

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

I was in a cycle of self-hatred and it was just a really dark time.

I went out and I knew I had to make it look like an accident because I did not want my kids to think that I had committed suicide.

Please welcome Jada Pinkett Smith.

Jada, I knew you as a Hollywood actress.

I never knew you were the daughter of two drug-addicted parents and a teenage drug dealer yourself on the streets of Baltimore.

I really thought I was going to be the next big-time female drug dealer.

I was absolutely fearless, but getting two nine-millimeter's pointed at you.

They pointed two guns at you.

That's a big wake-up call.

But what happened?

Somebody set me up and then I had to always have this tough exterior now as I'm dismantling my defenses.

I'm in a really raw place.

The holy slap. What happened?

I knew I was going to get blamed, but like, it was insane.

You say protection is your love language. Did you see that as an act of love?

The entanglement conversation.

We broke up.

And then what did you do, Jada?

My mother, my kids, they were like, how could you do this?

Do you regret putting that out?

Honestly, I've got this wonderful picture that I found.

Oh, I know that picture. Do you know why this is relevant?

Yeah, I lost them back to back.

I just want to start this episode with a message of thanks.

A thank you to everybody that tuned in to listen to this podcast.

By doing so, you've enabled me to live out my dream, but also for many members of our team to live out their dreams too.

It's one of the greatest privileges I could never have dreamed of or imagined in my life to get to do this,

to get to learn from these people, to get to have these conversations,

to get to interrogate them from a very selfish perspective, trying to solve problems I have in my life.

So I feel like I owe you a huge thank you for being here and for listening to these episodes and for making this platform what it is.

Can I ask you a favor?

I can't tell you how much you can change the course of this podcast.

The course of the guests were able to invite to the show and to the course of everything that we do here just by doing one simple thing.

And that simple thing is hitting that subscribe button helps this channel more than I could ever explain.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

The guests on this platform are incredible because so many of you have hit that button. And I know when we think about what we want to do together over the next year on this show, a lot of it is going to be fueled by the amount of you that are subscribed and that tune into this show every week.

So thank you. Let's keep doing this.

And I can't wait to see what this year brings for this show for us as a community and for this platform.

I always believe that in order to understand someone, you have to understand their context and having read through the entirety of your book,

there was this line that stood out to me, which I think might be, might summarise the most important part of your earliest context,

which is when I go in search of the origins of my broken heart,

it is the sense of not being the priority to the two people who gave me life that creates a fracture in my feeling of worth.

Yeah.

Why did you write that line?

Because it's true, you know, it's like our parents are like our first mirrors.

And so my parents were really young when they had me.

I mean, my mom was 17, right, 17, 18.

She was 17 when she was pregnant. I think she was 18 by the time she had me.

So youth on top of addiction.

And I just realised, you know, as I was going through my life in different therapeutic settings, I was like, oh, wow, like the first mirror I had was kind of non-existent in a way,

because drugs were my parents' priority, you know, during my upbringing.

And so I didn't really get the reflection of feeling like a priority to the people who brought me into the world.

Now, thank goodness my grandmother came into the picture, you know, and she really, she was a beautiful, powerful mirror for me.

That, you know, even to my, you know, it's still a mirror for me to this day where I could see myself. I could see the beauty of myself.

I could see my gifts and my talents was through her and what she was reflecting back to me.

But I think it's important that I think it's important if it's possible for children to feel that sense of, that sense of importance, that sense of priority from their parents.

I had an air of sort of loneliness as I read through the pages.

This kind of lonely young girl who was searching to be recognised and loved and to someone to sort of hold her hand and guide her through those early years.

And other than in your grandmother's garden and with your grandmother, it felt like that place of home was never really there.

Yeah, I definitely had it with my grandmother.

Now, once she passed, that's when I took to the streets to like figure out finding my home, finding my tribe, finding my power, finding my identity, finding my purpose, finding my worth.

Yeah.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

Your dad, Rob.

Yeah.

He took you for a walk one day and explained to you why he couldn't be your father.

He did.

I was seven and he just said, he said, look, I'm an addict and a criminal and I can't be your father.

And I was like, now mind you, he hadn't really been in my life that much anyway.

I didn't really know, he wasn't present in my life enough for me to even know what it was like to have a father.

But what I did appreciate in that moment was like, wow, just thank you.

Thank you for like being honest.

Now, I didn't realise at that time, because I was so young, how that would affect my relationships with men ongoing, you know, as an adult woman.

But yeah, in that moment, I was just like, thank you, somebody is like being honest with me.

I'm not crazy.

Something is absolutely not right here and he's letting me know what that is.

And he's saying, hey, I'm going to keep my distance, you know.

10 years old, 12, 13 years old.

What does Jada think she's going to be when she grows up?

At 10, 11, 12, 13, I definitely was like, I wanted to be an artist.

Definitely wanted to be an actress.

You wanted to be an actress?

Yeah, I did.

I did.

I wanted to be an actress.

I started very young.

I was doing theatre.

I think my first professional gig was like seven years old as one of Madame Bon Bon's children and the Nutcracker.

And then I was in different theatrical programs in the summertime and what have you.

And then when I got the opportunity to join Twigs, which prepared you for Baltimore School for the Arts,

I joined that afterschool program.

So arts has always been a big part of my life.

Do you know why?

Because as I read through those early years of your life, it seemed that acting was doing something.

The performance, the being on stage, the validation, I think it was giving you,

was doing something for you that it might not have done for someone else who hadn't walked the steps you'd walked up until that point.

The validation, but also an outlet.

It was a real outlet for me where I was able to express certain feelings that I didn't feel like I had the permission to express at home.

And it was a huge, it was a huge outlet for me in that way.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

I mean, to the point that my theatre teachers would often tell me, you know, they try to steer me into like,

why don't you try more comedic roles?

You know, I was always going for the very dramatic, very highly emotional, you know, roles.

And I just remember my theatre teachers always trying to guide me into diversifying the monologues that I would choose for my pieces to work on in class.

I read some books.

I think one of them was called The Body Holds the Score, which talks about the role that acting can play as sort of a therapy.

Yeah.

And it's so, it seems to not be a coincidence that the amount of actors I've sat here and spoke with who have pretty unthinkable early childhood experiences, domestic violence in the home, etc.

That then find acting as an outlet for a form of escapism, almost escaping the identity, embodying a different role.

Absolutely.

Totally agree.

Totally agree.

As I read it in your story, I was like, not another one.

Yes, another one.

It's classic.

Yeah.

And I reflect on some of the words you wrote in the early part of the book where you're talking about your mother and your father.

They're being domestic violence in the home at an early age.

Your mother running out of the house, dropping you on the floor because Rob had punched her.

I believe your father had punched her.

Yeah.

These are stories I guess you've heard after the fact from your mother.

Yeah.

But I guess you believe those moments leave a mark.

Absolutely.

I mean, my mother talks about it to this day and will choke up, she'll, you know, cry.

It's like, it's, it's, you don't get over things in the sense of like, it's forgotten.

You know, you learn to cope with it, you heal in a certain manner, but it still can leave a certain imprint upon you.

And even hearing those stories are not easy, you know, even as an adult, because she didn't really give me the details until I was,

I mean, my kids would dag on their adults before she shared with me the level of violence that she dealt with with my dad.

Did it help you understand yourself?

Did it help you connect dots?

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

I don't know if it helped me understand myself as much as it helped me understand my mother. And then that helped me understand a lot of how her journey has imprinted upon me in a certain manner, you know.

So I guess it does.

If you, you know, through, through my mother and her journey, it helped me understand her journey, which has affected me.

So yeah, I guess you could say that it helped me understand myself more.

I say that because I sat with, you know, Gabel Maté.

Yeah, I do.

Yeah, yes.

He was the, he's the person that opened my eyes to the fact that even the things that occurred when we are babies, we interpret them to mean certain things about ourselves.

And he says babies are incredibly selfish.

So for example, if the parents are arguing, the baby will interpret that as a reflection of them.

I think about the early context that I think I read about in your story, but also that appears in mine and how I interpreted that to mean that I wasn't enough in some way.

Yeah.

Which is a real through line throughout your story.

Yeah, for sure.

And I think that probably is probably more subconscious unconscious than that which the abuse of drugs and how that reflected to me that I wasn't worthy in a certain manner that why is it that this particular substance has more power over, you know,

has more attention, more power, more influence than me to the point that your father will tell you.

I'm relinquishing my parental rights because I'd rather be a criminal on a drug addict than try to get my shit together for you.

It's the way I interpreted that.

I mean, at the same time, I was like, just thank you for being honest instead of sitting up here pretending like you're doing something different.

Thank you.

You know, which a lot of people would do.

Tony, was he your mother's first partner after Rob?

No, he was her first husband.

First husband, okay.

Yeah, after Rob.

And he seemed to be a pretty solid partner.

He's a solid, yeah, he was.

He was indeed.

This guy comes into your life and plays the role of a father by all accounts.

He seems to do a pretty good job and seems to love on you in a way that is sufficient for a child.

But then he too vanishes out of your life.

Makes an exit.

Makes an exit.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

Which I understand, you know, as an adult now looking back and looking at the circumstances, you know, he did the best that he could.

He was a man that was trying to get his life together.

And my mother was was deep in her addiction.

Addiction to heroin at that time.

And so you can't you can't negotiate with that is either you want to get help, you know, or you have to.

Sometimes you have to make clean breaks.

I know that now as an adult.

I always know how to play the middle.

You know, and so I get it.

What does that do to you as a young, a young woman who's trying to figure out what's where safety is.

It's devastating.

It's devastating.

I mean, I completely abandoned feeling like I could depend on anyone.

Which is why I just took to the streets.

I was like, you know what, I'm going to figure out.

How to make money, gain power and create a situation where I can protect myself and my mother.

And to make sure just in case she doesn't make it, I'm going to be OK.

You take to the streets.

When you say take to the streets, what do you mean by that?

When I would see, you know, the high rollers, the hustlers, I was like, oh, that's what I want.

You know, I want to have the Mercedes.

I want to have big wads of cash in my pocket.

I want to have friends around me that will protect me.

And I want to be able to have security and stability created by my own hands.

I don't want to depend on anybody.

Not only do I not want to depend on anybody, I can't depend on anyone.

And so the streets, that's where I saw security.

Because we didn't have doctors and lawyers, you know, to look upon, you know, like that's the aspiration, right?

Because in our neighborhoods, that's what we had.

We had hustlers, right?

And they had the good life.

So you could be a hustler, you could be a hustler's girlfriend.

I wasn't trying to be the girl.

I wasn't trying to be the girlfriend.

And so I looked to that lifestyle to offer me the security that I didn't have at home as an opportunity for me to create that security that I didn't have at home.

Security, protection, safety.

These are all words that appear over and over again in your book.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

I know, right?

In childhood to adulthood, those are the recurring words.

And you found that security in part through a lifestyle of drug dealing yourself.

Which again, I said to you before we started recording, Jada, that I knew of you as a Hollywood actress.

You know, that's what I knew of you.

I'm not someone that's hugely involved in media or TV or movies, so that's what I thought.

I never in my life, and I thought of you as the daughter of two drug addicted parents who had chosen their addiction over you.

And I never knew that you started dealing drugs when you were very, very young.

Were you not scared dealing drugs in Baltimore?

You don't have time to be scared.

That environment was a war zone, right?

And so it's like stuff was popping off all the time.

So you just get used to a certain level of violence.

You get used to a certain level of just vigilance because that's what you're given.

So you just learn to adapt to that kind of environment.

So the levels, what somebody might consider dangerous for me was just normal.

It wasn't like, ooh, I'm going into something crazy here.

You know, it's like, shit, everything's crazy.

So what?

Right?

So I look at it now and I go, what in the world, you know, but I'm living a different reality.

And that time when I was living that reality, that's what life was.

And everybody, that's what we were all living.

Was there moments that were wake-up calls?

Hell yeah.

You were dealing drugs.

Listen, getting two nine millimeters pointed at you at one time or one to your head.

That's a, that you would think that's a big wake-up call.

Jada, we don't all know what nine millimeters is.

Oh, you know, guns, you know, it's two big guns, you know.

When did that happen?

I had to be 17, 17, 17 years old because that was my senior year of high school.

And what was the reason that someone pointed two guns at your head?

I was, I had posted up in this, in the projects and this apartment on the bottom floor where I would sell drugs out of the window or through the door of that particular apartment.

And somebody set me up to make a long story short.

Somebody set me up.

And as I was making the exchange through the door that had the chain on it, two guys from the side of the door, which I couldn't see because I'm looking through the peephole, two guys from the side of the door come around and kick the door in and pull out guns,

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

point them to me and take all my money, my jewelry and stash.

And I was really lucky to make it out of that alive for sure because the person who led that robbery ended up killing two drug dealers two weeks or a month after, put them in a trunk, shot the trunk up and murdered two guys.

And he ended up doing life for that.

But I could tell as he was leaving, you know, it's so interesting when you're in moments like that, I can still see his eyes as he's leaving me and how he's making a choice in the moment of what he's going to do with me.

And by the grace of God, he left me there.

Why?

Well, when, of course, you know, my crazy self, because of the protection that I was under at the time,

I called that person, I was like, I just got robbed, he knew exactly.

He knew exactly, he's like, I know who this is, don't worry about anything.

I was like, I want my shit back.

And so we actually, that person whose wing I was under, he made for a meeting for us to meet in that area a couple of days later.

He was like, you're not going to get your money back, you're not going to get the drugs back, but maybe there might be some pieces of jewelry of yours that he'll, you know, he hasn't sold yet. And he was exactly right.

He had, you know, a couple chains or whatever.

And I told, I asked him, I said, you know, why'd you just leave me there?

Like, and he said you were too pretty.

And that was the first time, and I talk about this in the book.

That was the first time that I was like, well, maybe I am pretty because I was like, maybe I am pretty because, you know, he,

because this, this was a stone cold killer.

And I talk about even when I met him, how he looked like he had never felt any kind of love in his life.

And I'm just, I don't know what kind of crazy nut I was at that time.

I was just so, all I could say is just out of my mind, like I was just in such an alter reality.

I really thought I was going to be the next cream pan, first of all.

Again, a lot of people don't know our queen penis.

Yeah, well, you know, I thought I was going to be the next, you know, like big time female drug dealer.

You know, and I really had, I was, I was crazy.

I absolutely was just a nut because I had no fear whatsoever.

I was absolutely fearless to be rolling with these wolves like this.

And like it was nothing.

Like it was absolutely nothing.

I think about that today.

I think of my daughter.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

I'm like, what the, like, I don't know.

All I can, and that's when I know, and I think back on everything that I've been through, I was like, there is a God for sure.

There was a God.

Because that dude, for me to even want to see his face again was like, I want my shit back.

And he had, he had it for me.

He was like, there you go.

You know, and so, but it prepared me for Hollywood.

It prepared me.

It prepared me big time.

It prepared me in a way because I was running with killers.

That's, it's as simple as that.

Right.

So the Hollywood flex, you know, dudes who were presenting themselves as like these powerful, you know,

if you don't do what I say, I'm like, bruh, honestly, it just didn't resonate that way for me.

I just looked at it.

I looked at all of that as just kind of like puppy play.

It didn't resonate with you, but from the words you described in your book about how you received in Hollywood,

it appears that you didn't resonate with Hollywood either.

Yeah.

For a while, I did not.

Yeah.

For a minute.

This rough around the edges.

Rough around the edges.

Yeah.

Because I mean, it was part of what was refreshing for a lot of people, but it was also the thing that was standoffish too.

Right.

What is that?

I think just that, that edge that I came with that no, you know, having no fucks to give basically was just like, I'm here to do me.

What?

You know, and I got something to offer.

And if you can't see it, well, then that's on you.

You're lost.

You know, just that kind of attitude and just kind of like, you know, I wasn't your prim, proper, demure young lady.

You know, it's just kind of like, it's just rough, rugged and rambunctious.

It's interesting, isn't it in life how a certain type of demeanor or attitude or mindset can help us to

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

survive and thrive in one context.

But sometimes we need to figure out how to turn that shit off.

Yes.

And that's what I had to learn to do.

Because you weren't in survival anymore.

I wasn't in survival anymore, you know, and I talk about this in the book, you know, how Warren Beatty bless him.

He was probably one of the first people that was just like, Hey, you're in Hollywood now.

Hey, I get it.

But why don't you allow people to see some other aspects that charm you have that smile you have like, let's take that.

Let's take that chip off your shoulder a little bit.

You know, and he was the first person really to talk to me in a way that wasn't like making me wrong.

Right.

He didn't make me wrong for being who I was.

He was just like, there's so much more to you.

And people see that, you know, and that was the first time I actually listened because he didn't make me wrong.

And I bet you Warren has no idea that how much that conversation and the time that he spent with me really meant to me.

It was really awesome because he was he was so respectful and he really honored where I sat and where you didn't get that often in Hollywood.

It was just like, No, you got to change this.

You got to do this different.

You'll never get jobs like that.

I was just like, well, then I won't work because, you know, I was very rebellious sometimes in that way.

Um, but yeah, he really that really stuck with me.

And from that day on, I just started on the journey of trying to figure out how to not lose myself.

But also feel find a way to feel safe to take that approach.

Because like I said, I was around wolves all the time.

So I had to always be on guard.

I had to always have this tough exterior.

I always had to carry the attitude like I'm not the one.

You don't want to come over here.

It's interesting because when you putting up such a barrier to defend yourself can often make us quite hard to form connections.

Yes, absolutely.

The reason I pause there is because I'm thinking about what you said in the book after Tony left you.

He was your mother's new husband.

He left abruptly after playing the role of a father.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

And you said the line about the rejection was brutal.

Something broke inside me.

My grief was oceanic.

I put it on a library shelf labeled unlovable.

And I tried to leave it there.

That's another word that comes up over and over again.

This word unlovable.

And it's funny because when people are, when they feel unlovable themselves, they do often put up these walls, which make them, it's almost like self-fulfilling.

Exactly.

And that's the essence of what I felt in Jada when she arrives in Hollywood is this person who's got this sort of little bit of a tough exterior up.

But not because, not because she's not, you know.

Yeah.

Not because, you know, it was really just, it was, it was so many things I was trying to protect.

It was defense, not offense.

Exactly.

Yeah, it was.

And I still to this day, you know, people like, you know, I still to this day have to like, manage that because it's just, it's just in me.

It's just part of me.

It's something because it was such a, it was, you know, it was something that was built at the foundation.

You know, it's in my DNA.

Default.

Yes.

My default.

So it's like, and I do it well.

I can just, you won't know anything that's going on.

But like you said, it's like, well, then you don't give yourself an opportunity to make the connections that you really want to have.

And you're going to be misunderstood.

Yeah.

All the time, which that is like, that has been my life too.

Just misunderstood.

Another thing I learned from reading the book, which is going to shock you that I didn't know, but this shows how little I am tuned into media and Hollywood.

Who for you?

Is your relationship with Tupac.

Oh yeah.

He comes over, introduces himself.

Yeah.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

First day of school, Baltimore School of the Arts.
And as soon as I walk in, he's holding court.
He's holding court.
He's like, he's a charismatic from day one.
He's holding court.
And I'm like, who's that peanut head dude over there?
You know, and I'm coming in.
I'm rocking, you know, I'm Jada.
I'm walking in.
I'm at the rat tail, like at the fly clothes, you know, and he turns and we, our eyes just meet.
And I'm like, oh, and then, you know, I'm, I'm going to hold my court, you know.
And so then he comes over, you know, I'm like, okay, cool.
Yeah, whatever.
And so he comes over and he's like, Hey, I'm Tupac.
And I'm like, Tupac, the name from the gate was just like, I never heard a name like that before.
That was such a powerful, different name.
And I was like, Tupac, and he had this big smile.
And I was like, it's not a lot of people that have that kind of like charisma and courage to just walk up on me on just like, I'm Tupac.
I'm, you know what I mean?
You need to know me, you know.
And from right from there, inseparable, we became the best of friends from that moment on.
We just connected.
It was as if we already knew each other.
It's crazy.
People will find it hard to believe that at that age in that environment, it wasn't a romantic thing.
I know.
People have had a really hard time, you know, understanding that.
Pac and I had a hard time understanding why it just didn't, we didn't have it.
I talk about in the book, you know, that being on the back of porch of my house and we're like having this discussion.
I'm like, okay, Pac, just kiss me.
And he kisses me and it's the most disgusting kiss between us both.
I mean, he pulled back just like, and I pulled back and I was like, see dummy, you know, and from there it was just like, and then there was one more time.
He kissed me and it was just like, and I talk about that.
And in jail when I go to see him in Dan Amora, that's a whole other thing.
And once again, it was just like, dude, doesn't work.
But throughout our relationship, we definitely had this beautiful closeness that was really intimate.
But never physically intimate.
A lot of emotional intimacy, a lot of intellectual intimacy.
We just knew how to reach each other in ways that was very difficult.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

We knew how to get around each other's walls.

And we didn't get offended when we would fall into our defaults of defense, which could be pretty fierce between the two of us.

He was quite a powerhouse.

And so was I.

We could be very challenging when we got riled up.

So arguments, we were very passionate.

But because we were one in the same, in that way, we kind of understood that language like, oh, this joke is, you know what I mean?

So we didn't get offended a lot until one particular time, which comes later in the book.

Yeah, when you come from the same place, you know the origin stories, you don't have that misunderstood.

Yeah, because you understand.

I just understood him.

I just understood him and he understood me.

He really got me.

And he really knew how to pull my coattails in ways that a lot of people didn't and same for me with him.

I just knew how to reach him in ways that and that had everything.

And I think because we didn't have that kind of, I think sometimes physical intimacy can really get in the way, you know.

And I think that God just made it that way in which God was like, no, no, no, I need you to to be.

I got a plan.

So that's not part of plan.

Did you know, did you in your heart of heart know that Tupac was going to go on to do what he did?

I knew he was going to go to do something.

I did not know he would become the Tupac we know him to be, but I knew he was going to do something great.

In hindsight, when you look back at who he was, the character traits, the ingredients that were within him, why did he go on to do what he did?

What was it about him?

He wore his heart on his sleeve and he could join you.

And so what I mean by joining you is that he's not talking at you.

He's talking with you.

He had a way of being able to speak about subject matters that he's going to sit with you in your broken heart and speak to you from there because he knows that broken heart.

He's lived that broken heart.

So and whether it's your broken heart, whether it's your rage.

But he just knew how to penetrate those emotional spaces in people.

And that's what I mean by joining you.

He knew how to join you emotionally in so many different verticals of emotion.

You know, he was supremely intelligent as well.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

He was so authentic also and so raw that I think that was really refreshing as well.
He gave you him and he was unapologetic.
So he's going to give you his intelligence.
He's going to give you his fear.
He's going to give you his pain.
He's going to give you his anger.
You know, he's going to give you his sympathy.
It's going to give you his understanding, right?
But it was coming from that heart space, that real space within.
It wasn't a gimmick.
It wasn't like, oh, I'm going to talk about this because this is what's hot.
No.
You know, right, wrong or indifferent, he gave you his truth.
And some truths people could rock with with them and some truths you couldn't.
You know what I mean?
And but regardless, it was what was real for him at that time.
He was always authentic.
But it's not easy.
It comes with a cost, right?
It comes with a cost.
Because it's almost the opposite of conformity in a way, authenticity.
Yeah, exactly.
And he was a rebel in that way.
And I think people really, at points in his career, you know,
he could speak, he would speak for the community.
And then at points of his career, he would speak from that,
that really intimate place of woundedness.
Yeah, mama.
Yeah.
You know, there's so many of us related to nobody was speaking to us in that way.
That could, that could go from ambitions of a rider to shed so many tears to a soldier's story.
Come on.
Come on.
You know, to, I mean, he had so he could speak to us from so many different angles.
That is just the evidence of authenticity, isn't it?
Because people are multifaceted in their nature.
No one is just ambition of a rider.
Yeah.
All the shades, right?
But rap music, especially back then was very narrowing.
It was like, this has had to be a rapper.
So someone willing to be authentic.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

It's funny I've seen this over and over again.

They are the most resonant people in the world because they represent us in a way that a lot of others aren't brave enough to represent us.

And that's also what vulnerability does.

Yes.

That's what you do as well in this book.

Well, thank you.

Because you're willing to lay it all out.

We can relate to, many people will be able to relate to many parts of you.

And, you know, without books like this, we get narrow views.

And those narrow views, I mean, those are crafted by other people.

And they're the least relatable narratives, right?

Yeah.

And we're also multi-dimensional.

You move to LA, you're working three jobs.

You start trying to climb into the ladder of Hollywood.

At this point, you, you meet a certain Fresh Prince.

The Saviour Prince.

The Saviour Prince.

Yeah.

And I was quite shocked by, I think of, I think of Will Smith.

I think charismatic, he's a good looking guy.

Yeah.

You didn't seem to think that way.

No.

No, not at first.

Yeah.

What did you think at first?

I mean, he was the Fresh Prince.

I was like, okay, he's cool, you know, but I was like, not, not, not the guy for me.

You know.

Why?

Was he too soft?

I wouldn't say he, I wouldn't say soft.

I would just say that he didn't seem deep.

And I talk about this in the book, how at that time, a troubled dude seemed deep to me versus just troubled.

It's like, stay away from the troubles.

Right.

And so he wasn't troubled.

It didn't seem to be, right?

And so I was like, that's not deep.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

Like he just seems like, you know, just didn't draw me in that way.

You don't feel the same way anymore though, do you?

No.

The deep parts.

Oh no, he's actually, yeah, exactly.

Yeah.

Yeah.

Don't judge a book by its cover.

That's what Will Smith taught me.

It was like, not to judge a book by its cover.

And I learned that, you know, years later when we had an opportunity to have, you know, we had a mutual friend.

And so we were able to share some time at Jerry's Deli over a meal.

And I got to see a totally different side of him.

Dwayne.

Dwayne Martin.

Yeah.

Yeah.

You went to that jacket potato place.

Yeah.

The baked potato.

Mm-hmm.

What was it about, what did you see in Will that night?

You know, I found it really interesting because one of the things that you described seeing in him was someone who was quite adamant in taking over the world.

Yeah.

He was so ambitious, you know, and in such a beautiful way.

He had big dreams, big dreams.

And he was so joyful.

He was really joyful, but grounded.

And that was the part that I missed.

He was grounded.

It was like he'd been through some things and he was really intelligent.

So he's what you call, you know, he could go from the hood to the White House and everywhere in between.

Right.

And I always find people like that fascinating that have a wide range within them, places that they can go.

You know, you drop Will anywhere and he's going to figure it out and fit in.

He'd asked you to be his on-screen girlfriend, hadn't he?

He, okay.

Fresh Prince.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

Yeah.

So I auditioned for Fresh Prince.

I think it was the second year to pay one of his girlfriends and they were like, you're too short.

I was like, all right, cool.

Right.

And so that was the first time that I actually met Will.

I came out of the casting and he was, you know, coming into the casting office or about to leave or something.

And he was like, hey, I was like, yeah, what's up?

You know, I was like, no need to talk to me.

They already said I'm short.

Yeah.

So I'm on my way.

And then, and I think, I think I was probably about 20.

And he wanted, he wanted me to play his, you know, his girlfriend as a series regular.

So he flew into North Carolina to meet me.

And I was like, no, I'm going to do movies now.

And he was like, all right, cool.

That's a, that's a bold, that's a big rejection.

To reject the Fresh Prince of Ballet when he says you can be his sort of recurring on-screen girlfriend in a hit show.

And you say, TV's not for me.

I'm going to focus on movies.

Big cool.

Well, I had just done it.

I had just come off of a different world.

And I knew like, I had the protection of Debbie Allen on a different world.

Right.

And so when I wanted to make moves, Debbie was there to help me.

That's not to say that I would have that same assistance on Fresh Prince.

And at that time, they locked you in.

You couldn't do anything.

You know what I mean?

They have you for six years.

They got you locked.

And I just didn't want to be locked like that.

And so I really wanted to try my hand at doing movies.

And then Dwayne Martin, when I turned wheel down, Dwayne Martin got on me because he felt the same way you did.

It was just like, it's financial security.

How could you let something like this go?

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

And you know, who's to say when your next starring move, you know, role is going to come in and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.

And I was like, but I'm so glad that I didn't take that role.

Because I tell you what, if I had taken that role, Will and I would not have been married and I wouldn't have had Jaden and Willow and Ben Tree's bonus mom.

My life would have been totally different.

You sure?

I'm positive.

Yeah.

As in you're sure that you wouldn't have gotten married?

I'm positive.

Yeah.

No.

You would have seen the red flags.

No.

Yeah.

No.

Earthquakes are hard to predict.

Sometimes you feel tremors ahead of time.

Often they come on suddenly.

And in your early 20s, you had your first, maybe not even your first, but what you describe in the book is your first breakdown, personal earthquake when you're driving down the street one day.

Mental health and psychiatry have come a long way since then.

I would guess that at the time, many people wouldn't have been able to tell you what that was.

I had no idea what was going on.

Me just thinking about that moment.

It's like, I was so overwhelmed.

And I was like, I didn't know what was going on with me.

And it came over me in an instant.

I was fine.

One moment I'm turning my car around to meet a friend on the corner that, you know, I saw to say, and to say hello to her.

And all of a sudden my body shaking, all these emotions come over me.

And I'm like, I'm starting to, it's like waterfall of like tears.

And I'm like, and I have no idea like my brain is not catching up to what is happening with my body.

All I know is that this waterfall, this volcano of emotions, it was fear, anger, despair.

And I was like, I got, and she was looking at me like, are you okay?

And I was like, I don't know.

I, you know, and I get in the car and I'm trying to drive.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

And I'm like, you can't drive.
Pull over.
And then I pull over.
And then I just remember feeling terrified to just let it go.
And I let it go.
And then I'm like, I want to die.
I want to die.
And I remember making it home.
And all I could do was call my mother and say, you got to come here.
I'm going to kill myself.
You know, and I think about that.
And I'm just like, wow.
And my mother was like, she was maybe a year into her sobriety.
Right.
And what a terrifying call to get.
Like if I get that call from Willow or Jaden or Trey, I'm just, you know, it's like.
And so she's figuring out because she just started a job at this hospital.
I'm so terrified to be by myself.
I call my home girl MC light.
And I tell her, it's like, you got to come out here.
I'm afraid to be alone by myself.
I'm going to do something to myself.
And she flies out.
And so she holds me down until my mother comes.
It's crazy moment.
Have you figured out what, what your body was telling you?
I think my body was telling me that.
I think my mind was telling me, Hey, we have some things we got to pay attention to up here.
Enough with let's keep it moving.
I'm going to make it so you're not going to just be able to keep it moving anymore.
You have some things that you got to pay attention to some things that need to be addressed.
And at the time, like you were just talking about, nobody was talking about mental health at all.
And specifically, mental health was considered like a white people thing.
Like people don't have mental health issues.
Right.
And so suicide for sure was a white people thing.
So I was real confused.
I felt really, I felt like something is, is has gone really, really, really wrong here.
Because nobody else like me feels like this.
Nobody knows what's going on.
And maybe I'm losing my mind.
I'm actually going crazy.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

You know, so it was a scary time.

When I read about that, it sounded to me like you had been, you'd been playing defense for just a little bit too long.

Yeah, for sure.

For sure.

And that's, I guess, one of the costs of the toughness, right?

They're like, as you say, we'll just keep it moving.

We just keep it moving.

Nobody's immune, are they?

No, it's going to catch you.

You can deal with it or it will deal with you.

Those are your, those are your two choices.

But you, you did keep it moving.

Even in that moment, it seemed, it seemed like you, you carried on with the work.

I think you were, you were recommended to go and see a psychiatrist.

Yeah, I went to see a psychiatrist.

They put me on Prozac and I started therapy.

I started therapy.

But it does still appear that you kept it moving because you, you kept working.

You didn't seem to want to show anybody outside of your sort of inner circle.

Hell no.

Why?

Absolutely not.

Because that's what we do.

We keep it moving.

Right.

And so I was like, I got the help that I need.

I got a doctor and I'm on Prozac.

Right.

So I'm like, okay, I'm doing what I'm supposed to be doing.

And I can't let anybody know.

And we're going to keep this moving because that's what we do.

Plaster over cracks.

Yeah.

We just, at that time, I'm going to take a break because, you know, I'm having, I'm depressed.

What?

At that time, that seemed absolutely ridiculous.

Quick one.

I discovered a product which has changed my life called Eight Sleep.

This product, Eight Sleep, which are a sponsor of this podcast, has been a revelation in my life because the Eight Sleep pod cover, which is basically a fitted sheet that goes over your mattress, controls the temperature of your bed throughout the night.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

And it follows nature's natural rhythm.

It starts cool, gets colder while you go into different phases of sleep and then heats up slightly as you wake up in the morning, which is effectively guiding you to have a deeper, more restorative sleep.

I genuinely think of all the things that we would include in health and fitness.

Eight Sleep now is the most important factor, the thing that I'm thinking about most often every single day.

When I wake up in the morning, the first thing I do is I check my sleep and I use that information to determine how to proceed in that day, how hard to work out, how many meetings to have, what I need to cancel, what time I need to get to bed.

So to celebrate them being a new podcast sponsor, I always want to get a discount for you guys and I've got one.

Go to 8sleep.com, which is E-I-G-H-T, sleep.com, slash Stephen, and if you do that, you'll save \$150 on the pod cover that I have on my bed, the one I'm talking about.

Grab your pod cover, send me a DM and let me know how you get on.

Let's talk about Zoe, who you may know because they're a sponsor of this podcast and I'm an investor in the company.

You guys know health is my number one priority.

Zoe's growth story has been absolutely incredible so far.

They're doing science at a scale that I've never seen before.

Because of their members and recent breakthroughs in research, they can now continue to offer the most scientifically advanced gut health test on the market.

Previously, the test allowed them to analyze 30 bacteria types in your gut, but now, thanks to new science, they've identified 100 bacteria types.

This is a huge step forward and there's nothing else that's available, even close to it on the market at all.

To find out more and to get started on your Zoe journey, visit zoe.com slash Stephen.

You can use my exclusive code, `ceo10` for 10% off.

Don't tell anybody about that, okay?

Just for you guys.

Do you go back to Baltimore?

I did.

I went back to Baltimore because I was going to continue working but not live in LA anymore.

So I bought a farmhouse.

I bought a little farmhouse on, I want to say it was about six acres.

Six or nine acres, if I remember correctly.

And it was, I was going to build a life there for myself in a little quiet corner.

And, you know, I was like, all right, if I need to audition, I'll either go to New York or I can just fly back and forth from LA.

Will was trying to hit you up at this point in your life.

Yeah.

He hit me up.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

He had just, Shari had just sent him divorce papers and he decides to call me and of course me not knowing anything about marriage, thinking that marriage, you know, break up of a marriage is like breaking up with a boyfriend.

He's like, you know, where are you?

And I'm like, I'm in Baltimore, you know, renovating my house.

And he's like, are you seeing anybody?

And I'm like, no, he's like, good, you seeing me now.

And I was like, what?

Once again, that kind of bold, you know, approach.

I was just like, oh, clutch my pearls a little bit.

So he was like, you know, call me when you get back to LA.

So when I got back to LA, I called him and we went out on our first date.

In and around that time, Pack had been sentenced to Rikers, right?

He'd been sent to jail.

At that point in time, he was at Rikers, but then he was on his way to Danimora, which is a horrific place where they send terrorists.

Yeah, usually.

Yeah.

I think the 9 11, some of the people that were involved with 9 11 or the World Trade Center bombings were sent to Danimora while he's in jail.

While he's in jail.

What do you have here?

Oh.

Yeah.

Now as I slip from grace and the world has turned against me, a few claim to have love for me, but once again, you show your love after deep reflection and spiritual awakening.

I have come to realize the friend love and soulmate was there all the time.

I have not seen or felt from anywhere, anyone, the intensity and loyalty that you have shown me.

That is why I want to commit myself to you.

I want to marry you.

He sends you that letter.

Yeah.

It's much longer letter than that, but that's the words that I put in the book.

A marriage proposal.

That's why he was in Rikers.

When I went to go see him in Rikers and Rikers is actually.

That's a really.

Danimora might be where they put terrorists.

Rikers is like.

I remember going to see him there and.

He was in such bad shape, you know, and I had the Rikers, I like.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

Yeah, Rikers was.

That Danimora terrorists are there, but.

Far more humane conditions than I would say Rikers.

It feels, it feels like the emotion is still right on the surface with you when you think back to these.

These moments in your life.

Oh yeah.

It feels like I just came back from seeing Pac at Rikers and I had to leave him there.

It's just like yesterday.

But I'm also in a very raw place in my life right now as I'm thawing out as I'm dismantling my defenses.

You know, I call it the thaw out some.

I'm in a really raw place.

So Pac was, he gets out of jail and.

Sugnight, I mean, talking about timing.

I think it was like a week ago or two weeks ago that someone's been convicted for two packs murder.

A lot of emotions.

Yeah.

How did you feel when you heard about the conviction or that someone that arrested it and arrest had been made.

Um.

I was like, I was glad that an arrest had been made.

This was someone who we had known had been in the car.

He had had done some street interviews about it, you know.

Um, and I was just hoping, I was like, well, I hope they're bringing him in because we're going to get some other questions answered.

So, you know, my hope is that we'll get more questions answered.

In the book you question, but then you confirm that Pac Tupac knew how you felt about him when he passed away because you and him hadn't been speaking.

No.

And I think there's a really important lesson in this for all of us.

Yeah.

Man, we had a, we had a huge fight.

Huge.

It was one of the biggest fights we had ever had.

And, um, and it was about how he had been living.

You know.

And, uh, I really,

at that time, you know, really had to let him know my position that I just felt like,

you know, where he was sitting with everything was just,

it wasn't going to end that well.

Right.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

And we had a magnanimous, I mean, it was just beyond the two of us just at each other.
And I was just like, fuck that.
I'm not calling him this time.
He's going to have to call me.
He was way out of line.
So I really dug my heels, heels in the ground in regards to like, nah.
You know, I let my pride, I let my ego come in.
I really took for granted that he would be living forever.
Like he had already survived so much.
Like it never, like I never, I looked at Park as being invincible at this point.
You know, because he survived so much, even so much that people don't know about, you know.
But just like I say in the book, I'm like, man, don't do it.
Don't do it.
Don't hold on to like that prideful part of yourself, you know, with someone you really care about.
Like, nah, he don't have to call me this time.
You know, I was like, no.
Was that the last time you spoke to him?
That was the last time I spoke to him.
That was the last time I spoke to him.
I was the last time I spoke to him.
And you know what's crazy?
It meant absolutely nothing.
It meant absolutely nothing.
And so that's the test I always have.
I'm like, okay, you're in this beef with somebody.
Will this beef matter in your deathbed?
And then right away, I'm like, nope.
Let me give him a call.
You know what I'm saying?
That's my, that's my test.
Almost a year later, he gets shot in Las Vegas.
You get a phone call while you're filming on set that he's from, I believe from his mother, Afeni Shakura, and saying that he's in hospital in a coma.
And a few days after that, you find out that he's passed away.
Yeah, I was on my way.
You know, Faye was like, no rush.
He's going to be fine.
Um, he had his fiance there with him and his family.
Um, she was like, so, you know, come after your trip in New York.
So I was on my way to him.
And my girlfriend, Fon, came to the door and she, I knew as soon as I saw her face that he was gone.
Oh, I know that picture.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

Yep.

That was Thanksgiving.

He came to LA to spend Thanksgiving with me.

And we were at one of my friend's house.

You look like brother and sister.

We look like brother and sister because that's where we were.

Yeah, he came to Thanksgiving to spend Thanksgiving with me.

We talked about mental health earlier.

Do you, do you know how to grieve someone, the loss of someone like, like that in your life?

No, I'm still, I'm still, um, working out my relationship with grief, actually.

Yeah, I haven't, I haven't really, uh, yeah, I'm still working that out.

Because this chapter of your life was loss.

Unworn loss.

Chapter 12 of your book.

I've got this other picture that I found that I thought was, um, relevant.

Oh, now you, do you know why this is relevant?

I do.

Maxine and Tupac are both in that picture.

In the same picture.

You have a tissue.

Thanks.

You get nice hugs.

Um, yeah, that's, uh, yeah.

Sorry.

Yeah, I, um, I lost Maxine and Pac back to back.

So I liked it, you know, this picture to be flanked by them.

Yeah, I lost him back to back.

Maxine was a good friend of yours.

Um, Pac was your brother.

Yeah.

She was like my sister, you know, she, um, I met Maxine on Jason's lyric and, uh, we became like super tight and she lived in Canada.

So she wanted to come to Hollywood and make a career for herself.

So I told her that she could come live with me.

So she came to, to live with me.

Um, she, we, we feel as though she, um, had a misdiagnosis that she had some kind of temporary disorder that really, um, disrupted her psyche.

And, um, she ended up jumping off her mother's balcony.

Committed, she committed suicide.

Um, so that was really tough.

It seems, it seems unimaginable that, that chapter and season of your life could be filled with so much loss and so much complicated loss, you know, because in all of these situations

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

as you write about in the book, there are reflections where you, you say in the book, if I, you know, you're left with this feeling.

If I'd done this, I could, maybe I should have done it like this or I wish I'd treat that situation differently in hindsight, as we know, is a wonderful thing.

Isn't it?

Right.

There are a lot of people that have lost a lot of people by, by suicide and they all have the same reflections.

Yeah.

They all have that last phone call with the person where they had to put up a boundary and, you know, I've sat here, even in LA in that chair with, I remember Boz, um, her, her partner at the time calling and saying, listen, if you don't come and do this, I'll jump off this bridge.

And then he doesn't.

Yeah.

It's like that existential disappointment of just life being what it is.

It's like grieving that grieving.

It's like she in a, she went from this like happy person to like having this condition that just, right.

And so I just, sometimes I just go, this is when I just have to like reconcile with God.

It's like, wow, God, like you really be doing some stuff.

Like, you know what I mean?

And it's like, and sometimes I get in grief around what life is.

And then I have to make peace with it.

It feels, if we think about your story, it feels confusing that God could seemingly hand someone so much, you know, wonderful career, wonderful family, all of those things.

But at the same time, and maybe, maybe there's a relationship, maybe there's a relationship between the two because had you not had the, had you not come from where you came from, maybe you wouldn't have had all the wonderful things that you have, but also had you not come from where you came from, maybe you wouldn't have experienced all the loss that you've experienced.

So maybe there's a relationship between the two because I've not experienced that loss, but I don't come from where you come from.

So I didn't lose friends growing up.

Right.

I didn't lose friends in my twenties either.

Right.

Having all the different experiences that I've had, as painful as some of them are, it gives me the opportunity to join people in a certain manner, you know, and in really powerful places, you know, like I have a beautiful friendship with Lauren London, and she is the widow of Nipsey Hussle.

And because of the loss that I went through with Pac,

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

I could reach out to her and I could go, hey, anytime you need anything, anytime you need to talk, I'm here.

And Lauren's quite like me, the fences, you know what I mean?

But I just kept walking closer and closer and I just say all that to say that we've been able to meet each other

in a certain place because of the type of losses we've had that can really create beautiful connection. You feel me?

I feel you.

Yeah.

So there are blessings in pain.

You just got to know that to be true and wait for that door to open, you know.

And that's just one, one tiny example of like the blessings that I've found in a lot of the loss that I've had in my life in general, you know.

There's almost an irony or a paradox in the fact that your pain caused a disconnection, but then the pain caused connection.

Deep.

Because heartbreak, there's this beautiful seed in heartbreak, which is like it breaks you open.

It breaks you open and you got two places that you can go.

You can go into the deep wells of darkness or you can go into the deep wells of light.

And I've been to both.

And I've learned I ain't trying to be over here no more.

You know what I mean?

So I always use heartbreak, discontent pain to help me search for bright light and beautiful blessings within them.

In the opener of the book, you describe in the prologue the life that the world would have seen in over the next sort of 10 years of your life before you turn 40.

You describe the, you know, your super successful Hollywood actress.

You've got this husband who is, you know, Will Smith and he's a super successful Hollywood actor.

You've got these kids, you've got the family, you've got the house, you've got it all.

Yeah.

Externally, you're killing the game.

So you must be killing the game.

Right.

Internally, you know, I was spiritually bankrupt, right?

I find it so interesting hearing you describe the relationship that both you and Will had as it relates to conflict resolution.

I find it so interesting because I've come to learn over the last couple of years that the way we deal with conflict predicts the long term health of our relationships.

Oh, God, yeah.

And I think there's this professor, I think it's called Professor John Gottman who studied couples and tried to figure out why they end up in divorce.

And he says the number one reason is because they build contempt.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

Tempt.

That's all about conflict resolution, how you're dealing with your bullshit.

Yes, absolutely.

Now you remind me of my partner because she wants connection, she wants to talk, she wants to resolve things.

She's, you know, she wants to deal with the emotions.

I would like to not.

Right.

I'll buy you something to make sure that you're safe.

Right.

I'll pay for your stuff.

Right.

But I just want to work.

Yeah.

And that's the way you describe it.

Yeah.

And so I resonated with Will in that.

Yeah.

You sharing how you felt throughout that story helped me to understand my partner and all the conversations she's had with me about what she actually wants from me and me misunderstanding her because we have different love languages.

Yeah.

And your love language starts when you're a kid, right?

Yeah, for sure.

And Will's does too.

Absolutely.

What was that conflict of your love languages?

Will's, you know, was very much like yours.

It's like, I want to work.

I want to work hard so that you can have everything in the world that you'd ever want.

You know, you're not going to need for anything.

Right.

And my love language was like, but I just want you to be here with me.

I don't need all of that stuff.

I want to look in your eyes and, you know, feel your love and feel your protection here with me.

And, you know, it's like that connection.

I wanted to feel like I wanted to make a masterpiece out of our connection, you know, and he wanted to make a masterpiece out of, you know, the, the, the life itself.

Right.

And neither is wrong.

Neither is wrong.

And that's what I had to learn.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

That, that, that's where we've come to now and understanding.
Neither one of those wants are wrong.
So how do you balance them?
Because it can't be one or the other.
How do we balance it?
Like Yin and Yang, everything about life is balance.
So I just want you to know that.
I just want you to know that because in, in as couples, we get into these power struggles.
No, my way is right.
No, my way is right.
Well, if you didn't have this, you know, you know, it gets into all of that.
Right.
And it's like, huh, stop.
It's not about anybody being right or wrong.
How do you get the balance of it?
That's it.
Right.
And so, you know, it took Will and I three decades.
I remember that kind of time.
Yeah.
Three decades.
Okay.
Three decades.
That's what we'll get to that.
We'll get you.
It doesn't have to be that, you know, it's like, do it now.
Cause that's what I've said to my girlfriend is I've told her that I've got this opportunity now because things are going well in my career.
So I just want to focus for now.
And then we're going to have all of our lives together.
I actually said that to her one day and she reminded me of it when we were arguing.
Yeah.
I was like, we're going to have all of our lives together.
So like we'll connect later.
Yeah.
We'll connect later.
It's like, what kind of foolishness is that?
You know what I mean?
And I'm going to tell you like this.
I bet you when you're in your deathbed, you're not going to think about whatever it is you're trying to accomplish and achieve.
What do you think you're going to think about most when you're in your deathbed?

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

How you were loved and how you loved.

No.

100%.

Okay.

As I said it, I thought about Tupac and how you never know how long you've got left with someone.

You don't know.

Why would you ever want to wait and put that off?

It's an excuse though, isn't it?

It is an excuse.

For sure.

To justify my own toxic work of holism.

Well, you know, I wouldn't call it toxic.

I'm always careful with this word toxic that we're throwing around, right?

Because we're all so wounded.

Exactly.

And it's not, listen.

Intimacy makes us have to look at our shit.

Right?

It's easy to go, I pissed you off.

I got you this diamond ring.

I got you this, you know, beautiful bag.

I'm going to take you on this trip.

It's like, right?

But like real emotional intimacy.

We got to deal with our stuff.

A lot of stuff comes up there.

But that's where, that's where connection and love and true happiness.

True fulfillment is what's going on in our inner landscape.

You talk of this loss of identity when you married Will.

And this is quite what I wrote down.

It feels like I can't grasp my own journey.

At times I feel resentful and angry.

I don't know what to do about it.

You and Will had these two sort of different visions for happiness and your lives together.

His being that he wanted to take over the world as a global.

You know, maybe start all the things that he is.

And within there you start to lose yourself a little bit, it seems.

This word resentful.

Yeah.

Very interesting word.

Yeah.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

Can you give color to that word?

Why you chose to use that word?

Because it's true.

You know, it was like, I felt as though at that time,

All right, if I mean, I, I want to help you do all of those things.

I'm here to help you with that.

Right.

And I'm like, and in return,

I should get a bit of what I want, which is connection.

Right.

And so you just, for me, just giving and giving and giving and giving and giving and

and forgiving, forgetting, well, not even forgetting,

not realizing that I was abandoning myself

in the hopes that if I just keep pouring into this,

if I just keep pouring into him,

if I keep pouring into his dream,

I'm gonna eventually get what I want, right?

And that's a false idea in so many ways, right?

And so many of us do that.

If Will looked back and was trying to give me

whatever the hell it was I was asking for,

he wouldn't have been able to accomplish it anyway,

because if I'm not connected to myself,

if I don't have a good relationship with me,

there's nothing he can do.

So I was gonna be asked out anyway, you know what I'm saying?

So it's like, that's part of the journey.

There's no right or wrong.

Everybody's always trying to find

the good guy or bad guy in people's stories.

There's no good guys or bad guys.

We're all wounded trying to figure this shit out.

You know?

And so it took me a long time to realize

it is not his responsibility to make you happy.

He can't.

It's impossible.

But it took me forever.

Hard-headed, stubborn, you know, because that romantic idea.

And that's why I talk about checking the boxes.

It's like, I did everything I was supposed to do.

You get to have your dream, how come I'm not having mine?

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

And that's because Will was doing what he wanted to do.
He was making himself happy.
He was making himself happy.
Making himself happy.
And he says that to you, doesn't he?
He says, when you separate, he says he wants you to go and...
He's like, go.
Go.
Go make yourself happy.
Go make yourself happy.
And how did you receive that?
Not well.
Not well, because, you know, there can be truth,
but you know what I'm saying?
It's like how we, you know, I think it was very true,
but I think at that particular point in time,
I was just still really resentful.
I'm just like, you know, oh, so I helped you
get your happiness, now you just going, you know,
don't meet to the curb.
And you know, I got to do it all on my own now, you know?
But that's the truth.
I had to do it all on my own, you know?
Just like he did.
You got to do it on your own.
You got to do it on your own.
You got to do it on your own.
And a lot of that's what this is about in me detoxing
from needing fulfillment and validation outside of myself.
Detoxing from needing it from Will, my marriage,
my family, a career.
Like I had to get to the bare bones of Jada
and walk what I call the exiled lands.
And those exiled lands are going into the crevices of,
you know, those places within that were holding me back
from myself, all the fears, all of the false information
and false ideas of what life is
and what a marriage is supposed to be.
And you know, who I was supposed to be,
what a wife is like, all of it.
Perfectionism.
Perfectionism.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

And then I just went off to be completely imperfect and took joy in that.

Because being in Hollywood, I mean, this is a place that values the appearance of perfectionism.

I think every looks perfect on the surface.

Yeah.

And I think it's not a healthy idea.

It's just not healthy and it's not true.

And nobody can live up to that, you know?

Which is why I've been dismantling that need to be perfect for myself.

And that's been a painful ride, but.

Leading up to your 40th birthday, which is also where the book starts.

I read the first pages of the prologue and I couldn't quite believe what I was reading.

Because the place you're at in your life, this chronic state of discontent that you describe,

I remember when I got to the chapter 17 in the book, which is No Sock and Mum Here,

that was the first time I had to stop reading because it was a lot, a lot for me to take.

Hearing that that's what was going on in your head and your mind, that's the way you viewed life.

You didn't see any path forward for you.

You're 39 years old, apparently, you know, on the surface, it seems like you've got everything that anyone would dream of having.

But internally, there's this chronic state of discontent.

Yeah.

Yeah.

If I was, I often say to people,

if I was a fly on the wall,

but if I was a fly inside the walls.

Yeah.

What was going through your mind?

39 years old, about to turn 40?

Oh, I was in a very, very dark place.

Very dark place.

It's just, I remember the line I read where you said, if I got to 4 p.m. every day.

I was like, I made it.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

I made it.
And even that was like so hard.
I mean, you know, I was talking to my mother this morning
because she just read the book and she said,
I can't believe you didn't talk about
how you woke up every day crying.
Really?
Yeah, and I was like, you know, Ma, I just,
I think it was enough to tell people
that I was looking for a cliff to drive off of,
you know, and what she brought up was like,
she knew I was unhappy, but she didn't know why.
So it wasn't that people around me didn't know
that I was really unhappy.
It's just that everybody believed what I believed,
which is why it was so hard for me to talk about,
which is like, you've got everything.
What are you unhappy about?
Right? And so that's how I was feeling.
You've got everything.
What are you unhappy about?
And that was just, I had so much shame around that
because I didn't understand.
And even then, there wasn't a lot of conversation
around mental health.
And so I was just like, fuck it.
I can't keep doing this.
I went out.
And it was just a really, really dark time.
When you say you were looking for a cliff to drive off of,
you're not saying that theoretically or as a metaphor?
No, I'm saying I was looking to the point
where I was like, big sir,
I knew exactly the route to drive
and it's this really narrow route.
And sometimes it gets really foggy there at night
and I'm not making it out of that drop.
I remember driving that one time going to big sir
because I was looking like here, like on my hull
and I was like, these drops aren't gonna,
like I need a drop that I'm not making it back.
I don't wanna be disfigured.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

I don't want, I want out.
And I knew I had to make it look like an accident
because I did not want my kids to think
that I had committed suicide.
No, I was, yeah, I was in a lot of pain.
I was in a really, really dark place.
And when you're in that place, you just can't see your way out.
And you really think, I really thought something
was really wrong with me because what I was feeling
wasn't matching the exterior of my life.
So I really did feel like I was just born broken.
And I was just wired in a way that just,
what was the truth?
If that's how you felt, what was in hindsight now,
what do you know to be the truth of that emotion
and that state of your life?
39, 40 years old, what was actually going on?
That I really feel like that sometimes
when we get into these states of wanting to die,
those of us who have had like suicidal thoughts
and would have you, sometimes it is chemical.
That's a different thing.
I think mine was more psychological.
Something is asking to die, but not you.
And it's a different way of looking at things, right?
And so, and it's an extreme shift
in which I had to get out of my cycle of self-hatred.
I was in a cycle of self-hatred that I didn't even know
because we're unconscious of it.
So the mind is tricking us, you know what I mean?
We got to be careful with this.
This isn't as reliable as we think, you know?
And so, but I was in a cycle of self-hatred
and it wasn't until, thank God for my son that I was,
you know, he introduced me,
his friend's father did ayahuasca
and they happened to be talking about it
and they talked to me about it.
Jaden came in the kitchen, he was like,
you got to sit down with Moises and Mateo,
you got to hear about this experience, Ma,
that their dad had.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

Was Jaden saying that intentionally?
Did he know that you needed that?
No, he wasn't saying that.
He was just curious.
He was just, he knows I'm curious.
He knows I'm a seeker.
Right.
Right?
That was divine.
And so I went and talked to them and I was like,
hey, is your dad in town?
And then their dad came and I talked to him
and he, I was like, I need that.
And then the universe opened up a door for me
to have my own ceremony
for days of like, intense,
intense ceremony.
But that's when I got to see that cycle of self-hatred.
I was like, this is you.
These are your thoughts.
This is how you feel about yourself.
This is the problem.
And so the medicine really showed me
this pit
of self-hatred I was in.
And it helped me get out of it.
Chapter 20 of the book, you titled Surrender.
Yeah.
Surrender is an interesting word.
Why is surrender so important in your journey?
You have to surrender everything you think you are
and everything you think you know.
I've spoken to a lot of people that have done
Alcoholics Anonymous and they talk about
the importance of surrender.
Surrender, yeah.
It's like surrendering, you know, for me,
also surrendering to a higher power.
And that's a constant.
That's every day.
I have to remind myself and deepen my surrender
to a power far greater than myself.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

Chapter 21, The Holy Joke, The Holy Slap,
and The Holy Lessons.

It's interesting because there's similarities
between chapter 19 and chapter 21 in that
you took a lot of the blame for situations.

Chapter 19, The Entanglement Conversation.

Because when you watch that clip online at the red table,
Will looks tired and he looks sad and he says that thing.

He says, I'm going to get you back.

It made it look like you had cheated on him or something.

I had to check the facts because if you see that clip
in isolation, it looks like you cheated on Will
or something, which is not what happened.

Yeah.

But you put that out anyway.

I did.

You could have not put that out.

I know.

Do you regret putting that out?

No.

You don't?

I don't.

If I didn't put that out, I wouldn't have seen
that next place of healing that I needed
because I can take so much like discomfort.

It wasn't until I saw how the people around me were affected.

I mean, my mother, my kids, my friends, people like,
they were like, how could you do this?

And I was like, well, I just wanted to end everything.

You know, Will wasn't ready for the world to know
that we weren't together and that we were living
separate lives.

And I just took it because I just wanted to stop.

I just wanted to end.

People were like, no.

My mother was like, what are you?

She was like, you need to get your ass in therapy.

She's like, you are co-dependent as hell.

You know, and everybody was just so and then how people
that love me so much were affected by that time.

I don't think it would have penetrated and for me
to really look at that part of myself if it hadn't been

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

for how the people around me reacted.
Because I don't really care about public in that way.
Like most people do.
I don't, whatever, because I understand the chaos
and just absurdity of all of that.
But people who love me, I needed that mirror to see that
place of healing that needed to happen in me
and the dynamic within myself.
What was that dynamic within yourself?
Just like martyrdom.
Oh, okay, throwing yourself under the floor.
Yeah, that martyrdom that I will.
Martyrdom, the holy slap.
Yeah.
You write about in the book how you didn't realize
that Will had actually slapped Chris until much later.
You thought it, you suspected maybe it was a skit or a joke.
I thought it was a skit and then I realized it wasn't,
but I didn't think that he actually made contact with Chris.
Looked like he ducked it.
Social media grabbed onto this eye roll.
And they, social media believed that that eye roll
was some kind of like, go get him, Will.
Yeah, and even if it was, it was like,
I can't force Will to do anything.
And even Will went together.
We weren't together as, you know, we were family.
I was there with him as family,
but we weren't together at that time.
Were you surprised by the reaction and to that moment,
both for you, but also for Will?
Yes and no.
I was surprised at how much,
I knew I was going to get blamed,
but like I didn't think that it was going to be,
I mean, it was insane, you know, it was like, wow.
But I knew, I knew we were, I knew it was going to be a storm.
In the book, you say protection is your love language.
He protected you, didn't he?
Did you see that as a act of love?
You know, it's a really complicated moment.
It's a really complex moment.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

I will say yes and no in a certain manner, you know?
But I definitely think in his way.
But it was, it was so much more, it wasn't about me.
That's why it's complex, right?
It's like it was about a lot more than just that moment,
a lot more than just me.
That's what I know, you know what I mean?
Because you know Will and you know where he's come from.
Yeah, and I, there was a lot that was stirring up for him
at that time because of emancipation
and he and Chris have their own history.
Going back to the 80s.
Yeah, going back to the 80s and it's a deep one.
Jada, thank you.
Thank you for writing this book
because it's not until we understand people's context
that we understand them and when we understand them,
we realize that they are just so much like us in the wounded,
the imperfect, the survival, the defense and all of those things.
And that's exactly what I got from reading worthy.
But also, as I said to you, I think before we start recording,
there were so many moments in there that acted as the advice
that no one around me could have given me
because they've not walked in those stairs.
You act as an elder to me in the book
because you've helped me to figure out and shine a light
on a certain area of my behavior
which comes from maybe a wound that I have
that is going to hold me back and lead me to a place
I don't want to go to.
I promise you, yes.
Yeah, exactly.
And you're right, you should use the word breadcrumbs
but that's exactly what the book is.
It's your story, but throughout your story,
you leave these little nuggets of wisdom and lessons
that will guide those that read the book
to a better place in their own lives
and they can subjectively define what that better place is.
But the wisdom is enduring
because the wisdom is human and it's true.
So there's something in there for everybody.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): "I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!", "Me & Will Are NOT Together", "Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!"

It's one of the best books I've ever read
because of the writing style, the vividness.
I felt like I was in your grandmother's garden.
I felt like I was there at all of the key moments
when you have what I described,
what I thought was a panic attack on the highway
and those moments, the moments of sadness.
The vividness of the writing is so profound
but the vulnerability of the book
is the most impressive thing.
It's easy not to be vulnerable.
It's easy to paint a narrative that is self-serving
but that's not what you do here.
You seem to be in the pursuit of the truth
and that's exactly what I take away from this book.
So thank you so much, Jada.
Thank you, thank you for creating a safe space
at your gray table and for holding my tears today.
I appreciate that, thank you.
As you may know, this podcast is sponsored by Hewlett.
If you're living under a rock, you might have missed that.
I discovered Hewlett's RTD about four years ago.
Hewlett's RTD is basically a meal in a bottle.
It is nutritionally complete.
It contains 26 of your essential vitamins and minerals.
It's got your protein in there, 20 grams of protein.
It's got slow release energy in there
in the form of those slow release carbs.
It's just nutritionally complete.
Not only have I got a good relationship with it
in terms of health, but it saves my life
in terms of those busy days
where there's a higher probability
of me reaching for something I might regret.
If you haven't tried Hewlett's RTD,
you could probably see it in a couple of supermarkets,
but you can order it online
and the link is in the description below.
Let me know which flavor is your favorite
and also tell me if it ends up adding value to your life
in the form of making you nutritionally complete
on those difficult days.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Jada Pinkett Smith (EXCLUSIVE): “I just wanted to stay ALIVE until 4pm!”, “Me & Will Are NOT Together”, “Tupac Kissed Me TWICE!”

Thank you for watching.
I'll see you in the next video.