

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / E260: Russell Brand FINALLY Opens Up: Escaping A Lifetime Of Anxiety, Addiction & Finding Love!

That's a brilliant evil question.

It's evil.

I've asked so many people this question, no one's ever wanted to answer it.

Well, here I am.

Russell Brand is one of the most famous comedians in the world.

Actor and author.

He's one of the most unmistakable performers on the planet.

You don't have to be around when the laugh just stops.

Your earliest years are particularly hard to read.

Drugs and self-harm, your mother's illnesses.

How do we go on the journey of changing?

Wow.

This is proper diary of the CEO's stuff.

There is deep spiritual appetite within all of us for connection.

But we have a culture that is predicated upon individualism and materialism.

My initial solution to feeling disconnected and lonely was to try and become famous.

If you are using impermanent means to achieve a permanent solution, you can only fail.

But what I would say is, is in that loneliness, in that sense of I'm not good enough,

I'm worthless, are all the ingredients of success because it is, sadly, a gift to you.

What could I have added to 10-year-old Russell's life,

do you think that would have made him feel valued?

You are enough.

You are sufficient.

We are going to be okay.

What told you otherwise?

Russell Brand is one of the most fascinating individuals I have ever spoken to.

A former, self-harming, heroin addict, self-confessed, narcissist,

bulimic that craved fame and attention and was so addicted to sex

that he slept with five women a day that married Katy Perry three months after meeting her and then divorced her with a text message.

Have you ever felt that subtle feeling that the way you're living is not quite right?

That something somewhere is out of balance.

That you're not living your life as that human somewhere inside you should be living their life.

The Russell Brand that sits before me today can relate.

And he's found a new cure for that feeling.

A better way to handle pain.

A new blueprint to live by, which he believes that you and me and all of us will eventually realise through failure and frustration.

We are all addicts, searching for ways to feel less pain through porn and screens and sugar and addiction and drugs and whatever our vices might be.

But maybe, just maybe, maybe Russell is right.

And maybe there is a simple cure for all of us right there in plain sight.

Russell, I read a comment at the top of a YouTube video that of an interview you did.

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And this was the comment, this man is a hero.

He's truly an example of transcendence across the spectrum from the archetype of selfishness enthralled by addiction to complete self-ness and self-awareness.

I love this man with all of my heart.

Wow.

That was a comment left regarding you on a recent interview you've done.

Now, I'm going to be completely honest with you.

I should admit that I wrote that comment.

Like, sometimes I do, even though I know I've written it, when I read it back, it still gives me a boost.

I said to you before we start talking, I wanted to talk about disconnection.

Yeah.

Disconnection for me and my life started early.

Disconnection for me was coming to the UK from Africa as the only black kid went to Plymouth.

Everyone's richer than me.

Everyone's white.

And that pursuit of filling that void of whatever it was, that shame, that insecurity, which is very clearly the reason I'm sat here.

What do we need to know about your childhood?

How did it shape the man that sits in front of me today?

I have had a life that has been defined by addiction.

And the addiction, and in particular the models of recovery that are available for addiction, is a convenient framework for addressing the problems we have in our age that are expressed extensively and identifiably through materialism and attachment.

I get attached to stuff.

I was, when I was a little boy, I grew up in a single parent family, just me and my mum.

I come from an ordinary background in Essex, Grays.

Ordinariness, normalcy.

These can be terms that are difficult to define.

But I think we all know what we mean when we say a normal, ordinary, modest, blue-collar background,

low expectations, state schools.

We know what images that conjures.

My mum was sick a lot when I was a kid, and my mum was the defining influence in my life.

All of us that are lucky enough to have mothers are going to be defined by that relationship as well as the other parental relationship.

I feel like real early on, something in me, which I would now, because it's almost impossible, even not to reverse engineer these narratives, isn't it?

And to thread it through with newly accrued and acquired wisdom.

But I feel that I was looking for something.

I feel that there is a deep spiritual appetite within all of us for connection, the subject that you have identified as our framing for this conversation that we are having.

But we do not have a culture that presents us a discourse around connection.

We have a culture that is predicated upon individualism and materialism, your value.

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And this is, I think, across the political spectrum, and even in more compassionate narratives around identity.

Individualism is still enshrined as the centrifugal point.

So I felt like that I was in a state of lack.

I don't know what it is to be a man.

I don't know what it is to be a success.

I don't know what it is to have power.

I don't know what it is I recognize now, even to feel at ease, even to feel serene, even to feel relaxed, is probably only by the time I got clean from crack and heroin and alcohol.

But I'd noticed that I'd been having an anxiety attack for basically my entire life.

When I first told my life story, which is an ordinary exercise at treatment centers that help people to get rehabilitated from chemical dependency, and I was fortunate enough to go to one,

when the fella read it, Chip Summers, one of the first people in recovery I ever met, when he read it, he went, poor lonely little boy.

And I was 27 then.

So I suppose my life has been defined by addiction and addiction is in part a lack of connection and attempt to synthesize the connection to self, other and God.

God of your own understanding, perhaps understood as a totality, a sense of unity, a unity of force, a highest principle, when it says in the Old Testament, worship no other gods than me, the implication I offer is that we are a species that worships.

And if you do not access the divine, you will worship the mandil, you will worship the profane, you will worship your own identity, you will worship your belongings, you will worship the template lane before you by a culture that wants you, no, wants you, but gets you distracted and relatively done.

So my initial solution to feeling weak and disconnected and lonely and somehow silently brilliant was to try and become successful, was to try and become famous, was to try and have resources, to try and address all of the problems of my original condition.

My original condition culturally and socially as I saw it was lack of power, lack of value, lack of connection, lack of influence.

And what does our culture tell us is the solution to this?

Be somebody and my God, I'm talking about a long time ago now,

I'm talking about in the 80s and the 90s.

Now the culture is amplifying that message a hundred fold with a million screens in every direction, 50 lenses like the eyes on the inside of a fly rather than the almost 2D experience of lenses that I grew up with.

What could I have added to 10 year old Russell's life?

Do you think that would have made him feel valued?

10 year old, I reckon, mate, now that I'm a dad and you can't be a father to anyone else until you're a father to yourself is a sense that who you are is all right.

You're all right.

You don't need to worry that you are enough.

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You are sufficient.

We are going to be OK.

What told you otherwise?

All conditions.

It isn't the broad cultural message.

You are insufficient.

You will not be sufficient until you acquire this body, these objects, this approval, these affiliations.

I don't even think it's personal to me.

Like, whilst, like, you know, necessarily our conversation has to be framed by sort of biographical denial that's particular to me.

Don't you find that when you know anyone's story really, that the universal was there waiting for you, that there is a ubiquity of this message?

How many times have you heard people that are hugely successful say, I felt inferior.

I didn't feel good enough.

I wanted to achieve this.

I didn't have this or that.

It's like, it's else wise, what could you have achieved?

Else wise, what could Joseph Campbell have achieved?

Were there not archetypes strewn about us, maps waiting to be discovered?

It's true.

Most people that sit here, that have achieved phenomenal things are, it starts with a story of not being enough and you often wonder whether they're driven or dragged.

Driven by their own, you know, because they're framed in books as driven.

But in reality, they're being dragged by insecurities and shame and all of these things.

That feeling of not enough, your earliest years are particularly, particularly hard to read.

And I'll be completely, when I read about the circumstances of your earliest years,

I do see a story that is very unique in the sense of self-harm, your mother's sicknesses and her illnesses, and there's that guy underneath there that knew he was brilliant, as you say, believed he was brilliant, brilliant in what way?

Well, I suppose, and I find this to be quite common to addicts and alcoholics, there's this pre-metabolized quality that's waiting to be activated.

Now, brilliant is obviously a comparative and relative term and the training I've been fortunate enough to receive prohibits me from leaning too heavily into a framing like that now, like superior to, better than, but I feel that I had a sense of a resource that was waiting to unfold.

I had a sense that there would be a secondary coordinate that might arrive in the form of a destination, all energy at the most fundamental level requires polarity, it requires polarity.

And I suppose that word parent in and that word parenthesis, another word for bracket in suggests that you need to be held in some way, you need something that's going to be able to hold you.

Now, if like me, I believe in God, Steven, so the thing that defines me now is I believe in God, and I don't believe that I have unique access to God or superior access to God, or that there's this little set of dances or codes or clothes that need to be worn to access

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God more primarily or more privately, I believe that in an absolute loving God that all of us have the right to be here, that I don't need no special adornments or epithets or epilets or badges or medallions, that it's enough for me to be one of everybody else. Back then, though, as a little kid, when I felt inferior and broken, I just wanted to feel a little bit special.

I wanted to feel a little bit valuable.

And I suppose the first time that I really felt that was making people laugh, doing a school play at my little school, Gray School, Bussy Malone, and feeling the overwhelming, terrifying adrenaline and the accompanying sense of competence that comes with being able to corral and direct that energy when it comes, a sense of purpose, revelation. When you ask like, you know, what could you have added and what do you mean by silently brilliant, like, I don't want to feel better than no one else no more.

I don't want to feel worse than anyone else.

And I want to participate in other people's becoming who they are intended to be.

There's a beautiful phrase in recovery you may enjoy, we recover the person we're intended to be, that somehow we can respect individuality, limitless, limitless diversity, while somehow accepting that there is something unitive among us, something collective to be realized and achieved.

So I suppose it was my own savoring of my particularness that I was experiencing, even know, and this is no fault of my parents, although I might analyze my culture, I felt that that I couldn't express it, and I didn't know what value it had, and what its use was. It was inutile, until the culture tells you it can be monetized, or it can be mobilized in order to.

Now that framing isn't necessarily one that I would ordinarily gravitate to, but that's the one that is available to that is the totemism of our culture.

That's the paradigm that we are offered.

So I suppose that's the one that many of us inevitably pursue.

Do you have any emotional sentiment towards that young man's circumstances as you look back on what he, the situation he was in and what he was experiencing?

Do you feel, you feel sorry for him, you know, do you feel happy for him?

What should you feel anything towards?

Laterally, due to the principles of recovery, due to the fact that I have mentors, I have peers, I have people that look to me for guidance, I have service, I have duty, responsibility.

Laterally, Stephen, I come to feel incorporated with that little boy.

But if you'd spoke to me 10 years ago, I doubt I would like to have heard him referred to.

I wouldn't have liked that spectre to have risen a phantom I'd happily put aside.

But now, like that little boy, like hopefully the little boy that you described down there in Plymouth of all places, that famous rock from where they depart across the oceans, that personal Mayflower journey, he's with me now.

I love him.

And he's like, he is a great asset when I'm dealing with young, vulnerable, broken people.

When people tell me that they want to end their own lives, when people tell me they self-harm, until people tell me they want to kill themselves, that they can't cope with

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life, they don't feel that they're good enough, I'm not phased.

I can stay 100% present with that.

And that is a great gift, no?

Was there, I think about this a lot with myself, was there another path to where you are now?

Yeah, probably, mate.

Probably.

I mean, look, you've made like, you know, you've made a lot of people, I know a lot of people.

But for me personally, I'll just tell you why I asked that question.

I believe that I had a belief that was ill-informed by the society I lived in.

And I believe I had to pursue that belief to find out that I was wrong and have it fail me.

Well, it's happened now.

Now it has happened.

So the answer is 100% of course, absolutely indefagably, this is the reality that was designed for you internally, that your consciousness is creating this reality.

This reality is not coming externally at you.

This consciousness is unfolding from within you in the moment.

Where else could it be?

Where else could it be?

But potentially, limitless alternatives, potentially unbridled possibility.

And for you, you think you could have become the man that sat in front of me now via a different pathway?

Yeah, but also know, like I suppose I'm saying is I accept this, the path that I've walked and that, you know, that I'm sort of continuing to walk.

And I suppose anyone that's engaged in the process of recovery has to, as a part of that, accept the various chapters, episodes that have led to that.

I mean, I think that's part of self-acceptance.

Part of self-acceptance is to appreciate and understand the various steps that have led you to where you are.

And just again, I think, to reiterate that that's why I mentioned addiction and recovery early on, because it provides you with access to an archetype, but this is who I was.

This is the way that I lived.

This is the way that I tried to handle the challenges that life gives you, impermanence, temporality, death, inequality, hypocrisy, destruction, all of these things that sort of are pervasive, whether that's cultural or simply part of being in a temporal and spatial reality, recovery gives you a different set of tools, a different way to deal with those same challenges, which for one of a better word, I will call spiritual, a spiritual solution to what I regard now as a spiritual problem, once again, tagging our idea of connection that you've helped us set up this conversation using.

Spirituality as a form of connection.

A lot of people are put off by the term spirituality, because it sounds a little bit exclusive and a little bit, but I would class myself now as being spiritual.

Thanks in part, I have to say to my partner, who is a breathwork instructor, and I met in

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Bali and so on, but one of the quotes that I love from you is like many desperate people, I need spirituality, I need God, or I cannot cope in this world, I need to believe in the best in people. Since I've become spiritual, I've found that it's easier to be alive. Spiritual, what is that word? Spiritual literally means not material, that's what it means, it's not observable or measurable. The problem perhaps that we have nowadays is that we live in a quantitative reality where all things are measurable, where all things are based predicated on rational principles, but all of us know what love is, all of us know what intuition is, all of us know, as C.S. Lewis beautifully outlines, in mere Christianity, when we have transgressed against some moral code that appears to have been instilled in us and in spite of the advocacy and campaigning of evolutionary biologists seems to appeal to some nuministic tendency, nuministic meaning simply a sense of awe, a sense of oneness, a sense of glory, a sense of glory you might experience at sunrise, or sunset, or looking into the eyes of a loved one, or even a stranger and knowing that the connection is real, knowing that the unity force is real, and that somehow this connection implies a set of ethics, morals, and principles. It's not just, oh wow, God is one that's lose ourself in some hedonistic revelry, that pleasure is not an end point, that service is our way of acknowledging this unity. So spirituality for me is a survival technique, you won't get very far in this world without it, and if you don't have it in a declared explicit, and I don't mean doctrinal way, I mean personal but somehow connected and communal way, you will try to create God, you will try to create spirituality from your preferences, your preferences will become your God, I prefer it when people talk to me like this, I repel this, my aversions and my preferences will become my religion, and this is I'm capable of that today. I'm lucky to be such a craven mad smackhead, and it's nice to walk around the streets of Shoreditch, where I have used, where I've scored, where I know the back streets are brick lane, where there are enclaves, where they serve up Muslim men wearing full regalia, that would never deal with that kind of business, it's against the Quran, but serve it up to slip down them rat runs, to see it trace across the silver page, to lose myself in smack world, and to come back here now with a different way, a different way, the city has changed and I've changed and no man crosses the same river twice, and no man visits the same Shoreditch twice, because the man is different and Shoreditch is different. I was looking for the same thing then, I was looking for the same thing then, like when I was looking around then for smack and crack and all of that, I was looking for the things that I'm looking for now, and if I'm not very rigorous in my spiritual practices, and they're sort of simple, I know I can use a lot of long words, it's a thing I like doing, I get off on it and stuff, but spirituality ain't complicated, my nan's better at it than I am, my mum, my wife, they're all better at it than I am, they do it natural, because they're not like mobilized by this sort of primordial yearning that can become my fuel, it ain't no easy task to turn all that gunge, that swamp gunge, that nihilistic jet fuel into love of one another. There's people now that are living a life where, including me probably to many many respects, that are using preference as our god. Yes. You sniffed that strangely. Well, because I thought, is there chlorine in it? Really? I just wondered. What is it? Water. Water, okay. I don't think there's chlorine in it, I hope there's not chlorine. Those people that are choosing preference as their god now, that are living a life maybe where materialism is their, is their, their saviour.

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What is, there's a couple of questions I have here. You know, the Russell that was in shortage for other reasons once upon a time and the Russell that's in shortage now, you said that they were both looking for the same thing. What was old Russell finding and why wasn't the thing he found as good as the thing he finds now? I.e. what is the outcome of those that are choosing preference as their god? Like why is that such a bad thing? What is the long-term or short-term consequence? Well, I wouldn't suggest that there is but one path. As they say, as Krishna Murthy says, truth is a pathless land. We got to find it ourselves. But that said, there are templates, paradigms, conditions and practices that might help us. So I'm not making a judgment on anyone else's path. My spirituality is not about you should be doing this and you should be doing that. My spirituality is I should be doing this. I should be doing that. My morality is about my conduct. If someone else wants me to judge them or help them or guide them or aid them and I'm able to, then it is my duty to do it. But what I would say is, is if you are using impermanent means to achieve a permanent solution, you can only fail. If you are mistaking the vehicle for the self, for the essence of the self, you can only fail. If you have not interrogated who is this in here? What is this subjective experience that only I am having? How do I deal with the tension of the paradox and remember all energy comes from polarity? All energy comes from polarity. That I am infinitesimally small to the point of being absolutely irrelevant in a cosmic framing and yet all reality takes place solely, as far as I know, within my consciousness. You said you can only fail if you go on that pursuit. So you said if you do this, you can only fail. You can do this. You will only fail. What is failure for the modern person that is pursuing that? What does that feel like specifically? Is it a feeling? Is it a sense of dissatisfaction? What is that common failure that those in that sort of impermanent pursuit of preference? What is failure? Pain, disconnection, loneliness, despair, a sense of worthlessness. But even in these flaws and failings I offer is the DNA of success. I notice a lot with addiction, of course, and forgive me using this framing, it's just the best model I've ever been given to not kill myself, is that addicts are so close to realizing it. Nothing is real. Nothing matters. Not even your identity is real. Destroy it. Destroy the self. Destroy the self. The self is not real. But they're killing the wrong thing, you know? They're killing the wrong thing. They're killing the host vessel. But in the end it becomes a thing. Everything you need to become recovered is present in your addiction. Everything you need to become awakened is present in your somnolence. How could it not be? Where else could Nirvana be back here? So what I'm saying is, is in that loneliness, in that sense of I'm not good enough, I'm worthless, are all the ingredients awaiting reorganization. And perhaps this is what a program, a system, a practice, and some mentors and some peers can provide. And I think it is different for all of us. But the failure is sort of the sense, isn't it? Because you asked an important question, Steven. You asked many important questions, Steven. But this one in particular is, why, what is it again with C.S. Lewis? What is that you're feeling? You know, you know, if someone is good to you and treats you in an open-hearted way and you cuss them or muck them about or disem or slander them, something in you goes, you shouldn't have done that. Well, what is that? What is that in your belly? Not the God of the heavens, not the gods of the Old Testament or the Quran, although they're all fantastic, but the God that's in your belly telling you, that wasn't right. That wasn't right. You have to, in the end, answer to this God.

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And as I say, the ingredients are all present in this sense. Hmm, there's something I'm supposed to be doing. There's something I'm supposed to be doing. It's only some tweaks I find. You know, I used my program for recovery over a 20-year period from the smackhead, crackhead that I was, and I also use it in five seconds when I'm like, when I'm caught again, as I will be, as I am capable of being, when I feel temptation, when I feel inferior, when I feel that someone is trying to impose status on me, I feel all the machines fire up. Still. Yeah. It's mechanical. It's biomechanical. It's biomechanical. The Swamis, the masters, the Rishis, the Yogis, and the Seishis. And interestingly, mate, Swami means he who is with himself. They are able, I believe, to observe it. There it goes. But it's not me. Your thoughts are merely the first layer of the external world. They would have a weight. They would have a charge if we had the instruments to observe them. Instead of identifying with my thoughts and locking into them, oh, look, there it goes. Little Russell thinking it matters if everyone loves him. He's thinking that again. Why wouldn't he think that with that little childhood? Why wouldn't he think that with that little society that he lived in? Some compassion for him, but some duties also. Quick one before we get back to this episode. Just give me 30 seconds of your time. Two things I wanted to say. The first thing is a huge thank you for listening and tuning into the show week after week. It means the world to all of us. And this really is a dream that we absolutely never had and couldn't have imagined getting to this place. But secondly, it's a dream where we feel like we're only just getting started. And if you enjoy what we do here, please join the 24% of people that listen to this podcast regularly and follow us on this app. Here's a promise I'm going to make to you. I'm going to do everything in my power to make this show as good as I can now and into the future. We're going to deliver the guests that you want me to speak to and we're going to continue to keep doing all of the things you love about this show. Thank you. Thank you so much. Back to the episode. One of the things I've thought a lot about recently, you mentioned the God in your belly or that person or that signal in your belly. That's trying to tell you how you feel. And we've all become so phenomenally good at tuning out of that and tuning into the kind of external how you feel, like how you should feel based on the job or title, status that you have. And this is a stronger noise and signal now than this one. Your life has been this. You talked about mentals as well. Your life has been this amazing journey from chapter to chapter to chapter as this person described as transcendence. The question I'm getting at is like, I'm thinking about someone right now that sat in the city and they know they feel like shit at a deeper level, but they've gotten so good to listening to their mother's opinion of them becoming a stockbroker that it's almost hard to hear that feeling of I feel like shit. How do we go on the journey of changing? How do we get there? Well, typically, Stephen, the journey begins with a departure from home. Interestingly, whatever home is, you have to leave. You have to leave the familiar, the place that you are familiar with. Scary. Often this is induced by crisis, a crisis that you cannot avoid or delay or defer. A crisis of some kind may come. Of course, this can be an inner crisis, a moment of despair. Often, a psychic breakdown can precipitate change, transition, awaken him. I suppose one way that you can do it, this is the way that I would do it, the way that I have done it, is firstly to acknowledge the problem of my condition, to admit there is a problem

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and that my life has become unmanageable. These are not my ideas. What are the signals of that? Unhappiness, sadness. In a sense, one thing that's good about that is you're trusting your personal integrity. It's not like, oh, you're delirious. Why are you not happy? Why is this not working for you? Problem and manageability. You're sad. I'm using, in fact, the example you use. Someone in a city holed up left with a familial and cultural conditioning that has left them at odds, maladjusted to a maladjusted world. One, there is a problem, life is unmanageable. Two, you've got to believe it's possible to change. If you don't believe it's possible to change, you will never be able to marshal your inner resources towards making that change. One way that this change can be made is through mentorship, even if that mentorship is in the abstract, even if you've just chosen, hey, this person seems to be able to have done that. He says that he used to feel weak, inferior, incompetent, impotent, and he says now that he doesn't feel those feelings. So maybe, if I do what they did, maybe I can change also. So this, so this, and the third component, first one, acknowledgement of powerlessness. Second one, belief change is possible. Third principle, it will not come from the same map and rubric that you've been running on up till now. You are going to have to import new ideas. You will need help. That help I would offer you might be of a divine nature, prayer, meditation, humility to ask for something greater than your my individual wants, my individual preferences, not just some wish list passed up to the Cosmic Santa. It is an, it is a acknowledgement that there is a requirement for growth and indeed that I'm no longer prescribing what outcomes I want. It's curious. There are often paradoxes in this. So for me, mate, it's like, first, you admit the powerlessness and the nature of the problem. Second, I believe it's possible to change. And I base that on, hang on a minute, these people used to have that problem and they've changed. So what if I do what they did, then maybe my life will change. These are all things derived from 12 step ideology. The third thing is accept someone else's plan, accept someone else's help, surrender, because in the, in the end, this is the think perhaps the hardest contradiction, at least I find it a very hard contradiction to live with. This idea of activated surrender and a return to the original condition. Activated surrender. Russell is no longer in charge. Russell is no longer in charge. Russell is a servant. There is a master. I am in the service of this. Now, I recognize those words are pretty loaded, but I'm saying that this is, if you can envisage a benign and loving mother or father, rather than authority, and if you do consider authority to be mostly malign, I could not identify more strongly. My distrust and my dislike of authority is a deep, deep fuel in me. I do not like being told what to do. I do not like it. It is a big, big part of my religion. I have to stop myself reflexively doing the opposite of what I'm told. If someone speaks to me authoritatively, someone asks me to help them, I will do my level best to help them. If someone tells me what to do, I find it very, very difficult indeed not to do the opposite. Anarchist, calisthenics, break rules every day, just to remind yourself that you belong to something higher than a set of systems potentially imposed by a malevolent force. The step three there, you referenced the first time, was about running basically a new instruction manual for your life, like accepting, because the current instruction manual is clearly not producing the results you seek. So, a new instruction manual for your life. And my brain went, but how do I know which one to pick? Because there's many temptations for a new path forward. You know, there's the, I could join a cult in Arizona or I could, I might seek meaning

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in surrender in another wrong place, from my preferences to something even more destructive, or how do we know, you know, how do we know what new instruction manual to run our lives on when

we find ourselves in such a situation? I'm thinking again about that person who finds himself in a job because their parents have told them to go and get that job and now, or they're working any job where they feel like something is wrong. They admit it, step one. Step two is they seek out mentors to provide evidence that it's possible to leave the situation. And then step three is this idea of surrendering and running your life on a new instruction manual. Where do I find that instruction manual? Is it from my mentors?

It's interesting, isn't? Yes, possibly. Yes, quite likely, yeah. Because I feel we're in a crisis of authority. Most people don't trust the government. Most people don't trust the media. Many people don't trust the judiciary or state authority. And I would have to confess that I am inclined to agree that we are in a true crisis of authority. Who indeed would you trust to say, I will do what is right. I will do what is right for you. I will do what is right for the community and trust that they are speaking on behalf of a set of principles that could be somehow universal and truly valid. How I have handled this is I've been fortunate enough through crisis and despair to find myself primarily connected to a group of other people the same as me who cannot cope with reality unless they drink or use drugs. And those people provide me with a paradigm for moving forward and a program. And I like that word program because it's both a sort of very old-fashioned but also an ultra-modern word in terms of software, for example. Thanks mate, yeah. And I guess at some point we're going to have to trust ourselves. But when embarking on this journey, it's not easy to lean into intuition. And it isn't easy to trust others. I find trust very, very difficult. I don't know about you, mate. I don't know what kind of experiences you had there

as a young man in Plymouth. But for me, trust ain't my go-to. That's not my go-to. It takes me a little while. My strategy is do not put yourself in as a situation where you require trust. Why? Because maybe people are going to let you down bad. Maybe. Maybe the systems of authority, be they educational, legal, judicial, maybe they're going to let you down. Maybe they can't be relied on. I mean, I was kicked out of school. I was expelled from school. I went to university for one day, left that. I did all these things. I remember it. I recognize it in your story, but I don't have the same level of... I'm skeptical. I require evidence to accept things, some kind of subjective or evidence that I... But I wouldn't say I'm distrusting broadly.

Or maybe I am to some degree. My skepticism is that.

So critique is an analytic. It's a perspective of until you know.

But your problem with your challenges with authority that are clearing your story through school and institutions and all these things. Where does that come from in you?

What is... And how would you describe it? Well, now I would describe it as a very deep love of God and a great deal of respect for other people's individual liberty and freedom. And the idea that any central authority would impose that without clear consent achieved through democracy and community dialogue seems ridiculous to me. But obviously, it's biographical and interpersonal that the circumstances of my life have shown me that the people one way or another that are in positions of authority on the various scales of authority that most people encounter, familial, social, educational, have not been able to fulfill the duties required of them. Of course,

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there's a person that's a certain way down the path now, because in the words of Philip Blarkin, they in their turn were fucked up too. That we are just part of a long lineage of people coping with broken systems. And I would say from agriculture onwards, systems of aggregation, centralization, accumulation that can't enshrine the rights of the individual, except for a certain set of individuals that we are living in a system that's about centralizing power and increasing authority, diminishing individual freedom using whatever rhetorical tricks are required, safety, convenience, whatever is required to achieve this centralized authority. Now, so I now feel like you said before, there are other ways that you could have ended up being this man in this chair. Now, I am glad that I've been deeply schooled in mistrust of authority, that it's almost like it burns in me. I can tell. Watch them. Watch what they're telling you. Watch what they're telling you. I give it to my own children, and I hope I'm not doing them a disservice. Question authority. Question it. Question it. And of course, this makes bedtime difficult because who's the person telling them bedtime? But it makes schooling because institutions have an inertia. Institutions have a tendency. They might start off with, we're going to educate these kids to be creative and individuals. But in the end, it's going to be about health and safety. In the end, it's going to be about fire drills. In the end, it's going to be a set of a bureaucratic enmeshment and maze that prevents individual freedom. The great David Graber, God rest his soul, though he was a communist, so he maybe wouldn't thank me for saying that. David Graber says that one of our great dialectics against Soviet communism, for example, was that they were bureaucracies that prohibited individual freedom. But look at the bureaucracies we live within now. How do they solve the problem of spying and stealing your data? Just make someone tap. I agree. Don't stop spying. Continue to spy. Continue to accumulate the data. Just tap agree. You agreed to be spied on. This is bureaucracy. These are the observable tendrils and symptoms of a centralized authority that is not necessarily sentient, occultist, or overtly corrupt, but a tendency to accumulate power, to dominate resources that is plainly observable in the geopolitical dramas that play out in our time, the ecological crises, and the evident main stage players that occupy our current time, that many of whom have not been elected to get there. I'm talking about unelected, acronym organizations that have a great deal of influence in the world today. The reason I don't trust is not, I love my mum and dad, Ron Brand, Babs Brand. In fact, today, sat here in Shoreditch as an adult man, I wouldn't just walk around Essex and go to find some couple of working-class kids and say, why don't you and you take responsibility for my spiritual development? They did their very best they could and I couldn't love them more. I couldn't love them more. But my mum she had cancer like eight times in a few years. My dad, he's got his own deal. He's got his own deal. And I recognize what it is to feel strong individualistic further. I love them. I love them. When I'm trying to formulate and I know I'll make errors as a parent, of course I will. We all do. And as you will discover, it is our duty to wound our children. It's not our duty. It is a necessity beyond the duty. It is a tendency. It's just gonna, they're gonna end up wounded. They have to. They're gonna have to find a second mother, a second father. They're gonna have to. They're gonna have to. So it's not anybody's fault. It's not even the system's fault. I'm kind of grateful to all of it now. I'm grateful to these institutions. I'm grateful to the mainstream media. I'm grateful to these governments. I'm grateful that they have set out the instruments required for the change that we will encounter in the coming few decades.

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You mentioned your mum and your father again there. Your father, what role, what impact did his departure have? Do you think on hindsight on your relationship with authority, if any at all? I would say fatherless men. I don't want to be so solipsistic as to make this entirely about me, he says, 20 years into a career. But I think and I experience with fatherless men who I deal with a lot in my, what I would say my spiritual life is to be around men a lot that I remember recovery, both being meant or by and mentoring and recovering mutually in support communities. Broadly, fatherless men feel a big burden and they do not feel safe in this world. A big burden, not safe in this world. If they're with the mother, I think they feel it is their duty to look after the mother if they are without other parents. I have a parent, my God, who knows what kind of chaos and I'm not saying there is only one way and that there is only template, but one template. Because I'm already talking about a subset. I'm talking about a subset of people that have become drug addicts and alcoholics in order to deal with these kind of challenges. But also I know people that don't identify as addicts in exactly that way and still the absence of the father. And that also, by the way, could be through death or it could break up the relationship or it could be because the father doesn't have the emotional lexicon to connect. One way or another, because I can think of examples top of my head of all of those. I think it feels that you are prematurely invited to be a man. In fact, we're not thinking about our interview, Stephen, because you'll be glad to know I thought about you before I met you. I felt the significance of anthropology, the significance of what the original condition might be. I do not use these terms to suggest there is some one template that could be imposed and stamped upon everyone. I would never take away people's individual rights or struggles, particularly those connected to obvious and evident civil rights, cultural and identity issues. Those are their stories for them and I support them in those stories. But when it comes to how human beings might have lived for hundreds of thousands of years, it appears we do well when we are a connected unit that communicate together in order to achieve a common goal. Time and time again, when anthropologists and even contemporary psychologists study these forms of society, they discover that there are rights of initiation for both males and females, although there often appears, based on what I have heard and as you know, I'm not an expert, to be particular emphasis on male initiation as the body is not so uniform in the way that it informs a boy that it is a grown-up now, not a child anymore, and that there are new duties to be undertaken. One of the best examples I've ever heard and I feel like I see somewhere in Freud, or maybe in Joseph Campbell, is that I feel this is some Australian aboriginal tribe, that they, what they do, and I think they're doing this now, I figure, I don't know, you know, I'm putting this stuff together, you know how it goes, that the boys at a certain age are dragged away from the mother and they make much of it, they wear masks to the men of the village, all the men are part father, all the women are part mother, and of course there are categories for other forms of identity too, which they honour and revere, often in the form of the shaman who is beyond gender identity, incorporating both, you see reflections of this to this day, even in monotheistic faiths where the priest wears what appears to be neutral or androgynous attire, distinguishing them from the rest of the community, yet honouring them and revering them. And you went through that initiation way too early, in your own words, you say that you were prematurely forced to be a man because you've got the duties of care over your mother,

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at a young, young age, your father leaves, I think, six months old, and then the other thing that happens, which feels like a horrible turn in, you know, horrible sense of chance is your mother has cancer and she struggles with it for many, many years, so you've got this young boy, and I was thinking about this when I was doing the research for this conversation, you've got this very young, young, young boy who's struggling with a lot of things on his own, disconnection coming from all angles, and then the stability in his life becomes, gets the uncertain horror of cancer come into her life, and what that does to that young boy who's already destabilised and sense of like connection, these are all interpretations I have from reading a piece of paper, you know, if I'm just being honest, I was putting myself in those shoes and saying, I've got this stable figure here in my life, my mother, and I'm dealing with all this instability over here, and then this becomes unstable. Yeah, it's good analysis, but you know, really, my mother struggles, them's her struggles, she had to go through that, and bravely she's done it, what life force that woman has in her, and to pick up on a point within your question, you cannot fake being a man or a woman or an adult, let's say, a word that doesn't have any cultural load to bear, you can't fake that, or you can fake it, and I did fake it, and that is what people do, they fake it, they fake it, but in a sense, maybe you need another adult to make you that, you need to be initiated, you need a code, you need to know that it's about duty and responsibility, that it's not all just about swagger and personal achievement, and like many young men, I joined the group of lost boys, I found men, young young men, kids, kids, because if I met them now, that's what they were, kids, a couple of years older than me, that becomes your tribe, unless you have hierarchies and systems of acculturation and inculcation that are based on higher values, remember our earlier point about moral authority and trust, who you're going to give it over to, you'll create your own one, you'll create your own little community without elders, without elders that are reliable and trustworthy and dutiful, and understand the nature of sacrifice, sacrifice of themselves in order to perform them duties. So of course, yes, I feel like when you feel the incumbency of adulthood upon you early due to the conditions of your domestic trial there, you will have to, as they say, man up or woman up, you will have to, but it won't be real, because it can't be real, because it's not only a set of endocrinal imperatives, it's also a system of instruction as laid out in that, as laid out in the previous anecdote, the Cambelian analysis of the anthropological conditions of that Aboriginal group there. So really, until you find other adults, elders that are like, I'm, I know what I'm doing, you don't need to worry, I'm stronger than you, it's going to be okay, I'll look after you, it's all right, do this, that, you know, a father, a father, like a father is, you know, you're going to forgo this now, because in the future, this, you know, and without that, you will not forgo, you will consume now, you will consume now, you will not understand, you will not understand your role. So it probably takes a long while, I've said it before, Stephen, but I'll say it again, because it bears repeating, you know, thou shall worship no other gods than me, because otherwise you will worship them gods, you will worship pleasure, money, fame, them gods are greedy little gods too, they're easy little deities to start worshipping, and the problem with the worship of those gods is you lose the principle of the divine, the interconnectivity, the pleasure is not the result, pleasure is a byproduct, pleasure is an inadvertent byproduct, please God, of doing the right thing. I was just thinking then, as you're talking about,

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all of that, and the gods we choose to worship in young men and fatherlessness, I was thinking about the Andrew Tate phenomenon, as a form of, he really seems to have captured a huge amount of young men for some reason, and trying to diagnose why, why that is, is a very multifaceted process, isn't it, because there's elements of purpose and meaning and having a figure in your life that you can guide you, can initiate you into what being a man is, that it seems that young men are in search of. Yes, I agree, I agree, I agree, no doubt. One of the challenges it feels like we have culturally Stephen, is we are unable to observe the difference between symptom and cause, symptom and cause, and obviously, as with matters medical, cause is what we must analyse, cause is what we must understand, there's no point saying you shouldn't do this, you shouldn't do that, if you have a set of values that are pretty simple, I call them Sesame Street values, kindness, love, service, that's going to take care of a hell of a lot, if you have kindness, love, service, it's going to take care of a hell of a lot, are you being kind right now, no, you've gone off track mate, you've gone off track, you're not being kind, are you being off service, no, then we can maybe sift through, also we live in such a curated space that it's difficult to discern what people are actually angry about sometimes, what is it, as one of my great teachers says to me, what is it, don't get caught up in the phenomena, the epiphenomena, the distractions, the static, what is it that you are trying to understand, what is it you're trying to do? All of these groups then, people that are big fans of and you take, people that are radically left, people that are radically right, what is it that they are seeking or that they are getting from such a radical pursuit? Well, a argument might be that we are recognising that there is nothing in our evolution to suggest that we live in cultures of 300 million people who live by one ideology, that we have to truly respect diversity, that we have to acknowledge that many of our most influential and powerful systems do not have our best intentions in mind, that they in fact benefit from ongoing cultural conflagration. If we can do one great service in this cultural space, I recognise that part of your goal and your mission is to awaken latent potency in individuals in honour of your own journey and it is a great mission if I may say, but part of this mission must be for us to learn this simple lesson, we have more in common with one another than divides us and it is our duty to reach out in particular to the people we disagree with in a spirit of love and good faith. Firstly then, identify, oh am I reaching out in good faith to people I already agree with? No, no, no, no, no, that's not it. Disagree with, I disagree with that on this important hot button topic of guns or pro-life, pro-choice or identity or tradition or progression, I disagree with them and I respect you all right, I respect and I love you and I know that I do not know what you know, that I am not God, I am not God, I do not know, I do not have any authority over you but I believe that together we can achieve a consensus and this consensus must be founded on good faith, we must allow one another to communicate in good grace and openness, we cannot yield to censorship not because we want people to feel the air with toxicity and hate but because we know that if we try to control it, who has the right? Who are we granting the right to now? Have you investigated any of these organizations? Have you investigated their funded, their affiliations, their agenda, their imperative because to some degree I am sorry to report that I have and I have found them wanting, they will not be getting my consensus for authority any time soon and I would offer you this, you

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have

more in common with the people you are fighting with, those you most loathe, whatever hue, persuasion

or a cultural garment you've conveniently strewn upon them than the people that are saying that they will protect you, the institutions that are saying they will protect you. Are you optimistic?

Yes, God is real. You're optimistic that we'll get to a place where we recognize that our similarities are greater than our differences? Yes. And so if I make Russell Brand, I know

I don't think this is a job role you want, but if I make you prime minister or president of the

world, how do you systemically change things to help us achieve the objectives you've described in connection, community, kindness and togetherness? What are the things? I've asked so many people

this question, no one's ever wanted to answer it because it's so big. Here I am. Bring power as close as possible to the people affected by it. Default to decentralization and localization wherever possible. Of course, this will not immediately yield perfection, but have you looked out of your window? We are not competing with perfection, we are competing with corruption.

So what do we want? Most of all, we want true democracy. All the values that people espouse are the values we should be practicing. They say the world does not need more people to believe in God just for those of us that do to start acting like it, to start acting like you believe God is real. Redistribute the control of municipal facilities to those that are affected by them.

Do not have water companies in the United Kingdom like Thames Water owned elsewhere in China or Canada or Kuwait or Qatar or wherever those facilities are held,

have municipal facilities run by the community that is affected by them. I'm not talking about renationalization, I'm talking about community. The community runs its water wherever possible.

I recognize that there is some complexity when it comes to electricity, municipality, running roads, running hospitals, but who among us has ever been into a hospital and not marveled at the beauty, the compassion, the ingenuity, the commitment, the devotion of the people that work there? Wouldn't it be better if the people that cleaned the floors in the hospital felt that they were invested in it, that it was their hospital, the nurses that work there, the doctors that they have real power, that those are their hospitals? Wouldn't it be better if both sides of our political conversation, I'm talking about the United Kingdom right now, hadn't agreed already that privatization is the way to go and they're not going to do anything about it? I'm not saying that there's anything wrong with capitalism in its basic format of we create a product and the people want the product and look at that, we made a little bit of money. I'm talking about this gigantic, metastasized monster devouring everything right down to spirit.

We must recognize where centralized authority is coalescing most and this we must address, this we must address, wherever it is financial, corporate or state power, wherever it is possible, we the people, we the people, those three magical constitutional words, if they were listened to, if they were lived by, it's already there, the kingdom of heaven is spread upon the earth and man sees it not, it's already here, it comes from inside your consciousness, you awaken, you believe it's possible to change, you act like it's going to happen, that's how these things unfold, it's happened again and again, the miracles of transition and change, the great beauty of science and medicine and technology, when it is freed from its tendrils, when it is untethered

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from the mendacious objectives of a system that sees all things as dominion for materialization and commodity, when it is freed from that, you will see the true genius of our scientists, the true genius capable in technology, if we can just address the model, if we can just have as an agenda an awareness that we are just on one little rock in infinite space right now that we're all participating in this one centralized idea and yet infinite diversity, infinite individual freedom, infinite ways of being human, we must all take responsibility for becoming the person we're intended to be and if you don't know who that is you find someone who does and you find a system and a program that can help you and we'll all do our best together and it's going to be glorious, glorious, but beyond glorious it is necessary. One of the things you said within there was about empowering nurses for example and cleaners, cleaners in a hospital and it reminded me of a study I read many years ago that showed nurses that were given ownership about the

decisions within a hospital had higher satisfaction, there was less accidents, there was less accidents with misprescribed medications, there was higher attention and when they leveled out the payment, the remuneration policy, so there was less unfairness in how people remunerated all the standards of the hospital went through the roof because people were empowered, they had autonomy and control over their lives and work, so I completely relate to that. My question though is about step one, because what you described there sounds like it's at the top of Everest and sometimes when something feels, it does, even for me it feels like it's a long way away from where we are now, so I'm asking what's the first pebble, what's the first domino that has to fall, what's the first thing that I can do as an individual to help us get closer to that world?

Well firstly Stephen, people climb Everest every single day, they have to clear the litter from that mountain now once it was considered inconceivable and every time there is an apocal shift, every time we say oh it seems that the sun doesn't go around the earth, it seems like the earth goes around the sun, oh there are things that are smaller than atoms, it appears that these sub-particular phenomena that are so small it's even difficult to label them exist in a unified field that they are emanating but somehow connected to, I'm speaking of course of quantum entanglement, if you reverse the charge of a particle thousands of miles away, the partnering, the partnering particle will reverse its charge also, there appears to be some unitive force, what I'm expressing is the most simple, practical, effortless achievement that we will ever yet undertake, it is merely the realization of the truth that we are individual, yes, but we are connected also, that there are goliaths that have incrementally coalesced due to the progression of the great sometimes unacknowledged revolutions, I'm not saying known as acknowledged agriculture, industrial revolution, technological revolution, that all of these have been undergirded by principles of dominion that might as well be feudalism, in a sense there is no change at all except for the individual change that you yourself can make, this is why I think people get a lot of traction when they say you know look after yourself, this is part of it, eat well, awaken, pray, meditate, recognize that it is normal to feel sometimes total despair and total despondency, remember all of these great journeys that we're describing that you're fascinated with began with exactly that, exactly that, that the great sages and secular saints that we have been granted have shown us and told us be the change that you want to see in the world, whether it's our Gandhi or our Malcolm X, people that are willing to give their life for what they believe in, because what they believe in is bigger than their life and you're

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gonna die anyway, you're gonna die anyway, but your principles, this is eternity, that we can touch eternity in the moment, so it's not like woo-woo to say meditate, wake up, this is changing the prima materia, it is the field of consciousness, this is I suppose what I'm advancing, consciousness

precedes matter, you have unique individual access to consciousness, you are online, you are on the grid, you are responsible for whether or not you believe this is possible, nobody else can tell you what to do there, that is your private kingdom, your private domain where you can be for now, for now, whoever you want to be in there, please do not relinquish

that right by not taking it now, for I tell you, authoritarian forces are abundant and abound, they are looking to colonize the very space of attention that exists right now, this moment, this is what is being colonized, attention, data, data on what, you, the territory of the self, this is fertile, this is not nothing, it is not nothing to awaken to the reality of who you are in this very moment, that is not nothing Steven. Quick one, as you know, Airbnb are a sponsor of this podcast and I was actually in an Airbnb last weekend when me and my friends had a reunion in New York and it's from staying in Airbnbs over the years that led me to start hosting my own place, I know friends of mine who actually Airbnb their own place in order to pay for the Airbnb they use when they're away on holiday which is pretty smart and maybe you stayed in an Airbnb before and thought this is actually pretty doable, maybe my place could be an Airbnb, it could be as simple as starting with a spare room or your entire place, you could be sitting on an Airbnb and not even know it, whether you could use some extra money to cover your bills or something a little bit more fun, your home might be worth more than you think and you can find out how much it's worth at [airbnb.co.uk slash host](https://www.airbnb.co.uk/hosts), check it out, find out how much your home is worth and let me know what you think. One of my team members had a question for you, I was just

chatting to them about about you and they said you know I really want to know how he lives on a day-to-day basis because I know from your books and stuff the Russell that roam the streets of Shoreditch once upon a time, the Russell I see now is through the lens of YouTube and I see him what it looks like the countryside somewhere with like some logs in the back, how do you live your life now? I'm glad you've asked this because this is proper diary of a CEO stuff because this is actual scheduling, I have to live sort of like a monk basically, I have to be conscious all the time, I have to be conscious about why I eat otherwise I'll eat something stupid, I have to be conscious about what I say otherwise I'll say something stupid, I have to be conscious about what I do, I have to familiarise myself with extremes continually so I thank you God have access to hot temperatures and cold temperatures, I expose myself to them regularly every day if possible, do a lot of cold therapy, I get right in that cold and while I'm in that cold I think this thing taught to me by Michael Singer and anyone who's willing to watch Michael Singer stuff, the moment in front of you is not bothering you, you are bothering yourself about the moment in front of you, then I get in very very hot temperatures and I think the same thing, the moment in front of you is not bothering you, you're bothering yourself about the moment in front of you, I do Brazilian jiu-jitsu because for me it was not natural to tangle like that and I love Brazilian jiu-jitsu so much, COZAROGA naturally, we're the first person I ever talk about all that stuff and I do that a couple of times a week, I do... Why? I need more detail on my... Well you see why like we it's good

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for

I think people to touch one another in a way that is playful and absolutely consensual but sort of assertive, it's like kind of I heard a youtuber say like dance actually and it's very good for me, it really puts me in my body, it's not cerebral, I don't know about you Stephen but I suspect you're the same, I am very intellectually oriented, I live in here, I'm... You find it very easy to be self-obsessed and to get caught up in all that stuff, so things that put me in my body, the body, the body holds the key, the body, the body, you've got a body, it's important, the body of Christ, it's very important to get in that cold water, it's very important to get into that yoga, very important, these things are important and beautiful and connecting, so I do a lot of BJJ, I do a lot of yoga, I do a lot of other type of exercise, calisthenics, bodyweight type stuff to try and stay fit, I've got young children, I have another child coming, I have to stay fit, I have to be able to be God willing, present for these children going forward and I love it and it's what we're going to do, we're animals, again this anthropological idea, how might we have lived for those hundreds

of thousands of years that predate the great miracle of agriculture, how might we have lived, we work, we touch one another, we're socializing, we groom and we graze together, it's nice, the kind of trust you develop with people in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, they choke you to the point of unconsciousness but then when you tap it's over and this is something that you share between you. There's a trust in that as well, isn't there? Yes, trust, good to embody the trust, that experience the trust, as they say, if you want to know if you can trust someone, trust someone and maybe it's difficult to seek out those kind of opportunities where it can play out so microcosmically and practically. Because I did a Brazilian Jiu Jitsu lesson or two and that man could have killed me at any moment, I really knew he could have killed me, he had me tied up like a ball of elastic bands and I knew at any moment he could have killed me but I trusted him and I didn't know this man. It's lovely, isn't it? There's something amazing about it and it's an instant bonding that this man has his life in my hands, yet he's teaching me an art form, he's teaching me a discipline and holding my, literally my life in his hands. It's funny because I didn't know him but I felt like he was my mentor, my father, my immediately after. Because I trusted him with so much, my life, right? So it's a wonderful thing.

Touch very important for us late ape creatures. That's why hairdressers, you tell the hairdresser or the barber stuff, this is why like I strictly come dancing, they can't stop falling in love, they're performing these rituals that are designed to elicit certain states.

Vulnerability, isn't it? That's the connection. The vulnerability, the touch, the awareness of sameness but differentness, the acknowledgement that we are creatures, that we are embodied creatures, all of these things I think contribute to that. So for me on my day, yes, every day, prayer and meditation, first thing, every day rigorously ensure that I have done things for other people, preferably without letting other people find out that I make myself available to other, in my case in particular, men that require help with their issues around addiction and mental health that I have checked in with other people that I consider to be peers around the challenges that I face psychologically, that I don't spend all my time obsessing just about what I want. But I have to do quite a lot to not be crazy. I have to do quite a lot to not be crazy. So the hot, the cold, the BJJ, the yoga, there's someone I work with once who said every day, I get up, I meditate, I pray, I do exercise, I do green juice, I do hot, cold, I attend a

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support group and then I feel okay, okay. That's what I get to feel if I do all that. Then I don't feel like a lunatic, a vacillating wild glassu of mad vicissitudes that could lash around anything in its search for connection. Is there not another way at this point? This also is attached to another question I've often pondered from doing what I do here, which is about how, I mean, it says Steve Peters, who's a psychiatrist, I believe, talks about these goblins and gremlins, and I spoke to Gabel Maté as well. I know you've interviewed him and I watched that fantastic unbelievable guy, but

I wonder if the traumas, the things that are hard, I use the word hard-wide tentatively, but the things that are hard-wide into us are ever overcomeable. If we can ever take them to zero in terms of the power they have over us or infants we have over, all we will spend our lives managing.

I was taught, from the wound comes the salve, from the wound comes the salve. The place of the deepest wounding will provide your salvation. This is what you must investigate. It is not, when people love you, we always feel it's because of the strength or the capacity or the virtuosity, but often it is the vulnerability and the fragility, because we all know that this vulnerability and fragility is something we share. This is what comedy is to me, Stephen, is the ongoing acknowledgement. Everyone's running some game, I'm this, I'm doing this, I've got this going on, you're gonna die. It's all gonna fall apart. It's all going to fall apart, except for these permanent principles and a connection to the eternal achievable through consciousness. This is why I need ceremony, this is why I need practice, this is why I need peers and mentors and mentees. And from the wound, from this place of I'm not good enough, nobody loves me,

I don't fit in. The only way that I can achieve trust is through having some authority or value as accredited by a culture that I don't even bloody trust, as compared with a metric that I don't even agree with. Instead of this now, and again, continual, moment to moment, I'm not suggesting

that I am any better than anybody else, just that I'm not any worse than anybody else. That's the biggest thing that I'll offer. It's ongoing, it's continual, but the thing I'm glad of it now, I'm glad of the wounding, and you will be too, whoever you are, you will be glad of the wounding too, because it is, sadly, a gift to you. That doesn't mean it was right, or that there weren't perpetrators, or that it's not bad, or that the culture doesn't need to change, or any of those things, all those things are definitely true. But from it, all of the time you see it, go Great Ormond Street, go anywhere, watch the Paralympics, it's everywhere, it's everywhere, people overcome.

And I ask that because so many become frustrated that the wounding, they haven't been able to overcome it. They become frustrated by that, because a lot of the kind of, I don't know, maybe spiritual doctrine, maybe whatever says, you can take this pill, or you can do this exercise, you can do this retreat, and then you won't be a narcissist, or you won't be a whatever, right? And then they try it, they buy the course, then they still are, they find themselves reacting in those old ways and being triggered in the machinery that you spoke of that comes up when we're triggered, we're still there, then they go, fuck! And he's a buy another course. We do need to be very self-compassionate, and I think we have to perhaps recognize that it is not a commodity that can be externally required, but an external co-ordinate can indeed ignite

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that which is already their dormant and latent, and awaiting to be born. Precisely the necessity for initiation we return to here, the initiation is to activate, activate that which is already there, activated surrender, not passive surrender, but not passive surrender, activated surrender. I'm a vessel, I'm here for whatever you are, I trust myself, God, I pray to you God, not my limited conception of you God, with my tiny little mankind mind, I pray to you God, as you know yourself to be, and I offer myself to you God 100% and totally please use me, please take away from me, everything that is not of use to you, put aside all my preconceptions and use me God.

Utilizes the wound, the wound becomes a portal, you become a vessel.

I want to stay on how you live, so I understand your sort of morning routine there, but if I zoom out on where you live, why you choose to live there, your relationship with work now that you have this I think greater clarity on institutions and how you balance that.

Well, I have to make a lot of content, because every day I'm on rumble, every day I make an hour of content, every day we make an additional 10 to 15 to 20 minute video on a news subject that generally encompasses and establishment narratives and a way of explaining that that is hopefully inclusive. Every day we have other social media content, we have a business, I'm part of a significant business endeavor that I regard as a movement rather than a business, but as you are all too aware, if it doesn't function as a business, it will not function at all. So it has to have good hygiene and housekeeping. You're a CEO. I literally am here not under the pretense of being a CEO, but because it is part of my job and I do have a diary, although I don't keep it myself and I try not to look at it, but it exists. And so I have to participate continually with that and ensure that an organization is around me that is able to facilitate the things that I'm good at and accommodate the many things where I am currently looking to improve. I have to

make order of content, we try to do this in three days, that means a couple of days a week I'm available for different types of expedition and adventure such as this one. This is why, for me, the spiritual life, it has to come first, but not out of a sort of an ethical evaluation.

Spirituality in the end is a survival technique. It's not like esoteric, it's not like I'm doing this thing like waving around incense or dressing up in a robe. I'm trying to not go crazy and end my life and damage the life of people around me by devoting myself. They say only the really crazy people become saints, only the really crazy people wouldn't even consider it.

You have to need it. It has to be beyond wanting, because wanting is just here to keep the blob going.

How does it feel to be in your mind? Could you describe it to me?

No, sometimes it's amazing, but sometimes it's very, very, sometimes it's very, very fast, sometimes it's very volatile. I feel like it undulates a lot. This I understand to be very common to addicts, experiences of extreme high, extreme low, fastness, not natural to be serene, evaluating information very, very quickly. It feels fast sometimes, very fast. It has a strong sense of craving and longing, which is a type of magnetism, I suppose. I suppose magnetism is a longing for unity, connection. It's very difficult to discern physical forces, because they are, by their nature, non anthropological. It's very easy to anthropomorphize physical phenomena, like gravity or magnetism or whatever. What feels like, if me, is that there is a great deal to get done. That's what it feels like. There is a great deal that needs to get done, and in order to do it, I have to surrender strongly, otherwise I will mess it up badly.

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That's what it feels like. That's why there's a lot of ceremony that is communing with that, which is unknowable. Prayer, ceremony with other people, acknowledging the sacred, not forgetting the sacred, that the most important things are difficult to measure and weigh, but they are there anyway. Each day, there is much work to be done, and I'm a father of young children, and I have a dog that I adore, and I have many animals. I have a lot of very simple, pastoral duties that have to be done, and I have a lot of spiritual things that have to be done to hold me together. There's a lot to be done, and then often I get to a point where I'm so tired that the whole enterprise feels like it could collapse inward like a narcissistic, semi-gothic soufflé. There has to be a lot of caution, a lot of caution. Also, I'm a person, perhaps you identify and agree with a sense of purpose and mission, and a deep, deep belief that the most profound and significant changes imaginable are possible by virtue of the fact that they are imaginable, in fact, because the role of imagination we see all around us in every building, every object, every book, every cultural artifact, as well as the many flawed and defunct aspects of our culture. Also, imagination is the device that brings the unmanifest into the manifest. Do you ever find yourself, because you are a content creator, do you ever find yourself slipping in, and when you play that game, you're dealing with algorithms, and metrics, and numbers, and rankings, and I'm trending, and I'm not trending. Does that ever trigger your old, you know, the old machinery? Yeah, I try to not go near it. I try to not go, because in a sense, back to basics for me, recovery is somewhat based on abstinence. Like, I don't have an odd drink, or the occasional line, or the occasional, or the occasional. I don't do it. I don't do it. So I try to practice good hygiene there, because if I start, it's very difficult to stop, and another momentum takes over. So, yes, it is, of course it is, because these are part of, you know, again, part of the blob, part of the primal ooze competition is part of who we are, status is part of who we are. So I try to stay out of the ring, as one of my teachers says, stay out of the ring, stay out of the ring. What are you working on? What are you working on improving? You talk highlighted, you set up the strengths, and then your things you hope to improve. What are the things that you hope to improve? For me always, patience, patience. Try to be patient, because impatience is ridiculous to think I know when something should happen is a mental concept. So I try to work on patience, to be very, very patient. Mostly I work on this, but it's more to be achieved by surrendering self-will than can ever be achieved by utilizing it. And that's a very, very, very, very difficult thing to practice, particularly when agitated. What does that mean? I didn't understand. Ah, okay. We achieve so much through will. I'm going to create a podcast. I did that thing I was going to do. Now I have to create various sets around the globe. But to believe that there is a greater power that will come into being if I surrender, but become intuitive to what one of my teachers calls the whispers on the wind, that I will be directed, that my job is to stay out of my way, that my life is none of my business. To not look at my day like it's a chunk of thing that I want, my day, I'm going to eat it up. This is, oh, wow, this gift. I'm alive. Oh my God, what a miracle. This is incredible. And to stay in that feeling of grace, and stay in that feeling of gratitude, and to spot as quickly as possible when I inevitably give it up, give up your connection to God for a biscuit. Give up your connection to God because someone has a nice car. Give up your connection to God because someone says something about you on the internet. Give up

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your connection to God because people lie about you or attack you. Don't give up your connection to God. And in order to not give up your connection to God, you are going to have to cultivate a very strong connection to God because elsewhere, as you say, much noise, much distraction,

what a coincidence that we live in an environment that seems to be cultivated in order to distract us from the ever-present divine. When you say God, yes, are you talking about a religious, specific religious deity? Or is there, how do you define your God?

Loving, unity, and absolute respect for individual identity within that.

Do I find this God in a particular book or every book? It's up to you, mate.

Do you consider yourself to be part of a religion?

I do. Yeah, I mean, this one, the only one, they're all the same. I suppose if you want some help, Perennialism by Aldous Huxley is a good place to look at, where he identified in the same way that Joseph Campbell and Carl Jung, it could be said, identified respectively, that there are mythic tropes that appear to recur in all cultures. He began to write a famous book, which I believe gave the name to the phrase, Perennialism, in which he observed that Eastern mysticism, Sufism from the world of Islam, and certain aspects of Christianity, particularly Gnostic Christianity and what is commonly regarded as first century Christianity, had within them, not archetypes as in, you know, the crucifixion, which we know occurs in many folktales and mythologies, not just in Christianity, not narrative devices or characters that recur, but ideologies that recur, principles, values that occur in all of them. And many of them, Aldous Huxley, his Huxley authors, are about overcome the self. There is something bigger than the self. You're not real. Who are you when you don't have your name? They call it the unborn in Buddhism. Marcus Aurelius says, you are dead. Your life is over. Now live the rest of your life properly. Get rid of it. Put down the corpse, they say in Buddhism. In Christianity, die that you may be born again. The flesh man must die. The carnal man of wanting and longing must die that the transcendent man be born. You're getting in the way. You're getting in the way with your memories and your story and your projects and your values and your virtues, all but the universal ubiquitous ever present archetypal virtues that Huxley explains and elsewhere through Jung and Campbell. We get the idea that there's some sort of ulterior cultural force, not cultural force beyond that, beyond way, way, way beyond culture. Culture is what we create. Indigenous, primal reality, trying to, not trying to, expressing itself through us. It's talking to us all the time, all the time. It's here. It's everywhere. It's waiting to be discovered by us collectively and individually. And what better job could we have than to find it ourselves and help others to find it? But I think the reason why is because when people hear the word God, they think of a man in the sky. Well, they should stop that unless it helps them. That's good. If you don't behave, you're going to go to hell. That's an idea that a lot of people struggle to get on board with. Well, that's because people have been lazy, because we are in the Kali Yuga. We are in a time of darkness. They're forgotten in this darkness that when people say there is a father, they mean there is a figure that is more powerful than you, that loves you. And if you don't do what's right, you are going to hell. Not after you are in it. If you don't do what's right, you are, oh no, I'm so unhappy. I'm in this bed seat that we talked about earlier. Why? Because you didn't listen to the father, because you perhaps couldn't find the father, because as I've alluded to many times, you live in a culture that wants to distract you from the father or the mother or

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whatever word helps you, that is there within you waiting to be born, that you've been distracted from, understandably, because of the primal urges to compete and acquire and eat and defecate. All of this is normal, ordinary, forgive yourself immediately, and now move forward to what it truly means. What you understand to me, I understand all the problems of religion. Religion shouldn't

make you hate other people. Religion should make you love everyone. They've all got that written in there. Why don't we focus on that bit? Because if people start doing that, you can't manipulate and move around on a little chess board and turn them into little consumer blobs. Obviously, obviously.

Where does love fit into all of that romantic love? Because I thought about some of the stuff I said about our ancestors, and is monogamy the path forward? Is romantic love a framework for stability that we need to find God? Oh, my friend, well, there is an argument that romantic love is derived from the idea of chivalry, as the word suggests, a kind of late medieval notion that we should focus our arda on an individual like a knight would attach the colors of their bequeathed, betroved, or beloved to their lance as they jousting metaphorically. And really, though, this chivalrous idea is but one aspect of love. And they note that many people never had actual conjugal relationships with the symbolic feminine, divine feminine figure that they would attribute that quality to. Romantic love, I feel, romantic love, perhaps, as all forms of love, obsession, attachment ultimately are, I was taught this, I didn't make this up, are the inappropriate substitute for the true love of God. What is love? Whether you love West Ham, United, or your wife, or your children, or your beautiful, it sounds new, breath, worker, girlfriend, except for the desire, longing, yearning to be at one with, to be connected to, to acknowledge that what's in there is the same as what's in here, that we have a shared purpose. Isn't love the felt awareness of the true unity that undergirds apparent separation? We come into form for a little while, all of us were twice, twice before we were a single cell, you were a single cell, then you were two cells in the belly of your mother, and way, way, way back, you were an amoeba. And there it is in your programming and your coding, the unity is there materially and practically, forget esoteric theology, forget ontology. It's there as a factors and observable facts, it's there as a cosmic fact, there was a big bang, unity is there, love is the felt remembrance of this. Why does love feel good? Although love, as we know, can be very painful when love is not reciprocated, when love is rejected, when love cannot unfold. This love is more than a sensation, it is a duty, and it is the deepest truth of our kind, that when we love one another, we acknowledge the truth that we're not separate from one another, isn't it glorious to move from that position where you think, I don't like that person, I don't like that person, then oh my god, they're the same as me, I love them, I love them, because you have recognized the truth, and truth and beauty are one, as Wilde says, that there is something, it rewards us, it rewards us, it's speaking to us. I heard it argued that once there was a great unity and the infinite intelligence for its own amusement, lost in the atemporal, espacial abyss, sent all things into fragmentation, only to see which ones would awaken and recognize the unity of our origin, the deep unity of our origin. When will we come home? When will we come home to love? You fell in love when you had two

children, you've got a third on the way around the corner. That's a very special love that you've you've found, fatherhood. I'm not a father yet, but I'd love to look down the road and get some

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lessons from you as a father. What lessons did fatherhood teach you about life and how we should be living? It teaches you, teaches me, taught me, there's a lot more important things in this world than me, but I learned this lesson in a variety of ways now. There's a lot more important stuff in this world than what I want and what I think and what I reckon. It don't amount to much amidst the infinite. It taught me that love is real, that the most miraculous things are accessible and ordinary and animal, that you can procreate life into being what a gift and it flows through you when we're part of an endless chain and God has no grandchildren, they belong to the world, they don't belong to you and it's your job to just stand there and bring out of them whatever's in them

and just stand back and marvel and weep at what's in them. Weep, like the horror, the beauty, the horror, the dreadful beauty of what a child unfolds into, the awareness that they, that they, in the best case scenario, the best case scenario, they are walking into a future that you will not be there to guide them through.

So I suppose what that asks of you is an understanding of your place in this world and acknowledgement both of your relative insignificance but simultaneous omniscience, omnipotence, simultaneous is a paradox. All energy comes from polarity. Acknowledge the polarity, don't hate the polarity, don't hate the others, don't let them tell you those people are different from you because they wear a baseball cap or they voted to leave Europe because they identify with these pronouns or because they believe in this cause or that, the absolute unity. It shows you that the way you love your children must become the way you love all people. Love as Ram Dass was told by his teacher, tell the truth and love everyone, not easy, not easy if you tell the truth to love everyone. It teaches you everything, it teaches you everything to become a father, it teaches you you're going to need other fathers, it teaches you you're going to have to become a father, it teaches you you're going to have to become a father to that little boy, it teaches you everything, all lessons are there, all lessons are there.

A future you're not going to be a part of, why it was so visible in your body and in your consciousness that that particular sentence was difficult for you to say as it relates to your children. Because it's so ordinary Stephen, any old lady, any old man, you chat to anywhere, oh yeah, my mum was like that, my dad was like that, my little girls, it's just, it's just so beautiful.

What are the lessons about the future that they, you try and give them if any at all?

And how do you feel about the future that they're going to go into?

I'm trying my best to arm them, I'm trying my best to arm them, I'm trying my best to arm them like Sarah Connor or something, I'm just trying to tell them, and also they are them, I see every day how they're more powerful than me already, so they'll be all right, God has no grandchildren, they'll be all right, they've got their path, I know they can hurt me, you know, I know that. All we can do for each other, beyond father, daughter, is become who you are,

become who you are, become who you are, become who you are, trust that it's going to be beautiful, that you're not ugly, that you're not hideous, that you've made mistakes, you've done stuff wrong, you've had stuff done to you, make mistakes, all of this, all of this, and yet become who you are, become who you are, become who you are, so all I want is I try to not go, this is everything, I think, don't go unconscious, don't go unconscious, stay present, stay present,

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things will make you go unconscious, it might happen as I leave this room, it might happen when the people from the next room come in, you can go unconscious at any moment, don't go unconscious,

stay present, stay present now, God is now, may you find God now, that's the only place you're going to find God, you're not going to find Him yesterday, you're not going to find Him in a week, God's here, now, find it, find the absolute, and when I say God I mean absolute unity, absolute inclusivity, absolute love, absolute unity among us all, so me, I'm basically, look, you know what I mean, you can't live like that with my kids, can I, like, bang and honor them, like John Wesley from the Pulpit or MLK, I just got to say, all right, how's it going, do you want that to me, I'm not letting you eat that, come to, why not, you know what I mean, I'm living, why don't you tell me stuff you've done at school, what do you mean you got a boyfriend, I'm doing all that I'm saying, all the normal chats, everyone's happening, having, but what I'm trying to do is recognize they ain't going to get a better conduit than me for good or for real, so I better get out of the way, I could get out of the way for them, you know. Russell, thank you so much, thank you for, thank you for being an inspiration to me in so many ways, one of the ways that I think, I mean, you're completely in a league of your own, outside of the comedy and all that, is the way that you communicate ideas in a way that is so and I know you must be aware of this, that it's so brilliant and poetic, and you said it halfway through this conversation that it's intentional your use of words, you could, you know you could use simpler words, but you choose the poetry, that's the best way I can describe it, why? Because it's so, why, it's not only erudite to talk like that, think of perhaps one of the great archetypes of the working class we have nowadays, Danny Dyer, he's a poet, he talks

beautifully, it's nice to be specific. Yeah, if you can. Be specific, what do you mean, what do you mean? And to be honest, it's, you know, it's always been there, it's always there, it's there. It's funny, because as I was observing you today, you seem like you're just one step ahead of the thing coming out of your mouth, and that's why you're able to string this poetry together in such a cohesive way, in a coherent way, because your brain seems to just be one step ahead of Mark, like of the way that I would speak, yours, it's wonderful to observe, and it's a wonderful talent. I observe it as well in your new show, Brandemic.

Well done, Jesus.

No, no, no, it's wonderful, I watched all of the clips, I watched the trailer, what you managed to do in that show, so for anybody that doesn't know, Russell has a show called Brandemic, which is going to be available for just two weeks from June 25th, which you can watch online globally, you can pre-order it now, I've pre-ordered it, and my partner's pre-ordered it, so we're, even though we're going to be watching on the same screen, so there's two pre-orders, but it's this wonderful confrontation of the last couple of years of our lives, mixed with comedy at the heart of it, with also this permeating, really important message underneath there somewhere, which I think you use comedy in such a wonderful way to, if I may say, inject an important message into me through the medium of humour, and it's a wonderful skill that I've seen in some great comedians, some of, you know, Jimmy Carr took to his credit, he's wonderful at what he does, he uses a different form of comedy, but the form of comedy you use to address very important subject matter is genius, it's very, very hard to do, and in fact,

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when I sat here with Jimmy, he said he's trying to do more of that, I've seen a few great comedians like the Chapelles of the World, who I saw in New York a couple of weeks ago, and Aziz Ansari, Aziz Ansari, he's fantastic at that, I saw him at the store do that as well, I highly recommend everybody go and get pre-ordered, it'll only be available for two weeks, and if you go check out the trailer on YouTube, it is fucking hilarious, it confronts all the things a lot of people are a bit too scared to confront, but with a real elegance, a real class, so thank you for that, and also, I have to mention Community, which is an event that's taking place, when is it July? Yeah, July the 14th to July the 17th, is it polite for me to ask your girlfriend's name?

Melanie. Melanie, yeah, come with Melanie, she should be right up her alley, we're off there, B.S. Simpkins there, Vandana Shiva, proper leaders, both in political and spiritual spaces, because in the end, these are fake divisions, there is only one space, you'll love it, come, come and do a turn on the Saturday night. I saw a poster for it, and I thought this can't be real, because of the people that are there, and they're all gathering, and I thought it can't be in person, it must be online, and then I found out it was in person as well, so 14th of July to the 17th of July in Hay-On-Way. Hay-On-Way, why is there a river that bifurcates England and Wales, or at least separates England and Wales, although actually England and Wales were most conceptual, so bifurcates that bit of land that is currently called England and Wales, it's there, so on a campsite I went to during the pandemic, I went there on a holiday in one in Vans, you know, that you can do up from within, and we had such a lovely time there, and we did a small festival last year, and this year we're doing a bigger festival, and the money that we make, we give to people with addiction and mental health issues, various charities that we support for this day free foundation, it's proper, it's an attempt to live how we might live.

That is probably the most compelling thing to me, because I literally read a chapter in my book called The Journey Back to Human, and so it's wonderful to see something called community that's doing exactly that, bringing us back to what it is to be a human, and as you say, the cause is that the proceeds of this event are going to our phenomenal, including a plebeothian charity, I believe. Which one is that?

It's a charity in Plymouth that I think we're doing. Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, Plymouth.

Trevi. Trevi, yeah.

Trevi women, that's the only treatment centre in the country that is able to take women with addiction issues and complex needs that have kids already, because obviously it's very difficult to look after women at drug addicts that have kids and stuff, so that place though, they do a fantastic job down in your ends in Plymouth. My old neck of the woods. So you can heal yourself, but also the proceeds will help to heal others, which I think is a phenomenal thing, so thank you for that. We have a closing tradition on this podcast where the last guest leaves a question for the next guest, not knowing who they're leaving it for.

You can have a 60-second conversation with anyone in your life, but it is the last conversation you will have with them.

No, I can't do this. That's a brilliant or evil question.

It's evil. I always tell the guests, I say, because they've all been stitched up by the last question, so I say, stitch, pay it forward, you know.

You've already got to know them, and it's 60 seconds, and then that's the last one you're having. Who do you call and what do you say?

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Well, but the thing is, is that, can I just break this down a bit?
You're dispatching them after that. So it's in a way, and you have to know them.
Is that contained in the connection?
Well, it's, you can enter.
It's only 60 seconds, 60 seconds, and I've never seen them again.
I mean, there's no one in my life that I love that I want to give up on that.
So 60 seconds, I'm never going to see them again afterwards.
God, there's some good people that I've met though, aren't I?
Because I'm going to pluck a straight, like a virtual stranger.
A virtual stranger.
Interesting.
Because why, it's only 60 seconds, you're letting go of them.
Oh, no, you're not, I don't think it means that you can never see them again.
So my daughter, I mean, why for the world?
I think what the way I interpreted it was, it's your last day on earth, you get a phone call.
This is getting worse, then there's no more me.
Oh my God, who wrote this question?
Some evil, I'm joking.
You don't tell us, it's anonymous.
Sometimes, so it'll eventually come out on a card that people can play with their friends.
Oh, you're bastard.
You'll find out.
Oh, you're always, hustler.
You hustler every day.
All right, so just say something I love that I'm going to talk to you for 60 seconds.
But then they're alive already.
You can't even get someone that's dead, back, on my nan, kind of my nan back.
I'd love a minute on my nan.
I'll take my nan, I'll take 60 seconds on my nan.
I love you nan, I'm all right.
I'm not so crazy, you were right about the drugs though.
Why her?
Because she was so lovely.
It's actually loved me so much.
It was so unselfconscious.
It was so unselfconscious.
You all right, darling?
Shame on it.
I want that old twad, Wes Kibosh.
Watch that, drugs.
She's doing, I tell you, I see on Kilroy, it leads to worse things.
60 seconds.
Let her know you're okay.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / E260: Russell Brand FINALLY Opens Up: Escaping A Lifetime Of Anxiety, Addiction & Finding Love!

Yes.

You're okay?

Yes.

Perfect.

Thank you, Russell, and honor to meet you, and thank you so much for being here.

You could have been anywhere, so I really appreciate your time.

I really, really appreciate that.

Thanks.

Thank you.

Thank you so much for having me.

It was a really lovely, intense experience.

The scenery, the environment is so gray, and the conversation is so colorful.

Intentionally, I told you.

Excellent.

Quick one.

I'm so delighted that we've been now sponsoring this podcast.

I've worn a wig for a very, very long time,

and there are so many reasons why I became a member,

but also now a partner and an investor in the company.

But also, me and my team are absolutely obsessed with data-driven testing,

compounding growth, marginal gains, all the things you've heard me talk about on this podcast,

and that very much aligns with the values of Woop.

Woop provides a level of detail that I've never seen with any other device of this type before,

constantly monitoring, constantly learning, and constantly optimizing my routine.

But providing me with this feedback,

Woop can drive significant positive behavioral change,

and I think that's the real thesis of the business.

So if you're like me and you are a little bit obsessed or focused on

becoming the best version of yourself from a health perspective,

you've got to check out Woop.

And the team at Woop have kindly given us the opportunity to have one month's free membership for anyone listening to this podcast.

Just go to [join.woop.com slash CEO](https://join.woop.com/slash/CEO) to get your Woop 4.0 device and claim your free month.

And let me know how you get on.

As you know, they're a sponsor of the podcast,

and I'm one of the investors in the company.

My relationship with Huell started with the Ready to Drink range,

which I have here in front of me on the table.

Why did I choose to drink this?

First and foremost, convenience.

I'm not the type of person that wants to spend a huge amount of time

whisking or mixing things together.

And I don't typically have a huge amount of time during the day.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / E260: Russell Brand FINALLY Opens Up: Escaping A Lifetime Of Anxiety, Addiction & Finding Love!

And there are some days, not always, but there are some days where
because of the limited amount of time I have,
the choices that I would ordinarily reach for aren't necessarily the most healthy choices.
They're certainly not nutritionally complete.
So as soon as I discovered Huell existed,
because of a wonderful guy who worked on one of my teams in Manchester,
walked past me wearing a Huell t-shirt,
I inquired what it was, he told me what it was,
and then I bought the Ready to Drink bottles into the office.
It was a game changer for me.
And it meant that on those days where I'm tempted to reach for
less nutritionally complete options or less healthy food options,
I have something right underneath my desk in the fridge that I can reach for
that allows me to remain in line with my health and nutrition goals.
And Tesco have now increased their listings with Huell,
so you can now get the RTD, Ready to Drink, in Tesco Expresses all across the UK.