Healing Addiction from Within: Mark Manderson on Recovery & the “Core Lie” Transcript

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Introduction to Recovery and Healing

Just thank you for allowing me to come on your platform to just share this message. I want to impact people that may not know who we are or what we do because it is one of the only diseases that is a hundred percent, I want to say fixable.

Like once you understand this, it is a progressive disease that can actually be stopped and reversed through education application and execution and life gets so good once you stop numbing or sedating and it doesn't have to be just the drugs or alcohol if there's any area of life that you're struggling with and going man life would be different if i could just give this up but we're seeing a ton of young men and even young women and it's destroying relationships, like all sorts of stuff.

Welcome to Take Back My Brain with Lori Hammer, where real healing starts in the brain. I'm Lori, a functional nutritionist and mom who's walked the path from anxiety and burnout to clarity and calm.

Each week, we're going to dive into brain-based tools like amino acid therapy, gut health, fasting, and faith to help you reclaim your energy, emotions, and sense of self.

All right, everyone, welcome back to the podcast. So special treat for you today, and I want you to really think about this. What if we treat an addiction, not as a moral failure, but as an invitation to heal?

So today I have with me Mark Manderson, who is leading Pacific Shores recovery in Newport Beach for like the last 25 years. And his mission is to remove the stigma from mental health and addictions.

And so I cannot wait to have this conversation because you all know how passionate I am about mental health. So Mark, welcome to the podcast. Thank you so much for having me on.

Mark Manderson's Personal Story

Yeah, it still blows my mind. We just hit quarter of a century this year. It's wild doing something that you love for a long time. Yeah. Oh my gosh. So that kind of leads me into my first question.

Like, how did this start for you and how have you sustained it so long? Because recovery centers are hard to sustain. Well, very much so. So, I tell people, it's not like I looked for this.

I was recruited by the dude upstairs, but not in the typical way. Most people that are involved in recovery have a personal story, like they overcame the recovery, or they overcame addiction, living in recovery.

They're loud and proud and they just help a ton of people. Yeah. Um, when I was eight years old, so my aunt suffered from addiction. She was, uh, they called goofballs.

She would mix heroin and meth together. And so back in the eighties, there really wasn't much other than, I think it was like Betty Ford and Hazelton.

And so she went to rehab, got kicked out and came to live with my mom, my mom's single mother raising me and my younger daughter. And I had bunk beds.

So aunt Stephie got to, got to live with me. It was the coolest thing. So she was the fun outspoken aunt, the kid at heart. I mean, just so wild, but.

But just in a really fun way, like, like she really was a kid in an adult body, which was just so fun to be around as an eight year old. But what had happened was I remember I came home one day and I walk in and Aunt Steffi is on the floor and not responding at all.

And there's I'm sure my memory is skewed. I tend to have a lot of skewed memories, but the memory of what happened was there were thousands of pills all over.

Like, I could actually feel them underneath my feet as I walked up to her, and I started shaking her like, Stephie, why are you sleeping on the floor?

Like, wake up. And her body was lifeless. She didn't wake up. And so I went and I grabbed my mom. My mom came and fortunately revived her, but it created all sorts of trauma, which at the time I didn't even know.

I guess one of my go-to coping mechanisms back then, it still is now, but I'm aware of it, is just stuff it. Like my daughter used to sing all the time, conceal don't feel for any frozen families out there.

And so I stuffed it and all through high school, college, didn't even remember what happened. But going back to the story, so my mom ended up kicking her out because she had all pills there.

It could have been my sister and me. And a few short months later, same thing happened, but there was nobody there to find her. So she actually did die of overdose a few short months after.

And so just by stuffing it down, I got really good at kind of putting on masks and just being who I thought everyone wanted to see. I was that happy kid from Southern California, the surfer, the fun guy, and didn't really understand the trauma and how deep it went until I was done with college.

Everything on the outside looked great. I had a job in commercial real estate, which back in the early 2000s in Orange County, it was a huge boom. Like it was very hard to not make money.

And I was miserable on the inside and actually became suicidal. And I just, I couldn't figure it out why I'm like, I don't get it. I have everything. I'm life is great, but I was dying inside.

And then through a ton of therapy, my parents actually put me in therapy at six when they divorced and I didn't know you could stop. So I'm still in it.

I just keep leveling up. It's like a video game. But no, it's so helpful. And fortunately, I had a few really good therapists that helped uncover this repressed memory.

And once I started to look at it, I thought, oh my gosh, I had no idea that affected me. I just kind of thought addiction affects only the individual.

And so as I started getting more educated on it, My story was not that unique, hearing of kids, family members, spouses, parents. And I thought, there's got to be a different way.

And so as I started looking into it, we just started wanting to help people. And then we just kind of grew by mistake. That's why I say I was recruited.

If you look at who's the least qualified person to do something like this, I'm there both hands up. There's no way I could be used for something like this.

But through just trial and error and just, I think of just being really empathetic and wanting to better understand what drives the symptoms of what we see as addiction.

That's what led to going, wow, it's not really about the drug or the alcohol. It's about what's underneath that core. We call it the core lie, but the core issue that shows up as a symptom.

And most people just treat the symptom, but it's rinse repeat. And so. I just started asking a ton of questions. I've never been afraid of looking dumb.

And so just by asking questions of, why did you do this? You got help? You went to rehab? Explain to me this. And I just started finding patterns after probably five to 10 years of doing this and said, I think we might be able to help a little bit different than a lot of places out there.

And so it took a complete different, more holistic approach where we do combine the clinical, but also with the holistic side. And we started getting really good results and just by asking questions of how can we better serve to really get to the core of this that it's led to everything from ended up writing a book called The Recovery Way that has helped a lot of people not even need to go to treatment, but identify and expose the core lie and do work on their own.

I created an app back in 2018. that we use in-house and people from all over the world use it.

Holistic Recovery Approach

So it's just a passion to want to help people of understanding. We create our own pain. That part sucks, but at the same time, we identify and understand that.

That means we can create our own healing and pleasures. We start to understand the process. So that was my long-winded answer to how I got involved. I love it.

I love it. I love the different approach that you guys take there. Can you kind of unravel what that holistic approach is combined with everything else that you do?

I'm a little magic box on how we cure addiction in one answer. No, there's no box. I feel like most people think that. Just tell me the one answer because everything's black and white.

So there's a lot of depth to that question, so I appreciate it. I don't want to sound all philosophical, but one of the things is once we recognize the life we desire is hiding behind the pain that we've been avoiding, that helps give us permission to actually go to the depths of the things that we've been fearing the most, knowing that we can go through this.

And so we have a wonderful team here from psychiatrists to doctors to therapists to case managers to certified staff. We've got a whole team that comes together to help create a safe space.

Because one of the questions I love asking clients and it just blew my mind when I first started asking this is, when's the last time you truly felt safe?

And so many times people come in and go, I don't know if I ever have. And I had a great childhood, but no one has ever asked me that question. So one of the things we focus on is to really make sure the person is safe so we can start stripping away all the armor that we've put on to protect ourselves, to really get to that core issue.

And then once a person feels safe enough to be seen, that's where we can become vulnerable, expose the core lie, do the work. And then they're kind of like, I don't have to go around hiding this pain anymore.

So by facing the pain, it sets you free. Yeah. Isn't that true for all of us, not just addicts? Yeah. Well, so here's a little side note. Now, there is a continuum of addiction, but if you look at it, all undesired behavior is some form of addiction.

And so when we look at it… My next question for you, yeah. Well, yeah. Well, not to discount, like, what are you talking about? I'm a hardcore heroin and cocaine addict.

Like, you're telling me, like, no, I do agree with that. We actually, we heard someone say, I'm addicted to food and

you just don't know what it's like." And it got into a huge, huge altercation.

But there's this continuum. So when I understand if any behavior I'm finding myself involved in that I don't want to do, you can consider that's a very loose definition of addiction.

And then we can look at what are the consequences coming from that. But once we start to identify this is undesired behavior that's providing consequences in my life, What is the unmet need?

So that's the other part that we look for is, it's always a protection mechanism. Like, I've never met a person that in high school or college said, I want to be an addict when I grow up.

I've yet to meet one. It's the exact opposite. Yet we still find ourselves going to this fast, reliable source to sedate and to numb when I don't know how to actually, and this part scares people, but how to sit in the pocket of pain.

to actually provide the space to say, okay, I know you're not going to kill me, even though it feels like it, but let's create some space to sit in this to see what is it you're trying to tell me.

And once we start having that different dialogue, that's when life begins to change. Oh my gosh, that's so true. Sitting in that pocket of pain is, I think, one of the most difficult things to do, right?

Because nobody wants to feel pain, physically, emotionally, spiritually, none of that. I know when I was deep in my eating disorder, that's what I did.

I numbed myself with food. I binged and purged all the time because I didn't know how to deal with life outside of that. And I remember after I did outpatient recovery stuff, I just bawled and bawled and bawled because I don't know how to deal with life.

outside of this behavior that I have to be able to sit in that pain. And I feel, because most of the people that I deal with have mental health issues or at least anxiety, depression, all those things.

There's always that underlying pain that we haven't dealt with. And I feel like that's why we have such this medication epidemic, because we're always trying to put out everything.

We're trying to fix everything. kind of fix it. We're trying to like mask it, numb it, everything. And then I see a lot of people, you know, go from these meds to more hardcore addictions or, you know, it just, it kind of breaks my heart mark because we've set up our society kind of for addiction in some instances.

Well, yeah, the immediate gratification, the constant dopamine hits, it actually, I mean, the science shows it rewires the brain. So when a person's struggling, it's not like, oh, just get some more willpower or, well, we can go down that rabbit hole.

But a lot of the times, it's understanding my brain has actually been wired this way by society, by the way I was raised. Number one, it is, I don't want to say get out of jail free card, but when I can take the pressure off of like I'm broken and say, okay, I've been wired this way.

The neat thing is, is I didn't know what I didn't know. Now that I'm starting to know, I can get more educated to find out how do we begin to rewire the brain?

Because it's not always difficult. The beginning it is. I heard someone share this on the Gosh, probably a couple of months ago, like, you know the saying, the truth will set you free?

I'm like, yeah, yeah, I'm aware of the book that that came out of. The problem is the truth will set you free, but it's going to ruin your day at first.

And I'm like, that's so true, because the illusion of I have a sense of control, or I'll even call it a delusion of trying to

control things. That's where the sedation, the numbing out comes in.

It kind of re-edifies that I don't have to deal with this. I can still control this. And once we start to understand that, we go, no, actually, it's a shortcut paved to hell, unfortunately.

The pain just keeps magnifying. So as I begin to understand that, that is where I can start making the conscious decision to say, OK, I've rewired this.

Addiction, Trauma, and Brain Rewiring

So this is where the pole is, the emotional gravity. But that means as I start getting, so one of the things we do is environment, community, connection.

Once we get that now, we create that safety to say, it's going to take a lot of work up front. But once I start doing the work, the brain will start making these new neural pathways.

And these part that we've reinforced will actually start to kind of grow like little weeds, if you will. and it won't be as fast to go there. And over time, we start finding this becomes the new emotional gravity and the pull.

But one of the biggest keys to teaching clients is how to confront that internal narrative. And so one of the things that we do is we ask questions. The type of questions we ask provides the type of answers in our life, creates the quality of our life.

So even just simple questions, such as anytime there's this internal narrative that is either, I wouldn't say harming me, but getting kind of loud or uncomfortable, it's, well, is this true?

I used to never ask that. I assumed everything my internal narrative said was, this is true, this is fact, you can't question it. And because I feel it, that creates the truth.

I had no idea I was falsifying my own truth because I would feel something and think that's how the world viewed it. Many times I was alone in my misery, everybody else is having a great time, and I'm like, why does my reality suck and nobody else around here does?

And so that's one question, is this true? Another one is, well, what are the facts that I am using to base this meaning that I've attached to this emotion?

So once we start learning how to observe emotions, it starts to change the game. I used to run from my depression. Like I shared earlier, I was a beautiful stuffer.

I could stuff like no other. The problem is there's a capacity for everything until it explodes. Nobody likes being the exploder. I was fine being the stuffer.

It was never the stranger across the street that exploded on. It was my wife, my kids, my family. It was the people I cared the most about. Damn it. I know.

I hear you. And so, as we start giving that part of us a voice and we want to observe it instead of basically take it as true, this is a part that it took a while, but I used to misdiagnose and label my depression as negative, thinking stuff it, ignore it, and I don't know if you experienced this.

I've got two kids, but when they're young, the more you ignore them, the louder they get. It's the weirdest thing. That is true. Yes. It's amazing how that happens.

Yes, but when you sit there and you say, sweetie, I love you, tell me what's going on, they will open up and share the highlights of the day, the lowlights, what they hate, what they love, all in the same sentence.

And when you just sit there free from judgment or evaluating whether they're right or wrong and just being there and being present, it's amazing the connection you can create.

So I started asking myself, what if I did this with my depression? and it was crazy at how it no longer, I thought it wanted to kill me, it just wanted to be seen, to be heard, to feel safe, and that was the part that really led me in my journey of overcoming the suicidal ideation and depression, and once I started learning this, I started sharing with other people going like, I don't know, like I've been in therapy my whole life, nobody's taught me this, like try it, and then it started working, and the biggest thing was our emotions just want to sit at the table, Not just the ones we label good, but the ones we label bad.

So once we remove the labels and say, everybody's welcome to my table. I built this table. Come on in anytime you want. It is so freeing. Yeah, so freeing.

When you're dealing with people at your recovery center, I think we have a stigma around addiction and people who struggle with addiction. So when people are coming there, they come with all these feelings, all these labels, all these things to them, but that's not who they are.

That's not who God created them to be. So when you're dealing with them, how do you help them kind of unwind or unravel that deep core identity? Well, and such a great way you put it, I was going to even say that, I was going to say, well, the first thing we got to do the work is most people hold beliefs as their identity.

So if you challenge a belief or identity, they go down swinging. But if we can say, we can put this identity back on at any time, but just for giggles, let's take this identity and just put it out here and then let's talk about it.

And what happens is, once I get this removed, it's no longer, I'm broken. It's, oh, this is what is continually driving my decision-making process. So we pull it out to deal with it, and then we say, okay, now what started driving this?

And that's where we expose what we call the core lie. And then when we look at that, we go, oh my gosh. So our current coping mechanisms, is it helping?

And initially, the answer is always yes, otherwise we wouldn't do it. So when we look at it and say, yes, it works. Okay, great. It's the two S's. The other one is, is it sustainable?

So does it work at actually doing it? Yes, it does. Now, is it sustainable? No, actually, it's a progressive disease. It actually gets a lot worse as time goes on.

So when I look at it from a sustainable lens, we can say, okay, this might not be the best way to cope. It's still there. We can always go back to it.

Let's look at some other ways might take a little bit more work up front. But let's look at the sustainability and the dividends on the back end. And that's where it starts to kind of crack the mind a little bit is where we get the breakthroughs of like, wait, so I'm not an addict?

I'm not a bad person? No, you found, actually, you're a brilliant person. You found a fantastic way that is fast and cheap and quick to get the results you're wanting.

We just didn't look at the full picture. So once we start doing that, that's how we're able to remove the label, the belief, the identity to say, I just didn't know.

And when I don't know, I don't know. Now that I know, I can make a different decision. I love that. And that was just true forever, all of us, just taking it.

those beliefs and setting them aside and figuring out what's beneath them. What are some myths about addiction that you wish people knew and how they would view people that struggle with addiction?

Yeah, one of the biggest myths that I love busting is that it means a person's broken or less than or something's wrong with them.

Identity, Labels, and Core Lies

We've had clients come through these doors that had some of the most beautiful childhoods growing up. We've had people that had horrific childhoods growing up and both equally addicted to very similar substances.

So I think one of the misnomers is they must have had a ton of issues or childhood trauma. Sometimes it's true, sometimes it's not, but we tend to assume here is the peg that everybody's going to fit into that falls in this category.

I've seen, I mean, we've had, because we're in Orange County, we've had celebrities come through here. We've had pro athletes come through here. We've had wonderful moms on the PTA come through here.

We've had doctors from the hospital across the street come through here. I mean, it is one of the most non-biased, non-judgmental ailments. It will hit anybody.

And so, of knowing that everybody that is suffering with addiction is somebody else's child, It can be somebody else's brother or sister or friend. Unfortunately, when we look at the addiction, we think of the homeless person or we think of all the negative, but we tend to discount and forget they were a kid that had the pictures on the refrigerator at one point.

They were the kids laughing and having fun and playing with our kids or other people's kids at some point. When I can start to link in the human nature process of it, it helps remove some of that judgment of I am different.

I love that. Anything else you want people to know? that it can be overcome. I think one of the biggest misnomers, like we see all the time here when there's an intervention and the family says, like, this is it.

And so the person comes in at first kind of under false pretenses, like, well, I'm just here for the family. I got to get back. I got my job. I got my dog.

I got to take care of all the stuff. Now, one of the things that we have to do is sit down and say, well, wait a minute, let's hit pause for a moment because we tend to really, we tend to undercut the seriousness of this disease.

It's a brain disease. So like, if you think about it, if you went to a doctor and a doctor said, you've got cancer at stage four, we're going to be aggressive with the treatment, but without treatment, you're looking at three to four months max to live.

I don't think a single person goes, well, hold on, doc. I got to take care of my dog. I got to go take care of this. I got to enroll for school. When it's put into that type of realm, like cancer, it's whatever it takes.

I will live at the hospital. You tell me. We will fight this thing together. It's all in. I would love to see more people understand that with addiction to say I'm going to fight now to survive and then thrive then I can go back to everything else because now it's one of the only diseases that once you're diagnosed with it it's not just trying to get back to normal it's you actually become a better person through it if that makes sense.

Yeah totally. How do you deal with the the recovery aspect of, like, when they go back to their families, they go back to their job, how do you bring the family in, you know, their community into this recovery process?

Yeah, so it starts from day one. A lot of people think I go to rehab or treatment, I get fixed, and then I go home, and it's kind of like, I don't want to misdirect anybody, but I really want to be transparent of of when you're in treatment or rehab, that's just the start.

That's like you're building the foundation in full immersion. The work really starts once you leave these super safe

walls and go back to the world that you started using in the first place.

So one of the things we talk about is environment connection. I teach what's called the five foundational freedoms. It's in the book, The Recovery Way.

But one of the big ones is family and friends. and making sure that they are aware. So we have a six-week online program that we highly encourage, like highly encourage kind of like, it's not a choice, it's a choice, but it's not a choice, like make sure you participate.

Yeah, and it's a six-week online course and what it does is it helps with boundaries and codependency because a lot of times the family wanting to help is unbeknownst to them, made some decisions or engaged in some behaviors that actually negatively reinforce the using.

And again, not intentionally. So we start to pull the sheets off and start to uncover that. And then we also educate them on signs to look for and different things.

But so the idea is, is why their loved one is here for 90 days, they're going through the six-week process themselves. So they're doing their work and healing.

Their loved ones with us doing their work and healing. And then towards the end, they come together, they start working together. And then we set a plan up for when they go home.

And then we have a online virtual program that we actually started. We were lucky enough to start before the whole COVID thing happened. Back in 2019 is when we just happened to see some stuff happen.

And so we launched it. It worked great. And then when 2020 hit, we're like, we're already doing this.

Myths About Addiction and Stigma

This is great. And then that helps them really really reintegrate back into the real world on the world's terms with the foundation that they built while they were here.

That's amazing. I can imagine it's just hard. It's one of the most difficult things. Yeah, watching my own family members, there's a lot of addiction on both sides and just watching them come home and kind of fail.

I even hate to say the word fail. It's just old habits came back and there wasn't enough foundation for them to overcome what they needed to overcome, unfortunately.

Yeah, and that's one of the analogies I'll use with a lot of the younger guys that come to the program is, okay, so you were working before, what would happen if you stopped working for a month and then you showed up on payday?

What would your boss say? And almost always are like, my boss would say, get out of here. I'm like, yeah. We got to use the same mindset for us. This is why, and I'm referencing the book a lot, because a lot of the work we do comes from the book, but it's called first fruits.

If I'm not taking care of myself, we call it healthy selfish, if I'm not doing the work today, I'm not guaranteed the results. In fact, by not doing the work, I'm guaranteed to not get the results.

So most people will do the work, get the results, stop doing the work that got them the results, and then wonder why they no longer have the results. So it's one of those things of, like my dentist used to say, Mark, you don't think how to brush the teeth that you want to keep.

Only floss the teeth you want to keep. Other than that, you don't have to brush or floss at all. I'm like, oh, yeah, I guess so. So you better believe I brush and floss every single day.

Multiple times a day I brush. Right. Right. We want to keep those pearly whites. Yeah. That's awesome. I'm so curious. What's your take on the opiate crisis and everything?

Oh my gosh. So it's interesting because it seems to change every once in a while. So I know the opioid crisis back when I was a kid, high school, college, it was just basically mainly the heroin.

now with fentanyl coming out. So one of the things that we're seeing, and this is the sad part, it's so frustrating. And then now with kratom, the seven, the seven, wow, is I will get about that.

So yeah, I'm not going to get into it, but it's, I think it's like 20 times more potent than morphine and you can buy it at a smoke shop. I'm actually, I'm working with a team trying to get it banned here in Orange County.

They've been successful in some of the areas, but So you ask, what are my thoughts on it? Back in the day, and I don't condone using or trying things, but back in the day you could experiment and it was like you had a second, third, fourth, fifth chance to be like, oh crap, you know, I need to get my things together and I need to find different ways.

Nowadays, they're finding fentanyl laced and everything from Xanax even on the street to marijuana to ecstasy. It's insane. They're cutting it because it's so cheap.

So we're seeing a lot of people that think, I got one more relapse and then they don't come back from it. So the stakes are so much higher because you have no idea and the littlest amount can send you into cardiac arrest.

I mean, it just stops. It's disheartening. What do you think about the policies that are going on right now? Do you find any of them encouraging? So what's interesting is that when you asked me what I think about the policies, the first thing that came up is when my wife and I got married, we just hit 17 years, we made a decision to stop watching the news because we thought, is it really going to affect the way that we live?

And actually, it did a lot more than we thought and anticipated. We're actually happier. We're more grateful. So when it comes to policies, I sat on a nonprofit board for a couple years really trying to push for some of these things in the human trafficking area.

I was more on the addiction side and it was an uphill battle and you'd see or hear of a bill going through and it sounded like it was going to be something, but something else was connected to it.

So I just said, I don't want to do politics. I this might sound really bad.

Family Recovery and Reintegration

I don't care what what the policies are. I want to address the core issue that whether it's legal or illegal, we can help that person heal because I mean, I've visited Amsterdam, but they've got homeless over there.

They've got drug issues just like we do here. And what's legal over there is not legal here. So I'm just kind of like, I think human nature is whether it's legal or illegal.

If a person wants to do something, they're going to find a way. If you don't address the core issue, they're going to continue to struggle. If you do address the core issue, it doesn't matter to them if it's legal or illegal.

They say this no longer aligns with what I'm after. I am wanting to build a life that I don't ever want to sedate or retire from. And so when it comes to policies, I don't know.

Maybe it's a negative way to look at it, but that's where I am at least in this season. Yeah, we rarely watch the news either. So life is way better without it.

I've found if I need to hear something, somebody tells me like, we were on the, oh gosh, the tsunami watch. And

someone's like, are you aware of what's going on?

I'm like, no, but I'm sure you'll tell me we're on tsunami watch. I'm like, oh, okay. So what are you doing different? Well, just to be aware, we might have to leave.

Oh, okay. My life didn't change. Right? One time my mom said to me, because I just don't watch the news, and she was a CNN junkie, and she goes, how do you know what to pray for if you don't watch the news?

I said, well, I'm pretty sure the Holy Spirit will tell me what I need to pray for. And most of that stuff doesn't going to matter anyway because they don't care.

So it's fine. Anyway. I pray for a little bit more selfish stuff these days for me and the clients and our team. So maybe it'll expand past my direct impact.

But for right now, it's pretty darn selfish of just wanting to help those in my direct reach. Right, and that's just a ripple effect. It ripples out all over the world, Mark, and everything that you're doing.

So for someone who's listening that they're struggling themselves or they have a loved one who's struggling, what would you tell them to do for the first step?

Well, I would definitely want more context because struggling could be different for different people. So I know one of the things I put to put this together a little while ago, and it seems to be helping a lot.

So I'm just I'm giving it out to any podcast I'm on. If you want to send it to your listeners, all they need to do is first step. They can follow me on Instagram.

My handle is at Pacific Shores Recovery. and just they click follow dm habits and basically what it is is it goes down and defines some of the the daily i don't want to say daily duties that sounds like a like a negative but basically daily things that we have seen after doing this for a quarter of a century of people that changed just their daily decisions and the things that they do that become habits that create a life no longer tied to addiction, more recovery based, but just it expands everything.

And so it's on a Google document. I've got videos in there with some educational stuff, but it's a wonderful resource. So they can just DM me habits and I'll send it to them.

At a very, very surface level, it would be just reach out to somebody, to someone and just start the conversation.

Opioids, Fentanyl, and Policy Views

Usually that's the most difficult part because again, that internal narrative of all the negative self-talk and the guilt and the shame and and all the crap that our brain comes up with, the first step is just call and reach out and let someone know, I think I might have a problem or my loved one might have a problem or I don't even know what to do.

I just, I want to open a dialogue to get more educated on this. Yeah, I love that. There, you were just mentioning, you know, daily decisions, daily habits, and you talk a lot about gratitude.

So I want to end with this. How important are those daily habits and that daily gratitude in recovery? And we're going to expand even outside of recovery because what is so incredible is we create our reality with our daily decisions.

So if I'm not absolutely in love with certain aspects of life, not to discount, but all I got to do is look back behind and say, what were the daily decisions that led to this?

And then the cool thing is success just like anything else leaves clues. And so there's going to be clues if it is a well-

lived life, but there's also going to be clues if it's a very painful life.

And as we start looking at our daily decisions, it stacks up over time. Most people will try to look forward and say, I want that and not understand that today is the basically culmination of everything from all the past decisions that have been made up to today.

And so that's why breaking down over the five foundational freedoms, one of them is very simple, is fitness. Simple for health. The person saying, I want to have energy, I want a clear mind, clear, clear head.

Like, I just want to feel different. All we got to do is look back to say, what have been your daily decisions that led you to where you are? and then what would be the new daily decisions, the new habits, the new behaviors that would lead you to the person that you're wanting to become.

And nowadays, you don't have to pay for education. So, so many people say it's an education issue.

First Steps and Daily Habits

That ended when freaking Google came online and the Internet happened and then Chachi BT totally changed the game. Totally changed the game. So, it's no longer education.

You can get educated for free on anything. It comes down to application and execution. Yeah, absolutely. Absolutely. Mark, thank you. Thank you for your mission.

Thank you for everything that you're doing. I know this is going to bless a lot of people. So I know everyone listening, you know somebody who needs to hear this.

So make sure you share this because it can save somebody's life, change their life, change your life. God has a big plan for each of us. So make sure you're paying attention to what that might be.

So Mark, thank you. Is there anything else you want to leave the listeners with? Just thank you for, for allowing me to come on your platform to just share this message.

I want to impact people that may not know who we are or what we do because it is one of the only diseases that is a hundred percent. I want to say fixable.

Like once you understand this.

Gratitude, Application, and Closing Message

it is a progressive disease that can actually be stopped and reversed through education application and execution and life gets so good once you stop numbing or sedating and it doesn't have to be just the drugs or alcohol if there's any area of life that you're struggling with and going man life would be different if i could just give this up like we're seeing a ton of young men and even young women addicted to porn and it's destroying relationships, like all sorts of stuff.

So zero judgment zone. It's one of those things of going human behavior seeks to sedate. That's one of the things that we get into the middle of to say, I'm going to consciously choose a different path and through daily direction and actions, we can change that.

I love it. I love it. Thank you so much. God bless you. God bless your recovery center and thank everyone for listening. We'll see you in the next episode.

I appreciate you, Laurie. Thanks. Thanks for listening to Take Back My Brain. If today's episode helped you connect with hope or direction, I want you to follow the show, leave us a review and share it with someone who needs it.

And if you're ready to start your own healing journey, explore our courses and our coaching programs at lorihammer.com backslash store. So until next time, remember you cannot medicate away a nutrient deficiency and healing your brain isn't just possible, It's powerful.