[Transcript] Between Two Beers Podcast / Josh Komen: Surviving Cancer, Heart Attacks, Climbing Everest, and more!

On this episode of Between Two Beers, we talk to Josh Coman.
Before I start with the bio, can I just say stick with this one.
It's one of the most powerful stories we've ever told.
At the age of 23, Josh was one of the fastest runners in New Zealand.
Then, in the blink of an eye, he became one of the sickest.
Josh was diagnosed with acute myeloid leukemia not once, but twice.
This diagnosis took him on a 10-year battle of deep depression,
an allogenic stem cell transplant, being put into a coma, developing graft
versus host disease, multiple complications, or while experiencing
multiple heart attacks.
And somehow, in the middle of this hell, he climbed Everest
and went on over 200 skydives.
Today, 10 years after he received his deadly diagnosis,
he is alive, strong, healthy, and happy.
Not only did he survive, but he began to thrive.
Josh reclaimed back his health through patience and persistence
and is now married and a father.
Through his suffering, Josh has learned so much about the human condition.
And in this episode, we cover it all.
Strapping, Josh is an absolute legend.
Listen on my heart, or wherever you get your podcasts from,
or watch the video on YouTube.
And follow us on Insta and TikTok, where we cut up all the best video clips
from each episode.
This episode was brought to you from the export beer garden studio.
Enjoy.
Josh Kamen, welcome to Between Two Bears.
Thanks, Steve. Thanks, Seamus.
Thanks for inviting me here.
It's great to be here. You guys do a fantastic job, by the way.
Oh, cheers, Josh.
Thank you very much.
We're very excited to have you in the export beer garden studio this morning.
Earliest ebb ever, I think? 7.30am start?
Are you a bit of an early morning guy?
Yeah, I'm normally up about 6am, but no beers cracked at 7.30am.
It's a bold move. I don't know how many sips I'll have.
Put them on blast early. I like it.
Are you a cold shower in the morning guy still?
Yeah, absolutely. Cold shower for about roughly 6 years now every morning.
Haven't had a warm shower in that period of time.
But yeah, I've got a strict morning routine. I like the morning.
Run us through that morning routine.

So let's wake up. I do a bit of meditation.
I focus on what I've got for the day, where I've been.
So it's a bit of a negative meditation, to be honest.
It's what could go wrong for the day.
And I go along the day and have a look at what could go wrong.
And then I always come back to where I am right now and what do I have.
And that always resets me.
Get out, do a bit of stretching.
Then I go outside, expose my eyes to light.
Get the wood in, get the fire going. Cold shower.
Then I crack into a good breakfast.
When the start, when the day.
Solid start.
It's a solid start.
It's like you're winning the start.
We don't often start shows like this.
But I feel like by the time you get to the end of the episode, you'll understand.
But how are you? How are you right now?
I'm more than good.
I have to pinch myself sometimes to just sit with where I am right now,
from where I've been.
Every day is a blessing.
Every day is an opportunity.
And I'm very grateful for everything that comes my way,
and especially having my wife and daughter.
It's just a true privilege to be where I am right now in my life.
I'm fantastic.
I have my days, no doubt.
Not perfect.
But all in all, I'm very, very good from where I've been.
Amazing.
We are fortunate to have you,
because you're down in Greymouth,
but you've popped up for a little getaway to Auckland.
The big smoke.
The big smoke.
How often do you get out of Greymouth?
I get around the South Island a lot.
Not too much in the North Island.
My cousin lives up here in the North Shore, Stanmore Bay.
Funny enough, my wife and I eloped,
and we actually got married in Swan Bay,
just outside of Stanmore Bay.

So a small wedding there.
So I do have a significant reference to Auckland.
But no, not too much.
I love to see my cousin, love to see my family.
But yeah, it's a really nice place.
The city, not so much,
but out by those beaches, pretty nice.
Yeah, we've heard the same about Greymouth,
but not lucky enough.
I haven't been down there.
I went there as a kid.
We did a tour of the South Island,
and I have really vague memories of what it was like.
But again, speaking to other guests that we've had on
that come from the coast, it's a magical place,
and we definitely need to get down there at some point, Steve.
You and your four kids, you beautiful wife, Bonnie.
Party in the mouth?
Party in the mouth.
Party in the mouth.
That's what it was, yeah.
Okay, I feel like yours
is exactly the kind of story between two beers was built for.
Because in researching the set, it's been a ride.
And a really good one.
We've spoken to so many of your friends and family
who just think the world of you.
And we're actually going to start with a quote from one of them,
who's Ruth Croft, who's one of our favourite former guests.
Ruth.
And strap in, because there's a bit here.
Ruth says,
When I think of the pre-cancer Josh,
he reminds me of a workhorse.
He trained hard, raced hard, even partied hard,
sported a mullet for some time,
loved double brown and a jelly tip.
Josh was tough and had this hard exterior.
But cancer changed all that.
He has endured some of the darkest depths and demons
that many of us won't experience in a lifetime.
And through it all, that hard workhorse exterior
has surely softened.

I even remember in a letter Josh wrote to me,
which said that if people can learn from my suffering,
then it's all justified.
This sentence in itself says so much about him as a person.
Josh has time for everyone and anyone,
and understands we're all working through something.
He has this ability to bring energy
and lift those up around him.
I know coming from the West Coast and even from New Zealand,
we too often don't talk about what is really going on.
Josh always holds space to have those real conversations
to open up and be vulnerable, because when we do that,
it always leads to such a richer human experience.
There's been many a time when I've gotten down
on insignificant life matters.
It just takes a split second to think of Josh.
His story has a way of putting what's truly important
in life into perspective.
Just such an incredible passage from Ruth.
But I wondered if we could start by you reflecting
on your friendship with Ruth
and how important it has been to you over the years.
Hummling words.
It's a banger of a testament to a truly amazing character
that we're looking forward to meet.
She's been an amazing friend.
We come together.
I knew Ruth from primary school,
but she went away to boarding school in Ringiruru in Christchurch.
But we come together with running.
When she was on her holidays,
we ran with an old guy called Eddie Gray.
He finished third at the Worlds,
1969 World Cross Country Champs.
He was 32 seconds behind Ray Bedford,
who was the current 10K World Record holder at the time.
A real stoic, hard man,
but he just loved us kids running with him.
Ruth was about 16, I was 17.
And we'd go for a run,
two hour run over the Paparole Hills,
very majestic place.
And then we'd go for a bit of a swim

in the Brunner Bridge, jumping off the bridge.
And yeah, we just clicked.
We were just great friends,
great conversations,
and she was just a really, really loyal friend.
And then you get sick
and I don't know how to talk to people,
but women have a special ability
to be able to listen.
You know, Ruth never had answers for me,
but she had an ear.
Yeah, she was living in the States at the time
with the scholarship of running,
and you know, she'd always answer the phone.
And I wouldn't be too in-depth
with what was going on in my mind,
but I was just talking about the physical pain,
what was going on, but Ruth was number one
who would write letters and emails,
and she'd always have a funny joke,
or something funny to say.
Put a smile on my face, so it's those simple little things
you know, love from a good friend.
But yeah, she's been an amazing advocate,
especially in that last 10-year period
from what I've been through, you know.
She's been, you know, I've got three really good friends,
and she's in that category of just that person
that's always got you back.
She's always there,
and she always sees the good in what she's doing,
and she's always working to be better as well.
And I'm very privileged to have her as a friend,
so thank you very much for the kind words, Ruth.
On the other side of it,
I'm proud of you, of seeing her success,
of seeing her just absolutely conquer the world.
Mate, she is just an absolute beast
in what she's doing, yeah.
And you're right, she's conquering the world,
conquering the mountains, you know.
She is the mountain queen of the World Running Trail series.
But we always saw it in her.

I remember a run with Ruth.
We were running up Strongman Hill,
and Eddie's had a few beers, and he was that old runner like that,
and Ruth's behind us, and Eddie's like,
where's Ruth, and all of a sudden Eddie's dying,
and she's behind us, and here she was, you know.
She's only 16 years old, mate,
but she had this stoic strength about it
that she's not going to give up.
You could see that she had something very, very special,
and you've seen what she's doing, you know.
It's just a replication of what she's put in and who she is.
For anyone after you've listened to this episode,
go back and listen to Ruth Croft,
because her story is incredible,
and the way she thinks and approaches life
is really special too.
The word perspective she used at the end there
has been used a lot with the people we've spoken to about you,
and we're going to tell the full story very soon,
but I just wondered if you could reflect on your current perspective
of life and where you're at.
In my current perspective, I see the good in everybody.
I've seen the pain in everybody,
and I'm trying to connect with the heart of the individual.
I'm seeing the internal love and pain.
We're all gone through something.
I know when I used to look out of the hospital window,
that's kind of changed my perspective there.
I saw the worry, the concern, but the love on people's face,
so when I meet people, when I talk to people,
I'm not looking at their external worth.
I'm looking at their internal worth, where they've been,
where they're going to, who they are as a person.
You know, speak to me.
I'm trying to open up that space.
Also, I see opportunities every day.
I think if you turn on the news a bit, it's quite negative.
I turn that off, and I step back,
and I see a lot of good in the world.
Even getting on a plane to fly here to be able to speak to you guys,
it's just these small little things that we really take for granted
that we don't look at, and I really appreciate those things

because they have been taken away before.
The ability to walk, talk, to breathe, to be out in nature,
to swim in a cold river,
just these really small, little, perfect things
that I bookmark, hold on to, and move forward.
So I see the good, I see the bad, and I hold on to the good,
and I bookmark that, and I own it, and I hold it tight,
and I never let it go.
Well, episode over.
I don't think we've ever had the ability in an opening exchange
to have so much wisdom dropped and so much empathy and presence.
Like, we've only met you for the first time this morning.
You walked into the room, and people talk about the energy
that you can feel off someone, and you radiate it,
and you're genuinely interested.
You knew the stuff that we've done and some of our achievements,
and you talk to them authentically,
and it's fucking humbling to be in your presence.
And the research for this episode for me
has been a really emotional one,
partly because I was on the other side of your journey
as a support person for my mum
when she went through her own cancer battle.
So it dredged up going back to some of those places
and some of those challenging moments,
but also, and I'm very, very close to my mum,
as I know you are as well.
So a lot of what you speak about and the love of your mother
and the love for your mother really spoke to me
and spoke to my heart.
But also, like, your perspective on life, man.
Like, I'm a big disciple of the resilience project
of Hugh van Kylenburg of Gratitude, Empathy and Mindfulness,
and I'm terrible. I'm not terrible.
I'm trying to be better at practicing those things,
and perspective gets used.
We'll get to your journey to Nepal as well
and how that changed you and changed your perspective on things,
but it's just such an amazing tale that I just cannot wait
to go through with you as well.
It's been an absolute rollercoaster,
but let's start on the West Coast.
Just cheers to mums first, eh?

Yeah, fucking hell, what a guy.
Cheers to mums.
They are fantastic.
And it was your mum that brought you into the world
on the West Coast in the greymouth.
So we've spoken a little bit already about it,
but talk about the influence of the place on you as a person.
Yeah, greymouth's a majestic spot, it really is,
and growing up on the coast, it was barefoot freedom for me.
I loved it. You know, I lived in a small little street.
There was the rugby field across the road,
and the ocean was on the other side.
It was just everything, the bush, the hills, everything there.
And I loved sport growing up, that was my go-to.
I loved everything I could touch.
My love was basketball and rugby league.
I played for West Coast in both sports,
but running was my pure passion.
At school, my sister would describe me as ADHD.
I always had to do something, but running was like a meditative freedom for me
where I could get out and just feel my heartbeat,
the sweat on my face.
Yeah, it was something that I just loved,
and running around the coast,
especially out the coast road with Eddie and Ruth,
and being with those people in those hills,
it gave me such pure joy and appreciation from where I was,
you know, and being in nature.
It's the most beautiful place in New Zealand, in my perspective,
but you've been out there in the hills.
It was fantastic, but growing up, I was a line mechanic too.
I worked on the power lines with hard physical working men,
and that kind of shapes the coast as well.
We're an area that's had a lot of hardship.
It rains a lot.
You've got to get it out there and work, do it, perform, keep going, don't complain.
And I was a sensitive kid, but once I got onto the workforce,
I kind of didn't know, repressed those feelings a bit.
It was that hard, stoic man.
And my mantra growing up was,
I'm going to work 10 times harder than the guy next to me.
That's who I became, and that's the identity I brought into.
No one's going to work harder than me.

And it was to my detriment, really.
You know, I'll give you an example.
I worked a 23-hour day once.
The lines fell down on the coast,
and I did a 14-hour day in Reefton, came back,
had to go down to Paringa, which is about a 2.5-hour drive.
Another pole fell down.
Working, working, working, then I was out for a run.
During the summer, I was out getting firewood.
You know, getting firewood for my uncle and aunties,
and filling them up, then out for another run.
You know, just work, work, work.
I've been three, four hours sleep.
And at work, you know, I work for my lunch breaks and just keep going.
And that's how the coast shaped me.
It was hard, stoic.
And it's had a lot of pain and hardship as well.
And I lost a few good friends growing up,
and that had an impact on me, and I never spoke about that.
It was just, you know, I have a few beers and keep going.
And then when I was in the hospital, things changed.
But that's kind of the foundation of the coast.
Hard work, keep going, don't give up, don't complain.
But on the other side, it's got that majestic raw beauty
within the nature.
And the people were really amazing.
And I've had very, very blessed coming from a small community,
going through what I've gone through
and having that community support as well.
Can we talk about your maternal grandmother, I think it is, as well,
and her, was she a nurse that just had a biggest heart in the world?
My grandma, great, great question yet.
Jean, Janie.
So my mum watched my father die around 54 at a heart attack.
cardiac arrest.
Nana was by herself with four kids.
And she was this lady that just gave her heart to patients.
So here's a bit of a story about her.
She'd do a night shift.
She'd see a kid who didn't have the appearance with them.
She'd go home, make them a sponge cake, bring it back,
put it by their bedside, so they've got a sponge cake or something,
and then come back.

And then she'd be in the kitchen, making marmalade,
raspberry jam, and delivering it to the Cobbden community.
Oh, yeah.
Yeah.
And one day I was with my mates, you know,
she's carrying two bags of groceries over the Cobbden Bridge.
Barbara's coming through.
It's windy.
I'm like, Nana, get in the car.
She's like, no, I've got to walk.
I've got to get these home.
She just would not get in the car.
But she just had a heart of gold,
and she had this quintessential love for her grandkids
and just spoiled us rotten and took us down the farm.
Yeah.
An amazing, beautiful lady.
It seems such a...
The way you've described those two things,
it's a real kind of paradox, right?
Like the harsh nature and the masculine edges to the place
with the soft underbelly as well of that giving spirit.
It makes sense now that you unpack it
as to why you are like you are.
But amazing kind of influences growing up.
100%.
Yeah.
And I worked with this guy called Bobby Boswick.
I want to talk about this guy when I first started my apprenticeship.
He was, for me, a true role model
because my dad worked a lot.
He was the overtime king.
I didn't really spend much time with my dad as a child
but seeing this guy, Bobby Boswick,
he had the strength about him.
He was physically strong.
He could do anything, you know, carry cross-arms
and chain sawing up the pole.
Do anything physically.
But he had this real respect about him
and he was quiet.
He was humble and people just left Bob alone.
And I thought, man, I want to replicate that guy.

So I took a lot of his values
of what he portrayed as a that hard, stoic man.
He was physically strong
but, for my mind, he was mentally strong too.
We'll be right back after this short break.
The evolution of Josh Coleman,
the person, is an incredible story.
But pre-cancer Josh was a bit of a naughty boy.
He was a bit of a ratbag.
A larrican?
A larrican.
And we've had a few sources.
It was a bit of a public nudity
sort of featured a lot through those useful years.
There was.
There was.
Yeah, yeah.
I was energetic.
It's good.
It's good description.
Yeah.
I mean, we spoke about alcohol before.
Once I got on a few beers, mate, that was it.
I didn't care about girls or nothing.
It was like, what could we do for fun?
And there was a group of guys that, you know,
would take your clothes off and do a few funny things.
But, yeah, I took it to another level sometimes.
I know you've spoken about your old man,
but was there a situation where post-nude streak,
nude streak, is it like, oh, yeah, no, no,
sometimes streaks aren't nude.
Post-nude streak, you're in the headmaster's office, maybe,
or the school office and your old man can't keep a straight face
as you're getting a dressing down, excuse the pun,
or pun intended?
Yeah, yeah, we were on a basketball camp.
Down in Macaulay, we're coming back,
and we all ran down the viaduct naked and things.
And then, as you do, we all ran down.
Just pause you there.
When I first heard that, I was like, wow, fair play.
Like, he's downtown Auckland.

Streaking, streaking down the viaduct up here.
Naive me, not realizing there's a South Island viaduct.
Correct, correct.
So there's a viaduct between Canterbury and the West Coast,
a viaduct bridge that goes over the pass,
and we all stopped.
Well, a few of us stopped,
because other guys didn't do it.
We ran down there.
However, prior to this, there was a teacher who was a,
she was a lesbian.
Lovely lady, nothing against lesbians,
but one of the boys were doing the old dip between the legs.
The wombat.
The wombat, yeah, that's the wombat.
That's the wombat.
What a squashed rat, isn't it?
Yeah, and she was laughing and stuff,
and we rend it, and we did that.
So there's a bit of nudity involved,
and then we all got suspended.
Everyone found out about it,
and we're in the principal's office.
And for some reason, we're talking about the viaduct,
but Dad starts explaining about tucking your dip between the legs
to the principal.
I've got no idea why,
because the conversation wasn't about that.
Like explaining the merits of it, or like the...
No, just how it's done.
The technique, yeah.
Mum's sitting there, arms folded, like, not good,
and he's passing himself a fly after, like, what?
The principal's like, what's going on?
And the principal goes,
do you want to get out of the room?
Pete, you know, you can have some time to yourself.
So he got kicked out of the principal's office.
I'm getting told off, and I got to stay.
So it was so funny.
Mum's grimace look on her face,
and Pete's just in tears trying to explain
how to tuck your penis between the legs.

The one man.
It's such a good reference.
But in those moments, you've said,
like in those formative years,
you had a challenging relationship with your dad,
but in those moments where that character and that humour came through,
did that bond you two guys together as well?
Yeah, so the relationship with my dad
was the fact that he wasn't around
and I wanted to be seen by my dad,
because I had to break this down when I got counselling
to unravel this blueprint that I had as a kid.
My dad was a great dad.
He had one of the worst childhoods, I know,
and I didn't really understand what that was like.
He's been six to seven years in an orphanage,
went back to his home, a dysfunctional family,
didn't know his sisters, called his sisters that girl,
and moved home when he was 16.
And my mum was probably the best thing that he's ever found.
And my dad was working so hard to give me a life that he never had,
so I could do my sport, so I could have runny shoes,
rugby boots, because his father gave him
pure rugby boots between him and his brother.
So he was working that hard,
and that was his way of showing love.
And I always wanted to show my dad what I was doing in my sport,
and he was never there.
And I didn't see that as a kid,
that's what I'd be seeing.
But my dad gave me this freedom of,
he said, you can go out and do what you want.
I just don't want the police at my doorstep.
So that's kind of my dad.
He's a very, very funny guy.
Loves to laugh, loves to joke,
and having that moment with dad for sure,
that is my dad.
And we did have a nice moment there,
but we did have a lot of conflict growing up,
because basically we didn't understand one another.
And it wasn't until I got sick when I started talking,
we understood, and we're best mates now.

But his story is unique to himself,
and that's his story,
but what he went through is very, very tough.
And as a kid, you don't understand your dad's past.
No, you don't.
Perspective.
So get us into the running journey.
At what age did you realise that you had
an incredible motor that running
could be a future for you?
I always knew I had a bit more in the tank,
especially in sports and training.
I'd always do a bit more.
I used to go to the gym as a 14-year-old,
and then run home, go to squash, then run home.
So there was always more to me.
But I started competing over in Christchurch,
and I started picking up a few Canterbury titles
around 15 and 16.
And I thought, oh, yeah, no, this is going quite well,
but I picked up an apprenticeship at 17,
worked on the lines, and I was working hard.
And I asked Dave McKenzie,
the 1967 Boston Marathon winner,
to be my coach, lives out to Nolly,
great guy, and when I spoke to him,
commitments, you know, when you put something out there,
you commit to your words, so I was like,
no, I've got to really commit to this.
I was about 16, 17 when I asked Dave to coach,
and then I started winning 800s,
1500s, 5Ks over in Canterbury quite consistently
in the youth grades,
and then in the senior men.
And then when I was 20, I got to compete
at my first New Zealand champs,
and I finished a close second at that time,
and it was probably in that moment
that I thought, man,
I could probably represent New Zealand
and maybe go to the Commonwealth Games.
I'm going to really give this a good crack,
so I moved over to Christchurch

and put myself in a better environment
to kind of flourish,
and things were going great.
Yeah, really, really good. I loved Christchurch.
There was a really good running group over there.
I made some great friends,
great friends too.
Oh, no, I was going to say,
between two beers,
enthusiasts may not realise this,
but out of the pair of Stephen and I,
I'm not the runner.
So I'm not very well placed to put this,
but I did the Kipchoge challenge
a few years back,
and I supported, heartily,
that journey.
Can you, Steve, put some context
on some of Josh's running,
because I know you've done the research on that,
but how challenging that was.
Well, yeah, I think
for people that aren't into running,
it can be hard to understand how fast these times are.
So I did this...
It was this big project to display
how fast Kipchoge was actually running
when he went sub
two hours,
and it was like two minutes 50
per kilometre.
So I was really fit at the time,
but I set this goal
to try and do a kilometre in 250 or under,
and eight weeks of intense training,
and I got there,
and it was the hardest thing I'd ever done,
and that was for me as a very fit person,
but I got there at 250.
But to put your times into perspective,
at your pomp,
what would you have done a kilometre in?
It was around about 223.

Fuck, that's fast.
223, yeah, yeah.
It's fast in context with that,
but when you're racing like Sam Tanner right now,
it would be like,
he's fastest in New Zealand,
he'd be like 182, 182, 172.
Something like that. He's fast.
He's so fast.
It's such a...
gruelling distance,
isn't it, that 800 metre or that kilometre?
It's like,
you have to just keep fighting through that pain barrier.
You just have to go hard and hold on.
And that's what I loved about it.
Yeah, I was going to say, did you froth that challenge?
Yeah, because mentally I struggled with the 1500
at a young age, and I was going to step into that,
but the 800 I really loved physically,
I loved that challenge where you go out
and hit about a 53, second 400,
and then you try and back that up.
So, yeah, I loved the challenge of it,
just backing myself up and feeling that hurt box
around that back bend on the 200.
Just seeing how much I could pull out.
But yeah, I loved feeling that internal pain.
You know, just pushing myself through.
I thrived off that.
We're about to get to the first stumble,
but I just wondered if you ever think about
how far you could have gone in running
if you didn't get sick?
Do you think about what you could have achieved?
Especially at the start, Steve,
when I first got diagnosed, I really consumed me,
and I had to learn to let that go.
The thing as is what was, you know,
with every small opportunity that I had
with the limited knowledge, I did my best.
And when I went through that 10-year period,
I had to look back and say,

hey, man, you could run a 223, 224K.
Not many people can do that.
You could run so fast. You've got two legs.
That was an absolute privilege.
So that changed my perspective, but at the start, yeah,
I was consumed in the fact that what could have been,
how far I could have gone,
I didn't get to fulfil my goal,
because all my worth was wrapped up in hard work running.
That was my value.
And at the start, that just, yeah,
that destroyed me because I thought my life had ended
once I got diagnosed.
And, yeah, so it was a process of leading that goal
and understanding that it was a privilege to run that fast,
and I had that opportunity.
Whether I achieved my set-out goal,
I have a saying now, make a plan,
but don't fall in love with the plan,
and I fell in love with my plan at the start.
But, yeah, it is a story of what could have been,
but I look at it as what was,
and I had that ability to run fast.
Yeah, I'm hoping we can get into the...
Pick it up from wherever you want the natural place to be,
but at the beginning of your first journey into sickness.
Yep.
Sorry.
So I was out running with a training partner, Andrew Davidson,
a great guy, and I just rolled my ankle over nothing,
and it just wouldn't heal from there.
It wouldn't heal.
So I thought I'm going to go overseas and just get better.
I had a break from running,
so I had to let go of the New Zealand champs that year,
and that 2011 year, I'd run the fastest 800 metre time.
I actually had the number one ranking in New Zealand,
because the Green Bellum ran the fastest,
but he was a junior, so I had to see him.
It only lasted for six weeks, but, you know,
I was on top of my game, and I knew the form that I was in.
And, yeah, I was devastated at the fact
that I couldn't go to the New Zealand champs that year,

because I knew I could have won gold that year.
That's just what I felt.
And so I went back home to Greymouth.
I competed in a bike race around Brunner.
It's a 136K bike race, and during this bike race,
I was up with the leaders for about a third of the race,
and then I just fell back, fell back, fell back,
and I was just biking, and then I collapsed off my bike,
and I thought, well, what the heck's going on?
Willed myself up to Lake Brunner, went in, got a Coke,
and a Snickers bar, and I thought I'd just slow on blood sugar,
sat there for 20 minutes, and I'm just saying,
get on that fucking bike and finish this fucking race.
Just get it done.
And I'm dying, dying.
And it was another 42K to go.
So I'm breaking off the pieces bit by bit by bit,
because I know the area, and I finished the line.
I said, I'm never riding a bloody bike again,
and I sleep for a week.
I'm having night sweats, hallucinations, all this stuff.
And I've gone to the doctors in this time,
but they never took bloods.
They just gave me some antibiotics
and a prescription for that.
And I woke up one morning.
I had this massive swollen eye, and I collapsed at the sink,
and my brother was there.
He picked me up.
He rung up my auntie.
He goes, get him up to the hospital.
Went up to the hospital.
And I remember being up there with Mum when she came,
and I was crying.
I thought, something's not right.
Something's not right.
Something's not right.
But still, they were trying to drain this eye,
and they hadn't taken bloods, and were like,
take some bloods, take some bloods.
And they admitted me for the night.
Finally, they'd taken the bloods.
I was about to fly out two days to Thailand with my mates,

and they came in, and I'm saying,
I can't go.
I'll be a bit later.
But then during that time, when Nathan was there,
my family were there.
They were getting called up.
I saw this look on their face,
and this doctor came in.
He was a professor.
And then he gave me the diagnosis that I had leukemia.
And my Mum just cried hysterically,
and I was like, what have I done?
That was my instant thought, what have I done?
I didn't know what leukemia was.
It sounds like a horrendous word,
when you look at it in the letters.
Had no idea what it was, but it was a cancer of the blood,
and I'd just seen the distraught on my family's face,
and I'm so confused.
What is this?
And he goes, you're going to have to go over to Christchurch
to the bone marrow unit to get specialized treatment.
It's probably going to be about seven to eight months
a long time.
I was like, what?
So in that moment, I was so confused
and what was going on.
I didn't even understand cancer.
For me, when you hear the word cancer at that time,
at 23, it was a death sentence.
And leukemia was something completely new,
but seeing the look on my family's face,
that cut me up more.
So that's when I just shut the door,
and pushed them away.
So that's the lead up
into that cancer diagnosis.
I've been on the others, again,
to draw from personal experience.
I've been in the room
when a doctor tells a loved one that they have cancer,
and it is,
fuck, it's like the oxygen just goes out.

And exactly what you've said, it's like, oh my god,
this is, that's it.
Having pushed people away,
did you then seek to backfill
that knowledge gap to try and understand
what you had,
or did you just think, oh, hunker down
and just deal with whatever comes?
No, good question, yeah.
So, as you say,
the death sentence, when that diagnosis,
I had an old guy across the road,
they didn't do a very professional job
of telling me what I had, and he's like,
oh, my mate died from that,
my mate died from that.
But yeah, so I went into pushing them away,
but I like to know, I like to know information
and what I'm talking about, what I've got.
So I bought these books, and understood leukemia,
and learning all this new terminology
and the immune system and stuff like that.
I wanted to know, and probably
dug in a bit too much,
and put myself in a position
like, holy shit, this is
really, really, really serious.
And the doctors were giving me great information,
but it wasn't in the in-depth what I was learning in books,
but hey, books are on a whole different scale.
They don't look at me as an individual,
and that's what my doctor was really good at,
looking at me as a person.
Peter Ganley, fantastic guy, I had to always say,
hey, you've been a great runner.
That's the foundation that you set
that you're going to get through this.
And he always looked at the positive.
He was a great doctor.
But I dug, indeed, trying to research
of what was going on in my blood,
and I ended up having a very, very poor prognosis
with numerous genetic mutations,

which put me in this poor category.
Can you tell us about the chemo journey?
Yeah.
Yeah, I'd never experienced chemo before,
but there was a guy at work who'd come in
after my family had gone through it,
and I asked him what it was about,
but he had a different cancer,
and he gave me a brief description,
but leukemia is completely different.
So I'm in an isolation room with a double ventricle door,
air pressure room,
so it was an isolation room,
a little, little tiny room,
about half the size of this room.
And the chemo itself, the first round,
was horrendous. I was used to pain, good pain,
running on heels. Love that pain,
as we spoke about before, Shay.
But this was a different pain.
I suddenly got stripped away,
and my stomach shrunk to the size of a walnut,
and it was the first time I was on morphine,
having boluses of morphine.
I just, like, haven't felt that pain before,
and I didn't know when it would end,
and it just stripped me apart.
My hair was falling out and all that stuff,
and I remember Carol, she was retiring,
and she's coming in with these boluses of morphine,
injecting them into my stomach.
I was like, fuck off, I don't want your bloody morphine,
just leave it, I'll do it myself.
And she's like, well, left me to it,
and she was retiring that week,
so I wrote her a letter and gave her some chocolate,
so sorry about that, and she said,
don't worry, love, I've had a lot worse than that,
and I thought, wow, what goes on in these rooms?
We'll be right back after this short break.
It's impossible to know.
It's a hard story to retell, but it's very important, too.
Even just that, you just don't get a picture

of exactly how hard it is.
The importance of sharing your journey
is to talk about rock bottom
and when things got to their worst
because of where you've got to and how you doubt with it.
With that in mind, I was wondering
if you could talk to the experience
of when you were at your lowest?
Yeah, definitely.
It brings good context to the story.
So I had about two to three months of treatment,
just this physical pain,
spewing out, shitting myself,
all these different pains it's hard to describe,
but there was a mental pain lingering,
and it was not being able to communicate,
bottling everything up, pushing everyone away.
You know, I mentioned earlier
I spoke to a few good friends like Roof,
but not really telling them what was going on.
It's always like, yeah, yeah, no, no, no, I'm good, I'm good,
but the physical pain's really getting to me, and da-da-da.
So it was three months, and during my treatment,
you'd be a month in hospital, have your chemo,
you wait till your neutrophils come back,
and then you get out for two weeks.
I was staying at this place called Ran Nui House,
an amazing place, month in, then two weeks out,
after the third round I was out,
and I pushed my mum away, said,
go, go home, I can't have you here, but she came back.
So she's gone out this day
to go get some groceries,
and this pain in my head, like,
all that value and all that worth
of my hard work and running, that's where I thought my life was,
and I thought I had nothing left, you know,
you're weak, you're loose, and it was just building up,
it just cascaded, cascaded,
you're nothing, you're nothing, you're nothing,
and then it's like, you're fucking nothing.
It's just bang, bang, bang, and I just couldn't,
and I thought, fuck, I've got to end it,

I've got to end it, I've got to end it, I've got to end it,
and it's hard to talk about,
but I have to talk about it,
and I always get quite emotional,
so in that moment,
I walked to the balcony,
I used to work at heights, and I thought,
yeah, no, let's jump, you know how to do this,
and I was on the fifth or fifth level,
and I was up there,
and I thought, yeah, this is it,
you can end this, you can get this pain,
you can control this, this is your way of controlling it.
Step over,
one foot, and I feel disgust and wimp,
and I, what do you even want to call it,
and I turn around,
and I see my mum's cup of tea there,
and
I just feel
her love come to me,
and I say to myself,
you can't put this pain
that you're feeling inside your mum, imagine,
just it came to me, her love,
and it pulled me back, it just pulled me back,
and I sat down, and I had my bald head,
and I just got my fingernails in my head,
just screaming like, what's going on,
what's going on?
And
I had to figure something out,
so I took two zopper-clone pills,
went to bed, mum didn't even know what happened,
went to sleep, and the next morning,
the canteen coordinator was coming around
for that three-month period and offering me stuff,
and I always say, no, no, no, no, no,
and I knew they offered counselling,
and this was me using my strength at that time.
I recognised I needed help,
I had a weakness not being able to talk,
and I needed to understand what was going on,

and so I rung her up,
her name was Sarah, lovely lady,
she organised counselling in the space of two days,
and that unfolded.
My path of being able to communicate
and understand what was going on,
and yeah, he gave me some great tools,
and it was just a fantastic thing to do.
So, is it as linear as that,
that was the rock bottom,
that was the hardest moment,
and you came back,
you sought counselling,
and that's the beginning of the path
to the Josh that you are today.
It was a start for sure,
it was a start, but
there were harder times to come,
and I did feel suicidal
throughout the journey,
but I've gathered some tools
to be able to mitigate those thoughts,
to push them away, and to be fair,
they still come now some days.
My body's not perfect, I cramp up at night,
and you have these thoughts,
and you take that space and push it away.
So this was the journey of learning
that 10-year period,
so this was the start,
and he'd take me in, we'd have a conversation,
our first conversation was about my childhood,
and I'm like, why are we talking about my childhood?
When I've got cancer,
but it portrayed a bigger picture
of what was going on, you know,
how my identity was caught up and running,
and hard work, it was like,
no, no, there's more to you than just that.
That was just a part of your life,
and so it's separating the two.
It wasn't me, Josh Coleman, that wanted to die,
it was just this pain in the situation

that I was in that wanted to die,
and I had to separate the two,
and he gave me some great books to read,
and I started reading books, and I started journaling a lot,
going back to my diary writing,
then I went into visualisation,
I didn't really know much about meditation back then,
but I kind of was doing it,
just visualising, because I used to do it in my running,
so I was just visualising myself, you know,
getting out of hospital,
and that, and I started writing a few goals out
of what I wanted to do, and I write a heap out,
then I'd cross them off, and eliminate them
to about two or three, and I focused on those three things.
I used to look out my window
and watch the trees, and pretend I was part of the tree,
and kind of just taking myself
internally to externally,
and then I started talking, you know,
talking to my dad, talking to my mum,
talking to people I trusted,
I didn't tell everybody what was going on inside,
but talking to Ruth more openly,
my mate Hamish had come over,
and he'd just sit next to me,
and we'd have a chat, and I'd be open
and honest with these people, you know,
of what was going on, and they never had answers,
they just listened, that's all it was,
and it just helped take that
allostatic load, that total stress load off my shoulders
to help me go forward with a lot more clarity,
but also, till I read a book
by Victor Frankel,
and I've still got this book, it's next to my bedside shelf,
and Man's Search for Meaning,
fantastic book, and basically the crux of it was like,
you know, you've got to find meaning
within your suffering, just a backstory
about Victor Frankel, he was in Auschwitz
in Dachau, for weeks amount of time,
and you know, he suffered a lot,

a lot, and he voluntarily
put himself in Auschwitz at the start,
you know, he had the opportunity to get out of Austria,
but he stayed with his mother and father,
went into these prisoner of war camps,
and got through, and he's made up this thing
called logotherapy, which means meaning therapy,
finding meaning within your suffering, finding purpose,
and there was a quote in there too,
I really liked, it's like,
when we're no longer
able to change a situation,
we're forced to change ourselves,
so I had to change myself,
and I really love that book, and I admire that man,
I find him a close friend in a way,
because I've read his book that much,
so these little things really helped me go forward,
so that was the start of the journey, Steve, yeah.
Second time in a few episodes
that Man's Search for Meaning has been referenced
on the pod, Russell Packer,
who we had on recently as well, spoke about it as well,
and the impact that it had
during his time in jail,
around choice, and the choices that you make.
Yeah.
The last of the human freedoms,
yeah, is a choice,
a conscious choice that we can make,
and he spoke about that in his book,
when everything's stripped away, down to your bare nudity,
you still have a conscious choice to choose one's way,
so I made a choice and a promise to myself,
no matter how hard it got,
I'm not going to take my life,
and that was the promise I wrote down on my diary,
no matter how hard it got, I'm not going to take my life,
and that was my promise.
Seventy times?
Seventy times a day.
Seventy times a day for seven days.
Like, you've packaged up the learnings really well.

How long
was that process of the first conversation
to, I guess,
being open and honest with your family?
Can you timeline that?
Um,
in particular with my dad, it was kind of straight away,
because
he'd come into my room one day,
he'd been in pain and he'd started crying,
and I hadn't seen my dad cry,
and I was like, my dad loves me,
he's been watching me,
and then we started talking,
you know,
we started talking genuinely for the first time.
I understood his childhood,
and, you know,
we got to know one another,
and that was big for me,
and that was what David guard the council,
he's like, you've got to start chatting to your dad.
Yeah, that was huge for me,
after this, these tools you've got,
and you're working your way, and you start to turn a corner,
and you beat this thing,
so we're on the way out of it.
How much of a role did humour play
in your rehab?
How important was humour?
Yeah, it was so good, my uncle,
he always used to say, if you're not laughing, you're dying.
So, you know, I used to,
on the cards when I said thank you to the nurses,
I could see their shoes, because I'm lying on the bed,
and the first thing I'd see was their shoes,
so I'd say thank you, and I'd write their shoe,
and they'd always laugh.
The nurses were fantastic,
I mean, Seamus, you might have seen the nurses in action,
and they were great, they were always trying
to give me a laugh, and my dad was funny,
and he was always giving me a laugh too,

you know, with one incident with David,
he wrote, my car was for sale,
and put it outside in a public space in Christchurch,
and I was getting all these random phone calls,
it was an old car.
And one guy rings up, he's like,
oh, I'll swap you some big slips for you,
and all this stuff, and I'm like, what's going on,
and Pete comes down, and he's like,
oh, did you get some phone calls, did you get some phone calls?
I'm like, you bastard,
yeah, so, little laughs like that,
you know, sustain me, it was just, yeah.
It's an absolute rollercoaster, isn't it?
It is.
That period, or that cancer journey,
for everybody involved, but you're right,
in terms of laughter, and lightening things up.
It's critical in terms of the human kind of journey.
Oh, we're meant to be connected, you know,
and that's when I talk about,
I do a lot of talks and workshops, you know,
the foundation of health is connection.
When we talk about laughter,
we'll open up that dopaminergic pathway.
We're releasing dopamine,
what has an essential effect on the immune system as well.
So we've got this feel-good,
feel-good molecule about us,
just by laughing, and it, you know.
There's a dark human story coming up, I think, as well, right?
Yeah, I'm not sure if this one
will ever come up at one of your talks,
but I've been on the phone with your mate, Ben,
and he's given me so much gold.
And one of them was about, you know,
part of this journey is,
if you wanted kids down the line,
you had to put some...
Yeah, to put some specimens aside
in case that was coming down the track.
And he retold, I was wondering
if you had a version of it,

your experience producing that?
Yeah, just a bit of a backstory on Ben first,
because he's been a bit of an inspiration in my life as well.
He's been through his own audio,
so you know when the mitochondria
produces ATP, it didn't seem to try to phosphate.
I'm nodding my head like I know what you mean,
but I'll go back
and actually research what you're talking about.
So he's producing this thing called KTP.
It's crazy.
It stands for clinic...
clinic's tissue papers.
And that was a genetic mutation
from a severe disease that lasted like
four or five years, but still lingering from man flu.
Really?
Yeah.
So he's a huge inspiration
going through what I went through.
So thanks, Ben.
Still lingering a bit.
If you go round to his house, there's a few KTP lying around.
A few tissue papers.
I like the slow.
Yeah, took me a while on the slow.
And I was like, okay, yeah, I get it.
We're going after Ben.
Yeah, so he's stretching me up here.
Yeah, so the first...
I got diagnosed, you're going through all this confusion.
You're talking about chemo
and you're learning about the immune system and all this stuff
and you're like, what's going on?
Then they come in with this cup.
You've got to take a sample.
I'm like, I've already taken a blood sample.
You know, it's done. No, no, no, no.
You've got to take a sample of your semen, your sperm.
You've got to make a collection.
You might not be able to get it.
It's going to fry your testicles and all that.
Fuck, this is the last thing I want to do.

So they give me a magazine.
I don't have a smart...
just reek, you know, they haven't been cleaned.
Oh, man.
This is going to be dreadful.
And I'm like, literally going,
yeah, okay, okay, go around.
And then I start to get woozy, you know.
Woozy, I'm like, oh, I've got to get this done.
You know, this is important.
I've got to get this done.
So you go back and forth.
And you try to get this thing done.
And then the climax comes
and I'm like leaning over.
I miss half of it.
I miss half of it.
And I'm like, grabbing the pipe
to try and pull it into the car.
Oh.
I'm like, shivers, I'm never going to be able to have kids.
This sample's terrible.
And I go back and I'm like,
oh, lying in my bed,
but I can't believe we brought that story up.
Yeah.
He's telling us that it was
asking about the worst wank of his life.
The saddest wank.
That was the saddest wank of my life for sure.
It was dreadful. The toilets weren't cleaned.
It was the last thing I wanted to do.
Faced with your own mortality.
Just look at what is going on.
This is not what I want to be doing.
I'm going to scrape the little dregs on the side into...
Literally, into the cup.
You're pulling the pipe hard, just pushing everything in there.
Oh, yeah.
The worst, yeah.
But nobody tells you about that.
I was not prepared for that at all.
It was about chemo, it was about cancer,

it was about diagnosis, about prognosis, all that.
And you got to do this.
Well, we had Rebecca Stott on recently,
football fern who's playing in the...
or played in the Women's World Cup.
Same thing. She had her own cancer journey,
came back, has now playing international football,
but soon after she started, IVF.
And I fucking had no...
genuinely no idea.
So I think these kind of conversations are
great in terms of
informing people what they might be in for
should the unfortunate happen to them,
because they're realities of the situation.
Correct. Store up the Wank Bank.
Imagine, just for a second,
imagine if you had passed out during the act
and someone had to come into the bathrooms
and find you...
No, that's what I nearly did.
Yeah, that's what I'm saying.
Yeah, trow around the ankle, stick mag on the side,
just...
a grim, dirty, dirty...
Oh, shit.
I'm not sure how many other podcasts go from
suicidal thoughts to wanking stories
in the space of a few sentences,
but I think we managed to get it to work.
Just for the audience, the wanking story came first
before the suicide.
Oh, okay, good to know.
It's important to get that timeline around the right way.
Okay, it's good.
Yeah, okay, it's good.
Okay, let's work out of that first.
So you're beating it.
Talk us through coming out the other side
and when you saw the light
and when you thought that this wasn't going to be
part of your life anymore.
Once I've beaten it, I've gotten to remission,

but I get told there's a high chance this has come back
because it's an aggressive cancer,
poor prognosis, that's great.
And I really didn't know what to do with that,
so I went home and all I did
was get into the surf, I loved surfing at the time,
I was at Coblin Brakehead, nice left hand brake,
and I was just out there with no swell
and just thinking about life and that last year,
you know, at the start I was one of the fastest
in New Zealand, had all these dreams
and got cancer one of the sickest,
and then I nearly took my life
and I'm processing all this stuff.
So it wasn't like I was pushing people away,
I was just trying to figure out who I was
and where I was going, and the surf
really helped that, and I was out there
just enjoying my time that I had
and I was doing a lot of riding and meditation.
Meditation was huge.
And then I get a phone call from Ben,
and it's a missed call
and I ring him back and I say,
hey mate, what's going on?
And he's like, hey bro, do you want to go to Everest Base Camp?
And I was like, mate,
are you kidding?
I just had all this stuff go on and
no, probably not, and then I'm in the surf
a couple of days later and I'm like,
I just knew how short life was
and going to Everest Base Camp
was a big dream of mine, I always wanted to go there.
And I just hit the water, I said, no mate,
break down that fear barrier and you've got to go.
You've got to go, so I rang him back and said,
yeah mate, we're doing it.
So five months after my last round of chemotherapy
I was fluent to Kathmandu
and it was just absolutely incredible.
It was my first real overseas experience
in Australia.

I was going to say, pause there,
what's your overseas travel experience
at that moment?
Yeah, so it's just been over to Australia really
at the Gold Coast, Brisbane, Sydney,
things like that, going to a few league grand finals.
But yeah, nothing compared to Kathmandu,
like a sensory overload,
but in a positive way.
It was like, whoa, this is so exciting.
There were guys, tuk tuk tuk tuk tuk,
and I saw my guy and took me in the tuk tuk
down in Kathmandu around the back alleys
and I'm like, whoa, this place is incredible
in terms of poverty.
I've never seen that before.
You see people homeless on the street
but this is completely different.
There's open sewage ways,
there's kids with nothing,
and this was a life-changing experience for me.
I'm driving and I see these kids playing in rubbish.
Some were naked, some had clothes on
and they were playing and they were waving to me
with beautiful smiles, you know, waving.
So I waved back and then it just happened to me,
you know, how lucky and how privileged
was I to suffer in such good conditions.
I was in hospital.
I had my mum, I had counselling, I had food,
I had soft beard, I had the adequate treatment
to get me right, and these kids had nothing
but yet they were making the most
of what they had in front of them which was rubbish
and their friends next to them.
And I thought, wow, thank you,
thanks kids.
So yeah, that just lifted me up a bit too
so that was another learning event,
you know, we always learn,
people always teach you something
and I learnt from those kids in that alleyway
in that moment.

This Everest expedition is great
and Ben has given me a bunch of
talkers which I'm really excited for you to tell.
And he kind of painted the picture
of, you know, your five months
out of this thing.
He's there, he's physically fit,
he's sort of on top of the world
and he sort of dragged you along.
And there's about four stories so I'm just going to
sort of go through them and get you to talk to them.
By the way, I feel like as well
before we rip into this, like
a story to base camp of Everest
is worthy of a podcast on its own.
Like, fuck me, not many people
that I know have been able
to do that. So not only to do that,
but to do that after
your first challenge, and we'll go through
some of the other challenges as well, is a fucking incredible,
incredible story, but
I've taken Stephen's thunder, go with your full point.
So he talked about
hitting his altitude ceiling
and so again, he was fit and healthy
and you were much more fragile
but he got to this place where
he thought he needed to stop
and he talked about the character of you
saying, no, we're not stopping,
we're going to keep going, like you took the lead.
You talk about that?
Yeah, I think we're in Teng Borshe
and he was quite concerned. I got altitude sickness, so I needed to stay
and he wanted to stay a few more nights
and I said, no, we're doing one night and we'll keep going.
We keep going, we start somewhere where to keep going.
And
we pulled through and
we got to Everest Base Camp and I wanted to
go to Mount Kalamata in the morning
to see the sunrise over Mount Everest

and see that and that was
just shy of 20,000 feet.
It was about 19,500 feet, I think.
Mount Cook said 16,000 feet.
So I wanted to go up there in the morning and he's like,
no, we've come here, we've done what we needed to do.
I'm like, no, bro.
We're going to go see the sunrise over Mount Everest.
We're going to go see this, we're going to hit this.
And he's like, no, I'm too tired, we've done it.
I'm like, no, we haven't.
It's at our back doorstep, we're going to.
So, yeah, it was step by step.
We got there very, very slowly, but, you know,
that was still a small, perfect moment I talk about, Seamus.
Watching the sunrise come over Mount Everest,
waving to Sir Ed up there,
it was a beautiful moment
and it's something that I hold dear
to my heart in that moment,
sharing that experience with Ben.
Yeah, it was absolutely beautiful,
very majestic and, yeah,
just taking those opportunities
when they present themselves, you know,
we're down and out, we're tired,
but you're never going to get that back again.
So we had to take it and
I dragged Ben up there and, you know,
I'm sure he's grateful for that opportunity as well.
Down and out and tired is a bit of an understatement.
Tell us about what was really happening with you,
because he said you would sort of hike
for 10 hours a day and then come back
and you'd crash and you'd be 16 hours
and you'd be sort of, it looked like,
just absolutely out to it
and then you'd snap up the next morning
and you'd go again.
What was internally going on with you?
You've got an opportunity, mate. You've got to keep going.
And that's the West Coast mantra that's coming out of me, too.
You know, I haven't really fully let go of that,

but I'm here for this experience.
I've got to make the most of it and I can't turn away.
I just can't, you know.
This is the goal that I've set out to achieve.
I've got time to rest if I need it,
but we've only got a limited time
to be able to get up there in that period
to get up to base camp.
You know, life is so short
and sometimes we need to just grab...
No, I do believe we have this thing within ourselves
that we don't even understand
and it's this inner potential, this capability
that we haven't tapped into,
and I found a lot of that when I was running,
but I found more of that when I was in chemotherapy
getting through cancer
and I knew that I could get more out of myself
no matter how tight I was,
because this was an experience, as I said,
that I'm not going to get back again.
And I had to make the most of that
and I had to go inside myself
and say, hey Josh, you're here,
you're alive, get after it, man.
Just get after it.
In the most positive way.
It wasn't in a negative, derogative way.
If I can get going, it's like, hey man,
embrace this moment.
Get after it, son.
So whose idea was it to get naked
at the top of the mountain
before the Sherpa chased you down?
So my naked days are going away,
so Ben's calling this one out
and he's like, yeah, let's get naked, let's get naked,
and we start taking our clothes off.
And I'm like, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no,
this is the most sacred site of kind of Nepal.
No, I'm like, okay, fear it, no, absolutely.
Yeah, so we just get a photo
on our singlet, so I have my grey mouth singlet on,

given the old Shaka era,
so we did that, but they called us out on that,
which is fear enough, we didn't know.
And absolutely, we didn't want to disrespect anybody.
I imagine frostbite in that kind of altitude
would be a challenge, potentially, as well.
Like cold exposure for some of those dingley danglies
would be a risk.
Yeah, there was nothing between.
Nothing between.
Yeah, Mount Kalabata is still
the coldest day experience I've ever had
going up there at 19,000 feet.
Yeah, it's cold.
So this next yarn, I think,
captures the Josh Koeman spirit
as well as any...
And it's when you're coming back down the mountain
and he told the story of that you were crook.
You were in a bad way.
But due to a pre-existing condition,
like they weren't able to come in and chop you out
or help in any way.
And I hope I've got this right,
but he told a story about, like, you were carrying a backpack
and you were fragile and you were, you know, struggling with it.
And he thought that it was his opportunity
to help you out, and he kept saying,
let me take your backpack, let me take this,
let me help you down.
And he said, you wouldn't allow it,
but then you stopped for a break at one point,
and he, I don't know where you'd gone,
but he took your backpack and he went off down the mountain.
He thought, no, I'm going to help him out.
This is for his own good.
And he said, once you found out, once you saw him,
you came charging after him
and were basically swinging punches and swearing,
and you were furious.
And he said he didn't understand it at the time,
but now in reflection he does,
that this was your dream, this was your goal,

this was your challenge,
your mindset was you're going to do this in this way.
And he was trying to change that.
Yeah, he's bang on the money, you know that.
So I was coming down, had the ability to do sickness
and the body's struggling,
and then I got that deli belly,
and I'm spraying walls in the teahouses.
He said ceilings.
Ceilings, yeah.
He said ceilings.
He said he's never seen.
Well, he didn't shit at the ceiling before.
He didn't come into my hospital room,
so I'd seen words, so I had that perspective.
But yeah, he's right.
It was my dream, and I knew my cancer could come back,
and one of my values is if you start something,
you finish it with your own pack on.
You carry your load, you carry your load.
And for me, it was carrying my stuff in
and carrying my stuff out.
That's the whole adventure, that's the journey.
Was that physical and a metaphor as well?
Yeah, physical and a metaphor, for sure.
Yeah, and he took my backpack that time,
and he's offering, really kind, and I understand that.
And I said, no, if you start something, you finish it.
I need to take this bag.
I want to get it out.
And he did take it.
And I was just, I still hadn't been,
I'm still going through, you know,
I'm talking about meditation and mindfulness practices here.
I still haven't fully grasped it.
And I probably responded in the wrong way,
and I come down, oh, fuck, what are you doing?
Take my bag.
You don't do that, you know?
I wasn't really swinging, but I had my arms up and stuff,
and he's like, oh, put it down.
And I grabbed it off, and I physically pulled it off him
and got it off, and he just walked off.

And I carried it out, got to Lukla Airport,
and yeah, things were good,
but we went to Thailand afterwards,
and managed to talk about it in a lot more clarity.
And he could understand that this was my adventure.
There was a good chance of my cancer coming back,
and for me personally, I needed to carry my pack in,
and I needed to carry my pack in
to make it the true whole quintessential adventure
that I was after.
Those open and honest conversations with your friends,
they must have galvanised those friendships for life now.
And do those carry on in everyday life?
Not just the big issues,
but the small everyday issues as well?
Yeah, yeah.
I mean, I think about my friends all the time,
and those bookmark moments I spoke about,
they just come to my heart and go through my mates,
and then I'll just give them a call.
And then we have some great conversations,
being tears me apart,
but we have a lot of laughs,
and we have a lot of truthful, honest talks,
especially about being a father now.
He's a father of two,
and he gives me a lot of good advice.
My mate Hamish, you know, I ring him up
and have a good yarn to hang.
And Ruth too, you know, just...
we don't speak too much about her running.
It's just more, how are you doing?
You know, what's going on inside?
You know, we really open up that conversation
to understand what's really going on in their life.
And it's really sent the foundation of a true friendship
that definitely won't be broken.
So you conquer Everest, you get home,
you rest up, I imagine, for a while.
Link us up to the next step,
which is your adventure into skydiving.
Yeah, so I get from the pool,
we go to Thailand to just rest a bit,

and I backpack around Asia for three months
and go around Cambodia and just hitchhike around.
It was absolutely fantastic, and I'm saying,
asking myself, what else could I do?
What's a childhood dream?
I want to get back into my running,
but first I wanted to become a professional skydiver,
and I found out there's this diploma in commercial skydiving
that's based in Mithun, just outside of Christchurch.
And I thought, right, I'm going to enrol in that
and just go jump out of planes for a bit.
So I got back from Asia and was in Mithun,
I think July 2013.
And yeah, it was just amazing.
I met some incredible people from all around the world,
but it was the most freest moment of my life.
Not jumping out of the plane, but pulling the parachute
and just floating down.
I've just never felt so much freedom.
Just been up in the Southern Alps,
and, you know, just doing something
that's completely unnatural to the human body.
But also, too, for me, it was overcoming that fear as well,
being able to jump with control,
because that was still lingering in me.
You know, I was thinking about jumping off a balcony,
and if I did, I wouldn't be able to land safely.
So the skydiving, for me, was overcoming that fear barrier
about being able to jump but land safely.
So that was a huge part of skydiving as well,
but I did want to do this as a young kid and be an instructor.
And it was fantastic.
I absolutely loved jumping out of planes
with some really good friends that I made as well.
Completely different people from all walks of life.
How many jumps have you done?
I did about 210,
which sounds a lot, but it's not much.
My brother's a skydiving instructor right now,
and he's had just over a thousand jumps.
Is every jump different?
Every jump's unique.
It is, yeah, every jump's unique.

It's got something special about it.
You don't know, because when you're jumping with people,
you don't know what's going to happen,
or how it's going to unfold,
or what your parachute's going to do on opening,
and how the landing's going to be,
and you've got that wind factor as well,
and how you're going to hit the relative wind.
So every jump's unique, yeah.
But it was during a jump that you realized
that your cancer had come back?
Yeah, it was in that jump.
So it's towards the end of the course,
and I went up to do an 18,000-g jump with my mate Ivan,
and we're up there sucking on oxygen,
and then I jump out,
and I see one of them, then two of them,
then three of them, then ten of them,
and I'm like, fuck, I'm getting hypoxic here.
I've got low red blood cells.
So I pull my parachute.
So that's why you're in free fall?
Yeah, so I realize it's straight away,
so I pull my chute, and I just spiral down.
Get down to altitude as quick as I can,
and I'm lying there, and Ivan comes up,
and he's like, what was going on, man?
What did you do?
And I was like, didn't tell him, but I knew.
So I enjoyed a few more jumps at lower altitude
until I had my appointment,
which was only four or five days away,
and I looked at my hand, and I had these purple dots,
which signified low platelets, platelets are clotting factors in the blood,
and I confirmed it for myself when I saw Peter,
told him he knew,
since my blood through the lab comes out,
and he's like, yep, you've got cancer again.
Yeah.
That's a gut punch.
It is a gut punch, but I was aware that this could come back,
and mentally I was more prepared,
but physically I wasn't prepared for what was going to unfold,

because it was going to be a completely different level physically,
and I didn't understand what was going on there,
but mentally I had all these tools,
and I was very grateful for the opportunities that I've took
in that 11-12 month period,
being a Skydiver, going to Basecamp,
doing all these cool things.
So I had acceptance there,
like I've done the best I could with what I had.
I've achieved some lifehood, childhood dreams.
So mentally I was prepared on that aspect,
but the physical aspect of what was going to unfold,
yeah, it hadn't computed yet.
Is there an anecdote where you took your family,
your family members up for a Skydive?
Yeah.
As well?
There is, yeah.
After you realised what was happening, or what was coming?
Yep, yep, so I got that diagnosis,
and I had cancer,
and we were going to start treatment in about two weeks.
I had some blood transfusions, so I was kind of good to go.
So I said to my family, let's go for a jump together,
you know, one last hurrah, let's do that.
Yeah, it was a wonderful day.
When you frame it one last hurrah,
is it one last hurrah in terms of a Skydive,
or are you preparing yourself maybe for a finite end?
Yeah, I'm contemplating my own mortality, yeah,
because I understand the significance of this coming back,
and the fact that I'm going to have an allergenic stem cell
transplant, or talk about later,
and I possibly might not be able to do this again as well,
and I wanted to share this with my family,
because I loved what I was,
they hadn't what I've done.
My sister was there, my mum and dad,
and the first time the tandem instructor,
I was outside filming us,
and the first time the tandem instructor had jumped
the whole family, and it was really, really cool.
Very, very special moment, yeah.

That sounds like a big, perfect moment.
Big, perfect moment, yeah.
We'll be right back after this short break.
Take us inside this grueling next stage.
You're facing your own mortality.
Are they giving you percentages or numbers or likelihood?
Are you seeking that information?
Yeah, I did.
I seek that information at the start of my diagnosis,
but my specialist, Peter, never gave it to me,
but I asked Regis Rust and other people,
and the numbers were around 20% to 30% survivability.
You know, I didn't have, it wasn't very good.
There was no kind of, with tumor cancers,
you know, you get this kind of number,
but I was about percentages, you know, it wasn't stage.
There were no stages with it.
So, yeah, that was my percentage.
10 to 30% give or take.
But then again, that's across the board.
People get acute mydoid leukemia,
who are much older than I, and I was young.
So, as Peter said, my doctor,
that was my advantage of getting through
what I was going to go through.
Now, is it stem cell trance?
Yeah, it's called an allogenic stem cell transplant.
Okay.
So, I'm just going to, I'll describe it to you.
So, our immune system is derived from these special cells
called hemopoietic stem cells,
the little stem cells that live in our bone marrow,
and they create myeloid and lymphoid cells,
so our red blood cells and our white blood cells
basically are immune system.
So, I had this mutation of what was going on
between my myeloid cells, my white blood cells.
These little blast cells, these immature cells
that weren't maturing into full white blood cells,
they would just keep making these white, these blast cells.
So, there was a breakdown in the factory
of what made my immune system, if that makes sense.
So, this whole immune system, these stem cells

would have to be replaced.
And when they presented this to me, I thought,
why don't you just give me a blood transfusion?
But they had to replace that core crux of the immune system,
these hemopoietic stem cells that live in our bone marrow.
And it's a complicated procedure to be able to do that.
And do they have to find an exact match?
The best option is an exact match,
and that's like a sibling donor.
We've got this thing called the MHC,
it's called the major histo-compatibility complex,
human leukrocyte antigen, so these proteins have to match.
So, basically, they detect foreign protein
from your own protein, so they need to line up.
So, this new immune system doesn't attack your body.
So, that's the best match to have as a sibling donor.
That's what you want, or a twin, twin's the ultimate.
But my siblings didn't line up, they weren't a match,
so I'd have to have a foreign donor,
a young girl from Germany, which blew my mind.
So, this young girl, she was donating her stem cells,
because I've got a registry over there.
New Zealand doesn't have one, because we've got European ancestry,
but they do like Marys and Pacifica.
So, if there's any Marys people and Pacifica people,
get on that registry, put your name down, you could save a life.
So, yeah, so my transplant was coming from a young girl in Germany,
so it was a bit of a mismatch that the proteins weren't going to align.
Tell us about this connection with this girl in Germany,
because you kind of knew her name before you'd heard her name.
Yeah, how did you find that out?
No research.
It was remarkable, it really was.
So, I had this, the build-up to it was horrendous,
had this transplant, and I got to see the bag
and it said Deresden, which we can talk about towards the end.
Deresden is a city in Germany,
and I could speak a bit of German at the time,
because I had a girlfriend who was from Germany,
and I always used to say, my Spender kommt aus Deresden.
And during this time, which means my donor comes from Germany,
and during this time I wrote a letter to her,
I was allowed to say thank you, but it was censored

of where I was from, what my name was.
It all scribbled out, but I said thank you,
and sent her a postcard of the West Coast, sent it to her, said thanks.
And then later on, this is about 18 months, two years later,
I get an email from a certain person when I'm working at the Scott,
I've dropped something, I get a watch awake, I get an email saying,
hey, we've got an email from your donor, I said, no you don't.
No you don't, what's going on?
And what she had done, is she had emailed all this,
because I've told her I'm a Scott, I've emailed all the South Island Scott,
I've been sent to this.
I said, do you know a guy who had a transplant,
of course there was none.
So Rebecca at the office emailed me, and then we were emailing,
and I thought, no, I've got to go say thank you.
Got to go say thanks, and I went over to Germany,
and said thank you to her, gave her a hug, and it was just surreal.
I really was lost for words.
No amount of thank yous can thank someone for what she did.
And we created a special bond,
it felt like I was looking at a replica of myself in a way,
I was really, really blown away.
Part of your DNA, I mean, I had her immune system,
we're blood brothers for life, you know.
So we sparked up a relationship,
and I've met her a few times, been over there a few more times,
and her sister came out to stay with us,
and we messaged quite a lot, and I keep in contact.
That's a fucking incredible story.
To meet the person that's the stranger that's literally saved your life,
is, I don't know, the odds of that being.
But in that moment when you lock eyes with that person for the first time,
is it just an overwhelming wave of emotion?
I cannot describe it, Shay.
I can't describe it, but yeah, I just grabbed her and hugged her,
and just said thank you so much, hands on two shoulders,
looked into her eyes, and I just said thank you.
But thank you doesn't justify what one means.
But yeah, it was a beautiful moment,
and I'm so glad that she was able to donate,
because you're not allowed to have contact with your donors.
This is a big thing as well,
because a lot of people in the past have taken advantage of the situation,

like an IOU, you owe me now, and they've tracked them down and said,
oh, I've got no money, you know, I gave you that,
can you give me this kind of thing?
So that's why they don't allow it.
So it was a real privilege to be able to meet my donor,
and she's a lovely, lovely girl, amazing girl,
and we've actually, my daughter, that's her middle name, is Hannah.
So it goes to your question, you called her Hannah,
I saw her on that bag from Dresden,
and I thought spontaneously, I said,
oh, I'm just going to call her Hannah.
This is before the letter, and I just said,
oh, I'm going to call her Hannah.
I don't know why.
I don't know why.
But I always referenced her as Hannah.
Hannah sent me her bone marrow,
but her name was Hannah when she sent me that email.
And yeah, it was like it was meant to be.
That's so cool.
I don't want to tell your story for you,
but is the worst still to come?
Is the suicide disease part of it the pain you experienced?
Is this in the right order that this is happening?
Yeah, yeah, yeah, no, it's happening.
So I had, that transplant had two months of chemotherapy,
and during this time, I got neutropenic sepsis.
And I had a friend who I'd met.
He's a farmer from Invercargill.
He was 36 with two kids, and he passed away.
He was about to have a transplant.
He did have a transplant, got sepsis,
neutropenic sepsis, neutropenia.
Neutropenia means no immune system, low white blood cells.
Sepsis is a bacteria of the blood, deadly.
So he passed away, and then I got this.
And I got sent up to the intensive care unit,
put on life support, and they told my mum and dad,
hey, you might not wake up.
But God willing, after 10 days, I woke up miraculously.
It's still a miracle.
And I was 51, 52 kg.
I was skinny, I couldn't walk, I couldn't talk,

and this goes to the transplant, which is still unique in itself.
The normal protocol from having that two month of chemotherapy,
you have two months' breast, because this is the worst of the worst.
They annihilate you with full body irradiation.
Total toxic chemotherapy, so your immune system doesn't grow back,
because normal chemotherapy depletes your immune system,
it grows back, depletes your immune system, it grows back.
This had to be eradicated.
So it's like Fukushima, nuclear, you know, exploding.
We had to rebuild it from you.
The normal protocol, two months.
I got out of ICU, I was in a wheelchair,
skinny as an alien, bald head, getting pushed around.
I had two weeks to get ready for this transplant,
because Hannah could only donate at this time,
because she had to organise to her travels, what she was doing.
And it was like, there's a good chance you're not going to survive this transplant.
So that two week period, all I did was go down in the wheelchair,
if you're at the Antigua Boat Shed, I used to sit on the green shed,
close my eyes, pray, meditate, visualise myself,
strong and healthy and happy, being up in base camp,
sharing nice moments with my friends, connecting with my family,
and just close my eyes and focus on the connections that I had.
And that's all I did.
And then I had that two weeks, and I had the transplant,
had that treatment, the full body irradiation, the toxic chemotherapy,
I was in the semi-comatose state for three months.
And then from the transplant, you acquire this thing called
graft-versus-host disease, because we spoke about it before,
it wasn't a complete match, I had this mismatch,
the proteins weren't aligning.
So this new immune system was attacking my body, it was killing me.
And we talked about spraying the ceilings in Nepal.
I was just depleting, I was shitting myself 50 plus times a day,
spewing up, the body was rejecting itself.
And my pump next to me just looked like a sci-fi machine,
it was just bags of everything.
But how good are nurses, Shay?
They're amazing people.
My mates, nurses were absolutely amazing,
they're coming in, they're wiping my bum, I shit my jocks,
they're taking my clothes home to wash and bring back.
I've never experienced authentic care in my life,

been in such dire situation.
They're holding my hand, they're crying with me,
they just want the best for me,
and they're doing everything possible to help me through.
So I was in that three months period, and I got myself through there,
and I was in Christchurch for about another year,
I had multiple complications from this transplant,
they're trying to align the steroids and the immunosuppressants
to get my transplant, the immune system, and adequate levels,
so it's tampered down a bit, that it could function,
but it couldn't function too much.
So a year there, and then that's when I went over to see Hannah,
when I got better, I got out, went over to see Hannah meet her,
and then when I was in Germany, I got pneumonia.
So I was in hospital, in Berlin, hospital for a week, got flowing back,
and I was going back and forth in the mine, you know, what's going on,
but then I went down to see Ben actually, towards the end of the year,
hung out with him in Wanaka, come back, and my face fled up,
and this is what we talk about, this worst pain.
My face fled up, it started off at shingles, and it's a massive red face,
you'll see it, good picture in my book,
and I knew it was something, for some reason I just knew it was something more,
so I said to the people in Grandmouth Hospital, take me to Christchurch,
I need to go to the bone marrow unit,
once I got there, this pain just fled up in my head,
and I've spoken about pain earlier,
but this was just something that I've never, ever felt before,
so it turned out to be this thing called trigeminal neuralgia,
which is described as a suicide disease,
because 20 to 30% of people who get this take their life,
because the pain is horrendous,
and I'd describe the pain as someone's got like a cheese grater behind my eye,
or there's a knife coming in on the side,
or my face is on fire, it was immense,
and I had every pain medication you could think of to try and get this down,
but nothing was working, so they ring up the UK for a pain protocol,
and they don't do this now,
so what I had to do was get this lignocaine infusion,
go up into the ICU room, and get lignocaine,
lignocaine is an anesthetic that we utilise to stop the nerves,
and I had big boluses of it, so it could stop the heart,
hence the reason I had to go into the intensive care unit to get this,
so it could stop the heart, and thank goodness it worked for me,

at numb the nerves, I still feel a tingling sensation down the left hand side of my face,
but that pain of, yeah, it is incredibly, incredibly painful,
and I have no words to describe how painful that was,
apart from that analogy that I just spoke about.
And how many times did that, was that pain constant?
Did it come and go, and how long was that pain with you?
Yeah, so it was really acute, and I could feel it manifest,
you could feel it come, and then I'd hit the pain button,
the morphine button, I was just on constant morphine and fentanyl,
I love fentanyl, just bang, bang, bang, bang, bang,
but it wasn't touching the sides, and I feel it, and I'm just screaming, screaming,
and I remember holding Courtney the nurse's hand,
and she's holding, and she's got tears in her eyes,
like she was helpless, that's all she could do,
and I'm just squeezing her hand, just crying,
and it would last for about maybe two to three minutes,
and then just die down again, and I'm exhausted, and go to sleep,
and then, so I probably had about maybe over 30 episodes of that,
until they sent me up into the intensive care room to get that lignicone infusion.
And I have heard you describe this before,
and I thought it was a short period of time, maybe,
like these episodes happened in a day, and then you had the surgery,
it was like a three month period, right?
Yeah, yeah, I was in there for three months,
yeah, back in the bone marrow unit, I was in there for three months.
With this pain?
With this pain?
Coming and going.
Living on morphine, living on fentanyl, tramadol, yeah,
it was crazy, and I was on high-dose gabapentin,
gabapentin kind of blocks the nerves, the neuron signals,
and I was talking like this, and then I couldn't talk.
Yeah, my whole motor function was just shut down,
and I was just a zombie, I was a real zombie.
In those moments, are you still holding on to the small, perfect moments
that, is that the things that keep you going and keep you fighting?
Yeah, it's a multitude of a lot of things, Shay.
It is holding on to that love,
it's holding on to those moments with Ben at Everest Base Camp,
it's holding on to that thing that I was able to run,
but it's holding on to the love that I do have for people,
particular individuals, and it's coming back to Victor Frankel.
We've always got a choice, we don't know what's going to happen tomorrow,

hold on for that, hold on for that.
This pain will reside, you've got to hold on to that faith,
and that's what I held on to, that this won't last forever,
and I always just had faith that this won't last forever,
but I'm holding on to those small things, that love,
those nostalgic moments, to pull me through that horrendous pain,
and thank goodness it did.
This is an insane story, Josh, there's still more to come,
but you get through this, and link us up to Wim Hof
and cold immersion, and what happens next,
in the timeline of what's going on.
Yep, so I go through that trigeminal neuralgia,
it's dampened down, but the graft-verse host disease,
where the immune system's attacking my body, just fleas up,
and the immunosuppressants and the steroids aren't doing its job anymore,
they don't work, because this graft-verse host disease is out of control,
and you can see in my skin it's a bit pigmented,
but I developed this thing called GVHD,
Graft-verse host disease, screloderma,
so it's like a thickening of the skin.
So I turned into, I don't know if you've seen the Wizard of Oz,
where he's got no oil, I was just stuck in my own body,
I couldn't bend over, I was just completely stuck,
the fascia and collagen were gluing itself together,
and I couldn't move, and the pigmentation was deteriorating from my skin,
so they had to send me over to Melbourne to get treatment,
because we don't have this treatment over here,
it's a BCP, extra-corporeal phototheresis,
at the Peter McCallum Centre in Melbourne.
So I got sent over there, and I had high hopes on this treatment,
there was only two or three Kiwis at the time
that were getting treatment over there,
and then they left, and I was getting treatment,
one lady in particular, Tracy Martin, who was a great friend,
we stayed at this place called The Quest,
so I was getting treatment there, and I had high hopes,
and it was going okay, the body was starting to free itself up,
and I was experiencing what I was getting to at night,
was these horrendous night cramps,
like from my hips to my legs, we'd just lock up,
just lock up, and there was a time when I was in Melbourne,
when my brother was there, I locked up for two and a half days, three days,
and I couldn't walk, you know, it was just, you know,

my hands and my rib cage were just stuck,
it's like someone was squeezing you,
and that's kind of the disease I was in,
but things were starting to get better in that first three-month period,
and my mate, Matt Walker, sends me this documentary,
a vice-documentary of Wim Hof,
and I was like, wow, man, he's cool,
and he's talking about the immune system,
and I understand what cytokines are,
and I understand the immune system,
and he's putting all this together,
and it really made sense to me,
and talking about inflammation,
and so I start doing this two-week course, cold showers and breathing,
really get into it, I'm hitting it hard,
and I feel a bit of goodness come inside me, you know,
I'm having the cold shower, and I feel quite good, you know,
positive, and I ring up, so I go on the course,
and I see that he's coming to Melbourne,
so I ring up this guy who's the manager,
and I say, hey, can I go on the course?
And he goes, where are you right now?
And I said, oh, I'm staying up in the Parliament building,
in the Quest, and he's down in Feds Square right now,
come down, he's next to him, so I walk down,
and there's Wim Hof with his top on,
doing things to Channel 9 and...
This way.
Who, hiring around, and then he comes over for a conversation,
and I have a really good conversation,
and he's just glowing light,
he's just got this radiance about him,
I've never seen anything like it before,
and I thought, wow, I want what he wants,
so I booked myself into this retreat,
this Wim Hof retreat, and that's a few months later,
but I'm really excited about it,
and doing the treatment, things are going okay,
I'm pretty stable, but in the background,
I've had this lingering pain in my chest,
that's hanging on a bit there,
and I've had all these tests,
and I had hydroponin levels, I did stress test,

I had an angiogram, they didn't do anything,
so nothing really got done,
but they done the test,
and they knew something wasn't right,
but nothing happened,
and finally I got to go to the Wim Hof retreat,
I was booked on, I was so excited,
and the first table I went to,
I sat down to this guy called Lars and Mark Mullin,
Mark Mullin was the former Australian kickboxing champ,
and Lars was a Swedish guy,
so like a Swedish Viking,
but he'd spent time in Ocarito,
which was down south from Waterow,
when my dad grew up, so we started,
and I was really excited,
he's a really cool group of guys.
Went to bed,
I went to bed, and I woke up,
and I had a heart attack,
and I was in the bed for about 40 minutes
before I asked someone to help me,
and I couldn't, I was trying to sit up,
and the pain in my chest would just cramp down,
I couldn't get out of bed,
couldn't get out of bed, and Guy Lawrence,
he was the founder of 180 Nutrition,
a bit of a big brand in Australia,
he'd come and put his hand on my shoulder,
because I said, hey, I can't get out of bed,
and he sat there, they rung the ambulance,
and they took me to Geelong Hospital
from the retreat, and this was another time
where I hit rock bottom,
and I was like, fuck man, you can't do anything,
whatever you try to do, something pulls back on you,
and I really didn't want to have these heart issues,
I just didn't want to have heart issues,
cancer was fine, but I just didn't want heart issues,
and got taken to Geelong Hospital,
had two heart attacks there,
it was the first time ever I swore at a doctor,
I was like, fuck off, you don't know me,

I was hysterical, I really was,
and they put me in the isolation room,
because I was just going off, and I had two there,
they sent me to Peter McCullum Cancer Centre,
where I was getting treatment,
my doctor was there, Simon Harrison,
and he got to see these heart attacks,
I was flipping the ECG upside down,
and I had three more there,
and then they sent me over to the Melbourne Hospital,
the Royal Cardiac Unit over there,
and I think I had another six heart attacks there,
it was just crazy, it was so crazy,
but people, I was in the cardiac unit,
and the doctor there, they didn't know what to do with me,
because of this thickening of the skin,
they didn't know whether to give me a heart bypass,
or stent my left main artery, they didn't know what to do,
they hadn't come across a patient like myself before,
what were the risks involved,
and it was funny, I laugh at it now,
it wasn't funny at the time, but the doctor comes in,
and there were the Rio Olympics on,
and two of my former competitors,
Hamish Carson and Julia Matthews were on,
doing the 15, I was so excited for them, it was great,
and they said, well Josh, you've won the gold medal
for the most talk to our patients in the hospital.
Looking at your little CVA, what the?
Yeah, so they were peeking out,
but they wouldn't make a decision, boys,
and so I wrote the doctor a letter,
I had to write him a letter, I said,
I don't care if I live or die,
just back yourself and make a decision,
and do something with me, learn from me as a patient,
whatever happens, just do something.
Next day, heart attack, flip the ECG up,
so I down in the cat lab,
they decided to step my left main,
and that was, yeah, that was done.
So that was the lead up to the Wim Hof,
and I had those heart attacks,

but from that, that my GVHD had fled up
from being in such a stress state, high inflammation,
so I had to go on intensive treatment again.
Man, that's so Marche,
but then again, like you're here,
you're healthy, we beat this,
but the cold immersion side has stuck with you.
That part has become, as we spoke about at the start,
like a core piece of your life.
So talk of how much that helps you.
So I got out and I pushed it away for a little bit,
but I sent a thank you message,
there was a group chat for this Wim Hof retreat,
I said thank you to the guy that rung the ambulance
and put his hand on my shoulder
and cared for me for that hour period,
and it was Guy Lawrence,
they were all excited that I was okay.
So he had actually done a podcast
with this guy called Dave O'Brien
from Fifth Element Wellness,
who was on the course as well,
and he sent me the link to it.
He goes, have a listen to this.
So I started listening, and yeah, it was awesome.
Dave O'Brien had this holistic health center
called Fifth Element,
and he was talking about gut health,
he was talking about the immune system,
he was talking about training,
he was sauna, cold therapy, breathing, meditation,
all these things that I'm dabbling in,
but haven't quite engrossed myself in yet.
I thought, oh, I gotta go check this in,
it's just outside of Brunswick in Melbourne,
and so I go down to meet Dave O'Brien
and really immerse myself,
and once I walked in the door,
there's this guy there called Mark Claw,
and he's become a fantastic friend, great guy,
and he looks at me, drops his weights, mate,
just drops, he goes, Joshy, real Australian,
Joshy, is that you, mate?

I'm like, who the fuck are you?
He's got this big beard, it's like a pirate,
he's got his treasure, mate, and he picks me up,
literally picks me up, he goes, oh, mate,
it's so bloody good to see you, it's fucking great,
and I thought, man, we spoke about places
what you resonate with, with people,
this place engrossed me,
and I chatted with Dave, and he's like,
we're gonna do a whole complete gut protocol with you,
installing supplements and do all this,
and the gym program, gave me a personal trainer,
Anthony Massino, great friend,
he's still my trainer today, done wonders with him,
and it was just a place where I immersed myself
and where I got a lot out of myself,
but it wasn't until I had my first cold bath,
my ice bath, I still hadn't had a full ice bath yet,
and I was shitting myself, boys, I was terrified,
but I'd seen all the scientific validation
and Dave's talking about, Anthony's talking about,
Mark is there, so we go round to Mark Klawis,
he asks Mark Mullin, the guy on the retreat I spoke about,
the Australian kickboxing champ, Lars is there,
so we've got four boys there and the big bulky men,
and I'm skinny, it's 55kg,
I've recently had the steam to my left main,
I'm trying to work myself up, and I ask myself,
what the heck are you doing?
But then it comes back to writing that letter to the doctor,
it's like, mate, you gotta back yourself here,
you know there's something here,
and I've done all the research, I've looked at it,
you know there's something here,
and we do the breathing session, we get in the bathroom,
the boys are around me, come on Josh,
get in there mate, breathe,
and I just shut my eyes down, if we shut our eyes,
we take away 50% of our sensory input,
I focused on my breathing,
and I took control of this acute stressful situation,
full control,
and I felt that pain come,

and I wanted to get out, but I took control,
closed my eyes down, focused on my breathing,
and so I was in there for five minutes,
and I got out, and I started crying,
and I started running for the first time,
down Marky's corridor, 30 metres,
and I was like, holy shit, I feel fucking amazing,
I feel so good,
I survived that when I thought maybe I could die,
from those heart attacks,
and yeah it was a beautiful moment in my life to be fair,
it kind of was a transcendent moment in a way,
I went deep within myself, and I found something,
you know I felt Josh Coleman,
that old school Josh Coleman up in the Paparoas,
overcome that pain that he was feeling,
and I got through it,
but we can get used to things such as running,
you can adjust to that,
but this was something completely new,
this acute sympathetic state
where all that blood is rushing from the extremities
to the corridor to protect myself,
I wanted to get out, but controlling that,
mentally, that was profound for me,
and then having that dopamine effect afterwards,
just mental clarity that I hadn't had,
real mental clarity for many years I hadn't had that,
was so powerful that I became addicted,
it was just my go-to foundational wellness practice.
Can you compare that feeling in the ice bath
to the 200 bend on the runs,
is it a similar comparison of that fucking burn
when you're running to that fight when you're in the cold?
Are they comparative emotions,
or am I making a drawing a really long bow?
No no Shay, it's a great question,
because I think about this a lot,
because I've had numerous experiences in my life,
especially with skydiving and running,
and feeling something intrinsic within yourself,
but it is, it is completely different,
it's unique in itself,

because not everybody wants to go out there and run,
not everybody wants to jump out of a plane,
but the ice, we all respond to it the same,
and for me, it was just toning down
that acute sympathetic state, that stress state,
and coming into a parasympathetic state,
when I'm just immersing my body in cold,
like I'm physically doing something
when I'm skydiving or running,
I'm physically, actively doing that,
but I'm just sitting in cold water,
and my body's saying, get the heck out of there,
but I'm in my mind, like, no, I'm okay,
and I'm focusing on my breathing,
something that we can take conscious control of as well,
our breath, and then I work on my mind,
and I say, no Josh, you've got this,
and then you come into this parasympathetic state,
and it's a beautiful, and I run workshops,
and I see it with people,
and it's amazing to watch,
people are so fearful of getting in the ice,
but if we calm ourself down with the breath,
we focus on the fact that we are here,
we are capable, and we spoke about that potential within ourself,
you find this in the spirit,
and then you come into this parasympathetic state
where we activate the vagus nerve,
and you see it, you see the smile come,
and I get emotional when I see this on people,
because I've found something inside themselves
that they haven't seen before,
and I've felt before, because feeling is understanding,
you can describe things to people,
but you have to feel it,
and I've seen it before,
and I've felt it within myself,
and I get emotional when I see it with people,
because it's the same feeling I got,
and you can get it too, you can get it too,
we can all do this, just exposing ourselves to cold,
but it's the feeling afterwards,
that dopaminergic effect that we get as well,

and that mental clarity,
I haven't felt after a great run,
or jumping out of a plane.
You do such a good job,
I'm so articulate at sharing this story,
I mean this has been so gripping.
Thank you so much.
The hardship we have talked about
leads us to where we're getting to now,
and the reflections on it, and what you've learned,
but before then, I want to talk about
perhaps one of the best parts of this journey,
and that's Sibyl, and I want to talk about
when you met and that plane ride.
Yeah, Sibyl.
It's probably about the best part of the story,
what makes that pain worthwhile.
So I'm flying back and forth at this stage,
it's about three years into my treatment,
and I had five years in Melbourne in total,
and about three years into it,
and I'm flying back and forth, and I'm sitting on the plane,
and the whole plane's full, ironically,
and there's one seat between me and this girl,
and she's a beautiful girl, a blonde girl,
and I start talking to her, I say,
hey, how are you? Because I'm feeling better now,
I'm engaging with people.
I say, hey, how are you going? You know, what are you up to?
She goes, oh, she had like a German accent.
I said, oh, where are you from? She said, oh, Switzerland.
Oh, cool, what are you doing?
She's just backpacked around New Zealand,
done a yoga training course, and done all these cool things,
and now she's going over to Australia to do another yoga course,
and backpack around, and we got conversing,
had a great conversation.
And then I asked her what she did.
No, she's asking me what I did,
and Melbourne, what am I doing?
And I said, I'm going to see my brother,
and he was living there at the time,
and I got told of that, that's the truth,

and then I asked her, what are you doing in Switzerland?
What do you do for a job?
And she's an oncology nurse, a cancer nurse,
out of all things.
I said, oh, wow, so I thought, I'll tell her the truth.
I'm actually going over here for the special treatment,
ECP, have you heard of that before?
And she said, no, no, I've never.
So I sparked, I say in the talks,
I said, I don't recommend this as a pickup line,
but I said to her, I said to her,
do you want to come and see some cancer treatment?
Do you want to come and see it?
And she's like, oh, yeah, sure, cool.
I was like, yeah, right, whatever.
Said, that's great.
So meet me at Parliament Building
at 9am, my treatment was at 10,
and yeah, we'll go from there, that's the next day.
And I didn't think she'd turn up.
I really didn't, you know, she's doing her thing.
Like, who wants to come and see three hours of ECP?
My blood taken out and put back in.
But she was there.
She turned up, and it's one of my big values,
is when you say something, you back that up.
She backed up her word.
And to this day, I've probably had over 250 treatments,
and it was the only time to this day that it was delayed.
Really?
It was, yep, true.
And it was delayed to 1pm, so unfortunately for her,
we had to spend the morning together,
so we shot down to Vic Market.
We got a coffee, sat there for a bit,
and we had a lot in common, great combo.
She came back, and she came back and watched the treatment.
She spent the whole day with me.
And then we got messaging, and we spent the week together,
and yeah, she had our first kiss
and Fitzroy Park up the top there, and...
Um...
We talk about health,

but the relationships that we forge,
it's the foundation.
And I talk about all these holistic practices, yeah?
But having her by my side and finding her, you know?
I found my true worth.
She brought the best out of me, you know?
I want to give you an example of what this girl is
and what she's done, you know, at the time,
I was flying back and forth to Melbourne getting treatment.
I had no job.
I was on $272 on a sickness benefit.
I was living at home with my mum and dad.
She chose to come over and...
be with me.
She's a special, special person.
And, um, yeah, we've been together
for over five years now,
and we got married.
And, um,
a bit of laughter here from that collection sperm sample collection.
It wasn't too bad after all.
Maybe Sibs was just quite fertile,
but, um, yeah, we had a young daughter,
Maya, Maya Hanna, after her bone marrow donor.
You know, and, um...
I'm truly blessed for what I have in my life right now
and spoke about it at the start.
You know, how are you?
I've got that perspective of where I've been through.
We've spoken about all that, but what I have in front of me
is this amazing woman.
This daughter.
You know, here I was about to take my life
and got the opportunity to give life,
put life back into the world.
She's a beautiful wee girl.
And, you know, I spoke about it before, um,
the people that we connect with, the people.
That's the foundation of health.
So that's why I try to see that.
That's why I try to see the heart within people.
See the good.
See where they've been through the two miles of the chaos.

And that's why I love doing these ice bath workshops
and seeing that spirit come out in people,
seeing that capability
that we can pull ourselves to base camp and back
with their own backpack,
because we're capable of more than we think
going through that 10 years of arduous physical pain,
mental pain,
but having found that quintessential love
for my wife and daughter, the nurses, my mum,
all that, I don't need that go.
I hold on to that for dear life,
because that's all I've got when I've got nothing else.
So...
We've been in touch with Sybil,
and she's shared with us a few yarns,
and you talk about perhaps not being the most attractive option
for her at the time.
I think anyone that's listened and got this far through the episode
will see exactly what she saw in you.
Like the spirit, the man you are,
is just incredibly captivating.
But you said you were surprised she turned up.
She gave us another reason why she was hesitant about perhaps turning up.
She said there was a bit of an odour on the plane,
and she couldn't quite put her finger on what it was
until she discovered it.
Do you know what this is?
You've got to wonder why she stayed with me.
You really do after this, I mean.
So I'm on the plane,
and you know my feet cramp up as I spoke about,
and I take my shoes off.
I take my shoes off.
And I've got stinky feet. Real bad.
But I didn't care beforehand.
Like I'm talking to this beautiful girl.
Yeah, she's...
They reeked her out,
because she's got a really, really good sense of smell.
Like she knows when something's off,
even in my cute piece of smell.
Yeah, she eventually told me,

she's like, I seriously was contemplating not coming to be with you
because you had stinky feet.
Amazing guy, like holy shit, this guy, but those feet.
She's Swiss, she's clean to a T.
So I've got to keep everything clean.
She's up my clean, up my game on cleanliness.
Yeah, she's amazing.
So she's told me that, she goes,
I was seriously contemplating not being with you
because of your feet, but no, no.
She enjoyed the odour,
and yeah, she's been by my side.
They say like attracts like, right?
So if you see all those amazing qualities in her,
it's easy to see why she's chosen you as well.
Yeah, it's hard to comprehend at that time.
I mean, I look at it from anyone's aspect,
if you met someone who's getting life-saving treatment,
living at home with their mum and dad,
no money, $272 in stinky feet,
you're probably not going to go there.
Chances are it's lower survival rates than what I had with cancer.
But she stuck on.
Had you closed the door on love
and finding someone at that stage?
Yeah, such a good question
because I had a previous girlfriend before that
and I don't really go into that too much,
but that's another story in itself.
A lot happened there and I did close that door
and I said to a good friend, I said,
fuck, you know, push them aside.
I'll wait until someone comes into my life
and wants to be with me and they see me for who I am
and I waited for that girl.
So yeah, great question.
It's got a whole different story in itself.
But yeah, I did close that door.
As we get towards the end of the journey,
I want to bring in, we've got a few voices to bring in,
I'm going to read a few things of the impact
that you've had on others.
So we spoke to Rachel, your sister,

and I'm just going to read what she sent us.
She said, it was so hard as a younger sibling
watching your older brother who in my eyes
had always been so strong and tough
to then be in a situation where he was so weak and powerless.
And then when he did overcome his cancer,
he was a completely different person,
just in his physical appearance,
but also his personality, his beliefs, his priorities.
So there was a time there
that I went through a bit of a grieving process
because he was no longer the brother I had known
for 21 years, he was different.
And we had to get to know each other again
as this new version of Josh.
He's been the Josh before cancer,
the Josh during and the Josh after,
Mr. Split Personality Lowell.
But it was an absolute privilege
to walk beside him during the journey
and we definitely changed our whole family unit
for the better.
So the first part to reflect on
is the changing of that family unit
and the dynamic.
And we've spoken about how it's brought you closer to your dad,
but everyone is obviously intertwined
in this journey you've been on.
And can you just talk about what that's like now?
So during the journey itself,
at Runaway House, everyone had a part to play there.
Rachel sacrificed her flat
and come and looked after me.
And when I was in Melbourne,
my brother was there as my caretaker.
I called him the caretaker, he was there holding my hand.
He became my big brother.
I couldn't do much.
I've seen so much pain inside myself
and seen so many tears.
And those tears have brought us together.
And that's why I think pain serves a purpose
and really collaborating with family and friends together.

It's the authentic thing that binds us together
and we found true love, you know,
and we really understood one another
for our own individual differences.
Because me and my sister, we are different.
But what brings us together is that deep love.
And when everything was lost,
my family was always there
in the matter about our differences.
And we spoke about love before
when I broke up with my previous girlfriend.
My sister was the first one I confided in.
I flew over to Brisbane to see her.
You know, my brother.
70 years younger than me, looking after his big brother,
who took him for his first step down the hallway.
You know, the family just was more cohesively together
and got to understand my dad and my mum.
That quintessential mum, that love,
that resonated out within the family,
just grabbed us together and held us together as a family
and it did bring us closer.
And it's like Jake's doing his thing,
Rachel's doing his thing, her thing.
But what holds us together is that love
that's endured and exposed,
been exposed through that hard chaotic time.
Hard and chaotic is right.
And I want you to reflect now that those that are here
that have heard the journey,
we spoke about it at the start
and Ruth mentioned it's suffering.
You've suffered.
You have been to the depths of the worst things
that anyone has ever been to.
And you've come out the other side and you're grateful for it.
Can you talk about suffering and your position on it?
Yeah, it's such an interesting question to ask
and I think about this so often.
But it comes back to Victor Frankle for man's
search for meaning for me.
It's finding meaning within your suffering.
And if the world was perfect and everything was great,

we wouldn't take those small opportunities.
We wouldn't embrace them as what we would.
And I've never felt authentic care
when I've been on my deathbed.
A hand-told is different when you succeed in running
from when you're essentially dying.
It's tighter.
It's more firm.
It's the fabric.
It brings that true love out that someone cares for you.
Like I found my dad when I saw him cry.
Without that pain, without that suffering,
I don't feel that we find true humanity
for what it's worth.
And I see a lot of people give for causes
where people need.
And a big part of that is giving back.
And so many people have given to me
to help me through what I've been through
in such an authentic manner
that I've really found their true inner spirit.
And that pain, that suffering, brings out the best in people.
Not like running a race and finishing in the fastest time,
but the best in people of what their human spirit is.
Because we take people's face value sometimes.
And when I've been on my deathbed,
when I've been in complete pain and suffering,
I've seen that wonderful human spirit, that heart,
in people bringing out the best in me to say,
hey, keep going, Josh, keep going.
So that suffering brings purpose.
When it comes back to Victor Frankel,
what he talks about in logotherapy,
there's always meaning within our suffering
and the meaning is love.
And we have to hold on to that.
It's an incredibly powerful message.
Before I wrap up and bring in the last few,
there's one that we skipped over,
which is your record, Ice Bath, recently.
You were all over the news and the headlines
and sort of captured my attention.
It seemed like there was a huge community of support,

people that knew your story and came round to celebrate this thing.
But talk about why you did it and how long and all the details.
Yeah, it was a very, very special moment.
I've been wanting to give back to Ra Nui House.
Me and my family spent 482 nights there.
You break that down in rent rates, that's a lot of money.
And I've been wanting to give back to this place
and it's a big value of mine always.
Give back somehow and I didn't know how,
but I've become obsessed with Ice Bath
and running workshops and that.
That's a really cool idea.
We'll make an unofficial Ice Bath record.
It was never about a record and I know people out there
have done longer Ice Baths than what I did it for.
But for me, it captured that 21-minute segment on TV.
Seven Sharp were into it.
And yeah, so I pitched it to Ra Nui House
and there was a lady there called Jody Gill.
She actually won the party in the mouth with Radio Harake.
Yeah, she's a great lady and she saw the smile on her face
and twiddled her fingers and said,
I think we could do something here.
And she said to me, oh, how much do you want to raise?
Maybe 30 grand would be great.
That would be really, really cool.
And she just ran with it and put it out there
and got the media involved.
And yeah, we set up this unofficial Ice Bath record.
Seven Sharp were there.
Filming, Genie Harper did a wonderful job
and New Zealand got around it.
And it was 21 minutes in the Ice Bath
and it was the coldest day in Christchurch
for a March calendar month for 14 years.
It was four degrees outside.
It was blowing the southerly.
And it was a big emotional day
because I had a lot of really good friends
that come out and they were in the support bar.
So a lot of great people.
Doctors and nurses were there.
There were other support bars.

My company, Electronet, were there.
Everyone was there that just meant something to me.
Especially the doctors and nurses came over
and gave it a go.
And I, the breeze, no, not the breeze, sorry.
Yeah, the breeze radio were there in the morning
and I did an Ice Bath with them.
So it was this big day, really big day.
And yeah, so I got into the Ice Bath
and the coolest thing that doesn't get mentioned
was my wife and good friend, Hamish,
were in a bath next to me and they did 20 minutes.
They did 20 minutes next to me.
You don't see that on the cameras.
It was, you know, essentially on me.
But Sibs got in the bath.
This is, yeah, she's, when I pitched it to her,
she goes, I'm getting in there too to show women
that they can do this as well.
And it was a freaking cold day.
And it was 0.8 degrees in that Ice Bath.
And I don't have the best circulation.
It has improved from what I've been doing.
But yeah, it was tough.
But she was there.
She got out of the bath
and she was breastfeeding my in that next moment.
And you can,
and I think the money we raised
before I went in the bath was around 40,
or brand, 40,000,
and then seven-sharp to dissolve some segment.
And I got out and I'm like this frozen little
white-baited red-bait.
And I'm at my elderly hypothermic.
And my nervous system shutting down.
And she's talking and I can't even remember
saying what I said.
I said something like, the West Coast White-bait,
migrated from the Grey River
to the Ice Bath.
West Coast White-bait out.
And Ruth showed me this afterwards

and I couldn't even remember saying it.
But we got out and it was $65,000.
I went over with my mate Hamish.
We had a shower.
Half of our 40 minutes came back.
And we got up to about, oh, 80, 85,000.
Then we managed to raise about 105,000
for running our house.
It was incredible.
It was amazing.
It was beyond my expectations.
So a bit of a shout out to the New Zealand public
for getting behind Ranaui House
and what we did that day.
And 20 more minutes.
I know it's not an actual record,
but it was just so cool
to give back to a quality cause
that gives to so many people.
Because Ranaui House, it doesn't only look
after bone marrow patients, cancer patients.
It looks after everyone.
So for example, if you had a car crash,
you needed to go into the intensive care unit
for six weeks.
Your family could come and stay for free.
So you don't only suffer with your health.
You can suffer with your finances too.
And that's a bit of a financial lifeline
that they do so much for families.
Before we leave Cold Immersion,
have you got an ice bath question?
Before we leave Cold Immersion,
so I love getting into Lake Topal
whenever I can, whenever I'm down there,
because that's my hometown.
I feel like I connect back to the place.
Do you have a preference between ice bath
and Cold Immersion and natural water streams?
Yeah, absolutely, absolutely.
I love, I've got an ice bath at home,
and I love getting in that different times of the day.
That's basically for mental resilience.

You know, I might do it at 9pm at night,
six in the morning, after work, whatever.
But it's the same in the Māori culture.
Tūranga Waiwai, a place where you feel connected.
I've got two special places up the Ten Mile
and after this pass at Avalanche Falls,
where I get into nature and into the cold water.
And I'm truly one with myself,
where I can connect with myself and the world itself.
And for me, you know, I definitely choose
outside of nature in the rivers,
especially the Ten Mile up there.
And Avalanche Falls and after this pass,
it's just a beautiful spot where I can connect with myself
and the world around me and the people,
that love in my heart.
It's the ultimate mindfulness practice in my mind.
You know, we are acutely aware of oneself and we are.
So that's my Tūranga Waiwai.
But if people are up there when you're up there,
do they need to be upstream from you?
Because is that where you're doing the old aquedumps?
Who spelt this yarn?
Oh, just a genuine quiz.
I'm just a curious guy asking a question about an aquedump.
I don't even know what an aquedump might be.
I've got an idea.
I think you've got an idea.
Of what it is.
But I imagine you can only do them when you're out.
You wouldn't do them in your home, I suppose.
Are you sure or not?
I don't know.
This has come out of left field.
You've either spoken to Sibs or Hamish.
But yeah, this is true.
Nature.
Well, it's not a nature.
You know, I'm a bit like a dog, you know.
You've got to mark your...
Territory.
Mark your territory.
Okay, so I was at...

I was with the Sibs one day and I said,
go upstream, love.
I'm letting something out.
So yeah, let the old aquedump out.
There you go.
Yeah, you part the cheeks.
You've got to make sure you're facing the current.
So it's pushing down.
And then you turn around, back to the current,
to get the good flush out.
It's a really nice feeling.
And just in line with Sibs joining you for the ice bath,
has she given that a go herself,
that full technique in the river as well?
You can put her on blast because she gave it this yarn as well.
No, Sib is too clean for that, mate.
She won't do that.
Yeah, that's Swiss ingenuity.
That's the Kiwi style right there.
Swiss precision is not going to allow that to happen in nature.
Yeah, good dump.
Yeah, Hamish cracks up about that too.
I've let out a few, so.
Good things.
Good things.
I've got a couple more voices to bring in before we finish.
I just want to make sure you know how inspirational your story is.
What we've just talked about, getting married,
having a kid, raising money,
speaking, going on podcasts, talking about this,
is just so helpful to so many.
There'll be so many people listening to this right now
who have been at a similar low ebb
and just feeling full of life through your story.
So thank you so much for coming and sharing.
But I'm going to bring in Ben because I had a great chat with him
and he had some really nice things to say.
So Ben said, life is about perspective in a lot of ways
and Josh's story helps with that.
When you're down or think things are challenging or at a low ebb,
he helps to pull you head in.
I think if he can overcome what he did, why can't I?
He's one of the most inspirational people in the world.

I'm proud of him. He's so special, a real treasure.
I try to spread the word about how good this guy is,
but I almost feel bad about bragging that I know him.
I watched his talk at a community group in Blenheim recently
and you could just see people in tears.
He resonates on a deep level.
I use him weekly for inspiration.
He's also reached out to a lot of people in my life
and he's had the same effect on them.
He's such a legend and it's so important people get to hear his story.
And I can't echo those words strongly enough.
It's so important.
It's so great that you're here where you are and able to tell the story.
So thank you so much for coming in.
The words are humbling, but thank you guys for allowing me to speak on your platform.
You guys do a wonderful job
and I know in some of your previous podcasts
you've had like Mark Ellis and Leigh Hart and all that on
and speaking about how much they had an impact on you.
But I think in the future generation you guys will have a future impact
on the next generation of media.
So you guys do a wonderful job and thank you for allowing me
and inviting me on to between two beers.
All the best for your journey as well.
Thank you.
Thanks Josh, that's so cool.
I'm going to throw to Shae who's going to wrap us up.
But before then I just had one last question of what
your health journey looks like from here
and how you approach the future
and is there fear of cancer coming back?
Do you look at it as fear or what your outlook is now?
Yeah, no, no, I don't look at it as fear.
I accept that it could come back.
It is a concern.
The saddest thing about it is if it did,
you know, would I leave my wife and daughter?
And that's the concern.
So I try to be the best I can be at getting better with my health
and I invest a lot of finances and time
and looking after my immune system, my mental health,
everything like that.
Because I know if something does come back,

I know I've done my utmost best to mitigate the cancer
or any chronic illness.
Am I concerned?
Am I fearful?
No.
Am I concerned?
Yes, because that brings awareness and that makes me take action
to look after myself.
But yeah, that's kind of how I see it now in a nutshell.
I'm going to borrow some words from Sybil to start this outro.
She wrote to us and she said,
to me, Josh is the most wonderful person I know.
His life experience brought him so much love and wisdom.
He's got the ability to make deep, meaningful connections
with people around him and he wants to help people
and bring the best out of them.
Three things I've taken out of this conversation.
I've been fighting back tears almost since we started
because it's not tears for the situation that you've been in.
It's a difficult emotion to feel.
It's one of amazing gratitude
and one really humbled to be in your presence
and to hear your story.
Perspective is so, so critical.
And your ability to hone your craft of communication,
the way you get your message across is so, so captivating,
but so on point as well.
And it's a story that needs to be shared as far and wide as possible
and I'm so thankful that we've got a platform
that a lot of people are going to be able to hear this.
And I've got immense gratitude
for spending some time with you this morning.
And you talk about small, perfect moments.
And this episode that we've created,
this moment that we've created between the four of us in this room
for me is a small, perfect moment that I will always look back on
and be able to listen back to
and pull some amazing nuggets of wisdom from someone who's lived a life
and has a lot of life to live.
Thank you very, very much.
Thank you, Shane. Thank you, Steve.
Go well, boys.
Cheers, Josh.

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