

John Spera and Corey Sutton - Episode 801

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SPEAKERS

Corey Sutton, James Geering, John Spera

J James Geering 00:00

Welcome to the behind the shield podcast. As always, my name is James Geering. And this week it is my absolute honor to welcome back onto the show John Spera, and welcome for the first time Corey Sutton. Now in this conversation, we discuss a host of topics from core from Corys, early life as an athlete, mixed martial arts, international football, his journey into the fire service. And then we dive deep into firefighter wellness, from fitness to the workweek. And as you will hear, I get qualified when we're talking about the workweek and the resistance to change. But then we dive into the world of CBD an area that I have been an advocate for, for multiple years now, John and Cory have their own company, and they're going to discuss that as well. Now, before we get to this incredible conversation, as I say, every week, please just take a moment, go to whichever app you listen to this on, subscribe to the show, leave feedback and leave a rating. Every single five star rating truly does elevate this podcast, therefore making it easier for others to find. And this is a free library of over 800 episodes now. So all I ask in return is that you help share these incredible men and women's stories, so I can get them to every single person on planet earth who needs to hear them. So that being said, I introduce to you, John Spera and Corey Sutton enjoy all right, well, John and Cory, I want to start by saying thank you so much for taking the time and coming on the behind the show podcast today.

C Corey Sutton 01:53

Thanks for having us. We appreciate you letting us be here.

J John Spera 01:56

Yeah, James, it's always a pleasure to talk to like minded brothers and sisters. And you and I go a little bit, a ways back and like recently had a podcast where you became you came on, and you were a guest and covered a lot of topics. So I'm really looking forward to where this conversation goes today. There's so much we could cover and looking forward to it. So thank you for having us on.

J James Geering 02:16

No problem. Now, Cory, I've had to navigate time zones because of different parts of America or even different parts of the world. But this is clearly a strange time zone because you got a Christmas tree in the background.

C Corey Sutton 02:29

Yeah, we we have four kids, I have three jobs. My fiance is a nurse, and we have no time. So we took the upstairs, one down, but this one I said, but this time, it's we're starting to celebrate Christmas early.

J James Geering 02:43

Exactly. I mean, there's only 187 shopping days left. So all right. Well, as we discussed before, hit record. John and I did an episode recently together, and I was on his show, and then when he's been on my show once prior as well. So I want to spend a little time getting to know you. And then obviously then we'll kind of round robin some of these questions that we're going to discuss on firefighter wellness. So my opening question is always tell me a little bit about your family dynamic. what your parents did, and how many siblings I'm sorry, and where where were you born? So where were you born family dynamic? How many siblings?

i 03:19

Yeah, so I was born in Roseburg, Oregon, and spent most of my life in Oregon up until I was 30 years old. My parents had a blessed childhood. My dad's been in the construction industry all my life and just retired this last year, just to touch before 70 years old. My mom stayed at home for most of our years, and our adolescent and then kind of when we became adults, she went back into special education. So working with special needs children with autism and learning disabilities. And yeah, I couldn't be more blessed to, to have the folks that I do that were able to kind of teach me good, you know, characteristics, morals and values. I have two brothers, I have one biological brother that's four years older than me. And then I have a, an adopted brother, who is also four years older than me. And his story is a beautiful one. He came up in the foster system and, you know, through, you know, strife and struggles. You know, my parents had the ability to kind of get in his life around 1516 years old. He was kind of raising his father because his father was a day from being 70 years old when he was born. So he had a unique grow, you know, ability to have some strife early on, and then when he came into our family, it was a huge blessing. So he and I are I mean, as close as brothers could be, and he just retired 31 year marine so highly decorated and just a success story in itself so

J James Geering 04:55

amazing. Well, that's a perfect example of how trauma can define you or you know, it can become a superpower if you process it. And it sounds like based on what you told me briefly about your parents that the kindness, compassion and hard work that you were raised in is the

about your parents that the kindness, compassion and hard work that you were raised in is the kind of environment to forge young man into a great professional and uniform, for example.

 05:18

Yeah, I couldn't agree with you more. He had 1516 years of learning how to be a Marine and, you know, fend for himself. Be strong minded, and like you said, you can either use it as a crutch, or you can use it as a push forward to success. And that's what he did.

 James Geering 05:35

Well, I know football, and athleticism is a big part of you know, your early life. And obviously, what you do now as well. What sports were you playing when you're in that school age?

 05:45

Yeah, so I went to a small school a little to a school, about 300 Kids total. So as we grew up, we played all sports. So if you weren't doing something, you were bored. So I played football, basketball, baseball. And I also ran track in high school. So I was a four sport athlete. That was kind of what we did it defined who we were, you went to school. And as soon as you're done, you're putting athletic gear on and hitting the field. So I look at kids nowadays, and they are single sport athletes. And I kind of feel sorry for him not not that they don't have great opportunity. But I just remember so many amazing stories of going from one season to another. And just the dynamics of changing sports and getting on a different playing field was just amazing.

 James Geering 06:32

A lot of conversations I've had with people who were high level athletes when they were younger, and the coaches from from our side is there seems to be a very glaring truth. The multi sport athletes seem to have a lot more resilience physically, and probably mentally as well, because you're moving loads different planes of motion, you're not getting that repetitive movement over and over again, like a year round baseball pitcher, but have for example, what did you experience through your career as far as that multi sport element to your longevity in the sport?

 07:06

Yeah, so as I was growing up, my dad played football in high school. And he was just always telling stories about how he loved it. You know, he also played many sports, but from a young age, in my mind, I wanted to be an NFL football player, just like my dad was striving to be. So as I was growing up, doing all different types of sports, I came into to high school and I'd wrestled all my life, my high school football coach, which is, he was an amazing coach. He's in high school football hall of fame now. But he came to me and he said, you know, you're a defensive back in a running back. And the movements that you use are turning and spinning,

and jumping, and catching and all these things, I think you'd be better off playing basketball. And I was, you know, pretty excited, because wrestling is really hard. And it's scary. And it's a lot of things that are that you struggle with as a young man, and I loved basketball, although I wasn't very good at it. So I took his advice, because I trusted him as much as anybody in the world and hit the basketball courts. You know, I wasn't really good, technically, but I could hustle and I was a good athlete. So, you know, I was able to hold my own, you know, in high school and through varsity and whatnot. And so I think that you have those abilities that you speak of, of just doing different things in your hand eye coordination. They fend Well, whenever you're doing the sport that you're trying to succeed at, when others are good at exactly what they have to be good at when they get into positions where it's, you know, somewhat unique. I think that's where some people struggle from an athleticism standpoint.

 James Geering 08:40

Now, obviously, you were good enough to play for West Oregon University. So talk to me about that experience. And what were you studying academically during that?

 08:50

Yeah, coming in, you know, that was sports kind of led me to college, which is a beautiful thing, because since I was a young boy, I always knew I wanted to go to college, because that was my way to play football to the next level. So I did well, in high school went to Western Oregon. I played defensive back at Western Oregon, I study physical education and health. And then I also ran track and field. And that was like we were talking about, I ran track on my offseason, because I knew it would make me faster and more athletic for when the season was hitting. So I had opportunities, actually more opportunities to play baseball in college, and I just turned it down because my interest in football was there. And I knew that passion would lead me more than anything else. So I couldn't I couldn't have better things to say then you know, that college football experience was amazing. I have so many friends from the locker room that I just miss, you know, playing football is one of the opportunities and things that I took advantage of but you don't realize until you're grown looking back how much those those experiences socially and in the locker room that you're going to miss and And, quite frankly, you know, sometimes I just sit and reminisce and, and look back at those times and just get some giggles back from some of the experiences we had.

 James Geering 10:10

And what about academically? What did you graduate with?

 10:13

Yeah, so I graduated with honors, PE and health. So I had a, and then, you know, I've since then went on to get my master's degree in organizational leadership. And then I started taking some doctorate classes, but I had a little rude awakening this last year, it's just too busy. I had to one of my goals in life is I got to learn how to focus better, and finish the job before I start something else. So that organizational leadership degree, that's good. But I think, you know,

I've kind of done a handful of businesses in the past and, you know, the school of hard knocks and doing business is my business degree a two, it's a, it's humbling at times, but it's amazing the opportunities to get that you get the people that you meet, and, and at this point in life right now, it's about trying to create businesses that help others and that's where kind of we're at today.

 James Geering 11:11

Beautiful. Well, you talked about chasing the NFL as your father was, you are at the end of college, walk me through the NFL element, if there was any and how you found yourself in Austria.

 11:25

Yeah, so I did have a lot of success. And in college, I was a multiple time all American all conference several times. In my senior year, you know, I got National Player of the Week, one week and then kind of coming to the end of the season, you know, people were really, you know, talking highly of, you know, my opportunities. And I was it was a, you know, Naia school and we're moving into Division two. So you didn't see a lot of individual people going into the NFL from smaller schools. So I was kind of laying the groundwork a little bit. And so some, some of the, you know, the information and ideas I was getting from the outside and probably weren't as realistic looking back. But I thought, Man, I thought I was getting drafted, I thought I was going to be in the combine and all these different things. Then when the rubber hits the road, those opportunities weren't there. So I had to try to do grit and grime and get get whatever I could get. So I was going to different columbines on my own dollar trying to get good statistics down so and just catch the eye of somebody. So the end of my senior year, I ended up getting defensive player of the year for the naa so I had some really good accolades, but I think when people you know, they'd say, Oh, who's this kid, and then they watch a film and I'm a five, nine white dude. And pretty fast, but nothing really stuck out other than I was able to make plays, you know. And then when you look at some other people out there, you're like, man, they fit the potential really well. So I had a unique experience. You know, at that point, I didn't have any opportunities. I kind of I went around, went to the Arena Football League for a while, came back home and then I ended up getting to the the EFL, European American Football League. And that opportunity came because my defensive coordinator and offensive line coach, those guys had connections over there. And one of them actually was the head coach and defensive coordinator. Anyway, so when I went over there, what an amazing experience. So I, they called me and I had four days to have a passport. So I drove myself to Seattle to get a passport the next day, on a flight two days later, and then I like wake up and I'm in Vienna, Austria. It's cold as heck. And I'm like What do you know? So going through that season, it was cool. It was a it was different than than American football, it was a little more relaxed, and the regimen wasn't quite as intense. But you have some really good football players over there. Probably individually, some really, really good talent. And then collectively, you have some really good teams and some lower end team. So it was unique from week to week, the competition. We had some great success. Vienna is a really good football city for American football. We ended up winning the national title. We won our way all the way to the European American Football Championship. So that's Europeans kind of Super Bowl. Super Bowl for football. Yeah, I did really well I got National Player of the Year there we won the national championship and then lost in the Euro bowl. So but what a great experience

J James Geering 14:40

is that the same league that the London monarchs are or monarchs as the Americans call it?

i 14:45

Yeah, that's I think that was I want to say that was the NFL Europe right before they kind of went out uh, not doing it anymore, or are they still doing it?

J James Geering 14:56

I'm not sure you're asking the wrong person. I'm I was part of the world bowl. I thought I got to see them train when I was doing lifeguard training in Crystal Palace years ago. That's the only reason I know who they are. But a bunch of big American dudes randomly in London.

i 15:09

Yeah, yeah, I kind of had the same experience what was unique there, you know, you, you go to football stadiums here and watch, you know, and you have these immaculate stadiums, these NFL stadiums. And then we went there, and we went to our, you know, our home field. And I was under impressed. You know, I was like, oh, man, this is different than I was expecting. And then we went swimming one day, and we saw the soccer field. And I go, I hope I can play there someday. A soccer player, but it was amazing. So it was a really, looking back, it was really cool. You know, kind of just seeing the experience. And I'm like cheering for all the guys here playing soccer that are kind of, you know, considered lower level when I know their skills, and their abilities are as good as anybody in the world. And I'm sure that you know, they kind of go to their home field and then see, you know, for example, Bronco stadium, kind of, we're here in Denver, and probably have the same experience. And I just those things that when I look back, I'm just there. They're priceless opportunities for me, man. I'm so grateful and thankful. Although I didn't make it I have zero regrets. The Yeah, I'm here for a reason. And like, I always tell my boys like, I don't have any regrets. Because I put every ounce of effort that I could have, I don't know anybody that I came in contact with that had more desire and work ethic to get there than I did. And I think that's a win in itself.

J James Geering 16:32

Well, one more area before we lead you through your fire service career, I skied in Austria quite a few times. And I was young, near Salzburg. And it's a very different culture than the UK than America and then not in a bad way at all. It's a little bit more stoic, I would argue. And it's just it's foreign. You talked about looking back fondly at the locker room element of university. As with when we transition out the fire service, a lot of our men and women kind of find themselves missing that tribe, that purpose, etc. Did you have any element of kind of, you know, loneliness, depression or anything like that, when you were plucked from the US and found yourself in Vienna? Or was it a good transition from one tribe to another?

 17:17

Yeah, they the people in Vienna were amazing. The way I was treated from day one was as good as it could have been. So I never felt like an outsider there. We had five or six other Americans and some dual citizen guys. But there was actually a few guys that I went to college with that were on that team. And then a few from, you know, sprinkled all across the country that were there. And yeah, I think the sense of brotherhood from day one for me was amazing. You know, the national players and the international players all got along perfectly. I think it was good from the ownerships standpoint, we're really into having good international talent, but also having good international people that would come into their program. And then the head coach and the defensive coordinator were both Americans who I knew already and had played with and for. So it was an easy transition for me, I'm not sure that my experience was exactly like everybody else that's paid played there. I think I kind of got the red carpet, if you could say so.

 James Geering 18:20

So walk me through playing American football in Austria to joining the fire service back in the US.

 18:29

Yeah, so playing over there was it was great. I mean, football is football, and they play a good quality of football over there. So there wasn't from an X and O's standpoint, there really wasn't that much difference. Like I said, it was a little bit the talent differential from game to game was probably the difference between going to college every every team you play is pretty darn good. And over there, there was a handful of teams that were lower level, and then you'd play teams that felt like a really good college team. And so that was kind of unique, but transition wise, you know, when I finished there, I got I got into that kind of the corporate role world I went to Bally Total Fitness, worked my way into a general manager role there and then then got out into real estate and I own my own business. I owned a real estate company and a mortgage company for years and years. And then, you know, I had some, some marital issues that kind of made me just look at my life choices and, and I started following my passion more, you know, so it came to a point where I knew I was missing something and that was the camaraderie, the locker room feel and the sense of purpose. I mean, selling a house is great, but going you know, into a locker room just feels different. And I started looking at a couple different options, one being the military going in and maybe joining as an officer or the fire service. I knew a couple people in the fire service that were amazing people so reached out to them did some ride alongs and pretty quick into that. I knew that was my calling at that point. And the transition to then there was kind of that same mindset that we had spoke about earlier of, you know, you have a goal and you know what it takes to get there, I was willing to do anything and everything, it took me about three years, I pretty much quit my full time job, I didn't have money and savings. Luckily, I went to EMT school full time. And then six months, I was done with all my schooling and then traveling the Western United States, you know, doing interviews, trying to get on as a volunteer doing all the things that you have to do. And at that time, it was really competitive. That was, you know, about 1213 years ago, you know, typically every interview was like, you know, 10 people out of 1000, or something was the odds. And so, I kept going to interviews and leaving there feeling like I did really well. And I, just knowing

myself internally, I was like, I'm a good candidate. I think that, you know, I'm gonna get brought in, I get a phone call, they say no, sorry. And I'm like, What the heck is wrong with me. But, you know, that opportunity was good, because it humbled me, and it made me look at myself and, and pretty soon I was going in interviews gone, I'm not gonna say anything that they want me to say, I'm just gonna be me. And one of these days, somebody's gonna like me for me and bring me on. And I had a buddy that played for the Denver Broncos here in Colorado. There was a test in south metro fire, I reached out to him, I said, Hey, I'm going to, I'm going to come down and test are doing 14 jobs. And it looks like there's 2500 applicants, I'm not going to get the job, but it's going to be fun to hang out for a week. Go watch a game and stuff. You know, I went in there and was myself. And finally I got it. And I think that was a testament to this fire department is amazing. I think I'm a really good fit for the fire department. And I think when I was sitting there just being me, that's, that's when I showed my best. But looking back now there's zero regrets. I love going to work every single day. And by the day, by the time my four days over, I'm typically ready to go see my buddies. So yeah, what an awesome opportunity. And what a great career I'm in.

J

James Geering 22:05

Beautiful. Well, let's bring John back in. So John, you joined that department a few years ago now. So walk me through how you guys met, and we can kind of learn a little bit about the relationship.

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22:17

Yeah, so I worked for another fire department. I'll kind of just rewind to go back to you started in Boca Raton fire when we talked about that department a lot. Because we love that work schedule the one on the three off, that's, you know, the ideal schedule for the fire service. So I worked there for five years. Life and I when we first met our first five minute conversation was we both wanted to live in Colorado, that was when we lived in Florida, looked around and ended up seeing that Aurora fire had a lateral program. So I ended up lateral into Aurora fire as a fire medic, worked there for 13 years had some really good seasons had some not so good seasons, and it wasn't the people in the firehouse it was leadership type stuff. And I tell people, we've spoke about this before, but you know, our fire departments have standards for us. And they should, there's a standard that the Fire Department holds us to but as you go and you know this James, as you went through your career, you began to have a standard, you know, at first all you want to do is get on the job and you're just willing to do whatever it takes and everything's okay even the bad stuff, you let it go and, and then over time, you begin to have a standard for your for your organization. And if they don't meet it, it's okay to find another organization. And I don't think a lot of people feel that way or believe that but it's okay, if your organization's not meeting your standard, it's okay to after you put the work in and you did what you can to try and make things better. It's okay to find one that does and that was south metro for me. So 45 years old, going back through a fire academy. Pretty awesome experience. So when we talked about fitness, sometimes we just talk about fitness in the sense that Fitness is important for the fire service. And Fitness is important for career longevity and, and durability. But fitness actually put you in a position to when an opportunity comes across. And it doesn't have to be a fire department any type of opportunity that requires you to be physically fit, you're ready to go. So was funny, a lot of times I'd hear Are you sure you want to go back through an academy? Are you sure you could do that at 45 years old. And it's fitness

when your fitness is where it needs to be? It allows you to say yes to opportunity. So went through an academy did the whole probationary thing again. And what was really cool was I was able to do that as a 45 year old man who had experienced two departments. And it was just coming from a different place. You know, you're not the same guy at 45 than you are at 26 When you first start the career, so it was a cool experience. And I love the humility involved with having to be new again. Like it's so easy to say, hey, you need to be humble. Well, let's put you on the gerbil ground with an instructor that has less experienced than you do. Who is telling you something that doesn't make sense to you and see how humble you could be then it's really easy to say hey, we need to be humble. So went through that experience probate She was great. And I got to work with Cory as a probationary firefighter. So I was his probie at station 38. And what was cool was our culture is amazing. There's high expectations, the standard is high, but they treat you well, they treat you like, you'd want to be treated, they treat you like you belong. It's not a free pass. It's not, hey, you got through the academy, and you don't have to prove yourself, you still do. But the culture is so strong, and the people are kind. And I tell people, when when you come across happy people, happy people don't want to treat people poorly. It's unhappy people that want to treat people poorly. So you don't have that, like hazing and all that other stuff that some organizations do. And it was a great experience in Korea. And I just, you know, we worked together for about four months, worked out together had good conversations, we had similar mindsets. We both had a passion to help people. And it was just one of those things where you just meet people and you know that you're going to be friends for a long time. And that was my experience with Cory. And then I had to rove out of that station, I went to a different station, but we always stayed in contact and we always had very similar goals in life and just different ways of accomplishing them. And here we are today. You know, Cory reached out to me about a year ago and started talking to me about CBD. Okay, so here we go. We're gonna move into this direction a little bit and I'll tell you what, man I when I first got that phone call from him, I'm like, What are you like Spicoli is like Fast Times at Ridgemont High, we're gonna we're gonna order a pizza here. Like I had no clue what he was talking about, but it kind of know caused me to dig a little bit deeper and eventually try CBD. And for me personally, I hadn't been sleeping through the night for at least a decade. Typically, I had no problem falling asleep but I was up three or four times a night so that's where we're at today we both have a similar passion and desire to help people in the fire service first responders and that caused us to create respond wellness.

 James Geering 27:12

Well, let's unpack that for a second. When you look back at a year ago and prior talk to me about the self talk with CBD What were you thinking with your prejudice before your eyes open?

 27:25

Yeah, so I just assumed that like CBD, if you use CBD, you were using marijuana, it was the same as smoking marijuana. Right? And that's just how naive I was. That was, you know, you have certain beliefs that you're just taught growing up, and it takes a strong person an open mind to detach from some of that stuff. So for me growing up like marijuana was was the devil and you know, people who smoke marijuana were losers and THC and all that stuff. And CBD to me was THC. And I had a really good friend who was in that industry. And I still believe that no matter how much you would tell me, that's not the case. I still, I still believe that was a bad

thing. And it took me literally digging deep for several weeks and reading and the real reason that I did that as I trusted Corey so much, I had so much respect for him. And his experience with CBD and him talking to me about it. And that it caused me to do that. And maybe in the past, like the people that I interacted with, I just really didn't have any desire to look further into it. But because it was him, it was like, Okay, if Cory is somebody who is experiencing positive results, I need to look at this. So the more I did, the more I realized, like Man, this is a great option for first responders, people who struggle with sleep. People who struggle with anxiety, people who struggle with pain, people who struggle with focus, and it's not a pharmaceutical, it's not alcohol, it's not Ambien and drinking a six pack of beer to try to go to bed before shift. And I started seeing the opportunity to kind of help a lot of people through Sheeran CBD. But the problem was is a lot of the companies out there weren't THC free. And that was kind of where this whole mission of trying to create a product that is 100% thc free and addresses the issues. But then putting it in a position because we know that trust is going to be the biggest challenge trust is going to be one of those things where if people don't trust the company, they don't trust the people associated with it. It doesn't matter how good it is. And that's where we're at today. But man I was definitely a skeptic initially and I was somebody who viewed it as no different than smoking marijuana through a through a bong right like that's what I that's how I saw this thing.

 James Geering 29:51

So my very first guest that discussed this topic was Dr. Gregory Smith, and that was six years ago now and I just had knee surgery Want to meniscus snipped, and he sent me a bottle of th free TCXO THC free CBD. It's a mouthful. And I'd been given a prescription for painkillers and there was only a few pills in there. And I basically then replaced it with CBD when it arrived and then tore up the replacement prescription. And that was it. I was I was done. And that second surgery was super painful because my meniscus was stuck between the TIB fib and the femur, so it was like jammed in there. So they were like yanking on my kneecaps is a little bit of trauma in there. But I was absolutely blown away. And so for for several years, the red pill medical was the one that I was sending everyone to, because you need to have that trust. I just had Paige Figi on who's really the origin story of CBD. And you know, we kind of learned again, this is a woman with a terminally ill child who went the holistic route found something after trying every pharmaceutical didn't work, and literally save the child's life with hemp. So let's turn it to Cory for a second because obviously you brought it to John walked me through any prejudices that you had prior and then how you got to the point of trusting CBD in the first place.

 31:12

Yeah, I'm gonna roll rock, rewind real quick and just give John some kudos because I didn't have a chance for any rebuttal of his being my probie. But let me tell you, this guy is so stinking funny that any work out works, everybody. So in terms of probies there's not not a better probie out there, I can promise you that. And what's amazing about that is he had more experienced than me. He was smarter than I was. And he came in with amazing humility. And immediately it was just like, listen, you're not going to, you're not going to do all the cleaning, then boom. It's like it's a magic floor because it's always clean. I'm like, what do you do? And he's like, it's already done. I'm like, You're like I was cleaning ninja. You know, it was it was amazing. And you know, you would not expect that for somebody coming in in his 40s a grown

man that's been through several, you know, a fire academies and his teaching classes and stuff. It was it was awesome. So I'll give John kudos for that. What a cool experience. And then, in that, you know, same time for him, we just became great friends. We had so much fun. We, you know, we get everything done, we go play pickleball for two hours. That was the workout where it's dripping sweat in the firehouse you know, is awesome. So. So kudos to John. And same thing. You know, being a business owner when I was starting this process, I was planning on doing it myself. And then a couple, you know, the, again, the school of hard knocks and things that I learned is sometimes, you know, splitting, splitting things in half is better. Because when you know you're going to be eaten on a grape or you're going to be eaten on a watermelon. So I looked at John as as a great opportunity, one from a friend. And two from a business mind he's very has an acumen that's amazing. And his ability to connect with people and build trust and do all those things is something I knew that I needed. And his social media presence is is awesome. So and it's the exact people that we want to help. So I reached out to him and my background was CBD and THC. I didn't really have like a good or a bad really thought about it. I know a lot of people that have done THC in the past great, very successful. People that, yeah, so I don't necessarily think it's a good or a bad thing. Really, my mind is built around the boxes, my department tells me I can't take it. And if you do, you're going to lose your job. So that's easy for me, I'm not going to touch this stuff. So and I'm not sure what I would do if if they told me I could I probably wouldn't. So with that being said, I'd heard a lot of stories about CBD. And you know, frankly, where we're at as a society right now, you know, the FDA is not regulated, there's not a lot of, you know, testing agencies doing, you know, background on it. And it's just not if there's not a lot of money to be made. There's not a lot of research is being done and or publicized. So but through word of mouth, I've heard stories just like yourself of like being on a pharmaceutical drug for pain, and then you get on CBD who's you know, it comes from the ground and it's extremely, you know, it seems like it has no side effects. And then people are off of opioid painkillers because of that, I had a look into it. My reasoning for doing so was just overall stress. I have good stress management interpersonally and feel like I'm able to kind of look at myself and I make changes as needed. But I knew that you know, even the changes I was doing weren't helping enough. And the example that I give for me is like I always said I had like a ball in my like a volleyball in my stomach and it was vibrating all the time and when I had ability To relax, I could not relax. And I wasn't feeling overall stress. But I knew that wasn't something was wrong. And my body just couldn't relax. So I started doing some research and found CBD. Then I started reaching out to different companies and chatting with people about THC free products. And kind of the overall impression that I got where people were either in it for a Money Gram, or they had no idea what firefighters, you know, police, military first responders needed, because we can't have a fraction of THC in our systems or we can lose our jobs. So overall, I just saw a big niche and an opportunity to help people opportunity to build a great company and business and therefore, I said, it's time to roll. This one was organically brought to me through research. And then soon after I took the product. Personally, I had amazing results. The very first night that I took the sleep product, I slept like a baby. And I the big thing is falling asleep quickly because typically I'll lay in bed, watch TV, turn it off thinking about what I have to do turn the TV back on. Two hours later, I finally go to sleep. And first night I took it I fell asleep 1520 minutes later. And that was the big game changer for me. I thought it was a placebo effect. I thought I was being psychosomatic, you know, and then continue doing it and then wean myself off it for a while. And after a little while, I started going back into that routine. So it's now became my daily regimen. I haven't not taken Sleep, sleep aid for almost a year now. And it's a game changer both from a stress management point for me and asleep management. So it's been it's been a game changer life changing Absolutely. For me.



36:47

And I'll just add on to what Corey was saying is that's the hard part. Right. Like we know first responders in our jobs like, man, we work so hard to get a job. And you heard Korea's experience. Mine was similar multiple interviews, and this is fire police, EMS. Like once you get that career, you want to hold on to it because you've worked so hard to get it and one of the things that recently happened at our department, and I won't name the company but a company sent they had CBD THC CBD products, a company here in Colorado decided that they were going to send products to all the fire houses in Colorado, they're just going to send the CBD free, THC free products to all the fire houses all the different fire departments, they must have just got on the computer and got addresses and with good intentions, right? The good intentions was here's our here's our CBD products are THC free. And the name I'm not gonna say the name of the company, almost it but the name of the company was similar to relax. And that's not the name of the company. And that's not what that did. Because now you have all these CBD products showing up to firehouses all across Colorado. And what do you think that's doing to administration's because they're these, these products are showing up at the firehouse these guys are getting it they want to take it policy may say that you can't take THC it may say you can't take hemp based products, it just depends on the fire department. And now they're having to quickly address all these products shown up it did the opposite of relax it made it made a couple of days worth of just chaos. And that's just not understanding our culture, not understanding our people not understanding the challenges not understanding the bias, the skepticism, all the things that we're going to have to overcome in the fire service to help people understand what I didn't understand a year ago, and all and I totally understand that because that's where I was at I was that same guy I wasn't as open minded as Cory was. So it's interesting to see just having two guys that have used their own products for a year at a fire department that randomly drug tested us several times how much trust and credibility that has brought to a specific product or to CBD where people are beginning to trust us and people are beginning to say you use this you put this in your body, okay, I'll give it a shot. So it's not an easy arena or environment to share CBD but it's going to take education and it's going to take a lot of trust and credibility. And I think that's our biggest mission right now is to be able to build that trust and earn that earn that trust so that more firefighters police officers, EMS, er Doc's nurses feel comfortable putting their body because when you put that dropper under your tongue, if you're not 100% Sure, you're not going to not have a problem with random drug tests and I wouldn't put it under my tongue. I totally get that.



James Geering 39:56

One of the things as crazy as if you look at the THC content in hemp it's point 3%, which is really one would call almost a trace a trace amount. So the fact that we're worried even of that showing up is, you know, arguably insanity in itself. But then when you look at the th free CT THC free, CBD, you know, now you removing it completely and the number of people that I know we're on a host of prescription meds, you know, some anti depression meds and opiates that were freaking out about trying CBD and it was the same thing. I'm like, I've taken it for years never failed a drug test or anything because, again, it's third party tested, which we'll get into in a minute. But the absolute fear of a plant, you know, that they are not physically testing for in a drug test, they're looking for certain compounds. CBD is not one of them. That shows you how much misinformation and what's the right word. Just just fear, basically, that has been created about something that is completely benign. And we have people reaching for Ambien and opiates and alcohol and all these other things that are quote unquote, socially acceptable. Whereas this leaf that was demonized in the whole Reefer Madness, you know, basically racist

driven job justification underlying element that was drug prohibition, which I would argue none of those should be but CBD was wrapped into that along with some of the things like paper and some of the other industries that realize it was going to be a threat. Here we are 80 plus years later, still scared of a leaf. So you know, it's so important that we finally take a step back and look at this, this plant, look at you know, all the great things that are happening, and then really, ultimately challenge regular CBD to be able to be taken, you know, if it's below a 1%, or whatever it is, then okay, it's the therapeutic effect, and you don't need to be testing for it.



42:03

Yeah, I agree. And I think that's the mission right now. It's, we do have a product, that's great, we have a product that's changed both of our lives, and many people who have tried it. But I want more than anything is for people to see that it's safe, that there's a great benefit, and that you have no worry of ever having to justify a drug test result. Because there isn't, it's not in there. Like you cannot pick up something that's not in our product. Like that's impossible. And even to this day, even with everything we've done to earn that trust, you'll still have people who will have a challenge, putting it in their body. So that's what we're most excited about. we're most excited about educating people, and giving them an opportunity to say yes, and give it a shot. Because what's the alternative. And we don't want people drinking themselves to sleep before shift and take an Ambien and then showing up to work with that with that there's a hangover to that there's a hangover effect, and you're not, you're not focused, you're not able to do the job and whatever. However, somebody views that next day of work that keeps them up at night, and the uncertainty that comes with a shift and you know, the stress that comes with it, and some people just don't get to sleep. And the more we talk to our firefighters and our brothers and sisters across the country, it's that night before shift that tends to keep people up. And what they're doing to go to sleep is not healthy. But like you said, James, it's, it's socially acceptable. And that's something that we're we're excited to change.



James Geering 43:46

We'll carry bringing you back in. I as I mentioned, I had Paige Figi on who was the Charlotte's Web origin story of the basically the way that we're using CBD today. And it goes back just over 10 years. And they now Charlotte's Web as a company as well, like yourselves. And they have NSF certification on their zero THC CBD, which is one way of recognizing that, as we just discussed, you can safely take it, it's going to have the efficacy that it says and it's going to have it's going to be devoid of anything that we would be worried about in the test. So talk to me about your third party testing and your product.



44:26

Yeah, and I'm very familiar with Charlotte's Web. And man, they have made over the years some amazing findings and changed many lives. And you know, we're thankful for that 100%. And in terms of testing, like their company obviously knows exactly what they're doing extremely professional and doing it for the right reasons, taking it to the next level of testing. So what we're doing on every box that we have, there's a QR code that takes you right to the testing lab and it gives you the documentation for every batch that's being put, you know, into the product so and batch by batch so our sleep aid or our stress management, which is balance

are dialed in, and our and our pain aid, all of them go through rigorous testing, they have the, you know, the most highest quality of isolate and distillate CBD and CBD G products, and then when you take it to the next level, and pay for a third party to go in and test it, and let everybody know that there's no connection between us and them, and you are getting what you say that you're getting. And that's one of the things we have to be, you know, cautious and curious about is if it's not FDA approved, and people are not, you know, held accountable for putting exactly what they say in the product, you know, that can bring some of the that negative mindset back that we work so dang hard to achieve. And we've already seen it. So we've already been around it and had that come across our tables. But for us, we are one of the ones that are doing it the right way, we took our time to come to the market exactly how it should be done to truly help build this market. Because as you said, there is no reason why CBD you know, at the point 3% And or the THC free shouldn't be taken by anybody and everybody. What's What's crazy to me is, you know, and I was in this same same mindset, just a year year and a half ago is, is you think that there's something about this product that makes it you know, either illegal or not being able to be taken after taking it for a while. That truly angers me and just blows me away that there's a product out there. And we're not making any claims medically that it's going to fix or cure anything. But the way it makes me feel the way it makes John field and make way you've explained it to make you feel it's undeniable that something's happening in your body. And it's improving us. Just recently, within the last month, month and a half, I had a guy reach out to me and said, I hear kind of the results of some of the people taking your product right now, dude, and I'm going through a bad spot. I've even considered you know, thinking about suicide. I'm like, Dude, don't even think about that. Let's let's work together. And so we got some of our product and got it in him. And he felt better. Now rather than placebo psychosomatic or what I think is happening is something in his body is improving. And putting him in a great headspace he reached back out to me. And those are the things that make John and I so passionate is the stories that we continuously hear over and over and over again. And I think I think we got to forge we got to push forward. I implore fire chiefs and battalion chiefs and chiefs. Take this product from us or another reputable company. See how it makes you feel so you can start pushing the same agenda. Because if you truly want your firefighters and first responders to feel better, to live happier to have more successful lives in inside and outside of work, this is just another option that helps. So man, I truly hope that we start making way and people start understanding a that this product, CBD doesn't go on your body and then somehow chemically change into a THC. I've had that question many times, that just doesn't happen. I've checked with everybody. And then the other thing that doesn't happen is if you're taking a THC free product, that's point 000, which ours is it doesn't cumulative build over time. And then now you have 50 nanograms or more in your body, what's happening is you're taking the wrong product, because you're taking the point 3%, which you're not going to get high on you take that long enough, it can build up. And so that's kind of the education because we want people to be able to competently take the product and not let this taking it be more of a stressor. Like when you get that first test. I'm just hoping it comes back to zero because when I got my first random, I was not nervous at all. I was super excited. And my whole crew was like You nervous? I'm I absolutely not. I've done enough research. Well, I know there's no risk. And I'm excited for this opportunity. Because now I can tell people I had a random they came back perfect. And I hope they test me each and every day for that matter. It's just another opportunity to educate and teach people. I'm not scared and you shouldn't be there.

J

James Geering 49:29

I have a friend of mine, Dr. Eric Goodman, who's the creator of foundation training, which is a

bag health and movement practice. And he was one of the first people that really explained to me the endogenous cannabinoid system. And so you can bolster that with CBD you can bolster that with with marijuana as well that's your choice. There is you know, obviously the CBD does exist in that plant as well. But ultimately he was saying that you can also bolster it with sleep with you know, with expansion of the body putting the The joints back where they need to be. And so this is one of the crazy things is yes it is exogenous and endogenous cannabinoid systems within your body exogenous is what we're putting in with THC with, excuse me CBD supplementation. But what he was saying is that you're, it's basically a system that they just discovered in the 90s that exists within us. So it's in theory kinda like saying, I'm testing for red blood cells. You know, that was what I was saying. He was like, it's not apples to apples, but it's the same kind of thing. This is supposed to be in your body. But what I because I've taken this now for, like I said, six years, what I've witnessed is, as you said, it's not a magic pill. And when people say, Oh, is it a placebo? I would argue, Well, no, because you're going into this thinking this is shit. So placebos has an expectation that it's going to work. This is the opposite. So I don't think the placebo exists as much. But I've always used the fire service analogy of cribbing. And I think of CBD as cribbing. You've got voids that need to be filled. When you actually crib those void spaces. Now, for example, you take CBD and now your sleep gets better. Well, it's your improved sleep that actually is helping process some of the trauma helping repair some of the injuries etc. One of my friends from my last apartment, his mother was bedridden with terrible hip pain. And he started taking the one CBD that I was using at the time. And he wrote to me about three months later, it goes, Dude, she's out the bed. She's back in her physical therapy session. She's doing amazing. Well, it's not a magic pill. But it got her back in her physical therapy sessions, which then in turn, was the thing beneath the thing. You know, that's what really fixed her. So I think this is why I love that analogy is CBD will give you that, that craving that crutch, to then fix the things that are really the problem. And the ultimate goal is to not need CBD anymore. You sleep like a baby, nothing hurts your mental health is great. But if you need a little cribbing along the way, CBD is a great option.



52:02

Yeah, I agree. I like the idea of it's a catalyst. It's not, it's not all be all. And like with sleep, there's so many things that you need to do to get a good night's sleep, you have to prepare the room, the room has to be dark, the temperature has to be right, you can't have your phone right next to your bed, you shouldn't have a TV in the room. These are all best practices for sleep. And guess what, maybe you're still not falling asleep. You've done all those things. And you're still you're still not falling asleep. And we've talked about this James, how important is sleep, how important is sleep, it's the gateway to all the problems we're dealing with in the fire service, you know, the mental health issues, the obesity, you could argue, a lack of sleep as part of that we've talked about the poor choices you make when you come off a bad night's sleep. We talked about heart disease, we talked about cancer and the immune system is not 100% Because you're sleep deprived. So sleep alone if people would just fix their sleep, and the fire service would fix fix their sleep. And we already talked about the schedule in our last podcast you and I have but we know part of its that and Cory is actually one of the guys that's in charge of our reduced work. We he is the he's heading up that whole reduced workweek mission that we have at our department. So I agree, man, it's not the end all be all it is the Caribbean. It is the catalyst and ultimately you want to fix the problem. You want to dig deep enough drill deep enough to figure out why am I why am I struggling?



James Cooring 52:24

 James Geering 55:24

I know one of the departments here Boynton Beach just went to 2472. I'm still waiting to find the right person to talk to from that department. But that being said, I think they also factored in a cannabis use element to it, you know, and again, that's not a drug that actually works for me specifically, but I'm a huge advocate because to me, I'd much rather someone be smoking a little weed than as you said, pounding a 12 pack and take an Ambien. So that's another great one. But that's these are steps in the right direction. I know obviously, I have Chris from your department on and you've got so many amazing initiatives in south metro. But we discussed the work week. And as you said to me that's that's the the main pillar that we should be addressing. So I'm hoping that that you guys will able to, to move forward with that. But I also hope this, this whole CBD and or cannabis thing starts to expand, not lumping CBD in with that. But those are two separate things. Because these are holistic, proactive elements that will help improve the overall well being of a firefighter. Whereas when you're saying you can't do this, but Knock yourself out and go go pound a few beers in the pub. We're sending the wrong wellness message as well. So I think this, the sleep thing is absolutely paramount in your department. And then I would like to see nationally at 2472 is the only one that makes sense. It's just insanity the way that we've devolved, but also take away the stigma from some of these plant medicine and also from the mental health side the psychedelics I mean, if we're really going to go There, the number of people that have had successes with that and the military in the first responder professions that protect this this country, but have to go overseas to get treatment. So there are so many things, I think we're having this awakening now from plant medicine and proactive elements that I hope will create such an amazing, healthy environment for our future firefighters to enter into.

 55:25

Yeah, to piggyback that, I think that respond wellness is doing a really good job initially, just at our inception of, we are a currently involved in a in a test with the fire department, where they have test subjects taking the product, they're just seeing how the product works for them A and then B, they're doing your analysis once a week for eight weeks. And then you know, that'll be just work can't wait for the results. Because again, we know how it's going to come out. We can't wait to get those results to publish those results. And then I've been contacted by a few other fire departments that are interested in using us for a very similar test internally. So I do think that there's some progression happening right now, and some people that are trying to put their best foot forward, but I just, I hope that that happens quickly, because as you said, you know, drinking and drugs, ambient opioids, all these things, I know more than more than 10 people right now that are doing that every single day, to get to sleep and or to manage pain. And then you know, also to alcoholism, in the in the fire service or military or it all over the kind of the first responder world is out of control. I think that what we have going and some of the messages that we're sending, will assist people in controlling that. And I'm not saying stop drinking, because it's not a it's not that as long as it's not a problem and a detriment to your life. But when something starts being creating a negative effect, rather, it's in your marriage relationships and or your ability to do things properly and healthily, you got to you got to be able to stop. So that's our goal. As a company, it's not just CBD, but we're also talking a lot about a maintenance plan about health, healthy eating habits, exercise habits, you know, meditation, breathing techniques, stretching hot and cold therapy, there's so much more of that goes into having being totally present and stress, not stress free, but being able to handle your stress. And then your sleep habits as we've all said it the biggest the core of it, because if you don't have the proper sleep, man, it's becoming, it's a carcinogen for us, you know, it's cancer causing and you can't recover and have a healthy body without it. So and then also just

the reduced work week, I couldn't agree with you more in terms of the we just made a recommendation to the department here south metro and, and that is 100%, where we are at, we're looking at both 42 hour work weeks, which incorporate a four battalion and either on a one on two off one on four off set, or my favorite is the one on three off. And I think that just the the body's rhythm, the work rest cycles and, and the ability to you know, shut it down and get home and be healthy is quite important.

 James Geering 58:25

Well, I just want to repeat what John and I discussed, because we've both of you have used the terminology one on two or four, you know, whatever it is, this is the problem that we have told ourselves this myth for so long. I did a video a few months ago now. But I took a bunch of poker chips, and I lay them out on a table. And I said alright, so we have our one on two off, okay, what we fail to acknowledge is that that's three, eight hour days crammed together. So it's not one on two off, it's actually three on one off. And then we talk about I only work 10 days a month. Well, it's not 10 days a month, it's 30 days a month. So this is the issue is that we have believed our own fairy tales, all of us you meet both of you guys. We believe that when we first came on this job, because we didn't know any better, but then you get into it. And you see actually the insanity. And even what drives me crazy is that some people talk about the fire service as a business. All right, well, beautiful. So look at the business world, they're actually realizing that they can be just as productive in for nine hour days is that people were in five, nine hour days. So the good business people are actually getting this even in the corporate space. So their work week is becoming even sure so I think that that's the problem is that we've told ourselves the myths. Some people in certain administration's go, well, it's working, so let's just leave it and I don't want to have to go to the city or the county and ask for more money for this. But the reality is, firstly, it's breaking us in every way, shape or form. That's why we die of everything. Not one thing. But secondly, we're bleeding money and the long term savings that department would have, if we actually took care of our people, they would save money hand over fist.

 1:00:14

When you made that analogy, and you were able to show three days of work and a 24 hour shift that was eye opening for me, and some will argue, well, you know, we have a lot of downtime. And we we sleep at the firehouse, and I'll argue we don't, it's you're in a hyper vigilant state, for three days at the firehouse on a 24 hour shift, you're in a hyper vigilant state for six, six days, six, eight hour shifts and a 48. And even though you're at the kitchen table, and you're laughing, and you're having a good time, you're just you're disconnected. It's almost like white noise in the back of your mind that, you know, at any moment, you could experience the worst call the most challenging call of your career. That's all of us from minute to minute. And that's always in our minds, and you can't get away from that until you're home. If you're in a firehouse and you're responsible for responding to a call, that is a potential that is always there. And those that care about the job that are into the job have probably experienced that even a higher level because they want to perform at a high level. And it's always sits there. So I couldn't agree more. And I think that alone, that concept could really open a lot of administrators eyes that you're people who are working a 48 hour shift and six days of work where they're in this hyper vigilant state, and what does that do to heart rates, respiratory rates, just metabolically throughout the body? Like how does that affect us? You know, how

does that lead to career longevity and durability? Look can't benefit it. There's no way it's just not possible. So I appreciate you coming up with that man. I don't know where you were at. And when the when that light bulb went on, or you're probably doing CBD. That's probably what you thought about it. But that was, that was incredible. I appreciate you coming up with that.

 James Geering 1:02:02

Well, another irony as well is what is which is a department that most of us Revere, is FDNY. They work at 42 Actually, they work a 40 hour work week, if I'm not mistaken, not even 42. So they normally have twelves. And in a combination of tough twelves and 14 suntans based on I believe you know, where you work and how far back we go. But ultimately, they're putting it together and during 24 hours, but it's a 2472, roughly. So this is the irony, oh, would never go for that. Well, the one that you you know, post about every September, the one that you try and dress like that those those people have a 42 hour work week. So you're telling me you want to be Rescue me, but you don't want to put the effort into actually truly mirror the department that you admire. You're all about smoothbore nozzles, but you don't want to fight for your ability to actually go home in a better place. So that whenever you look in whichever way we turn, it's a fallacy that we've we've lived and we have to take a step back and be humble enough to go. No, it's not Dalmatians and haystacks anymore. This is 2023 with EMS. And yes, you can say, well, station 86 doesn't run when he calls. Oh, so we're going to we're going to basically fuck over everyone that works in a busy station because Steve, the fat engineer doesn't do much work. Or can you advocate for the right fucking people are actually getting murdered every shift? Because if you go to an apartment complex and as a security guy, do you ride his ass? He's not chasing bad guys all day. No, we're not supposed to be busy. 24/7 we got training and then we also need to have rest and recovery built into the shift. So that will be my argument.

 1:03:40

I like it. That was awesome. I'm gonna have you I'm gonna borrow borrow you and have to fly you in here put you up right before we go and have meetings with the powers that be and the Board of Directors because I need that type of enthusiasm.

 James Geering 1:03:55

What do you think doing this for seven years trying to get his message across?

 1:03:59

Yeah, they're gonna go no, we're not going to 42 What do you guys think about a 36 hour work? No, but you know, the one of the big challenges I'm coming up against and I understand it because, you know, fire department has a business on the administrative and the board side. And we're at right now we're in working at 56 Hour Workweek. So we're working. I hate to say the two days on but four days off, but it's I don't know how to add the math of the eight hour days fast enough. But you get what I'm saying. And people understand that but it's 56 hours a week. And if and so we're saying let's get to a 48 Let's get to a 45 and then a 42. Sunday, but

but a big thing that we're hearing it's just finances like oh, we just can't afford it. And you know some of mine is my feeling is you cannot afford like your number one most important asset of your company is your lifestyle. The people that go and are face to face. providing customer service, or your patients, and nothing more important than, you know. And I think the one thing that we can do today to help 100% of us is get our work week figured out. And we're not the only one, there's several across the country that need to do the same things. And we're trying to be a leader in that industry. But you know, just being that it's not just a financial thing, there's abilities and ways that you can change your, you know, your business philosophy, if you will, to, to figure out ways to come up with money to make it happen. And I think I think you can't afford not to do it, I truly don't. And I just don't understand why people, I think maybe when you're not on the line, you don't see it the same way. And you you're pulled apart just too much. And it's not any negative to them. It's just the reality of what happens. Yeah, so we've seen many times, like, I just want them to come and write, you know, work a couple sets with us see what happens. Because there's, you know, I'm at a slower station, it's a tech house, and we don't run a ton of calls, but I've worked at some of the bigger busier houses that we have, and work in working two days in a row, and then, you know, four days off, and then you're coming back, you're just barely recovered at times. So I thank you for what you're doing for the service, because I know your message is getting out there in big numbers and creating a change. And we want to piggyback on top of that, for sure.

J

James Geering 1:06:31

Well, with the financial side, I think and again, what did what I, what I've had the ability of is to be from a different country come into a fire service work for for professionally, and then one volunteer. So I've got to see East Coast, West Coast, you know, I mean, rescue truck, company engine, and so really get a very kind of 10,000 foot view of the American fire service. And then you leave that fire service, so then you get to sleep, then you get to catch up and your brain starts working again. And then you can look objectively. And so when you look at the people that are like, Oh, we can't afford it, and you take a piece of paper and you gotta write write down how much your workman's comp costs you Okay, what about the the line of duty death payments? All right, what about the overtime covering these spaces, all right, light up. And then these lawsuits when we've made mistakes in the section Rex and you know, pushing the wrong meds, and whatever it is. So just someone being an asshole to someone and then complaining, factor all that in, and then figure out because with with most of the shift schedules, if there's a Kelly already infused, you can kind of bargain that away. So it's not even a full shift. It's like, you know, two thirds of a shift. How much would it cost to put that in place versus this annual financial bleeding that you're doing? It's, it's, it's an easy, easy, some says to solve, you would save so much money. But the problem is, you need a courageous leader that doesn't want to look good in a budget year, but actually understands that 510 years from now, their courageous leadership will save their city and county, so much money, which will help increase staffing, which would open fire and fire stations that possibly will browned out or close. And the huge thing about the fourth shift is you have the wildfire, you have the earthquake you have you know, the the pandemic, whatever it is, you have another entire shift of men and women to pull from when you actually need to have extra bodies.

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1:08:36

Yeah, that's the financial side. And now let's talk about level of service. Right? That's every mission statement out there that's been written, it's all about customer service level of service,

high performance. When you show up to work at you know, you're working 24 hours. And when you leave, you're going to be home for three days. You are given it everything you have, you're given 100% You're not pacing yourself over a 48 hour shift. I don't care how much you're into the job, I'm into the Job Corps into the job James and you are doing the job, you're into the job. Human nature is if you're there for 48 hours, you have to at some level, pace yourself and not only pace yourself, consciously, but subconsciously, your body's going to do it, you're going to you're going not 36 in that 36 hour, you're not performing the same as you were in that first two hours. So it's, it's better customer service, it's a higher level of service, the performance is going to be higher. It's just basic math, that if you have somebody working at 24 hour shift, and then going home, that next 24 hour shift that's coming in, that would cover that 36 hour that performance is most likely going to be better. It's just the way it is. So if we're truly concerned about customer service and level of service and how we're interacting with the community and the drugs we're pushing and our responding and all the things that people get jammed up for when they don't do a good job than this is the only type of schedule that makes sense.

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James Geering 1:10:02

We're just to add an even another layer to this, I would argue that a lot of the line of duty deaths have a sleep deprivation element to it. I mean, how many people have got lost in a search how many people have fallen off an aerial Miss, you know, with lost their footing how many as I said, these intersection wrecks that kill us or civilians, and you hear about those micro sleeps, you know, when we're so tired. And when you talk about the sleep statistics, if you have 24 hours without sleep, it's like a point one, blood alcohol. But that's from someone that had perfect sleep, and then did a sleep study. So you are study someone who's a firefighter for 10 plus years, and they're doing 20 fours, or God forbid, 40 eights. And that's two days without sleep when your baseline was already halfway asleep in the first place. And you think of our ability to make mistakes and and like you said, that factor into its quote, unquote, for them. No, we're not. And you know, the one example I use bringing Cory back in, when Cory was a high level athlete playing for Vienna, or his college, or whoever it was, would I want to keep him awake for two days? And then root for him on the field? Fuck no. That would be ridiculous. But yet, when you apply it to a police officer, or a firefighter or paramedic or a dispatcher, they're like, ah, that'd be fine. Well, Cory has to catch a ball. Cory today is trying to find someone in a search or push the right meds on a on a code, two very different things. So it's insanity that physically we take such good care of our sport and athletes, but such terrible care of our tactical athletes.

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Yeah, when you when you look at what exactly what we're saying to as firefighters in the society, people are talking about, you know, getting caught in a fire and dying or some of these, you know, horrific things that happen every once in a while. But how many times? How many people do we know that have died of cardiovascular death or cancer, and now it's published that lack of sleep, sleep deprivation is a carcinogen. It's causing, I'm not I'm not afraid of when when we have a fire, I think our training or you know, what, what we've put in into training, education, science, all these different things, learning of how to fight a fire safely, and do I feel good, my officer tells me going outside, I'm pretty much guarantee that that this is going to be the right tactic, because we practice and we're ready to go. But you tell me, if you were to guess how you're gonna die, it's not that I think I'm gonna go into a basement and die,

I think it would be more likely that cancer and heart attack, those are the two things that scare the crap out of me. And I think that I'm good and saying the majority of my friends that I work with my co workers, John, I think that's what we're afraid of. Yet this the schedules and some of the things that we do on a daily basis, don't improve that. And that's where I wish that somebody as you were saying, somebody stands up, and just pushes forward, go, I don't really care, we're gonna figure it out. We're gonna do it together. Because it's 100% the right thing to do, and it's been too long.

 James Geering 1:13:12

Well, I just lost another Anaheim firefighter brother, Albert Watson, I think I think Albert was 60, if I've got that, right. And this is the other thing, we talk a lot about the lifespan of the first responder, and we, on average, die five years after retirement or 12 years younger than the average civilian. What I think is missing from that argument is if you think about the draw ground, you look to the left and the right of you when you're first hired, or you're first in an academy, that is arguably some of the most the fittest and most mentally resilient men and women in that community. So really, those people standing on the diamond should be living a lot longer than the average civilian. So I don't think they'd been robbed at 12 years, I think they'd been robbed more like 20 plus years. So this is the issue is, no one will deny that fact. Ralph Marino, Anaheim fire caps, and we just lost a few months before October, you know, so I'm watching my brothers and sisters drop in like fries. And sometimes it's cancer, heart disease, strokes. Sometimes it's addiction, you know, overdose suicide. Like I said, it's not one way it's every way that we die. And the common denominator is sleep deprivation. And if we create an environment that allows our men and women to recover, we will make a huge dent in the cancer issue in the heart disease issue in the obesity issue in the back and knee and neck injury issue, and then the mental health issue in the fire service.

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Well, I love it. And the thing that I think we've been doing it for so long, I think the part that is hard for us to overcome is so many of us love our jobs so much and we love that we get paid to do what we do that we just deal with it It's like, it's like part of the deal, right? It's like to get to go on all those great calls and those amazing things and to be these people that other people look up to, and to have a strong purpose in a career where a lot of people don't, they just go to work every day, like we have some pretty, you know, who we are as a people as people is going to make the difference between life and death. For others, that's a pretty incredible thing to be part of. And I think that allows so many of us to be okay with the sleep part of it. And I think it's time for us to say, yeah, what we do is amazing, and it's incredible, and we love it. But guess what, most people wouldn't do it, most people won't do what we do. And the fact that we're willing to doesn't mean that we have to sacrifice ourselves mentally, physically, just to do something that, you know, we love doing. And I think that's that kind of like, the two sides of it. It's such an amazing career. And it's such an amazing thing, we get to experience that we allow some of the other things that we shouldn't allow. And I think that's the part that we have to look at a little bit deeper, like, what are you willing to sacrifice? To say you're a firefighter? What are you willing to give up? Is it going to be being able to walk your daughter down the aisle, and be there on her wedding day? Is it going to be able to, you know, see your son have his first child like, what are the things you're willing to give up down the road, so that you could be this firefighter today. And I'm not willing to give those things up. Like, I want to experience

all those things. And I still want to do the job I do. And I love what I do. And I think it's amazing. But that doesn't mean I have to sacrifice some of the other things in the future that will be sacrificed if I don't get sleep, and if I don't have a good maintenance program in place. And I think that's the challenge is you have this population of people that love what we do. And it's incredible what we do. And they overlook some of the other things and don't look further down the road. Like what does this really look like 20 years from now?

 James Geering 1:16:57

Well, the other thing that is a glaring symptom of this whole thing is the hiring crisis. I don't know if you guys are experiencing this in your area, specifically, but so many places, certainly in the US. And I think you know, other countries like the UK are going through it as well. Of course, part of that is I'm sure the pool of young men and women that are able to do this job physically is shrinking, because we clearly have an obesity epidemic that no one wants to talk about. Now that COVID is gone. But um, the other side is that we kind of talk about her kids today. Well, kids today understand how to research, they understand how to learn about something. And so unlike us at the beginning of our career, we just went blindly in because we had service burning in a heart. And you know, I remember with higher layer, I got hired, I didn't even know how much they paid us. They told us like three or four weeks after we started. I mean, it was shipped, by the way, but an amazing department. But now these kids are going huh, I can do job A and it will be this amount of money and this time off, or I can be a firefighter work because now they actually see it, you know what's in all 56 Hour Work Week, they're woefully understaffed, that they're getting mandatory. So now it's an 80 hour work week, or I could work Job A. So we've shot ourselves in the foot, and people go into throwing their hands in the air, like, oh, we can't hire anyone. But because we did it to ourselves. There was a point a critical point where people were finally going to understand, and they're seeing firefighter after firefighter blowing their own brains out or dying of cancer, you know, funeral after funeral, eventually people are gonna get wise and this is a problem. We're trying to get wise through our loyalty to the profession and this this service that we give. But the average person who hasn't stepped into this arena yet has gone on the outside looking and going about that. And it's funny because one of the guys I had on the show not too long ago was like, that's the same with democracy. We as a country beat our chest about democracy. And it's a great concept. He said, but think about looking from the outside in. People are murdered in your schools, almost every single week is 70%. obese and overweight. There's a mental health crisis. There's gangs on all the streets, there's homelessness, you know, you can beat your chest and say you're the greatest country or the greatest professional, the greatest Union. But if you're not fucking walking the walk, those words are only going to get you so far. And I think that we've come to that point in the fire service now.

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Yeah, I think that's where I'm at with being the team lead of this reduced work week I, I look at our department, and you just were talking to Macklin the other day as well. And we have some of the most amazing resources some of the most amazing people and and I am very blessed and happy to work for this department and I don't want to work for anybody else. But we work 56 hours a week and we're okay with it at this point unless we can figure it out financially and to my Point is like, no. If I went into any office and told told an owner, hey, everybody right now works 40 hours go tell them they're going to work 56 hours? And then wait, let's, let's see what

the questions are, like would raise my hand? Are we getting paid? Like 30%? More? Know, you're getting paid the same? Are we getting increased 401 K benefits now? It's just the same line? Well, it's, it's just what everybody else is doing. And who's gonna stand up and go now this is this is crazy. This isn't right, this needs to change. And just because everybody else isn't making the change doesn't mean we're gonna wait for everybody else. We got to do it now. And there's really no other option. And I mean, inevitably, like you said, hiring crisis. So this isn't something that happens today, a change today happens in four or five years. Because you have to hire enough people to to get through the normal people that are leaving, then you're adding, you know, work week hours, you know, accordingly, promotions, whatever. So I think that I mean, it's the time is now it has to happen. And truly, you can't look yourself in the mirror and you can't say we're the best in class. We're not the employer of choice, when when you're working a schedule, that's not as good as those around you. And quite frankly, I've been told in this process of my leadership on here is, well, you guys chose this schedule. And I'm like, No, we did 15 years ago, somebody else chose his schedule. And I'll tell you what, from the time, I can ask everybody from this point backwards, would you rather work a 48 hour work week on the same schedule or 56? I can get like 97%. And then the other 3% just didn't either read it or don't understand the question. And then if we go until the next phase would be, would you want to work a 24 hour shift on a 4842 hour workweek. And inevitably, that's where we're gonna go. That's where everybody would want to go. Because internally, now we're starting to pay attention. We know the narrative of our health. And that is that needs to be required. And we have to push it from the union and the line moving up that nothing else is acceptable at this point.

 James Geering 1:22:17

One of the most nauseating things that I get asked a lot is James, can you send me the data on why a 42 hour work week will be healthier than the 56 hour work week? And I feel like saying, Well, can you send me the data that shows that your PP home will be better if you don't jam a metal coat hanger up it? Are you fucking serious? That is the most ridiculous thing I've ever been asked. No, I can't show you the research because it doesn't need to be done. It's like,

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James, I hate the button. But just the other day I go, Hey, you, I heard that podcast you and James did. Can you send me some data? You're looking at your audience, man. I'm so sorry.

 James Geering 1:23:00

I'm gonna go Oh, hang on hold on

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my PPO. That sounds horrific. But this is where we're at. I know totally. But John started laughing. And he goes, Oh, my gosh, I want you to say that to Jane, when we talk to him next week, because you're but here's the deal. That's the question I get all the time, just like you. And so I'm like, if I don't have the data, they're gonna think I'm not ready to present. And to

your point. It's crazy. Like, talk to the people that are working this schedule, talk to the people that are working the other schedule, just because you don't have the data doesn't mean it's not factually accurate. Because the data is taught to the people that are doing it, right.

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James Geering 1:23:41

There's a phrase I love, don't wait for science to prove what you already know. This is the thing. We're so myopic now these days. Oh, can you show me? Can you show me the data? Right? Yeah, whatever it is, you know, well, I mean, let's take roof, sustained vertical ventilation for a second. I trained in Florida. Basically, almost no roof ops training whatsoever went to California, my learning curve had to be like a skyscraper. I was just clinging on to my job. And then finally make that make a truck company or Telamon. Seeing how effective vertical ventilation is at the right fire with the right building construction, coordinating with the interior attack, getting the hell off the roof as soon as you're done. Okay, and, and then I go back east again. And they're like, Oh, it's so dangerous. We don't do it here, Mike. So you put two companies of people under this roof was dangerous, but you won't make a chimney? And again, it's one of those things that oh, let me see the data. Let me just come in here a second. Cut a hole there. Yeah. Do we need a fucking study? No. You know what I mean? So this is the problem is that I think it's a coward's way out. Oh, I need to see the data is basically saying, Oh, let me defer this decision for another two years. And the answer is, for fuck sake, grow a set of balls. Look in the mirror and ask what you do. To Ask me, ask yourself, does that make sense, of course, it makes sense. Put a little checkmark on and then figure out how you can do it. Because the fact that you have got someone who will wake up at three in the morning, roll out of bed, drive a vehicle lights and sirens through traffic, pull up on a building, pack up, make entry, do a right hand search, pull someone out now, because of the dynamic of that scene, doff their gear, start working as a paramedic, doing mental algorithms for the meds that you're pushing, and then go and give a pass on the hospital. You're okay with that person working 56 hours a week for the person that bags your groceries taps out fully, then if that's how, if you think that then you're a fucking idiot, and you don't even need to be in that position making decisions in the first place. But that's just my thought.

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Well, I think the data is there. It's just not they don't, it's not. It's not going to show up in hours worked. It's showing up and what's happening to our people. That's the data. The data is our mental health. biggest issue we have right now in the fire service, cancer, heart disease, obesity, it's there, like what we're doing is not working. We're trying all these other things to put band aids on it, you know, our physical, our annual fitness assessment and all that stuff. And people are still having heart disease, our decon procedures, and people are still dying to cancer. We're doing all the things and we're not looking at the root issue, which is the sleep that data is there, they it's been there for decades, it's just you want it to show up in a different way you want somebody to say here's a study that shows if we work a 42 hour workweek these people are, you know, have a reduced risk of heart disease and cancer and mental health issues. What that data is really, it's already there. It's it shows up and when you don't sleep and you don't get the right amount of rest, these things are more likely to happen. So it's just the way we're look, it's you know, and like you said, sometimes it's just an easy excuse to kind of push it back for two years.

J

James Geering 1:26:59

Well, Marion County here, a local businessman has actually funded a study with an organization that works with NASA and DARPA and the Navy SEALs. And we're actually doing I'm getting to be part of this kind of panel. I mean, the experts are doing national studies, I'm just advising, and in November, we will have data. But it's just going to underline what we've already talked about. But at least you'll have a piece of paper that you can give to your whoever it is. And now you can take that excuse off your list as well. But I would argue if you're in a leadership position, and you've got bugles on or stripes, or whatever it is in your profession, and you can't make decisions and advocate for your people, then and your opening statement is old, but it's complicated, then you're a coward, you don't deserve to be in that leadership position. Now, in 2023, we need the courageous competent leaders to step up and stop hiding behind pseudo research, look with their own eyes or how their people are doing just like you said, and start advocating for him and be part of a paradigm shift in this country. Because as I've been very clear, we beat our chest about a union. And here we are in 2023 Still working this god awful shift. So if they're not going to help push for it, then each department has to get their fired up men and women that love this job and actually hate go and firefight at funerals. And finally make the push.

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Yeah, I think I think, you know, our department that we pull our, you know, information and resource and opinions from, I think, I do think that, you know, we've done a great job getting to where we are, we've forged a lot. I mean, I'm just going to just going to trust the process internally that you know, we are going to make the right decision, we are going to be able to, you know, be the catalyst for providing the right information and getting in front of the right people and start making those, those pushes. Because, you know, if you truly want to be the most progressive, the employer of choice, the first in class, if you want to do all those, then prove it. It's it, that's all you have to do is prove it. And I again, I do trust, our leadership and the people that are in the decision making process processes here, that we can be one of those departments that start pushing forward and create that, that that book of how to and we pass that along to everybody else and be the change we have to be the voice of change. And I think that's like you said if you want to be a strong leader, be notable be a legend. Make the move that might be a little bit alternative to what everybody else is because if it's just about finances, figure it out. Because Because the one thing that you can hang your hat on is I saved lives by putting people in a better position, improving their sleep habits, reducing cancer reducing cardiac reducing suicides, because Because what you don't want to do and This is the whole purpose of why I took this job and this responsibility as the lead of this committee, I have, I have zero hours per day that I can give to anybody else. When this came across my plate, I said, Yep, I'll do it, I'll be the lead, I'll do whatever I need to do. Because it because it's going to affect everybody in a positive way. That's my way. That's my way of saving lives, period. And that's truly how I get motivated to put time and effort and energy into this project. And why, you know, talking to you, and getting, you know, fired up about how you felt the same way, is because from that seat, that's how you make an effect that saves lives. And that's, that's who you are internally. That's how that's who John and I are. And we got to push people, for sure, man, get them out of their comfort zone and make it happen.

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James Geering 1:30:48

Absolutely. There's a phrase and I always kind of have to paraphrase it, so I can never remember it verbatim. But plant the seeds of a tree under which the shade you will never know. That is the kind of leadership you're not going to get patted on the back and a Christmas bonus, the year that you put this in place is going to seem like an excessive cost to a department or whatever you're going to have even people whining that the 56 messes up their schedule. I mean, the 42 mess up their schedule, and they prefer the 56. Because they don't understand it. But when you truly understand that you're doing the right thing, as you said, three 510 years from now people will look at back and go, That man that women, that team revolutionized our fire department and we are going to so fewer funerals now. And that is the ultimate thing. I started this podcast after going to six, in two years burying my friends, six funerals in two years, some of them as young as in their 20s. So that's what drives me. And the every single day, you hear that? Oh, can you show me research? Oh, but it's complicated is nother day closer to another funeral. So to me, if you signed up saving lives, start with your own department.

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And as we all progress through our careers, when we know more about our careers, when we experience our careers at a deeper, deeper level of we have more knowledge, when we know more, we have more of a responsibility to do more with what we know. We can't just sit back and be like, Hey, we know this, this sucks. People are dying because of this. And we know it and we've like you experienced those funerals. But when you know more, you have a responsible responsibility to do more. That's why your podcast exists. That's why Corey and I are doing what we're doing at CES. And that's how things get better. It's, it's the people that understand there's a problem and aren't willing to put themselves out there and make a change that sit there in silence, knowing that you're just not doing the right thing, you got to step up. And it may not be a podcast, it may not be a CBD company. It may not be changing, you know the work schedule of your fire department. But there's something that every person who's listening to this podcast recognizes as a problem. And it doesn't have to be a big thing. But when you sit back and just passively watch things, go poorly and do nothing about it. That's where we never make progress. And if you know more, you have a responsibility to do more. And that would be my encouragement to anybody listening to this, if you have a department that's looking to go to a reduced workweek, well, instead of complaining about it, and sitting around the table, and, you know, bitching about administration and all that stuff, like are you doing something to make things better? What are you doing to improve your fire department? You see mental health issues, you don't have a peer support team? Are you complaining about not having that peer support team? Are you doing something about it? And I think that's what we as a society have become really good at is complaining about the problems that are out there. But we're not coming to the table with solutions. And if we do have the solutions, that's great. Oh, yeah, this is what we should do. But are you willing to do it? Are you willing to put yourself in a position that when you step up and say, Hey, this is a problem? You're gonna be targeted? You're gonna be, you know, somebody's not gonna like you. What's the alternative? Things don't improve?

 James Geering 1:34:11

Exactly. And I refuse to go. I mean, you'll have to go to some funerals, but I refuse to allow the same rate. And it's just to throw in another thing that I heard a lot. Or we don't want to take a pay cut. Well, what happens when you go on days, you get assigned to training? Do they cut


your pay? No, it's the same salary. You're working in normal week that you should have been working. You know, I would argue 50 years ago, moving forward. So that's complete rubbish. And one of the most disgusting things that I've heard and again, call out and if you've been told this, oh, what if we give them more time off, they're just going to work more overtime or they're just going to work more in their their other jobs? Well, firstly, who made you in charge of their whole life and secondly, if you have a well staffed Fire Department, there won't be the overtime for these people to work themselves into the Round. So every single kind of Oba that I get back, there's a simple solution, either it's a myth that you've been told, or, you know, you're so arrogant that you think that you should control these people, even when the days off, or the actual underlying issue is that because of the way that you have devolved, you have this void that is created this mandatory overtime that never ends. And then you're blaming people for for working too much when you need them to work too much.



1:35:31

Yeah, I mean, that's that, that's like the common theme you, you know, if that's a actual conversation, you're like, Well, you can, this isn't a me problem, it's a you problem, fix it, hire more people, we don't have overtime. So the ability to, or the inability to see how many people you need to staff, an organization. And so then you're kind of damned if you do and damned if you don't, because when it's open, and people are willing and able to hop in the seats and fix your problem, then you talk down to them for that, that just seems ridiculous. You know, and they we talked about, you know, the the wage and the income and people to do that. The commonality here, though, is, is a department telling you, that you have to be there to work. And this is your shift, versus a choice that somebody is making to work themselves into the ground or whatever. So and that, and, you know, do the testament of our fire chief, he's like, he's trying to make changes, and he his heart is in the right place wanting to move forward in the right direction, he sees some gaps. And that is exactly what he says, I don't want to tell somebody, they have to be at work for 48 hours. But we do have to figure out, you know, X, Y, and Z as a problem, find a solution and move forward. And sometimes I'm not going to all put this all on administration either because us as firefighters, we are 50 At least 50% of the problem, if not 51%, because you could tell like you said a minute ago, you could say, Hey, you're gonna work a 42 hour work week, you know, that's three less, three years, less years and a 20 year career or something like that, right? And then somebody is gonna go, but I lose my four days. Like, Yeah, but you're only working one day to three days off, versus your current two to four. Like, you're not understanding the math, let's sit here and do it. And they're like, No, I understand. I just want four days. So so we can't fix fix our own problem, because sometimes that's us. And I always ask people, when I'm given like an update on where we're at, I'm like, please, don't come up with the narrative at the kitchen table and start coming up with what you think is happening. There's a thing called a cell phone, you have my phone number call me because I'll answer any question. But nothing is happening without the lines approval. So and I'm sure that's the same you know, and in all different walks of life with police and fire military nursing, like everybody, sometimes we need to advocate for ourselves, go and push forward and then when something beneficial is in front of us, like show appreciation, because I feel like administration it's always bad that that but like ours, like I was trying to express they do a ton of good for us and we don't go that doesn't go on scene. But when when something good happens, like be that be the sounding board in the firehouse, create positivity, be a leader of the positive versus the negative, because I know, I know that happens a lot, man, where people just complain, complain, complain, but that's our job. That's our responsibility. And I ask


anybody listening, if you are sitting at a table, and you're that one that's complaining all the time, check yourself, really try to make a known effort to start being more positive, appreciative for what we have and and move forward in the right direction versus the wrong.

 James Geering 1:38:58

Well, just to summarize what you said as well, this is the issue with so many conversations is someone will pick a side Oh, the, the the admin or union or the line staff or whatever? Well, yes, is the answer all of you, we all need to advocate in our different ways. And it's the same with with the school violence side. It's not just guns. But that's all people want to talk about when there's a shooting. I mean, sadly, John knows more than the most about the impact of that. And then a few days later, oh, this the new shiny objects in the news and those poor children and families that are devastated now it's forgotten about again, the answer is a multifaceted, you know, gun control the mental health and psych meds and sleep deprivation and gaming and all these other things that contribute childhood trauma unaddressed to contribute to that one element of psychosis. Well, it's the same with this. We have to create an environment for our responders to thrive we have to understand that the work that needs to be a certain point, but then we also simultaneously educate the firefighter as well. Tom was talking about on sleep hygiene. On what job to have on the side. hang drywall for eight hours? Yes. Work in the ER overnight? No, you know what I mean? So then when everyone understands the whole picture, now everyone moves forward and no one's pointing fingers anymore in blaming someone, which is a cowardly way of saying I don't want to put in the work.

 1:40:24

Yeah, I think I think you hit it man out of the park. It it's not just what we're dealing with. Everybody's dealing with something. And you got to stop being a society that comes up with excuses and come up with, with problem solving and be open minded to the other side. Because it's not. There's never a one. You know, one thing fixes everything. There's it's a multifaceted approach, as you just said, yeah.

 James Geering 1:40:53

Well, bringing it back to the CBD conversation so we can round out. You mentioned, sleep, stress and pain. So talk to me about the blends you have for your products.

 1:41:04

Yeah, so and we also have like a focus and energy product as well. But sleep inevitably, like we've talked, I think that's, that's the basis of everything, that's the strong foundation of the totem that I truly feel like everybody needs a benefit of sleep, our product for me and John and for many of our customers has been extremely successful in terms of getting people to sleep, and then having people have a longevity of sleep. So good, good rest, waking up and feeling good. So you also have balanced, which is, you know, formulated just to try to benefit, the stress response. And so inevitably, like, you're trying to build your body's immunity, because

when you have a strong body, it's able to deal with stress more efficiently. Stress doesn't just go away, because our lives don't really change. So the way you your body's ability to deal with stress. And then using tools and techniques that are taught as well to be you know, more stress adverse, and then pain. You know, anti inflammation, as many have known and learn from listening to podcasts and listen to scientists, I listen to Andrew Huberman all the time, and you know, pain and inflammation go hand in hand, and inflammation and disease go hand in hand. So I feel like that's something that people need to get a get a very good grip on how to deal with pain management. I do, you know, hot and cold therapy as well. And that's changed my body's ability to deal with just pain. I don't have lower back pain anymore. Since I started doing those protocols. I do think it is an effective to CBD that I've been taken as well. So I definitely would tell somebody, if they're in pain can't sleep because they're aching at night, try it out. And then focus and energy. A lot of people are taking products that you have no idea what's in them. But everybody else takes pre workouts and things like that. Really focus on the products that you're taking and look at the ingredients in there. Like our our focus product is amazing in terms of giving you like a bump of energy, but not shaky energy, and then basically giving you a clear mind and head. So if you're going into a stressful environment, I use it for a pre workout. It's really balanced in terms of my energy when I start, and then when I'm done, I'm ready to just get showered up and get back to work. So and it holds for for several hours. Yeah, John's gonna jump on.



1:43:34

I like to kind of just share some of the experiences people have had with the products I think that's a good way to share what they could do for somebody. We had a guy he he heard about CBD heard about what we were doing came up to me kind of like pull me in the room didn't want anyone to know that he was talking to me, you know, like all the all the normal stuff firefighters do and he's like, Hey, this is what I'm experiencing. Like, Hey, man, we got some some sleep aid. I'll give it to you. And he goes on a four day and i i Walk in the firehouse and I can't even get my foot in the door and I feel somebody grabbed my shoulder. And he pulls me into like a mop closet. And he's like, dude, that is the first time I slept through the night and seven years. I'm like, so it worked. He goes do it. It's amazing. Like I feel great. I don't feel because he's used Benadryl in the past like these are firefighters were who were taking Benadryl to go to bed it's ridiculous right but that's what was was his protocol. And that's what he used and ever since then he's been experiencing great sleep. So that's that sleep aid and we've heard very a variety of stories from different amounts of time on the job guys that have been on for 30 years guys have been on for two years, a busy medic units, similar similar experiences. For me personally, I want to talk about that balance and the balances are our stress product and what that's done for me personally, I'm a I'm a father of three I'm a full time job at the fire department teach an EMT program for 15 years. So like another kind of full time job, lead instructor there have several businesses, I'm a pretty busy guy, and sometimes to my own fault. And in the past I've struggled with when there's a stimulus where my kids maybe don't do what I want them to do, or I come home from a rough shift. In the past, I've experienced kind of like a reaction state where I don't have this ability to kind of process that stimulus before I respond to actually react. And I've read books, I've gotten to counseling, like all kinds of things to work on that and I've had some success. But ever since taking that balance, I have been able to create this space from stimulus to where I have a thoughtful response. And it's been a game changer. I know Cory experienced the same thing with his kid, and I'll let him kind of share that. But it's, it's amazing man. And I, I know that as first responders, a lot of us experienced that type, that same thing, you come home from a shift where you did CPR on a six month old, and then, you know, you watched a guy, hold his wife of

60 years, and while she passes on, she's now passed away and you experience all these things that most people never experienced. And then you come home and, you know, you get somebody complaining, because you left dishes in the sink or, or just something like silly that sets you off and you fly off the handle, and no one wants to be that person no one wants, doesn't matter how successful you are, as a firefighter. If your family thinks you're an asshole, you're that your doesn't matter, career did not matter. So that's been a strong result for me. And I think it's something that a lot of people struggle with between not getting enough sleep, and then just the daily demands a light coming off a 48, or 24 is a challenge. So it's been a nice way to address some of that. And we'll never say that's going to fix all your problems. But what it does do it puts you in the headspace, like you said James to kind of see things clearly. And then make the adjustments that are needed.

 James Geering 1:47:05

Cory You want to add to that?

 1:47:08

Yeah, I was telling John, just a story when we were kind of getting things rolling, and I'd been on the product maybe three or four months. And other 17 year old, I have four kids, six to 17 years old, but I sat down with my 17 year old because you know, we were starting to have conversations and add products all over the house and whatnot, just trying different things. So I wanted to make sure I explained to them kind of what was going on and and then I just educated them the difference between THC and CBD and how that product works. My 17 year old me knows knows things are going on. So it was important. Anyways, I probably been on it three or four months. And I sat him down to told him and he's like, Oh, that makes sense. Then I was like what he's like, I could totally tell you've calmed down. Like you have been you have like went from you know, and I'm not a disciplinarian by heart, but being able to not just react like John was saying I was responding like, you know, confidently and quietly and keeping the same principles and manners that I expect in the household but spreading it in a totally different way. And he and he said that our relationship has definitely improved over the course of the last few months just by the way, you're talking to me, and I just don't feel defensive all the time. And I was just like, Man, when I was sharing that story, I just get goosebumps because I'm like, a positive effect in my life and his likely his future, you know, so amazing result for me on that one.

 1:48:41

And we use we use the word respond for several reasons. So respond wellness, we are focusing on first responders, we want to serve that community serve those who are out there serving others. So it has two meanings though respond wellness or first responders but then how do you respond to just the daily demands of life, the stress of life, the things that are inevitable, just like life is hard. Life is hard. It's it's hard for everybody. So that's where that name came from. And we feel like it's it's doing that it's addressing all those things that first responders deal with and then it's putting them in a position on their days off to still be able to respond to their families and in a way that they're proud of because none of us I can't there's nothing worse than responding or reacting to your family and what that feels like afterward man, that

shame of you know, lashing out at your child or making a snide comment, comment to your wife, like those are the things that I you know, I really am appreciative that I've been able to address through through our products. So it's been, it's been incredible. And I tell people if you would have told me and I think I said this earlier a year ago, if you said Hey, John, in a year, you're going to be on a podcast, and you're going to be on behind the shield talk about your buddy and he's in a you're gonna own a CBD company. I would have told you you're crazy. But I think that's the cool thing about I have an open mind. Like, I have my core beliefs, my principles, my convictions that are not going to change. But I also have an open mind, you know, I have an open mind. And that's allowed me to open myself to this idea a year ago, and and now be in a position to be able to share that with other people. So it's been incredible man.

J James Geering 1:50:18

Well, I'm sure people are intrigued. Like I said, I've been an advocate for multiple years. I love hearing that this this kind of awakening that is happening and the separation between the demonization and the reality that we're seeing now. So where can people find the products online? And where are the best places to go?

o 1:50:38

Yeah, the best place to go now would be we're open. We've been open for several weeks, we wanted to make sure before we open, we did it in a way that we could execute on the product delivery. But more importantly, that there was a sense of credibility and trust within within that opening. So it's that respond wellness.com. That's our website. And what I love about it, it's super, super simple to navigate. But then there's everything on there that would lead you to feel comfortable putting the product in your body. We talked about our test results, frequently asked questions, our four main products are going to be sleep aid, the balance, and then also painted and dialed in and dialed in that resonates with our community big time, how often do we use that term, but that's our energy and focus product. But I think once you go to respond wellness.com navigate the website, you'll find everything you need to find to feel comfortable putting the products in your body. So right now that'd be the best place to learn more, we've tried to put as much information as we can to address the questions we know are going to come and then from there, you can reach Cory or myself. Both of us are on social media, and you can always reach me through fit to fight fire. But really, we want to have those conversations. What we're looking forward to most is those conversations that I was having a year ago with Cory when he called me and I thought he was crazy. And now here we are today.

J James Geering 1:52:02

So Cory firstly, where are you on social media? Obviously, we know John is fit to fight fires are pretty obvious place for him. What about yourself?

o 1:52:11

Yeah, I've been very, I've been very limited on my social media, I wouldn't even know my tags to be honest with you. That is not my life. But respond wellness is, is where I probably searched the most. And then you know, catching me via email is probably the best. I'm on email all day

the most. And then you know, catching me via email is probably the best. I'm on email all day. But it's my first name CLR EY at respond. wellness.com. And I think that's the other thing that you can gain from a company like us as our mission is, is is very niche. It's first responders, police, fire, military nursing. And that community is by far our biggest priority and who we want to, you know, gain trust and manage those profiles. So you can reach out to us directly, we're going to be right back to you for q&a, conversations, whatever. So we know really, this is for ground roots effort. And we're willing to kind of go above and beyond what most companies would in this industry. So we want to just do it one by one provide an amazing product that people that creates results, and then the word of mouth is going to spread it like wildfire.

 James Geering 1:53:20

Beautiful. Well, John and Cory, I just want to say thank you so much, firstly, for humoring me on the whole shift change element. Because I mean, there's there's a lot of people I talked to, there's very few that actually are forging a path themselves and truly understand the whole conversation. But secondly, as you know, I just said it before. I'm a huge advocate for CBD, there are I think 4000 companies out there. So it's very confusing for the consumer who they can trust. But you know, you guys have brought another brand here today that I'm sure a lot of people are going to look into and realize that they can trust, not worry about workplace drug testing, and hopefully have the same experiences that the three of us have had with this amazing plant medicine.

 1:54:04

Yeah, and I thank you. I don't know, John told you, James. But this is my very first podcast. So man, this was an amazing experience. I had an amazing time. And I think nothing but the best of you and the path that you lead. So to be able to have my first podcast Be With You just blew me away. And I just like telling, I was telling John, do a practice, run or use your wheat like to do a little, I don't want to really mess this up. So hopefully, I at least kept the bar because I know I'm sitting with two very experienced, you know, social media influencers. And again, I thank you very much for having us and it's definitely been my pleasure.

 1:54:48

Thanks again, buddy. Like always, our conversations are great. And you always add so much value to the way I think and that's what I appreciate about you. You're a deep thinker and you're in it for the right reason. And you reckon knows that and people when they're doing things for the right reason right away, and that's something I've always thought of you and is always resonated with me. So yeah, man, we'll get you back on the fit to fight fire podcast in the future. We have some more to talk about. We've covered a lot of topics, but I think we could dig deeper into some of the ones that we've covered this most recent podcast but again, grateful for the opportunity and I look forward to looking forward to a future conversation