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

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

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

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

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

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

4

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

of your purchases of their incredible nutritional solutions.

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00:00:19,780 --> 00:00:27,280

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

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

Project and multiple special operations organizations.

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

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

8

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

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

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

the Super EPA and then most recently, Cynaquil.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Click on sign in and then create a new account.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

verified for life.

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00:01:20,920 --> 00:01:26,720

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

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00:01:26,720 --> 00:01:34,360

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

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

for a one time purchase.

21

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

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

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00:01:42,040 --> 00:01:45,520

Titiro and Wes Barnett.

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00:01:45,520 --> 00:01:51,320

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

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00:01:51,320 --> 00:01:56,740

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

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00:01:56,740 --> 00:02:03,320

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

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00:02:03,320 --> 00:02:08,160

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

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00:02:08,160 --> 00:02:09,160

worked for.

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00:02:09,160 --> 00:02:13,680

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

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00:02:13,680 --> 00:02:19,960

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

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00:02:19,960 --> 00:02:20,960

project.

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00:02:20,960 --> 00:02:25,040

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

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00:02:25,040 --> 00:02:30,040

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

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

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

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00:02:33,880 --> 00:02:37,820

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

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00:02:37,820 --> 00:02:39,660

and mortar element.

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00:02:39,660 --> 00:02:44,360

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

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00:02:44,360 --> 00:02:47,100

100 stores all over the US.

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00:02:47,100 --> 00:02:52,160

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

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00:02:52,160 --> 00:02:55,420

you see online are applied also in the stores.

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00:02:55,420 --> 00:03:02,040

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

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00:03:02,040 --> 00:03:07,120

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

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00:03:07,120 --> 00:03:08,720

holiday times.

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00:03:08,720 --> 00:03:17,600

But if you use the code SHIELD15, that's S-H-I-E-L-D-1-5, you will get 15% off your order or in the

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00:03:17,600 --> 00:03:20,520
stores every time you make a purchase.

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00:03:20,520 --> 00:03:25,840
And if you want to hear more about 511, who they stand for and who works with them, listen

46
00:03:25,840 --> 00:03:34,060
to episode 580 of Behind the Shield podcast with 511 regional director, Will Ayres.

47
00:03:34,060 --> 00:03:35,200
Welcome to the Behind the Shield podcast.

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00:03:35,200 --> 00:03:38,700
As always, my name is James Gearing and this week it is my absolute honor to welcome

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00:03:38,700 --> 00:03:47,080
on the show, paramedic, FDNY firefighter and the man behind the burn box, Thomas Ansoo.

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00:03:47,080 --> 00:03:51,000
Now in this conversation we discuss a host of topics from his early life growing up in

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00:03:51,000 --> 00:03:57,180
New York, his journey into the world of EMS, entering the fire service, the importance

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00:03:57,180 --> 00:04:04,740
of servant leadership, firefighter mental health, special operations, power of entrepreneurship

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00:04:04,740 --> 00:04:06,440
and so much more.

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00:04:06,440 --> 00:04:11,400
Now before we get to this incredible conversation, as I say every week, please just take a moment,

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00:04:11,400 --> 00:04:16,200

go to whichever app you listen to this on, subscribe to the show, leave feedback and

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00:04:16,200 --> 00:04:18,120

leave a rating.

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00:04:18,120 --> 00:04:22,960

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

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00:04:22,960 --> 00:04:24,600

for others to find.

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00:04:24,600 --> 00:04:29,320

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

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00:04:29,320 --> 00:04:34,600

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

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00:04:34,600 --> 00:04:40,000

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

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00:04:40,000 --> 00:04:45,120

So with that being said, I introduce to you Thomas Ansoo.

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00:04:45,120 --> 00:04:46,120

Enjoy.

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00:04:46,120 --> 00:05:08,040

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

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00:05:08,040 --> 00:05:11,480

on the Behind the Shield podcast this afternoon.

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00:05:11,480 --> 00:05:15,040

Thank you for having me as I've been a fan for a while and it's an honor to be here and

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00:05:15,040 --> 00:05:17,080

tell my story and speak to you.

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00:05:17,080 --> 00:05:18,080

Absolutely.

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00:05:18,080 --> 00:05:19,080

Likewise.

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00:05:19,080 --> 00:05:22,040

So where on planet earth will be finding you today?

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00:05:22,040 --> 00:05:23,320

So where do I live?

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00:05:23,320 --> 00:05:24,320

Yes.

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00:05:24,320 --> 00:05:25,320

Oh, all right.

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00:05:25,320 --> 00:05:31,560

So currently right now I live in Long Island, New York, Baldwin, but I was born and raised

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00:05:31,560 --> 00:05:33,040

in Queens.

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00:05:33,040 --> 00:05:34,040

So that's where I live most of my life.

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00:05:34,040 --> 00:05:37,400

I just moved out here to Long Island and I work in Brooklyn.

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00:05:37,400 --> 00:05:38,400

So brilliant.

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00:05:38,400 --> 00:05:40,760

Well, let's start in Queensland.

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00:05:40,760 --> 00:05:45,760

So tell me about your family dynamic, what your parents did, how many siblings?

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00:05:45,760 --> 00:05:46,920

Oh, man.

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00:05:46,920 --> 00:05:50,200

So my father was like a manager of a supermarket.

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00:05:50,200 --> 00:05:51,200

He's been doing that for 30.

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00:05:51,200 --> 00:05:52,200

He's still working.

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00:05:52,200 --> 00:05:53,200

He's like 72.

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00:05:53,200 --> 00:05:56,200

He's still working.

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00:05:56,200 --> 00:05:57,480

He's kind of the only guy working.

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00:05:57,480 --> 00:05:59,600

My mom was pretty much a stay at home mother.

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00:05:59,600 --> 00:06:03,100

She had a few jobs here and there, but nothing really serious.

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00:06:03,100 --> 00:06:05,480

I have six brothers and I have four sisters.

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00:06:05,480 --> 00:06:06,480

Wow.

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00:06:06,480 --> 00:06:10,320

So I got a pretty big family growing up.

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00:06:10,320 --> 00:06:14,760

We were actually born in Manhattan, most of us, and then we moved to Queens when I was

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00:06:14,760 --> 00:06:15,760

like six.

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00:06:15,760 --> 00:06:19,720

We moved to Queens Village and that's kind of where we've been.

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00:06:19,720 --> 00:06:21,760

That's kind of where they still are now.

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00:06:21,760 --> 00:06:22,880

Beautiful.

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00:06:22,880 --> 00:06:26,040

With your dad, it's an interesting lens that he has.

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00:06:26,040 --> 00:06:30,360

Have you ever had the discussion with him about how groceries have changed over the

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00:06:30,360 --> 00:06:31,360

years?

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00:06:31,360 --> 00:06:36,400

How, because when I was young, which is certainly before you were born, there wasn't really

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00:06:36,400 --> 00:06:39,600

any food as far as organic and that kind of thing.

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00:06:39,600 --> 00:06:44,000

Now a few decades prior there was, but then you start getting all the processed food.

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00:06:44,000 --> 00:06:48,720

But now when you go into a lot of supermarkets or grocery stores, that finally is a thing.

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00:06:48,720 --> 00:06:50,280

They don't have their own section anymore.

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00:06:50,280 --> 00:06:52,280

The organic, healthier food is everywhere now.

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00:06:52,280 --> 00:06:57,720

So has he ever discussed about the kind of evolution of what's in his walls?

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00:06:57,720 --> 00:07:00,520

He never really talks about his job really.

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00:07:00,520 --> 00:07:06,320

He just complains that some of the cashiers don't show up and stuff like that.

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00:07:06,320 --> 00:07:07,840

My father's actually from Ghana.

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00:07:07,840 --> 00:07:10,360

He's from Ghana, West Africa.

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00:07:10,360 --> 00:07:12,380

So he came here when he was 28.

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00:07:12,380 --> 00:07:14,360

So he has a very different outlook on everything.

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00:07:14,360 --> 00:07:17,800

He's a very like nonchalant, like nothing makes him upset.

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00:07:17,800 --> 00:07:18,800

He's always very cool.

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00:07:18,800 --> 00:07:24,000

He just comes home and he's like, work was work.

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00:07:24,000 --> 00:07:25,560

Now what about his experience?

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00:07:25,560 --> 00:07:26,960

Obviously I'm an immigrant too.

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00:07:26,960 --> 00:07:33,760

And I think that sometimes there's a very, what's the right word, irresponsible narrative

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00:07:33,760 --> 00:07:36,080

when it comes to immigration in America.

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00:07:36,080 --> 00:07:42,360

And a lot of this country is built on the back of immigrants from all colors and creeds.

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00:07:42,360 --> 00:07:49,560

What were the highs of his immigration story and then were there any lows as well?

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00:07:49,560 --> 00:07:54,200

I wouldn't say there was any lows.

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00:07:54,200 --> 00:07:56,720

One time he got assaulted, somebody hit him with a hammer.

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00:07:56,720 --> 00:07:57,720

Crazy.

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00:07:57,720 --> 00:07:58,720

But it's New York.

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00:07:58,720 --> 00:07:59,720

I'm not sure.

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00:07:59,720 --> 00:08:00,720

I was very young.

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00:08:00,720 --> 00:08:03,680

I'm not sure if that had to do with him being an immigrant, but he had struggles because

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00:08:03,680 --> 00:08:06,440

he has a heavy African accent.

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00:08:06,440 --> 00:08:11,440

So like people think because he has an accent, he's stupid or something, which is a problem

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00:08:11,440 --> 00:08:14,200

he has, is a challenge he has a lot.

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00:08:14,200 --> 00:08:19,320

But as far as us and our upbringing, he was just very big on education and he wanted us

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00:08:19,320 --> 00:08:20,320

to go to school.

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00:08:20,320 --> 00:08:23,320

He didn't care what, like you could be a terrible kid, but as long as you had good grades, he

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00:08:23,320 --> 00:08:25,440

was okay with it.

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00:08:25,440 --> 00:08:28,480

That was his big, that was the one thing he didn't get angry often, but if it came to

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00:08:28,480 --> 00:08:33,160

school, that's the one thing that kind of made him upset.

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00:08:33,160 --> 00:08:35,820

See English people have the opposite problem.

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00:08:35,820 --> 00:08:42,440

Everyone thinks we're intelligent when I'm actually dumb as a box of rocks.

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00:08:42,440 --> 00:08:43,440

School is a big thing for him.

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00:08:43,440 --> 00:08:45,800

I mean, I guess he's still disappointed in me.

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00:08:45,800 --> 00:08:46,800

I didn't go to school.

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00:08:46,800 --> 00:08:50,220

I went to school, but I didn't go to college or anything.

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00:08:50,220 --> 00:08:51,220

We went to trade school.

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00:08:51,220 --> 00:08:55,760

I'd argue that's probably one of the most powerful ways of educating a child.

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00:08:55,760 --> 00:09:00,340

Yeah, but growing up was mayhem and having all those siblings and like getting ready

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00:09:00,340 --> 00:09:02,160

for school, everyone fighting for the bathroom.

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00:09:02,160 --> 00:09:06,480

It was a challenge every morning.

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00:09:06,480 --> 00:09:09,600

I'm one of five and I grew up on a farm, so we were kind of feral.

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00:09:09,600 --> 00:09:12,680

We kind of raised ourselves a little bit, but it was the same thing.

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00:09:12,680 --> 00:09:17,000

You become this little tribe and almost kind of separate from your parents.

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00:09:17,000 --> 00:09:21,880

Yeah, I used to wonder how did my parents do it, but things were different back then,

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00:09:21,880 --> 00:09:26,720

but I think a lot of it was the older ones start to look after the younger ones.

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00:09:26,720 --> 00:09:27,720

So you know what I mean?

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00:09:27,720 --> 00:09:32,760

Like my older brothers did a lot of, you know, my parents would go out, they'd watch us and

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00:09:32,760 --> 00:09:34,480

it was terrible because they were terrorists.

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00:09:34,480 --> 00:09:37,400

They were mean.

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00:09:37,400 --> 00:09:38,400

What about sports?

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00:09:38,400 --> 00:09:41,640

What were you playing and doing back in school age?

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00:09:41,640 --> 00:09:47,640

So one thing I wasn't heavy into sports like as far as school, but I would go to the park.

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00:09:47,640 --> 00:09:49,520

My sport of choice was basketball.

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00:09:49,520 --> 00:09:53,960

I never really played for a team, but I would go to the park and always play basketball.

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00:09:53,960 --> 00:09:57,880

My older brother, he was a football, I have one older brother who was big in football.

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00:09:57,880 --> 00:10:05,960

Another older brother was big into chess, but no one really took sports too, too seriously.

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00:10:05,960 --> 00:10:10,960

And what about access to actual, you know, athletic areas?

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00:10:10,960 --> 00:10:15,200

Because when I think of, you know, Manhattan and some of these really built up, you know,

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00:10:15,200 --> 00:10:21,120

urban settings, when there's a discussion on, for example, you know, again, nutrition and

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00:10:21,120 --> 00:10:25,560

you look at what, you know, technically as a food desert and in a populated city or the

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00:10:25,560 --> 00:10:26,840

ability to exercise.

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00:10:26,840 --> 00:10:30,480

Now, you know, in Manhattan, obviously people are walking everywhere, but it's not like

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00:10:30,480 --> 00:10:35,040

they have these lush, beautiful parks everywhere like we do here in Florida, for example.

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00:10:35,040 --> 00:10:40,360

So what was, you know, what kind of parks did you have access to back then?

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00:10:40,360 --> 00:10:45,080

So Central Park in the city, that's a big, that's a pretty big, a lot of people go there.

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00:10:45,080 --> 00:10:49,760

In Brooklyn where I work now, Prospect Park, a lot of people like to get out and walk around

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00:10:49,760 --> 00:10:50,760

there.

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00:10:50,760 --> 00:10:51,760

There's a lot of local parks in our neighborhood.

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00:10:51,760 --> 00:10:55,960

Speaking, now that you say it, I do remember guys played roller hockey.

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00:10:55,960 --> 00:11:00,280

We had like a roller hockey ring, but we didn't have a couple of parks.

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00:11:00,280 --> 00:11:06,680

I wouldn't say lush and beautiful, concrete, most of it, and asphalt, but we found ways

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00:11:06,680 --> 00:11:11,600

to get active, ride our bikes, you know, run around, play tag and stuff.

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00:11:11,600 --> 00:11:15,640

Did you have any exposure to the fire service when you were a kid?

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00:11:15,640 --> 00:11:16,640

Had none.

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00:11:16,640 --> 00:11:21,920

The only thing is when I was a kid, no, only time I really learned about the fire department

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00:11:21,920 --> 00:11:24,480

is when I was like an adult.

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00:11:24,480 --> 00:11:28,600

So when you were in school, what were you dreaming of becoming back then?

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00:11:28,600 --> 00:11:32,340

So going to school, I was not the best student.

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00:11:32,340 --> 00:11:33,480

I wouldn't say I was a bad kid.

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00:11:33,480 --> 00:11:37,800

I wasn't into gangs, but I was very, very silly and goofy, very immature.

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00:11:37,800 --> 00:11:43,200

So what I wanted to be a business, I wanted to be go to business.

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00:11:43,200 --> 00:11:48,880

I know I wanted to do business, so I think the high school I went to had like, it was

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00:11:48,880 --> 00:11:50,560

broken up to four different schools.

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00:11:50,560 --> 00:11:54,560

And the one I went to was the business part of that school.

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00:11:54,560 --> 00:11:56,200

It was in Queens, New York.

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00:11:56,200 --> 00:11:58,080

And you know, they give you a few business courses.

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00:11:58,080 --> 00:12:01,680

It wasn't much, but that's kind of where I wanted to go.

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00:12:01,680 --> 00:12:04,920

I wanted to get into business, found it interesting.

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00:12:04,920 --> 00:12:10,200

So walk me through the journey from graduating wanting to go in the business world to entering

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00:12:10,200 --> 00:12:11,200

the rock.

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00:12:11,200 --> 00:12:16,080

All right, so my older brother had become an EMT.

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00:12:16,080 --> 00:12:19,640

He was in this program where if you get in trouble, like not in trouble, if you're short

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00:12:19,640 --> 00:12:25,960

a few credits for like to graduate high school, you are they have a program where you can

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00:12:25,960 --> 00:12:31,720

get your diploma, the credits that you're shy to graduate and you can get your EMT certification,

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00:12:31,720 --> 00:12:34,500

your emergency medical technician certification.

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00:12:34,500 --> 00:12:37,080

So my older brother did it.

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00:12:37,080 --> 00:12:42,120

I didn't really want to do it, but I found myself following after him two years later.

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00:12:42,120 --> 00:12:47,200

I was shy a few credits and I kind of was being a knucklehead in school.

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00:12:47,200 --> 00:12:49,360

So I said, you know, I didn't have any other options.

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00:12:49,360 --> 00:12:52,800

Well, I had other options, but I figured I'd follow my brother's footsteps.

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00:12:52,800 --> 00:12:59,880

I get into that program where I get my EMT credits in my diploma.

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00:12:59,880 --> 00:13:03,040

And it was a challenging program because you have to, you couldn't miss any days.

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00:13:03,040 --> 00:13:04,160

You couldn't be late too much.

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00:13:04,160 --> 00:13:09,640

You have to keep a certain grade to stay in, but you get your EMT card and your diploma

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00:13:09,640 --> 00:13:10,640

at the same time.

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00:13:10,640 --> 00:13:11,640

So it was a good opportunity.

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00:13:11,640 --> 00:13:12,640

I took it.

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00:13:12,640 --> 00:13:14,960

I thank God I passed it.

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00:13:14,960 --> 00:13:20,240

And then right after you graduate that you go right into FDNY has a training orientation

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00:13:20,240 --> 00:13:22,880

program for EMTs for EMS.

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00:13:22,880 --> 00:13:24,320

It was called TOPS class.

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00:13:24,320 --> 00:13:31,800

And it's right when I graduated, I graduated, let's say June 1st, I was in FDNY TOPS class,

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00:13:31,800 --> 00:13:33,760

like the 20th of June.

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00:13:33,760 --> 00:13:37,000

And I was 18 when that happened.

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00:13:37,000 --> 00:13:39,600

And where did you find yourself assigned?

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00:13:39,600 --> 00:13:46,520

So after joining TOPS class, I got assigned to Bed Star Brooklyn, station 35.

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00:13:46,520 --> 00:13:48,680

It was in the bottom of a hospital.

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00:13:48,680 --> 00:13:51,240

It was probably, there was a station right next to it.

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00:13:51,240 --> 00:13:54,120

There was two, station five seven and station three five.

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00:13:54,120 --> 00:13:58,760

And three five is kind of like the forgotten child of that neighborhood.

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00:13:58,760 --> 00:14:00,360

So we were in the basement.

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00:14:00,360 --> 00:14:01,360

It was like next to the morgue.

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00:14:01,360 --> 00:14:02,360

It was gross.

233

00:14:02,360 --> 00:14:05,560

But now right when I left, became a firefighter.

234

00:14:05,560 --> 00:14:06,560

They got a brand new station.

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00:14:06,560 --> 00:14:10,120

But of course, when I leave, they get all the nice stuff.

236

00:14:10,120 --> 00:14:13,160

But yeah, it was a good experience, man.

237

00:14:13,160 --> 00:14:15,640

Bed Star is a little different than it is now.

238

00:14:15,640 --> 00:14:20,000

It wasn't as bad as the 80s, but it was definitely a rougher neighborhood.

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00:14:20,000 --> 00:14:22,520

Nowadays it's a very neighborhood, very gentrified.

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00:14:22,520 --> 00:14:23,520

It's very different.

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00:14:23,520 --> 00:14:28,840

It's not as bad as it was, but it was a good neighborhood to get experience.

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00:14:28,840 --> 00:14:31,000

What shifts were you working?

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00:14:31,000 --> 00:14:34,640

So when you first graduate, you get put on a mentor unit.

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00:14:34,640 --> 00:14:38,320

So like for 90 days, you work with experienced EMTs.

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00:14:38,320 --> 00:14:41,520

And then after that, then you get put on a regular line unit.

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00:14:41,520 --> 00:14:47,600

So I worked the unit I worked sat in Greenpoint, which was not too bad.

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00:14:47,600 --> 00:14:54,200

But after I got a probation, I got sent into right in the heart of Bed Star, unit three

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00:14:54,200 --> 00:14:55,760

seven Frank, it was a very busy unit.

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00:14:55,760 --> 00:14:59,120

You got a lot of experience out doing that, man.

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00:14:59,120 --> 00:15:00,120

Did I answer the question?

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00:15:00,120 --> 00:15:01,120

Yeah, absolutely.

252

00:15:01,120 --> 00:15:04,280

Was that an EMT and a medic, two of you in each unit?

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00:15:04,280 --> 00:15:09,200

No, so EMTs, EMTs are paired with EMTs and medics are paired with medics.

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00:15:09,200 --> 00:15:10,200

That's how it works.

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00:15:10,200 --> 00:15:15,720

If you get a BLS run and you need medics, you just call for them.

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00:15:15,720 --> 00:15:19,520

Certain calls have medics, they have both of us on them.

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00:15:19,520 --> 00:15:20,800

Gotcha.

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00:15:20,800 --> 00:15:24,120

So in that area, you said it wasn't as bad as the 80s.

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00:15:24,120 --> 00:15:27,600

Talk to me about that area in the 80s and then what were the kind of calls that you

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00:15:27,600 --> 00:15:29,920

were running on in your career?

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00:15:29,920 --> 00:15:35,160

Well, back then it was big with drugs was a big thing back in the day.

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00:15:35,160 --> 00:15:39,480

When I started working there, you still had your issues with drugs.

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00:15:39,480 --> 00:15:41,600

Problem is it was very, very violent.

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00:15:41,600 --> 00:15:45,040

So we do a lot of shootings, a lot of stabbings.

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00:15:45,040 --> 00:15:46,600

You get a lot of your run in the mill calls.

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00:15:46,600 --> 00:15:52,240

But when I first got assigned to that bedside area, that's there was a lot of shootings,

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00:15:52,240 --> 00:15:53,240

a lot of stabbing.

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00:15:53,240 --> 00:15:59,840

You're guaranteed every weekend, you're guaranteed to get some trauma calls there.

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00:15:59,840 --> 00:16:01,320

The neighborhood is not the same anymore.

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00:16:01,320 --> 00:16:03,960

I don't work there anymore, but I drive through it.

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00:16:03,960 --> 00:16:07,840

It's just a much nicer, it's not much going on.

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00:16:07,840 --> 00:16:08,840

It's definitely changed.

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00:16:08,840 --> 00:16:11,360

A lot of the cities changed, to be honest.

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00:16:11,360 --> 00:16:16,560

So when you think back to that time, though, because I think again, back to environment,

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

we've both seen it.

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00:16:17,560 --> 00:16:22,560

There are kids that you go to their parents' house on a call and you just look around and

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00:16:22,560 --> 00:16:28,200

go, oh my God, these kids are doomed to get out of this and find a positive road.

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00:16:28,200 --> 00:16:32,800

When you look back at that time, what was that environment?

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00:16:32,800 --> 00:16:37,960

What were the contributing factors that were resulting in addiction, drug dealing and the

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00:16:37,960 --> 00:16:39,440

violence around it?

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00:16:39,440 --> 00:16:43,640

Oh man, there's a lot that contribute to that.

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00:16:43,640 --> 00:16:47,680

I think education is a big part of it, just lack of education.

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00:16:47,680 --> 00:16:51,720

There's a lot of people, hardworking families out there trying to do their best, but they

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00:16:51,720 --> 00:16:54,960

don't know what they don't know.

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00:16:54,960 --> 00:16:58,040

Just also the pressures of the neighborhood.

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00:16:58,040 --> 00:17:01,160

So let's say for me, for instance, me, I was in my high school.

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00:17:01,160 --> 00:17:05,400

I wasn't in the worst neighborhood, but my high school, you had to go through metal detectors

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00:17:05,400 --> 00:17:10,600

to get in, but there would still be a mob of kids standing outside when you get out.

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00:17:10,600 --> 00:17:13,920

So yeah, you're clean, you got nothing on you, but when you go in home, you're getting robbed

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00:17:13,920 --> 00:17:15,400

on the way home.

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00:17:15,400 --> 00:17:18,260

That kind of principle applies.

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00:17:18,260 --> 00:17:23,200

You could try your best to do what you can, but if it's a lot of toxic people in your

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00:17:23,200 --> 00:17:26,000

environment, you kind of have to... Sometimes you got to do things you don't want to do

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00:17:26,000 --> 00:17:28,720

to survive.

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00:17:28,720 --> 00:17:34,280

You find a lot of people just minding their business, getting caught up in stuff.

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00:17:34,280 --> 00:17:36,920

I think lack of education is a huge one.

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00:17:36,920 --> 00:17:42,120

I think whenever there's lack of education, lack of money in a neighborhood, it's going

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00:17:42,120 --> 00:17:45,520

to breed violence.

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00:17:45,520 --> 00:17:49,640

I've always found it... I think strange is even the right word.

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00:17:49,640 --> 00:17:53,280

Unfair, I think is the word.

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00:17:53,280 --> 00:17:57,160

We're all aware of those kind of parts of town, those schools that have the metal detectors

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00:17:57,160 --> 00:18:02,560

and the really bad gang membership, and there are shootings and killings outside those schools

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00:18:02,560 --> 00:18:04,280

all the time.

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00:18:04,280 --> 00:18:10,480

When you get a person walk into a school, all of a sudden it makes the news, and rightly

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00:18:10,480 --> 00:18:11,480

so.

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00:18:11,480 --> 00:18:13,360

It's a horrendous event, any sort of school shooting.

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00:18:13,360 --> 00:18:17,500

But I always... When I see those, think of, well, that's probably the tip of the iceberg

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00:18:17,500 --> 00:18:21,840

for how many kids are murdered just outside of school, just like you were saying.

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00:18:21,840 --> 00:18:26,240

Yeah, so it's unfortunate.

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00:18:26,240 --> 00:18:30,120

But I'm not going to say act like the city or people haven't tried to make programs.

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00:18:30,120 --> 00:18:33,640

There's definitely programs, after school programs and stuff out there.

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00:18:33,640 --> 00:18:34,640

But is it enough?

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00:18:34,640 --> 00:18:35,640

I don't know.

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00:18:35,640 --> 00:18:36,640

I don't know.

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00:18:36,640 --> 00:18:43,920

But things have definitely changed a little bit for the better, I would say.

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00:18:43,920 --> 00:18:47,660

Now what about mentorship and the fire service specifically?

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00:18:47,660 --> 00:18:50,920

One of the best things that I've seen, and I talk about it all the time, they have a

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00:18:50,920 --> 00:18:56,320

mentorship program here in Ocala, Florida, where I live, and started by a friend of mine.

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00:18:56,320 --> 00:19:00,760

If you think about, for example, the diversity conversation, and FDNY was certainly one of

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00:19:00,760 --> 00:19:06,200

the ones dragged into the spotlight initially for that.

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00:19:06,200 --> 00:19:13,160

Ultimately you want to find the best candidates in all the areas, all walks of life.

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00:19:13,160 --> 00:19:17,520

When you set up mentorship programs and you remove the barriers to entry, because here

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00:19:17,520 --> 00:19:22,280

in Florida we have to go through Fire Academy first, pay for it, and then try and get hired

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00:19:22,280 --> 00:19:23,280

usually.

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00:19:23,280 --> 00:19:27,520

So if you're from a poorer neighborhood, you may just simply not have the means to

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00:19:27,520 --> 00:19:30,080

get to an academy to pay for an academy.

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00:19:30,080 --> 00:19:34,280

So what this does is it trains the kids free of charge, and they have a centrally located

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00:19:34,280 --> 00:19:37,920

area, usually downtown.

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00:19:37,920 --> 00:19:41,520

And then there are scholarships for Fire Academy, and then departments on the other end look

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00:19:41,520 --> 00:19:42,520

into hire.

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00:19:42,520 --> 00:19:48,000

It's a phenomenal program, because not only are you raising up young boys and girls that

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00:19:48,000 --> 00:19:51,440

are going to be great firefighters, you're also giving them an opportunity, other girls

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00:19:51,440 --> 00:19:54,200

and boys, to go, you know what, this isn't what I want to do.

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00:19:54,200 --> 00:19:56,200

And that's a huge win as well.

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00:19:56,200 --> 00:20:03,000

So through the FDNY lens now, have you seen mentorship programs that are empowering kids

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00:20:03,000 --> 00:20:08,840

from less underserved neighborhoods to be able to believe that they can also be firefighters?

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00:20:08,840 --> 00:20:09,840

Yes.

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00:20:09,840 --> 00:20:14,880

That's one big thing that the fire department has made huge strides in lately.

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00:20:14,880 --> 00:20:18,480

I didn't necessarily, I didn't really know, I knew you see fire trucks driving by when

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00:20:18,480 --> 00:20:23,000

you're a kid, but I didn't put the two and two together that, you know, I could do this

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00:20:23,000 --> 00:20:24,220

thing.

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00:20:24,220 --> 00:20:27,440

So growing up, I didn't really know about, I didn't really think that it was possible

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00:20:27,440 --> 00:20:28,440

for me.

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00:20:28,440 --> 00:20:29,440

I didn't have any family on it.

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00:20:29,440 --> 00:20:31,600

So I never just, it was just out of sight, out of mind.

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00:20:31,600 --> 00:20:36,080

But that's when I became an EMT, and I was working side by side with these guys and watching

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00:20:36,080 --> 00:20:41,640

some of my fellow coworkers, they were taking the promotional exam to become EMTs, I mean,

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00:20:41,640 --> 00:20:43,160

come firemen.

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00:20:43,160 --> 00:20:46,280

That's kind of where I was like, oh, oh, it made it seem realistic.

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00:20:46,280 --> 00:20:52,680

But the FDNY, there was a huge lawsuit and there was a hiring freeze, but they've been

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00:20:52,680 --> 00:20:57,600

making a lot of strides to even the playing field as far as diversity goes.

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00:20:57,600 --> 00:20:59,560

So they have huge diversity initiatives.

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00:20:59,560 --> 00:21:04,200

Like my brother-in-law is waiting to get hired now and he has a mentor.

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00:21:04,200 --> 00:21:08,960

You see him on the street, like you're walking by, they have little tables set up.

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00:21:08,960 --> 00:21:13,280

They're doing a lot more than I remember when I was getting hired.

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00:21:13,280 --> 00:21:17,600

So it's huge, it's huge what they're doing to get, spread the word, you know, just let

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00:21:17,600 --> 00:21:20,560

you know that it's an option, let you know it's something you could do.

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00:21:20,560 --> 00:21:25,080

A lot of the, they have free training for like when the test, after you take the test,

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00:21:25,080 --> 00:21:30,040

like if you want to take practice, like for the physical or practice written, it's like

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00:21:30,040 --> 00:21:33,880

they have all that stuff available, you know, which I didn't know existed.

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00:21:33,880 --> 00:21:35,640

But they've really doubled down recently.

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00:21:35,640 --> 00:21:36,640

Yeah.

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00:21:36,640 --> 00:21:40,440

Now I think it's important for people to hear that because those programs just seem to work

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00:21:40,440 --> 00:21:46,480

so well and it just addresses all the inequities that used to occur, you know, and you think

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00:21:46,480 --> 00:21:52,340

about how many great firefighters and police officers and EMTs and you know, other professions

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00:21:52,340 --> 00:21:56,140

that we lost because we just weren't able to get into those areas.

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00:21:56,140 --> 00:22:00,280

And those, you know, young men and women maybe missed the opportunity to do something that

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00:22:00,280 --> 00:22:02,340

they really, you know, dreamed about.

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00:22:02,340 --> 00:22:06,920

So yeah, and then also I got a friend, Steve O. Michelle, who's originally his family from

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00:22:06,920 --> 00:22:12,480

Haiti and he grew up in, I mean, the most desperate apartment complex I've ever seen

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00:22:12,480 --> 00:22:13,480

in my whole career.

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00:22:13,480 --> 00:22:16,480

I mean, we used to think that it was all boarded up and vacant and, you know, people would

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00:22:16,480 --> 00:22:19,520

come and move the boards out the way and, you know, move a whole family in.

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00:22:19,520 --> 00:22:24,440

And I mean, it literally looked like it came from a third world country.

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00:22:24,440 --> 00:22:29,960

And he ended up getting into one of the Colorado colleges playing ball and then he became a

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00:22:29,960 --> 00:22:34,680

firefighter and he got himself assigned back to his neighborhood just so he could show

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00:22:34,680 --> 00:22:41,080

other Haitian and Haitian descent kids that you can be a firefighter.

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00:22:41,080 --> 00:22:42,380

If I can do it, you can do it.

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00:22:42,380 --> 00:22:44,920

So I think those messages are so, so important.

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00:22:44,920 --> 00:22:46,480

Yeah, that's huge.

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00:22:46,480 --> 00:22:47,480

That's huge.

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00:22:47,480 --> 00:22:52,520

Like when I got into that EMT program that I was in high school, a lot of the kids that

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00:22:52,520 --> 00:22:56,920

graduated that same program, they would come back and they would just come back, they would

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00:22:56,920 --> 00:23:00,320

be in uniform and they're dressed blues and they would just tell you, hey guys, this is

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00:23:00,320 --> 00:23:01,320

awesome.

386

00:23:01,320 --> 00:23:02,320

Stay with it, stay focused.

387

00:23:02,320 --> 00:23:04,320

And it made a difference for sure.

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00:23:04,320 --> 00:23:05,320

Beautiful.

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00:23:05,320 --> 00:23:09,800

Well, talk to me then about your transition from EMS to fire them.

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00:23:09,800 --> 00:23:10,800

Okay.

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00:23:10,800 --> 00:23:17,560

So when I got to my EMS station, worked there a couple of months, everyone, most of the

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00:23:17,560 --> 00:23:22,080

guys there, they were, they took the promotional exam.

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00:23:22,080 --> 00:23:26,720

So the way the FDNY works is they have an open competitive and then they have a promotional

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00:23:26,720 --> 00:23:32,000

exam to get hired off of open competitive is for the general public and the promotional

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00:23:32,000 --> 00:23:36,960

is for them to, they promote you from EMT paramedic to fire.

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00:23:36,960 --> 00:23:41,760

I know it could be different in other States, but yeah, where I work, it's they promote

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00:23:41,760 --> 00:23:43,120

you.

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00:23:43,120 --> 00:23:47,040

The promotional comes out every two years, if I'm not mistaken, it's been a bit, and

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00:23:47,040 --> 00:23:49,680

the open competitive is every four years, whatever.

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00:23:49,680 --> 00:23:54,200

So when I'm there, a lot of guys took that promotional test and they're waiting for their

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00:23:54,200 --> 00:23:55,200

physical.

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00:23:55,200 --> 00:24:00,280

So all they talked around the station was they're talking about fitness, talking about

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00:24:00,280 --> 00:24:02,440

their heart rates, they're getting in shape, they're talking about the run.

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00:24:02,440 --> 00:24:04,040

And I'm like, what are you guys talking about?

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00:24:04,040 --> 00:24:06,200

And they would just explain, Hey, listen, we're trying to go to fire.

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00:24:06,200 --> 00:24:07,840

And they told me all about it.

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00:24:07,840 --> 00:24:08,840

They told me the benefits.

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00:24:08,840 --> 00:24:11,620

They told me about the job.

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00:24:11,620 --> 00:24:16,000

And that's when I really realized, I'm like, wow, this seems like a lot of fun.

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00:24:16,000 --> 00:24:17,480

I think I could do this.

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00:24:17,480 --> 00:24:20,000

So that's kind of how fire got put on my radar.

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00:24:20,000 --> 00:24:22,440

I was an EMT for about five years.

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00:24:22,440 --> 00:24:29,600

I took the following promotional, and then I went to paramedic school for a brief stint.

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00:24:29,600 --> 00:24:32,000

So I don't know if I can call myself a paramedic.

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00:24:32,000 --> 00:24:33,840

I went to the class.

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00:24:33,840 --> 00:24:37,680

I passed the final, but I never worked a day as a medic.

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00:24:37,680 --> 00:24:42,980

But right when I had a week left and then fire academy started, so I just took the final

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00:24:42,980 --> 00:24:45,040

and then I went right into the fire academy.

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00:24:45,040 --> 00:24:47,360

But that's kind of how I found out about the fire department.

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00:24:47,360 --> 00:24:54,360

That's kind of how I learned about how it works, the benefits, the perks, the schedule.

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00:24:54,360 --> 00:24:58,000

Everything that I found out about the fire department was like, I need to do this.

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00:24:58,000 --> 00:25:03,280

I mean, you had a hell of a skill set to bring into the fire service, though, whether you

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00:25:03,280 --> 00:25:04,440

worked as a medic or not.

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00:25:04,440 --> 00:25:06,880

I mean, that was still tools in the toolbox.

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00:25:06,880 --> 00:25:07,880

Yes.

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00:25:07,880 --> 00:25:09,440

Yeah, I was already helping people.

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00:25:09,440 --> 00:25:12,420

So it was just like another way to help people.

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00:25:12,420 --> 00:25:17,240

So when you look back on the EMT side, before we get to the fire side now, what were some

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00:25:17,240 --> 00:25:22,640

of the what we would call career calls you had in those five years?

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00:25:22,640 --> 00:25:25,040

So yeah, I was very young.

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

I was 18, man.

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00:25:26,040 --> 00:25:31,080

I had delivered my first like right when I got off that probation unit, that training

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00:25:31,080 --> 00:25:34,080

unit, my first tour, I delivered a baby.

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00:25:34,080 --> 00:25:37,360

And it was like it was me and another intern.

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00:25:37,360 --> 00:25:38,360

So it's like both of us.

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00:25:38,360 --> 00:25:40,120

It was strange.

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00:25:40,120 --> 00:25:48,520

But it's messed up, man, because you're always you're there at people's worst.

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00:25:48,520 --> 00:25:54,320

So when you say career calls, are you asking like just some of the calls that stand out?

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00:25:54,320 --> 00:25:57,800

Yeah, because I mean, the worst thing you can ask any of us is what's the worst thing

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00:25:57,800 --> 00:25:58,800

you've seen.

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00:25:58,800 --> 00:25:59,800

So it's not about that.

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00:25:59,800 --> 00:26:02,480

It could be, you know, like you said, delivering a child.

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00:26:02,480 --> 00:26:08,960

Like, for example, one of my shifts, I was on I think I was on shift and then I went

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00:26:08,960 --> 00:26:11,120

to my medic ride along.

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00:26:11,120 --> 00:26:13,560

I extubated a term Leo patient.

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00:26:13,560 --> 00:26:19,040

So I basically took a life and then I delivered a baby and brought life into this world all

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00:26:19,040 --> 00:26:21,340

within about 24 hours of each other.

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00:26:21,340 --> 00:26:25,160

So that's one thing not horrific, but it was just, you know, a memorable thing.

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00:26:25,160 --> 00:26:28,440

And obviously, there's I'm writing my second book, I literally was writing about one of

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00:26:28,440 --> 00:26:31,600

my worst calls just like an hour before we sat down.

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00:26:31,600 --> 00:26:32,640

That was fucking awful.

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00:26:32,640 --> 00:26:37,840

But so yeah, just any anything that you when you look back, you know, was powerful to you.

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00:26:37,840 --> 00:26:40,280

Oh, so yeah, that was a big one.

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00:26:40,280 --> 00:26:41,760

Just delivering a baby.

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00:26:41,760 --> 00:26:46,520

But I don't know, man.

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00:26:46,520 --> 00:26:52,920

It's just what comes to mind is I can go on and tell you about the shootings, the stabbings,

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00:26:52,920 --> 00:27:00,440

but it's just it just for me, it puts me in a that job put me in a strange mindset because

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00:27:00,440 --> 00:27:04,120

you start you start to see how people treat each other.

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00:27:04,120 --> 00:27:08,040

And that, you know, that if you're not strong enough, that kind of that could mess with

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00:27:08,040 --> 00:27:09,040

you a little bit.

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00:27:09,040 --> 00:27:12,120

So a lot of I'll be honest with you, a lot of the runs on all other calls, they all kind

462

00:27:12,120 --> 00:27:13,480

of blend together.

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00:27:13,480 --> 00:27:16,000

All the stuff that deal with kids are probably the worst.

464

00:27:16,000 --> 00:27:18,000

Those really cut the most.

465

00:27:18,000 --> 00:27:20,960

You know, those are never fun.

466

00:27:20,960 --> 00:27:24,680

But yeah, it just puts a different perspective on the way you see life.

467

00:27:24,680 --> 00:27:28,320

You see life differently when you start start that job.

468

00:27:28,320 --> 00:27:30,000

I really like the job.

469

00:27:30,000 --> 00:27:31,360

Honestly, I'll be honest with you.

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00:27:31,360 --> 00:27:32,360

Don't tell anybody.

471

00:27:32,360 --> 00:27:34,480

I'm not going to tell anybody.

472

00:27:34,480 --> 00:27:35,480

Go back.

473

00:27:35,480 --> 00:27:37,240

But I had a good partner.

474

00:27:37,240 --> 00:27:40,240

You know, you listen to music in between calls while you're driving around.

475

00:27:40,240 --> 00:27:42,800

I didn't mind it.

476

00:27:42,800 --> 00:27:46,920

My department at the time, it could it was a little crab in the barrel.

477

00:27:46,920 --> 00:27:51,480

Like, you know, people were kind of going after each other, but which completely changed

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00:27:51,480 --> 00:27:53,120

when I joined the suppression side.

479

00:27:53,120 --> 00:27:56,600

But yeah, I really liked it.

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00:27:56,600 --> 00:28:02,320

It was not every day you have to be scooping up gunshot victims, you know, in

481

00:28:02,320 --> 00:28:03,320

the morning.

482

00:28:03,320 --> 00:28:06,640

You don't have to be all that, which it is a 90 percent of the time.

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00:28:06,640 --> 00:28:09,640

One of my strongest memories, I've been interested to see if you had the same thing when you

484

00:28:09,640 --> 00:28:11,440

were in the ambulance.

485

00:28:11,440 --> 00:28:15,600

I remember driving up Orange Blossom Trail in Orlando, which is our kind of red light

486

00:28:15,600 --> 00:28:20,520

district and a lot of poverty and violence as well.

487

00:28:20,520 --> 00:28:22,720

And we're driving up in what we call the rescue.

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00:28:22,720 --> 00:28:25,240

So it's an ambulance with firefighter gear on it.

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00:28:25,240 --> 00:28:30,240

And I just remember, you know, like sex workers and gang members all just like waving to us

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00:28:30,240 --> 00:28:31,240

when we were going by.

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00:28:31,240 --> 00:28:37,320

I'm like, there is not another vehicle on planet Earth that the most desperate people

492

00:28:37,320 --> 00:28:39,200

in society would wave to.

493

00:28:39,200 --> 00:28:43,760

But the end of the day, if something horrific happens to them, we're the very last people

494

00:28:43,760 --> 00:28:46,240

that they're probably going to see, hopefully save their life.

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00:28:46,240 --> 00:28:47,360

So did you have that?

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00:28:47,360 --> 00:28:49,860

I mean, obviously you're working in a pretty rough neighborhood.

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00:28:49,860 --> 00:28:55,800

Was there a kind of reverence of you guys and your profession specifically amidst a

498

00:28:55,800 --> 00:28:57,840

lot of this desperation?

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00:28:57,840 --> 00:29:01,160

I didn't really get that too much when I was driving an ambulance, unfortunately.

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00:29:01,160 --> 00:29:05,840

That's like when you become a firefighter, you're like a local celebrity.

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00:29:05,840 --> 00:29:08,480

Everyone waves, stops and waves.

502

00:29:08,480 --> 00:29:13,920

But it wasn't, I'll be honest, it's sad to say like law enforcement has it pretty bad.

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00:29:13,920 --> 00:29:18,360

So we didn't have it as bad as law enforcement because it's like a thankless job those guys

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00:29:18,360 --> 00:29:19,360

have right now.

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00:29:19,360 --> 00:29:20,360

It's tough.

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00:29:20,360 --> 00:29:25,920

But yeah, I didn't really have that happen when I was in EMT.

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00:29:25,920 --> 00:29:27,600

No one's ever really happy to see you.

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00:29:27,600 --> 00:29:32,320

When you pull up in an ambulance, people are kind of screaming like, hurry up, you know,

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00:29:32,320 --> 00:29:34,000

hurry up.

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00:29:34,000 --> 00:29:37,320

It's funny though, like you said about being told to go back when you're a firefighter,

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00:29:37,320 --> 00:29:39,240

because over here we get to be both simultaneously.

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00:29:39,240 --> 00:29:41,560

So I'm a firefighter paramedic.

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00:29:41,560 --> 00:29:48,320

But there is this kind of rhetoric about, I don't want to do EMS, I just want to do

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00:29:48,320 --> 00:29:50,960

fire, especially when we are dual certified here.

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00:29:50,960 --> 00:29:55,520

But I always say, okay, well, you make the most heroic rescue.

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00:29:55,520 --> 00:29:59,320

You do a right hand search, you drag them out onto the front porch.

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00:29:59,320 --> 00:30:01,600

Now what?

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00:30:01,600 --> 00:30:06,840

You just remove the corpse until an EMT or a paramedic and ultimately doctors and nurses

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00:30:06,840 --> 00:30:09,480

interact and hopefully save that person's life.

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00:30:09,480 --> 00:30:14,840

So I never understood that kind of anti-EMS sentiment because ultimately, whether you

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00:30:14,840 --> 00:30:19,040

like it or not, you save lives in the back of a rescue.

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00:30:19,040 --> 00:30:20,040

You 100% right.

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00:30:20,040 --> 00:30:22,120

And I think everybody knows that deep down.

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00:30:22,120 --> 00:30:25,240

They just don't want to, you know, what it is.

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

We're here to help people, you know, and you probably have a better chance bringing somebody

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00:30:30,040 --> 00:30:32,800

back doing CPR versus you.

527

00:30:32,800 --> 00:30:36,080

Like how often are you dragging people out of fires?

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00:30:36,080 --> 00:30:38,640

Well, I guess it depends on where you work.

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00:30:38,640 --> 00:30:41,560

Yeah, I've only dragged dead people out of fire.

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00:30:41,560 --> 00:30:44,160

So I'm over whatever now.

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00:30:44,160 --> 00:30:47,760

Well, then one more question before we move to fire.

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00:30:47,760 --> 00:30:55,200

When you look back now with this mature perspective that you have an 18 year old boy being thrust

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00:30:55,200 --> 00:30:56,920

into that world straight away.

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00:30:56,920 --> 00:31:01,000

There's conversations about the fact that our brains haven't kind of matured yet.

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00:31:01,000 --> 00:31:04,920

And I was just by chance, I was, I didn't get into the fire service till I was 27.

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00:31:04,920 --> 00:31:09,880

So I, you know, my poor little tiny brain had been given some chance to mature, but

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00:31:09,880 --> 00:31:13,480

there is a lot of conversation about, are we putting, you know, our kids into first

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00:31:13,480 --> 00:31:16,840

responder professions too early and exposing them to trauma where maybe they're not quite

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00:31:16,840 --> 00:31:18,020

ready yet.

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00:31:18,020 --> 00:31:22,000

So what's your perspective starting so long as young yourself and being thrust into a

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00:31:22,000 --> 00:31:25,320

pretty, pretty desperate area?

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00:31:25,320 --> 00:31:26,600

Oh man.

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00:31:26,600 --> 00:31:27,600

So I don't know.

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00:31:27,600 --> 00:31:33,280

I never said this before, but I remember I was in a bad place, man.

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00:31:33,280 --> 00:31:38,680

I was, cause I just, everything was just seeing so much, seeing so much.

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00:31:38,680 --> 00:31:42,120

I will just remember mentally just being in a bad place.

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00:31:42,120 --> 00:31:45,840

So I get mental health is huge for us.

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00:31:45,840 --> 00:31:50,200

Luckily, I didn't, you know, I didn't, it didn't send me off the deep end.

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00:31:50,200 --> 00:31:55,600

So I was able to bounce back, but I do remember being like 19, 20 and just in my mind, I just

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00:31:55,600 --> 00:31:57,280

like nothing made sense to me.

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00:31:57,280 --> 00:31:58,800

I was like, what's the point?

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00:31:58,800 --> 00:32:05,520

You know, it was, I remember being in a bad head space at that time.

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00:32:05,520 --> 00:32:06,520

I don't know.

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00:32:06,520 --> 00:32:09,200

I don't know what pulled me out of it, to be honest with you, but I do remember that

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00:32:09,200 --> 00:32:15,520

looking back, I do remember just thinking to myself, you know, how, how important mental

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00:32:15,520 --> 00:32:18,520

health is mental health is huge, man.

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00:32:18,520 --> 00:32:21,720

It's kind of an issue we're having now, you know, every now and then, unfortunately we're

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00:32:21,720 --> 00:32:29,520

having guys who succumb to challenges they face, you know.

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00:32:29,520 --> 00:32:34,120

I've seen a few FDNY death notifications and it breaks my heart because every time there's

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00:32:34,120 --> 00:32:38,920

not an explanation of what happened, you know, it's either, you know, it's a suicide or an

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00:32:38,920 --> 00:32:40,560

overdose, you know, basically.

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00:32:40,560 --> 00:32:42,720

So and those are the same things to me.

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00:32:42,720 --> 00:32:43,720

They're exactly the same.

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00:32:43,720 --> 00:32:45,000

It's, it's a mental health crisis.

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00:32:45,000 --> 00:32:51,240

And, you know, when you, when you look back and you think that, like, I've got a 16 year

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00:32:51,240 --> 00:32:53,280

old at the moment who's a junior.

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00:32:53,280 --> 00:32:57,400

So all you knew until 18, as you said, you're even doing some extra credits to make sure

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00:32:57,400 --> 00:32:58,600

that you graduate.

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00:32:58,600 --> 00:33:03,360

All you knew was the classroom and then, you know, summer break and that kind of thing.

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00:33:03,360 --> 00:33:06,840

And so when you transition out and they're like, Thomas, all right, here's the real world

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00:33:06,840 --> 00:33:12,080

now and your echo chamber is everyone's worst night, worst day.

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00:33:12,080 --> 00:33:16,240

How is that not going to skew your perspective of the world?

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00:33:16,240 --> 00:33:22,280

Yeah, I remember for maybe a year straight, I just remembered being just, I was probably

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00:33:22,280 --> 00:33:23,480

a terror to be around.

575

00:33:23,480 --> 00:33:25,280

I was just like, what's the point?

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00:33:25,280 --> 00:33:31,880

Kind of like, but yeah, thank God I didn't stay there long, you know.

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

But yeah.

578

00:33:33,880 --> 00:33:34,880

Yeah.

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00:33:34,880 --> 00:33:38,800

Well, thank you for sharing that because I think, you know, all of us go through stuff,

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00:33:38,800 --> 00:33:41,600

you know, but when, and if you had this when you were younger, you know, we look at the

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00:33:41,600 --> 00:33:44,600

other guys and girls and we're like, well, they're all fine.

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00:33:44,600 --> 00:33:46,320

Why am I the one that's going through this?

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00:33:46,320 --> 00:33:48,440

But none of us are fine.

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00:33:48,440 --> 00:33:49,440

How can you?

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00:33:49,440 --> 00:33:53,680

You're going to be a sociopath if you were fine, like truly fine, unaphased by all the

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00:33:53,680 --> 00:33:56,320

horrific things that we see.

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00:33:56,320 --> 00:33:59,800

I think something that could be beneficial, if I could give a piece of advice to like

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00:33:59,800 --> 00:34:06,080

my younger self would be just to get a support system, you know, even, you know, just to

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00:34:06,080 --> 00:34:10,520

have somebody or have a group of people, even if it's your family, just try, it's probably

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00:34:10,520 --> 00:34:11,520

easier said than done.

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00:34:11,520 --> 00:34:16,760

If I had to support a better support system, you know, maybe it would have helped me like

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00:34:16,760 --> 00:34:19,280

navigate that a little better.

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00:34:19,280 --> 00:34:22,080

But that's the one piece of advice.

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00:34:22,080 --> 00:34:26,520

Try to get it, try to get a support system, a couple of people you trust to help you work

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00:34:26,520 --> 00:34:28,080

through things, you know.

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00:34:28,080 --> 00:34:29,080

Absolutely.

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00:34:29,080 --> 00:34:30,320

And especially outside the fire service.

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00:34:30,320 --> 00:34:34,680

I think people don't realize that when you're in a crew getting beat down, you know, once

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00:34:34,680 --> 00:34:39,700

every three days, 24 hours, you're all in the same meat grinder.

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00:34:39,700 --> 00:34:44,120

So you're not a good barometer on how each of you is doing, but your family members and

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00:34:44,120 --> 00:34:47,280

your friends, they're the ones that be like, wow, you look like shit today.

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00:34:47,280 --> 00:34:48,280

What's going on?

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00:34:48,280 --> 00:34:50,280

You need that honesty.

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00:34:50,280 --> 00:34:51,280

Yeah.

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00:34:51,280 --> 00:34:52,280

Yeah.

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00:34:52,280 --> 00:34:54,280

Mental health, man.

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00:34:54,280 --> 00:35:01,400

Yeah, but it was a, I mean, I had honesty.

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00:35:01,400 --> 00:35:05,240

It's, I haven't really thought about those days in a while, you know, you bring up thinking

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00:35:05,240 --> 00:35:06,720

back of all that stuff, man.

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00:35:06,720 --> 00:35:11,120

I had a lot of good memories working in EMS, but I do remember, you know, it can weigh

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00:35:11,120 --> 00:35:12,120

on you.

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00:35:12,120 --> 00:35:13,840

I know I didn't go through it particularly.

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00:35:13,840 --> 00:35:18,200

I know when COVID happened, a lot of people, a lot of EMTs had a hard time as well, just

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00:35:18,200 --> 00:35:24,040

with the stuff that they saw, you know, and the runs they were running, you know.

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00:35:24,040 --> 00:35:25,040

Yeah.

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00:35:25,040 --> 00:35:26,040

All right.

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00:35:26,040 --> 00:35:29,440

Well, thank you again for your transparency there.

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00:35:29,440 --> 00:35:34,440

Moving on to the fire side then, and I absolutely adore the fire side too.

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00:35:34,440 --> 00:35:37,400

You know, you do this promotional test.

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00:35:37,400 --> 00:35:41,360

You like myself had no real family in fire, so I didn't really know, you know, I just

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00:35:41,360 --> 00:35:43,360

knew ladder 49 and back draft.

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00:35:43,360 --> 00:35:46,600

That's about the only introduction I got to the American fire service.

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00:35:46,600 --> 00:35:49,000

So what was your transition like?

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00:35:49,000 --> 00:35:52,920

Walk me through your probation there and then where you were assigned.

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00:35:52,920 --> 00:35:53,920

Okay.

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00:35:53,920 --> 00:36:00,680

So the fire academy was, it was interesting, you know, it was fun, challenging.

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00:36:00,680 --> 00:36:08,640

I got assigned to engine 290, ladder 1, engine 290, firehouses 290, 103 in East New York,

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00:36:08,640 --> 00:36:10,120

Brooklyn, back to Brooklyn.

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00:36:10,120 --> 00:36:13,640

It was a busy shop.

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00:36:13,640 --> 00:36:14,920

Everyone says they're in the busy shop.

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00:36:14,920 --> 00:36:16,720

You ask anybody and after you, where do you work?

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00:36:16,720 --> 00:36:20,120

You know, it was busy.

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00:36:20,120 --> 00:36:25,920

Funny enough that the engine I worked, they did a lot of EMS, a lot of EMS calls and they

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00:36:25,920 --> 00:36:27,920

also did a decent amount of fire.

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00:36:27,920 --> 00:36:31,680

It's very, it's one of the tougher houses on the job.

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00:36:31,680 --> 00:36:37,760

So I'm super grateful I got sent there because even though we ran around a lot, there was

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00:36:37,760 --> 00:36:42,040

a lot of training, a lot of drilling and I learned discipline there.

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00:36:42,040 --> 00:36:47,880

I learned how to be disciplined and focused and I learned to pay attention to the small

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00:36:47,880 --> 00:36:48,880

details.

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00:36:48,880 --> 00:36:52,080

There was a lot of little details and you know, if you don't pay attention, they all

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00:36:52,080 --> 00:36:56,640

start to add up and I'm glad because I think if I went somewhere that was really laid back,

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00:36:56,640 --> 00:37:00,400

I'd probably be, you know, wherever I went is what I would have come, you know, and I'm

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00:37:00,400 --> 00:37:03,760

glad I went there because it taught me all the stuff I need that kind of helped me move

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00:37:03,760 --> 00:37:06,160

forward.

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00:37:06,160 --> 00:37:11,680

What was it about the officers or the leaders in the station that created that culture?

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00:37:11,680 --> 00:37:15,880

Because if I hear EMS, I hear, you know, high frequency of fire, but I also hear training

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00:37:15,880 --> 00:37:20,200

and drilling, which I think is so important, even more important if you're in a quiet station.

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00:37:20,200 --> 00:37:24,520

So when you think back as far as leadership, you know, what were the qualities that created

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00:37:24,520 --> 00:37:26,620

that culture?

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00:37:26,620 --> 00:37:30,200

So one thing I noticed immediately when I got in the fire service and I got walked in

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00:37:30,200 --> 00:37:35,600

that firehouse, it felt like it didn't feel like it felt like the guys, the bosses were

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00:37:35,600 --> 00:37:39,920

working with you, you know, if like they'll be on the hose, humping the hose with you

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00:37:39,920 --> 00:37:46,520

versus when I was on the other side, it was kind of telling you what to do, you know,

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00:37:46,520 --> 00:37:49,520

it felt like the higher ups were with you.

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00:37:49,520 --> 00:37:54,760

So the captain we had, he just retired actually like a month ago.

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00:37:54,760 --> 00:37:56,200

He never raised his voice.

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00:37:56,200 --> 00:38:00,960

He one thing that was huge is he always if you were you did what you're supposed to do,

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00:38:00,960 --> 00:38:03,960

he would always go to bat for you no matter what, which was huge, which I wasn't used

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00:38:03,960 --> 00:38:05,600

to.

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00:38:05,600 --> 00:38:11,200

And again, the big thing for me was just feeling like the guys, the bosses, they earned your

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00:38:11,200 --> 00:38:14,440

respect because they were they were doing it with you.

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00:38:14,440 --> 00:38:17,800

They wouldn't actually do anything that they wouldn't do.

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00:38:17,800 --> 00:38:23,920

Yeah, that reminds me a lot of my, my favorite crew, I'll be completely honest in Anaheim,

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00:38:23,920 --> 00:38:26,680

California, my my captain is exactly the same.

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00:38:26,680 --> 00:38:33,400

He was a ginger wrestler when he was younger, you know, construction his whole life as well.

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00:38:33,400 --> 00:38:38,680

And you know, big old bushy red mustache, and he would just get off and, you know, look

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00:38:38,680 --> 00:38:42,800

around and then he just say like three words and he knew exactly what needed to be done.

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00:38:42,800 --> 00:38:47,360

But just like you said, he never raised his voice, we'd have to fight him at the kitchen

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00:38:47,360 --> 00:38:50,600

sink for the dishes, you know, fighting for the brush on the rig.

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00:38:50,600 --> 00:38:54,040

I mean, you name it, but that's that's a leader that's not a boss.

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00:38:54,040 --> 00:38:57,120

And I think that's the difference.

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00:38:57,120 --> 00:39:02,520

Another thing that I really loved about my firehouse that first fire I got sent to was

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00:39:02,520 --> 00:39:08,000

they had like most firehouses have it, but it was just like such a I've never experienced

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00:39:08,000 --> 00:39:11,960

it before, like the sense of pride that everyone had.

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00:39:11,960 --> 00:39:17,760

You know, everyone, everyone had a sense of pride and it was so it wasn't just about it's

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00:39:17,760 --> 00:39:21,960

like if you got detailed out, you were representing that company.

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00:39:21,960 --> 00:39:27,400

So they made sure you had you like you were squared away all across the board.

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00:39:27,400 --> 00:39:32,440

And if you're associated with this firehouse, it's going to be associated with, you know,

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

professionalism.

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00:39:33,440 --> 00:39:35,440

That was huge.

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00:39:35,440 --> 00:39:36,440

Absolutely.

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00:39:36,440 --> 00:39:44,160

I always remember just that feeling and that crew, for example, that feeling when you get

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00:39:44,160 --> 00:39:48,800

on scene that you can just tell people are glad that your crew got on scene, you know,

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00:39:48,800 --> 00:39:54,200

that you added value to that crew or that scene rather than others that I've seen to

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00:39:54,200 --> 00:39:58,520

get off the scene because they were removing so much value at that moment.

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00:39:58,520 --> 00:39:59,520

Yeah.

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00:39:59,520 --> 00:40:01,560

Yeah, it's exactly that.

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00:40:01,560 --> 00:40:03,360

It's super grateful for I don't know.

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00:40:03,360 --> 00:40:04,360

I don't know.

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00:40:04,360 --> 00:40:05,600

Somebody must have liked me.

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00:40:05,600 --> 00:40:07,560

I'm very grateful I got sent there.

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00:40:07,560 --> 00:40:11,240

It definitely set the trajectory for me.

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00:40:11,240 --> 00:40:13,760

So where were you after that?

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00:40:13,760 --> 00:40:19,060

So I was there for about eight years and I just recently got sent over to squad one also

695

00:40:19,060 --> 00:40:21,360

in Brooklyn Park Slope.

696

00:40:21,360 --> 00:40:26,280

I'd been there for about two years now, two or three years now.

697

00:40:26,280 --> 00:40:31,000

And special operations, we have squads and rescues and stuff.

698

00:40:31,000 --> 00:40:35,160

So it's a little extra training, a little extra equipment.

699

00:40:35,160 --> 00:40:39,160

But you got to have one a minimum of five years and they like, you know, you got to

700

00:40:39,160 --> 00:40:42,180

have some experience, you know, they don't want to teach you basic firefighting.

701

00:40:42,180 --> 00:40:44,920

You got to have that squared away before you get there.

702

00:40:44,920 --> 00:40:48,960

And when I got there, I was just so grateful because a lot of stuff I didn't feel behind

703

00:40:48,960 --> 00:40:49,960

the eight ball at all.

704

00:40:49,960 --> 00:40:54,280

Well, with some of the newer stuff, the technical stuff, I didn't know, obviously, but a lot

705

00:40:54,280 --> 00:40:56,920

of a lot of stuff I was prepared.

706

00:40:56,920 --> 00:40:59,360

I was well prepared coming from the house I came from.

707

00:40:59,360 --> 00:41:01,740

So I was super grateful.

708

00:41:01,740 --> 00:41:03,760

So what was the skill set for a squad specifically?

709

00:41:03,760 --> 00:41:08,000

Because I know we use all these different terms depending on where we are in the country.

710

00:41:08,000 --> 00:41:11,800

So what would a squad company be responsible for?

711

00:41:11,800 --> 00:41:17,000

So squad companies are they're like basically a manpower pool.

712

00:41:17,000 --> 00:41:20,400

So we pull up to the command post.

713

00:41:20,400 --> 00:41:22,520

We pretty much do whatever needs to get done.

714

00:41:22,520 --> 00:41:24,120

We have basic assignments, right?

715

00:41:24,120 --> 00:41:27,520

We have assignments that we have kind of in stone.

716

00:41:27,520 --> 00:41:31,880

But if we get there and the chief has something else for us to do, we kind of take on that

717

00:41:31,880 --> 00:41:32,880

task.

718

00:41:32,880 --> 00:41:42,480

So for example, if it's a five story building, first, first, first do go to the first floor.

719

00:41:42,480 --> 00:41:45,000

Second do goes to the second floor.

720

00:41:45,000 --> 00:41:47,960

Who's checking three, four and five?

721

00:41:47,960 --> 00:41:52,480

Like we could get sent to go check the upper floors or if it's a roller stores, right?

722

00:41:52,480 --> 00:41:55,320

Maybe first do is in five building.

723

00:41:55,320 --> 00:41:59,000

Second do goes to exposure two.

724

00:41:59,000 --> 00:42:00,200

Like who's checking the other stuff?

725

00:42:00,200 --> 00:42:04,080

So we kind of fill in the gaps.

726

00:42:04,080 --> 00:42:07,240

Squads operate in their first do response area as an engine.

727

00:42:07,240 --> 00:42:13,680

But aside from that, you know, we operate pretty much like a truck and we respond to

728

00:42:13,680 --> 00:42:16,720

any fires in the borough on our half of the borough.

729

00:42:16,720 --> 00:42:19,520

So we split the borough with squad 252.

730

00:42:19,520 --> 00:42:24,080

So on our half of the borough, any fire calls, we go there, operate as a squad.

731

00:42:24,080 --> 00:42:27,500

But in our first response area, we operate as an engine.

732

00:42:27,500 --> 00:42:29,640

Who normally gets assigned rent?

733

00:42:29,640 --> 00:42:35,280

I've had varying dynamics in the four departments I work for.

734

00:42:35,280 --> 00:42:37,080

Sometimes it was a special operations guys.

735

00:42:37,080 --> 00:42:39,720

Sometimes it was, you know, one or two rescues put together.

736

00:42:39,720 --> 00:42:42,600

So what about with your borough?

737

00:42:42,600 --> 00:42:45,480

So we have the squads, right?

738

00:42:45,480 --> 00:42:46,960

And again, we're like a manpower pool.

739

00:42:46,960 --> 00:42:50,480

We kind of just fill the gaps to get things done.

740

00:42:50,480 --> 00:42:51,480

Rescues for my mistake.

741

00:42:51,480 --> 00:42:55,920

And these guys were made, they were created to save firemen.

742

00:42:55,920 --> 00:42:58,440

They do way more now, right?

743

00:42:58,440 --> 00:43:02,880

So command is grown, but that's kind of, so when they get assigned, there's one rescue

744

00:43:02,880 --> 00:43:06,880

in every borough and they get assigned to every fire and they kind of go there.

745

00:43:06,880 --> 00:43:09,160

And that's kind of one of the things that they do.

746

00:43:09,160 --> 00:43:12,600

But we, on our regular assignments, we have a, we have a fast team.

747

00:43:12,600 --> 00:43:18,960

So our third responding truck, they operate as the fast team or you guys would say RIT.

748

00:43:18,960 --> 00:43:23,400

So most, we don't, surprisingly, the fast truck doesn't get put to work often.

749

00:43:23,400 --> 00:43:24,680

Thank God it's a good thing.

750

00:43:24,680 --> 00:43:33,520

But our third responding truck on every fire is the, the fast team or the RIT team.

751

00:43:33,520 --> 00:43:38,640

Has there been an increase in conversation on rope rescue after the thing you had too

752

00:43:38,640 --> 00:43:39,640

recently?

753

00:43:39,640 --> 00:43:40,640

Oh man.

754

00:43:40,640 --> 00:43:41,640

I remember being in Probie school.

755

00:43:41,640 --> 00:43:45,240

I remember being in the academy thinking we're never going to do this.

756

00:43:45,240 --> 00:43:46,720

Cowboy stuff.

757

00:43:46,720 --> 00:43:48,800

We're never sending anybody over.

758

00:43:48,800 --> 00:43:52,120

And then since I've been a fireman, it's probably been like five or six.

759

00:43:52,120 --> 00:43:54,920

It's just, yeah.

760

00:43:54,920 --> 00:43:59,400

Whenever something big like that happens or something like that, it's fairly rare and

761

00:43:59,400 --> 00:44:02,040

it's probably one of the more dangerous things we do.

762

00:44:02,040 --> 00:44:03,040

Yeah.

763

00:44:03,040 --> 00:44:05,040

It's, it's, it goes job wide.

764

00:44:05,040 --> 00:44:06,200

Everyone's talking about it.

765

00:44:06,200 --> 00:44:07,800

Everyone's asking what this guy did.

766

00:44:07,800 --> 00:44:09,760

How did he set it up?

767

00:44:09,760 --> 00:44:12,640

You know, you know, it's, it's, it's good.

768

00:44:12,640 --> 00:44:13,860

It's good to get people talking.

769

00:44:13,860 --> 00:44:17,400

It's good for the, maybe the companies that are in, people who are engines who don't really

770

00:44:17,400 --> 00:44:18,400

do rope stuff.

771

00:44:18,400 --> 00:44:21,760

You know, it's good to get everyone talking, drilling on it again.

772

00:44:21,760 --> 00:44:23,800

But I was on vacation when it happened.

773

00:44:23,800 --> 00:44:28,680

So I, you know, I was kind of out of the loop, but the most recent one.

774

00:44:28,680 --> 00:44:29,680

Yeah.

775

00:44:29,680 --> 00:44:30,680

Brilliant.

776

00:44:30,680 --> 00:44:35,600

Well, now you're wearing a firefight uniform engine and then squad again, career calls,

777

00:44:35,600 --> 00:44:37,800

ones that you really remember.

778

00:44:37,800 --> 00:44:38,800

Hmm.

779

00:44:38,800 --> 00:44:43,000

I guess the ones that I really remembered is nothing glamorous.

780

00:44:43,000 --> 00:44:45,720

It's you know, one that ones that stick out as your first fire, right?

781

00:44:45,720 --> 00:44:50,720

I remember the boss and I remember him talking to me, like you want to get in there and just

782

00:44:50,720 --> 00:44:52,680

put the fire out and he's kind of telling you, relax.

783

00:44:52,680 --> 00:44:54,160

He's telling you, look at the flames.

784

00:44:54,160 --> 00:44:55,960

He's kind of talking you through it.

785

00:44:55,960 --> 00:44:57,240

Like those are things I remember.

786

00:44:57,240 --> 00:45:00,880

I remember, I don't know what we, how, how graphic we can get.

787

00:45:00,880 --> 00:45:02,520

I remember my first couple fires.

788

00:45:02,520 --> 00:45:05,760

I'd never had people jump.

789

00:45:05,760 --> 00:45:08,560

That was, that was a people jumping out of windows.

790

00:45:08,560 --> 00:45:13,020

That was a, a strange feeling.

791

00:45:13,020 --> 00:45:16,960

Or even if you're outside, you're waiting for water and you could hear the crowd.

792

00:45:16,960 --> 00:45:17,960

Everyone go, Ooh.

793

00:45:17,960 --> 00:45:20,240

And you're like, you know, some, you know, people are jumping.

794

00:45:20,240 --> 00:45:23,720

That kind of, those things kind of stick out to me.

795

00:45:23,720 --> 00:45:24,720

What else?

796

00:45:24,720 --> 00:45:26,440

I don't know if you're looking for good stories, man.

797

00:45:26,440 --> 00:45:28,440

I'm just talking.

798

00:45:28,440 --> 00:45:34,720

Anything anywhere you want to go, I sit there in the door.

799

00:45:34,720 --> 00:45:40,640

It's like a lot of the, the earlier stuff, that's kind of what sticks into my mind.

800

00:45:40,640 --> 00:45:45,400

Cause after a while, everything is kind of like, you know, so it kind of blends together.

801

00:45:45,400 --> 00:45:50,480

I would say this, like some of the, like some of the best people and the smartest people

802

00:45:50,480 --> 00:45:56,120

I've met in the, like, on the fire department, like I've met some really rock stars and really

803

00:45:56,120 --> 00:46:01,440

smart people, really brave people, man, who think of things that I didn't even, I don't

804

00:46:01,440 --> 00:46:02,440

even think about.

805

00:46:02,440 --> 00:46:06,800

It's like, you have people on this job or like chemists and stuff like that.

806

00:46:06,800 --> 00:46:10,320

Like there's some real brilliant people working on the fire department, man.

807

00:46:10,320 --> 00:46:14,520

And I'm glad I've had the pleasure of working in fire houses with some of these people.

808

00:46:14,520 --> 00:46:15,520

Absolutely.

809

00:46:15,520 --> 00:46:18,120

Well, you mentioned first fire.

810

00:46:18,120 --> 00:46:21,920

I think one of the first fires I had in my first department, I had to buy cake and ice

811

00:46:21,920 --> 00:46:24,400

cream and then I can't remember some of the other ones.

812

00:46:24,400 --> 00:46:27,560

I think maybe steak and lobster was one of them, which was really expensive for a pro

813

00:46:27,560 --> 00:46:28,900

be with almost no money.

814

00:46:28,900 --> 00:46:32,440

And then Orange County, you had your t-shirt ripped off you.

815

00:46:32,440 --> 00:46:36,640

So what's the tradition when you're first fire in your department?

816

00:46:36,640 --> 00:46:37,840

There's no tradition.

817

00:46:37,840 --> 00:46:38,840

Maybe it's not no tradition.

818

00:46:38,840 --> 00:46:39,840

It's my fire.

819

00:46:39,840 --> 00:46:41,760

They kind of tell you, you did your job.

820

00:46:41,760 --> 00:46:42,760

Shut up.

821

00:46:42,760 --> 00:46:43,760

I like that more.

822

00:46:43,760 --> 00:46:44,760

It's cheaper.

823

00:46:44,760 --> 00:46:52,400

You know, but even though they don't say it, they know, like they know, you know, they

824

00:46:52,400 --> 00:46:55,520

know a big thing when you get sent to an engine, they want to see what you're made of.

825

00:46:55,520 --> 00:46:57,840

They want to see your stuff.

826

00:46:57,840 --> 00:47:01,200

And like once guys see that you're not going to guys want to make sure you don't, you're

827

00:47:01,200 --> 00:47:04,520

not going to give up, you know, you don't got to be the greatest in the world, but they

828

00:47:04,520 --> 00:47:06,920

got to make sure you're not going to give up.

829

00:47:06,920 --> 00:47:12,000

And once you kind of show what you got, they ease up a little bit, a little bit.

830

00:47:12,000 --> 00:47:14,120

Are you still at the firefighter rank at the moment?

831

00:47:14,120 --> 00:47:16,480

Yeah, still at the firefighter rank.

832

00:47:16,480 --> 00:47:19,360

I stayed that for 14 years and I love that position.

833

00:47:19,360 --> 00:47:24,120

And I just, you know, I mean, I moved around so that kind of took me away from the draw

834

00:47:24,120 --> 00:47:25,820

of promotional tests.

835

00:47:25,820 --> 00:47:31,040

But when I really evaluated myself, I still absolutely love going inside, going on roofs

836

00:47:31,040 --> 00:47:33,520

and cutting, you know, being on the tool and extrication.

837

00:47:33,520 --> 00:47:37,800

So I just never lost that desire to just stay in that one seat.

838

00:47:37,800 --> 00:47:43,680

But certainly, I don't know if it's the same with you, but down here with the high turnover,

839

00:47:43,680 --> 00:47:48,920

you know, a lot of these departments, they're 50% or so, like at five years or less, and

840

00:47:48,920 --> 00:47:52,720

people are kind of racing to promote.

841

00:47:52,720 --> 00:47:57,760

I asked Al Benjamin this, who was on the show quite a while ago now, real, real senior man,

842

00:47:57,760 --> 00:48:00,080

you know, rescue legend.

843

00:48:00,080 --> 00:48:03,760

But you don't hear that often about the concept of the senior man.

844

00:48:03,760 --> 00:48:07,600

Now I know, you know, you probably don't consider yourself that, but you're starting to get

845

00:48:07,600 --> 00:48:09,480

towards that point now.

846

00:48:09,480 --> 00:48:14,360

Talk to me about the value of staying at the firefighter rank up to this point.

847

00:48:14,360 --> 00:48:15,360

Yes.

848

00:48:15,360 --> 00:48:21,240

So one thing I also loved about the firehouses, everyone respects the men, I mean, respects

849

00:48:21,240 --> 00:48:24,960

the bosses, but the men run the house.

850

00:48:24,960 --> 00:48:29,160

You know, the men run the house, everything gets ran by the senior man, the higher ups

851

00:48:29,160 --> 00:48:34,320

before it goes to, you know, the bosses where they have to like, you know, put pen to paper.

852

00:48:34,320 --> 00:48:38,040

But like, if you're in a really good firehouse, like it's got to be cakewalk as a boss, right?

853

00:48:38,040 --> 00:48:40,800

The men make sure that meals are done, make sure the house is clean, make sure the drills

854

00:48:40,800 --> 00:48:41,800

are getting done.

855

00:48:41,800 --> 00:48:44,400

Of course, the bosses have their say in everything.

856

00:48:44,400 --> 00:48:49,680

But it's huge because, say for instance, like my company, I mean, now it's we're in a weird

857

00:48:49,680 --> 00:48:54,000

place of transition where a lot of the people with time are retiring.

858

00:48:54,000 --> 00:48:55,000

It just is what it is.

859

00:48:55,000 --> 00:48:56,000

They're leaving.

860

00:48:56,000 --> 00:48:58,320

And it's kind of like there's so much stuff that I haven't seen, so many things I haven't

861

00:48:58,320 --> 00:49:00,520

experienced yet.

862

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

And these guys have all that knowledge that they could kind of like, you know, pass on

863

00:49:06,600 --> 00:49:07,800

and then, you know, they're leaving.

864

00:49:07,800 --> 00:49:11,640

So unfortunately, the job turns over quick.

865

00:49:11,640 --> 00:49:12,920

But you know, you know how it is, man.

866

00:49:12,920 --> 00:49:14,880

You just got to get on the rig and do what you have to do.

867

00:49:14,880 --> 00:49:21,360

But yeah, the senior man is a huge, so much value senior men bring because they just seen

868

00:49:21,360 --> 00:49:22,820

so much.

869

00:49:22,820 --> 00:49:26,080

And they know like a big thing with being a firefighter, you don't have to be the strongest

870

00:49:26,080 --> 00:49:27,080

guy.

871

00:49:27,080 --> 00:49:28,080

You just got to, you got to be smart.

872

00:49:28,080 --> 00:49:33,200

You got to be senior guys, you'll be pulling ceilings, breaking your back, pulling ceilings.

873

00:49:33,200 --> 00:49:37,360

And you see a senior guy with a cigar in his mouth just coming like nothing, you know,

874

00:49:37,360 --> 00:49:38,360

pull a room.

875

00:49:38,360 --> 00:49:39,360

It's experience, man.

876

00:49:39,360 --> 00:49:40,360

It's nothing like.

877

00:49:40,360 --> 00:49:46,760

Yeah, no, it is amazing, you know, whether it's a, you know, a captain or an engineer

878

00:49:46,760 --> 00:49:48,680

or a firefighter.

879

00:49:48,680 --> 00:49:53,120

And I think this is the thing too, that I know lots of people with lots of time on that

880

00:49:53,120 --> 00:49:55,840

aren't, you know, that aren't senior man quality.

881

00:49:55,840 --> 00:49:57,640

They've just been there for a long time.

882

00:49:57,640 --> 00:50:00,800

And then, you know, there's also people that have come from different departments that

883

00:50:00,800 --> 00:50:05,800

have, you know, when a company with humility that are incredibly invaluable and they may

884

00:50:05,800 --> 00:50:08,960

only have, you know, three years on your department.

885

00:50:08,960 --> 00:50:13,840

But that experience and that knowledge sharing and that humility, I think is so important.

886

00:50:13,840 --> 00:50:18,660

And it just, it kind of breaks my heart a little bit, you know, when people are barely

887

00:50:18,660 --> 00:50:21,400

at that firefighter level, now they're riding up as an engineer.

888

00:50:21,400 --> 00:50:26,200

Now they're getting, you know, sorry, they're promoted to an engineer after three, two years.

889

00:50:26,200 --> 00:50:31,440

And now they get to ride up as an officer and you've got like four years in the front

890

00:50:31,440 --> 00:50:32,440
seat.

891

00:50:32,440 --> 00:50:33,520
That's, you know, it's terrifying.

892

00:50:33,520 --> 00:50:38,000
So I think pumping the brakes on that and just being proud of the firefighter position

893

00:50:38,000 --> 00:50:39,320
is that you're in no rush.

894

00:50:39,320 --> 00:50:40,760
And I get the financial side.

895

00:50:40,760 --> 00:50:41,960
I understand it.

896

00:50:41,960 --> 00:50:47,340
But did you dream of a certain pay raise when you were in Fire Academy or were you dreaming

897

00:50:47,340 --> 00:50:48,920
about saving lives?

898

00:50:48,920 --> 00:50:53,360
So I love it when, you know, when I meet firefighters that just aren't in a rush, that are just

899

00:50:53,360 --> 00:50:56,880
enjoying that position like I did.

900

00:50:56,880 --> 00:50:57,880
That's exactly it.

901

00:50:57,880 --> 00:50:58,880

Not in a rush.

902

00:50:58,880 --> 00:51:00,040

The test was coming out.

903

00:51:00,040 --> 00:51:01,040

I did start studying.

904

00:51:01,040 --> 00:51:05,200

I'm always the type of guy to take every opportunity that comes my way.

905

00:51:05,200 --> 00:51:08,840

So like even with the paramedic, like I take every anything.

906

00:51:08,840 --> 00:51:13,480

But when the test came, you know, COVID and stuff happened, things got pushed away and

907

00:51:13,480 --> 00:51:18,080

I just had time to think and I was really starting my business.

908

00:51:18,080 --> 00:51:19,080

And I don't know.

909

00:51:19,080 --> 00:51:21,560

I don't know if this sounds bad.

910

00:51:21,560 --> 00:51:23,280

I didn't have any drive to be a boss.

911

00:51:23,280 --> 00:51:24,720

I didn't have any drive to do it.

912

00:51:24,720 --> 00:51:25,720

There's nothing against them.

913

00:51:25,720 --> 00:51:27,200

You know, I just didn't want to do it.

914

00:51:27,200 --> 00:51:29,800

I'm having a good time to find my new firehouse.

915

00:51:29,800 --> 00:51:30,800

I'm learning a lot.

916

00:51:30,800 --> 00:51:31,800

I'm still learning.

917

00:51:31,800 --> 00:51:33,560

I just didn't have to drive to do it.

918

00:51:33,560 --> 00:51:40,160

But I felt like if I needed to this thing's I'm going to I hope I don't regret this.

919

00:51:40,160 --> 00:51:43,000

Like I could be studying the books, but I don't know.

920

00:51:43,000 --> 00:51:46,320

I could be I could be researching marketing, researching things that are going to help me

921

00:51:46,320 --> 00:51:50,000

in my business, which I really have a big passion for business.

922

00:51:50,000 --> 00:51:54,560

So I was like, you know what, I want to bet on myself and I want to kind of like focus

923

00:51:54,560 --> 00:51:57,080

there, you know, I'll take the next test when it comes out.

924

00:51:57,080 --> 00:51:59,960

Yeah, I don't think you're going to regret it at all.

925

00:51:59,960 --> 00:52:01,280

I mean, it's always going to be there.

926

00:52:01,280 --> 00:52:05,520

But I mean, for me, you know, where we are, you know, you're not looking at, you know,

927

00:52:05,520 --> 00:52:06,880

brownstones and high rises.

928

00:52:06,880 --> 00:52:11,760

You're looking at, you know, single story family dwellings, either side of about 1500

929

00:52:11,760 --> 00:52:12,760

square feet.

930

00:52:12,760 --> 00:52:16,940

So when we pull up on a fire, you know, me and my partner are going to be the ones pulling

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00:52:16,940 --> 00:52:21,120

hose and make an entry and going in the engineers at the panel and the L.T. is going to be on

932

00:52:21,120 --> 00:52:22,240

the radio.

933

00:52:22,240 --> 00:52:25,280

So of those three positions, I want to be the one on the hose going in.

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00:52:25,280 --> 00:52:28,600

I don't want to be standing looking at a gauge and I don't want to be talking dispatch.

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00:52:28,600 --> 00:52:29,760

That's just me.

936

00:52:29,760 --> 00:52:31,640

So you know, so that that's just it.

937

00:52:31,640 --> 00:52:32,640

And it kept me going.

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00:52:32,640 --> 00:52:39,100

And like you said, you know, when you've got 14 years on, you're like, I barely seen anything.

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00:52:39,100 --> 00:52:40,100

That's 14 years.

940

00:52:40,100 --> 00:52:43,760

And yes, I've seen a lot, but nothing compared to my 30 year captain, for example.

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00:52:43,760 --> 00:52:49,280

So that's what kept me going is I don't want to be taken away from a position where I've

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00:52:49,280 --> 00:52:55,820

got the highest chance of being hands on and truly helping someone in crisis when I've

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00:52:55,820 --> 00:52:57,800

got so much to learn still.

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00:52:57,800 --> 00:53:02,240

Yeah, that's exactly right.

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00:53:02,240 --> 00:53:03,620

We mentioned your business.

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00:53:03,620 --> 00:53:09,800

So as a side note, before we dive into into what you're doing now, I love the concept

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00:53:09,800 --> 00:53:18,000

of people forging a second hobby, you know, alternate entrepreneurial project in a business,

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00:53:18,000 --> 00:53:22,120

whatever you have, how much you commit for two reasons.

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00:53:22,120 --> 00:53:27,120

Firstly, the identity reason, because we are firefighters is what we do.

950

00:53:27,120 --> 00:53:31,160

And it's absolutely hands down the greatest profession on planet Earth.

951

00:53:31,160 --> 00:53:33,020

But it's not who we are.

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00:53:33,020 --> 00:53:39,040

And so when you create another project, you're kind of kind of breaking that facade a little

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00:53:39,040 --> 00:53:44,760

bit because you are Thomas, who is a firefighter and also an entrepreneur.

954

00:53:44,760 --> 00:53:51,580

But also when you do transition out, it's an injury, you got fired, you made it to retirement.

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00:53:51,580 --> 00:53:54,360

Now you have that to transition to.

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00:53:54,360 --> 00:53:57,600

And I think one of the worst things that we do in our profession is we go all in on the

957

00:53:57,600 --> 00:53:58,780

job.

958

00:53:58,780 --> 00:54:02,880

And then one day the bay door closes behind us and we're like, well, now what?

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00:54:02,880 --> 00:54:06,720

So now I just want to kind of preface this conversation with those two observations.

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00:54:06,720 --> 00:54:11,240

I love the fact of anyone doing something else on the side, as long as it doesn't obviously

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00:54:11,240 --> 00:54:15,620

become more important than the fire service while they're in uniform.

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00:54:15,620 --> 00:54:17,040

So talk to me about that.

963

00:54:17,040 --> 00:54:19,020

You were studying business when you were young.

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00:54:19,020 --> 00:54:23,560

You become an EMT, arguably a paramedic and then a firefighter.

965

00:54:23,560 --> 00:54:27,460

Talk to me about the creation of Burnbox.

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00:54:27,460 --> 00:54:31,960

So yeah, so back to when I first got to my first firehouse, there was a couple of gentlemen

967

00:54:31,960 --> 00:54:35,600

there who had their own firefighter products.

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00:54:35,600 --> 00:54:38,200

I don't know if you've seen like that Halligan bottle opener.

969

00:54:38,200 --> 00:54:40,680

I worked with a gentleman who owns that company.

970

00:54:40,680 --> 00:54:42,760

Few guys had their own fabrication companies.

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00:54:42,760 --> 00:54:44,800

Guys are making tools.

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00:54:44,800 --> 00:54:51,200

There's a few tools on the rig that some guys jimmy rigged together for different type of

973

00:54:51,200 --> 00:54:52,200

hydrogen plug.

974

00:54:52,200 --> 00:54:57,840

Firefighters are the most creative bunch of people and every firefighter has three jobs.

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00:54:57,840 --> 00:55:02,360

So I just got on Instagram one day and I'm searching firefighter owned products.

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00:55:02,360 --> 00:55:07,560

And then I saw so many different brands where guys have apparel companies, guys making tools

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00:55:07,560 --> 00:55:09,000

like wedges and shove knives.

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00:55:09,000 --> 00:55:11,400

There's guys doing cups.

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00:55:11,400 --> 00:55:13,880

There's guys making pliers.

980

00:55:13,880 --> 00:55:18,960

So many different things came up when I was looking up firefighter owned products.

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00:55:18,960 --> 00:55:22,320

I thought it'd be really cool if I could like curate all these products and like ship them

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00:55:22,320 --> 00:55:24,560

out.

983

00:55:24,560 --> 00:55:30,300

The goal is if I could get one day get 10,000 people signed up and let's say Joe Fireman's

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00:55:30,300 --> 00:55:34,160

making a tool in his garage and I can get the exposure.

985

00:55:34,160 --> 00:55:36,440

I can get that out to 10,000 people.

986

00:55:36,440 --> 00:55:37,640

I thought that'd be really cool.

987

00:55:37,640 --> 00:55:39,360

So that's kind of what started it.

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00:55:39,360 --> 00:55:45,240

And that's kind of what the goal is to help support firefighter owned businesses.

989

00:55:45,240 --> 00:55:48,520

I had Trevor Williams on the show from Williams Key.

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00:55:48,520 --> 00:55:52,040

And firstly, my god, that guy's life story is amazing.

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00:55:52,040 --> 00:55:54,480

And he's a good looking dude as well.

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00:55:54,480 --> 00:55:57,120

He's what women think of when they think of a firefighter calendar.

993

00:55:57,120 --> 00:55:58,120

Not my ugly ass.

994

00:55:58,120 --> 00:56:01,160

But yeah, so that's a perfect example though.

995

00:56:01,160 --> 00:56:08,020

You get a guy who comes from the carpentry world and locksmithing and then he finagles

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00:56:08,020 --> 00:56:13,560

a tool to start getting the keyless entry into some of these places without destroying

997

00:56:13,560 --> 00:56:15,080

their doors.

998

00:56:15,080 --> 00:56:17,020

And now you have all the products that he's had.

999

00:56:17,020 --> 00:56:22,400

So talk to me about some of the companies that you've interacted with that you've used

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00:56:22,400 --> 00:56:24,560

in the burn box that you really like.

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00:56:24,560 --> 00:56:27,560

Yeah, Trevor is an absolute beast, man.

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00:56:27,560 --> 00:56:28,560

He doesn't stop.

1003

00:56:28,560 --> 00:56:29,560

He doesn't stop working.

1004

00:56:29,560 --> 00:56:31,040

He's always working on something new, but he's great.

1005

00:56:31,040 --> 00:56:34,000

I've worked with him a couple of times.

1006

00:56:34,000 --> 00:56:38,000

I've worked with a few apparel companies like Hook and Irons apparel, those guys I work

1007

00:56:38,000 --> 00:56:40,240

with a lot.

1008

00:56:40,240 --> 00:56:42,680

Axehead Threads, they're pretty popular print shop.

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00:56:42,680 --> 00:56:46,240

As far as tools go, Job Town Tools.

1010

00:56:46,240 --> 00:56:50,080

He's another FDNY fireman, retired.

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00:56:50,080 --> 00:56:51,080

He makes a lot of tools.

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00:56:51,080 --> 00:56:52,080

Who else?

1013

00:56:52,080 --> 00:56:53,760

Oh man, I can go on and on.

1014

00:56:53,760 --> 00:56:55,360

I work with Modus Fire Rescue.

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00:56:55,360 --> 00:56:57,360

Who else I work with?

1016

00:56:57,360 --> 00:57:02,960

Oh man, I'm just drawing a blank.

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00:57:02,960 --> 00:57:07,800

But I've worked with many firefighter owned companies.

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00:57:07,800 --> 00:57:12,360

The beauty is just, I love it whenever I send a box out and customers get it and they say,

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00:57:12,360 --> 00:57:14,700

oh, I didn't know this existed.

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00:57:14,700 --> 00:57:18,080

Or I send the box out and I get an email saying, hey, I used this thing twice already.

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00:57:18,080 --> 00:57:19,080

Thank you.

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00:57:19,080 --> 00:57:22,960

That's what keeps me going, man.

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00:57:22,960 --> 00:57:24,440

That's the goal.

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00:57:24,440 --> 00:57:30,160

Learn the word and provide discovery.

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00:57:30,160 --> 00:57:34,520

I think it was about five, six years ago now.

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00:57:34,520 --> 00:57:35,980

I think it was Christmas.

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00:57:35,980 --> 00:57:39,980

My wife and kids got me a present and it was a little crate.

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00:57:39,980 --> 00:57:46,640

And inside were four beer glasses that said, gearing Dog's Bollocks Brewery, which is,

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00:57:46,640 --> 00:57:50,120

Dog's Bollocks is something we say when it's really good in England.

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00:57:50,120 --> 00:57:53,500

And then there was the mats and then there was a couple of bags of nuts or something.

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00:57:53,500 --> 00:57:56,920

There was such a unique, interesting gift.

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00:57:56,920 --> 00:57:59,720

Because I mean, especially now when we have Amazon and everything, how many of us just

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00:57:59,720 --> 00:58:01,840

buy things straight away?

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00:58:01,840 --> 00:58:07,280

So talk to me about the concept of Burnbox and what people would be receiving every month.

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00:58:07,280 --> 00:58:08,280

Okay.

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00:58:08,280 --> 00:58:12,680

So basically what I try to do is give you something that you can use every month, like

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00:58:12,680 --> 00:58:17,600

try to give you a functional tool or piece of gear.

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00:58:17,600 --> 00:58:22,160

So I've done fire hoods, I've done pliers, I've done multi tools.

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00:58:22,160 --> 00:58:25,080

We've done shove knives, Williams key, we've done webbing.

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00:58:25,080 --> 00:58:29,160

We've done, I try to give you something, at least one thing that you could use that day

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00:58:29,160 --> 00:58:31,160

when you get your box.

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00:58:31,160 --> 00:58:33,080

I try to make it a satisfying package.

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00:58:33,080 --> 00:58:35,920

So I also try to do a piece of apparel.

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00:58:35,920 --> 00:58:39,080

So that could be a t-shirt, a hat or a belt.

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00:58:39,080 --> 00:58:43,200

And then you've got your other items like, you know, your key chains, your tumblers,

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00:58:43,200 --> 00:58:46,800

your coasters, your bags and stuff like that.

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00:58:46,800 --> 00:58:48,760

I try to make it a satisfying package every month.

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00:58:48,760 --> 00:58:50,520

I don't want to be the tool of the month.

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00:58:50,520 --> 00:58:52,440

I don't want to be the shirt of the month.

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00:58:52,440 --> 00:58:56,240

I try to get a couple of brands, a couple of things to send.

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00:58:56,240 --> 00:59:03,520

It's about a 55 to \$100, 55 to \$65 box, but it's valued like 75 to 100 depending on the

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00:59:03,520 --> 00:59:04,520

month.

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00:59:04,520 --> 00:59:09,780

And the goal is just to spread discovery, functionality, and it's another way to support

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00:59:09,780 --> 00:59:12,640

other firefighter-owned businesses.

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00:59:12,640 --> 00:59:16,240

Talk to me about from day one and how you grew it.

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00:59:16,240 --> 00:59:21,800

Like how did you go from having this idea to actually putting it in action?

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00:59:21,800 --> 00:59:26,280

So I had the idea for like two years before I actually pulled the trigger on it.

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00:59:26,280 --> 00:59:27,920

I had that idea for two years.

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00:59:27,920 --> 00:59:31,040

I didn't pull the trigger on it.

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00:59:31,040 --> 00:59:36,320

One day, you know, I made a change and I said, you know, enough's enough.

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00:59:36,320 --> 00:59:40,640

I used to do a lot of party and I was one of the guys in the firehouse who liked to

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00:59:40,640 --> 00:59:42,640

always hang out.

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00:59:42,640 --> 00:59:47,680

I quit boozing and stuff and I started focusing, trying to get focused.

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00:59:47,680 --> 00:59:51,280

So I started the burn box just to keep busy.

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00:59:51,280 --> 00:59:52,280

And I started it.

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00:59:52,280 --> 00:59:54,680

I'll be honest with you, I didn't think anybody was going to subscribe.

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00:59:54,680 --> 00:59:57,640

I didn't think, you know, or more than a month.

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00:59:57,640 --> 00:59:59,280

And then I just tried to be strategic.

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00:59:59,280 --> 01:00:01,880

I tried to partner with brands that had a following.

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01:00:01,880 --> 01:00:05,040

I tried to do cross promotion.

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01:00:05,040 --> 01:00:08,560

Brands that like, so three different brands have 20,000 followers.

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01:00:08,560 --> 01:00:13,080

I figured if I put them all in my box, I'd have 60,000 people potentially looking at

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01:00:13,080 --> 01:00:14,080

it.

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01:00:14,080 --> 01:00:15,080

So I did all that.

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01:00:15,080 --> 01:00:17,040

It was a, I had that deal for a long time.

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01:00:17,040 --> 01:00:20,920

It took, I'll be honest, it took a while for me to get the strength to launch it, you know,

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01:00:20,920 --> 01:00:23,080

because who wants to fail?

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01:00:23,080 --> 01:00:27,280

And that goes out to anybody who has a dream, wants to start something, you know, just go

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01:00:27,280 --> 01:00:29,560

for it.

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01:00:29,560 --> 01:00:30,560

But that's what I did.

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01:00:30,560 --> 01:00:32,640

And first month I got 40 people signed up.

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01:00:32,640 --> 01:00:37,000

I thought I was going to have more, had 40 people and then like every month it just kept

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01:00:37,000 --> 01:00:38,000

doubling.

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01:00:38,000 --> 01:00:43,800

And I think we're rounding out about maybe 2,200, 2,200 right now.

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01:00:43,800 --> 01:00:46,080

So it's, it's doing okay.

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01:00:46,080 --> 01:00:50,920

It's getting harder to find products the more I grow, but it's a challenge and I'm having

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01:00:50,920 --> 01:00:51,920

fun.

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01:00:51,920 --> 01:00:55,000

Now, what about the, the curve?

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01:00:55,000 --> 01:01:00,100

Because for example, when I started the podcast, you know, it went from one download to two

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01:01:00,100 --> 01:01:04,560

downloads to four downloads, you know, and that there's, there's this, this facade of

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01:01:04,560 --> 01:01:07,800

overnight success, you know, in, in business, in podcasts.

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01:01:07,800 --> 01:01:11,560

Casting and everything, you know, and then you look, for example, you see someone who's

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01:01:11,560 --> 01:01:14,840

in three films that year and you're like, wow, they must have, you know, they got their

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01:01:14,840 --> 01:01:15,840

big break.

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01:01:15,840 --> 01:01:20,640

And then, you know, five months later, you see them on some Disney TV show and oh, oh,

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01:01:20,640 --> 01:01:24,640

they've been acting for 20 years, you know, and it's just that that was their day.

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01:01:24,640 --> 01:01:28,960

So because it's very, very discouraging, I think, because we are sold this kind of over

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01:01:28,960 --> 01:01:33,040

overnight success facade and it can, it can really kind of take the wind out of people's

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01:01:33,040 --> 01:01:36,640

sales when the first month they see 40 orders, for example.

1100

01:01:36,640 --> 01:01:46,640

So what, what was, what kept you going if you had higher expectations than what originally

1101

01:01:46,640 --> 01:01:47,640

happened?

1102

01:01:47,640 --> 01:01:54,960

Well, the main thing is, I think if you're going to start something, it's, I think you

1103

01:01:54,960 --> 01:01:58,800

could probably attest to this because I'm sure recording a podcast consistently isn't,

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01:01:58,800 --> 01:02:02,480

you know, easy, but consistency is huge.

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01:02:02,480 --> 01:02:05,960

And I guess I want to say the word fortitude because it's going to, you have to have a

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01:02:05,960 --> 01:02:11,120

passion for it because when it gets hard, that passions, what's going to keep you going?

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01:02:11,120 --> 01:02:14,560

Because if not, I'll be lying if I said I didn't have months where I just didn't want

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01:02:14,560 --> 01:02:15,560

to do it anymore.

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01:02:15,560 --> 01:02:18,800

The day before shipping a product is missing or broken.

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01:02:18,800 --> 01:02:19,800

You know, what are you going to do?

1111

01:02:19,800 --> 01:02:25,600

I got to find a couple hundred of D, you know, it's not all it's, it's that passion that's

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01:02:25,600 --> 01:02:30,560

going to keep you going when it's, when it doesn't look good.

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01:02:30,560 --> 01:02:33,200

So if you're going to start something, just make sure it's something you're passionate

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01:02:33,200 --> 01:02:34,200

about.

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01:02:34,200 --> 01:02:37,720

I don't know how to do that, but I think that that passion is what's going to carry you

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01:02:37,720 --> 01:02:44,440

through when things aren't looking good because you're going to have a lot of bad days.

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01:02:44,440 --> 01:02:49,000

It might be a strip of like a week or two in a row, just nothing's going right.

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01:02:49,000 --> 01:02:53,080

You know, and everything in your body is telling you to shut this down.

1119

01:02:53,080 --> 01:02:56,240

You got to be passionate about it and to keep going.

1120

01:02:56,240 --> 01:03:03,080

And cause I've had, I'm fortunate that I have a job, so I was able to take risks, more risk

1121

01:03:03,080 --> 01:03:06,680

with the business than I needed to because I, you know, my family was going to eat no

1122

01:03:06,680 --> 01:03:07,680

matter what.

1123

01:03:07,680 --> 01:03:08,680

I had to have a job, right?

1124

01:03:08,680 --> 01:03:14,200

So, you know, maybe the first year wasn't the best year, but it was, it was a learning.

1125

01:03:14,200 --> 01:03:16,560

I learned, you know, I was building proof of concept.

1126

01:03:16,560 --> 01:03:20,680

I was learning the ins and outs of stuff and I was fortunate enough that I have a job where

1127

01:03:20,680 --> 01:03:23,640

I could, you know, my family's fine.

1128

01:03:23,640 --> 01:03:26,000

So that would be a piece of advice.

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01:03:26,000 --> 01:03:29,960

Just make sure if there's something that you're into, just be passionate about it because

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01:03:29,960 --> 01:03:33,880

that passion is what's going to carry you through the days you don't feel like getting

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01:03:33,880 --> 01:03:34,880

up.

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01:03:34,880 --> 01:03:38,160

You don't feel like sending those emails, you know, dealing with unhappy customers.

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01:03:38,160 --> 01:03:43,800

One month I had sent out a couple hundred boxes, the wrong shirts.

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01:03:43,800 --> 01:03:46,080

Everyone got the wrong shirt size.

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01:03:46,080 --> 01:03:51,480

Like everything in me wanted to say, this is it, you know?

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01:03:51,480 --> 01:03:55,560

But it's, you know, just got to keep going.

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01:03:55,560 --> 01:03:56,560

I do.

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01:03:56,560 --> 01:04:00,800

I actually literally, I mean, recently told, you know, turned to my son or my wife who's

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01:04:00,800 --> 01:04:07,320

ever around at that moment, you know, when it's 1130 at night, midnight, and I'm still

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01:04:07,320 --> 01:04:11,440

finishing editing because I've had technical problems and I'm, you know, come hell or high

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01:04:11,440 --> 01:04:15,000

war, I'm going to put this podcast on the same days that I've said, you know, for the

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01:04:15,000 --> 01:04:17,200

last seven years now.

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01:04:17,200 --> 01:04:21,140

And I just turned to them and say, this is, this is what people don't see.

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01:04:21,140 --> 01:04:23,160

This is why, like you said, their consistency.

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01:04:23,160 --> 01:04:25,160

It's easy to be consistent on the good days.

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01:04:25,160 --> 01:04:28,920

Can you be consistent on the shit ones?

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01:04:28,920 --> 01:04:29,920

That's so true, man.

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01:04:29,920 --> 01:04:33,640

And it's also like, like you said, you do all this work for this many years and then

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01:04:33,640 --> 01:04:35,760

people see you and you're, oh, you're an overnight success.

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01:04:35,760 --> 01:04:36,760

Like they have no idea.

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01:04:36,760 --> 01:04:41,680

Like a lot of people, like this subscription, a lot of people told me they had the idea,

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01:04:41,680 --> 01:04:43,600

but they just, you know, it's a lot of work.

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01:04:43,600 --> 01:04:45,960

How do you get all these vendors and all those products?

1154

01:04:45,960 --> 01:04:47,880

And I would sit up to three, four in the morning.

1155

01:04:47,880 --> 01:04:51,520

I have notebooks of just me just planning this stuff out and no one sees that.

1156

01:04:51,520 --> 01:04:53,760

No one, no one, no one ever know.

1157

01:04:53,760 --> 01:04:58,720

I have those, those books of the weeks I stood up trying to make, trying to run the numbers

1158

01:04:58,720 --> 01:05:00,160

and make it work, you know?

1159

01:05:00,160 --> 01:05:01,160

Yeah.

1160

01:05:01,160 --> 01:05:02,160

Building boxes, you know?

1161

01:05:02,160 --> 01:05:05,360

Well, like they say, if it was easy, everyone would be doing it.

1162

01:05:05,360 --> 01:05:10,560

So I think when you, when you, when you actually start something like this, you kind of get

1163

01:05:10,560 --> 01:05:13,760

a new respect for people that have built things from nothing.

1164

01:05:13,760 --> 01:05:15,800

Oh yeah, for sure.

1165

01:05:15,800 --> 01:05:16,800

Yep.

1166

01:05:16,800 --> 01:05:17,800

All right.

1167

01:05:17,800 --> 01:05:20,240

Well, I want to go to some closing questions and obviously we'll talk about where people

1168

01:05:20,240 --> 01:05:21,240

can get the, the burn box.

1169

01:05:21,240 --> 01:05:26,520

But before we do, is there a book or are there books that you love to recommend?

1170

01:05:26,520 --> 01:05:30,240

It can be related to our discussion today or completely unrelated.

1171

01:05:30,240 --> 01:05:31,960

Oh man.

1172

01:05:31,960 --> 01:05:36,560

So I'm not, I'll be honest, I'm not a big book guy, but there are two books that I've

1173

01:05:36,560 --> 01:05:42,080

read recently and then not, they're nothing fancy, nothing, but there's an, an entrepreneur

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01:05:42,080 --> 01:05:44,600

out there, Alex Homozzi.

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01:05:44,600 --> 01:05:47,280

He has a book called a hundred million dollars offers.

1176

01:05:47,280 --> 01:05:51,400

And then he has another book called a hundred million dollar leads.

1177

01:05:51,400 --> 01:05:54,000

And that's, it's all about sales stuff.

1178

01:05:54,000 --> 01:05:58,360

Those are the two recent things I read and it's kind of like changed my perspective.

1179

01:05:58,360 --> 01:06:00,660

That's for anybody who's thinking about entrepreneurship and stuff.

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01:06:00,660 --> 01:06:03,520

He breaks everything down in an easy way to consume it.

1181

01:06:03,520 --> 01:06:08,600

Like hard concepts, he breaks it down and a lot of those things in his book I was doing,

1182

01:06:08,600 --> 01:06:10,720

but I didn't know I was doing it.

1183

01:06:10,720 --> 01:06:11,720

So it was interesting.

1184

01:06:11,720 --> 01:06:15,520

I meant to ask you, you just reminded me, what about marketing?

1185

01:06:15,520 --> 01:06:18,120

What's worked for you and what hasn't.

1186

01:06:18,120 --> 01:06:24,480

So in the beginning, cross promotion was big, just partnering with other brands and just

1187

01:06:24,480 --> 01:06:28,220

putting a bunch of people together with, you know, strategically that worked.

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01:06:28,220 --> 01:06:33,000

But eventually a plateaued where I had to get a marketing agency.

1189

01:06:33,000 --> 01:06:34,560

I wanted to learn how to do marketing myself.

1190

01:06:34,560 --> 01:06:39,120

I like, I took a course and everything to run my own ads, but the issue I'm having is

1191

01:06:39,120 --> 01:06:43,320

time I have three boys, I'm married, just got to a new, new a firehouse.

1192

01:06:43,320 --> 01:06:44,320

I'm running a business.

1193

01:06:44,320 --> 01:06:49,380

I just didn't have the time to learn the way I wanted to.

1194

01:06:49,380 --> 01:06:53,360

So I ended up hiring a marketing agency and they kind of been helping me out with that

1195

01:06:53,360 --> 01:06:55,280

for the most part.

1196

01:06:55,280 --> 01:06:59,160

I found, and this might be different because I don't put out a product per se.

1197

01:06:59,160 --> 01:07:06,440

I mean, it is, but you know, it's a free podcast, but the, I've got up to, I think it's like

1198

01:07:06,440 --> 01:07:09,840

168 something thousand people on Instagram, for example, community.

1199

01:07:09,840 --> 01:07:12,280

I hate that word followers because no one's following me.

1200

01:07:12,280 --> 01:07:14,680

I'm not, I'm not follow worthy.

1201

01:07:14,680 --> 01:07:20,040

So the community is there, but every time I put something out of value, that's informative

1202

01:07:20,040 --> 01:07:23,080

to say, you know, Hey, look at this thing or, you know, Hey, there's this fundraiser

1203

01:07:23,080 --> 01:07:24,080

coming up.

1204

01:07:24,080 --> 01:07:28,680

It's like crickets, but you know, you put the, the kitten on the skateboard video out

1205

01:07:28,680 --> 01:07:30,600

there and everyone loses their mind.

1206

01:07:30,600 --> 01:07:32,680

And so the algorithms are so shifted.

1207

01:07:32,680 --> 01:07:37,740

So what I've realized is that, you know, this, again, this facades that, Oh man, if you know,

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01:07:37,740 --> 01:07:41,260

this one influencer, if they do one post and you're going to blow up, like, no, no.

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01:07:41,260 --> 01:07:45,680

So to me, I don't know if you've had this, one of the most powerful marketing tools is

1210

01:07:45,680 --> 01:07:47,200

back to word of mouth.

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01:07:47,200 --> 01:07:48,200

It's trust.

1212

01:07:48,200 --> 01:07:52,660

If people like what you do or what you sell, they will tell other people, but obviously

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01:07:52,660 --> 01:07:54,520

that's not going to blow up.

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01:07:54,520 --> 01:07:57,320

That's a much slower burn.

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01:07:57,320 --> 01:07:58,320

That's the truth, man.

1216

01:07:58,320 --> 01:08:00,240

You, you're dropping gems because that's another thing.

1217

01:08:00,240 --> 01:08:05,720

So sometimes I get people who want to give me products for the boxes, which is great.

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01:08:05,720 --> 01:08:10,920

But some people like their products, try to fix a problem that doesn't exist.

1219

01:08:10,920 --> 01:08:13,000

So you know, you got to let them down easy.

1220

01:08:13,000 --> 01:08:17,880

Hey, say, listen, I don't think it's going to be a good fit, but like, I have to make

1221

01:08:17,880 --> 01:08:19,640

sure I keep goodwill with my customers.

1222

01:08:19,640 --> 01:08:21,240

I can't just put anything in the boxes.

1223

01:08:21,240 --> 01:08:25,240

Like it has to be something I can see myself using or being functional.

1224

01:08:25,240 --> 01:08:29,560

And it, cause if I don't have, keep goodwill with my customers, they're not going to recommend

1225

01:08:29,560 --> 01:08:30,560

me.

1226

01:08:30,560 --> 01:08:32,280

They're not going to tell anybody else to try it.

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01:08:32,280 --> 01:08:35,800

So yeah, it's what you said is very true.

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01:08:35,800 --> 01:08:38,200

Word of mouth is huge, you know?

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01:08:38,200 --> 01:08:39,200

Absolutely.

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01:08:39,200 --> 01:08:40,200

All right.

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01:08:40,200 --> 01:08:41,560

So moving on to the closing questions.

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01:08:41,560 --> 01:08:43,680

What about movies and documentaries?

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01:08:43,680 --> 01:08:44,680

Any of those that you love?

1234

01:08:44,680 --> 01:08:50,480

Oh man, I don't really have anything off the top of my mind, man.

1235

01:08:50,480 --> 01:08:52,680

Hmm.

1236

01:08:52,680 --> 01:08:53,680

Movies or documentaries?

1237

01:08:53,680 --> 01:08:58,560

I don't know if it's, it doesn't really pertain to business.

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01:08:58,560 --> 01:09:01,240

I have, I'll be honest with you, I haven't really watched anything recently, man.

1239

01:09:01,240 --> 01:09:04,320

I think the last documentary I watched was like the social dilemma.

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01:09:04,320 --> 01:09:09,240

It has to do with like, you know, the way social media works, but I don't know if that's,

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01:09:09,240 --> 01:09:10,640

that's going to add any value to anybody.

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01:09:10,640 --> 01:09:11,680

No, I think it will.

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01:09:11,680 --> 01:09:12,680

That's a great recommendation.

1244

01:09:12,680 --> 01:09:18,040

I mean, the fact that you've got these designers, these programmers that created this software

1245

01:09:18,040 --> 01:09:22,280

that now they have to shield their own children from because it's so damn effective.

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01:09:22,280 --> 01:09:24,960

If that's not a powerful message, I don't know what is.

1247

01:09:24,960 --> 01:09:25,960

Yeah.

1248

01:09:25,960 --> 01:09:31,640

I think one eye opening thing I had to realize is that I thought for a while, I didn't realize

1249

01:09:31,640 --> 01:09:35,400

that we are the commodity that Facebook sells.

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01:09:35,400 --> 01:09:36,400

Like I thought it was the other way around.

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01:09:36,400 --> 01:09:37,680

Like they're showing us stuff.

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01:09:37,680 --> 01:09:38,680

No.

1253

01:09:38,680 --> 01:09:42,760

I didn't see your call and say, you know, I need my product to go in front of X amount

1254

01:09:42,760 --> 01:09:43,760

of people, you know?

1255

01:09:43,760 --> 01:09:47,320

And that's how, yeah, I just took, I didn't, it woke me up.

1256

01:09:47,320 --> 01:09:48,320

Yeah.

1257

01:09:48,320 --> 01:09:49,320

That's interesting.

1258

01:09:49,320 --> 01:09:53,000

Actually, while we're sitting here, you know, and we both in professions that serve, you

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01:09:53,000 --> 01:10:00,600

know, and both trying to provide products that add value to the world, it makes it even

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01:10:00,600 --> 01:10:06,120

harder to understand that unethical business model, you know, whether it's social media

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01:10:06,120 --> 01:10:11,920

and kind of mining people's personal information or whether it's selling Oxycontin or McDonald's

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01:10:11,920 --> 01:10:18,200

or whatever it is that, you know, people can sleep at night, counting their money, knowing

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01:10:18,200 --> 01:10:20,060

that they've made people's lives worse.

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01:10:20,060 --> 01:10:26,200

And then back to what we talked about earlier, I had an aha moment recently, like, oh, that

1265

01:10:26,200 --> 01:10:28,840

that's also part of the mental health crisis.

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01:10:28,840 --> 01:10:35,160

The reason why some people are okay with Americans dying from their products is because they

1267

01:10:35,160 --> 01:10:38,800

themselves are probably going through a mental health struggle, but they're just billionaires,

1268

01:10:38,800 --> 01:10:41,120

so no one's really paying attention.

1269

01:10:41,120 --> 01:10:42,120

Yeah.

1270

01:10:42,120 --> 01:10:44,440

It's so many levels of this stuff, man.

1271

01:10:44,440 --> 01:10:50,800

And it just makes you feel so small, you know, compared to these machines that are out there,

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01:10:50,800 --> 01:10:51,800

machines.

1273

01:10:51,800 --> 01:10:52,800

Yeah.

1274

01:10:52,800 --> 01:10:53,800

I think I'll put this to you.

1275

01:10:53,800 --> 01:11:01,760

I, I really think that there is a paradigm shift towards, what's that term people use?

1276

01:11:01,760 --> 01:11:03,960

Oh my goodness.

1277

01:11:03,960 --> 01:11:05,440

I'm blank on the term.

1278

01:11:05,440 --> 01:11:12,200

Anyway, you know, back to the family owned butcher or baker or, you know, the coffee

1279

01:11:12,200 --> 01:11:16,240

shop or the brewery and places where people can sit down and talk.

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01:11:16,240 --> 01:11:20,720

Because you think about the American shopping mall, it wasn't really, I mean, I know that

1281

01:11:20,720 --> 01:11:25,200

teenagers would hang out there, but it wasn't really a place that people would go and interact.

1282

01:11:25,200 --> 01:11:28,240

They would go, they'd sift through racks of stuff and shelves of stuff.

1283

01:11:28,240 --> 01:11:33,120

They'd fill carrier bags and then they'd walk out a lot broker than they walked in.

1284

01:11:33,120 --> 01:11:36,520

So I hope bespoke, that's that word bespoke.

1285

01:11:36,520 --> 01:11:42,200

So that kind of artisan crafts person, I think there's a real desire to go back to that.

1286

01:11:42,200 --> 01:11:47,480

I think like industry got so, so big that it lost all personality.

1287

01:11:47,480 --> 01:11:49,480

And so I think that's why you're seeing a lot of these.

1288

01:11:49,480 --> 01:11:54,280

I just shared a video the other day of a coffee company that's owned by a family that had

1289

01:11:54,280 --> 01:11:56,200

three special needs kids.

1290

01:11:56,200 --> 01:12:01,840

And so every branch of this coffee store employs people with, you know, autism and Down syndrome

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01:12:01,840 --> 01:12:03,880

and some of these other things.

1292

01:12:03,880 --> 01:12:07,400

What a beautiful, you know, social business model.

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01:12:07,400 --> 01:12:09,920

That I truly think is what people are yearning for.

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01:12:09,920 --> 01:12:13,520

So everyone like you and other people out there that are trying to start something out

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01:12:13,520 --> 01:12:17,440

from the ground that's coming from a good place and is small.

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01:12:17,440 --> 01:12:21,800

I hope this is our time again now, because I think that, you know, as the Macy's and

1297

01:12:21,800 --> 01:12:27,080

all these other places start falling, because they are, you know, I think it's time to regain

1298

01:12:27,080 --> 01:12:32,160

that small village, you know, community that we had a few decades ago.

1299

01:12:32,160 --> 01:12:34,320

Yeah, I agree.

1300

01:12:34,320 --> 01:12:39,080

I feel like with social media, everything's just so fast paced with like a TikTok culture

1301

01:12:39,080 --> 01:12:40,880

where everything is just fast.

1302

01:12:40,880 --> 01:12:42,040

Everything's just fast.

1303

01:12:42,040 --> 01:12:46,720

Way we operate and you know, it's good to have, you know, companies, businesses that

1304

01:12:46,720 --> 01:12:51,840

have a soul, you know, a face and a soul behind it because it means more, you know?

1305

01:12:51,840 --> 01:12:52,840

Absolutely.

1306

01:12:52,840 --> 01:12:53,840

All right.

1307

01:12:53,840 --> 01:12:57,840

So, you know, great people, is there a person that you'd recommend to come on this podcast

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01:12:57,840 --> 01:13:02,520

as a guest to speak to the first responders, military and associated professions of the

1309

01:13:02,520 --> 01:13:03,520

world?

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01:13:03,520 --> 01:13:06,960

Yeah, I think where it comes right now is Bill Waters.

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01:13:06,960 --> 01:13:08,440

He's the owner of Job Town Tools.

1312

01:13:08,440 --> 01:13:11,640

He's a retired firefighter.

1313

01:13:11,640 --> 01:13:13,960

He's out in, I'm not sure if he might have moved.

1314

01:13:13,960 --> 01:13:14,960

I'm not sure.

1315

01:13:14,960 --> 01:13:17,680

He's out in Long Island as well.

1316

01:13:17,680 --> 01:13:18,880

Brilliant.

1317

01:13:18,880 --> 01:13:19,880

I will look him up.

1318

01:13:19,880 --> 01:13:23,400
Yeah, I'll see if I message him.

1319
01:13:23,400 --> 01:13:24,400
Yeah, please.

1320
01:13:24,400 --> 01:13:25,400
Excellent.

1321
01:13:25,400 --> 01:13:26,400
Thank you.

1322
01:13:26,400 --> 01:13:27,400
All right.

1323
01:13:27,400 --> 01:13:29,320
Well, in the very last question before we make sure everyone knows where to find you

1324
01:13:29,320 --> 01:13:32,160
and Burnbox, what do you do to decompress?

1325
01:13:32,160 --> 01:13:34,640
Oh, what do I do to decompress?

1326
01:13:34,640 --> 01:13:35,640
I don't.

1327
01:13:35,640 --> 01:13:36,640
That's my problem.

1328
01:13:36,640 --> 01:13:37,640
That's my problem.

1329

01:13:37,640 --> 01:13:38,640

That's my problem.

1330

01:13:38,640 --> 01:13:39,640

I don't.

1331

01:13:39,640 --> 01:13:43,040

I will say something I'm doing now to decompress.

1332

01:13:43,040 --> 01:13:46,160

So my kids, my boys, like they're into this.

1333

01:13:46,160 --> 01:13:47,560

Like I used to watch a show.

1334

01:13:47,560 --> 01:13:48,560

Don't laugh.

1335

01:13:48,560 --> 01:13:49,560

Don't judge me.

1336

01:13:49,560 --> 01:13:52,080

They used to watch a show, Pokemon, when I was a kid.

1337

01:13:52,080 --> 01:13:55,200

So like they're at their age where they're doing that and kind of they're into it.

1338

01:13:55,200 --> 01:13:58,840

So whenever they're out playing and stuff, I kind of like sitting in there hanging with

1339

01:13:58,840 --> 01:14:00,920

them and kind of help me relax.

1340

01:14:00,920 --> 01:14:04,600

Reminds me of simpler times, you know, I buy them cards so they can open up.

1341

01:14:04,600 --> 01:14:06,760

They kind of want to do like a YouTube video.

1342

01:14:06,760 --> 01:14:08,880

So I'm trying to help them with that.

1343

01:14:08,880 --> 01:14:10,840

I guess spending time with my kids, I guess.

1344

01:14:10,840 --> 01:14:11,840

Love it.

1345

01:14:11,840 --> 01:14:15,320

They're not running around like lunatics.

1346

01:14:15,320 --> 01:14:18,640

My son got into Pokemon, but I don't think he ever understood how to play it.

1347

01:14:18,640 --> 01:14:19,760

And I sure as hell didn't.

1348

01:14:19,760 --> 01:14:21,960

So we used to just make up games with it.

1349

01:14:21,960 --> 01:14:24,720

We were doing it so wrong, but you know, he'd always win as well.

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01:14:24,720 --> 01:14:28,240

He'd always give me all the crap cards and he'd figure out how to have to get one.

1351

01:14:28,240 --> 01:14:30,680
So even without the right rules, I still lost.

1352
01:14:30,680 --> 01:14:33,760
But it was quality time, just like you said.

1353
01:14:33,760 --> 01:14:35,160
That's how I spent most of my vacation.

1354
01:14:35,160 --> 01:14:38,920
Whenever they finished their homework, they'll grab some cards and we'll just sit and hang

1355
01:14:38,920 --> 01:14:39,920
out.

1356
01:14:39,920 --> 01:14:40,920
Brilliant.

1357
01:14:40,920 --> 01:14:41,920
All right.

1358
01:14:41,920 --> 01:14:44,280
Well then for people listening, where can they find Burnbox and then where can they

1359
01:14:44,280 --> 01:14:46,200
find you as well on social media?

1360
01:14:46,200 --> 01:14:47,200
Oh, yeah.

1361
01:14:47,200 --> 01:14:51,800
So I kind of have, it's the same because I manage the social media.

1362

01:14:51,800 --> 01:14:58,480

So the Burnbox, the underscore Burn underscore box on Instagram and on Facebook, it's at

1363

01:14:58,480 --> 01:15:02,760

the ad symbol at the Burnbox sub.

1364

01:15:02,760 --> 01:15:04,560

And that's kind of just the Instagram page.

1365

01:15:04,560 --> 01:15:08,480

I had plenty of photos of the stuff that I feature.

1366

01:15:08,480 --> 01:15:11,000

You know, you could check out the comments and everything.

1367

01:15:11,000 --> 01:15:12,000

It's legit.

1368

01:15:12,000 --> 01:15:15,860

A lot of people think this thing is run by some huge, is this me?

1369

01:15:15,860 --> 01:15:18,880

My wife helps me with customer service and we have a team packing.

1370

01:15:18,880 --> 01:15:22,240

It's not a major operation, you know?

1371

01:15:22,240 --> 01:15:23,240

It's not.

1372

01:15:23,240 --> 01:15:27,280

And if anybody's interested and, you know, if you're a firefighter or first responder

1373

01:15:27,280 --> 01:15:32,360

and you have a product you think would be cool, you know, just shoot me a DM.

1374

01:15:32,360 --> 01:15:34,880

And yeah, that's it.

1375

01:15:34,880 --> 01:15:35,880

Thanks for having me.

1376

01:15:35,880 --> 01:15:36,880

I'm really glad to be here.

1377

01:15:36,880 --> 01:15:37,880

I've been a huge fan.

1378

01:15:37,880 --> 01:15:48,600

I appreciate you taking the time.