Men Aren’t Broken—They’re Silent | The Mental Health Truth No One Tells You | James Harris | Ep. 114 Transcript

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Introduction and Guest Background

Your wife is, let's say, making dinner or something, and you hear, why are you banging those pots so loud? Like, what are doing? That's not directed towards her.

That was everything else that you had that day that couldn't really relieve yourself of. And now it's being projected on her or the kids. What's the best way to navigate that?

Your licensed mental health professional, James Harris. James. Today we're joined by James Harris, licensed mental health professional, U. S. Army veteran and founder of the Global Men to Heal Movement, empowering men to break stigma, heal openly, and lead healthier lives.

During the pandemic, that two plus years of people being stuck together, they realized like I'm not compatible with this person. We together based on attraction or we was together for what?

The kid. So I created the board game because not only get them to enhance that relationship, but to get back to the basics of that relationships. When a random person come and ask me, what's the worst thing you've seen?

Tell me why people shouldn't ask that. Michael Jordan. What is he known for? His passion, though, baseball. If he's stuck with baseball… Even when he went to the White Sox, he ain't…

Think about it. People were like… They're like, what is going on here? Exactly. He realized, like yo, my passion not gonna get me there. But where I am now, I'm the best basketball player in the world.

I can still be passionate about that, but do something else to impact other people. Do you feel like where you're at today is your true God-given purpose?

Man, that's a hard question. Welcome to another episode of a healthy point of view podcast. I'm your host, Sam Tahata. And as usual, we're bringing experts from all over the world to talk about health, wellness, beauty, and mindset.

Today, our guest, he flies here in from Virginia. This is an individual who's gone through, talk a lot of tribulation in life, experience, a type of experience that most of us don't get to actually even experience ourselves.

This is someone who's been on tour multiple times, Afghanistan, Iraq, as through the army. Today we're going to be talking about mental health. We're gonna be talk about what us men have to go through, how to enhance relationship.

Today, we have the pleasure to have a licensed mental-health professional, James Harris. James. Let's go. Welcome to a Healthy Point of View podcast, brother.

Man, listen, I definitely appreciate you for having me out here, man. Definitely appreciate that warm introduction as well, I want to thank you for your service, that you put yourself, your life on the line for our country.

You know, obviously I served as a firefighter paramedic for 12 years, putting my life online. I come from a family of first responders and military. My brother went out to Iraq, first ground troops in.

And it's not easy. It's that easy for you and it is not for easy your family. Because I remember Back then, the cell phones weren't even around like today.

And my mother, she wouldn't leave the house. because she was just always waiting for that phone call, for my brother to call when he was in Iraq. She was always watching the news.

Oh, they killed X amount of Marines. Just thinking it's him. It was stressful. No, it definitely was. Not only for, of course, the soldiers that's there, but definitely the family, similar to those reasons.

And what we used to say is, when I work with soldiers now who will come in and return home, I counseled the entire family. The soldier and the families because The soldier might physically was the person deployed, but the family technically is also deployed because they don't have the detachment.

And it could just be different because the internet services oftentimes goes down while you're over there. Or the mail just get on the delay. So it's so many different things.

By the time you do get the news, if somebody sent you a letter or if you can't do the Skype or Zoom or anything like that, it can be stressful for you and the families.

I appreciate that, man. Yeah, so much appreciated on what you've done. And now you're out here doing even things greater, right? With the individuals that are coming back home, with other people here within our community, you doing things for the black and brown community which is much-appreciated as needed.

Definitely. So before we get into all of that I want the listeners and viewers to get to know who James Harris is. But I wanna know more about your upbringing.

Okay, like around when you were like five years old how what happened to get you where you're at today? Man, a couple different things. So first of all, like where I am now, I'm a husband and I've definitely a father.

Two daughters, age 19 and age 13. I got a freshman in college and then an eighth grader in junior high school. That's a process in itself. And then my lovely wife definitely support me in everything that I do, so I appreciate her.

But to answer the other part of your question, My upbringing, man, I was a typical kid, oldest of three in the household, father died when I five due to cancer.

And then, of course, single mom situation, which was not an unfortunate situation but just a fortunate situation. But for a lot of people it can be viewed as unfortunate because that forces the older child to grow up a little bit faster with the assistance and help that they're giving to the parental figure.

Childhood Trauma and Foster Care

So in my case, it got even more intense because my mama had, well, you don't have to feel so you probably can understand this, but she had Epilepsy so for a lot of people who don't know which means she can have random seizures, right?

So epilepsy and then of course sprinkle throughout the epilepsy. She had a series of strokes so when I was about eight or nine in Virginia Department of Social Services, it might be cause I'm different in Florida or what where your other listeners are but Department Social Service is pretty much the entity that handles foster care, juveniles, and all those type things.

So anyway, they had to step in because it was one situation to where my mom didn't have a nurse on staff and she had a stroke, but we were in school, my brother and my younger sister.

The state viewed it as, well, if this happened with your kids, how are you able to assist them or take care of them if you continue to have seizures or continue have strokes and lose consciousness or whatever the case is?

So they pretty much stepped in and from there we went to foster care, man. Oh, wow. Yeah, so that was a dramatic situation. How old were you when that happened?

About eight or nine. So, yeah, eight and nine, I was over in the foster system for about two to three years. And then that family we were placed with was pretty decent one, still in contact with them to this day.

but some things transpired within that situation to where me, my brother, and my sister, I'm the oldest of those, we had to be separated, went to a group home.

I was gonna ask you, did you guys stay together? Yeah, initially we did, but we went into a groups home and then they separated us, that fact. Because my sisters, of course, she went a girl's facility.

My brother and I, In Virginia, we couldn't stay together because of how the bedding was or whatever. It was limited spaces. So we eventually went to separate group homes as well.

That was the whole thing, man. Just trying to keep it together, continue to reach out to them, continuing to have that family bond, aswell as checking on my mom and stuff like that.

So when I mentioned earlier, it's an additive to being in a position as an oldest, taking up that mantle, trying to keep the family together, especially when it was something that wasn't necessarily your fault.

To just dive a little bit deeper, I know a lot of the viewers and listeners are probably asking questions in their head. When that happened, you were still in communication with your mom?

Yeah, yeah, still to this day. Well, my mom is of course way older now and she now an additive. She's in the early stages of the dementia. But yeah, my mom, throughout that time, of course, she continued to have epilepsy, which the seizures were able to be managed with medication and all that, but the strokes continue to happen too.

So yeah. She never, I guess, physically and legally was able gain custody back of us due to that medical situation. Hopefully, it's just a Virginia thing, man, because I don't wish that on nobody.

You get what I'm saying? That's rough. That very rough to go through that, especially as you're developing and growing. Correct. I mean, that's a form…

You were in the military, so being in military you experienced a certain PTSD, right? Correct, but this is a PTSD from childhood. It's childhood trauma.

Yeah, and that's exactly what it is. More so, a lot of people are familiar with PTSD, but even before PTSD you got acute stress disorder, you know, And you've got complex trauma, which is those repeated traumatic events that is happening over and over.

So for me, in during that time, of course, not just my family, But for a lotta other families who were in similar situations, it was more of a complex, trauma situation.

Because just think about just being, if you didn't have as much resilience as you could have, You can think like, Man, nobody wants me or you know question your faith.

Like why is this happening to me? You know, just so many different factors but of course in that situation just having strength and resilience and Just wanting to be better and different, you, know I just took a different outlook to ensure that I was doing everything I needed to do so my brother my sister can have the support they need and within their respective journeys, as well as the other kids I was in the group home with, you know, so.

How did you keep yourself focused and keep your self in that right mindset throughout that whole time? Man, it was, to be honest with you, that was the easy part.

So what I did too, I went to this military high school called Franklin Military, which was their first publicly funded military school in the country.

I elected to go there for highschool because I knew I was going to wear a uniform, so I didn't have to worry about wearing clothes and doing all this other stuff.

As an employee I worked at a grocery store. So the money that I get pay wise, I'll make sure my brother and sister had everything that they need, you know, because they went to a regular public school, obviously.

Oh, that's pretty smart. Yeah, so I didn't want them to be in a position to where people would tease them or bully them for being in the group homes. And, some group home take care of the residents.

A lot of it is just money grabs. You get what I'm saying? So I didn't want to risk the group home not giving them adequate things. So they probably did the essentials, but of course, when you're in school, kids would probably be like, oh, look at those shoes.

My point is, When I was, I went to the military school, so I didn't have to buy clothes, but I able to use my funding and take care of my brother and sister.

So for me, that was a part of the, let me just stay focused and do what I gotta do. But to fast forward from that part, man, and I emancipated myself at 16. Yeah, how you do that?

Just got with my case work and man was like, hey, listen, cause in Virginia, you age out at 18. But anyway, so the next two years, for me, I was just looking at things differently.

Like, yo, if I can wait to graduate high school, well, my age are anyway and then I have to figure it out. Or I could do it now, get this motivation, stack this money up and I'm working.

and just make it happen. So went through the process with Department of Social Services and was able to, it got granted the judge had to sign off on it or whatever the case is.

In theory, I was a legal adult at 16. Which was cool while you were in it because I'm my own guardian at that point. So, my classmates and other people had to get down for a message to sign.

I'm just- You're signing it yourself. Signed it myself. It was pretty dope, man. So from that period, though, I was just on growth mode, just motivation mode.

Entrepreneurship mode and it was good. You know, the way things turned out, to be honest with you. That's amazing. I'll tell you, in my lifetime, almost 40 years, I'm 38, 39 in January.

And I have never met someone who was an emancipated minor, ever. The only person I ever heard of that was Macaulay Culkin from Home Alone. Oh, yeah, because his parents was taking his money.

So very interesting, man. That definitely shows that you had that in your heart from a very young age. How did you get to where you're at today? Yeah, so to backtrack to that point though, while you awarded a state or in foster care a group home, the idea is, hey, this is a traumatic event, like you mentioned.

The state recommends that people get therapy. And it was a good recommendation, but for me it, was an unrelatable process. I'm just young black kid from the projects.

You got me with this old white lady. So it wasn't a cohesive process and I felt more that it just seemed rehearsed and like a check in the box. So I didn't obtain as much as I could from that therapeutic journey.

I was like, all right, cool, whatever. Let me just go through it. Fast forward, of course, the Army situation. Eight years, two deployments, one Iraq, and one Afghanistan.

And I knew I different, similar to what we talked about earlier about the family deploying and stuff like that. you know, just physically here, but still distant, dealing with stuff, so I tried therapy again.

And even with that process too, it was an unrelatable experience because a lot of the workers at the veterans don't have combat experience, you now, and they go from a books perspective.

That's part of a lotta the reasons too why aotta veterans tend not to go to therapy and or do the groups. They feel like they don' understand them. Yeah, it's not cohesive because like right now I can talk to you about…

Like you save people, you pull people from fires. You know what it feels like to rescue somebody. Know what is feels to hear certain things and smell certain thing.

That's relatable to another veteran. But to somebody that you're explaining this to and they give you an answer that seems like you read that in the book or you've seen that on the case study.

So it's a little bit different. Veterans tend to go more to the group because it is that collective universality experience. This might be something I got to do.

I've got the experience from the system standpoint of being a youth in foster care group home. Got this experience of a veteran who needs support and don't really feel like it's there.

And then of course I have the realization of living as a black man trying to navigate life. And those pressures that come with that, not only from a societal standpoint, but just from an masculine standpoint of men are supposed to be dot, dot dot.

Whether that's stoic or hold emotions or whatever the case is. So that led me to say, you know what? Let me go back to school and get this thing on the right track.

Because even before that I was doing the entrepreneurship thing. I had a party bus, an art gallery, carpet cleaning company, couple properties. You know, so I liquidated all those things.

I still got my properties, but the art gallery, party bus, coffee cleaning company, and a couple other investments, I was like, you know what, just go back to school.

So I able to do that. And of course, since I, was a veteran, had the military benefits. so, I just completed school and, here we are, now I'm licensed.

Military Service and Therapy Challenges

That's amazing you took advantage of that because there's a lot of guys in the military that don't take advantage. They had the GI Bill and all that other stuff.

And I told my brother when he got out of the Marines, I said, take a advantage to that. Yeah, you might as well. It's definitely beneficial. I would say that that is definitely one of added bonuses and a situation to where it can roll over to your spouse or your kids too.

So that might be something that a lotta other veterans can look into because You already earned it, you sacrificed for it. So you might as well take advantage of it to further your education, whether it's from a bachelor's or a master's, and or they do trades now.

There might be something to take. That's what my brother did. He did the same thing. Went to a fire academy, paramedic school. Oh, nice. And he works for the company now as one of the techs.

Let me ask you, do you feel like where you're at today is your true God-given purpose? Purpose, man, that's a hard question. I don't know if it's like my true God gave me a purpose.

your passion might not necessarily be your purpose, but you are getting fulfillment from assisting other people meet theirs. You know, because I'm mending a lot of families, I helping a lotta communities, helping people reach

elevations within themselves that they probably wouldn't unlock otherwise, you know?

And what I mean by passion and purpose is different because think about, like, if you take somebody like Michael Jordan, what is he known for? That's…

What's his passion though? Baseball. You know what I'm saying? If he stuck with baseball- Even though when he went to the White Sox, he didn't do that again.

People were like- They're like, what is going on here? Exactly, but he realized like my passion, I go get me there. But where I am now, i'm the best basketball player in the world.

And it's something that he probably never said, But his peers say, yo, He's the Best. He get what i am saying. So his Passion was baseball, not even purpose, something he realize like I can still be passionate about that, but do something else to affect and impact other people.

So I view it that way, you know? Yeah, yeah. It's interesting you bring up Jordan, man. I was just having conversations about Jordan. You know, Sawyer was at the Khaled.

We the best foundation nonprofit thing that he does every year at The Golf Tournament, which is sponsored by Jordan but Jordan doesn't show up. Yeah. Jordan kind of is always kind just doing his own thing.

But he's suing NASCAR right now. No, I know he had a couple of cars, but I wasn't familiar that he… He's suing him, man. It's hit the headlines the last couple days, and that's unlike Jordan, it's always interesting to kind of, you know, interesting you bring it up, when I was just talking about him the past couple When we talk about men that go through what they go though, and I can relate with what you were saying about the counselor, the therapist, because in the fire department, it happened with us.

Suicide rates were going up, they decided to bring someone in. It was like this little old lady, a psychiatrist. And all the guys was just like, nobody wanted to even stay in the room.

It certainly doesn't know anything of what was going on. Because it's just a projection. You viewing it as this little white lady is not carrying people from the fourth floor, or she's not kicking in doors, she not doing whatever the case is.

So for a lot of veterans that tend to be the issue. Not that they judge the person on either end, but it's automatically assumed that it is going to be an unrelatable process.

Because again, when you start talking about… Just think about how many veterans now got younger kids and they want to go to amusement parks and stuff like that.

But that veteran is like, oh man, there's going be noises there. It's gonna be tight crowds bumping people. But to us, when we was overseas, if you get bumped or you got tapped or see all these crowds, you'll hit on the swivel because it could be snipers, it can be IEDs.

It can just be so many different things. So telling your kid, like, my first couple years back, and my daughter wanted to watch fireworks on New Year's and the Fourth of July and stuff like that, that was difficult for me.

You know, telling my wife, hey, y'all go ahead, I'll sit this one out. Just because. In hindsight, you realize, again, it's not on them to understand that.

It's me, let me fix or try to make some changes on my end so I can participate in those things. But of course, as my daughter's grown old now, or at least older, they understand and they get when I…

go to a restaurant and want to sit in a certain chair and wanna do certain things so they understand it too because again, like it was a family adjustment.

But you know what I'll tell you, some people will just never understand though. Because when I was at the fire department, every day I went to work, the stuff I saw was people's worst moments.

So things like that, how you said, sitting in that certain share, facing the door, things we do it because we've seen something that potentially caused us to think.

You've see that type of situation or a potential outcome of that situation. Especially, like you mentioned, people's worst moment to where you got to put somebody on a stretcher or you gotta breach this door, you've got do certain things.

Just to be in that situations and to hear somebody at the end that's supposed to be the expert, it's unrelatable. Or they give you an answer that seems like, oh, you read this on chapter three.

It's not one of those things where the empathy can take over and somebody say, yo, I've been there. This is what I did to assist that. These are some things that you can actually do to help, you know, and it's more relatable.

That's why the group process is a little bit better, because you have two to three other veterans saying, hey, man, I did this, this is what I watched, or this was, it was more related, opposed to it, feeling stripped it.

And somebody's like, oh man. I'm just here. You kind of sometimes feel like you're being a judge as well, too, if not. The one thing that worked at the fire department was when that didn't work, They ended up getting a few guys that volunteered and they put them through the courses to be able to help the other guys.

Yeah, so peer. A peer situation. So even now, those are more common now for people who have challenges with addiction. They call them peer recovery specialists.

Okay. who've overcome their situation of substance use. They also got peer recovery specialists in other fields such as gambling, because people would much receive it more from somebody who'd been there.

So yeah, that's definitely a beneficial tool. When dealing with men, so us as men especially, if you go into one of these menly jobs, first responders, military, or even construction, your program to suck it up.

We're men, we'll deal with it later, right? We don't show emotions. So I want you to talk a bit about living through silence versus vulnerability and the realization moment between both.

Yeah, so it just varies. You mentioned the employment aspect of it, you know, like these A-type jobs, But think about it from a societal standpoint. A lot of boys are brought up in that same situation.

Hey boys don't cry, boys aren't supposed to do that, don' sit that way, Don't play with those toys. Don' go around there with the pink stuff, get this blue stuff with this green stuff.

So it's conditioned earlier within males' lives, unfortunately. And not to generalize it, but more than less those things happen. And then, of course, as you continue to matriculate and go into the field of employment, even before that, maybe college, just think about how many males will probably be gymnasts if they weren't judged for it.

I grew up in the projects, man. It was like mattresses on a corner. You see people, we used to flip and do all- Everybody was flipping. Yeah, exactly.

That was a thing growing up. So you can relate to it, but just thinking about having a male gymnast. You know what I'm saying? Just think about that person would be judged.

Or even now, if somebody's a male cheerleader. So just those minor things were pivoted and changed to pretty much the trajectory of a man life. But when you talk about the vulnerability aspect, the…

to show yourself and to be free to your colleagues and or your partner without being judged, that's a whole different

thing. You know, a lot of men feel that they don't have that ability or don' have their circle to do that.

And if they do, they still have some reservation based on it because they dont want to feel like I'm a burden to somebody else. Like, I am not going to talk to my wife about it, because I don"t want her to stress.

So it's putting others before yourself again.

Men, Vulnerability, and Emotional Displacement

So even if you are first responder or military or just pretty much a male, that's your thought. I ain't going to tell my mom this because I don't want her to stress.

Or I aint going tell to my wife this, because… So you still taking on that role of, I guess, yourself as protecting. In essence, you still wearing yourself down because you not offloading it or relieving yourself of the situation.

So in those cases, if you don't have a therapist or a good support system to off load this stuff, like overfilling the backpack, eventually it's gonna.

It's going to explode. Correct. Yeah. Interesting enough, You brought up the, speaking to your wife, when you, let's say you come home from work or whatever.

And when I was at the fire department, they actually created a special committee for the wives so they can understand how to deal with the partner when they come home.

That's good. Because if you get a crazy night where you had shootings, stabbings, people ejected out of vehicles, things happening to kids, you're coming home with that.

Those are demons that don't leave your head. Correct. And it's hard to say, hey, daddy don' feel like talking right now, or babe, just give me a moment.

It comes out. as that secondary emotion, which is anger. So displacement, and a lot of people don't understand that. And there's a chapter in my book on displacement actually, because just think about what you mentioned.

It's, a heck of a day, traumatic experiences back at the back. whether it's argument at the office or you rescuing somebody, those things. And when you go home, your wife is, let's say, making dinner or something, and you hear, why are you banging those pots so loud?

What are doing? Why is it so hot in here? That's not… directed towards her. That was everything else that you had that day that couldn't really relieve yourself of or say, and now it's being projected on her or the kids, which is an unfortunate situation, but it happens a lot to people who oftentimes don't address those things or process those thing in healthy ways.

So on that topic, what's the best way to navigate that? So it sounds like your department did a phenomenal thing by allowing the wives or partners to know like, hey, listen, it might not be a situation that you want to talk about right now.

So whatever their function was, sounds good. But I would say for the other people, communication is definitely best. You don't get in trouble often if you over communicate.

The lack of communication oftentimes get people in trouble. Over communication, man. So if it's easier, maybe I had a rough day. Let me just take the shower and I'm gonna get with you in a minute.

Or talk to your kids the same way. Hey, give daddy a moment. Opposed to coming home and when your wife tried to talk to you or your kids tried, you pushed them away or you present that anger or that displacement that we just spoke of.

So it's easier to communicate those things and then hopefully your partner or kids will understand like, all right, cool, dad just got home, he may have had a rough day.

You're communicating those thing, your putting that information out there so they would know. Not only that, but you can also do the self work on your way home.

Riding in silence, think about it, debrief, or talk to somebody else on your way home to relieve yourself of that situation. Something I try to do just from all the sessions that I do in a day is definitely some mindfulness on my way to home.

So I'm riding in the silence just so I can clear my head. When I go home, my wife wants to talk about her day. It's not I'm not minimizing her day. I don't just talk to somebody who almost died by suicide, I didn't talk somebody today who was in an abusive relationship or whatever the case is, you wanna talk about this?

So I not minimize her experience, just processing on my way home to prepare for what she might bring me. Because again, it's not on her. And then of course you can also do different mindfulness exercises, whether that's before you get home and or in between home.

A lot of people go to the gym after work, you know, that probably can be your exercise too that you can do. So there's a couple different things you could incorporate before get you home, which would be beneficial.

It allows you to truly like decompress, right? Correct. Yeah, yeah. Because let's face it, a lot people don't go actual therapy. If you did go to therapy, it'll be a couple of different exercises that they may offer or that can just be your space to free yourself.

So when you can go home, you're going to be more attentive and present within those moments with your family or your partner. We got a lot of doctors that tune into the podcast that listen to the message and working in the healthcare field, they experience a a lot of things that they see as well, working in the hospital or seeing patients that have cancer or other type of chronic illnesses.

And one of the things has always bothered me the most is when a random person who knows that I was a fireman or when I wasn't a firefighter, they'd come and ask me, what's the worst thing you've seen?

Oh man, yeah. Tell me why people shouldn't ask that. So one is making that person they're asking relive that worst thing that they do. When they ask it, I start thinking about it.

That train accident, the kid. And it just won't go away. It is the and I want anyone listening to the podcast. This message is so important. I'm happy that you're going to touch up even more on it It is the worst thing you could ask someone who does service work.

You don't want that person that you're asking to relive those moments. But then too, you want to be on the end of that, obtaining or receiving this, these catastrophic events, because subconsciously they're going to do something to you because now you thinking about the two to three events that this person just mentioned.

And why would you wanna be in that position to just ask somebody that question? Because, it can do a lot of, damage to that person's psyche if they were having a good day.

Because again, now you're reliving all these things that you just mentioned. But of course, aside from that, it's like, Now you're probably even thinking about those people that you saved or those entities that did work with, like, oh, I wonder how they turned out or what they're doing now, or you question yourself.

If I would have just did this, it would've, you know, so it's opening too many doors and unknowns for that person all over again. So hopefully they would reduce asking those questions.

And I do think that for the person who gets asked that question, like when people ask me that, I don't just flow with

it. I actually stop them and let them know that that's not a question they should ask and explain why.

And you should. Yeah, and I think, that the important thing, opposed to answering it, you definitely let him know like, hey, there's an appropriate question because I, cause I'd do that all the time.

Like, if somebody asks me, Hey, what's the most severe case you work with? Hey boss, That's something that I'm willing to share with you. Because one, it was personal to them, but to me, that's not something that I want to think about.

And hopefully from there, they internalize and be like, you know what? I'm not probably not going to ask nobody else, but you know how people are, they're probably going ask somebody else.

They're always digging. So through a lot of the stuff that you've gone through, war, foster care, grief, you have always been able to maintain a soft heart.

A lot people can get very sour. and just become this type of person that no one ever wants to be around. Yeah, so a lot of people within who have experienced something similar to what I did, of course, they become now desensitized to a lotta different stuff.

And that's oftentimes their response. So for me, that wasn't the response because I'm always doing the self work. I always trying to or I'm always aspiring to be better and doing better.

So again, that's working on myself mentally, physically and emotionally and allowing not only to my wife to support me, but I am a therapist with a therapy.

I make sure that I get this up off me so I can be for my family, my community and those alike. I always tell every doctor or any expert who sits in that chair that you're in is who heals the healer.

Sometimes we're so focused on helping other people out. What about us? Because what happens is we end up absorbing A lot of that negativity. And so for me, I always tell people that you definitely got to moderate what you ingest.

A lotta people think dieting or fasting is nutritional based. It's mental based too. What you're listening to, what you viewing, all those things have impacts on you subconsciously.

So it's not just, and I'm gonna fast forward a couple of days, I not gonna eat meat or breads and all that stuff. But it also, hey, am not going to listen to music talking about harming people.

I am going look at movies with Cursing or explode like all those things matter. You definitely want to ensure that you are fasting and moderating what you ingest especially in this climate now of Just over analyzing of the politics and you know, we seeing what's planned out from a standpoint of You know just certain attacks on different classes of people, right?

So those you definitely have to moderate as well. Yeah. So so you You got a men's journal. Yeah. Man Just Express Yourself. What's that all about? So even before the journal, I created this movement called Men To Heal.

Men to Heals focus on men over our wellness, whether it's mental health, physical health and of course that emotional health. And I created that from an assignment that I had in grad school, you know, those generic assignments on the questions.

If it's one population you can work with, who would it be? So eventually the initial population that said veterans, I can, just to explain to you why.

And then I realized, like, oh, man, but what about the men? They rarely have anything. And, then, I'm just looking around at my cohort. I was the only black male.

It was only one of three males. You know? And the other eight people were women. There was one black woman. So, out of all those, it was two black people, and I as one Black male of 3 males, so I am looking like this anecdotal pod cohort is probably representation of the world and the field.

So the filed is definitely 80 plus percent women, not a lot of black people within the fields. I was like, you know what? I'ma just do a project on men.

That's what I called it. You know, wind up, it was a successful, I got a success grade on it and then I just thought about it, you know. So fast forward, finished grad school, graduated or whatever.

I was going through my residency, getting my hours for license attainment and I was working at this phenomenal outpatient practice owned by two women and they do, they did so much for women within the community.

They did, you know, like health and welfare stuff for a lot of women in presentations. So I always used to be, hey, when we gonna do something for the men?

When we going to do some for men. What was the answer? Hey, we're going do it soon. You know just a typical political answer, political, Hey we got you.

We're gonna figure something out, whatever the case is. I'ma just create it. Then I throw it back to the assignment that I had, Mental Hill. So at this time is when I owned the art gallery.

I was like, you know what? So when my art got to be closed at maybe five or six o'clock, put out some flyers, out the information on social media saying, hey, from six to eight, having a community talk, men's mental health, and invite out your brothers, your uncles, or dads, all your males, whatever.

And before I knew it, man, it was, full, you know? So I started doing it mental heal. And then it's was mental health athletes, mental first responders, just different pockets of those things.

Now I was like, oh man. You know what? Let me just continue to grow it. So then in that case is when I created a merch from it because it a advocacy tool.

When people see me wearing the shirt or see somebody else wearing a shirt, they get to asking questions. Oh man, my uncle need to talk to his father.

Coping Strategies and Asking for Help

You know a good therapist? Or hey man my dad was going through X, Y, Z, he ain't know. So that's why a lot of people was getting the shirts, which was unfortunate for.

And then of course the social media presence grew from that. Just me doing the talks in person and speaking and doing different things. Similar to probably what y'all going to now, people send you questions and hey, how can I deal with this?

Or what do you think about this, or what are the resources for that? Well, hey my uncle's going through this or my dad, this happened to him. So I'm like, all right, cool.

I can answer everybody's question, but it seems to be these common ones that people wanna know. That's what led to the book. It's over 65 different topics.

Some talking about grief, I talk about anger, talk more displacement, trauma, pride, ego. There's so many different topic that men typically Don't talk about unless they're in those male dominant spaces.

Like you can, when you was a firefighter, y'all can talk in the locker room about things that you probably didn't share with your wife or your partner.

But you know, your life and your partners and those people who need to know. You get what I'm saying? So it's easy to be in a barbershop getting your round up or you're haircut and you saying, man, I am just dealing with this and this is going wrong in my life because you talking to the fellas.

So everything I felt that men or boys have encountered but didn' have the ability to process or weren't willing to with their partners, I just try to put it in the book.

option for men to write out their answers and or draw out the answers too, because a lot of people get the artistic value and be able to see those different schemas from those answers.

So it just became a fortunate tool, man. A lot male organizations do get to book, you know, their diamond book for the younger population and, or just different male dominant places get in and support.

And a lotta wise bad too which is fortunate because What got the wise band is I encouraged the wife, like, hey, get this book. Whatever you want to talk about with your partner.

circle it, underline it and highlight it. Give it to him and tell him, hey, next time we go out, we're gonna talk about these things. So now it feels like it's something that we were doing to enhance the relationship opposed to like a chore to them.

He benefited because, all right, baby, you wanna talk pride or ego or anger. You know, he's gonna have to be like, oh man, she wanna to talk, but let me not ignore her because she gave me this assignment.

a thing for us because she can now say, hey babe, when you was upset, you reacted this way or you did this. And I didn't, opposed to her trying to talk to him and she probably meet, it's not with resistance or that wall, but now it a tool, its exercise.

It's been real fortunate for a lot of partners to gift it to the males within that ladder. Man, shout out to those two women that you were with, because that was the cue to bring you to this book, which, you know, for me, I'm all about accountability, right?

And having a tool like this. And that's what it is, yeah. It what gets you climb up that latter and reach that level of success with your mental health, all right.

Sure, yep. Because again, a lotta people, Specifically men might be going through these things and might never touch it or address it. You know, like just think about depression.

I encounter so many athletes, whether collegiate or professional, who still think depression is a cheerleader's diagnosis. So when I re-educate them on what depression, is from not only the mental health and emotional symptoms, but from the physical symptoms.

The tightness in chest, the gastrointestinal issues, sweaty palms and all those things, in addition to lack of eating, sleeping, poor appetite, isolation, loneliness, thoughts of harming yourself.

Just running down the basic symptomology of what it is. they started to realize like, oh man, this is not just for cheerleaders or women. You know, I haven't been hanging with my teammates like I used to, or I don't eat, you know before practice like used too.

I am waking up in the middle of the night and can't fall back to sleep. So after we started breaking it down, we realized like Yo boss, you just depressed, now let's figure it out because we got something to aspire to.

We know what it is, we can treat it now. Make some lifestyle changes. Do some different things to get you out of this state right here. Oppose to you running from it and resisting what is.

It's not a weakness to have depression. That impacts millions of people every day. And if you know what it is, we

can do some different things. James, one of the things that I've seen a lot of is people know that they have a problem, right?

That there's solutions out there, and you just need the appropriate guidance to lead you in the right direction. But what ends up happening is that people don't want to go to a therapist because they don' want feel like they're labeling themselves as being sick.

Well, not only that, so you said people know they have a problem, some people don't. Some people are numb and desensitized. Just think about how many times you heard somebody say, I'm just his way.

Oh, a lot. I've been his a long time. But see, that's exactly what I want to say. They don't want to be labeled as having a problem. They didn't wanna be labelled as being sick.

And one of the things that I try to do more on the clinical side, it's not that you're sick, how I would say every great athlete has a coach. It might be just one sentence that that therapist tells you that will just change the trajectory of your entire life.

And that's the main thing. Not even that, just giving resources or advocating or, hey, here's another way to think about that. I can't tell you how many times I've sat in front of somebody, whether they were you know, a millionaire or professional athlete or whomever.

And I'm like, hey, what's another, alternative way you can think about that? Or what is another way that you could phrase that situation? And they started to think I see why it happened to me or it could have been, you know, XYZ.

Like those things matter. But to hear that from somebody, yeah, definitely. And the accountability piece is definitely important too, because now you got something to go back to because, hey boss, You agreed to this.

You said that you were going to do this, so you can't be upset when your partner bring it back up or when you are in your work environment or on your team environment and somebody say, Hey boss.

You said this, you agreed to this. You didn't hold up your end of the bargain. Accountability is big within that. Now you've worked on projects with the NFL Players Association, right?

Correct. And now, I'm sure you seen over the past What three months has been three NFL players who died by suicide or so. So now I'm in re talks now with them to assist and strategize on how to do certain things within that locker room.

Hopefully those things come back to fruition and it's more fluid conversations opposed to just I don't wanna say performative, you know, hopefully they are in a position to say, hey, let's get somebody in here and let us try to figure this thing out.

And doing my anecdotal research with these athletes who are still active in the athletic field and or who retired, they just realized like, the resources piece that you mentioned, because a lot of people, just think about how many people say, you got a million dollars.

You just signed a big contract. What you depressed for? What are you upset for, but that's not the bulk of it. They're away from their family, they're traveling.

Traumatic brain injury. CTE, which can't be diagnosed until after you die, unfortunately. Just the isolation piece, that loneliness piece. That piece of feeling like, hey, I got to perform every day.

Like, what am I not, you know, just judging yourself or comparing yourself to that athlete in the locker room who might want your spot. So a lot of those things impact how they perform and play.

But of course, a lotta those aren't viewed by the public. I paid my money to watch you on TV or see you in a game,

I don't care what you got going on outside of the field.

Of course you can't really just say that to the owners or the NFLPA or to NBA association for that matter. So you have to do more of the research of, maybe the players have advocate more to get somebody in here to talk about different things post their career.

Because a lot of athletes are retiring and feel like, yo, what am I gonna do now? Because every couple of days I was in practice. Every Sunday or Saturday I played or Thursday, you know, so those things matter.

That could cause a lotta depression. Depression, because I in a system for a long time, now I don't know what the heck to I was watching an interview with Gilbert Arenas, he mentioned it.

He was depressed after he left the NBA. I used to just get in my car and drive because I ain't know what else to do. My kids was at school, my wife was somewhere else.

What am I gonna do? I'm sitting around the house. So now, your identity is tied to that. Who am i? Let me recreate myself or let me at least learn who I am.

And that's the biggest thing I push too with athletes. Who are you? Like, your identity is not just you are a great player or you were a player. It's more than that.

So, you know, our clinics, we're working with the NFL Sisters and Services that, work very closely with that NFL Players Association. And we, one of our doctors is on the Scientific Advisory Board with an almonds clinic.

We're workin' with these players for the traumatic brain injury. And I'll tell you what, until I started actually being part of it and listening to the stories of these current and former NFL players, it's tragic.

Some of the stuff that the family goes through, what they're going through with their health, you know, having seizures randomly because of the depression, and then they get put on all these medications.

They get the wrong diagnosis, then it causes a chemical imbalance. It's a serious thing. And again, as a fan, somebody who's patron, you're like, why are you not still playing?

Men to Heal Movement and the Book

You go back to all those things, but of course they're dealing with some internal things and then yes, that also leads over to the family because to them, your dad or your brother or you're my husband opposed to this gladiator who's putting your body on the line, you know?

So, one of the things that I like to talk about, the sector and business that, I'm in the biohacking, health and wellness industry, Historically, it's been older white men that are running it.

You know, I'm Dominican, was raised in the inner city. My two partners, Dr. Davis and Dr Haywood, they're African-American, both physicians. And one of the things that we're very passionate about is bringing what we are doing, this alternative type of medicine, to the black and brown community.

So my next question for you is, culturally competent therapies, The way that you do your therapies with people from our communities, I would only assume it's a bit different.

For me, it's that authentic piece of being who I am, living my true, authentic self, and allowing my clientele to see that. And people know when you're disingenuous or you putting up a facade.

So for me yes. But I think it is definitely important for everybody to be culturally competent in whoever you're working with. Not only from a standpoint of the subgroup of black and brown people, but just think about it.

I got women clients, so I have to be culturally competent on women's issues as well. You get what I'm saying? So I think for those others, whether that's a therapist of a different ethnicity, yes, they definitely should be aware and culturally on the population that they're serving to work with.

I work what a lot of LGBTQ plus community members as well. So it's important for me to understand the terminology, the disproportionate issues and events that have occurring within our lives.

The phobias that may be having against them. All those things are important. But yes, it is definitely important to be culturally competent and aware of your own biases before you even work these people.

You get what I'm saying? And that'd be an issue with a lot of people too, who don't have that genuine authenticity and aware of their biases, but they still treat these people, these clients or these patients however you want to identify it.

and it bleeds over and people know that. And now they're getting hurt by, just think about how many people that you know or you've probably seen online that has church hurt.

It's the same thing that blees over from doctors, providers, therapists and all those things. Like, and that would shut somebody down. Hey, I tried therapy, it didn't work because my therapist was a butthole or my therapists didn t treat me fair or whatever.

So now you cast a shadow on an entire field and this person was trash and you could have potentially went to another therapist and it could've been a different experience.

You get what I'm saying? But a lot of people won't take the time or the resources to do that. Hey, I tried, it didn't work. This is probably going to be the next experience if I go see somebody else.

Even if that's the town over or whatever, they probably gonna treat me the same way if bring them this particular issue or what I'm going through, opposed to, hey, you know what, it didn't work with this person, let me at least try somebody else.

So yes, I would definitely encourage my colleagues out there to be culturally competent in who you're working with because it definitely can make an impact within this field.

How important is faith in this process? Yeah, so just depending on who you are and where you want to ensure that you do have something to strive for and continue to put you in those situations of what to expect, not only from yourself, but from your community.

And often times to do that, you have to have that substance of, believing that things will be better or believing it's greater on the other side. So faith is definitely important depending on where you are within your journey.

And if you're in the field too, you want to ensure that you doing a good job. You know, so all those things matter. On the inverse of that too it a lot of people who don't seek services because they have that much faith.

They think like, hey, this is all I need. But no, You can have therapists and your faith and you can Other entities that you do do to ensure that. You are in a better position Yeah, I'm happy that You touched up on that because I've had people that are very strong into the word and they're like Oh, no, this is just God's plan.

I like almost like it God made sure that these therapists are here for you. Correct? You know, it's like There was a little saying that was like, a boat, you're in the middle of the ocean, the boat is sent your way.

No, no, God will save me. And the guy's like I'm sending you the vote. So people gotta recognize that God puts these tools here. It's definitely a sign too.

Not only that too, I work with a lot of clergy. Just think about how much they take on from their congregations. that

they don't offload. Like, what are you doing with this?

I don' disagree with you praying to your deity and thinking that everything is be okay, but you still definitely, like you mentioned, have to off load that to somebody.

You know, oftentimes they dont. And you see the results of that from different fallouts or different things that didn't process, unfortunately, that bleeds over to the congregation in some cases.

You get what I'm saying? So no, faith is definitely important, but it can be a hindrance to people who don't take advantage of the other resources. But if you do get other resource, whether it's a therapist or do meditation and mindfulness, it doesn't negate the fact that you have strong faith.

I agree. What's the most damaging lesson for boys? Most damaging lesson for boys I think at those early ages when the parental figures and or authority figures prevent them from doing things that they were considered to be gender neutral.

Like just think about the Like I was in a store one time and this young boy wanted this Easy-Bake Oven. You know what I'm saying? So Easy Bake Ovens is one of those things that you can, you know, make small pastries and stuff.

So her response is, nah, baby, that's for girls. Let's get something else. Lets get you a truck or a bike or whatever the case is. Whatever she said. I am like, all right, cool.

To me that didn't make sense because cooking is a life skill. He can learn early or what ever the But the fascinating thing is a couple of weeks later, I'm in the grocery store with my daughter and it appeared to be the same woman this time with a gentleman.

And he asked her or she asked, one of the two asked hey, what's for dinner? Her response was, it doesn't matter, you're not gonna cook anyway. So instantly, I'm looking around, trying to figure out if it's her, because in my mind, a couple weeks ago, you prevented your son from learning to cook or cooking with this Easy-Bake oven, but now you're with somebody and you are complaining that he doesn't cook.

That's the level of cognitive dissonance that people have. So I think those are some of the damaging things, just encouraging young males at an early age to be their authentic self or learn certain things because you think it is a crossroads of gender opposed to a life skill.

Yeah, you know, I grew up kind of like that. Like my father, he doesn't cook. You know? Yeah. No, but I love to cook! In some cases, though, that was the way of life from that part of society.

One, being Dominican, and then two, just those earlier men, those generations before us. They were the workers. Correct. Listen, man. I had this coworker.

He was probably in his 70s, always crisp, iron, sharp. His wife went out of town for two weeks. He came disheveled. So everybody was like, yo, what's going on?

My wife normally irons and do all these other things. I don't know what I'm doing because he was the worker. All I know, Ima do this. They had a system within our dynamic.

She did the cooking, she did ironing and cleaning and stuff like that. So it was visible that he had no parts of that and he never learned too because as he growing up, he hunting with his dad and his uncles.

He was doing construction. It was just so many entities where he didn't have to be hands on with that stuff. But of course, visibly to us, it was like, bro, what is going on?

When's she coming back? Because you look terrible right now. No, no, that actually happened. My mother, there's

four of us. I'm on the other side of four.

But my mother had to go back to the DR for like a funeral or something. And my dad stayed. And he even said it, he ended up trying it after the fact. He says, man, I gotta learn how to do something because none of us would eat it and we were kids.

And after that, for the rest of the week, it was just nothing but the microwave TV dinners. But it's something that has been programmed as part of a culture and that should change.

So I think now it is definitely shifting. I know for me, just raising my young ones, man, it was more so gender neutral and explaining that to other people, like, yo, these are life skills, not necessarily, you know, he should learn how to cook or he shouldn't know how earn and do different things because eventually he's gonna have a family and or at a minimum is gonna need it for his own survival.

So James, right now there's a big movement happening called Make America Healthy Again. And it has a, a hyper focus on figuring out the root cause of medical issues versus what we're so used to, which is looking at only treating the signs and symptoms.

With what you have going on, I already know based off today's conversation, it's not about just touching the size of symptoms, you're going into the route.

So I want you to talk about how What you're doing defines what this movement is talking about when it talks about targeting the root cause versus just the superficial.

Yeah. So I'm not familiar with that movement or I don't want to cast a shadow on that particular movement. But when we talk about root causes of different issues and it sounds like If they do want to truly make America happy again, I'll afford, and I'm glad they are touching that approach.

Because when I first started in the field over 15 years ago, it always used to be separate. Physical, you see the doctor, they rarely, if any, overlapped with the mental side of things.

And then from a mental site of thing, we see a therapist, but they didn't touch on the physical side things, But now from the collective standpoint, We know that the man and body is definitely connected.

Like if you have hypertension, that can lead because you're overstressing or hypervigilant or experience some traumatic events and stuff like that. Even linked to diabetes.

Not only that, just the cause too from heart disease. That's the number one killer among men. And think about that you can get that too, from overstressening so many different things.

So just viewing the body as one and having a holistic approach is definitely beneficial. But when we talked about the root causes of those things, we can go back to childhood.

Root Causes, Health, and Cultural Competence

We can back those traumatic events and all those grief events that one didn't process that probably did have his nervous system out of whack, which caused that chemical imbalance in the brain, and which cause dysregulation within the body or those heart palpitations.

so many different things that one didn't address at a certain point. And then from a physical health standpoint, just think about how many people don't get yearly physicals, dental exams, STI checks, and so on many other factors.

All those things can build up throughout too. Just think if you haven't had a physician for X amount of years, that plaque can build up around your arteries and now all of a sudden you got a heart issue.

Or your body is not pumping as much blood as it could be to certain parts. And now something that could have been prevented easily is now taking a toll.

Then just another part of it, the mental side of things. Like too, just think about the dementia side or the autism side, or seizures and strokes and stuff like what I mentioned about my mom earlier.

A lot of those things now can be treated if caught early, or they can at least put you on some type of regimen to reduce different symptoms and signs and things like that.

So I definitely think identifying the root can beneficial. It's extremely beneficial, man. Going back to this whole movement, and one of the things too that they touch up on is all of this ultra-processed foods, right?

Especially the communities that we grew up in. Yeah. All the chemicals in the foods. Right. One of the things they just changed right now is in the military, the MREs.

That stuff is borderline poison, you know, those MRAs, full of sodium. And they actually said, why are we treating our own military with this crazy poisonous food?

So, and these are the- And most of time it comes down to funding and just being in a capitalistic society, specifically for those cultures who are, I guess, less fortunate or don't have the availability to have access to proper nutrition or with the military, they went with The Lord's Bitter.

It wasn't like they was going to fly in a chef to make these gourmet meals, because of course, budget-wise, that was gonna be an issue. But just think about how probably more efficient and better the performance could have been if proper nutritious was there.

I can- It can't happen, baby, just listen. As a kid, I'd go back to Dominican Republic, third world country, eating all organic, fresh, everything. But that's how you go to Jamaica, you got to Bahamas.

That's all people are eating. It's what our system here has. The big food companies, the big pharmaceutical companies. All of it ties together. And it's basically on capitalism, from that standpoint alone.

Because things can be, yes, a little bit more nutritious and a level more affordable too, depending on where you are. Just think about how many times you don't went to the store and Soda flooded with sugar and All these other dyes and so many other factors is like one that and and but a bottle of water is three dollars, right?

You know same thing for burgers and all this other stuff those things you can get two for three Dollars, but the salad you paying twelve dollars You understand so a lot of those thing is beyond our control but allowed every two is hey, you gotta be disciplined and sacrifice enough, but again, if you're talking to somebody from that area who don't have the ability to pay a little bit extra and or who's already working overtime and it's tight to spend our money on that, same thing for therapy.

Do I wanna take off work, go sit with somebody for an hour, or do I want to get this overtime? Do want wanna drive all the way across town and you know what I'm saying?

It's not really a luxury to them because they don't view it that way. I agree, man, 100%. So, James, if the men in the world, their pain was heard, what would the word here?

Men keep the pain within a lot, you know? And when you think about if every man out there was able to express themselves, what would this world be? I think it'll be a probably a lotta crying.

Is it okay for men to cry? Definitely okay. I got a topic in there on that too. So when cry, it does something to your body. It does some to you nervous system.

a human function, not necessarily a woman function. So, you know, clear out your tear ducts and so many other

factors. But if men could express themselves and or express that pain outwardly, which some of them do, the unfortunate side of it, it comes out as reckless behavior, being promiscuous, substance use, all those factors, but if it can be expressed and come out in a healthy way, I think it'd definitely be beneficial for the families, your coworkers, and all the people that you impact back currently.

I think it would definitely sound like, hey, I've been trying to tell you this, you know, because think about it. Right now, it's a young boy or a man or whomever is saying, I'm saying it, but I am just not articulating it in a way that you understand it.

Because somebody right now is trying to tell you this, and she's probably saying you started yelling. Or, hey, you just left the house, or you did, but to him, I'm telling you this.

I am processing this with you. But to her or to your partner, whomever, they're not understanding it because you're articulating it as, babe, i need your help.

Or hey bro, im going through this, what would you do? It's not that easy for them to say. It is coming out as oh man, why is he drinking every weekend?

or why he with different women, or, why is he gambling like that? Why does he keep speeding? He getting all these speeding tickets. It comes out as reckless behavior, being promiscuous, all those things, opposed to just verbally saying, I need help right now.

I'm drowning. Hey, you know, i'm not feeling like myself. James, before we wrap up, man, you got the cheesy. Cheesy dates. I want you to talk about that because I find that very cool, attractive.

You know, I appreciate that man. So ask yourself this. How many board game creators do you know? None. But one now. One now, so one, that was my way of getting into an industry that's definitely not a lot of black people in or just common daily people are in.

Some people do have the cards and stuff like that, but this is an actual full pledge board game. So I created it during the pandemic, man, because I was even before the pandemic, I would send a lot of couples, but just during the Pandemic that two plus years of people being stuck together, you realized they the people who I Was encountering realized like I'm not compatible with this person.

We together based on attraction or we was together for what the kids or We was to gather because at the time it worked, But we've outgrown each other.

So I created the board game because again like having different sessions with people you realize that they drifted apart or didn't really know each Other from the jump.

So the board game is one of those things to not only get them to enhance that relationship, but to get back to the basics of their relationship that Ru calls again.

Because when y'all first got together, yall was… overly affectionate, showing love, going on date nights and stuff like that. So in the board game itself, it comes with dice, with pawn pieces, but it does come with two different card decks.

One card deck is full of different date ideas because sometimes people run low on spontaneity. But you got to be intentional about dating your partner, even if y'all been together 50 years, you still want to do that, And then the other card deck is just different questions that you can ask throughout just to make sure y'all growing at the same pace.

So it's questions on intimacy, finances, social issues, lifestyles, living situations, just pretty much every situation that I counter counseling different couples, I put it in this board game.

And I did that because a lot of people too, you wind up being with this person, but you don't know truly who they are until you're in a situation cannot depend on you.

Are you gonna be there when I need it? And one of the biggest ones while we're talking about men is Like right now, you'd probably be partnering with a person.

You know, your thinking like, I got your back, You got my ass thick and thin, but until you're in that situation, and you realize like yo, this person didn't hold me down.

This happened with the couple that I was seeing. Husband, traditional, put wife through school. She wound up getting her bachelor's and her master's. When I say he put her through the school, he'd put up to school like pay for everything.

Anyway, they had three kids at the time. At that time, they also was married for eight years. So married eight year, three kids, he put her through school.

After that process, she started making money, working at a firm, pretty decent. He said, hey babe, I wanna take six months off, you take care of everything, and I want to get this HVAC certification so I can start my own company.

Her response, 3 kids 8 years of marriage, AND he puts her to school, her response is, I'm not taking care of no grown man.

Faith, Purpose, and Closing Advice

So even as a friend, what would you do? You can pay him back as friend. Like, hey, you put me through school, I got you. You could take six months off.

Go ahead. At a minimum, yes. But this is your husband and the father of your children. Right. If you're not willing to sacrifice that because of what your psyche is telling you society will say, wow, i'm taking of a grownman.

Just as decent person, Go ahead, boss. Let me pay you back for you putting me through, you know what I'm saying? And I can afford it now. So just different stuff like that will engage discussions because think about if he would have asked this on the first date or as they were dating, he probably wouldn't have murdered her.

You know what I'm saying? But just think about how many other questions that you want to ask your partner that, you didn't, or you probably fear asking them because you don't want the response or, You just don' know how to do it.

Even from an intimacy standpoint, let's just say you wanna spice it up, Or you wanted to add somebody or You wanna use toys. You don''t know to how ask that because, because You want them to think like, You did this with somebody else or you, you know, why you want to get this, whatever.

So there's a question in there on intimacy and financing and social issues. That's pretty cool, man. Yeah, yeah. Where can people find that? On the website, www. Mentahill.com.

The book is on there as well. And my YouTube is also on that too. My YouTube's Mentah Hill. Nice. James, as we wrap up here, man, if there is someone listening or viewing this podcast who really resonates with today's message, what is that one thing you can lead them off with?

Um, ignore the perception of others, you know, uh, just live for yourself in those moments and get the help that you may need. You know? Ignore the perceptions.

I know you probably think people would judge you if you talk to somebody, if went to therapy, um, but ignore that perception, get to help what you need because you can help yourself.

Offside of that, you can help your family. Offset of, that you'll be able to help the community. And then of course, it'll just continue to spread that way, but it starts with you.

So ignore that perception of how you will be judged or viewed if you were to be vulnerable and or talk to somebody. I would definitely say that. Amazing.

Where can people find you? The easiest way is on the website, www.men2heal.com. And then, of course, on there, you'll get to my social media, which is Men Underscore T-O Undescore H-E-A-L.

Then my YouTube is, Men2Heal, M-e-n-t-o-h- e-a-l. The book is also on Amazon, Bonzo Nova's Target, Walmart, so many other places. And it's called Man Just Express Yourself, which is an interactive planner guide for boys and men to better express themselves.

Amazing. We'll include all those links down below. Yeah, appreciate that. Brother, it was a pleasure having you on the podcast. It's a message that the world needs.

Definitely. I appreciate it. Thank you. Guys, you heard James. Don't feel like you're gonna be judged. Take care of yourself. Make that commitment and take things to the next step.

Get the book. It's a tool. Don' think that you are sick. Its all about us elevating and helping our community. If this message resonates with you or you think it might resonate with someone else, make sure you share it, comment, follow, do all that fun stuff and we'll see you for the