Paul Cornwall on Trauma, Addiction, and Finding Hope Transcript

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Opening and the urge to tell his story

Welcome to the Wellness [music] on Tap podcast with your host, Dr. Debs Eastwood. >> Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. But you've got a story. >> Yeah. I [laughter] don't know why. I [clears throat] I don't mind saying it as much now, but I've got my mates who are like, "You need to tell your story." And I'm like, "I don't want to tell my story." "No, you need to tell your story." And I'm like, "I don't want to.

Just leave me alone." [laughter] Well, >> I'm glad that you want to tell it being as you're sitting here opposite me today. That would be weird. I see that it is a yeah it's a real positive and I think that comes from um and and I know it but I feel this is why my research areas shame so I still there's still aspects of me where I still don't feel I'm good enough >> you still got healing to do we all >> massive oh yeah >> we're all on a journey aren't we all at different stages >> I think that's what we talk about at the work what we do cuz everyone who presents there has got a level of trauma it's just what levels of trauma and what's caused them levels of trauma.

>> Yeah. >> And then what pathways we can try and open up >> 100%. So where did all of this start then? >> So you just said you were born in Manchester. So >> Oh, were you recording?

>> So we've got >> Oh, sorry. >> No, no, no. This is the way we like to do it. We just brilliant. We just roll. >> Um >> so little Paul in Manchester that is obviously where it started.

>> Yeah. I was born at St. Mary's, so I think I lived this is quite strange. My um my mom's got alcohol dementia. Um, and we were sat in the Gen Monastery the other day, me and my partner Danielle and and my mom and um my mom started to tell my birth dates and that my dad suspected that I wasn't his and she gave the mom different date and I was like this is not the time to tell me that my dad's not my dad [laughter] but I'm the spit of my dad and it was like >> and she was just forgetting dates.

>> So [clears throat] I was born in Gen. I was [snorts] I was born in St. Mary's um Manchester Royal Infirmary. Um and then I went to Gorton. I think we lived there for a bit with my grandma.

Excuse me. Um and then we moved to Romley in Stockport, South Manchester. Um my sister never grew up with me. Um my mom um went away, bless her, on a holiday and and came back with my sister. Um yeah.

>> Oh. >> Uh and my dad was my dad had a lot of trauma. This is where I understand my dad cuz he's done there was he was quite violent and and quite toxic environment to grow up as a child. But I understand now through being able to see that sort of um he broke up his first um his marriage. He had his his ex-wife and her partner wanted to immigrate. So he had to sign my brother over to him. Um >> yeah, that's >> and yeah, and then he was he was a drinker from that day forward really. Um he worked he was an engineer.

[clears throat] Um and mom had so them two saw met each other when they were younger had a had a relationship departed ways. Mom went on holiday came back with my sister.

>> So dad >> was your mom pregnant when before she went away on holiday and came back with a baby. No, no. Um, my sister's dad is uh was a Spanish Spanish man from Lorett Demar.

>> Okay. >> Yeah. She used to carry his letters around cuz he kept him Yeah. My dad ripped him up though and she lost touch blast. It's quite a sad story.

>> Yeah. >> And my grandparents, my nana and granddad, beautiful people. Um, they wouldn't let because my mom and dad started to get back to together.

They wouldn't let my dad and uh take care of of Lisa. So that was another trauma for him. >> Yeah. There's layers

upon layers there straight away, isn't there?

Manchester childhood and family trauma

How many years is there between you and your sister? >> Five years. >> Five years. Okay. >> So there was that's a lot of >> I actually live in her house at the moment because I'm currently homeless.

>> Okay. Wow. >> I know. And I work in a homeless resource center, but I can't get enough points to to rehouse her. But I'll come to that bit of the story.

>> We'll get to that. So, we layers upon layers. Yeah. They took my my sister and brought her up, which in hindsight was was good because she didn't witness the stuff that I did.

>> Yeah. >> So, you were left with your violent father then? >> Yeah. He was he was really loving. I don't want to portray him in that because I've said it before, but he was Yeah, he was his temper was just >> Okay.

>> So, I grew up watching my batter my mom. So, yeah. Um because I'm tired. I'm really I'm feeling like really emotional. So [laughter] um >> we've had lots of tears on here and if that happens >> I'm not I'm not afraid of that. It's that's I like to feel >> not in a not in a morbid [laughter] way as I used to when I used to drink. I used to wallow in um like hello darkness my old friend. They used to like used to just fuel depression.

adding adding a depressant on top of depression. Yeah. >> Yeah. Bless. Yeah. But folk do, don't they? It's the mo one of the most accessible. >> Yeah. It's just because it's so socially accepted. You know, my colleague was saying yesterday I was talking about cuz my eldest is quite both my children have I've always kept that open space for them to to tell me if they're going to use substances. They'll never close that down because if I close it down, it's going to repress them and then they're going to do it secretly and then I can't >> Yeah, you can't help there, can you? You can't support any any sort of power in that then. Um, and it's there's a massive difference from when I was a teenager taking magic mushrooms and X Y and Zed. Mine was a bit exploratory and bit, wow, what's this? Looking back now, it was I was escaping very early on taking substances. Um but Ollie was like um he said to me sad he's he's one of his best mates passed away he's only 18 >> I know he ODed >> but this lad had reached out to Oie and he'd reached out to me um and this what really broke Ollie is because he felt like he couldn't save him um >> but he'd only open up in them spaces where he was in it so then trying to engage that Um, and I spoke to my boss about that and she was like, you know, this poor you, they have to be, but it still doesn't make you not feel that.

>> No, exactly. We're human, aren't we? Yeah. If you're close to somebody, you want to >> you want to help them and you take it personally if you can't, can you? Well, I do. I would.

>> Yeah. And Ollie was really like really reflecting negatively that he should have done more. And I was like, Ollie, come on, man. >> Oh, bless him. >> And um I said, you did everything. If he would have asked you to do it, would you have done it? He went, "Yeah." I said, "Did you ask me to?" He went, "Yeah." I went, "You you tried." But [clears throat] the difference when I was I was saying it because my colleague was judging me going like as I said, Oliver did some magic mushrooms in Thailand and it's not it was it's monitored and it's categorized, but he I'll give you an instance.

his friend died and he still understands his reflectivity that he's got stuff to deal with around his he was in a quite a longterm partnership a relationship from such a young age. So he said to me, "Dad, I'm going to go walking on take Loki out, which is our dog. I'm going to take him take some magic mushrooms and and just contemplate and meditate around >> the death of Kyle and and he's split up with what went on in that relationship." and and and I said that is I think for him to manifest that and and use that as substance to enlarge his consciousness is is a positive cuz I never did that. I never had that ability to be aware of reflection and navigate my emotions and my vulnerabilities and I'm like this lad's 19 you know this is beautiful.

>> Yeah. >> So when she said it I went all right so you're all right with I'll call you. Yeah. All right. Um, just give we have tit for t. We're very close. We just we we've been working together for a but it's that judgmentalness around

>> Yeah.

>> No, it's not helpful, is it? Judging >> people like >> cuz [snorts] I agree with what you've just said. I mean, that sounds to me as though a young man is being really responsible. He's wanting to explore.

He's using a substance. Whatever anybody may feel about that, I don't care. He's using a substance >> to help him emotionally. >> Yeah. To help him navigate a space of >> Yeah. to deal with a traumatic act in his life. He's not doing it >> He's not doing it for the way most people might do to escape for fun to get a be with a crowd, etc., etc. There's none of that attached to it at all by the sounds of things.

>> Well, it's the opposite escaping. I mean, he's going into it. >> He's having a look and exploring that and and that blows me away. That's why I'm like, "Yeah, >> that's wonderful." >> Um, >> so for you then, you're a young bloke [snorts] in Stockport growing up with a very loving but badtempered dad.

>> Yeah. >> And you're seeing what's, you know, your and you're experiencing living within that environment, which can't have been easy a lot of the time.

>> Oh, no. It was um [snorts] so I I grew up watching films with me dad cuz he was a big drinker. I've got a really early recolorations where we had like a flight of stairs and then the back door went out and a step into the garden. So I I remember him [clears throat] coming in not being able to stand being violently sick and me rubbing his back as a young kid to help him be sick. Um >> and then >> there's load there's so much stuff. So my mom was working like three four cleaning jobs like to make ends meet and I think she got she got caught once cuz she was working in a in a chip shop and um so the person came around to to the house and he said I've heard you've been working in a chip shop and she was like no I've not been working in a chip shop and he said well that's funny you because you served me last night.

>> Oh [laughter] oh oh red-handed. So it she would she was just trying to cope with what was being dealt. She was constantly. So we had this lone shark who used to come around and he was lovely like Malcolm.

Um >> that's not two words I thought I'd hear together. >> And he was he was lovely cuz he was and that was this was back in the day. So and he was a gay man. So he he like he used to get jumped all the time cuz people knew that he was and but the the interest rates were just it just kept people in that debt in order. So so I used to I grew up hiding behind seties you know when we saw him walking don't answer the door don't answer the door >> you know.

>> So you've got layer upon layer upon layer of trauma as a kid. >> Yeah. And then seeing the violence that was >> So what what behaviors did that manifest in you? It's gave me a massive sense of powerlessness. No, no control cuz I want a protector but I can't >> cuz when I tried I I got the same. Um and it's sad because if you met him you'd really like him. Um [snorts] he just did his own stuff.

>> Yeah. >> That's where my forgiveness comes. >> Yeah. I understand that he was imperfect and he he wasn't an he didn't do that on wasn't like a narcissist like knows that behavior and then implements it on purpose. He was just lost. Um didn't know how to deal with life. Found his comfort in alcohol >> cuz when he went to the pub, he was like the joy. Not towards the end cuz he died from alcoholism. It was it's wrote down as um a brain hemorrhage, but he had pancitis for like 12 years. Yeah.

>> You know, his stomach was massive. >> So, it may well have been the brain hemorrhage that actually >> Yeah. It was an accumulation of the poor health, physical poor health. It wasn't just So, it was smoking, not eating healthy, not drinking, no exercise. It was all of it.

>> But he drank cider, so he it rotted him. Um, >> yeah. Rough. >> Um, so growing up in that, >> I don't I don't remember having any wallpaper. I think I had some wallpaper on one wall. I had a wardrobe. It didn't have any hangers in it. Um, carpets. So, I grew up with like my mom used to smoke and instead of putting the cigarettes out, she would stand them up [snorts] and, you know, so they burn out.

>> So, I've got images now. I can I can see it. I can smell it. I can [clears throat] see the >> the top of the banister on the top of the stairs where she would put cigarettes while she's ironing um along the side and and the cigarette would then burn.

>> So there's them marks. >> So you had your brown marks on top of the rail. Um [clears throat] I think what hit me the other day was I I realized this to me partner and she was like, "Oh my Oh." And um I was never read to um never >> never >> and that will come into later on in the story. But >> mom couldn't read.

>> Your mom couldn't read. >> No, not really. >> Which >> she was literate so I can't. And that's another forgiveness when I started to cuz I was angry at my mom and dad for quite a long time. Um but then I sort of it was when I this is why I was fascinated with certain principles within that 12 steps even though I'm not massive there these negative elements to certain things and these positives and that's what sent me on my pathway because there was a certain there was a shift in me which allowed me to go from perception to perspective and it was allowed me to see other people's rather than my own perception had to it gave me a better angle and Then I started to see how was she going to teach me how to read when she can't read.

>> Yeah. >> She can't >> She did the best with what she had, didn't she? By the sounds of things. >> Transmit something she hasn't got. Can't she can't pass some on.

>> No.

School struggles, learning difficulties, and early escapes

She's working three jobs and still looking after the house. She was trying her best, wasn't she? >> And balancing. >> Yeah. >> Yeah. So when you became a teenager, did that you know you >> school was school [clears throat] was really um traumatic for me because I I think I would have been diagnosed with ADHD at that classrooms inability to read concentration is it's quite strange because I've started to since I've finished the PhD and having that like massive pressure whil working, being a parent, looking after mom and all that X, Y, and Zed. Um, I've [clears throat] started to realize that I'm I'm very heightened to certain stimulus. Um, especially noise, tapping.

Oh, and I knew it was there present because I struggled with it through union and distraction. Um, I knew it was when I did my GSE because because I got a PLP. I got a learning difficulty. They put me in they said, "Would you like a private room?" And they took me out this very quiet 100 people in a hall to put me into a room full of 10 people typing.

>> Oh, clack clack clack clack clack. >> Yeah, it was horrendous. So I started to become aware of that more. Um I'm sorry I diverted from the question. It was around home life.

>> Yeah, it was just exploring you as a teenager and how you let off steam. >> Well, my let off steam I started using substances quite early on. I was I'm I'm very I was very sporty. I'm very active.

I would find things. So I did gymnastics. I don't know why they ever got rid of the baggers, the British Gymnastics Association >> in primary schools cuz that just conditioned me as a as a child. My balance. Oh, I loved it being bodily >> energetic exercise.

Um, so after doing baggers and I loved dancing in primary school, so I was like the lead country dancer, which took us out. Yeah. Uh, and I sang in a choir. I was like I was solo. I sang in like most churches in in Stockport. And um, >> so I was very active in that. And it's quite Mrs. Comey. Oh, bless her. so she would know.

Um, >> bless you, darling. Taking you back to troubled times. >> It's all right. It's just, um, I so had to go in primary school with like black eyes.

So, she was like, uh, she knew. I think a lot of teachers knew. I really do. Um, but Mrs. comes to you. She's a dinner lady, so she used to save me food. [snorts] She used to shout me, "Come over, >> come over. Got you some after lunch and stuff like that." She was lovely. Still see a lad now. Um, still say hello. Um, but it's that I think I

always wanted to I always had dreams of like reading. I wanted to go to see artwork and I wanted to go to the theater and stuff like but um >> but the circumstances you were growing up in >> Yeah.

>> weren't allowing that to happen. >> No, they just the opportunity weren't there. >> Yeah. >> Um >> so you started you said [clears throat] you started substances.

>> Well, but just going back to that the film was a really it really it was a medium. It took me somewhere to like fantasy. It really took me out. So I think that was my first escape.

>> Okay. Okay. It was like >> that's why >> through film and and and through art um [snorts] in terms of >> films on TV or so I used to and this is why Norway is on my uh to-do list quite early. I was going to go in lockdown cuz there's a research associate [clears throat] who said come over and I'll take you on the I pronounce it wrong the fjords.

>> Yeah. Um and he said, "We'll go on a kayaking and I'll take you." Cuz I still remember being up my cuz every Sunday we would go to my nana and granddad's home and all the family would have dinner there and we'd all lie down, me and my sister, it would lie on the the the rug in front of the fire and everyone had Sunday dinner. Top button would come undone and everyone relaxes and I remember watching the Vikings. Do you remember all that with um Tony?

>> It's Kurt Douglas and Tony. He's >> I'm rubbish with names and things like that. >> There's a there's a beginning in that that film and uh it's got a very it's and the waterfalls coming down. So that's always been that's always like takes me somewhere.

>> Wonderful. >> So that was a one escape sort of thing. and obviously >> playing out and >> and I lived near some sort of uh a quarry >> so I'd be I'd be ever out there. I would be [clears throat] Yeah. Forever sort of seeking never at home.

>> So I mean there people have >> home wasn't a safe space. >> No. No. I mean people of our sort of age used to play in building sites and quaries and in the woods and things like that which kids nowadays >> don't seem to, do they?

>> It was like a BMX track up there. It's great. Yeah. >> Um, so yeah, and then substance cuz I grew up around alcohol. I grew up in a pub. So I was a very good pool player. So I grew up being in them environment. It wasn't anything.

>> So it was normal >> normal for me >> to have a drink. >> Yeah. It was like the other kids never really spoke about that. Um, and then I first I first experimented on deodorant >> to spray >> putting it in a plastic bag. Yeah. And then hailing it.

>> I know. Used to go home with like white rings around me >> about 11 something. >> Oh my goodness. >> Yeah. And then gas. >> Yeah. >> That really takes you uh it takes you somewhere.

>> And these were all your different roots of >> just Yeah. And then it was >> being present in that environment. >> Cannabis. cannabis took me and then um and then that progressed into I think mushrooms came around and and then amphetamine but that was only slight there cuz a lot of lads who were using amphetamine were um there's like older drug dealers who live close by and they would they would take quite a big amount to to work out. So they obviously inject the gear instead and then they have some wiz to uh to help pump iron.

Um >> Wow. Wow. Wow. >> So I had a little bit someone gave me about an ounce to look after one said store that in your house will and I at it all. I was up for like 3 days.

[laughter] >> I shouldn't laugh. >> I think I think that's when I realized I wasn't a very good drug dealer. [laughter] >> Thank goodness. >> I just at everything. um escapism again in it. What was I doing? Um >> yeah. And did that take you through your 20ies?

>> That progressed. It was quite sad cuz there was a lot of us who did quite a lot of experimenting and we did quite a lot um on the level of like Ollie's mate Kyle. Bless him. Um [snorts] but we were like so we do concoctions but I'd also play football so I was good at football. I got banned from rugby at M Paul because um for fighting and taking a chair leg on when I got sent off. So I ran after he was about 6'2 and I was obviously I'm quite small. So imagine in secondary school and lucky enough another teacher in there, Mr. Jackson like saw that I needed something. He ever played football? And I was like no. and he took me into under his under his wing and he allowed me to play football which was I was banned from everything. It's like things in school where I was I remember that I'd never been away, you know, never been abroad, didn't have them opportunities. And then I remember a teacher coming in the class and saying, "Who would like to go on a trip to Germany?" And I was like, "Oh." My hand was straight up and she put and everyone put their hands up and she went, "You can't go anywhere." And uh put your hand down.

>> Whoa. >> Yeah. And then she wondered why I locked her in the cupboard. And now, >> wow. >> I had a psychologist quite early on in in school as well. I was on report like for and I think the the school did the best cuz it kept me on report for like 5 years. And back then you would either go to Tatch the Ledge or Tatch the Lodge.

>> It was like the troubled kids schools as we might call them. >> And um and I had [clears throat] that and they brought a therapist in, Mrs. McCall. It's weird how you and she took me down these steps in some sort of meditation stuff and to a beach and it was yeah she was good.

>> Um >> so school wasn't your best place then was it? You didn't get let's say the full benefit from the education that was offered to you? >> No because like Mr. Davidson. He was my foam tutor. I knew when I went to Maple cuz you get picked out in a in a classroom. I I saw this big 6'4 meter Jordy crooked teeth. I knew he was going to be my [laughter] teacher and he was. But do you know what? He was he was actually he was absolutely lovely.

>> Good. >> He was um he was a gentle giant but he was also a geography teacher. He's peed but geography teacher. Okay. And he called me Devon for like three four years until I realized >> next next to my second name I was [laughter] like >> I thought >> so he'd given you a nickname [snorts] a sign of you know there affection isn't it?

>> Well he'd whistle he go used to whistle through his teeth so and he [snorts] go I can't do that. >> He'd go Devon you had too much orange juice again.

>> So he knew >> you know what I mean? I didn't know what he >> Yeah, >> they knew my behavior was like really It's quite sad because I remember getting told to get out of the class in Cornwall. You're going to have to leave. Um you're going into and this is what it was nicknamed then. It's quite bad. It's Remy. You're going into remedial. And I remember it now 106. I know exact I can picture where it is.

>> Yeah. Um, and I remember questioning, why am I being taken out of here? And he went, well, there's 32 kids in here, >> and it's 33 kids in here. If I can take you out, I can teach 32.

>> Right. It sounds as to me as though you had like the desire to learn, but because of everything that was going on for you, you just couldn't. Is that fair?

>> Yeah. Um, I didn't have the capability of processing. I didn't Yeah. I think I think looking well history's proven it to be different but um >> but that's changed considerably to where you are now hasn't it? So let's get through >> well just going back to that Mrs.

English was she that 106 was really a really good space for me. She had she was the oldest teacher in the and she just had such a calming demeanor about her. It was and there was four of us in there and none of us acted out for her.

>> Wow. none of us her teaching style was just and I got and I understood that like you know you get one kid who's disrupting and you're trying to teach I understood that um later on in life not at the time >> so yeah I always wanted to to read and stuff like that so >> so what did you do after school then so >> oh excuse me >> that's quite all right so you you were put down into the remedial classes but you did sit your GCS sees.

>> Uh, no, >> no, >> I missed quite a few and I remember it was um, >> oh god, what is it? It's um, I can't think of the term where you have A, B, C, or D. Um, >> oh, your grades.

>> Well, you know, you have questions, multiple choice questions, but you just have to like and I remember sat in and I was just coloring them in because they were literally listed A, B, C, or E. A, B, C, or E. And I remember just coloring patterns because I couldn't read the bloody question.

ah >> mostly. >> So it was a pointless exercise for you really then wasn't it? >> So mine was always memory of the words. >> Yeah. >> Not the pronunciation.

>> Um so it was very difficult for me to >> if I don't comprehend a sentence I'm never going to be able to answer, am I? >> No. No. Of course you're not. No, no, no, no. And that's a big criticism of the education system as well, isn't it?

>> Yeah. Wow. >> I know it's very dididactic and I mean it's slightly different now maybe. I don't know. Let's not go there. That's too big a topic. That's a big rabbit.

>> I don't think you get talked critically at think until you do like an MSE or a mast's level or something. So >> So you left school without qualifications.

>> Yeah. And what happened then? >> Well, I went into um physical labor cuz I was good. I was I was good at football. I was good at um exercise. I was healthy.

Substance use, addiction, and relationship breakdown

Um, so I went into I worked for Adidas >> when I was 16. That's when I realized what a UB4 what UB40 stood for the band >> cuz a UB40 is when you get put on the doll.

>> Yeah. >> And I never knew [laughter] that >> until I got a UB4 cuz I love UB40 at the time. Um, yeah, I got maybe done there and then I worked there with my sister and then I went washing hair for my auntie. So she said, "You want a job?" And I went, "What doing?" She was like washing hair in the old days. I was like, "All right, cool." And then while I was doing that, she said, "Um, do you want to go to college?" And I went, "Do I get a day off?" And she went, "Yeah, all right. I'll go college." [laughter] And then I was like, so I went like Pierre, was it Pierre Ging? Yeah. In Manchester. And I taught I learned how to It was quite interesting because I It was like I wanted to There was insecurities then because I didn't know how to speak to to girls. So I used to I used to look into magazines and like so I could talk to girls about their hair or something like that.

>> Um >> so you stud them down as well very quickly. [laughter] >> So you were studying a hairdressing type thing at college where you >> qualified as a hairdresser. Yeah.

>> Yeah. >> Purple rinses, blue rinses, anything. >> And was that a better thing to do because a lot of it was practical? >> I don't I didn't like hairdressing.

[laughter] I I only I only went to college because I got a day off. >> Yeah, fair dos. But just the learning experience, did you think you learn more because it was more practical?

>> Oh, definitely. I think um my career now is practice based. It really is. Um >> I like the interaction. Um >> I think it was just basically that I had no desire to open my own shop and continue perming hair and stuff. Um I always wanted something.

I always I did I it's quite strange because I I always saw saw through materialism. I used to always like when people used like that don't make you a better person just cuz you're wearing a >> lacrosse things or I remember having them arguments quite early on. Um so I think I've always been seeking me. I think I've always been I've always had a a deeper sense like Ollie's very >> I wasn't like him at 8 19 but I was very inquisitive.

>> Yeah. >> Questioning everything. Um [clears throat] >> so you didn't stick it out at your aunties? >> No. It was quite sad because my granddad died and um I don't really like saying this um if my auntie ever hears it but my grand I was really close to my grandad cuz my mom used to go there um all the time. We used to go every Sunday. know I I spent that's why I was really close to my sister. I spent most of my my time there. Um and when he died, they left me at the shop.

I know. And it was uh >> and I get it though. I understand that as well. That's where the healing comes. Um I know I know why she just ran off. Her dad was dead. You know, she didn't think of me in that sense. So I don't ever hold anything against her on that.

But that feeling of like >> I remember when my granddad died also on my mom's side. Um and we used to go there quite a lot as well and I loved them both dearly. Manor and granddad. Um and I was told that I was too young to go to the funeral and I was early early teens. I was definitely at secondary school. Can't remember exactly how old I was but you know definitely at secondary school.

And I turned up for school that morning. I thought, I'm not staying here. And so I wagged it. I took the day off. I was just so upset. >> Yeah. >> So I I have some appreciation of that.

So what after that then? That's obviously a pivotal moment for you, your granddad passing. >> Um cuz well, he was like the [clears throat] significant people who've been in my life and uh it's quite sad because they've all gone. Mhm.

>> Um so that sense of caregiver, he was a caregiver. Um he was safe space for me. >> Yeah. >> Uh loved him. Like so I he would take me he sort of like this is what I say about my sister experiencing a really nice thing because >> he would let me go in his shed where he had tools and just go in and cut some wood or he he'd take me in the greenhouse and show me that he's he's growing tomatoes and stuff like that.

Real different. My nana was just stunning as a as a person, you know, our family because we're all quite um big [clears throat] in a in a certain sense, but I noticed that love was shown through food and because my nana is Italian, they were Italian immigrants in Manchester in Little Italy in Ankos, which was like probably one of the most deprived areas in the 30s and stuff.

>> [clears throat] >> Um, I know there's a lot of discrimination against the Irish, but the um the Italians got it as well. Um, >> and it's quite sad because, um, well, my when I had my second lad with my exartner, Leanne, um, we I always said, "You can you carried baby, you can have the the first name, and and I'll get the second name." And and she didn't like the second name. And I was like, I want him to be called Carlo cuz that's my great greatgrandfather who was an immigrant into Scotland but was never nationalized.

He then because Mussolini changed sides, they all got arrested and put in turn. Um, and then he was escorted by his son who was in the fire service, I think, if I get it, but he was born. So, he was nationalized, >> right? And I think it I don't know the numbers but a large amount about 500 Italian 700 Germans all got put on a boat called the Andor Star which there was lots of controversy over this because it was painted battleship gray I think and stuff like that and it got sunk to go around and they all died.

>> Wow. I know. >> But when me nana told me the name I didn't know she had early onset dementia. Right. So it turns out that it it would maybe not be his name. So I had to go and tell Leanne that I'd actually [laughter] called which she didn't want in the first place. So um it's just >> what a story behind that as well.

>> I know I've totally go off. You have to pull me back please because I'm >> I will do that my darling. Do not you worry cuz I want to move forward. >> Okay.

>> Thank you for prompting me to prompt you. Um, I want to move forward to where things started to really change for you. >> I think it was the deaths really.

>> Do you think it was just after your granddad or >> there was a lot because of because of a lot of substances.

We took a lot of substances. There was a massive amount of mental health happening to all of us.

And when I was about 19, my um the paranoia in them was horrendous with us all. And my closest my best mate tried to take his own life. So he took like 50 on trips and like yeah a massive amount. And uh he survived, but sadly he's um >> he's he's still suffering today on that.

And I still see him. It breaks me out every time I see him. And um he's still there and he's that person but part of him went in that. >> So after that we all split. Um and I went into um it was quite clear as well cuz at the time rave scenes came about. Um, so ecstasy was around and it was like a quite clear split between groups and demographics of these groups like so a lot of people would either go to heroin and crack cocaine after the clubs or after this these sort of this um era or you'd go into drinking and cocaine. and I went into drinking.

Um, and I went into into the building trade. So, I I went working for uh a shop fitting company. >> Okay. >> Um, cuz I was good with my hands. Just >> sounds like a potentially quite dangerous mix there though. Building trade. I'm thinking like, you know, heights and power tools and drinking.

>> Oh, yeah. >> They don't sound like the best combination. >> Oh, one of the lads who there is a great shot fitter. He he was he would have a half a whiskey mixed in milk every morning and drink it and he'd suck cloves of garlic >> and ride a motorbike. [laughter] >> Criy. So did this was this sort of like >> a period of your life that was going to come to a head at some point and you were going to crash?

>> I No, I think that was like the start of the wor It was like the worst. It started off quite bad. I thought I found a solution by drinking because when I had a drink, it took away all that paranoia, took away all that anxiety.

[clears throat] The real temporary solution. >> Yeah. Dutch courage, it was that bump. >> And in like literature like 12step philosophy and that sort of stuff, they say that when it's quite common that I I had arrived, you know, and it's that I'm all right.

Um, so [snorts] that became that. But I [clears throat] remember my dad saying to me quite early on, "You and drink don't go, Paul." Cuz I would act out, >> right?

>> Uh, yeah. It was like everyone used to say, "You can't handle your drink cuz you're only little." And I was like, "Oh, yeah, it must be that." >> And it wasn't. It was just that once you been through what? Well, yeah. Once I started though, it was like that. I couldn't get enough of that.

>> Chasing That was your addiction was it then? >> It started into that then. Yeah. And then that became problematic in itself because I would act out, I would fight, I would say things. I wouldn't get up for work. Um, so then I started using cocaine to level the drink.

>> Oh wow. >> Cuz it puts you on an even keel. So you can drink but you you're not totally out of control um into blackout. >> And that's an expensive combination, isn't it? Well, I'd met I'd met Leanne though um when she I was 22 or 21 and she was Yeah, I was 22, she was 17. So, it was like 5 years. And I thought she would help me because she was she didn't drink, she didn't take drugs.

She showed me love, comfort straight away. Um and I thought that was like, yeah, it gave me a sense. I don't I like when I say I think at that time I don't know what what I actually think at that time. You can speculate that.

>> Yeah, absolutely. >> Um but yeah, that gave me a different a different sort of state of hope to what had been my life. [clears throat] >> Um and then that it didn't last long because my drinking became problematic.

>> Yeah. Um and then we decided to have children to I would promise that I would change after we had this responsibility. Um and looking back having children just compounded my inability to live really which I was already struggling with anyway.

>> Impossed well that was about 22 so it carried on. It carried on for another 10 years. Okay. >> Just getting worse

and because and then towards when she when we had Oliver. So it must have been um Ollie was Yeah. when she was pregnant with Oliver and the year before I'd started to someone had showed me how to wash cocaine to crack.

>> Okay. >> Yeah. So then I was off on the crack and that's a different beast. That's like >> I've seen things on television about how dangerous it is.

>> Yeah. The alcohol's like cuz alcohol lean used to always say it was I was there was a predictable unpredictability of how I would be. You just you did not know. And then once I cuz I had I used to have these fears of like waking up cuz I was a morning drinker and my mom was in it with me. So my mom was my drinking partner.

>> Oh wow. Kushid. So when I going back 2002, my dad died through that and that was a massive >> um massive thing cuz I'd lost >> Yeah. >> my role model um and I'd lost my older role model in my grandad.

>> Also goes back to my grandma before that losing her was another significant. But um so I used to it got to the point where I first started daily drinking in L in oh god what's it called in angles can't >> what's >> oh the bridge >> what's it yeah but what's that area called it's uh we did the university I was working there doing the university ripping the floors up and putting new floors down >> and that was the first time I started because you're in that building trade the drinking was a very cultural thing so I used to play for the pill team on a on a Monday night. I did some on a all involved alcohol.

>> So when we used to do that and you drink every night when you're when you're working away in digs, but then I'd started in the afternoon and that's when I started to notice along that with then obviously smoking crack towards the end was uh was and and obviously smoking heroin. So >> were the hard drugs, the cracking, the heroin, what eventually became your undoing and took you >> alcohol.

>> So it was that that took you into >> My one go to was alcohol always. >> So when did you get to the point where you were like, "This has to stop. I'm going to go into recovery. I'm going to do the 12 steps." When did that come?

>> I think I I was I was searching to change constant. I'd get in psychosis and write on the wall what I wanted to do. Like marry, learn how to read, learn well, it wasn't that. It was learn how to spell cuz when I got my mom out of that house, me and my friend went around, it was still on the wall.

>> Wow. >> Learn kung fu. It was like bit psychos, but there was a lot of truth in that. Um, learn how to dance, sing, stuff like that. Um, so it got it got quite when the when the crack had a hole for a few years. That was the worst time. Crack will take you there quicker than alcohol will. I I believe it took me to a a lower point very quickly because it hits you financially. The deceit around that.

>> Yeah. >> You know, it's like so I used to play for a quite decent football. So I used to train on a on a Thursday night. the drinking had progressed, but I could train at a level by drinking some shorts and or quarter bottle of vodka or whiskey or whatever I could get in. And the lads who were training at like semi-pros, they'd be like, "You stink of real, man." And I'm like, "Nah, nice.

It's from the night before." You know, I'd have to lie. So, I was constantly living in a lie >> of deceit. And that is just so trying to get out of it but not know how to get out of that >> just perpetuates you using that to escape that feeling. So it's such a vicious cycle of >> Was there a significant event that occurred?

>> Well, I got >> it drew the line in the sand. >> Yeah. Being really honest, didn't I? As well. Well, I got there were big things what happened. So, I got done for drink driving and uh cuz I'd tell myself that I was going out, but subconsciously I knew what I was doing. It was on in there.

>> I had an argument with Leanne. I said, "I'm going to my mom's cuz my mom was." So, I used to I used to ring my mom cuz my mom was drinking and I'd say, "Me and Lyanna are coming up at 2:00." And she'd go, "What in about 2:00?" And I'd say, "Come in at 2:00." She'd go, "Oh, right.

I'll put your two double large whiskies behind the toilet downstairs. So, she was in it with me. >> Rouses, >> you

know, she was in it. She was in that deceit. Um, >> and I think cuz I went had an argument with Leanne. Couldn't handle that life.

Went towards my mom's. Went in a pub in the morning, knocked on at 9:00, got in. And lucky enough, someone rang the police when I left cuz I don't remember leaving. And I don't remember having a fight. I got in the van. I started to be sick cuz my work's van uh conked out, went unconscious. The reason why I know all this is it's in the police report.

>> Okay. Yeah. >> Then I turned the van on to drive to my mom's which is about 500 yards up the road >> and then the police tried to stop me. >> Um and I got NFA with it. No further action because they watched me. They got they got a phone call. They watched me then get in a van then be sick then wait until I wake up before the they should have intervened as soon as that I walked to that soon as I had them keys in my hand.

>> Yeah. >> You know cuz it was a police chase. >> Wow. >> And I sort of come to my senses within this chase and I was like what am I doing? >> Right.

>> I thought what am I doing? >> Bit of a Eureka moment. >> Whoa. What am I doing? And because I'd went up, I drove at a policeman. Um uh and then as the other policeman come around the corner, I was like, "I'm sorry, mate. I've just I don't know what I'm doing. Um I've just come to my senses." And he went, "Wow, mate. You" And the first policeman was like, "Wow, mate. You didn't have take off there." He was like, >> he was dead. The other one just battered me >> rightly so cuz then could have killed him. Um that didn't even change me.

cuz I couldn't I want I wanted I wanted but I didn't know how to get it out. Um >> the turning point was I' I'd have an argument I'd escape. Leanne had find me. So I've had Leanne knocking on the crack house. We're 6 months pregnant with me mom on crutches with me van parked outside. And I'm telling the guy, tell him not, hey, that's the level of it where it destroys sort of families. Um, and I'm not proud of that. Um, but it was not it was a I can't remember when it was, but I was lay on the floor and Lyanna had found me in my mom's unconscious and um my mom was like shugging me going, "You've got to get up for work." Cuz they propped me up. They would save me. um I needed to fall. Um but they would keep me in work by getting me up. Um and I remember feeling shameful not to acknowledge open my eyes because I know I'm in trouble and I'm feeling pretty horrible in that sense. I remember Leanne saying, "You can't blame me. Don't have a going, Barbara.

>> [snorts] >> So much pain, darling.

Turning point and first steps into recovery

And >> it was it was loving cuz she said uh he's not doing she said he's not doing this on purpose. She said he's not well. So it was Leanne that realized and [snorts] >> Yeah.

And then she went to [snorts] and then I promise again I'm going to try and change. I'll go go to drug and alcohol services. I went to drug and alcohol services.

Um and they told me to drink. >> I've heard that coming off cold turkey is not a good idea. >> I know it's a drink down. It's to it's to stop you having seizures if you level and I get it. But that was a green light to me.

>> Yeah. That was a that was a a thing of uh and I can remember going outside and saying Leanne I've got a drink and she was like tell them to [__] off you can't drink. She knew >> and I think I had I there was another instance because I was seeking treatment. I knew at that stage I said Leanne I need I need to be taken out of society. I can't be trusted cuz I would give her control of the bank card. I give her the money and 10 minutes later when I meet itching for a drink or something and then having a go at her >> saying she's controlling or do you know um and I remember getting I got arrested for something um having a fight with a police officer again uh a taxi and then and someone saying to me um right we're going to test you for okay and I was like I've not cocaine any drugs and it came up positive so they sent me to an assessment rehab which later on in I've started to work for a turn.

>> Yeah. At that point though, it was like >> I remember he put a healthy boundary in I don't I said it to him one day

um cuz I went in and I went all right mate and he went just let's get one thing straight. I'm not your mate. And at that point my door you know at that moment I was open as a possibility and because it was that I you mate that rejection bump my wall come up again then. And then I was like, "Fuck you then." >> And off I went. Um, and I think it was the darkness in my mind was the it was it was my friend the turning point. I'm starting to it was Johnny Schulz shorts me. And he said, uh, it was after I'd been on a bender and I'd got back in work and I was feeling low and he was like, it was very strange that day cuz I was in this warehouse and I could it I felt like the walls were coming in on me like very much like a like a vibration.

And I remember him saying, "What is it? What's your issue, Paul?" He said, "You've got you've got somebody who loves you. You've got a young boy. You've got all your family adore you.

You're good at work. And that was the moment when I just I just I think I admit that I don't know. >> I really don't know. I was confused and I was I was done. And that was my turning point. That admittance that I uh I didn't know.

>> So now >> Yeah. >> I [snorts] first when I got to know you was just Paul the Wellspring. >> Oh yeah. And that was how I knew you but nothing else for a while. Tell me about the wellspring.

>> Right. I think the journey has to carry on to why I'm there really. >> Okay. >> Yeah. So from so from that point there I rang Alco anonymous and this woman spoke to me in a way that I'd never been spoken to ever. She she knew exactly or she expressed exactly how I felt in her own experience and her thought patterns and her behavior and I just thought [__] she knows some there's some here. Um and then a gentleman picked me up, Peter. He he came around from the phone line.

Someone came around and took me to my first meeting and he was just another really lovely guy. Reminds me very much of [snorts] the Mr. English in the 106 remedial. Um and he spoke about fear of the boogeyman and fear and um and that was the turning point. Um lucky enough, they asked someone to take me through the 12 steps. They took me through the 12 steps. Um, and that's where I really got interested in the 12 steps. I weren't too interested in the social aspects of the meetings and stuff like I really there was something deeper and that's what shifted me allowed me cuz I like to start there really because that's my perspective but shifted my perception of people and understanding of why that that they were all imperfect.

They didn't like do it on purpose. They weren't horrible. They weren't um cruel. >> They just had their own imperfections. >> Yeah. >> And that that sent me on a way then to just going myself.

That sent me on a pathway to wanting to to learn to read. Well, wanted to go to college. I wanted to do psychology straight away. So, I jumped in, signed up. I was working full-time. Harrison was born. Ollie Harrison was one, Oliver was three when I got sober and off substances.

>> Congratulations, by the way. >> Yeah. And um I started maths and psychology. It's funny that shied away from the one. Um and I did GCSEs and Leanne did her English GCSE at the same time. And she had a onetoone with this lady called Nikki Charles. She's significant. Um, I remember bringing so I started then got a job for Acorn Recovery Projects in in Stockport and Manchester uh in the in the housing and um I remember bringing a Leanne brought the results down to us cuz we got the results and I remember opening them and Leanne passed and I had failed and I remember Leanne crying and me saying, "Why are you crying?" And she was like, "Because I passed and you failed." And I said, "It's all right, Le." She went, "What do you mean?" And I was like, "I can't read." Um, [snorts] probably big to make. Yeah. Massive, >> massive turning point for me. Just like I needed help and I didn't know why I was drinking or I was lost.

So, these are big turning points. Um, and she went, "Come and meet." And this is why I don't really go for certain amounts of 12step sort of fellowships and that because there's a there can be power structure in there where sponsorship and roles of like mentorship they just to show you how to implement a certain principle in your life for you to take that you know to empower that not to not a life coach you know and and this >> and I sort of like so Leanne saying come meet this woman and and then I had an era of of somebody else saying no no just you've got fear you just need to do it and that was around [snorts] um learn direct so it was on computers I'd never turn a computer on in my life you know what I mean it's just a so I went and met this lady and she said Nikki Charles

lovely lady um she's mentioned in my my thesis uh and she said have you ever been screened and I went for drugs and she was like uh know um for dyslexia and I was like I don't even know what that is and she went I Paul you've got learning difficulty [snorts] know two ways about it so she part screened me sat down with me and uh did support onetoone while I did my English GCSE um which I passed >> y wonderful >> yeah and then she she put me I did my maths as well and then she put me for I started to do my A levels access course so it's like three A levels in in a short space of time. I think it was like nine months. Um and then she put me in for some award which cuz she couldn't believe how far I'd come in like a year to reading beginnings of acade academic journals or so and I won this Northwest Learner which me and the boys went to London to receive at the I know. Yeah.

>> You clearly had it in you and it just hadn't been brought out. >> Yeah. Portullus house and like me it was it was fantastic. It was great. Um, and then I don't know where I'm going, but there was breakdowns in the relationship still there. I need to mention that because when I got sober, I got this new lease of life and that that dependency on Leanne started to come towards myself, which then left her in a state of like I'm not needed anymore. So, there was fractions within the relationship. And [snorts] to be honest, the amount of dishonesty and the lies and the um carnage what I brought to that I broke a lot of trust and and uh and that I I'll mention that that that that never healed that around that. Um I don't think it was all I think as people you grow. So we were together 27 years so and people change.

>> Yeah. And uh >> you were going through a massive change in your life as well. >> Yeah. So I did my A levels still focused on the psychology um to hopefully do a a degree in psychology um which was my GCSE was the hardest. The A levels were hard. In the time of my A levels though my granddad had passed, my dad had passed. My brother-in-law became my dad, >> right? M looked after me. Whenever I got in trouble, he'd always be there. He was an Andy lad. Um and I got [snorts] a phone call of my sister of my mom saying that Gary died and that >> another big blow.

>> Yeah. At the same time when Nana was had dementia. So at the beginning of the end of my drinking, she started to get dementia and I go and see her in stepping and and this she she'd say things like, "Please don't leave me here, Paul. Please don't leave me here. Please take me. And I couldn't I could not handle that. So I'd run straight from there across to the off license and buy a drink. Couldn't cope with that emotional.

>> The difference with Gary is [snorts] I'd started to be able to regulate my emotions. I started to navigate. That's where I was really interested in these these sort of principles within this 12step philosophy because they're very good at navigating it in introspection into emotion, understanding what these emotions are, where they're stemming from. Exact. Like I like the old stuff where it's either rooted in um the the basic sort of fear is like it's rooted in something that I'm not going to get or something that I'm going to lose. M >> and there's a fear of that which keeps the angst and um and it was heartbreaking for Lisa.

Absolutely.

Education, healing, and supporting his mother

And the kids um and I'll never forget it. Uh especially Liv, not demissing Jay, minimizing Jay. It was just the way Liv it broke me that. Um so that was another another thing. Then my nana had dementia, bless her, and she passed away. So watching that, watching someone mentally go and then physically >> Yeah.

>> It's hard, isn't it? >> Yeah. And there was a lot of So there was a lot of deaths in the space of um this time and then um I started to do my undergrad. Um, and Lyanna had just got this new job and then she had this new lease of life and she did what I did but our relationship was broke >> and she went working like 48 hour shifts X Y Z and I started to it was the first time that I'd ever looked after my kids on my own for like 48 hours. [snorts] Uh, and I mean like never done the washing and was very good at all that sort of stuff and I never did it. So it was like a mini breakdown. Mom was my mom started to have alcohol seizure at that time and this was a really significant aspect of it as well that I got sober and my mom was my drinking partner. She didn't she went downhill and I couldn't save her. That plays out in my pattern of [snorts] couldn't save my dad. That's another um probably why I'm in the role that I do.

Um especially the area that I research. [clears throat] So mom was having fits every night like seriously falling down the back of stairs. Could have broken it.

>> Yeah. Um I was in my final year of my undergrad and I was looking after my kids for the first time and the monot the monotonous of that getting up in the morning and getting the breakfast ready for hurry up you need we're going to be late for school X Y and Z have you got your bag get sandwiches don't jump on that grass I'm not washing them pants tonight I've only got two pairs for the week and we buy like five shirts so you won't have to so you just don't have to do it all the time. [snorts] Um, and at the end of it, I managed to mom worked really poorly. They misdiagnosis for a delirium. I took her out of her home, put her in a home. Um, finished my undergrad.

Um, got a I got a distinction in my I got two I got a 21-1 in my um overall. I got first in my dissertation, but I just missed on a first on the >> Well done.

>> Yeah. On the overall 66% or something. Um, and I realized that I could look after my kids on my own. >> Two huge. >> And at that time though, um, there was something going on. And I won't go into that cuz I don't want to, um, [clears throat] >> put anybody in a bad light, but, um, I I was going to leave. Um, and we tried to do it again. Um and the sadness after that mom I went to the nursing room one night and she was like so some of the time she'd be like your dad's been here. I said he is he all right cuz he's and she's like yeah and then PJ which was a a dog she's [clears throat] here as well. The a week after I went back one night she was like [snorts] um you promised me you'd bring the M facts last night. I was like what?

She'd remembered and I thought what's going on it there was a shift. asked her some more questions. I said, "Where has my dad been?" She was like, "What are you talking about? Your dad's dead." And I was like, she was And I was like, "What about the dog?" And she was said, "Paul, you're freaking me out now.

What's going on?" I went and spoke to the manager. She went, "Paul, she needs a reassessment. She ain't got dementia." So, I was like, "What? I've took her stuff out of her house." >> Oops.

>> The best thing about that was she needed to She had steps up, steps down. She can't bend any >> She needed a level by the sounds of things. >> Yeah. But all the people who she was drinking with five of them on there, they were all doing it. So then we got her diagnosed again. She come out, we thought she was okay and we got her a nice um sort of like self-supporting flats area. Best thing ever. Like they were putting nights on.

She It was like she was a teenager again. She went, "Oh, I can't wait this X Y and Zed on tonight." Um but the brain went again. That's when we knew it was the red diagnosis was cause cost and it was alcohol dementia >> and it was and the reason I say this is because I implemented everything that my skill set around social work assessment and medication change her diet I took over controlling me and my sister took over the the health side so we try and get her on nutrition >> trying to monitor her drinking trying to monitor her cigarette intake but the one thing I couldn't have any power in was what the alcoord done to the brain.

>> Yeah, of course. >> And while this was all going on, you'd graduated. >> Yeah. >> And carried on your educational journey. >> Yeah. So then I got a scholarship for doing my masters in psychology which I [snorts] looked into um like narratives of recovery. Um and I tailored it into alcoholics because I had a lot of connection. it was accessible. Um >> cuz I was really interested in that self dialogue and the stories we live by and how we how our stories define who we are and stuff like that. We can cuz and what it was really important what came out cuz it was like there's a service in Stockport which we we sort of push people towards is facilitated. It's a reduction in motivation program in Stockport run by it's on a penine care and it's um run by ACOM really subcontractors but there's a power in the facilitator delivering which looks at consequences to addiction looks at patterns of behavior looks at all different angles but there's a power in the person delivering it we found in that that they could break the narrative which has been sustaining these people and holding them in a space they could break through that quite quickly >> and not diminish not diminishing anything away from practitioners and >> of course not there's many different modalities isn't there >> yeah and [clears throat] um there was just something significant in that um and I was interested then how we then re reauor ourselves through that shame and stuff like that so >> and you didn't stop with the masters either did you >> no no I got distinction in my masters again >> um >> so then I went working for just the wellspring and I didn't know what it was. Um and the wellspring is just it's a beacon on its own. It really

is. It was purposebuilt.

It's a homeless resource center for um and the strategy really focuses on at risk of homelessness um street homelessness entrenched rush sleepers and that's the main essence but it's a lot broader than that. Um so anybody presents at that door um with any aspect of trauma um we don't turn away and we try and help in whatever way we can.

>> How wonderful. >> Um it's [snorts] based it's it's it's a beautiful place. It's um it's governed by a really good board of trustees which covers lots of disciplines. So our chair is a is a family lawyer. So we got consulting uh managing consultants, we've got architects, we've got engineers, we've got people in the church community, whatever that is. And in then trickle down into Alex Knight who's our manager, she's just beyond her years. So when I say about like this lived experience has a powerful effect. There's only three people for Wishi um who have ever seen a level of care and love and empathy for human beings and that was Alex Allison blew me away taught me so much >> and I guess it's also part of your own healing journey as well the work that you're doing now.

The Wellspring, PhD work, and helping others

Yeah, I think my whole my whole career is based on trying to help someone. Um, >> that's wonderful. >> Yeah. Trying to explore. So, the wellspring in itself then Alex is a social worker by trade. Dora's worked in Dora Allison. She's worked in service.

She's worked with kids in deprived areas on Gausy Bank who now she's working as adults with their children who are still stuck. >> Mhm. you know, but her networking skills in Stockport and probation, police, GPS, mental health, um, social work, housing, everything. Um, we have another Lisa Cooken, social worker by trade, Moana, Merch, Rose, nurse, come from MRI.

>> So, you've got lots of wonderful specialties all there to help these people. >> Yeah. A very good skill set. Tula, Paulie, Ben, both in recovery. Aaron run children's homes. very good with the young population, young males um in my area obviously addiction and stuff but >> a lot of education going on I guess.

Yeah, we also have an an advanced prescribing practitioner three days a week, walking surgery, GP twice a week, really access, which is quite sad cuz [snorts] >> there was an incident yesterday. So, we were sto stood on a train bridge in Stockport. Um, so one of our one of our lads is um pure mental health.

what that diagnosis is needs to be defined and categorized. But he turns up and he'd been kicked out of hospital by a certain doctor on the ground [snorts] as a parent. I don't know if this is true that he's assaulted one of our staff.

Our nurses then ring and state that that's not actually true. Tried to calm him down. Rang 999 said he's going to kill himself. Um 4:00 comes, police have still managed to get hold of him. Um he was already under a section, so he was come out and then we get a phone call that he's on the bridge.

So we finished at R4 and two of the colleagues were already there. Um and lucky enough he got down, but we then leased with our nurses. This is all outside of ours. manager was there um to take him to MRI to because obviously there was some issue with that treatment in MLport. Um >> so you're now supporting very acute cases, emergency cases, long-term cases.

>> Yeah, massive that that environment is is traumatic for staff. >> Yeah, for sure. So, we've had so many deaths, it's unreal. And you get you get to know. So, the biggest one of the biggest pluses about the Wellspring is we have the most engagement because we offer food, showers, clothing, health care, charges, benefit, support, whatever.

>> Yeah. >> So, it's a very So, you get emotionally >> attached. >> Yeah. >> And you've written a thesis for a doctorate, I believe. Um well yeah while I was working at the wellspring uh an opportunity came up to um to apply for a funded PhD and um I did went through it and I managed to get it and secure it and the wellspring didn't want to lose me in that sense as well.

They uh they kept me on for like 10 hours a week um to hold hands with people who were not engaging in services or to really focus and target population around who needs to engage. It's like what like people getting punished for engagement when the issue is they lack the capacity to engage. So it's like that's discrimination is it? You're having a go at someone for not having the capability of doing something. Um like when I first day I think first week and a probation rang me officer around me and went where's X Y and Zed and I said well he's just rocked up now. She well I'm going to breach him because he's uh he's not turned up again. I said he's just woke up out the bush just behind the trees.

He ain't got a phone. He ain't got a diary. He ain't got a reminder set. You know you what you need to wake up here. Um, so I think the basis of that is we're advocates, but we were a skill set of advocates. And I've not used me title.

Well, I have used it once, but that was cuz some social worker >> was trying to >> Yeah. >> position herself above people without understanding who them people were.

>> Well, >> um, anyway, let's go on. I would like [snorts] to finish this off to round this up this incredible story that you've told by saying you in my mind are now an incredible role model for all these people. You have brought yourself from layers upon layers of trauma all the way through your early life through a variety of substance abuses through not getting any benefit from the education system because of what's happening to being somebody who is not only now working in the field and supporting others finding themselves most likely at similar points with a different story to the journey you've to a man who is now educated to the highest degree.

>> Congratulations, my love. >> Oh, thanks >> and thank you so much for >> I'll send you I'll send you the papers. They're in >> Excellent. >> Yeah, you'll like it. It's in relation to identity, so it's around >> that' be wonderful.

>> Self-perception, stuff like that. >> Thank you so much and coming and sharing. >> You're welcome. Was that all right? >> Yeah. Perfect.