07,080 --> 00:42:11,920

And then on occasion, you know, they're asked to do the wrong things, you know, and the

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00:42:11,920 --> 00:42:16,800

things that is a reoccurring theme in Afghanistan specifically, a lot of the special forces

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00:42:16,800 --> 00:42:21,600

guys I had on here were like, we should have gone in primarily with special forces, taken

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00:42:21,600 --> 00:42:26,680



out the training camps, taken out the key targets and then left again.

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00:42:26,680 --> 00:42:28,400

You know, and even I've had Afghanis on here.

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00:42:28,400 --> 00:42:30,680

They're like, you are doing amazing things.

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00:42:30,680 --> 00:42:33,200

And then Iraq happened and it got diluted.

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00:42:33,200 --> 00:42:34,720

You all went there instead.

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00:42:34,720 --> 00:42:36,280

Taliban got stronger.

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00:42:36,280 --> 00:42:38,260

And then we ended up staying there for decades.

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00:42:38,260 --> 00:42:42,480

So again, fire fire that knows almost nothing about this.

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00:42:42,480 --> 00:42:47,480

But when I hear the same reoccurring thing, now you bring these men and women home and

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00:42:47,480 --> 00:42:50,100

they get to ruminate on what they did.

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00:42:50,100 --> 00:42:53,720

This is one of the reasons why I think it haunts so many of our veterans.

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00:42:53,720 --> 00:42:57,320

I definitely agree with that 100%.

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00:42:57,320 --> 00:43:01,640

Well the other side of the question is kindness and compassion, something we also don't really

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00:43:01,640 --> 00:43:03,080

see on our screens.

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00:43:03,080 --> 00:43:07,380

So in those those six months that you're out there, whether it's from your own soldiers

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00:43:07,380 --> 00:43:12,120

or the indigenous people that you were there to help protect, what were moments of kindness

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00:43:12,120 --> 00:43:16,840

and compassion that you remember?

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00:43:16,840 --> 00:43:25,080

I remember that there was, we was on a patrol and I can't really remember exactly what happened,

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00:43:25,080 --> 00:43:28,520

but I remember that we were kind of like trapped.

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00:43:28,520 --> 00:43:35,000

Radio signal was a little bit bad and we were kind of like in this area where we were like,

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00:43:35,000 --> 00:43:38,400

I don't really know what we're doing here.

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00:43:38,400 --> 00:43:39,400

Something's wrong.

637

00:43:39,400 --> 00:43:40,760  
I know that something's wrong.

638  
00:43:40,760 --> 00:43:47,760  
And this Afghani opened his doors and was basically like, come in.

639  
00:43:47,760 --> 00:43:51,160  
You have a place to stay, you have shelter.

640  
00:43:51,160 --> 00:43:56,960  
And I remember sitting on the floor surrounded by bowls of rice and bowls of different kind

641  
00:43:56,960 --> 00:43:58,960  
of foods and breads.

642  
00:43:58,960 --> 00:44:03,640  
And we took our shoes off and we went in and you know we were like, what the hell are we

643  
00:44:03,640 --> 00:44:04,640  
doing here?

644  
00:44:04,640 --> 00:44:09,280  
And then we took our like gloves off and we were just eating with our hands, with our

645  
00:44:09,280 --> 00:44:16,960  
legs crossed on the floor with this family and we had no idea who they were.

646  
00:44:16,960 --> 00:44:22,600  
And they just wanted to make sure that we were safe and that we were all right.

647  
00:44:22,600 --> 00:44:31,400  
And then I, so I'm writing my book at the minute and we'll get probably onto that in

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00:44:31,400 --> 00:44:37,360

a little bit, but whilst writing my book, I have been kind of going back to times of

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00:44:37,360 --> 00:44:43,640

Afghanistan to times of Khan, Keanu, even, you know, growing up, I'm kind of doing an

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00:44:43,640 --> 00:44:47,560

autobiography, but with some, you know, some of the stories that I've done.

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00:44:47,560 --> 00:44:53,880

And it doesn't really fall under your question of kind of like kindness and compassion, but

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00:44:53,880 --> 00:45:02,360

I remember going out one day and I was on top cover of the Mastiff.

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00:45:02,360 --> 00:45:07,200

There had been an explosion and it was like three in the morning and we had to go out

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00:45:07,200 --> 00:45:11,760

and so we went out and I had the night vision on and I remember just kind of pulling up

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00:45:11,760 --> 00:45:15,680

to this area and seeing people running off with like limbs.

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00:45:15,680 --> 00:45:19,920

And I remember like looking into the dirt and it was kind of blood stained and there

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00:45:19,920 --> 00:45:26,080

was like fingers and toes and whatever, you know, I could try and picture.

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00:45:26,080 --> 00:45:32,080

I can't even, it was so messed up that I didn't know what I was looking at.

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00:45:32,080 --> 00:45:38,880

And so we're kind of like in this between two mud walls in this Mastiff and I'm looking

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00:45:38,880 --> 00:45:42,000

about and I'm like, where the hell are these people going?

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00:45:42,000 --> 00:45:44,520

I don't know if I'm going to get shot at because I'm at the top.

662

00:45:44,520 --> 00:45:45,640

Like I have no idea.

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00:45:45,640 --> 00:45:50,240

So the decision was made to turn back and come back when it was light.

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00:45:50,240 --> 00:45:55,480

And so we got back and I remember just like laying on my cot bed, just shaking because

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00:45:55,480 --> 00:45:58,720

I was like, what are we going to go back to tomorrow?

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00:45:58,720 --> 00:46:04,440

And we went back and there was rocks piled on top of each other.

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00:46:04,440 --> 00:46:12,420

And it's a way that the kind of kids in Afghanistan let other people know that there's an explosion

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00:46:12,420 --> 00:46:15,040

or an explosive in the area.

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00:46:15,040 --> 00:46:19,080

And they put these rocks out as kind of like a warning.

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00:46:19,080 --> 00:46:23,360

And I remember pulling up and seeing these rocks piled up and piled up on each side because

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00:46:23,360 --> 00:46:25,360

I was on the top cover again.

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00:46:25,360 --> 00:46:30,340

And we get to this area where we had just turned around and there was bloodstained sand

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00:46:30,340 --> 00:46:32,360

everywhere.

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00:46:32,360 --> 00:46:34,400

And I'm just absolutely petrified.

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00:46:34,400 --> 00:46:36,280

I'm like, these people have been here.

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00:46:36,280 --> 00:46:38,120

I just saw them running away.

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00:46:38,120 --> 00:46:39,520

Are they still in hiding?

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00:46:39,520 --> 00:46:41,480

What is going on?

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00:46:41,480 --> 00:46:46,400

And then all of a sudden I'm just like reflecting on my life.

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00:46:46,400 --> 00:46:48,000

Am I going to see my family again?

681

00:46:48,000 --> 00:46:52,280

Like all these things running through my head and this Kingfisher just flies up and just

682

00:46:52,280 --> 00:46:55,240

lands like on the wall.

683

00:46:55,240 --> 00:46:56,960

And I don't know what species it was.

684

00:46:56,960 --> 00:47:04,720

It had like oranges and blues and whites and like it was just like this beacon of hope,

685

00:47:04,720 --> 00:47:06,080

you know?

686

00:47:06,080 --> 00:47:11,000

And it just changed my mood completely.

687

00:47:11,000 --> 00:47:15,920

And in my book, I talk a lot about my mental health and how animals and how nature have

688

00:47:15,920 --> 00:47:19,120

healed in many ways.

689

00:47:19,120 --> 00:47:22,440

And people underestimate the beauty of Afghanistan.

690

00:47:22,440 --> 00:47:26,240

It is an absolutely incredible and beautiful country.

691

00:47:26,240 --> 00:47:33,800

And I would go there happily again just to see the beauty of it again.

692

00:47:33,800 --> 00:47:42,000

And this moment of Kingfisher calmed my nerves, calmed my anxiety, calmed everything.

693

00:47:42,000 --> 00:47:46,180

The team got out and they did, you know, their sweep, just checking if there was any more

694

00:47:46,180 --> 00:47:47,780

explosions anywhere.

695

00:47:47,780 --> 00:47:52,920

There was not the people who were trying to bury the IED had blown themselves up trying

696

00:47:52,920 --> 00:47:54,720

to place it to kill us.

697

00:47:54,720 --> 00:48:01,080

It was something along the lines of like a five or six kilogram explosive that would

698

00:48:01,080 --> 00:48:05,880

have easily shot the tire of a mastiff, you know, 200 feet.

699

00:48:05,880 --> 00:48:08,800

Like it was a big explosion.

700

00:48:08,800 --> 00:48:17,400

And just the surrounding and the natural beauty and everything just changed my whole viewpoint

701

00:48:17,400 --> 00:48:29,240

of that one experience going from death, destruction, anxiety ridden, like horrible feeling to then

702

00:48:29,240 --> 00:48:30,240

one animal.



703

00:48:30,240 --> 00:48:32,440

And that was it.

704

00:48:32,440 --> 00:48:33,440

Amazing.

705

00:48:33,440 --> 00:48:37,600

Well, I want to get to that part of your journey before we do.

706

00:48:37,600 --> 00:48:42,640

When you reflect, how embedded were you in nature?

707

00:48:42,640 --> 00:48:47,720

And did you have any pets growing up prior to even entering the military?

708

00:48:47,720 --> 00:48:51,920

Yeah, growing up, I always wanted a snake.

709

00:48:51,920 --> 00:48:53,720

That was like one thing that I always wanted.

710

00:48:53,720 --> 00:48:57,240

Mum and dad were like, no, we'll compromise and we'll get you a hamster.

711

00:48:57,240 --> 00:49:04,880

So I named the hamster Snakey because I was like this.

712

00:49:04,880 --> 00:49:07,760

And then, you know, I was like, still want to snake and they're like, let's get some

713

00:49:07,760 --> 00:49:08,760

rabbits.

714

00:49:08,760 --> 00:49:13,560

And, you know, we had a dog as well and cats.

715

00:49:13,560 --> 00:49:18,520

And I remember when I got my first snake, I was just like over the moon and just like

716

00:49:18,520 --> 00:49:24,480

a red rat snake, a corn snake, you know, what you have in Florida.

717

00:49:24,480 --> 00:49:29,240

And yeah, so I kind of grew up and I was actually talking about this with my with my neighbor.

718

00:49:29,240 --> 00:49:33,400

I walk our dogs in the back of the forest where I live.

719

00:49:33,400 --> 00:49:38,280

And we were talking about, you know, because I grew up in naval bases, was there like any

720

00:49:38,280 --> 00:49:41,720

forests and stuff that I could kind of escape to.

721

00:49:41,720 --> 00:49:46,000

And, you know, there were there were kind of like wooded areas that we could go to and

722

00:49:46,000 --> 00:49:49,960

we'd walk the dogs and living in Scotland for seven years, there were mountains and

723

00:49:49,960 --> 00:49:52,360

just like it was it was really beautiful.

724

00:49:52,360 --> 00:49:57,680

But I never really like and because I was so young, I had to kind of obviously do what

725

00:49:57,680 --> 00:49:58,680

mum and dad were doing.

726

00:49:58,680 --> 00:50:04,960

So I never really like I never really kind of like went into nature just alone.

727

00:50:04,960 --> 00:50:09,040

But when I moved to Essex, I got into trouble all the time with my parents because they

728

00:50:09,040 --> 00:50:10,960

would be like, right, you got to be back at this time.

729

00:50:10,960 --> 00:50:11,960

You can't go to the forest.

730

00:50:11,960 --> 00:50:12,960

You can't do this.

731

00:50:12,960 --> 00:50:16,600

I would go to the forest every single time I would ride my bike.

732

00:50:16,600 --> 00:50:20,960

I'd go to the park and I'd go over the little like BMX tracks and I would just wander in

733

00:50:20,960 --> 00:50:22,840

the forest.

734

00:50:22,840 --> 00:50:28,000

And I remember when I was younger, mum was like, Harry, don't go to the forest.

735

00:50:28,000 --> 00:50:30,200

You've got to be back in like an hour for dinner.

736

00:50:30,200 --> 00:50:33,040

Do not go into the forest.

737

00:50:33,040 --> 00:50:40,040

And I went into the forest, climbed this tree, fell out of this tree and landed on this like

738

00:50:40,040 --> 00:50:45,080

broken branch and it went straight into my back, like kind of like my lower back.

739

00:50:45,080 --> 00:50:50,400

And there was blood and I had a snack part of kind of stick in my back.

740

00:50:50,400 --> 00:50:55,360

And on the walk home, I found this feather and I picked it up and I was like, how am

741

00:50:55,360 --> 00:50:56,360

I going to tell mum?

742

00:50:56,360 --> 00:50:57,360

Like, what am I going to do?

743

00:50:57,360 --> 00:50:58,360

Like, do I lie?

744

00:50:58,360 --> 00:50:59,360

Do I not?

745

00:50:59,360 --> 00:51:01,840

And I went back and I was like, well, I found this feather in a tree.

746

00:51:01,840 --> 00:51:04,640

So I climbed it and I fell out.

747

00:51:04,640 --> 00:51:06,120

She was like, you're so full of shit.

748

00:51:06,120 --> 00:51:11,120

I was like, damn, like she's like, I told you not to go to the forest.

749

00:51:11,120 --> 00:51:17,400

But every moment I could, I was trying to get to nature as much as I could.

750

00:51:17,400 --> 00:51:27,800

And so I think it was just natural for me to try and kind of get to a, I don't know,

751

00:51:27,800 --> 00:51:32,960

I guess it was just natural for me to just want to be outdoors, but becoming a teenager

752

00:51:32,960 --> 00:51:38,720

and becoming kind of like conscious of the fact that I needed a career and I needed money

753

00:51:38,720 --> 00:51:40,000

and I needed these things.

754

00:51:40,000 --> 00:51:46,780

It kind of like stopped me from going to nature until I went.

755

00:51:46,780 --> 00:51:53,060

So let's talk about then you come back from Afghanistan, kind of lead me through that

756

00:51:53,060 --> 00:51:59,280

downward spiral that you found yourself before you ended up deciding to go to Peru.

757

00:51:59,280 --> 00:52:01,080

Yeah.

758

00:52:01,080 --> 00:52:08,880

I came back and was ruminating about everything that I had seen and done.

759

00:52:08,880 --> 00:52:17,080

And I was drinking heavily and my nightmares were becoming awful.

760

00:52:17,080 --> 00:52:25,840

I remember having to listen to this one album from Radiohead, The Bends, and I just had

761

00:52:25,840 --> 00:52:29,520

to listen to it on repeat because that was the only album I found that would help me

762

00:52:29,520 --> 00:52:31,040

go to sleep.

763

00:52:31,040 --> 00:52:36,600

And it was the kind of like, I don't even know how to call the noises, but it's like

764

00:52:36,600 --> 00:52:48,040

the reverberation kind of sounds in that album really helped me calm down.

765

00:52:48,040 --> 00:52:55,640

Because I needed to do something to help me sleep and the alcohol wasn't helping and I

766

00:52:55,640 --> 00:53:02,360

was not really, I didn't really have a purpose because we'd come back from Opera XVI and

767

00:53:02,360 --> 00:53:10,520

we didn't really have any kind of goals in sight.

768

00:53:10,520 --> 00:53:16,320

We were just in the barracks and we were just having to keep fit and just in case we might

769

00:53:16,320 --> 00:53:21,760

have to go back in a year or two years or whatever, we're going to continue to do classes

770

00:53:21,760 --> 00:53:26,520

and lessons and we'd go to the fire and range every now and again.

771

00:53:26,520 --> 00:53:32,280

But I started just losing my mind and I started thinking about suicide and I started thinking

772

00:53:32,280 --> 00:53:45,240

about self-harming and I just was getting so heavily intoxicated that these kind of

773

00:53:45,240 --> 00:53:54,000

like thoughts became like what ifs, you know, what if I did kill myself.

774

00:53:54,000 --> 00:53:56,800

I wasn't just thinking like, oh, you know, go hang yourself.

775

00:53:56,800 --> 00:53:59,040

It was like, how would I hang myself?

776

00:53:59,040 --> 00:54:00,080

Where would I hang myself?

777

00:54:00,080 --> 00:54:07,360

How would I hang myself in a way that wouldn't upset my family members or friends?

778

00:54:07,360 --> 00:54:12,440

And then all my friends that, you know, my brothers that I was in the military with were

779

00:54:12,440 --> 00:54:18,400

just drinking and having fun and in my head I was thinking, how are these guys okay?

780

00:54:18,400 --> 00:54:23,000

Like what's wrong with me?

781

00:54:23,000 --> 00:54:34,440

And so I was packing to go on like a week long exercise and I had everything kind of

782

00:54:34,440 --> 00:54:37,080

like scattered out in my room.

783

00:54:37,080 --> 00:54:42,400

I needed to take, you know, I needed to take my first aid kit and I needed to take, you

784

00:54:42,400 --> 00:54:48,960

know, my waterproof notebooks and different socks and talcum powders and underwear and

785

00:54:48,960 --> 00:54:52,080

I need to take this and this and this and I'm just like looking at everything on the

786

00:54:52,080 --> 00:54:58,640

ground and I was just like, just, I was like, I don't want to fucking be here.

787

00:54:58,640 --> 00:55:02,320

Like, I really don't want to go on this exercise.

788

00:55:02,320 --> 00:55:05,200

I'm not in a good head space.

789

00:55:05,200 --> 00:55:06,520

I can't do this.

790

00:55:06,520 --> 00:55:16,240

And so I went to my, I think I went to my corporal at the time and was like, look, I'm



791

00:55:16,240 --> 00:55:17,480  
really not doing good.

792

00:55:17,480 --> 00:55:19,040  
Like who do I go and see?

793

00:55:19,040 --> 00:55:20,360  
I don't know who to talk to.

794

00:55:20,360 --> 00:55:21,360  
I don't know what to do.

795

00:55:21,360 --> 00:55:31,120  
And he said, how about you go to, how about you go and speak to the Padre?

796

00:55:31,120 --> 00:55:32,120  
And I was like, okay.

797

00:55:32,120 --> 00:55:38,920  
So I went and spoke to this, this guy and he was like, you know, do you believe in God?

798

00:55:38,920 --> 00:55:40,280  
And I was like, fuck no.

799

00:55:40,280 --> 00:55:43,920  
Like my grandma died and I really like don't believe in God.

800

00:55:43,920 --> 00:55:44,920  
Like this sucks.

801

00:55:44,920 --> 00:55:50,200  
Like I just got back from Afghanistan and if you believe that there's a God, then something's

802

00:55:50,200 --> 00:55:52,520  
wrong because like, no, I don't.

803

00:55:52,520 --> 00:55:53,520  
And he's like, okay.

804

00:55:53,520 --> 00:55:55,520  
You know, how are things going?

805

00:55:55,520 --> 00:55:57,880  
I was like, I am not doing good.

806

00:55:57,880 --> 00:55:59,240  
Like I don't want to be here.

807

00:55:59,240 --> 00:56:00,240  
I don't want to go home.

808

00:56:00,240 --> 00:56:01,440  
I don't know where I want to be.

809

00:56:01,440 --> 00:56:02,440  
I can't sleep.

810

00:56:02,440 --> 00:56:03,920  
I have no appetite.

811

00:56:03,920 --> 00:56:07,720  
I'm drinking so much vodka just to try and help myself.

812

00:56:07,720 --> 00:56:15,000  
Like I, I'm lost and he goes, right, I think you need to go see, like, I need to think

813

00:56:15,000 --> 00:56:19,240

you need to go get like an examination done in the medical office.

814

00:56:19,240 --> 00:56:27,880

And so I went to the medical office and I was just sat there for hours.

815

00:56:27,880 --> 00:56:28,880

Nobody spoke to me.

816

00:56:28,880 --> 00:56:30,840

Nobody came out and I was like, fuck this.

817

00:56:30,840 --> 00:56:31,840

I don't want to be here.

818

00:56:31,840 --> 00:56:35,040

Like this is, this is done.

819

00:56:35,040 --> 00:56:40,560

And so I left and I went back to the part where I said, I went there for hours and nobody

820

00:56:40,560 --> 00:56:41,560

saw me.

821

00:56:41,560 --> 00:56:42,560

Nobody spoke to me.

822

00:56:42,560 --> 00:56:47,000

Like I know that I'm not the only person in this world, but like that was just pure disrespect.

823

00:56:47,000 --> 00:56:48,240

Like I don't want to be here.

824

00:56:48,240 --> 00:56:49,720

I'm going to, I'm going to go home.

825

00:56:49,720 --> 00:56:52,680

And he goes, you can't go home.

826

00:56:52,680 --> 00:56:56,720

You need to get a letter to go home and you need to go through this process.

827

00:56:56,720 --> 00:56:57,880

And so he said, I'll go with you.

828

00:56:57,880 --> 00:57:02,520

So the next day he goes with me and we sit there and I go in and they go, so what are

829

00:57:02,520 --> 00:57:05,080

you, you know, what are you thinking about?

830

00:57:05,080 --> 00:57:07,120

And I was like, I don't know, like suicide.

831

00:57:07,120 --> 00:57:09,800

And they're like, okay.

832

00:57:09,800 --> 00:57:11,080

Have you attempted suicide?

833

00:57:11,080 --> 00:57:12,080

No.

834

00:57:12,080 --> 00:57:13,080

Okay.

835

00:57:13,080 --> 00:57:14,960

Well, what are you doing to kind of like get over that?

836

00:57:14,960 --> 00:57:17,880

And I was like, what do you mean get over it?

837

00:57:17,880 --> 00:57:19,640

Like I have no idea.

838

00:57:19,640 --> 00:57:21,720

Like what kind of questions are these?

839

00:57:21,720 --> 00:57:27,440

And I just remember getting so angry and I was like, are you, are you joking me?

840

00:57:27,440 --> 00:57:34,920

Like I'm here asking for help and you're basically just like questioning me as if I'm like a

841

00:57:34,920 --> 00:57:36,840

suspect in a murder or something.

842

00:57:36,840 --> 00:57:40,200

Like what the, and I was just like, this is absolutely ridiculous.

843

00:57:40,200 --> 00:57:44,320

I was like, give me a note so I can go home because I'm not doing this exercise.

844

00:57:44,320 --> 00:57:45,320

I don't want to be here.

845

00:57:45,320 --> 00:57:48,000

And they were like, well, have you thought about suicide?

846

00:57:48,000 --> 00:57:50,320

And I was like, absolutely.

847

00:57:50,320 --> 00:57:56,520

And so they wrote me a note saying, you know, private Turner has thought about suicide.

848

00:57:56,520 --> 00:58:00,960

He should not be able to use or be anywhere near a weapon.

849

00:58:00,960 --> 00:58:05,160

And so when we would go on exercise and when we would go out running with all of our equipment,

850

00:58:05,160 --> 00:58:12,280

they gave me this wooden gun, like a wooden kind of like cut out of like a SA-80 assault

851

00:58:12,280 --> 00:58:13,880

rifle.

852

00:58:13,880 --> 00:58:19,360

And I had to hold this wooden piece of just cut out kind of like plywood whilst everyone

853

00:58:19,360 --> 00:58:20,360

was running.

854

00:58:20,360 --> 00:58:21,720

They're like, why the fuck are you holding that?

855

00:58:21,720 --> 00:58:23,920

Why are you holding that piece of wood?

856

00:58:23,920 --> 00:58:26,480

And I was like, cause I told them that I was depressed.

857

00:58:26,480 --> 00:58:30,240

And then they basically like have shunned me and they told me I'm not allowed to use

858

00:58:30,240 --> 00:58:34,020

a weapon, even though there's no ammunition, there's no nothing.

859

00:58:34,020 --> 00:58:39,600

We have basically screwed this kind of like yellow cap onto the end of the rifle, you

860

00:58:39,600 --> 00:58:44,560

know, so that when you do have blanks, just in case someone messes them up, it would,

861

00:58:44,560 --> 00:58:48,840

you know, not kill anybody.

862

00:58:48,840 --> 00:58:55,840

And I just got made fun of, like this young kid who can't hack it is now running about

863

00:58:55,840 --> 00:59:00,800

in the field with, you know, everyone who he was on tour with, with a wooden cut out

864

00:59:00,800 --> 00:59:01,800

of an assault rifle.

865

00:59:01,800 --> 00:59:03,280

And I was like, you know what?

866

00:59:03,280 --> 00:59:09,960

And I went to, I went to my Sergeant Major at the time and I, and I just said to him,

867

00:59:09,960 --> 00:59:12,800

I was like, you can keep the wooden cut out.

868

00:59:12,800 --> 00:59:14,320

I'm, I'm leaving.

869

00:59:14,320 --> 00:59:20,840

I'm not until you can like figure out how to deal with mental health and until you can

870

00:59:20,840 --> 00:59:23,800

figure out, you know, and he felt awful.

871

00:59:23,800 --> 00:59:25,160

I'm still talk to him.

872

00:59:25,160 --> 00:59:28,040

He's a, he's a great guy, but he felt awful.

873

00:59:28,040 --> 00:59:29,400

And he said, look, here we go.

874

00:59:29,400 --> 00:59:30,400

Here's a note.

875

00:59:30,400 --> 00:59:32,280

Go home for a month.

876

00:59:32,280 --> 00:59:34,880

Do what you need to do with family, with friends.

877

00:59:34,880 --> 00:59:37,320

Like you'll still get paid, go back.

878

00:59:37,320 --> 00:59:41,800

And when you come back, hopefully you're refreshed a little bit and we can kind of like talk



879

00:59:41,800 --> 00:59:46,640

about medical discharge or we can talk about something like that.

880

00:59:46,640 --> 00:59:55,640

And so I went home and got drunk every single day, but didn't know how to deal with it.

881

00:59:55,640 --> 01:00:00,720

Um, was, I don't know.

882

01:00:00,720 --> 01:00:04,560

I didn't have a purpose yet again, still.

883

01:00:04,560 --> 01:00:11,440

And so I was just at home, just struggling, living under a roof with my parents, which,

884

01:00:11,440 --> 01:00:16,160

um, you know, after you've left home and then you're forced to go back into home with your

885

01:00:16,160 --> 01:00:22,640

parents, even though they love you unconditionally and you love them and you are grateful and

886

01:00:22,640 --> 01:00:26,160

thankful for everything they've ever done for you in your whole life.

887

01:00:26,160 --> 01:00:27,160

It's not the same.

888

01:00:27,160 --> 01:00:28,520

I've been to war.

889

01:00:28,520 --> 01:00:29,520

I was struggling.

890

01:00:29,520 --> 01:00:31,920

Mom and dad were like, Harry dinner's ready.

891

01:00:31,920 --> 01:00:34,840

And I'm like, no, I can't do this.

892

01:00:34,840 --> 01:00:41,520

Like this is, I love you guys, but please, like, I can't just be like, I can't come back

893

01:00:41,520 --> 01:00:45,000

into this setting and be normal and be okay.

894

01:00:45,000 --> 01:00:46,000

And so I wasn't.

895

01:00:46,000 --> 01:00:53,120

And so I went back and I got medically discharged and, um, it took a very long time.

896

01:00:53,120 --> 01:00:57,440

And as soon as I got medical discharge, they said, it's not P you don't have PTSD.

897

01:00:57,440 --> 01:01:03,240

You, um, you have a current depression, uh, because they asked me about my grandma.

898

01:01:03,240 --> 01:01:06,200

Uh, and they said, oh yeah, you were depressed back then.

899

01:01:06,200 --> 01:01:07,440

So this is just part of it.

900

01:01:07,440 --> 01:01:11,920

And I was just, it's just recurrent, you know, like I was like, I thought recurring like

901

01:01:11,920 --> 01:01:14,440  
happened multiple times.

902

01:01:14,440 --> 01:01:15,440  
Like I was young.

903

01:01:15,440 --> 01:01:16,440  
My grandma died.

904

01:01:16,440 --> 01:01:17,440  
I got upset.

905

01:01:17,440 --> 01:01:19,720  
I told you about it and now you're using it against me.

906

01:01:19,720 --> 01:01:23,000  
Like I just don't get it.

907

01:01:23,000 --> 01:01:25,880  
And so anyway, they, they discharged me.

908

01:01:25,880 --> 01:01:31,760  
I had a little bit of money in my account and I just, I just was like, I need to kill

909

01:01:31,760 --> 01:01:34,400  
myself and I don't know how to do it.

910

01:01:34,400 --> 01:01:39,960  
So I Googled, um, volunteer work in the Amazon rainforest.

911

01:01:39,960 --> 01:01:42,000  
I found a place called fauna forever.

912

01:01:42,000 --> 01:01:45,160

Uh, they had a reptile and amphibian program.

913

01:01:45,160 --> 01:01:48,140

I said, I'm going to go there and I'm going to kill myself.

914

01:01:48,140 --> 01:01:53,240

My mom and dad and brother and sister will think that it was an accident from either

915

01:01:53,240 --> 01:01:57,720

a venomous snake or a tree fall, or, you know, just being in a dangerous country.

916

01:01:57,720 --> 01:02:05,120

Nobody in my family had ever been to South America before me and, uh, booked a ticket

917

01:02:05,120 --> 01:02:07,920

sold as much things as I could.

918

01:02:07,920 --> 01:02:14,520

And uh, and I went there and I had the intention to commit suicide.

919

01:02:14,520 --> 01:02:17,160

So talk to me about what happened when you got there then.

920

01:02:17,160 --> 01:02:23,040

So you, you know, you've grown up in the UK, then you go to Afghanistan for war.

921

01:02:23,040 --> 01:02:24,760

You come back to the UK.

922

01:02:24,760 --> 01:02:27,380

Now you find yourself in a Peruvian rainforest.

923

01:02:27,380 --> 01:02:32,000

So what would the, you know, what were the following weeks and months like for you and

924

01:02:32,000 --> 01:02:36,480

how did that shift that suicide ideation?

925

01:02:36,480 --> 01:02:46,480

So in my, uh, anger and complete, uh, mental block that I had, I had just, you know, blinds

926

01:02:46,480 --> 01:02:47,480

on.

927

01:02:47,480 --> 01:02:57,200

I, uh, I booked this trip with the intention not to return even, I bought a return flight

928

01:02:57,200 --> 01:02:58,920

because I didn't want it to look suspicious.

929

01:02:58,920 --> 01:03:03,640

If I was just going to go there, you know, I, I need, I wanted to make it look as if

930

01:03:03,640 --> 01:03:08,960

like I was actually kind of like trying to figure myself out.

931

01:03:08,960 --> 01:03:16,840

And when I landed after a 30 hour trip, um, from the UK, I then, you know, had to go to,

932

01:03:16,840 --> 01:03:23,720

uh, I think I went to the U S and then down from the U S I stopped in Columbia and then

933

01:03:23,720 --> 01:03:24,720

I landed in Lima.

934

01:03:24,720 --> 01:03:30,000

And then I had a flight from Lima to Puerto, which is like the jungle kind of town.

935

01:03:30,000 --> 01:03:37,680

It took me about 30 something hours to get to Puerto and I get there and I get out and

936

01:03:37,680 --> 01:03:42,920

I'm wearing like black jeans and like a black t-shirt with a black hoodie.

937

01:03:42,920 --> 01:03:49,800

And I have my like military duffel bag filled with kind of clothes and you know, some essentials

938

01:03:49,800 --> 01:03:53,240

I thought that I might be needing.

939

01:03:53,240 --> 01:03:57,200

And uh, I had no idea what they were saying.

940

01:03:57,200 --> 01:03:59,960

I didn't even know they spoke Spanish.

941

01:03:59,960 --> 01:04:08,520

And then I was like looking in my wallet and I was like, I have British pounds on me.

942

01:04:08,520 --> 01:04:10,560

What currency do they use here?

943

01:04:10,560 --> 01:04:12,240

Like how am I meant to pay for a taxi?

944

01:04:12,240 --> 01:04:13,240

I have no idea.

945

01:04:13,240 --> 01:04:14,240

Literally no idea.

946

01:04:14,240 --> 01:04:19,520

And I look, and I was looking through my emails because I'd screenshot it on my phone, some

947

01:04:19,520 --> 01:04:26,520

emails because I didn't have, um, internet roaming for international.

948

01:04:26,520 --> 01:04:31,520

And I think I was with like orange at the time and I'm like looking and I'm like, okay,

949

01:04:31,520 --> 01:04:36,680

so I'm meant to meet somebody here, but I have no idea who this person is.

950

01:04:36,680 --> 01:04:43,720

And I'm surrounded by Peruvians who are all like, you know, tiny little people just rushing

951

01:04:43,720 --> 01:04:49,560

about, grabbing their bags, speaking Spanish at a thousand miles an hour, doing this, doing

952

01:04:49,560 --> 01:04:52,000

this taxi, taxi, taxi, taxi.

953

01:04:52,000 --> 01:04:55,800

And I'm like, what have I done?

954

01:04:55,800 --> 01:04:58,960

I don't know what I'm doing here.

955

01:04:58,960 --> 01:05:05,520

And then out of the kind of like combination of like Hispanic people, this like white girl

956

01:05:05,520 --> 01:05:08,000

just walks towards me and shows you're Harry.

957

01:05:08,000 --> 01:05:10,120

And I was like, thank God.

958

01:05:10,120 --> 01:05:11,120

Yeah, yeah, I'm Harry.

959

01:05:11,120 --> 01:05:12,120

She was like, oh, okay.

960

01:05:12,120 --> 01:05:13,120

I'm Zoe.

961

01:05:13,120 --> 01:05:14,360

And I was like, hi Zoe.

962

01:05:14,360 --> 01:05:19,240

Like, ah, what do you do here?

963

01:05:19,240 --> 01:05:23,200

She's like, well, I'm like the volunteer intern and you know, I'm helping you get from A

964

01:05:23,200 --> 01:05:27,260

to B and you're going to be going up river in about two days, but there's been some rain.

965

01:05:27,260 --> 01:05:30,200

So we're not sure if you're going to be going up.

966

01:05:30,200 --> 01:05:36,080

And then I get to this place and I dropped my bags off and everyone, and I'm just alone



967

01:05:36,080 --> 01:05:42,480

in this house and the police come and the police are like, there's been five missing

968

01:05:42,480 --> 01:05:47,720

people, you know, your volunteer group was here.

969

01:05:47,720 --> 01:05:51,880

And I'm just in my shorts.

970

01:05:51,880 --> 01:05:55,240

First day being there, not knowing what these people are saying in Spanish.

971

01:05:55,240 --> 01:05:58,360

I, you know, it was bit, someone was there translating.

972

01:05:58,360 --> 01:06:01,800

And I was like, I don't know anything about these missing people.

973

01:06:01,800 --> 01:06:03,000

Like I've just landed.

974

01:06:03,000 --> 01:06:04,160

I have no idea.

975

01:06:04,160 --> 01:06:08,760

Well, the week before I landed there, there was a group that went out and they rushed

976

01:06:08,760 --> 01:06:13,640

back to go and see a football match and there was a tree fall.

977

01:06:13,640 --> 01:06:17,520

So they went around it and got lost for like three days in the forest.

978

01:06:17,520 --> 01:06:21,000

So I go to this place and then they're like, there's police everywhere and they're doing

979

01:06:21,000 --> 01:06:22,000

all this.

980

01:06:22,000 --> 01:06:25,440

And, and then I'm like, dude, this is, I don't know what I'm doing.

981

01:06:25,440 --> 01:06:26,960

This is absolutely chaos.

982

01:06:26,960 --> 01:06:28,560

I have no idea.

983

01:06:28,560 --> 01:06:30,200

It was raining constantly.

984

01:06:30,200 --> 01:06:31,640

They said, Oh, you're going to go up tomorrow.

985

01:06:31,640 --> 01:06:33,240

So I packed all my bags up.

986

01:06:33,240 --> 01:06:34,240

No, it's too much rain.

987

01:06:34,240 --> 01:06:35,680

You're going to go up the next day.

988

01:06:35,680 --> 01:06:36,680

I packed my bags.

989

01:06:36,680 --> 01:06:37,680

Okay.

990

01:06:37,680 --> 01:06:41,240

Like we can go and took like seven hours to drive to this boat.

991

01:06:41,240 --> 01:06:43,880

And then on this boat, we were in the rain all the way up.

992

01:06:43,880 --> 01:06:46,880

All of my stuff was soaked.

993

01:06:46,880 --> 01:06:50,960

I was like, Oh man, like, what am I doing?

994

01:06:50,960 --> 01:06:53,600

Like, right.

995

01:06:53,600 --> 01:06:55,960

Eat some food.

996

01:06:55,960 --> 01:06:57,600

Figure it out.

997

01:06:57,600 --> 01:07:00,560

Figure out how you're going to kill yourself over the next few days and just do it.

998

01:07:00,560 --> 01:07:04,240

Just get it done with like, there's people being lost everywhere.

999

01:07:04,240 --> 01:07:05,880

You don't know what language they speak.

1000

01:07:05,880 --> 01:07:08,880

Like it's going to be very easy for you to kill yourself.

1001

01:07:08,880 --> 01:07:09,880

That's it.

1002

01:07:09,880 --> 01:07:10,880

Right.

1003

01:07:10,880 --> 01:07:18,720

So next morning I wake up and the dreams I had were just absolutely nuts.

1004

01:07:18,720 --> 01:07:22,040

You're in a place with no wifi, with no nothing.

1005

01:07:22,040 --> 01:07:23,880

The sounds of the jungle are everywhere.

1006

01:07:23,880 --> 01:07:28,040

There's a little bit of electricity from a generator that you can charge your stuff,

1007

01:07:28,040 --> 01:07:30,480

but they turn it off.

1008

01:07:30,480 --> 01:07:35,240

I meet a few people there and I go out and I catch some snakes and I'm going out and

1009

01:07:35,240 --> 01:07:42,520

doing bird surveys and I see my first ever monkey and I see my first ever toucan and

1010

01:07:42,520 --> 01:07:46,600

I see my first ever macaws and I'm just like, okay, all right.

1011

01:07:46,600 --> 01:07:47,600

Yeah.

1012

01:07:47,600 --> 01:07:48,600

Okay.

1013

01:07:48,600 --> 01:07:49,600

Tomorrow you're going to kill yourself.

1014

01:07:49,600 --> 01:07:54,960

I see my first ever fergalance and it's like five and a half, six foot.

1015

01:07:54,960 --> 01:07:58,240

This venomous viper, like this snake is just absolutely gorgeous.

1016

01:07:58,240 --> 01:08:02,960

And I'm like, God damn, like I grew up with a corn snake.

1017

01:08:02,960 --> 01:08:05,480

Like this is just blowing my mind.

1018

01:08:05,480 --> 01:08:09,440

And then I'm finding all these different vipers and all these different things and I'm seeing

1019

01:08:09,440 --> 01:08:16,000

all these different monkeys and they're coming down to like, just eat these fruits in these

1020

01:08:16,000 --> 01:08:23,280

trees and I'm just like surrounded by nothing but nature and people in like minded conditions

1021

01:08:23,280 --> 01:08:25,960

and views, right?

1022

01:08:25,960 --> 01:08:31,480

And every morning you're going to kill yourself.

1023

01:08:31,480 --> 01:08:32,480

Today you're going to kill yourself.

1024

01:08:32,480 --> 01:08:33,480

Today you're going to kill yourself.

1025

01:08:33,480 --> 01:08:34,480

Today you're going to kill yourself.

1026

01:08:34,480 --> 01:08:36,920

Today you're going to kill yourself.

1027

01:08:36,920 --> 01:08:43,760

And then I went out fishing on one Sunday and went out fishing, caught a bunch of fish.

1028

01:08:43,760 --> 01:08:47,960

We were going to come back and we were going to fry it up and we're going to eat it with

1029

01:08:47,960 --> 01:08:50,960

rice and salad.

1030

01:08:50,960 --> 01:08:55,720

And I caught my first big catfish in the Amazon and I was just like, this is cool.

1031

01:08:55,720 --> 01:08:56,720

I'm going to eat this.

1032

01:08:56,720 --> 01:09:03,080

Like this is what I, I'm not going to bloody Tesco and buying fish out of like a fridge.

1033

01:09:03,080 --> 01:09:07,160

I'm catching it in the river and I'm eating it.

1034

01:09:07,160 --> 01:09:12,520

And on the way back there's like the cores flying everywhere and then the sun starts

1035

01:09:12,520 --> 01:09:19,280

to go down and the bats start taking place with the birds and the sun is reflecting on

1036

01:09:19,280 --> 01:09:24,440

the river and the boat engine is in the back and we just kind of like slowly just going

1037

01:09:24,440 --> 01:09:29,120

up river and I'm just sat on the boat with like my boots just kind of like dangling over

1038

01:09:29,120 --> 01:09:30,120

the edge.

1039

01:09:30,120 --> 01:09:36,640

And I just thought, why do you want to kill yourself?

1040

01:09:36,640 --> 01:09:40,960

You have a family at home that loves you.

1041

01:09:40,960 --> 01:09:49,440

You have like everything that you could possibly ever need.

1042

01:09:49,440 --> 01:09:50,880

You're struggling.

1043

01:09:50,880 --> 01:09:55,100

You're sad.

1044

01:09:55,100 --> 01:09:58,720

Like why do you want to kill yourself?

1045

01:09:58,720 --> 01:10:03,520

Your little brother at the time, I think he was like eight or nine at the time, your little

1046

01:10:03,520 --> 01:10:09,280

brother is going to miss you and your parents are going to think what they did wrong and

1047

01:10:09,280 --> 01:10:18,520

your sister is going to cry for days and your friends are going to wonder what happened.

1048

01:10:18,520 --> 01:10:24,520

And I just remember like thinking like, why do you want to kill yourself?

1049

01:10:24,520 --> 01:10:28,040

You know, like I had this like epiphany and it was just like on the front of the boat

1050

01:10:28,040 --> 01:10:36,680

and I just was like, I don't know, I just went back and I ate the fish that I caught

1051

01:10:36,680 --> 01:10:41,840

and I charged my lights and I went on a hike and I found some cool animals and I was just

1052

01:10:41,840 --> 01:10:47,440

like, you'll be all right.

1053

01:10:47,440 --> 01:10:53,120

And then I spent another two weeks in the jungle and every day I just loved life.

1054

01:10:53,120 --> 01:11:00,640

I just loved waking up and I just loved walking and I just loved the rain and I loved the



1055

01:11:00,640 --> 01:11:05,760

food and I loved the people there and I loved like the colors seemed colorful again and

1056

01:11:05,760 --> 01:11:17,400

the smell smelled smelly and the just I just could hear again and I could like, I don't

1057

01:11:17,400 --> 01:11:24,240

know, the gray had just lifted from me after two weeks being in the jungle, 14 days being

1058

01:11:24,240 --> 01:11:26,800

in the jungle.

1059

01:11:26,800 --> 01:11:31,840

And so I was like, you're going to go home and you're going to spend time with your family

1060

01:11:31,840 --> 01:11:35,800

and you're going to get a job outdoors and you're going to go do whatever you want, go

1061

01:11:35,800 --> 01:11:40,960

to music festivals, go to this, go to that, whatever.

1062

01:11:40,960 --> 01:11:46,080

And so I did, you know, I went home, I didn't kill myself, I went home, I didn't even try

1063

01:11:46,080 --> 01:11:49,720

to after them 14 days.

1064

01:11:49,720 --> 01:11:57,840

I went back and you know, I started doing bits and pieces and I got a job on a farm

1065

01:11:57,840 --> 01:12:03,480

and I went to a festival called Sonosphere and during that festival I saw Alice in Chains

1066

01:12:03,480 --> 01:12:11,800

and Master Don and Metallica and just saw like some incredible bands and was getting

1067

01:12:11,800 --> 01:12:20,720

paid and was living, you know, like a really awesome summer and just was, I don't know,

1068

01:12:20,720 --> 01:12:22,480

just living my life.

1069

01:12:22,480 --> 01:12:32,440

And then winter came again and I hadn't been in nature for a while and it started slowly

1070

01:12:32,440 --> 01:12:38,200

getting worse and worse and worse and worse and that's when I tried to hang myself.

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01:12:38,200 --> 01:12:46,280

And then after that failed, it was a really shitty attempt, you know, I guess if you've

1072

01:12:46,280 --> 01:12:50,640

ever been so depressed you think that something will help and then when you look back on it

1073

01:12:50,640 --> 01:12:54,840

you're like that was so fucking dumb, like why did you even try and attempt suicide in

1074

01:12:54,840 --> 01:12:56,400

that way?

1075

01:12:56,400 --> 01:13:01,840

And I was like, you know what, I'm selling everything.

1076

01:13:01,840 --> 01:13:07,920

I sold my car, I sold my shoes, I sold my TV, I sold absolutely everything and I said

1077

01:13:07,920 --> 01:13:11,160

I'm going to the jungle, I'm not going to come back.

1078

01:13:11,160 --> 01:13:16,040

So I did, you know, I saved up all of the money that I could potentially save up before

1079

01:13:16,040 --> 01:13:17,400

my flight.

1080

01:13:17,400 --> 01:13:22,960

I flew to Peru and that's kind of like when, you know, I went back to the same river that

1081

01:13:22,960 --> 01:13:31,600

I had had my epiphany on and then that's kind of where filming started for my documentary.

1082

01:13:31,600 --> 01:13:35,280

I didn't mean for it to be a documentary, you know, I just was filming because I was

1083

01:13:35,280 --> 01:13:42,120

living like this incredible life.

1084

01:13:42,120 --> 01:13:46,120

So as, you know, we start seeing you through the film, you know, you obviously, it's you

1085

01:13:46,120 --> 01:13:51,920

and Sam, they're together and then you come across an Esselott called Khan.

1086

01:13:51,920 --> 01:13:59,000

So walk me through again the element of healing that you found through bonding with a cat.

1087

01:13:59,000 --> 01:14:10,320

Yeah, so I kind of was there and this Esselott needed help, you know, it was taken from its

1088

01:14:10,320 --> 01:14:14,600

mother whether the mother was killed or whether it was just kind of found in a tree that they

1089

01:14:14,600 --> 01:14:20,520

had cut down and they were going to take it to sell it for more money because you could

1090

01:14:20,520 --> 01:14:25,320

sell an Esselott for more than what the trees were, honestly.

1091

01:14:25,320 --> 01:14:34,600

And we argued for like seven hours forwards and backwards and, you know, these Peruvian

1092

01:14:34,600 --> 01:14:37,960

guys had machetes and shotguns and they're like, we're not giving you this cat.

1093

01:14:37,960 --> 01:14:41,600

And I'm like, I don't want this cat.

1094

01:14:41,600 --> 01:14:43,360

This cat needs help.

1095

01:14:43,360 --> 01:14:47,080

If you take it on this road and you take it back, it's going to die.

1096

01:14:47,080 --> 01:14:48,440

You're not going to get any money for it.

1097

01:14:48,440 --> 01:14:49,680

You're not going to get anything for it.

1098

01:14:49,680 --> 01:14:51,520

They said, buy off me \$250.

1099

01:14:51,520 --> 01:15:00,520

As I dude, if I had \$250, I would consider it, but I do not have \$250.

1100

01:15:00,520 --> 01:15:02,340

And I'm a white guy.

1101

01:15:02,340 --> 01:15:11,680

If I am seen buying a wild, you know, exotic animal from you guys, I'm fueling a fire,

1102

01:15:11,680 --> 01:15:14,760

which is just never ever going to be put out.

1103

01:15:14,760 --> 01:15:17,280

And I was like, I'm not buying it from you.

1104

01:15:17,280 --> 01:15:19,880

Like I'm going to argue with you and I'm going to try educate you.

1105

01:15:19,880 --> 01:15:23,640

And I'm going to say, look, I think that this is going to be a better idea.

1106

01:15:23,640 --> 01:15:28,220

And so I bought them dinner instead of paying for the animal.

1107

01:15:28,220 --> 01:15:32,600

I bought them dinner and said, look, you've spent time and money bringing this cat down.

1108

01:15:32,600 --> 01:15:37,280

I understand living a life is not easy.

1109

01:15:37,280 --> 01:15:39,680

Here's some food.

1110

01:15:39,680 --> 01:15:42,240

Let's eat and let's talk about it.

1111

01:15:42,240 --> 01:15:50,200

And I took this tiny two and a half week old ocelot back and I remember like laying in

1112

01:15:50,200 --> 01:15:54,240

my hammock and just had him kind of like on my shoulder.

1113

01:15:54,240 --> 01:16:00,160

And he was just kind of like, he was so sick, you know, his, his stomach was bloated with

1114

01:16:00,160 --> 01:16:04,000

parasites and he was just like really lethargic.

1115

01:16:04,000 --> 01:16:11,600

And so I gave him some, some kind of like anti parasitical medicine with very, very,

1116

01:16:11,600 --> 01:16:13,720

very small doses because he was so young.

1117

01:16:13,720 --> 01:16:14,720

His eyes weren't even open.

1118

01:16:14,720 --> 01:16:21,320

You know, like ocelots usually as, as most kittens do, they usually open their eyes after

1119

01:16:21,320 --> 01:16:22,600

two and a bit weeks.

1120

01:16:22,600 --> 01:16:26,720

And then they start to kind of like, they have very blue eyes and they, they can visually

1121

01:16:26,720 --> 01:16:29,560

see it like about a month and a bit.

1122

01:16:29,560 --> 01:16:31,440

So his eyes weren't even open.

1123

01:16:31,440 --> 01:16:37,160

Like he was like sick, so I'm giving him these small doses and I'm giving him milk.

1124

01:16:37,160 --> 01:16:44,640

And I'm like, you know, just sleeping with him and making sure he's resting and just,

1125

01:16:44,640 --> 01:16:50,600

he was so young, I had to like get a piece of wet tissue and like basically like rub

1126

01:16:50,600 --> 01:16:55,480

his penis with it so that he would pee because his mom would usually stimulate him to pee

1127

01:16:55,480 --> 01:17:01,440

so that he wasn't just peeing over everything, you know, in the fallen tree or, or wherever

1128

01:17:01,440 --> 01:17:04,160

he would have been born.

1129

01:17:04,160 --> 01:17:09,880

And so, and I, and I knew this because, you know, growing up we had, you know, animals,

1130

01:17:09,880 --> 01:17:15,120

but I didn't know this from like a wild standpoint and all these things.

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01:17:15,120 --> 01:17:21,600

And so after he came back, I was thinking, who can we give this ocelot to?

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01:17:21,600 --> 01:17:24,680

You know, cause I, I didn't know anything about it.

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01:17:24,680 --> 01:17:29,880

A few years ago, I was going to kill myself because I was lost and now I'm in the jungle

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01:17:29,880 --> 01:17:35,360

and I'm finding myself in this predicament where I have this baby ocelot and I'm like,

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01:17:35,360 --> 01:17:37,160

what do I do with it?

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01:17:37,160 --> 01:17:38,480

I'm going to go home soon.

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01:17:38,480 --> 01:17:41,220

And I was like, why are you going to go home?

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01:17:41,220 --> 01:17:44,520

What do you possibly have in England, which is even cooler than this?

1139

01:17:44,520 --> 01:17:48,440

Like, and I'm not like saying it's cool as in like, it's a pet.

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01:17:48,440 --> 01:17:51,800

I fought to save this animal's life.

1141

01:17:51,800 --> 01:17:53,000

And now what am I going to do?

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01:17:53,000 --> 01:17:55,320

Is give it to someone that it might go to a zoo?



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01:17:55,320 --> 01:18:01,000

And I was like, no, like I have to see this through.

1144

01:18:01,000 --> 01:18:05,880

And so I was like, I'm going to message a few people, see if they have any kind of like

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01:18:05,880 --> 01:18:07,320

information and all this.

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01:18:07,320 --> 01:18:09,120

And I just was like, I'm doing this.

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01:18:09,120 --> 01:18:12,320

And I was like, I'm not going home.

1148

01:18:12,320 --> 01:18:13,320

I'm going to stay here.

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01:18:13,320 --> 01:18:18,960

And then me and Khan are just going to, we're just going to live our lives.

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01:18:18,960 --> 01:18:22,560

And that was the start of the Khan project.

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01:18:22,560 --> 01:18:27,760

Now, the goal was to get into a point, not where he was domesticated, but to actually

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01:18:27,760 --> 01:18:31,960

get him prepared to be a wild cat again.

1153

01:18:31,960 --> 01:18:36,600

Yeah, that's right.

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01:18:36,600 --> 01:18:42,240

The goal was for him to become so independent that he would be able to go off and fend for

1155

01:18:42,240 --> 01:18:43,520

himself in the wild.

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01:18:43,520 --> 01:18:44,800

He would be able to hunt for himself.

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01:18:44,800 --> 01:18:47,120

He'd be able to survive.

1158

01:18:47,120 --> 01:18:54,720

He would be scared enough of humans that he wouldn't come close to anyone other than myself.

1159

01:18:54,720 --> 01:19:01,520

And he would just be free where he belonged.

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01:19:01,520 --> 01:19:03,920

And that was it.

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01:19:03,920 --> 01:19:11,880

We wanted him to become just this wild cat.

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01:19:11,880 --> 01:19:17,400

And I did absolutely everything in my power to make sure that he became wild.

1163

01:19:17,400 --> 01:19:20,920

I became nocturnal to some point.

1164

01:19:20,920 --> 01:19:24,680

I lived alone for months and months.

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01:19:24,680 --> 01:19:32,600

I walked every single night, whether I was sick or whether I was injured or whatever.

1166

01:19:32,600 --> 01:19:34,760

I walked and I hunted.

1167

01:19:34,760 --> 01:19:40,120

I learned how to trap animals without using a weapon.

1168

01:19:40,120 --> 01:19:44,920

I had a little air rifle that I would shoot rats with if they were in my kitchen.

1169

01:19:44,920 --> 01:19:50,320

I made a slingshot so that I could slingshot birds out of the trees.

1170

01:19:50,320 --> 01:19:58,000

I was hunting for him and sharing everything with him and spending every hour of waking

1171

01:19:58,000 --> 01:20:06,160

day with him and teaching him what were the dangers of the forest and what were edible

1172

01:20:06,160 --> 01:20:07,160

and what was...

1173

01:20:07,160 --> 01:20:11,680

And in turn, he was teaching me so much.

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01:20:11,680 --> 01:20:18,560

I learned so much from this cat.

1175

01:20:18,560 --> 01:20:21,680

He taught me so much.

1176

01:20:21,680 --> 01:20:26,240

And it wasn't just teaching me how to love myself again or love anything again.

1177

01:20:26,240 --> 01:20:28,720

It was teaching me about the rainforest.

1178

01:20:28,720 --> 01:20:30,360

It was teaching me about sounds.

1179

01:20:30,360 --> 01:20:35,400

It was teaching me about direction, navigation.

1180

01:20:35,400 --> 01:20:45,800

He really put me on a path to success, obviously, until...

1181

01:20:45,800 --> 01:20:48,480

Well let's go there.

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01:20:48,480 --> 01:20:53,760

When I was watching it, and I'll preface this, I posted a video this morning that moved me

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01:20:53,760 --> 01:20:57,320

so much that I was in tears the whole fucking time.

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01:20:57,320 --> 01:21:01,160

I was trying to do the text that went with it, trying to put the subtitles on and make

1185

01:21:01,160 --> 01:21:02,920

sure that they lined up.

1186

01:21:02,920 --> 01:21:08,600

And it was a young man with Down syndrome going to his mother's grave site to tell her

1187

01:21:08,600 --> 01:21:09,600

that he just graduated.

1188

01:21:09,600 --> 01:21:12,360

And I'm actually welling up now just thinking about it.

1189

01:21:12,360 --> 01:21:14,200

It's beautiful, absolutely beautiful.

1190

01:21:14,200 --> 01:21:21,320

And then I watch your film and then I watch the bond that you have with Khan.

1191

01:21:21,320 --> 01:21:22,320

And it was beautiful.

1192

01:21:22,320 --> 01:21:26,120

I showed you my dog right before we hit record.

1193

01:21:26,120 --> 01:21:30,880

I had a German Shepherd prior to her and I have this little one now.

1194

01:21:30,880 --> 01:21:36,840

But when there's that bond between a human and an animal like that, whether it's a horse,

1195

01:21:36,840 --> 01:21:43,720

an ocelot, a dog, you can't even put it into words, but the film captured it so beautifully.

1196

01:21:43,720 --> 01:21:48,200

When you're both lying there on the forest floor and you send them off to go chase, I

1197

01:21:48,200 --> 01:21:51,360

forget what it was now, you see that.

1198

01:21:51,360 --> 01:21:55,500

So at that point, we realized just how beautiful a relationship that is.

1199

01:21:55,500 --> 01:21:58,880

So talk to me about what did happen next with Khan specifically.

1200

01:21:58,880 --> 01:22:06,800

Yeah, so I was fairly confident that he was getting to a point in his life where he was

1201

01:22:06,800 --> 01:22:11,640

going to be able to go off and start hunting and doing everything.

1202

01:22:11,640 --> 01:22:17,480

He was going off for hours and hours every single night and coming back with a full belly.

1203

01:22:17,480 --> 01:22:20,040

And I was watching him and helping him catch rodents.

1204

01:22:20,040 --> 01:22:26,080

And he was catching small caiman and I was teaching him all these things.

1205

01:22:26,080 --> 01:22:32,280

And we got to a point of where it was like, right, he's going to be a year old soon.

1206

01:22:32,280 --> 01:22:35,840

Like I'm really excited for the next four months because it means he's going to start

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01:22:35,840 --> 01:22:45,600

becoming this cat that I've worked so hard to get him to this point.

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01:22:45,600 --> 01:22:54,200

I've worked and I've exhausted myself and I've been in this country illegally because

1209

01:22:54,200 --> 01:23:04,320

I've missed my exit time and everything was dependent on Khan and he had to be successful.

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01:23:04,320 --> 01:23:09,880

Whether it was going to take another six months or another two years, I was going to ensure

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01:23:09,880 --> 01:23:12,640

that he was going to be a wild cat.

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01:23:12,640 --> 01:23:28,680

And one night we were just walking and someone had set up a, it was like a poachers track,

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01:23:28,680 --> 01:23:31,480

like a sawn off shotgun.

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01:23:31,480 --> 01:23:40,640

And he triggered it and just, he didn't die instantly, but it blew his right arm off and

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01:23:40,640 --> 01:23:48,440

I did everything I could to save his life.

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01:23:48,440 --> 01:24:08,200

And he just bled out and he wasn't able to survive.

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01:24:08,200 --> 01:24:17,520

He was killed by the greed of humanity.

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01:24:17,520 --> 01:24:21,520

You could just see the pain through the film and obviously we're seeing it again raw and

1219

01:24:21,520 --> 01:24:25,040

I'm sure that's never going to go away.

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01:24:25,040 --> 01:24:29,600

When we're on this subject for a second, talk to me about that through the Peruvians lens,

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01:24:29,600 --> 01:24:33,600

because I just watched a documentary on Brazil and some of the indigenous tribes that are

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01:24:33,600 --> 01:24:40,480

being in some cases murdered as they're logging and deforestation is happening.

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01:24:40,480 --> 01:24:45,640

What were you seeing around your area specifically?

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01:24:45,640 --> 01:24:50,160

A lot of deforestation, it's more selective logging.

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01:24:50,160 --> 01:24:59,440

People would go in and cut down huge, huge ironwood trees, which would be homes to hundreds

1226

01:24:59,440 --> 01:25:04,000

and hundreds of animals, whether it be from the smallest insect to one of the largest

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01:25:04,000 --> 01:25:13,600

birds of praise to ocelot kittens and just plants and fauna and flora.

1228

01:25:13,600 --> 01:25:16,200

They would go in and they would kill anything.

1229

01:25:16,200 --> 01:25:18,240

They'd kill monkeys to eat them.

1230



01:25:18,240 --> 01:25:20,200

They would kill snakes out of fear.

1231

01:25:20,200 --> 01:25:29,360

They would cut down these trees and cut them up and take them down river and sell them.

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01:25:29,360 --> 01:25:37,800

When they're doing their thing, they're setting up shotgun traps or they're going out on

1233

01:25:37,800 --> 01:25:47,440

the river and they're shooting different animals just to eat.

1234

01:25:47,440 --> 01:25:55,480

In hindsight, I feel sorry for them because their government and their lives are hard

1235

01:25:55,480 --> 01:26:00,640

because they are trying to feed their families.

1236

01:26:00,640 --> 01:26:04,400

They're trying to just put food on their plates and they're trying to provide for their families

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01:26:04,400 --> 01:26:11,960

and every tree that they cut down, they probably get like \$100 and it's like six weeks work

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01:26:11,960 --> 01:26:15,400

that they'll go away for and then they'll come back and they might make like a few hundred

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01:26:15,400 --> 01:26:17,720

dollars in that time.

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01:26:17,720 --> 01:26:24,320

In Peruvian solace, that's nothing really.

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01:26:24,320 --> 01:26:40,080

They would just take over the forest and just cut down trees and kill animals and just try

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01:26:40,080 --> 01:26:43,240

and survive, I guess.

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01:26:43,240 --> 01:26:53,160

But obviously that meant killing innocent lives and that meant Khan as well.

1244

01:26:53,160 --> 01:26:57,320

Well, this is the other side of the story.

1245

01:26:57,320 --> 01:27:00,400

I've talked about the Somalian pirates a few times.

1246

01:27:00,400 --> 01:27:04,840

I don't have people that were in anti-piracy and all these kinds of things.

1247

01:27:04,840 --> 01:27:12,040

You look at the origin story, that's an overfishing of Somalian oceans basically that are then

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01:27:12,040 --> 01:27:16,420

causing the fishermen to have less and less to bring and there's poverty and starvation

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01:27:16,420 --> 01:27:21,500

and they turn to crime and you see that in a lot of these other areas.

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01:27:21,500 --> 01:27:25,880

A lot of times we're responsible, the UK, the US, Australia, the places that are receiving

1251

01:27:25,880 --> 01:27:28,880

the goods.

1252

01:27:28,880 --> 01:27:32,000

We're the customer of a lot of these things.

1253

01:27:32,000 --> 01:27:36,480

I think it's a conversation that we need to be made constantly aware of is our impact

1254

01:27:36,480 --> 01:27:38,480

in other countries.

1255

01:27:38,480 --> 01:27:46,160

Speaking of impact, I lost my older German shepherd just over a year ago now and it absolutely

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01:27:46,160 --> 01:27:48,000

fucking devastated me.

1257

01:27:48,000 --> 01:27:55,000

I've been a firefighter for 14 years and she was my Khan at that point.

1258

01:27:55,000 --> 01:27:57,920

Even though she got to like 10 and a half, it was still young.

1259

01:27:57,920 --> 01:28:04,520

She was very, very healthy and a shepherd can live up to 16, 17, 18 years old.

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01:28:04,520 --> 01:28:07,800

It knocked me sideways and I actually happened to have my younger one.

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01:28:07,800 --> 01:28:14,520

I overlapped deliberately but it was absolutely brutal.

1262

01:28:14,520 --> 01:28:20,200

You pour your heart and soul into this beautiful cat, all of a sudden it's taken literally

1263

01:28:20,200 --> 01:28:22,520  
the squeeze of a trigger.

1264  
01:28:22,520 --> 01:28:25,080  
What impact did that have on your mental health again?

1265  
01:28:25,080 --> 01:28:29,880  
Now you are a few steps back all over again.

1266  
01:28:29,880 --> 01:28:34,320  
With Khan, I felt like I had won mental health.

1267  
01:28:34,320 --> 01:28:39,400  
I was with him and even though I was struggling still, I was with him and everything was great.

1268  
01:28:39,400 --> 01:28:44,240  
As soon as his heart stopped, so did mine.

1269  
01:28:44,240 --> 01:28:55,160  
I don't really like to make it sound similar to pets and German shepherds because Khan

1270  
01:28:55,160 --> 01:28:56,560  
wasn't a pet.

1271  
01:28:56,560 --> 01:29:04,280  
He was this project which was meant to be going off into the wild and going on to breed

1272  
01:29:04,280 --> 01:29:13,360  
and have offspring and to go back into the ecosystem where he truly belonged.

1273  
01:29:13,360 --> 01:29:20,360  
There's something I just cared about that so much.

1274

01:29:20,360 --> 01:29:21,600

I have two dogs here.

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01:29:21,600 --> 01:29:25,100

I have a dog from Peru called Mika.

1276

01:29:25,100 --> 01:29:30,920

My wife actually rescued her and I have a rescue from California.

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01:29:30,920 --> 01:29:35,080

She's a Doberman, Olive.

1278

01:29:35,080 --> 01:29:39,680

I love them to pieces but I definitely didn't.

1279

01:29:39,680 --> 01:29:42,920

I don't love them as much as I love Khan and Keanu.

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01:29:42,920 --> 01:29:49,680

It's a different love because this love here that I have is a partner.

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01:29:49,680 --> 01:29:55,960

They're going to be with me until they die or until I die, whoever goes first.

1282

01:29:55,960 --> 01:30:01,440

They're going to be there and I'm going to love them and support them and feed them and

1283

01:30:01,440 --> 01:30:05,680

play with them and they're going to give me so much joy back.

1284

01:30:05,680 --> 01:30:12,320

Whereas Khan and Keanu were wild animals that had been put in a really horrible predicament

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01:30:12,320 --> 01:30:18,560

and it was my job to make them as wild as possible and to make them as ferocious as

1286

01:30:18,560 --> 01:30:24,360

they possibly could so that they could go off and so that I could leave them and let

1287

01:30:24,360 --> 01:30:31,760

them go so that they can go on to do exactly what they were put on this planet to do.

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01:30:31,760 --> 01:30:33,600

That love for them is different.

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01:30:33,600 --> 01:30:40,600

Even though I love my dogs to pieces, I love them in a way which is so completely, is so

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01:30:40,600 --> 01:30:46,440

much more complex and hard.

1291

01:30:46,440 --> 01:30:52,120

But I started cutting myself deeply.

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01:30:52,120 --> 01:30:57,560

I started thinking about suicide every single day.

1293

01:30:57,560 --> 01:31:04,120

I went to Australia and I was handling some of the world's most venomous snakes and I

1294

01:31:04,120 --> 01:31:08,160

didn't give a crap because I was like, if I get bit, I'll get bit, whatever.

1295

01:31:08,160 --> 01:31:09,160

I'll die.

1296

01:31:09,160 --> 01:31:10,880

Thank God.

1297

01:31:10,880 --> 01:31:14,520

You know, do a Steve Irwin and kind of go out doing something you're passionate about.

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01:31:14,520 --> 01:31:18,200

But I was not well.

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01:31:18,200 --> 01:31:26,600

I thought that I had kind of like overcome some stuff but I had been put back many, many,

1300

01:31:26,600 --> 01:31:30,760

many steps in my progressive kind of path.

1301

01:31:30,760 --> 01:31:34,000

And yeah, I just did not do.

1302

01:31:34,000 --> 01:31:39,040

But something deep down inside me was telling me to go back to the jungle.

1303

01:31:39,040 --> 01:31:42,360

I had not finished what I needed to do there yet.

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01:31:42,360 --> 01:31:43,640

And I didn't know why.

1305

01:31:43,640 --> 01:31:49,000

But I was in Australia and I had a year visa to work there and to do all these things.

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01:31:49,000 --> 01:31:54,160

So I worked there but I only spent six months there because I was like, I can't do it.

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01:31:54,160 --> 01:31:58,880

My mom was sick at the time so I went home to see her for a few days and then I flew

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01:31:58,880 --> 01:32:01,440

straight back to the jungle.

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01:32:01,440 --> 01:32:06,280

I didn't know I had no plan.

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01:32:06,280 --> 01:32:11,200

I was terrified to go back because I was just so distraught and I didn't know what I was

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01:32:11,200 --> 01:32:16,320

going to do in the same area that Khan had been killed.

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01:32:16,320 --> 01:32:17,560

I was angry.

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01:32:17,560 --> 01:32:19,600

I was hateful.

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01:32:19,600 --> 01:32:20,960

I was sick.

1315

01:32:20,960 --> 01:32:25,360

I didn't give a crap about anyone else apart from me.

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01:32:25,360 --> 01:32:32,520

That goes for, you know, the native communities and the local people and the gringos in the

1317

01:32:32,520 --> 01:32:33,520

area.

1318



01:32:33,520 --> 01:32:37,080

Like, I didn't care what anyone thought about me.

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01:32:37,080 --> 01:32:38,080

I was just in the jungle.

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01:32:38,080 --> 01:32:44,240

And I would go off for days and days and days and just spend time in the jungle fishing,

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01:32:44,240 --> 01:32:49,440

catching fish, just like sitting around a fire, just like contemplating what I was doing.

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01:32:49,440 --> 01:32:51,400

Why did your stomach tell you to come here?

1323

01:32:51,400 --> 01:32:54,760

And I've always been a follower of my gut.

1324

01:32:54,760 --> 01:32:56,240

Why did it tell you to come back here?

1325

01:32:56,240 --> 01:32:57,240

Why?

1326

01:32:57,240 --> 01:33:00,240

Like, why, why, why?

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01:33:00,240 --> 01:33:07,400

And I bump into Trevor, who is one of the directors on Wildcat.

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01:33:07,400 --> 01:33:13,880

And he said, Oh, I heard from, you know, Paul Rosalie that you've got a pretty cool story.

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01:33:13,880 --> 01:33:17,680

And I was like, who are you?

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01:33:17,680 --> 01:33:22,960

You know, like, he met me and I was like in my jacket because it was cold as a thing called

1331

01:33:22,960 --> 01:33:24,680

free, oh, hey, where cold weather comes in.

1332

01:33:24,680 --> 01:33:26,680

I was like, who are you?

1333

01:33:26,680 --> 01:33:31,960

And he follows me on Instagram and I look on now and he's got like 400,000 followers.

1334

01:33:31,960 --> 01:33:33,960

And I'm like, who the hell is this dude?

1335

01:33:33,960 --> 01:33:36,360

Like, I, I don't care about him.

1336

01:33:36,360 --> 01:33:37,360

Like whatever.

1337

01:33:37,360 --> 01:33:40,080

He goes, I've heard some stuff.

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01:33:40,080 --> 01:33:44,040

Can I please see some footage if you've got any?

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01:33:44,040 --> 01:33:45,040

So I said, yeah, whatever.

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01:33:45,040 --> 01:33:46,480

Like, what can it do to her?

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01:33:46,480 --> 01:33:50,720

And he said, I want to make a documentary in memory of Khan.

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01:33:50,720 --> 01:33:52,960

Would you be open to that?

1343

01:33:52,960 --> 01:33:56,840

And I was like, yeah, I guess we could do something along the lines, like whatever.

1344

01:33:56,840 --> 01:34:01,720

And so like I showed him some stuff and he was like, crap, man, like this is some powerful

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01:34:01,720 --> 01:34:02,720

footage.

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01:34:02,720 --> 01:34:06,120

Um, we've got to try and figure it out.

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01:34:06,120 --> 01:34:08,920

And so we were kind of in talks and we were going to talk about doing it.

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01:34:08,920 --> 01:34:13,980

And then I was in the jungle again and I would, I just got on this huge walk and I think I'd

1349

01:34:13,980 --> 01:34:18,520

seen like three or four different snakes and I'd seen some really cool stuff.

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01:34:18,520 --> 01:34:24,080

Um, I come back and there was like, there's another Ocelot in the local community.

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01:34:24,080 --> 01:34:29,680

And I just remember just breaking down and crying and just being like, this could be

1352

01:34:29,680 --> 01:34:41,000

my opportunity to make sure Khan's life wasn't for nothing, you know, like, and so I, I was

1353

01:34:41,000 --> 01:34:48,440

sick, you know, like mentally, physically, like I put everything that I possibly could

1354

01:34:48,440 --> 01:34:57,280

into Keanu because I knew that I was doing what I did with Khan and it felt weird.

1355

01:34:57,280 --> 01:35:03,520

It felt like Khan was my teacher and Khan's life was like this lesson to then teach Keanu

1356

01:35:03,520 --> 01:35:04,920

what I had already learned.

1357

01:35:04,920 --> 01:35:09,360

And I had, I didn't have to like go through the basics step by step manual.

1358

01:35:09,360 --> 01:35:11,920

Like I went and I dove into it.

1359

01:35:11,920 --> 01:35:13,880

I did anti-parasitic medicine.

1360

01:35:13,880 --> 01:35:14,880

I was feeding him.

1361

01:35:14,880 --> 01:35:15,880

We were walking.

1362

01:35:15,880 --> 01:35:17,520

We were, we were hunting.

1363

01:35:17,520 --> 01:35:23,560

We were like going out for hours and hours and hours and hours and, and, and just beating

1364

01:35:23,560 --> 01:35:27,840

the crap out of the forest, you know, just like any mouse we saw, we would tag team it.

1365

01:35:27,840 --> 01:35:30,040

I would even try and jump on it or smack him.

1366

01:35:30,040 --> 01:35:31,160

I'm a shit alien.

1367

01:35:31,160 --> 01:35:35,560

He would go around one side of the log and I would run the other side and I would scare

1368

01:35:35,560 --> 01:35:38,840

it into his paws and he would grab it and just rip its head off.

1369

01:35:38,840 --> 01:35:43,600

And we were just ripping the forest up.

1370

01:35:43,600 --> 01:35:47,480

And it got to a point of where, you know, he was so healthy and it was coming up to

1371

01:35:47,480 --> 01:35:50,440

the point of where he was almost going to be a year.

1372

01:35:50,440 --> 01:35:54,640

And I was getting petrified that he wasn't going to live, you know, like just reliving

1373

01:35:54,640 --> 01:35:59,440

that memory over and over and over and over and over again, just in my head, like, what

1374

01:35:59,440 --> 01:36:00,440

about if he doesn't make it?

1375

01:36:00,440 --> 01:36:01,440

What about if he's not successful?

1376

01:36:01,440 --> 01:36:09,240

Like, this is all about Keanu, but ultimately I want Khan to be present in this and I don't

1377

01:36:09,240 --> 01:36:10,240

know how.

1378

01:36:10,240 --> 01:36:18,600

But yeah, and then I just, I just spent the next few months just filming absolutely everything

1379

01:36:18,600 --> 01:36:23,620

I could, making sure that he was as healthy as possible, making sure that he was fearful

1380

01:36:23,620 --> 01:36:29,120

of people, making sure that he was, you know, not super, super like injured after he'd come

1381

01:36:29,120 --> 01:36:31,520

back from fights with different cats.

1382

01:36:31,520 --> 01:36:35,280

And, oh man, like I, I went full tilt.

1383

01:36:35,280 --> 01:36:38,480

I was feral at the time.

1384

01:36:38,480 --> 01:36:43,760

My wife's friends call me feral because when I came back from the jungle after doing the

1385

01:36:43,760 --> 01:36:51,740

Keanu project, I was just like stick thin, just completely like deteriorated.

1386

01:36:51,740 --> 01:36:57,440

My hair was just like an absolute mess and you can kind of see it in the film, you know,

1387

01:36:57,440 --> 01:37:01,440

and I'm like leaving and I'm just like, I just don't look good.

1388

01:37:01,440 --> 01:37:04,000

Like I look like I'm physically exhausted.

1389

01:37:04,000 --> 01:37:16,880

I spent 674 days working with Keanu and out of them days I was illegal in Peru for 510

1390

01:37:16,880 --> 01:37:25,600

days and I, in that 674 days I left to go to the city 16 times.

1391

01:37:25,600 --> 01:37:30,320

That's days, 16 days out of 674 days.

1392

01:37:30,320 --> 01:37:36,000

I spent, I spent a long time in the forest.

1393

01:37:36,000 --> 01:37:37,520

I didn't need a watch anymore.

1394

01:37:37,520 --> 01:37:42,400

I knew the timings to a, to a five minute interval.

1395

01:37:42,400 --> 01:37:50,200

I knew it from the sounds of the birds, from the, from the sun in the sky, from everything.

1396

01:37:50,200 --> 01:37:54,920

I knew if there was an animal in the area because the monkeys would make a specific

1397

01:37:54,920 --> 01:37:58,800

sound and they wouldn't make the sound that they would make when they saw me or they saw

1398

01:37:58,800 --> 01:38:02,280

Keanu or they saw us together, it would be a different sound.

1399

01:38:02,280 --> 01:38:06,600

So I knew that there was something over there and we would just like, I didn't use deodorant

1400

01:38:06,600 --> 01:38:09,080

for, for years.

1401

01:38:09,080 --> 01:38:13,440

I didn't use shower gels or anything like that.

1402

01:38:13,440 --> 01:38:19,680

I occasionally use some shampoo and I occasionally just use some soap, but usually it was just

1403

01:38:19,680 --> 01:38:24,240

washing myself with water, eating what I could, getting back out, filming, doing absolutely

1404

01:38:24,240 --> 01:38:28,640

everything because I needed.

1405

01:38:28,640 --> 01:38:31,760

I didn't want this to just be a success.

1406



01:38:31,760 --> 01:38:33,840  
I needed this to be a success.

1407  
01:38:33,840 --> 01:38:35,320  
This was my redemption.

1408  
01:38:35,320 --> 01:38:38,760  
This was absolutely everything.

1409  
01:38:38,760 --> 01:38:42,480  
And I, I did everything I possibly could.

1410  
01:38:42,480 --> 01:38:43,880  
That was it.

1411  
01:38:43,880 --> 01:38:49,920  
And when I was able to finally let him go, it was one of the absolute hardest things

1412  
01:38:49,920 --> 01:38:54,480  
I've ever done in my life.

1413  
01:38:54,480 --> 01:39:02,240  
So my, my son is 16 at the moment and he basically has about 18 months till he graduates high

1414  
01:39:02,240 --> 01:39:06,600  
school and is probably going to go off to some sort of college somewhere.

1415  
01:39:06,600 --> 01:39:11,680  
And so I'm kind of in an adult world there now, like my, my oldest has already gone.

1416  
01:39:11,680 --> 01:39:15,440  
My youngest is going to be gone probably in this time period.

1417

01:39:15,440 --> 01:39:20,400

And you've poured everything into a child now for, in his case, you know, 16 and a half

1418

01:39:20,400 --> 01:39:22,320

years, like everything.

1419

01:39:22,320 --> 01:39:25,400

If you're trying to, you know, parent correctly.

1420

01:39:25,400 --> 01:39:29,720

And there is that there's on the one hand, like, I hope I prepared them properly.

1421

01:39:29,720 --> 01:39:30,720

I'm excited for them.

1422

01:39:30,720 --> 01:39:32,200

They're going to go out into the wide world.

1423

01:39:32,200 --> 01:39:36,600

But on the other hand is that fear and what they did for you, you're going to be losing

1424

01:39:36,600 --> 01:39:41,240

that thing that, that, you know, reciprocated unconditional love that you get from a child

1425

01:39:41,240 --> 01:39:44,560

most of the time.

1426

01:39:44,560 --> 01:39:46,280

So talk to me about that.

1427

01:39:46,280 --> 01:39:49,340

How hard was it to finally let go?

1428

01:39:49,340 --> 01:39:53,560

And then again, what did the following weeks and months look like after, you know, it was

1429

01:39:53,560 --> 01:39:59,040

a mission success, but you'd lost this beautiful creature, not lost, but you, you weren't

1430

01:39:59,040 --> 01:40:03,560

present in this beautiful creature's life anymore because you had succeeded.

1431

01:40:03,560 --> 01:40:05,240

Yeah.

1432

01:40:05,240 --> 01:40:11,960

So I knew that in the next following weeks, I was going to have to leave to go home.

1433

01:40:11,960 --> 01:40:20,200

Like there was only one way that I could do it and it was, you know, just taking it day

1434

01:40:20,200 --> 01:40:27,600

by day and then just having to just drop everything and leave because mentally I wasn't doing

1435

01:40:27,600 --> 01:40:28,600

very well.

1436

01:40:28,600 --> 01:40:36,160

Um, even though I was in this most beautiful place, like I, I was, I hadn't seen my family

1437

01:40:36,160 --> 01:40:40,760

well, my family had come out to see me and you see that in the documentary, but I hadn't

1438

01:40:40,760 --> 01:40:42,160

seen my family properly.

1439

01:40:42,160 --> 01:40:46,520

I hadn't been home prop, you know, in a long time, I hadn't seen my friends in forever.

1440

01:40:46,520 --> 01:40:48,200

How long?

1441

01:40:48,200 --> 01:40:56,600

And uh, I knew that like for my state of mind, I had to kind of go home.

1442

01:40:56,600 --> 01:41:01,480

And Keanu at this point was going off for five days and coming back and a little bit

1443

01:41:01,480 --> 01:41:06,920

kind of like beaten and battered and weathered, but it's the jungle he's going to be.

1444

01:41:06,920 --> 01:41:11,200

And then we'd go out and we'd, you know, and he'd catch like big birds and big rodents

1445

01:41:11,200 --> 01:41:12,200

and he'd eat them.

1446

01:41:12,200 --> 01:41:17,480

And then I would walk off into the forest and he'd go off and then I would come home

1447

01:41:17,480 --> 01:41:23,960

and uh, when I say home, I mean to the platform and uh, he would then return maybe four or

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01:41:23,960 --> 01:41:25,680

five, six, seven days later.

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01:41:25,680 --> 01:41:31,160

And at this point I'm just sitting there and kind of, you know, like doing the same thing

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01:41:31,160 --> 01:41:32,160  
that I did after Afghanistan.

1451

01:41:32,160 --> 01:41:37,000

I come back and I'm just kind of sitting there waiting, waiting, waiting every sound, oh,

1452

01:41:37,000 --> 01:41:38,000

is that Keanu?

1453

01:41:38,000 --> 01:41:43,360

No, it's not, you know, it's just a armadillo or whatever.

1454

01:41:43,360 --> 01:41:48,720

And so I knew from my sanity that he was going off and he was doing well and he was successful

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01:41:48,720 --> 01:41:49,720

in my head.

1456

01:41:49,720 --> 01:41:50,720

He was already successful.

1457

01:41:50,720 --> 01:41:56,520

I just had to then be like, when is the correct time to say goodbye?

1458

01:41:56,520 --> 01:41:58,640

Because I need to, I need to for him.

1459

01:41:58,640 --> 01:42:04,440

I need to for me and I need to just be like, this project is done.

1460

01:42:04,440 --> 01:42:06,240

He's a success.

1461

01:42:06,240 --> 01:42:16,080

And so I, you know, like booked a ticket and um, and uh, was just ready to kind of leave,

1462

01:42:16,080 --> 01:42:22,040

but at the same time felt awful leaving him because what if, what if he needed me?

1463

01:42:22,040 --> 01:42:23,120

What if he got sick?

1464

01:42:23,120 --> 01:42:25,600

What if, you know, any of these things?

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01:42:25,600 --> 01:42:33,120

And so, uh, I, uh, I was just beating myself up and torturing myself because I was like,

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01:42:33,120 --> 01:42:38,440

you know, he, he isn't, you know, like your kids hasn't got a phone and isn't able to

1467

01:42:38,440 --> 01:42:40,040

just be contacted.

1468

01:42:40,040 --> 01:42:45,800

Like when I leave him, I'm never going to see him again unless he's super, super sick

1469

01:42:45,800 --> 01:42:49,720

and I get a message from Christian or, you know, someone and they're like, I think you

1470

01:42:49,720 --> 01:42:50,720

need to come back.

1471

01:42:50,720 --> 01:42:55,200

And I was going to just, you know, I had money in my bank set aside in case when I went home

1472

01:42:55,200 --> 01:42:57,600

I need is to come back and I'd fly immediately.

1473

01:42:57,600 --> 01:43:00,280

Like, it doesn't matter how much it's going to cost me.

1474

01:43:00,280 --> 01:43:01,280

I'm getting back.

1475

01:43:01,280 --> 01:43:06,040

But I knew that this was probably going to be the last time I was ever going to see him.

1476

01:43:06,040 --> 01:43:15,160

And so letting go was an absolutely awful feeling and, um, coming home, I, uh, in the

1477

01:43:15,160 --> 01:43:17,520

documentary you see that I surprised my family.

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01:43:17,520 --> 01:43:24,120

They had no idea I was coming and, uh, it was this just really beautiful moment, you

1479

01:43:24,120 --> 01:43:28,560

know, like I, I got to see my family and I surprised them.

1480

01:43:28,560 --> 01:43:33,160

And like, I was just like, thank God, like I've done something and I should be proud

1481

01:43:33,160 --> 01:43:34,560

of the thing that I've done.

1482

01:43:34,560 --> 01:43:42,040

And but new years, well, Christmas came around and new years came around and I just was struggling

1483

01:43:42,040 --> 01:43:44,200

to fit back in.

1484

01:43:44,200 --> 01:43:51,320

It was this like horrendous feeling of like, I'm back where I belong, you know, at home,

1485

01:43:51,320 --> 01:43:57,920

but where I belonged was in the forest and, uh, and I couldn't go back because I didn't

1486

01:43:57,920 --> 01:44:00,960

want to get like trapped into that kind of like situation.

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01:44:00,960 --> 01:44:06,480

I was trapped there before with, with Keanu and, you know, I didn't need to be there and

1488

01:44:06,480 --> 01:44:09,640

I definitely didn't want to be there because of the people.

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01:44:09,640 --> 01:44:14,960

And, um, and so I was like, right, you know, like, what am I going to do?

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01:44:14,960 --> 01:44:20,400

And I was just like, I was talking to, uh, Lexi at the time who is now my wife and she

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01:44:20,400 --> 01:44:30,480

was helping me greatly through this process of transitioning from feral as hell to society.

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01:44:30,480 --> 01:44:36,320

And then the pandemic, and then the pandemic happened and I was stuck in England for seven

1493

01:44:36,320 --> 01:44:46,200

months and my, my mental health was just absolutely, it was just like, I just hate, I hated that.



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01:44:46,200 --> 01:44:52,520

And as soon as I could, I found a loophole where I could fly to Ecuador for one week

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01:44:52,520 --> 01:44:54,920

and I flew to Ecuador and just stayed there for six months.

1496

01:44:54,920 --> 01:44:56,280

And I just lived in the forest.

1497

01:44:56,280 --> 01:44:58,920

I discovered a new species of frog.

1498

01:44:58,920 --> 01:45:02,240

I was like helping a team called tropical herping.

1499

01:45:02,240 --> 01:45:07,720

Uh, some of my really good friends with like research and I was taking cool photographs

1500

01:45:07,720 --> 01:45:13,960

of cool animals and, um, you know, seeing some really diverse parts and, and I fell

1501

01:45:13,960 --> 01:45:21,000

in love with Ecuador and, uh, and so me and my wife have now started a nonprofit called

1502

01:45:21,000 --> 01:45:28,680

Emerald Arch and, um, we are going to be in the next, you know, year or so buying land

1503

01:45:28,680 --> 01:45:30,160

in the Ecuadorian Amazon.

1504

01:45:30,160 --> 01:45:35,240

Uh, currently it's kind of a dangerous place to be kind of low looking, but ultimately

1505

01:45:35,240 --> 01:45:43,480

anywhere in the world with people is the dangerous place in the world, you know, and, um, and

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01:45:43,480 --> 01:45:49,200

with Emerald Arch, we want to protect land and we want to do projects similar to Karnakeanu

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01:45:49,200 --> 01:45:54,000

and we want to reintroduce potentially and, you know, if they need it, fingers crossed,

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01:45:54,000 --> 01:45:59,000

they don't need it, but rehabilitate and we want to work with, you know, local communities

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01:45:59,000 --> 01:46:05,240

and we want to help spay and neuter, you know, domesticated dogs and cats in the area to

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01:46:05,240 --> 01:46:10,440

stop issues with, you know, interfering with jungle ecosystems.

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01:46:10,440 --> 01:46:18,000

But the main goal and mission for Emerald Arch is to take veterans struggling with PTSD

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01:46:18,000 --> 01:46:25,680

to the jungle because, um, if you're struggling with suicidal ideation and you're thinking

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01:46:25,680 --> 01:46:34,040

about ending your life and self-harming as a constant and, um, what you saw on tour or,

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01:46:34,040 --> 01:46:41,920

or just being kind of in a military kind of like career, if you go to the jungle, I know,

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01:46:41,920 --> 01:46:49,840

I know that like I'm one person in this whole world, but I know that nature helps heal and

1516

01:46:49,840 --> 01:46:54,920

I know that it helped me from killing myself.

1517

01:46:54,920 --> 01:47:01,320

So why can't I take people who also have a love for nature or who are also struggling

1518

01:47:01,320 --> 01:47:07,200

to the jungle so that then they can kind of walk like a few steps in my shoes?

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01:47:07,200 --> 01:47:13,600

And I think that, you know, it's going to be a long road to get everything up and running,

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01:47:13,600 --> 01:47:18,480

but I think once we do and we have like a few veteran retreats where people can come

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01:47:18,480 --> 01:47:24,440

for a month and they can, you know, no phones, no laptops, no nothing.

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01:47:24,440 --> 01:47:29,120

You're in the jungle, you go on hikes, you're doing scientific research, you can go fishing,

1523

01:47:29,120 --> 01:47:36,880

you can do whatever the hell you want to do under supervision and with psychiatrists and,

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01:47:36,880 --> 01:47:40,400

you know, because I went there just to do it.

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01:47:40,400 --> 01:47:41,720

I didn't have no support.

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01:47:41,720 --> 01:47:46,880

I want people to have that support where they can go, Harry, I'm not feeling great today.

1527

01:47:46,880 --> 01:47:52,600

Do you mind if I take a day off from doing all these things?

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01:47:52,600 --> 01:47:57,000

And in that, you know, ultimately it's like, well, how are you feeling?

1529

01:47:57,000 --> 01:48:00,080

Can we speak to someone like, are you feeling suicidal?

1530

01:48:00,080 --> 01:48:01,280

Are you feeling sad?

1531

01:48:01,280 --> 01:48:03,120

Are you just missing home?

1532

01:48:03,120 --> 01:48:05,080

Are you missing your family?

1533

01:48:05,080 --> 01:48:06,080

Like what is it?

1534

01:48:06,080 --> 01:48:11,600

And just take them, every person step by step as an individual, how they're feeling and

1535

01:48:11,600 --> 01:48:18,200

just try and put them on a path to success in their own life.

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01:48:18,200 --> 01:48:20,280

Well firstly, I think that's incredible.

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01:48:20,280 --> 01:48:24,680

The one question that I have when I was watching the documentary, you know, especially towards

1538

01:48:24,680 --> 01:48:28,120

the end, and you mentioned about having counseling, which is beautiful.

1539

01:48:28,120 --> 01:48:35,800

I mean, as far as the understanding of, you know, community, of purpose, of time in nature,

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01:48:35,800 --> 01:48:36,920

those are so obvious.

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01:48:36,920 --> 01:48:41,320

And when we reflect now on what a lot of the governments told people to do during the pandemic,

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01:48:41,320 --> 01:48:44,400

it was the polar opposite of what actually makes people heal.

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01:48:44,400 --> 01:48:47,360

So I hope we will learn that lesson next time.

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01:48:47,360 --> 01:48:52,320

But when we're talking about South America, an incredible healing modality that seems

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01:48:52,320 --> 01:48:57,440

to have resurfaced from ancient wisdom to current first responders and military members

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01:48:57,440 --> 01:49:00,280

are the psychedelics, the plant medicines out there.

1547

01:49:00,280 --> 01:49:03,400

Were you ever exposed to them in your journeys?

1548

01:49:03,400 --> 01:49:08,480

Yeah, I have done ayahuasca.

1549

01:49:08,480 --> 01:49:15,640

And so I was doing the Keonig project and I heard that there was like a group of people

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01:49:15,640 --> 01:49:18,720

down river.

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01:49:18,720 --> 01:49:26,400

And so I went down and just happened to be the night that they were doing ayahuasca.

1552

01:49:26,400 --> 01:49:27,760

And they said, do you want to join?

1553

01:49:27,760 --> 01:49:30,880

And I was like, yeah, like, I guess so.

1554

01:49:30,880 --> 01:49:36,600

I had just gone through like a pretty traumatic experience the night before where I was actually

1555

01:49:36,600 --> 01:49:38,200

reintroducing a monkey.

1556

01:49:38,200 --> 01:49:45,200

It was a howler monkey and his mom had been shot for me and he had been shot in the shoulder

1557

01:49:45,200 --> 01:49:47,480

through her.

1558

01:49:47,480 --> 01:49:52,360

And so I was reintroducing this monkey and we were like climbing in the trees together.

1559

01:49:52,360 --> 01:49:56,120

And I came down and I said, Max, you've got to come down.

1560

01:49:56,120 --> 01:50:03,080

Like it's dangerous up there without like a group because monkeys are group animals.

1561

01:50:03,080 --> 01:50:07,120

And so it came down, I put him away and then like he was crying and crying.

1562

01:50:07,120 --> 01:50:08,120

He wanted to come out again.

1563

01:50:08,120 --> 01:50:11,200

But obviously I was trying to do the Keonig project as well as this.

1564

01:50:11,200 --> 01:50:16,760

So I went out with Keonig and I come back and I let him out and he goes up in this tree

1565

01:50:16,760 --> 01:50:18,720

and he's not coming down.

1566

01:50:18,720 --> 01:50:24,360

I go, right, okay, I'll go get a banana that I've been growing.

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01:50:24,360 --> 01:50:28,480

And so I went and got a banana and I went in and I just was, I think I was making a

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01:50:28,480 --> 01:50:36,000

cup of tea, you know, and I just see this shadow just come over and this Harpy eagle,

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01:50:36,000 --> 01:50:44,200

largest eagle in the jungle had just taken him from this tree.

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01:50:44,200 --> 01:50:49,760

And he was screaming and screaming and I climbed this tree and I'm shaking and I'm like three

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01:50:49,760 --> 01:50:51,400

meters away from this Harpy eagle.

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01:50:51,400 --> 01:50:57,360

And I'm not joking you, the talons, these eagles take sloths out of trees.

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01:50:57,360 --> 01:51:00,000

Their talons can go all the way around us.

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01:51:00,000 --> 01:51:05,080

Like these talons are like inches long.

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01:51:05,080 --> 01:51:11,480

And he's just like looking at me and he's just so angry and Max is like falling down.

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01:51:11,480 --> 01:51:23,200

I'm trying to catch Max and I get him to the ground and yeah, just he ripped his spine.

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01:51:23,200 --> 01:51:25,200

So he was paralyzed.

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01:51:25,200 --> 01:51:32,360

The puncture wound went through his lungs and it's just nature, you know, like that's

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01:51:32,360 --> 01:51:34,560

what it is.

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01:51:34,560 --> 01:51:36,120

He died in a natural way.



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01:51:36,120 --> 01:51:41,960

And so, you know, I just, even though I get upset about thinking about it, like it was

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01:51:41,960 --> 01:51:45,680

a natural way that he died.

1583

01:51:45,680 --> 01:51:51,160

I you know, obviously in their moments, I'm trying my best to do something.

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01:51:51,160 --> 01:51:53,440

I'm not a primate by any means.

1585

01:51:53,440 --> 01:51:55,560

I don't climb trees perfectly.

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01:51:55,560 --> 01:51:59,480

Like I have some pretty fucked up toes, but it doesn't mean that, you know, I can just

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01:51:59,480 --> 01:52:04,280

like walk up a tree and on a branch, you know, 30 feet up.

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01:52:04,280 --> 01:52:08,840

And I felt so like, ah, this is, this is my fault.

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01:52:08,840 --> 01:52:10,240

You know, like I felt horrible.

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01:52:10,240 --> 01:52:13,960

And so when I went down, they said, do you want to do ayahuasca?

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01:52:13,960 --> 01:52:19,920

I said, you know what, like whatever, give me whatever, just to forget about this.

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01:52:19,920 --> 01:52:24,760

And I, oh man, it was crazy trip.

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01:52:24,760 --> 01:52:27,960

Like I have done mushrooms before and I've smoked weed before.

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01:52:27,960 --> 01:52:34,240

And, you know, I've done a few other drugs in my life, but this was like, I drank one

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01:52:34,240 --> 01:52:39,000

of the cups and it tastes like, it tastes like you're drinking like a thicker Marmite,

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01:52:39,000 --> 01:52:40,640

like a thinner Marmite.

1597

01:52:40,640 --> 01:52:41,640

Sorry.

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01:52:41,640 --> 01:52:44,480

Like it's kind of like a liquidy Marmite, a veggie Marmite type thing.

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01:52:44,480 --> 01:52:45,480

Horrible.

1600

01:52:45,480 --> 01:52:46,480

It tastes like crap.

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01:52:46,480 --> 01:52:52,040

And I drank one cup and I'm like feeling my stomach going and I'm like, okay, you know,

1602

01:52:52,040 --> 01:52:53,040

something's happening.

1603

01:52:53,040 --> 01:52:57,440

And the shaman comes over and is talking to me and says, because apparently they'd heard

1604

01:52:57,440 --> 01:53:00,280

about my story.

1605

01:53:00,280 --> 01:53:06,120

Maybe because you've been in the jungle a long time, one cup isn't enough for you.

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01:53:06,120 --> 01:53:11,120

Maybe you should take two because you're already part of the natural ecosystem.

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01:53:11,120 --> 01:53:12,680

Like you have been here for so long.

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01:53:12,680 --> 01:53:18,280

Maybe you should do two cups because clearly your body has just absorbed this and you're

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01:53:18,280 --> 01:53:22,800

not going to get high and you're not going to have this healing experience.

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01:53:22,800 --> 01:53:29,000

So I downed this second cup and I was sitting there and my stomach was kind of gargling

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01:53:29,000 --> 01:53:31,360

and I was like, right, I'm going to vomit.

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01:53:31,360 --> 01:53:35,760

Like this, this purge is about to happen.

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01:53:35,760 --> 01:53:40,200

And so I stood up and I went to go get some water and everything felt like it was rushing

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01:53:40,200 --> 01:53:41,200

by me.

1615

01:53:41,200 --> 01:53:46,800

And I went outside and I got onto my knees and I put my knuckles on the ground and I

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01:53:46,800 --> 01:53:49,200

just project I'll vomit it.

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01:53:49,200 --> 01:53:55,760

Like all of this anger, hate, it just was expelled out of my body.

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01:53:55,760 --> 01:54:01,160

And my knuckles are on the ground and I'm like eyes closed and I opened my eyes and

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01:54:01,160 --> 01:54:06,120

I'm like, where are my fingers?

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01:54:06,120 --> 01:54:08,120

I thought my fingers are completely gone.

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01:54:08,120 --> 01:54:12,800

And I was like, oh no, because one of the biggest fears about being in Afghanistan was

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01:54:12,800 --> 01:54:15,800

that I was going to lose a limb.

1623

01:54:15,800 --> 01:54:20,080

So I'm petrified that my fingers have gone and I'm like, no, no, no, no, no, no, this

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01:54:20,080 --> 01:54:21,080

can't be happening.

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01:54:21,080 --> 01:54:24,080

Like what is like, have I just woken up?

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01:54:24,080 --> 01:54:26,080

Like what's going on?

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01:54:26,080 --> 01:54:29,840

And then at the start of the matrix where it's like all the numerical zeros and ones

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01:54:29,840 --> 01:54:36,080

and greens, I turned my hand around and it's just like running like the matrix.

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01:54:36,080 --> 01:54:43,880

And for the next seven hours, I was just in and out of some of the deepest trips I've

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01:54:43,880 --> 01:54:44,880

ever had.

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01:54:44,880 --> 01:54:52,960

At one point I was like a hexagonal kaleidoscope type spider just going through the trees,

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01:54:52,960 --> 01:54:55,120

just spinning webs.

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01:54:55,120 --> 01:55:05,400

And then I was going through all these different experiences and I didn't feel like I had achieved

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01:55:05,400 --> 01:55:12,080

anything from this experience, but I definitely felt like I was definitely a little bit happier.

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01:55:12,080 --> 01:55:17,480

And I walked off into the forest, which I wasn't allowed to do, but I was very good

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01:55:17,480 --> 01:55:22,040

at just kind of like getting away and just walking barefoot wherever.

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01:55:22,040 --> 01:55:26,400

I just sat down and I just talked to Khan and I said, like, I love you, man.

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01:55:26,400 --> 01:55:29,760

Like I'm doing this for you.

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01:55:29,760 --> 01:55:34,240

And I just absolutely am so sorry that this happened.

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01:55:34,240 --> 01:55:39,960

And I sang the Chris Isaac song Wicked Game to him as he was passing away.

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01:55:39,960 --> 01:55:46,520

And I just remember sitting in the forest and just singing Wicked Game because the world

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01:55:46,520 --> 01:55:56,480

was on fire and no one could save me but him.

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01:55:56,480 --> 01:55:59,000

Just them lyrics really just mean a lot to me.

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01:55:59,000 --> 01:56:06,440

And I have Khan tattooed on my throat and it has Wicked Game tattooed underneath on

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01:56:06,440 --> 01:56:08,600

top.

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01:56:08,600 --> 01:56:12,640

And yeah, I just sang it to him.

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01:56:12,640 --> 01:56:18,200

And that experience, I think I was in like a hallucinogenic state for about six to seven

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01:56:18,200 --> 01:56:26,560

hours and for about three to four days afterwards, I was the happiest I'd ever been.

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01:56:26,560 --> 01:56:30,360

Crazy and mushrooms as well have definitely helped me.

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01:56:30,360 --> 01:56:36,200

I microdose on mushrooms, not daily, but once or twice a week, I'll have a few little bits

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01:56:36,200 --> 01:56:38,840

and 0.2 milligram capsules.

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01:56:38,840 --> 01:56:46,960

And every now and again, I'll do a little spring cleaning and I'll do like a gram and

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01:56:46,960 --> 01:56:47,960

really trip some balls.

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01:56:47,960 --> 01:56:54,040

And then kind of like the last time I did trip out, I was in Eastern Washington and

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01:56:54,040 --> 01:56:59,720

I was in this mountainous range and the trees were just speaking to me.

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01:56:59,720 --> 01:57:05,080

They were just waving and the wind was just talking to me and it just solidified everything

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01:57:05,080 --> 01:57:07,080

that I was doing with Emerald Arch.

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01:57:07,080 --> 01:57:10,920

Keep saving us, keep saving us, please.

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01:57:10,920 --> 01:57:13,560

We believe in you.

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01:57:13,560 --> 01:57:16,560

Really like, I do, it was weird.

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01:57:16,560 --> 01:57:18,800

And then my friends were like, hey, Harry, we're going to go on a walk.

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01:57:18,800 --> 01:57:21,200

And I'm like, dude, the trees are speaking to me.

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01:57:21,200 --> 01:57:27,440

And they're like, oh, fuck, we need to take more mushrooms.

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01:57:27,440 --> 01:57:35,440

But I've definitely had some kind of like psychedelic help, but I have not found that

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01:57:35,440 --> 01:57:38,720

it has cured my mental health.

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01:57:38,720 --> 01:57:44,680

Like a lot of people who have been struggling with PTSD have had some breakthroughs with

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01:57:44,680 --> 01:57:50,160

whether it be ketamine, whether it be mushrooms or whether it be ayahuasca.

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01:57:50,160 --> 01:57:56,560

Like I know a lot of people have definitely felt the powers of that, but I have felt the



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01:57:56,560 --> 01:57:58,560

powers of it briefly.

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01:57:58,560 --> 01:58:03,680

Well, I'm glad I asked because I mean, again, it's all these different perspectives.

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01:58:03,680 --> 01:58:06,040

A lot of people I know were in crisis.

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01:58:06,040 --> 01:58:08,840

They went and did ayahuasca, ibogaine, et cetera.

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01:58:08,840 --> 01:58:13,480

And there's a lot of them that took multiple goes before they had breakthroughs.

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01:58:13,480 --> 01:58:16,600

But even then, now you're processing what was in the closet.

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01:58:16,600 --> 01:58:17,600

You know what I mean?

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01:58:17,600 --> 01:58:25,600

So I think the more stories we hear, the more hope we infuse because the toolbox is so,

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01:58:25,600 --> 01:58:26,600

so large.

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01:58:26,600 --> 01:58:30,920

And for you, clearly, one of the most healing things was simply being in nature and having

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01:58:30,920 --> 01:58:37,040

purpose like engaging with other beautiful animal souls and going on the journey with

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01:58:37,040 --> 01:58:38,040

them.

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01:58:38,040 --> 01:58:40,240

For others, it was EMDR and talk therapy.

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01:58:40,240 --> 01:58:41,520

That was all they needed.

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01:58:41,520 --> 01:58:45,100

For me, clearly, the canine element is a huge part of my journey.

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01:58:45,100 --> 01:58:49,920

So just hearing this combination of all the things that you've talked about today, I

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01:58:49,920 --> 01:58:55,400

mean, even watching your dad cry on your shoulder when you surprised him, and the joy in your

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01:58:55,400 --> 01:58:59,760

brother's face when you took him on the walks and he came back saying, I didn't say much,

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01:58:59,760 --> 01:59:04,440

all these snakes and all these insects and all these animals, these little moments, all

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01:59:04,440 --> 01:59:06,680

these kind of factor into that jigsaw puzzle.

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01:59:06,680 --> 01:59:09,040

So it's absolutely beautiful to hear.

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01:59:09,040 --> 01:59:13,060

I want to make sure that people know where they can find Emerald Arch and support what

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01:59:13,060 --> 01:59:14,060

you're doing there.

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01:59:14,060 --> 01:59:16,720

So where's the best place online or social media for that?

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01:59:16,720 --> 01:59:17,720

Yeah.

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01:59:17,720 --> 01:59:22,200

So we do have an Instagram, which is just emerald.arch.

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01:59:22,200 --> 01:59:24,440

And then online, it's just [www.emeraldarch.org](http://www.emeraldarch.org).

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01:59:24,440 --> 01:59:31,840

They're the best places that you can really find what we're going to be getting up to.

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01:59:31,840 --> 01:59:39,680

This last year has been kind of a slow one, getting 501c3 status and going through everything

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01:59:39,680 --> 01:59:44,000

that goes with the IRS is obviously a pain.

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01:59:44,000 --> 01:59:48,920

But this year, and hopefully with my visa coming in and being able to travel, buying

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01:59:48,920 --> 01:59:52,560

land is the first hurdle.

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01:59:52,560 --> 01:59:55,800

So we're going to have to be fundraising for that.

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01:59:55,800 --> 01:59:59,760

But if anyone is a veteran or if anyone is struggling with PTSD, you don't have to have

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01:59:59,760 --> 02:00:00,760

served.

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02:00:00,760 --> 02:00:06,480

That is not anything that we want to, if you are struggling with your mental health, whether

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02:00:06,480 --> 02:00:13,200

it be serving in the military, serving in the fire service or just any first responder,

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02:00:13,200 --> 02:00:22,160

or if you've just had childhood trauma, whether that be abuse in any kind of way or PTSD from

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02:00:22,160 --> 02:00:27,880

car accidents, whatever it is, if you are struggling and we have the land and we have

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02:00:27,880 --> 02:00:34,280

everything in place, I want people to be able to just open up to Emerald Arch and myself

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02:00:34,280 --> 02:00:35,840

because I've been there.

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02:00:35,840 --> 02:00:40,320

This is a thing, you know, like when you go to psychiatrists and doctors, you don't know

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02:00:40,320 --> 02:00:41,720

what they've been through.

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02:00:41,720 --> 02:00:44,840

You don't know if your story is going to relate to them.

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02:00:44,840 --> 02:00:48,400

You don't know if opening up to them is going to help you in any way.

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02:00:48,400 --> 02:00:53,960

But if you know that someone like myself has been in a place of darkness and in a place

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02:00:53,960 --> 02:01:00,120

of absolute chaos, then you might be able to open up and feel a little bit more freer

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02:01:00,120 --> 02:01:11,040

about trying nature and trying freedom as a healing, as a way of healing.

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02:01:11,040 --> 02:01:12,040

Absolutely.

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02:01:12,040 --> 02:01:15,600

Well, the film I know is playing on Amazon Prime right now.

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02:01:15,600 --> 02:01:17,580

The film is called Wildcat.

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02:01:17,580 --> 02:01:21,480

If people want to reach out to you specifically, aside from the nonprofit, where are the best

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02:01:21,480 --> 02:01:24,160

places online and social media?

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02:01:24,160 --> 02:01:30,640

Yeah, so best place to reach out to me is usually just via my Instagram, which is just

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02:01:30,640 --> 02:01:34,240

harry underscore underscore Turner.

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02:01:34,240 --> 02:01:37,440

And I'm usually pretty good at getting back to people.

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02:01:37,440 --> 02:01:41,800

After the documentary, I had, you know, quite a few people messaging me.

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02:01:41,800 --> 02:01:48,560

Only a few assholes, which were like, you're an idiot, but a lot of them were really, really

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02:01:48,560 --> 02:01:50,480

nice messages.

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02:01:50,480 --> 02:01:57,440

And it really did encourage me to go on to more podcasts and to go on to more platforms

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02:01:57,440 --> 02:01:58,440

in this.

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02:01:58,440 --> 02:02:04,080

And it's encouraged me to write my book as well, because I know that this film means

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02:02:04,080 --> 02:02:08,400

a lot to me, but it also has meant a lot to a lot of other people.

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02:02:08,400 --> 02:02:15,400

And it has made people understand mental health in a way that they didn't before, because

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02:02:15,400 --> 02:02:17,280

it's so vulnerable.

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02:02:17,280 --> 02:02:22,760

And so I will try and get back to people on Instagram as quick as I can.

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02:02:22,760 --> 02:02:26,320

But usually that's the best way to contact me.

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02:02:26,320 --> 02:02:28,740

Well, I just want to say thank you.

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02:02:28,740 --> 02:02:32,440

It's been an incredible conversation.

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02:02:32,440 --> 02:02:37,000

I acknowledge the fact that when you're reliving some of the things, whether it was Khan, whether

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02:02:37,000 --> 02:02:41,640

it was the Middle East, it takes a little piece of you pulling the scab off the wound

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02:02:41,640 --> 02:02:42,640

a little bit.

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02:02:42,640 --> 02:02:48,800

But I think there's so much value to people hearing the struggles and then seeing the

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02:02:48,800 --> 02:02:51,760

hope on the other side and then the loss of Khan.

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02:02:51,760 --> 02:02:58,040

But the incredible story of Keanu and finding out that six months later, he's still thriving

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02:02:58,040 --> 02:03:00,420

and out there.

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02:03:00,420 --> 02:03:05,740

But this, again, like I said, this courageous vulnerability is what we need in 2024.

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02:03:05,740 --> 02:03:09,160

This is what masculinity and femininity actually is.

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02:03:09,160 --> 02:03:12,920

There's times where we have to be tough and there's times where we absolutely have to

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02:03:12,920 --> 02:03:15,540

be compassionate with others and with ourselves.

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02:03:15,540 --> 02:03:19,920

So I want to thank you so, so much for being not only, as I said, courageously vulnerable

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02:03:19,920 --> 02:03:24,000

today, but also so generous with your time.

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02:03:24,000 --> 02:03:25,000

Thank you very much, James.

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02:03:25,000 --> 02:03:26,000

I really do appreciate your time.

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02:03:26,000 --> 02:03:38,720

And this has been a great podcast.