

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

This almost killed me, and it's killed hundreds and thousands of women.
If men's f**ks were falling off, there would be a resolution tomorrow.
Until something's done, I won't quit.

Lauren Wasser.

Model, activist, and survivor of one of the deadliest diseases
caused by a product millions of women use today,
resulting in losing both of her legs.
I'm the girl with the golden legs.

Lauren.

October the 3rd, 2012.

Can you take me to that day?

It was just on my period. It was super heavy,
and I guess I must have passed out.

They found me face down on my bedroom floor,
toxic shock syndrome caused by a tampon,
and I was 10 minutes from death.

I had two heart attacks.

My kidneys, my organs were failing.

My feet were turning black, so when I finally woke up,
they needed to amputate my right leg,
or I was going to die,

but they're telling me that we cannot give you any pain medicine.

I felt every single thing that was done to me.

For those eight months, I was alone.

Every day, I was throwing, screaming, crying,
wanting to think about ways I could kill myself.

But there was something in my soul that was like,
don't pull the trigger.

Just hold on.

Are you feeling a sense of injustice?

This shouldn't have happened,

but there was nothing on the market for women that are safe for us.

It kills us.

It's the manual beginning.

Lauren, what can be done?

That's the scary part.

I have to give you a warning.

This conversation is not easy to listen to,
because it's so deeply moving.

But it's important that you do.

It's important that more people know about the risks
that they face by the products they use every single day.

And it's important that people hear Lauren Wass' unimaginable story,

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

a story that will change your mind, break your heart,
and then put it back together again.

Toxic shock syndrome is probably something you've never heard of before,
but it can affect anyone, at any time.

Men, women, and children of all ages.

Lauren, what do I need to know about your earliest years
to understand how you were shaped, moulded,
the perspective that you inherited from that early context and environment?
I think the idea of perfection.

The idea that physically looking like that 1% and being,
I guess back then too, being a supermodel in the late 80s, 90s,
that's kind of like the cool era,
and that's kind of where me being around all of these women
that were just flawless and beautiful kind of set the tone,
and also saw like, you can get away with anything if you're beautiful as well,
which was interesting to me.

But I was the complete opposite.

I'm a tomboy, played basketball, it's my first love.

That's where I think really moulded and shaped who I am as a person
and why I honestly think I'm alive.

I think having to have the dedication,
have the determination, but also have to show up every single day
and give it your all
was something that I didn't really see anywhere else.

Like my dad wasn't there, my dad unfortunately,
he got cut up in the whole drug scene, complete drug addict,
basically saw him homeless on the side of the street when I was younger,
like my mom and I would be driving down Melrose,
and my dad, I would look out and be like,
oh my god, that's my dad, like on the side of the street,
because he's homeless.

He was a model.

He was, he was a big model,
but you know, Studio 54, that whole era was obviously drugs,
mostly drugs, but my mom was like, head of her career, 21 years old.
21 years old, yeah.

She had me at 21.

She was a big model, wasn't she?

She was pretty big.

She was with Stephanie Seymour and Cindy Crawford and Naomi.

That whole era, you know, kind of growing up around that
was just kind of crazy to see.

She wouldn't even leave the house without wearing makeup

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

or like looking like top of the line,
whereas I don't give a shit.
Like I'll just roll out of bed and put on some basketball shorts
and vintage D&B, like cool amount, you know?
What if I'd asked you then, say you're 16 years old
and I said, what do you want to be when you're older?
What would you have responded to me?
Oh, I thought I was going to be like the Maria Sharapova,
like the WNBA, like I was, I was,
I was set in stone wanting to be like endorsements,
playing ball, 24-7 travel.
Like that was my dream.
Like that's what I really wanted for myself.
To be a basketball player?
Yeah.
So that's why it's kind of like just the irony
of like the fact I don't have legs anymore.
It's like just crazy to me because I'm like,
I'm an athlete first and foremost
and like that is my livelihood.
Like that's what I know best is movement is going outside
and going for a run, you know?
I mean, even just, we all take for granted
just walking in the shower, you know?
So you're 24 when your life changes.
October the 3rd, 2012, you're 24 years old.
Can you take me to that day when you woke up that day?
What was, you know, what was, if you can remember
the plans you had for that day
and how that day unfolded?
Yeah, I was 24.
Probably the best day of my life.
Super healthy.
My period has always been really heavy.
So I've always had to use super absorbent tampons.
But, and my mom had told me about toxic shock syndrome.
She had told me obviously how to use them properly,
change them every three hours.
But on that specific day, I, like any normal day,
it was just on my period.
It was super heavy and I ran out of my tampons.
So I ran and bought a new box.
And I just remember feeling super sick,

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

like almost as if I, like the flu.
It was October, so flu season.
All of my friends were getting sick.
And I had to go to my friend's birthday that night.
And it's just me and my blind cocker spaniel
at the time living in Santa Monica.
So it was just her and I.
I changed my tampon, obviously.
And I'm just laying there probably, I don't know,
30, 40 minutes.
I start feeling even worse.
And I'm like, wow, I'm really feeling sick.
I'm texting with my friends, you know,
a couple hours go by, change my tampon again.
So this is, this is the second time I've changed it.
It's about now like, I don't know, 5, 6 p.m.
And I have to get ready to go to my friend's birthday.
So I get in the shower, get myself together,
put another tampon in.
And as soon as I drive and I walk into the venue,
all of my friends are in there
and they're just like, dude, you look so sick.
And I felt it like, I finally in that moment
felt like this like whole wave of like heat
and also just something is not right.
And I'm like, yeah, I think I should probably just go home.
So I drive myself back home.
My mom and I are super close.
So we chat every five minutes.
We're always in communication.
And I was like, yeah, I'm just feeling kind of unwell,
but I'm, I think I'm okay.
And then I get to my apartment
and I'm just like really, really hot.
So I just take off all of my clothes
and I just like lay on the floor with, by my bed with my dog.
And I guess I must have passed out
and my mom spratically trying to like get in contact with me
and she can't get a hold of me,
but she knew that I was feeling ill.
So she called the police to come by for a welfare check.
So I'm laying on, I remember this
because I was laying on my, my, my bedroom floor

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

and I just remember my blind cocker spaniel
like literally on my chest.
And you know a cocker spaniel,
like they're so sweet and friendly.
And she was like ferociously like barking at me
to where like I could feel her like breath
and her like spit almost.
And she was just like so like adamant about like getting me up
like jumping on me and stuff.
And then I hear like the knock at the door
and I hear police, police open up
and I'm like, what?
Like what's going on?
Like why are the police here?
So confused.
But at this time I was already accumulating like 107 fever.
So I was pretty much like just not in any shape or form
like making any real decisions
because I'm just so discombobulated
of like even what's going on.
So I like throw on a hoodie and I open the door
and the cop comes in and he looks at me
and he's like, you're really sick.
And I'm like, no shit, you know, like obviously.
And he looks around my apartment
and I think like I didn't even have a chance
to take my dog out.
So I'm sure there was like P and whatever.
And he's like, you're really sick.
You need to call your mom.
And I'm like, okay.
And then he's like, so I plugged in my phone
and he just fucking left.
The cop just left me.
So then I like plug my phone in.
I text him.
I'm like, the cop just came.
Obviously I'm really sick,
but I think I just have the flu.
And I mean, he's a cop.
So I think if there was any real urgency,
he would take me to the emergency room.
And at that point I'm in Santa Monica

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

and I'm living five minutes from St. John's.
Like you could see St. John's
from my balcony of my apartment.
Yeah, this hospital that saved my life.
How long had you been on the floor?
Probably a few hours.
Thank you.
But she was like, after speaking to her,
clearly she has that motherly instinct
to be like, something doesn't sit well.
So I said, listen, the cop just left.
Obviously I think I'm okay.
I just need to just leave this off.
And I'll call you in the morning.
And that was the last we spoke.
Obviously that doesn't sit well with her.
So she feels the need to get another welfare check.
She gets her husband to drive her.
She was just had surgery.
So she was bedridden.
And she was living in Riverside at the time,
which is like, it could take up to like an hour
or two to even get to me.
So she called all of her friends, all of my friends,
called the police again to come to my apartment
to like see how I'm doing or get me help or something.
So once she did that, the cops came again
and it took them like 30 to 45 minutes
to get inside of my apartment.
And they found me face down on my bedroom floor,
defecated basically myself and everything around me.
I was dying.
I was 10 minutes from death.
They rushed me to St. John's.
And they were like, why is this healthy, young,
24-year-old girl plummeting?
They didn't get it.
And thank God there was an infectious disease doctor
that was on call.
And he said, well, does she have a tampon in?
And once they located the tampon and they sent it to the lab,
it came back as TSS1.
And that's when they were able to finally kind of

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

get me stable and give me the things that I,
my body was more susceptible to accepting at that time
because it was really grim.

And I had two heart attacks.

My kidneys, my organs were failing.

They put me on life support.

I had 107 fever.

They basically gave me a 1% chance of even surviving.

So.

TSS1.

Toxic shock syndrome caused by a tampon.

It's because all of these tampons,
feminine hygiene products that are available for women
in the market right now, if we were to go look,
they have chlorine, bleach, dioxin,
all these synthetic fibers that we place inside of us
at such a delicate time.

And that just gets in your bloodstream and it slowly kills you.

It's a gateway to everything.

And those specific things are so toxic, you know?

And then if you're using super absorbent tampons,
the absorbency is way more than just a normal one.

And even if you use a cotton tampon,
it's still sprayed with pesticides.

So there's actually nothing on the market for women
that is safe for us.

Everything has something, some sort of chemical in it.

So you're in hospital,

they've given you a 1% chance of surviving, of living.

And they've told your family presumably
that your chance of survival is,

well, you have a 99% chance of not surviving.

Do you know how your family had responded to that?

There was a whole line around St. John's
of everyone that I knew to say goodbye to me.

Of course my family too, but I'm from LA.

I've been around and know everyone.

And to see that kind of response,
especially during that where people are actually coming
to say they're goodbyes and pay their respects
is just insane.

Obviously I don't know any of that,
but that's just what I've been told.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

But it's just pretty crazy.
And I was on life support fighting for my life.
And each moment was very grim.
You were in a coma?
Yeah, I was on life support in a coma for like a week and a half.
Have you found out when it's on while you're in a coma
in terms of the treatments they were giving you
to try and keep you alive?
So they gave me, they put me my whole body full of fluids
because the toxins had taken over.
So they put my body full of like 100 pounds of fluid.
So when I finally woke up from the coma,
I was 200 pounds.
So like I'm tiny and I woke up and I was just like,
I thought I literally just had one of those nights
where you just eat a bunch of donuts and candy and ice cream.
And I was just like, is this what, you know,
I just had no idea why it was literally
and had tubes in my throat and machines everywhere.
And my mom obviously like sitting right beside me
and everyone freaking out that like I'm awake.
And but what degree am I awake?
Like no one specifically knew how damaged
or what severity it was until I could actually like
be awake to tell them or to show them.
But yeah, it was really touch and go.
The rest of your family, your grandparents,
your brother, were they around at that time?
Yeah.
Everyone was, all of my friends.
I mean, it was, it was really to that point.
I mean, my godfather and my mom got a casket.
They were going to plant my funeral.
Like it was to that point of like,
this girl probably will not make it.
And it's a bacterial infection.
Yeah.
But it's, it's, it has nothing to do with leaving
your tampon in too long.
I was changing my tampon as, as normal as I've always done
as normal as you should, as normal as directed.
But again, I think it's about how toxic these tampons are
and how they sit in our bodies.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

And, you know, it just takes one of those, those toxins to get in our bloodstream. And it starts that kind of flu like symptoms, that's so vague. That's so, um, yeah. I just think that could be in so many things. And even now, I would never be able to differentiate, oh yeah, my tampon is making me sick. I would never think that. But now that I have all the information and obviously knowing that like, I'm just the lucky one that got away with my life, you know, looking back on it, I'm like, wow, like that's, it's crazy that that almost killed me. And it's killed hundreds and thousands of women since the 80s, the early 80s. So now it's still an epidemic that's never gone away. Was it by chance that that particular doctor was on call that day that asked about, does she have a tampon in? Oh, I'm so grateful because that, that in itself is a miracle. That there was someone that knows about toxic shock syndrome and, you know, understands the dangers and was there and saw, you know, the symptoms that I was obviously showing and had even the idea to ask or to look or to, you know, say this is, this could be it. This could probably be why this girl's literally dying right before us. But it says a lot that they would ask that question. It says that there's clearly a long history of that being a causal factor for illness if a doctor would even ask that question. But the sad thing is, is a lot of, it goes misdiagnosed a lot of the time and a lot of people just think it's, it doesn't happen or it couldn't happen or, you know, it was kind of swept under the rug by tampon companies because it's a billion-dollar industry and, you know, no one ever saw someone like myself survive it and then being able to say, hey, like, this is, this shouldn't be happening.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

Like, this almost killed me.

And that's why I even shared my story to begin with is because I wanted women and I wanted the world to be aware that this is something that we shouldn't be taking lightly and that we need to demand for safer products and also demand, like, why is this still happening? And, you know, obviously then it was 2012, but here we are at 2023 and young women more than ever are in danger.

I read that the doctors were telling your mother to start praying that you'd stay alive.

Yeah.

And that the doctors were praying.

I think everyone was praying.

It was, it was really dark.

It was like, I feel so bad for my mom because I can't even imagine to, like, what degree she, you know, seeing me in that state and then every moment is, like, you know, when this machine's going off, you know, she's literally sitting on a cot next to me just staring and hoping that I'd even come to, you know. You're my best friend as well at that point.

Yeah.

And it, yeah, it just probably was so hard.

You start to wake up.

Yeah.

Can you talk to me about what happened from that point onwards when you start to regain consciousness?

What did you hear? What did you see?

Again, I think when I first woke up,

I was just, it was just pure shock.

I didn't know why I was so big.

I didn't know why I had the breathing tubes and the crazy thing too is, I guess, during the whole time when I was in a coma, my feet were turning black slowly because a lot of the damage was done when my body was dying.

So all of the blood went to, like, my brain, my heart, my organs and my everything.

And so your lower extremities or your extremities,

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

if that, don't really get the blood because you're dying.
So they're going to preserve the goods first,
if that makes sense.
So a lot of that damage was irreversible
because I was, I don't know, on my bedroom floor alone,
dying for, I don't know, a couple hours, I guess, you know.
And that time, a lot of that damage was done
to my lower extremities.
But also they were, it was happening to my hands too.
And so my hands were turning black too.
And to this day, there's no reason why any medical physician
can tell me why my hands came back
and I didn't have to amputate.
Like, they were thinking about amputating my legs and my hands
while I was in the coma because they were discolored
and turning kind of purplish pink and it's pretty crazy.
Like, if I would have woken up and had no arms and no legs,
I definitely don't think I would be here.
There's no way.
I don't think I'm that strong.
There's just no way.
But the idea of that is just kind of crazy that,
and maybe it's because, you know,
my arms are close to my heart and the blood flow came,
came easier that way.
But I think that's pretty crazy too.
When was the first time you were aware that there was a suggestion
of amputating anything?
For the first time I was alone in the ICU at St. John's.
And it was just me sitting there
and my feet were just constantly on fire.
Like, it literally felt as though someone was sitting there
just lighting my foot on fire.
Like, the burning sensation was insane.
And my right leg was worse than my left.
My toes on my left side were turning purplish-pink.
But my right side, there was a lot more damage, you could tell.
And so then the concern came in of basically they needed to
amputate my right leg to save my life,
or I was going to die.
And I had no idea about any of that.
So I'm laying there, my room is empty,
and there is a nurse that comes in

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

and she's on the other side of me behind a curtain.
And I can hear the conversation.
And she's saying, I have a young girl here who's 24 years old
who's going to need a right leg below the knee amputation.
And we need to get her in bed right away
and into hyperbaric as soon as possible.
So she's on the phone to UCLA to get me into UCLA
because they have the best hyperbaric chambers there.
That basically it's like 200% oxygen that you go into
and it basically just gets everything moving
and the blood flow to everything.
So they were trying to get me a room.
And I just remember hearing like,
I just remember looking around and being like,
is she talking about me?
She's saying that I'm an amputation.
And I just fucking started screaming.
And I was screaming for my mom.
I was screaming for my God.
I was screaming for everyone.
I was like, do not let this person,
do not let anyone touch me.
What is she saying?
Tell her that's not true.
Just completely unaware of the severity
of the situation for myself.
And yeah, that was probably the first time
where I even heard the word amputation.
I can't believe you overheard it.
Yeah, it was like shocking.
And then from there, I think I just was like,
I'm fucking doomed.
Because like, you know,
being able to just walk and move
and obviously being an athlete and having your legs,
like I couldn't even wrap my head around that.
Like, what does that even look like?
You overhear that behind the curtain.
You start screaming.
What happens then?
I think too, it's like being able
or just being a normal human being,
you never even think about what that looks like,

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

what that even entails of having to live with
or having to even, you know, put a leg.
Like, your mind doesn't even go there
because why would it, you know?
And so for me, just knowing what that did look like
and what I knew of people with, you know, prosthetics
or whatever, I was like, this is not going to happen.
Like, this cannot happen to me.
I don't want reality.
This is like a fucking nightmare
that I just really hope is going to end soon.
Did your mother come running in?
Yeah, she came running in
and she was just like trying to calm me.
But obviously it was like, she probably knew too,
but it was just a shock.
It was just like how, I couldn't even comprehend
like what that even meant.
So then they were like, we need to get you to UCLA
as soon as possible.
So we went to UCLA.
And you know what's crazy?
It's like our healthcare system is so backwards too.
Like, I can look back and say,
I'm grateful that I had health insurance,
but also that I knew people,
that I knew people in substantial places
and places that could help me.
But if I didn't know them,
I wouldn't have been given those luxurious like opportunities
of even getting a bed in UCLA if my mom didn't know so and so.
Or if my godfather didn't make this call,
or do you know what I mean?
And it's like, that shouldn't even be a thing.
Like everyone is a human being.
Like there's no this or that for life.
And that was kind of like really after all of this,
I was like, that's really sad that, I don't know,
life has kind of picked apart like what matters
and who matters and when it matters
and what you, what cards you can pull together.
So just getting to UCLA and in there and getting a room
and being able to like have that specific healthcare

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

and that attention, especially when I needed it,
was honestly heaven sent
because I wouldn't have gotten what I got
had I not been in connections with the people that I knew.
But yeah, just getting to UCLA
and immediately getting into hyperbaric
and trying to see the severity of the damage
and if it was possible to even get any blood flow.
But, and it would be weird
because I'd go into the hyperbaric chamber
and it's like this huge,
it's probably like the size of this room
and you could probably fit like four or five people in it
and they would just wheel me in
and I'd probably have to take some like crazy
anti-anxiety medicine because it's like,
it's like going to the depths of the ocean.
You know, they have to turn the thing
and they can't open it for anything.
Like, otherwise your lungs would explode
and it's like, it's pretty serious.
And then having to like see your feet slowly
just mummify or your, you know,
your toes turn black and, you know,
this one doctor, I remember she said something like,
yeah, you can just go home and, you know,
your toes will just fall off and, you know, like,
this is before I got to the doctors that I needed
but that was like kind of the shit
that I was presented with
of like people coming in and saying like,
oh, well, you know, this is just what's going to happen
and after that happens, then we'll figure it out.
I was like, excuse me?
And then like making a call and being like,
this is absolutely like insane.
No ways, you know, that happening or...
You just go home and your toes will fall off.
Yeah, as if that's like just the thing.
You come out of the hyperbaric chamber.
Your, I guess the hope was after coming out
of the hyperbaric chamber that there'd be some kind of movement
in your feet or something, right?

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

I had to do it like three times a day for hours on end.
It was not just like one thing.
It was just trying to see,
especially immediately how my body was responding
and if it was responding
and if there was any way they can salvage anything.
And at that point, gangrene had set into my right leg
and it was moving really, really fast.
So that's when they were like, we need to amputate like now.
And if they hadn't, then I would die.
Because then infection would spread
from the right leg up around the body.
So it was like cruising up my right leg,
but it somewhat was starting in my left foot too.
So my toes and my heel were really severely damaged.
So from that, but then I had my whole left leg.
But on my right side, it was like slowly creeping
to where I was turning purplish pink.
And yeah, they were like, this is going to move quick
and it's going to move to your heart and you're going to be dead.
So I really didn't have an option.
A doctor said that to you.
With your mother there.
And they were like, you have a 50-50 chance
of ever walking again as far as keeping my left side
because my toes would need to be amputated.
My heel needed to be debrised.
And knowing this now, but like your heel is probably
the most important part of your entire body
because there's nothing on this planet that is
able to take the beating that it takes on a daily basis,
whether it's standing, running, the pressure, anything,
that fat or that specific skin, you can't buy that on the market.
There's nothing on the planet that can, you know,
you can just grow it back or replace it or, you know,
do a transplant or something of that sort.
It doesn't exist.
So that was a huge concern for the doctors.
And as far as like me being able to go back to normal life
and being able to just walk normally,
even if I didn't have toes, which just people can do,
but the heel was a huge like concern for theirs.
And me personally, I was like,

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

and God rest my Godfather,
I wish I would have listened to him,
but he was like, you should probably just do both
and move on with your life and just kind of like, you know,
just keep chucking.
But like, I couldn't even fathom what that looked like.
I was like, there's no way.
I was like, I have to do this slowly.
I'll have to like maybe just do the one and then see what happens.
But like, there was no way I could go in there definitively
and be like, just take them.
So...
When it becomes clear that that's the path forward,
what's your initial response to the doctors
when they come with a definitive answer
that this is the path we have to take?
How do you receive that? How does your mom receive that?
Oh, I was just like...
Just obviously just a nightmare,
like crying, screaming, freaking out.
You know, especially when I'm presented with the papers
to have them do the procedure to take my life.
I mean, I take my legs and it felt like my life
because that's all I knew of like being an athlete,
you know, being a model, looking a certain way.
Everything I knew about myself was completely just out the door.
I mean, I was 200 pounds, my head was shaved
because my hair got matted because they were trying to save my life
and obviously no one gives a shit about your hair when you're dying.
And, you know, here I am in a hospital room
and being told that, you know, I'm going to enter this operating room
and come out a completely different person
and losing a part of myself.
It was just so surreal and so scary.
And, you know, then I had like people coming in with prosthetics
and like showing me how they lived their lives.
And, you know, my god, my grandpa was from the army.
So he was like, you know, you're just like these guys that go and get blown up.
And at that time I was so, like, depressed
and it was such a dark time that I was like, I'm not.
I didn't sign up for this. This is not what I asked for.
Like, I didn't sign something saying,
okay, these are the possibilities.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

I could die. I could lose limbs.
I was like, this shouldn't have fucking happened, you know?
Let alone like I'm 24 years old
and now I'm having to lose a part of myself
and it's something I can never, ever get back.
I can never grow it back. I can't go to a surgeon to get it.
Like, this is going to change my life forever.
And you have to sign that paper.
And I had no choice because otherwise, again, it was my life.
It was my leg.
Did you consider not signing it?
No. I wasn't so much pain.
I wasn't so much pain. I can't even tell you.
Like, I don't even know how I made it.
Like, of course, like I was drugged up so much
and I think that was how obviously I got through it.
But just to have to actually process what was about to happen,
I don't think I fully even gathered until I got down
and they were like, I signed the papers and they're like,
all right, today's surgery day
and like wheeling me out of my room, down to the floor
and like me holding like a stuffed animal
and just screaming and crying and like,
feeling like I'm doomed.
You know, and then my mom is like,
freaking out and everyone's crying
and then they write on your legs like yes and no.
So like them writing yes in black marker on my leg
that I knew that was going to go
and then, you know, seeing it on my left leg
of amputating my toes and to bring my heel
it was, yeah, it was just, it was a lot.
I don't even think I really processed that
and then when they were wheeling me away
I just screamed for my mom to like not let them take me
and that was, yeah.
You're mother during this period,
she's watching her daughter be wheeled away.
She's 24 years old.
You've built a life on modeling and athletics.
She's watching you be wheeled away
to have an amputation that day.
What's her state of mind?

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

What's her sort of visible state?

Broken, completely broken, completely shattered,
completely just couldn't believe
that that was even what was happening
and it all happened so fast
because obviously, you know, it's my livelihood.

It's, am I going to survive this
let alone do I have time to make a decision
based on am I wanting to keep my leg or not?

It wasn't even an option.

It was chaos, it was complete chaos.

What did she say to you before you get wheeled
into the operating room?

I love you and she, I just remember her like grabbing herself
because she was like obviously screaming and crying
but like trying to like not hide it from me
but like she couldn't even look at me being wheeled back
because she knew, you know, it was like
she just had to like turn and just like cry
and scream and hold it in as best she could to be strong.
But yeah, me screaming for her obviously didn't help
and I just felt like there was no control.

I couldn't even just get up and fucking run if I wanted to.

That's the irony of it.

It's like I was literally physically stuck no matter what
and I was just having to do this.

And it was, yeah, it was horrible.

She kissed your leg.

And my feet.

She kissed your leg and your feet.

Before you were wheeled in.

I mean, as a mother, you know, your newborn baby
toes and feet and seeing, you know,
you just never would think that that would ever happen,
especially to your child or your loved one.

I can't imagine what she was going through
because we often think about the person
who is going through the medical condition
but the people around them, especially someone as close
as your mother who is your best friend.

And you've lived your lives together since you were born.

I can't imagine the sort of trauma and the, you know,
the uncertainty that she was living with as well.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

Like, have you had conversations subsequently with her about what she went through in those moments?

No, I mean, it's sad because I feel like God has blessed me so much.

I'm so lucky.

Not only to just be alive, but I have everything I can need and more.

And I forget every single day that I don't have legs.

Like, I don't even think about it.

The only time I think about it is when I got a pee in the middle of the night and like, you know, going in the ocean, like there's certain things I can't do to can't just run in there because, you know, I have metal and I have screws and I have bolts and so like rust, but like, I don't even think about it.

Never.

And I don't even think about what happened, the trauma.

And a lot of that, you know, maybe it's true, like I'm suppressed and I've just kind of moved on.

But really, I'm just the happiest human.

But when I am with my mom, it is something where she's so fixated on the trauma, right?

Of what happened.

And I think it's lives with her more so than me.

And it's sad because I hate that.

Because I wish that she can just live her life and know that and live and know that like,

I'm more than okay.

Like God's got me and he's had me this whole time.

Like, you don't have to worry.

But I think as a mother and knowing the shit that I don't even fucking know that she had to go through and the decisions she had to make, I mean, she was like writing down everything, calling everyone, you know, making sure that I had the best of the best, making sure she like took the notes and the nurses and the doctors and I mean, she was amazing.

And so I know that she definitely saw and felt way more than I could even understand or, you know, gather from her.

And I just hope that one day she can let it go because I have, you know, and I just,

I want that freedom for her.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

Have you spoken to her about this?
Yeah, but I think it's just, it's just hard.
I mean, I can't imagine what she must have felt
and seen and, you know, it was hard.
It was, every day was like, are we going to make it?
You know, it was, it was a lot.
You come out of the operating room.
How long were you in there?
I don't know how long I was in there,
but I was in there for a while and I just remember
waking up and the doctor coming to me and he's like,
basically my heart freaked out during the operation
because I had two heart attacks when I first went
into the hospital.
So my heart was already kind of freaking out
and not in the best state.
And then through the operation,
I think some complications or something happened.
So I woke up and I'm sitting there
and I won't look at my leg.
I didn't, I probably didn't look at my leg for months.
Like I couldn't even acknowledge that that even happened.
So I just remember sitting up and being like,
not even acknowledging it.
The doctors are coming in and talking to me
and they're telling me that I had, you know,
some sort of complication.
You know, like, so Lauren, for the next 24 hours,
we cannot give you any pain medicine.
This is right after I had my leg amputated,
like chopped off.
And he's like, I guess basically because of all the medicine
and stuff it like something about they couldn't,
I don't know, my, it was about me staying alive
and not like having my heart like freak out,
having another heart attack or whatever.
I don't really remember the gist of it because clearly I was
so like not even really present.
But when I heard those words, I was just like, what?
So literally for 24 hours, they put me in my own little room
and I have felt every single thing that was done to me.
I was throwing shit.
I was screaming.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

I was crying.
I felt like a shark had just fucking ripped through my leg.
And yeah, like no, my mom couldn't be in the room.
Like no one could be because I was just screaming
and crying and just freaking out because like,
not only was that traumatic enough having to like
have my leg chopped off, but then to have to really feel
what was just done to me and have like,
have to actually just deal with it was on another level.
And that's something like a lot of people don't know,
but that was really crazy.
It's just unimaginable.
It's just like, you've used the word God quite a few times.
Were you religious before this happened?
And are you religious?
Are you still religious now?
Yeah, I definitely was.
I mean, I'm not like, you know, I just,
I believe in a higher power.
I believe in God.
I believe that, you know, there's something definitely
directing my steps.
Like I would not be here if there wasn't.
There's no way I would be alive if there wasn't a purpose
for my life.
And there is definitely, obviously now I can say that,
but like going through all of that,
I think there definitely was a moment when I was pissed
at God and didn't understand why this had happened.
But I know that in the process of like going through
depression and suicide and even having those thoughts
every morning when I'd get in the shower and I'd have
to get on like a little stool in the shower.
I'd wheel myself to the shower, which is another thing.
I was in a wheelchair for eight months, which is crazy.
And my foot, my left foot was still questionable.
I didn't have the right leg, but that's kind of just
where I was after I left the hospital.
But every day I would wheel myself into the shower,
get myself on a stool and just fucking scream and cry
and just yell at God and wanting to like think about
ways I could kill myself and my life that day.
And every day that I did that, something inside

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

was like just hold on.

There was something that just like in my soul was like just hold on.

And I mean it all makes sense now, but for those moments it was definitely like hard.

Just hold on.

Yeah.

And I, and trusting the process and trusting and believing that like, you know, this madness is this temporary and this is, it all just makes sense.

Just, just hold on kid.

Just like, don't, don't, don't pull the trigger.

And you seriously considered that during those times?

I mean, obviously not pulling a trigger.

I didn't have a gun, but if I did have access to one, I'm sure I probably wouldn't be here.

It was, it was to that extent of like every day, you know, waking up and just couldn't even believe or even know how and the hell I got to where I was.

You know, 200 pounds head shaved, one leg, another leg that's questionable.

Just the excruciating pain that I was in.

And just life continuously moving, right?

Everything's happening and I'm just having to stand still, sit still and be present with this nothingness, but just darkness.

And it was my mom and I and my little brother and I just, he would be the first one coming home every day.

And every time I thought about killing myself,

I always thought like, he would be the first one to find me.

And obviously my mom too,

but like not having them have to live with that for the rest of their life.

I think it really was like, I couldn't do that.

So obviously it never happened,

but it was, it was for sure an every moment thought, especially like and just being in so much pain and like having every part of yourself removed.

Sorry, I don't know, I'm not crying.

Yeah.

When I hear your story, you know,

and this is, I think why I asked the question about faith and God is it feels just like the deepest injustice.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

You know, it feels just like such a deep injustice.
It feels that for that to happen to you,
my head just goes, you know, like, how is this, how is this fair?
And then to hear the suffering that you endured from then after,
I just, I just can't understand the world where someone puts a tampon in
and then they have to endure such suffering.
And it just, it's hard to make sense of like,
for me hearing it, I just can't make sense of a world where that,
that can happen to someone.
What, what, what are your thoughts at that moment about this point of injustice?
Are you feeling a sense of injustice?
Are you asking yourselves the questions?
I think back then I was so concerned with every moment
and surviving every moment and trying to just live
that I didn't really think of how fucked up this is,
that, you know, I'm doing a documentary
and so I have like 90 hours of footage that was filmed during this whole process
because I was going to die, because of damages,
because of the reality of just documenting everything that I had to go through
and the trauma of it all.
And when I look back on it and I see myself,
my 24-year-old self, especially in that state,
it's really sad because I'm like, I was so innocent
and I was so young and I had this entire life and journey ahead of me
and it was like, how did I deserve that?
Just crazy, like I didn't do anything wrong.
I was using the product as I should.
I did everything I was supposed to and, you know,
it's just crazy that that is so powerful and toxic
and, again, it's almost sad because, again, I'm the lucky one,
that I'm here being able to speak about this.
But there are so many women that you'll never see,
you'll never hear their stories, you'll never see their faces,
you'll never hear the trauma they experience
because they're no longer here.
And so it's my duty to, A, share my story,
but B, inform the world that this is inhumane
and it could easily be prevented.
But, again, it's greed, it's cost-efficiency, it's money.
You know, I always say in my interviews,
if men's dicks were falling off tomorrow, that wouldn't happen.
So why is it women are having to fight for everything,
let alone what we do with our bodies,

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

let alone with the products that we are given
for something that we are just naturally having to do every month
for 40-something years, you know?
Why are we not a priority?
Like, why are we not protected
and upheld to the stature of men?
We're 50% of the population.
And also we make life.
We create life.
It just seems so crazy to me.
But again, we're in 2023
and those men are still making decisions about what women do with their bodies
and their choices on how they, you know,
approach what they want to do with themselves and their lives.
It's crazy.
You come out of hospital, you're in your wheelchair
bound for eight months.
You're living at home at this point?
Yeah, with my mom and my brother, yeah.
What impact does it have on your brother?
He's 10 years younger than you, so he's what, a 14-15 year old kid.
He is now firsthand.
He's got a first sort of person perspective
to real trauma and suffering and someone he loves.
And at 14, you know...
I can't even imagine.
I mean, I think that's also why there's a lot of
I think it's hard.
I've realized in my situation that everyone that was with me in those moments,
it was so heavy and dark for such a long period of time.
Again, like you said prior, it's not just about me going through the situation.
It affects every single person.
It's like a domino effect and everyone's going to deal with it differently.
And a lot of people, especially then being so young,
you know, just have to go through even that with me
not even experiencing firsthand was traumatic.
You know, so let alone my 14-15 year old brother
who's having to see, you know, their sister in this state, you know,
and then having to be so depressed and so angry
and just pushing and punching everything away from me as far as I could
because I didn't want to be here anymore.
And him having to experience that I'm sure has taken a toll.
And it makes me sad because it's just this whole thing is just so dark

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

and it just goes back to, yeah, it just affects everyone differently.

And I'm lucky that I've been able to get to this place

because, you know, I've done a lot of the work.

I've had to actually sit with myself and deal with it,

but it's hard to go there.

It's hard to dig deep and to have to face the reality of what you face,

especially in those moments.

And who knows when that will be and if that will ever be, but, you know.

You mean for those around you?

Yeah.

If they'll also go sit and do the work?

Yeah.

And like, I think too, it's like to see me in such a place now where I'm okay.

I think a lot of people forget, like, that I went through that too.

Like they just see me now and like everything's great,

but and I see myself now and everything's great.

But again, I'm at a different place when a lot of people still have to

maybe sit with the things that I maybe wasn't aware of or I wasn't a coma

or what, you know, the decisions and the talks that happened when, you know,

it was crucial to my well-being

and to even if I was going to survive or not.

When you came out of hospital and you spent the next eight months

in a wheelchair in real pain, depressed.

Very.

What were your prospects for life in your own, from your own perspective?

What were you thinking your life was?

If you thought about the future, if at all, what was the future for you in those moments?

I didn't have one.

I definitely, I think that's also why I was so suicidal was because I had this life,

you know, I had everything at my fingertips.

So I was able to do everything in anything.

And there were so many goals that I wanted to achieve and to, I just wanted to live my life.

I just thought like, I just had so many hopes and dreams that in that moment of like,

sitting in my darkest room because I didn't want to see the world,

I had it like completely blacked out.

And having to sit with myself and like seeing myself in a wheelchair.

And people who are in wheelchairs are my heroes because I don't know how they face a world that's not meant for them.

It's hard.

It's so hard to go outside and to go and just do the simplest things and to A,

be looked at differently.

Just things that we as people who are able to just be able-bodied or have prosthetics

or move or whatever, how that challenges them, you know,

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

and then face a world that kind of just looks at them and kind of doesn't in a way.

It's hard.

Like, I don't think if I had to be in a wheelchair, would I be that strong mentally?

It takes a really strong person mentally to be, to live that type of life.

And I hold the utmost respect for anyone that has to live in a wheelchair or be in a wheelchair because you're fucking a rock star and so strong.

And for those eight months, I was just like, there's no way I can live my life like this.

There's no way I can...

It's just not accessible.

The world is not accessible.

I learned that.

It's just not.

And it's...

And then you just look down upon, which is just crazy because you're really so strong to have to, you know, just face the world every day.

What is that like? You said you looked down upon.

What did you learn about the way that people in wheelchairs are viewed?

Well, just people with disabilities in general.

I think it's just like, there's just like stigma of incapable because you maybe look a certain way or because you're confined in a certain space or the world is not built for that.

The world is built for, you know, run in, walk stairs, you know, a shower even, just that.

Like people forget that there are people who can't do those things.

And there are a lot of the time left out.

And in those moments, I've learned that because I've faced it myself.

I think in my journey, it's interesting because like I've had to face so many different parts of life and lived so many lives for maybe shorts a powder of time, but at least in those moments, I've been able to relate and to live with maybe something that someone does have to live with forever

and how strong you have to be and what it takes every day to face a world, you know, that isn't really made for you or accepting of you or, you know,

just because you look a certain way, you're immediately judged or just seen as you can't do it.

And that's not true.

Why are you coming outside during that eight months?

Barely.

I hid myself.

I didn't even like, yeah, maybe just to like somewhat get my dog outside.

My mama kind of forced me, but I wouldn't.

I would just definitely want to stay in my own little world as dark as possible and just hide.

As dark as possible?

Yeah, because I didn't want to see outside because I couldn't go outside.

I would look at people with legs and be so pissed because I'm like, why do they have their legs and I don't?

Because you're so depressed and so like just in this zone of like you don't want to live anymore,

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

let alone like you're angry at the world because just of life because you can't live it the way that you used to.

And yeah, you just, you just, it was just a really dark time of trying to figure out again, why am I here?

What am I doing?

Is there a place for me?

I didn't think I'd ever be accepted by the modeling world at all, let alone looked at, let alone find love, genuine love.

Again, I didn't even think of life.

I just thought of how can I get out of this misery?

And that's why I was like just contemplating suicide daily.

I was just like, how can I do this?

It's really, it's really, it's really just really hard to think about when you see no light at the end of the tunnel for such a long period of time.

Like there's never been been through hard things in my life, but there's always been a glimmer of light even at the end of a tunnel.

And to be in a situation where you're waking up every day and there is no light at the end of the tunnel as far as you can see,

but carrying on regardless.

Well, also my foot was questionable.

So I'm having to go to wound care.

I'm having to go to hyperbaric every day.

My whole entire world shattered and I'm just sitting there with the pieces and then I'm just an excruciating pain.

I mean, the pain that I lived with for even seven years before I made the decision to amputate my second leg,

I had, because I was so young, my body was ever producing so much calcium that my bones, even though I didn't have toes anymore, my bones were literally protruding out my skin, like pushing and trying to basically fix the damage by like growing new toes, but it's impossible.

So I would have to go in and they would have to amputate that.

So I'd have to get my, that cut out of me as well.

I had to do that surgery twice.

I'd have to go to wound care every Monday, every other Monday,

because my heel was so badly damaged that, again, like I told you with the skin, there's no skin on this planet that's strong enough.

So I had to do apple grafts, which is basically maybe four skin, because that's the only skin that's tough enough.

And they did two transplants of that on my heel and then hyperbaric to try to get, you know, everything to kind of come together.

But even doing that, I would, my sweat glands are really damaged.

So I would sweat and then they would just kind of get really hard and stay there.

And I'd have to surgically get them removed every Monday.

And I was just like in so much pain because there was no fat pads, even on the bottom of my, where

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

the toes would be.

So I'm just on bone. So every time I'm stepping, I'm just like, it's just excruciating pain.

It just felt like, you know, when you have a toothache, it's like that consistent throbbing pain that you can't get rid of obviously until you go to the dentist.

But that was something that I lived with for seven years.

It's crazy. I don't know how I did it.

But I just thought that I had my whole leg and I just, I'm the type of person that needs to exhaust all of my options before I make a decision.

And that's something that I just had to do.

But in a way, I wish I would have taken my Godfather's advice in that moment of being like just take them both.

Because yeah, I can sit here now and say that probably would have been the best answer.

But what have I survived and not killed myself? I don't know.

But I think gradually doing one and learning how to live and to adapt and, you know, just how to have a prosthetic in general.

And to all of the capabilities and things I can do, I had to kind of learn as a slow process in a way, I think.

That was my life for seven years. I don't know how I did it. How did you do it?

I did it, my faith, also knowing that I have this purpose, that I have to, you know, scream out in the topist mountain that I possibly can find and yell and get people to pay attention.

And I think realizing that I'm just the lucky one really gives me the fight for these next generations to come to not allow this to ever happen again to another soul.

And to hopefully change the world to where that this is not an issue anymore.

And it may take my entire life, but that is my purpose.

Quick one, before we get back to this episode, just give me 30 seconds of your time.

Two things I wanted to say. The first thing is a huge thank you for listening and tuning into the show week after week.

It means the world to all of us and this really is a dream that we absolutely never had and couldn't have imagined getting to this place.

But secondly, it's a dream where we feel like we're only just getting started.

And if you enjoy what we do here, please join the 24% of people that listen to this podcast regularly and follow us on this app.

Here's a promise I'm going to make to you. I'm going to do everything in my power to make this show as good as I can now and into the future.

We're going to deliver the guests that you want me to speak to and we're going to continue to keep doing all of the things you love about the show.

Thank you. Thank you so much. Back to the episode.

Did you get therapy during that period, those eight months? Was there any sort of psychological support?

Yeah, definitely. I had a lot of that.

And it's interesting because during that process, obviously it was, I was so dark and so just not wanting to be here.

But the one consistent thing, which is the irony of it all is like my grandpa telling me about the

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

veterans that come back and all this stuff and just me being like, no, no, no, I don't understand that. I don't understand that comparison.

Then my therapist at the time was working at the VA and she was like, you know what? You should really come talk to some of these guys and see, you know, how they're living their lives. I was just like, no, this is not the same cut to my prosthetic guy, Peter Harsh, who's incredible. He's down in San Diego. He's an angel. Like he's just the best at what he does. His name is Peter Harsh. He's my prosthetist, but he's like the best in the world and literally an angel.

I got recommended to go down to him because I'm an athlete and I, you know, I'm young and I'm active and I want to live my life.

And so he would be setting me up for that lifestyle that I'd want and he's the guy to see.

So I got recommended to go to him.

But in that time period of having to sit kind of like this, but around a table in his office or his facility, he's dealing with a lot of the veterans and he's the one that gets them and fights the VA to get them taken care of.

And it's just so interesting that I've had to sit in this chair amongst all of these amazing individuals and hearing their stories and learning about the fight and just the resilience of them.

And finally seeing what everyone was kind of saying as far as the comparison or like you are just like them and we never understanding.

But the common denominator when I look around the room is we didn't kill ourselves.

We are alive. We chose to live.

And we all had that moment in our journeys, however we lost our legs, to want to give up, to want to pull the trigger, to want to end it all.

And we fought to be in that chair and that was like, it just came so full circle for me.

And it was just like this beautiful kind of like aha moment of like, roll with the punches of life, regardless of how they come at you.

It's about, you know, how you react to it.

What's your choice going to be?

And to know that we all made that choice is like, you know, incredible.

Not an easy choice to make there, is it? That acceptance you describe?

No.

I think that's kind of what I'm really curious about is the journey one goes on where they, at first they try and fight the thing that's happened to them.

And then that whole contemplation around the injustice why me, this was preventable, this is unfair. You're looking out your window you said and seeing people with legs and I read that you were even annoyed at the sunshine.

You go through that chapter, which is it's a real it's a conflict, right?

It's a conflict with oneself and the nature of what's happened.

And then at some point you arrive over this other side where you use the word acceptance.

You kind of accept it and you make, as you said, a choice.

You realize that there's a choice you can make.

That whole journey because, you know, whether someone's had an amputation or not, there's so many people in their lives right now that are something's happened to them.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

They're feeling that sense of injustice.
You know, they're going through the motions of blame or guilt or whatever it might be to try and understand how it was avoidable.
But the journey from that place, the conflict place to this acceptance.
What, you know, what does it take for us to get to acceptance faster?
I guess is my question because acceptance seems to be a much happier place.
I mean, time.
You can't rush it.
You have no control over it.
And I think that's when it's those moments when you have to sit in it, sit with it, feel it, feel every part of it.
And you have to figure out what are you going to do with what you have and what you've been given.
And, you know, I had to do that.
I didn't have a choice.
I didn't want to be in a wheelchair and I saw, you know, my only option was a prosthetic.
But how was I going to, you know, make it cool or make it me or make it, you know, something that I could feel like, all right, like, this is my new self.
This is my new chapter.
This is my new beginning.
It was more so like, I needed to see it as a challenge first because that's how my mind operated of like, Lauren, you have no other fucking choice.
You're either going to be depressed and kill yourself and end it, or you're going to get the fuck up and figure out what you're going to have to do to survive and live the best life that you know you deserve.
And it was just a slow process, slow, like, I wish I could put the fast forward and be like, what I know now I knew back then, but it's impossible.
Every part of my journey and everything that I've been through has gotten me to this place.
Every, every part has shaped me and molded me into who I am right now.
And a lot of that had to do with me doing the work and processing and again, seeing that our physical beings is nothing.
It doesn't matter.
It's like a shiny object.
You may be the most beautiful person, but you can be the most sad, unfulfilled, ugly person, you know, I mean, it just, it doesn't mean anything.
It's about what you do on this planet, not just for yourself, but for others.
How can you leave that impact?
You know, and that's kind of like how I now live my life every day is because again, everyone is fighting something every day.
And a lot of those wounds you can't see, it's mental, it's trauma that you'll never speak about or talk about or whatever, but you are internally having to deal with and face on a daily basis.
And I think if anyone sees me, if I'm just getting out of my car, if I'm walking to get coffee or I'm laughing, I'm hanging, whatever, you see me on the cover of something, Google me, whatever.
And you see that I didn't just wake up and get here.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

That I too had all of those feelings, that depression, that state of mind of not wanting to be here, but not allowing that to define me and to divine the future that I knew that I could have for myself.

You got to see that even though things are very small, those big celebrations of even just getting up the next day, even though you don't want to or, you know, facing something super hard or pushing yourself out the door when you don't want to

or, you know, not taking the pills that are in front of you and ending it.

That waking up the next day is a new day, that like you made it from that point, so it's just about gradually building on to that.

Every little challenge is a success that you've overcome.

And it adds up over time.

And then soon enough you'll be in a place where you're like looking back and being like, wow, I did that.

And I think that's the beauty of life and the darkest times really mold us for the people that we're supposed to be.

It's so incredible because, you know, everyone in their own lives feels like they've overcome something, right?

And the degrees in which the mountains that they've overcome are all different sizes.

And that's why your advice there is so unbelievably important and powerful because it is life advice for us all.

It's not someone who has an amputation advice in that I saw, as you were speaking, I saw all of the struggles I've been through in my life,

in the process, the things you were saying about time, community, meeting other people that have been through hardships that you can relate to

and that making you feel like you belong and you're understood and your plight is a human plight.

You're not, you know, broken or there's nothing wrong with you.

This is what it is to be a human.

I was, as you were speaking as well, I was thinking about this idea of strength and it is so tempting to say, oh, my God, you're so strong.

And in the context of how someone might view you and say you've got incredible strength, which you have,

there's also this other side of using the word strength, which makes me feel a bit uncomfortable because when we think of strength,

sometimes we think of like, just kind of like buckle up.

But actually, I think from what I've learned from doing this anyway, the path to strength is actually often being okay to be vulnerable

and be what some people might describe as quote unquote weakness, which is like being willing to talk and being willing to cry

and being willing to hold your hands up and say, I need help.

And it's almost ironic that that's the path to strength that sometimes a vulnerability and saying I need help is the path to.

Does that make sense?

Yeah, but it's also owning it, being able to like be like, this is what it is.

And, and, you know, patience and time.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

And once you understand that you can't rush that, especially when something physical happens to you can't rush the human body to heal right away.

It's impossible.

So I really had no choice.

It was like, I had to feel I had to sit with it.

I had to use a wheelchair.

I had to use a stool for a shower.

I had to, you know, learn how to walk without a limp.

I, you know, I had to force myself to do the uncomfortable, but we only grow in the uncomfortable.

If we're feeling fine and great and everything's dandy, we're not growing.

We're just staying the same.

You make the decision some years later, I think six or seven years later that you, um, you wanted to amputate the second leg, your left leg.

Why?

I wanted my life back.

I wanted my freedom.

I was turning 30 and I was like, I want to be a mom.

I'm an athlete.

I want to just be able to run.

I want to feel the wind in my hair, you know, the wind on my face.

I just want to be able to move.

Movement is so important.

And I wasn't able to do that with that leg.

It was holding me back.

It was holding me back from living my truth.

And I knew it was the best decision that I was going to make for myself and it is.

I'd never, ever look back and say, oh, I shouldn't have done it.

I have more.

So look back and say, I should have done it sooner.

Or I wish I would have done it sooner.

I guess on the today show, you said, um, losing your first leg saved saved your life and losing the second leg.

And that leg gave you your freedom, which is so interesting.

It's such a, it's such an interesting, um, unexpected thing to hear that losing your second leg is the thing that allowed you to have your freedom.

How did life change once you'd made that decision and you'd gone through that operation?

So I didn't have toes and then, uh, my heel was still just, it just would never be normal again.

And it was just like, why am I going?

This is not living.

I'm just getting by.

I'm just waking up and going to the doctors or I'm not going and going for a run.

I'm not going to go and play basketball.

I'm not going to be able to just walk down the street comfortably.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

You know, I, I definitely even like right in the beginning, like I would wear hoodies and sweatpants. I mean, you can see the heat wave here right now.

That's kind of what I was in, but I was in like, you know, huge sweatshirt, huge sweatpants, making sure like no one could see that I didn't have a leg because I was so scared of what other people would think.

I, I just was ashamed of myself.

I was ashamed of what happened.

I didn't, I just didn't know what was happening or what would happen next because it was so unknown.

So I was just trying to like still, I guess live in this world that I thought was of that girl, but I was no longer that girl.

And this was your God, was your Godfather's advice was to at the time when you first had the incident first happened,

your Godfather's advice was to amputate both legs.

Yeah.

And by the time you had gone through that decision to amputate the left leg as well, was your Godfather still around?

He, he was around, but then shortly after he died in a horrific or a car accident, which was is really crazy because he literally sat with me every single day, you know, hoping and praying that I would survive, you know, playing Bob Marley's three little birds and seeing to me, you know, and then cut to he's killed.

And I'm okay.

So it's just like how that happened is insane, but.

And he was like your father.

Yeah.

He was incredible.

He was one of the biggest sports agents in the world for basketball.

And he was just like 007, like so swaggy, so cool, like, you know, had to ask him and he just lived this like cool lifestyle and was just the coolest guy and was so smart and loving and sweet.

And yeah, just, just everything I didn't have within a fatherly figure, he definitely was my rock and that aspect of life up until, you know, the very end.

How does, how does, how does losing him impact you at that point in your life?

It was hard.

It was just like, I literally had just amputated.

So I was on crutches.

I just bought a house.

So I was like really wanting him to come over and see it.

And, you know, I saw a voicemail that I missed his call and the voicemail was like, Hey, let me know like when I can come over and finally see, you know, the crib and check it out and blah, blah.

And I was like, that was it.

And then like, I think a few days later he died.

But it's just, it's just crazy because I know he's proud of me.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

And I know that like, I have so many angels that I carry with me.
And I just know that he's, he's long on this journey.
I know he's super proud of me.
So if I can, you know, I live with that.
So, and he has an amazing little son that's the best as well.
So he's, he's still here in a lot of different ways.
And he's aware how much he helped you through that, through that period.
I think he's still really young, but I, but it's, it's interesting because like, you know, for kids to see me like kind of like a robot or like a superhero, you know, I walk out and I just see these gold legs.
And it's like, it's interesting because a lot of kids at first don't even notice them.
And then when they do, then they're just fixated.
Then they're just like staring and then they're just like, I was just one little boy.
I remember being in Switzerland in the airport.
And he literally sat on top of his suitcase, kept rolling up his pant leg, looking at his leg, looking at me, looking at his leg, looking at me.
And then I remember his mom was like, you know, can he, can he ask you a question or something?
And I was like, of course.
So like he came over and then he started to like try to race me in the airport because they wanted to see how fast I was.
And then he was like touching up my leg and feeling it.
I was like, I'm like a superhero.
I'm like a robot.
And he's like, yeah.
And then at the end of it, he's like tugging on his mom's shirt and he's like, it's like, mommy, mommy, I want a golden leg.
And I was just like, yeah, yeah, that's pretty cool.
I must say.
But again, that's just like, I've learned too.
It's like in this journey that owning it and accepting it and being okay with it, it only attracts people's curiosity instead of shutting them away or making them feel like they shouldn't ask the questions.
And especially with young kids, their brains are like sponges and they're curious.
And a lot of people, you know, that may look different.
Their mothers or their parents are probably like, don't look, don't stare.
And that's not what you should do.
Let them ask the questions.
Like I'm an open book, but like, I think giving little kids that idea of there is something wrong.
Don't ask, don't question.
It should be like, you should ask the questions and you should wonder because that kid now is going to see someone like myself or.
Just think that I'm the coolest thing on the planet instead of leaving thinking that there's something wrong or that I'm incapable or unable to do something.
So I think it just the perception of, I think how you just carry yourself is really important because you don't know who's watching.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

And it's usually the ones that like are on the, you know, the little ones.

And those are the ones that are this next generation or the generations to come.

Golden legs.

Golden legs.

Why golden?

It was 2012 obsessed with Brianna.

And the irony of Brianna is that my mom had got me tickets to go see her and I was so depressed and in a wheelchair and I was so embarrassed.

And I was like, I'm not going to go.

So I didn't go cut to, she hires me for savage.

And it was just so like full circle moment for me too.

Cause I'm like, Brianna is hiring me for her brand.

And I, I did was so embarrassed to go to the concert.

It's just crazy life.

But anyway, now she's married to Ace or, you know, has babies with ASAP.

And ASAP was the reason why I chose the golden legs because he had the golden grill.

Like he was all about that, especially at that time.

That was his thing, his gold teeth.

And I was like, you know what, I may not have gold teeth right now, but I'm going to get some gold legs.

And it's kind of just been my thing.

And I love gold.

I love gold jewelry.

I have a grill too.

I've, you know, so many different things, but like my legs are, they're my jewelry piece.

They're like my trophies.

It's also a statement of, um, of the kind of where, where you were with the acceptance piece, because you went from the sweatpants,

where you're trying to hide to the gold where you're like, look at this, look how cool this is.

It's a real, it's a kind of a real psychological journey to, to get from there to there.

Yeah.

And I think it's just about again, finding and making it your own and figuring out what works for you and how like, you know,

and I'm also, that was 001% that is so lucky to be able to have the access to the prosthetics that allow me to move the way I do,

that allow me to walk the way I do, you know, prosthetics are so expensive.

Um, and tell me the, cause I'm in, obviously I don't know about prosthetics in terms of detail.

So prosthetics are really expensive because like the feet are what allow you to do everything.

Right.

And healthcare, like God forbid someone goes and get hit by a car tomorrow, they're just given the basic needs that are going to be met,

which is just like a peg leg that just gets you from point A to point B.

Anything that's allowing you to basically get back to your livelihood, meaning running, biking,

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

swimming, any of that stuff,
going into the ocean even, that's a luxury considered.
So healthcare doesn't really provide you with that option.
So I'm grateful that I'm, that I'm sponsored by Ocer, who's a prosthetic company out of Iceland,
that they're so advanced and so like ahead of the game that they've made my feet to where it's like
the blade is like an ankle to where like the mobility and flexibility is just like as if I had a foot.
My blades are, my running blades, they're like \$125,000.
And that's just to run.
Just to run.
And I mean, these are expensive too.
My legs are probably like \$100,000, but these are just because the feet and then, you know, the
technology that goes into them.
And then, you know, the whole leg or whatever, it's a process and it's also just sad that I'm lucky
that someone can't just get back to their life.
Like that's why this foundation called Challenge to Athletes Foundation, CAF.
And they work with getting their people, their lives back by getting them legs that they need to get
back to just living their everyday life.
If you've been listening to this podcast over the last few months, you'll know that we're sponsored
and supported by Airbnb,
but it amazes me how many people don't realize they could actually be sitting on their very own
Airbnb.
For me, as someone who works away a lot, it just makes sense to Airbnb my place at home whilst I'm
away.
If your job requires you to be away from home for extended periods of time, why leave your home
empty?
You can so easily turn your home into an Airbnb and let it generate income for you whilst you're on
the road.
Whether you could use a little extra money to cover some bills or for something a little bit more fun,
your home might just be worth more than you think.
And you can find out how much it's worth at [airbnb.co.uk slash host](https://airbnb.co.uk/host).
That's [airbnb.co.uk slash host](https://airbnb.co.uk/host).
So I want to come back to this, what caused all of this?
You've been campaigning for some time. You've spoken to government officials about how to prevent
this happening to other people.
Zooming in specifically on what causes TSS, it's these synthetic chemicals that are put into tampon
products
that a lot of big brands still have on shelves all around the world today.
I'm an idiot when it comes to tampons.
So if you had to explain this to an idiot.
So basically a tampon, it goes inside of us at a really delicate moment when our body is, we're
bleeding,
we're trying to get that blood out, but yet we're putting something in us that's basically like a
corkscrew.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

And all of that blood that needs to get out is stuck there and it's creating this perfect storm along with the dioxin, the chlorine, the bleach, all of these chemicals that shouldn't be anywhere near us, let alone inside of us, and it creates the perfect storm.

So once that even sliver of that even gets in your system and your bloodstream, because it is like the mecca of everything, it can go straight to your heart and kill you.

And you know, that's basically what we're saying is like, why are you giving us something that is so toxic with all of these chemicals?

Even if it says it's organic, it's still sprayed with pesticides.

And then we're putting that inside of us.

And it's like, it's just like a Petri dish of, of, yeah, like just the perfect storm.

Has it changed your perspective on all of these other cosmetic products we use in our lives, you know, like deodorant?

Everything, yeah, because everything has something in it.

I think even with the food, you know, and the thing is, is like these girls nowadays are getting their periods at such a young age, 8, 9, 10 years old because of all the hormones in the foods.

And then they're using these products way sooner than we would when I was younger.

And they don't even have the antibodies to fight the toxins and tampons.

So they're the ones that are more susceptible to even getting toxic shock syndrome.

So, you know, and a lot of these young women nowadays are getting endometriosis, polyps, cysts, cancer, you know, way earlier than ever, ever before.

Because they're using these products way before they probably should.

Why do you think they're still on sale, these products?

And is there, when you see that the products that you caused all of this harm to you are still on shelves right now, how does that make you feel?

Infuriating, because I'm just like, how is, the thing is for me, it's about being transparent, right? Cigarettes, if you go to purchase cigarettes and you look, there's sometimes there's a picture it's uncomfortable to see, but at least that's your choice.

You're making the choice to use that product.

You're not giving women choices.

You're not like being honest about what's going in your product and what it's going to do to us.

If I use it for a day, a month, a year, what is that going to do to my body internally?

What issues may I develop?

You know, again, why also are we having to use products that are just full of toxicity instead of using something that could easily be changed?

But it's because it's money.

It's easier for them to pay out lawsuits or to do all of that stuff than to change all the machines.

The development of the tampon has actually never been changed.

The tampon is the same as it's always been.

The only thing that has changed is the advertising, the packaging, the commercials.

I was always pissed at the commercials.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

I'm like, how is there a girl running on a beach, going down a slide, running track, doing all this stuff?

But there's no warning at the bottom of a tampon commercial of what that product can do to you, let alone you watch an Advocommercial or a men's enhancement commercial.

And if you're not looking at the commercial, you're hearing it.

It's a medical device.

You think that's their approach to it? They're well aware of the potential harm these products can cause, but they'd rather just pay the lawsuit than do the expensive work of changing the product.

Yeah, a thousand percent. This shouldn't be happening.

It doesn't need to be happening, but there's been no, you know, no accountability.

And that's why, you know, I'm having to be in this position where I can share my story, share the story of others, you know, work with this woman trying to wake up Congress to, like, say, hey, why is it still happening?

What's going on here?

You've been campaigning to have laws changed, to have, you've done, I mean, a tremendous job, probably more so than anyone else that's ever lived to raise awareness for this issue.

What can be done? What do you want to see done to prevent this happening to other people?

Yeah, I've unfortunately, fortunately and unfortunately, I have been working with a mother who lost her teenage daughter to toxic shock syndrome.

I think when she was about 18, Madeline Masabi, through the darkness and through the trauma of all of that, we've really joined forces and wanting to change the world and wanting to advocate and wanting to pass these bills that are necessary for us to be protected and it's taken a lot of time and a lot of energy and she's doing a lot of the groundwork.

Like starting her foundation, don'tchockme.org, there's bills that we are working on to pass.

There was a bill called the Robin Danielson Act, which was named after a woman who died of toxic shock syndrome in 1998.

And that bill in itself got rejected by Congress 10 times.

And cut to Don and I meeting with the Congresswoman, Katelyn Maloney in New York a few years ago, to try and get that bill reintroduced.

Me sitting with the Congresswoman and having the conversation about why is this still happening and if that bill had passed, this probably wouldn't have happened to me.

And I had her speak to Don, the woman who lost her daughter, because I'm like, listen to this woman crying and screaming because she will never get to hear her daughter's voice again.

See her daughter ever again because of this.

So it was just kind of getting this Congresswoman to like realize like, let's reintroduce this bill.

But there's also so many things that we need to reintroduce and also address within Congress that has to change.

So her and I have definitely joined forces and have kind of been putting together new bills.

And, you know, again, it's going to take time and it's not going to happen overnight, but it's definitely in motion and alternatives.

A lot of the alternatives that women do have, they can still get TSS from like the cup.

And that I've had women reach out to me, you know, their husbands writing me saying my wife of

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

three kids is fighting for her life right now in the ICU from using the cup.

Or, you know, a lot of women want to say like, I'm using organic tampons.

It's like, OK, you're using organic, but it's still sprayed with pesticides.

You're still putting poison inside of you.

What is the approach you would advise?

I think just being aware of what you're putting inside of you, being aware of, you know, are you reading the box and seeing that it has all these chemicals?

And, you know, do you really want that to be just being, I guess, more just being more aware, not just thinking that it can't happen to you because it can happen to anyone at any time.

It's not about anyone's off limits. No one is off limits.

That's the scary part.

And, yeah, I mean, just be more aware, educate yourself.

That's the advice you would give if a young girl's listening to this now.

And because I imagine this is a really pressing question in there, in the people that are listening to this in their minds is what should I do instead?

Well, that's why I fight so hard is because I need women to wake up and say, like, well, what is our alternative? What do we do?

But we're only given what we're given and what we're given is shit and it's horrible and it kills us.

That's why I say it doesn't make sense. Like, if this were happening to men, there would be a resolution tomorrow.

Because a lot of these companies are male driven.

There's a lot of men sitting in the seats that are making these decisions or have the power to, but they don't even know what it's like to have a period.

They don't even know what it's like to have a baby, to have to make a decision if they're going to keep it or not.

You know, it's not anyone's decision, but they're the person that's going through it.

I guess my question is about, like, you've still got to use tampons, right?

So, like, you've got...

I can never and I don't. I can never use tampon ever again. It would kill me.

It would kill you?

Yeah.

You mean literally or you mean psychologically?

No, I mean, I would never anyway, but I'm just saying, like, that literally almost killed me.

So why would I ever want to, you know, have that thing even in the same room as me, you know?

Yeah, I can never, nor would I ever suggest anyone to.

I mean, I get it, you have to, but again, that sucks because those are the only options we have.

Even pads, you know, a lot of pads have synthetic fibers as well, you know?

The issue is there actually is nothing safe for us that we can use and go through the day and be like, oh, you know, just doing life and there's no worries.

It's like, no, you have to have that consciously on your mind of like, oh yeah, this thing could kill me, but I have to use it because I have track today or I have to go swimming or I have, you know what I'm saying?

Yeah.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

Forgiveness, this topic, this word of forgiveness.

What's your, you know, I was thinking about what you said about the, you wouldn't want to be in the same room as that thing because it killed you, because it nearly killed you.

What do you think the answer is in terms of like acceptance, forgiveness?

Where do you sit with, there's this tremendous injustice that happens to you?

Is the answer trying to get to a place of forgiveness for what happened?

Is it acceptance?

And what is, where are you at with all of that?

Forgiveness for who?

For the companies that know that they're killing people?

No, it's just greed.

And forgiveness, I don't even know what I would forgive other than,

I don't even know if there is forgiveness.

There's just anger.

There's just this fight.

There's just this unjust that sits within me to know that when I see a little girl walking down the street,

I see myself and I see her little feet.

I see her little legs.

I see her whole spirit and to know that that was me, you know,

and not ever wanting that to ever happen to another soul.

And I think that that's like just my whole mindset of there is always going to be unjust within myself.

If I don't live my truth by fighting for what I believe is right and what I believe is right is equality and safe products.

You've done more than anyone I've ever encountered as I said a second ago to raise awareness for this.

And I remember when my team back in London, they were sat around and they were discussing, you know, we said, I will get flying out to LA and Lauren's going to be on the podcast.

And Jemima, who does a lot of, she does, she leads the guest booking team.

She was explaining to them what toxic shock syndrome is because none of them had ever heard about it before.

And just to think about that one isolated example that there's a whole team,

there's a whole room full of people in London now that know about it because we're having this conversation.

There's millions, tens and tens and tens and tens of millions of people that have watched you talk about this online.

You have done more than anyone I've ever encountered to make put this on the public's radar and you continue to do that.

And in doing so, it is very, very obvious to see how you will end up saving many, many, many, many, many people's lives.

You'll save them from harm, you'll save their lives entirely.

You'll save them from the trauma that happens as a byproduct of the horrible things that happen

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

when someone undergoes toxic shock syndrome.

And I know because you've described your faith that you are someone who almost has an air of believing in destiny and purpose and things about you.

With it in mind, all of the people that you've helped and how you've put this conversation on the map, would you change anything?

Absolutely not.

If you told me tomorrow that I could wake up and have my life back, I wouldn't take it.

Because what I'm doing is, like you said, it's fulfillment.

It's the fact that I know that I'm doing something that needs to be done.

I'm fighting for life, for people to be able to live their lives, to be able to go about their days and live out whatever it is they want to achieve.

And know that it's, you know, I don't know, I just, I feel like that's my job.

My job isn't done by any means.

You know, and I'm making a documentary right now, or going to, but there was no reason why I should share anything with anyone because I don't need to.

And it's horrific what I went through, and it's hard to even imagine.

But I can be on a million covers. I can do a million interviews.

You can see images and this, that and the other.

But unless you see me and you hear me in that state, will you ever be able to put someone you love in that position to be like, wow, what is going on?

Why is this happening?

I never want my daughter, my sister, my cousin, my wife, you know, to ever use the tampon again. Do you know what I'm saying?

Like someone has to see me fighting for my life to be able to put themselves in a position to be protective of the ones they love.

And I always say this too, like, I'm so lucky that I look the way I do, right?

Because again, it matters.

And I think that is too why I got so much attention is because I am what I look like.

And how did that happen to her?

Why has this happened for, you know, decades?

So, yeah, I think it's just, it's my, it's my duty that I feel in my heart that like when I see a little girl, I need to be vulnerable to showcase that part of my journey and my life to remind people of why I am the girl with the golden legs.

Which can't be easy.

It can't, but it, but it is, I mean, in a way it is, it's because I'm okay with who I am and where I've come and knowing that that's part of what allowed me to be this person right now.

You know, and having to go through all of that.

But even sitting here and having this conversation with me where you have to walk back down the path of that trauma.

I mean, the only time I got emotional is when I speak about my brother and my mom and killing myself and them finding me.

I don't cry about what happened to me.

And maybe that's because I just suppressed everything and, and you know, it's this trauma that I

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

haven't really addressed.

But like, I know enough to know that like, I'm okay.

And like, God's got me and God's always had me and like, I'm living proof of that.

I'm living proof of, you know, there's, there's someone definitely directing my steps.

Like, I should not be here and have what I have and have been able to be above and beyond blessed that I forget my trauma.

I forget the darkness because I have so much such a beautiful life to live.

If your work was to be done.

If I sit here with you and I don't know how many years time, but if I sit here with you in a couple of, I don't know, a decade, it could be, it could be five months.

And you, you say, my job is done in regards to toxic shock syndrome.

What would you mean by that?

Meaning that we as women are protected, that we are given things that are not going to kill us for something that we inherently have to do every month.

And that's a basic necessity for life.

You know, I mean, we can't do anything without having something that's going to, you know, help us get through our days to be able to be the bosses that we are.

You know, and, and hopefully, you know, knocking down these doors and making people wake up and realize like this is a huge problem.

And hopefully getting these companies or a company to make something to where we can go about our lives and live just like everyone else and not have to worry if our tampon is going to kill us.

I think that will be the day where I can be like, wow, I know that we're safe.

I know that whatever happened to me will never happen to somebody else ever again.

And I think that's where the peace and maybe just the, you know, the breath of I can relax and really just let that part of life go because I know that my voice has been heard and I know that change has been done.

I don't know.

I just think the purpose of it of being able to leave a legacy of like where you're actually impacting something for people to say for when you're not here.

That's where I feel like that's where I want to be.

I want to be in that like that changing the world factor of how either people see themselves and love themselves, changing the fashion industry, changing, you know, feminine hygiene products, making sure that we're all protected and safe.

And I think that's so much bigger.

And if I can save a life, I mean, that's bigger than anything that could be bigger than any achievement.

You could ever imagine is because a human life and what that person is and what they could be to the world is so much more than just a cover or a, you know, fancy car or it's like it's so surface.

There's no fulfillment.

What are those things going to do when you die?

Nothing.

But you can die knowing that you've changed the world that you've changed someone's life for the better.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

And that to me is so powerful.

Well, Lauren, that is what you're doing.

I've never been so inspired by someone on this podcast ever.

I don't bullshit people, but like genuinely, I've never been so inspired because there's so many things that you're doing as a result of speaking that aren't necessarily the most obvious benefits you're having.

Obviously, your work to change the industry that harmed you is going to change lives.

But the the message of perseverance when it when there's no light at the end of the tunnel and to keep on going and to have faith that there is a higher purpose.

There is a reason to carry on.

I think there's so many people around the world that are in dark places and they can't see a reason to continue, you know, and a lot of them listen to this podcast because a lot of them message me.

And I think even hearing how you managed to take yourself from that place, you used time and you sat with all of the things you felt and where you are now in your life.

I think that alone will save a lot of people's lives because there's so many people.

Honestly, there's so many people that are going to listen to this that cannot see the light at the end of the tunnel.

You are the light at the end of the tunnel.

You know, you being here and doing what you're doing, you are that light.

You'll never get to see all the lives you impact and change positively because of that.

So on behalf of all those people who I'm sure would love to message you and tell you, but I'll do it on their behalf.

Thank you so much.

You've really, really inspired me and you've inspired me at a very profound, deep level because, you know, it's easy.

It's easy to go through life.

Even sometimes in the world, I live in and feel a sense of sadness or injustice or to have a huge amount of pity for myself or whatever it might be, you know, and you're a constant reminder of the choice that we have every day, every time we wake up.

So thank you.

Yeah, thank you so much for having me, giving me this opportunity.

It's been so fun.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you for blessing us.

We have a closing tradition on this podcast where the last guest leaves a question for the next guest, not knowing who they're going to leave the question for.

And the question that's been left for you.

I've not read it all because it's a little bit long, but I'm going to start.

Assume you can visit yourself on the day before you die brackets in the far future.

I hope.

What do you imagine that future version of you will tell present day you that you've done well.

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

That you've set out to do what you've chosen and wanted to do and you didn't stop no matter how hard things got no matter how many knows you got no matter how big the world got or how high up that you can see how you were ever going to get past what was in front of you, but you did it and you never gave up and you you saw everything as a challenge.

And hopefully in that moment, I'll know that I've changed lives, saved lives, changed the world for the generations to come and know that my work is done.

And I think that's just pure beauty.

I have no doubt.

Lauren, thank you so much.

Thank you so much.

Pleasure to meet you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Over the last few years, I've realized that my first foundation is my health, something you've heard me talk about a lot.

Nothing matters more than that first foundation.

So that is why I'm so excited to be involved with a company like whoop, who are leading the charge when it comes to bettering your health.

All my friends have received free whoops from me because once you've tried whoop, I think it's like lights turning on to your health.

That's the only way I can describe it.

My sleep, my performance, my recovery, my stress, it's like someone turned the lights on.

I'm sure you guys know, but for those that don't know what whoop is, it's a wearable health and fitness coach that provides you with the feedback and actionable insights into your sleep recovery training stress and overall health.

And I have become entirely, utterly obsessed with it.

If you know me well enough, you know how obsessed I am with the smallest details.

I think the small things compounded together produce the biggest gains in our life.

And that is exactly what whoop does in my health and fitness every single day.

Being able to see my 1% gains on whoop has had a profound impact on my health journey.

I highly recommend you try it.

All you have to do is search join.whoop.com slash CEO to get a free months whoop membership on me.

And if you do, send me a DM and let me know how you get on.

I love, I'd love, I'd love to know.

I'm someone that understands probably from doing this podcast, the importance of having greens in my diet.

But do I achieve that every week in the chaos of my life?

Do I achieve that?

Sometimes the answer is no.

With Hewlett's Daily Greens, the probability of me achieving that is now almost 100% because of its convenience and because of the ease of preparing this one scoop, 10 second shake, and you're ready

[Transcript] The Diary Of A CEO with Steven Bartlett / Shocking TRUE Story: "I Lost Both Of My Legs Because Of A Tampon" (Health Warning) - Lauren Wasser

to go.

This is the best product that Hewlett have released in recent times.

Many of you will think of alternatives to this, but I've tried those alternatives and none of them are as tasty as Hewlett's Daily Greens.

It was out of stock because of the demand.

It's now back in stock for everybody in the USA.

Right now it's not available in the UK, but when you get a chance, just try it.

That's all I'm going to say.

Just try it.

I think once you try it, you'll understand why this is such an essential part of my life right now and will probably become an essential part of yours.

.