

HHM - 16 Life After PTSD with Andy Ainsworth Part 2



David Sandstrom 0:06

Welcome to the holistic health matters podcast where it's all about maximizing your health potential in body, mind and spirit, so that you can pursue the abundant life more effectively. I'm your host, David Sandstrom, naturopathic doctor and biblical health coach. And this is episode number 16.

David Sandstrom 0:27

This is part two of a two part series on coping with stress. We're talking with Andy Ainsworth, who

is a Christian counselor. He's been in practice for 35 years. And he's an expert in relational care principles. And he knows an awful lot about dealing with stress and overcoming trauma. In the last episode, we talked about how to recognize the symptoms of PTSD. And if you might be experiencing that, if you haven't listened to Episode 15, I suggest you go back and listen to that episode now, because I think you'll get a lot more out of this episode if you do. At the time of this recording our nation and in fact, the whole world is in the middle of the covid 19 pandemic. And we're all under a great deal of stress right now. We could all use a little help in managing our stress levels. Because if stress is left unchecked, it can compromise our vitality on a physical level. Almost everything we do in the holistic health world to pursue health is related to stress reduction, we can reduce our physical stress with good sleep or a chiropractic adjustment; we can unburden our bodies by reducing our toxin exposure. In this episode, we're going to be talking about how we can lower our mental emotional burden, which if not dealt with effectively, can, through the mind body connection, ultimately, compromise our physical vitality. We don't have to be a war veteran to experience PTSD. The level of stress many people are experiencing right now with schools being closed, job layoffs, small businesses struggling to survive, the social isolation we've been experiencing. And when you consider the relentlessness of all this, add it all up. And for many of us, this meets or exceeds the level of mental

emotional stress a soldier could experience on the battlefield. This stress can manifest itself very much like PTSD. We talked about the last episode how to recognize those symptoms. So again, if you haven't listened to Episode 15, I suggest you do it now. One thing before we get started, I need to apologize in advance for the audio quality here. When we started recording, my primary recording software malfunctioned. And we had to use the backup recording. So we sound a little bit like we're in an empty warehouse. And there's a lot more background noise. So I apologize in advance. Putting all this together isn't easy. So I appreciate your understanding your patience in that. So let's jump right in.

David Sandstrom 2:58

Last week, we were talking about what PTSD looks like and what the symptoms are and how they manifest in our lives. And today, we're going to be talking about how we what we can do about that. And I want to start off with just reading about a study that I found when I was researching for my book, "The Christians Guide to Holistic Health." Harvard Health News published a study in 2010. They had 309,000 people involved in this study. So it's a fairly large study. And what they concluded was that loneliness, loneliness is a risk factor to all kinds of diseases and all cause mortality. Here's what they said. "Dozens of studies have shown that people who have social support from family, friends and their community are happier, have fewer health problems and live longer. Conversely, lonely people, people who lack strong relationships have an increased risk of all cause mortality of 50%. That's roughly comparable to smoking 15 cigarettes a day, and greater than the risk from obesity, and physical activity." So we all know that smoking cigarettes and having a sedentary lifestyle, and being obese are risk factors for disease. But how many people who are aware that a lack of relational connectedness can actually be worse than all of those.?That's what we're talking about. Here. We're talking about holistic health. We're going to address all aspects around sure we're going to address our physical component; we're going to watch our diets and exercising, get our sleep. And that's all good. And that's foundational. But we also have this other component, this mental, emotional and spiritual component that needs to be addressed as well. And he's an expert in that, and I can't wait to hear what you have to share today.

Andy Ainsworth 4:41

Yeah, thanks, man. Appreciate that. David, I appreciate your heart. Proceed the journey you're on and doing this work. It's really fun. This is fun. Get to be with no friend and get to say that now. Yeah. Great. And some years now. Yeah. And it's pretty, pretty wonderful what you're doing here and I know there's a whole lot of people out there being blessed by it. So thanks for Man in very honored, very humbled as it means to be sitting here with you, brother, thank

David Sandstrom 5:04
you for being here, buddy, appreciate you.

Andy Ainsworth 5:07

We love you and the show. Thank you and what I want to give honor to where honor is due in what I'm going to share this, this is nothing new. Thank you for saying expert and you've been at it for a while and doing the work. It's humbling to hear that and kind of embarrassing a little bit because there's so many for-runners. And so many guys and women who've worked so hard in the trauma world to and agree for it, to help people and I just glean so many so much from so many and and I just I just am so grateful to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ in the Spirit living in all of us who believe Him and who He says He is that just an opportunity to work with people who are in pain, and very humbling and wonderful blessing to walk with his people who are hurting. If I if I when it's all said and done. And if somebody were to say he was an expert in a B or C, I hope they would say foremost that he loved people. And he had that deep heart of compassion for people that I hope that I'm expert in that. Yeah. And even then it won't be and I hope my language is understood there. Yes. Amen. But I share your sentiment. Yeah, yeah. So so want to give credit and and honor Richard Tedeschi, and Lawrence Calhoun. In the 1990s they started putting together they became very concerned and started putting together some stuff around post traumatic growth. It's kind of been climbing and you know, making its way and getting traction through time. And it's more like a language more, you hear more often now. And and yet , it's still the press gets posttraumatic stress gets the press acute, traumatic disorder as stress gets the press, but not as much as post traumatic stress. It's just more, I guess, more glamorous, the pain is more glamorous, somehow. Yeah, I don't believe it. But but it just does. And so we we want to talk about the good things about words of life rather than words of death. I think there's some biblical principles in there. Yeah, post traumatic growth does not deny the pain. as I alluded to alluded to

last week, in our last discussion, but post traumatic growth is a word of life that brings hope and encouragement that we may not even feel or see yet. And I think Hebrews 11, one is pretty clear about that. Faith is the substance of things hoped for the evidence of things not seen. So the work of bringing words of life and encouragement and asking some provocative questions that may evoke some, some feelings, and some thoughts of maybe some some light and some, some truth here to the dark times of trauma. And it's a little at a time, we know I mentioned last time have been one brick at a time. But it's not fast. We're not going in, we're not trying to change things and lecture people into healing in a think, right. You walk with somebody who's in trauma, it's a journey. We don't walk in and lecture them, and advise them on how they should feel with biblical truth. And Come on, turn the light on. And now it's time to grow. That's just cruel, right. And Jesus is very clear about weeping. We were talking about earlier this morning, about weeping with those who weep. Yeah. And so there is that time so we can move into the celebration work. And it's simultaneous. It's not a formula. It is a process of asking questions, what I have found in following our mentors, and people I've read and studied and worked up through the years in various traumatic situations that that it's just asking wise, gentle questions. And even silence in the beginning is crucial. Sometimes there's no question. So part of the growth process is just weeping with and maybe no language at all. Yeah, that will set up a foundation of care.

David Sandstrom 9:00

And that is when a person is hurting, and they're going through some strong emotions. They don't need a pep talk. They don't need answers. They don't need the solution, which is what we're all tempted to do like the poor by Mr. Fix it hat on and just say, well just just get over it. That doesn't work. What that person needs is to be heard, and they want to be validated. So the best thing to do is to listen, sometimes it's just a hug. Sometimes it might be a tear shed together. But it's always with that person in mind. It's not. We don't want to take the focus off of them. We want to keep it on them and offer them the comfort and the empathy and the understanding that they need and that will set the stage for learning the solution down the road.

Andy Ainsworth 9:50

Yes. Many times Paulette, as an I, my wife, Paulette and I work with couples together. That work with men. She works with men, women

individually Many, many a time we have wept, in my understanding when it comes to clinical psychology and private practice, you know, you have to have boundary issues. And maybe I'm not crying with your people you're trying to help. But I know a man who wrote it and read, who said, to weep with those who weep. And so when it comes to pain, it's a it's entering people's world world, and seeing and feeling their world for buy through their lens, in walking in their shoes with that healthy emotional responding that you're speaking of David, I really do appreciate that.

David Sandstrom 10:31

It's real quick, the Bible verses and he was just referencing is Romans 12:15. And rejoice with those with who rejoice and weep with those who weep. Yeah, it's a powerful, it's so succinct, but there's so much wisdom there. It's incredible.

Andy Ainsworth 10:45

Yeah. Oh, yeah. Thank you for that, man. So there's good news here. Now, depending on where people are at I mean, yeah, cool. Yeah, absolutely. Good news. This is all good news. Hard to believe this is all good news. But it is, because we've talked about the hard news earlier. And when it comes to that, that post trauma probably should be a little bit more definitive, you know, acute stress disorder, as they call it in the DSM, or stress is the 30 day, some would even stretch it out to 60 days of experiencing all those general symptoms I was talking about, and perhaps even a few more depending on age and experience, and where you've been. And that's that that's a usually a one time event, it could be a car accident, it could it could be a death for the first time. It could be anything, but it's more more a brief, kind of an episode kind of a one time if not addressed, if not addressed, and it goes beyond and there becomes a chronic sadness, which can evolve into depression and anxiety. And that that'll be kind of the mark, that'll be the cornerstone of post traumatic stress disorder, will be the anxiety and the depression along with the other symptoms I described. Some fade, just because of time and work, some work being done, they delayed. But the real Cornerstone would be anxiety and depression will be will be pretty pretty, will be magnified. But we try that's what we try to get people in as soon as possible.

Andy Ainsworth 12:16

There's a man who came to me a good man, military veteran, had been deployed back home for a while you've been working, but he'd been

experiencing some trauma. He hadn't really talked to anybody. It was very prideful, not untypical, where he lived for a while in the middle of serving the military. And he's my friend and proud of him and call it proud and humbled to call him my friend is as a as a war hero to me, because he served us and protected us. But he showed up at the office, pretty shaken. And he had, after all, that time of kind of carrying the weight of his journey on by himself. He went to Las Vegas a couple years back, and in the shootings happened in Las Vegas. He's just enjoying himself. He's talking to his wife on the phone showing her that constantly, you know, do the whole concert thing. And I don't know Las Vegas, but I you know, this is my understanding. And he heard something very familiar. And he saw kids around him were talking about teenage kids dropping, oh man, and dropping all around him in my heart breaks even bringing this up. But as he looked around, and and he was hearing the bullets fly by his ears, wow, he's got recording. He was listening to it every day. Oh, man. So what we have here is somebody who's experiencing post traumatic stress, experienced pain again, which compounded what he was experiencing. And then he's listening to it every day. And he's gone and watching the news every day. So he's got the visual noise as well. So he went to a whole different place. And this is a serious warrior for us. Yeah. And and he was shook and he moved into finally sharing his journey, not just Las Vegas. Of course, I asked him to please erase your phone. He did on the spot in my office. He promised not to watch any more news get some didn't do some Yeah, got them now on a network with other which is typical for growth, you know, mention this in a little bit. But he got with other people who are walking through the same thing. So he's doing some stuff on online, kind of like a zoom. I think it was GoToMeeting at the time, okay. And sharing their journey and what they're experiencing the healing they need and being known, knowing others so they can share care for one another. The very thing you're talking about entering each other's world without lecture without fixing, just doing the healthy emotional responding that you're talking about David. And he stopped shaking. He can almost want to answer Wow, what's going on with you, man? pretty calm. He stopped shaking. Wow, that was one of his symptoms, which we mentioned in our symptoms earlier. Yeah, he was chronically shaking the physiological response right. He was starting to remember things. He was able to concentrate. He wasn't irritated on the job. But this came as written text took some time, we know that it took some time for him to finally see,

David Sandstrom 15:11

I want to make a point right there, Andy in what you mentioned is that there is a connection between our mental emotional component in our physical component. So there are mental emotional part, our minds direct, and send instructions to our brains and our brains run our bodies. So when the when the instructions coming from our minds are traumatized, and not write the instructions that our brain receives. It's not right. Therefore the instructions our brain gives to our bodies, just not right. It's out of balance. So we need to address the whole person, not just the physical, but the mental emotional as well.

Andy Ainsworth 15:48

That's beautiful, man. Well, I love how you frame that. Yeah, exactly. And that's what happened to him. And in the positive growth work happened the same way. Right. I mean, it can happen either way.

David Sandstrom 15:58

Absolutely For good or bad.

Andy Ainsworth 16:00

Yeah, right. Yeah. Yeah. So what this man did, I'm gonna move right on into some some things that as you allow yourself to be known, and know others, because it's about, you know, I mean, more blessed to give than to receive when you walk into a group or make the call or get connected in God's given to you, and you're receiving, and then he wants you to eventually give By the way, and that's going to be part of the growth process. And that's what this man did. And that's what called his heart.

David Sandstrom 16:25

God wants to bless us so that we can be a blessing.

Andy Ainsworth 16:28

Yeah. And there's, there's, wait a minute, I'm a victim here. Oh, wait, man, no, I'm I survived that trauma. But God has called me to be something different. And this is what the world out here doesn't may not have. They're counting on their own resources, which they don't have. Right. So so one of the things that this man embraced, and there's many others, that's just one story, in that he was heroic. And another way, you know, I know, he defended us, but he's also heroic in another way and how he addressed treatment now he can help other other guys, and that he knows

that haven't gotten help. Well, and I don't know who they are. Yeah, I'll probably never meet them. But I'm really excited about the possibilities. Yeah, excellent. So what he what he experienced and others experiences, new opportunities. He moved into new opportunities for himself, he was considering he had already been considering a career shift. And he was on his way to retirement. And he's already looking at this stuff. And, and he started to embrace new realities for him, that he can be, he can be helped some other men, he can help in the community. When people have been hurt, they need care. That was never his frame of thinking. And so his trauma, and that, that he sought help, and then sought more support, in practical, caring, we being heartfelt experiences, that were supportive to as hard that lifted his spirit that he started embracing new options. And it wasn't me it didn't, it was an emotional shift. You know, I've gone through this trauma, so I'm gonna change my career. So what I'm talking, I'm not what talking about that this was already moving in his heart. And he started his eyes were open to how we can actually care for more people. So we embraced, that will be part of the growth process, you may be on the job and you're in your career, and you're doing your thing. You just simply may be caring for the guys on your job a little bit more. It's a new opportunity to embrace people, you'll see pain, you'll be more aware of people in pain around you. And you may find yourself embracing that opportunity just to care for somebody. Because you know what? It's like what it's like to experience care yourself.

David Sandstrom 18:39

So can you correct me if I'm wrong on this, but if I if I'm wrong, let me know. Does it help that person to get the focus off of themselves and onto other people? Is that part of the growth process? Is it embracing that mission? Or the purpose? Yeah. And it just helps distract them? Or how does that work?

Andy Ainsworth 18:57

I think, you know, and that that's a great question, by the way, and great statement, there are some will get will avoid their healing, and just start serving other people to avoid their healing. So there could be an avoidance problem there. And that will be obvious. Yeah, just be running around like a chicken with their head cut off. And it won't be helping anybody because it will move into all those unhealthy responses of fixing and lecturing, and even criticizing and ultimately complaining, you know, given their own story is more serious than that other person's story we're

drawing from. So all those unhealthy responses that we know about will be the fruit of that. But there is a time and I'm not saying don't want to reiterate, going in taking care of your trauma in tears, sharing your story, and maybe writing out your narrative and being able to shift your narrative simply through writing and through prayer and through support and being in group. And you'll know God will lead by wisdom and discernment and Proverbs chapter two, one through 11 speaks to cry out for wisdom and discernment and understanding and insight. So you'll know when to shift authentically care. And that doesn't mean my journey didn't my personal healing for trauma didn't healing and stop. It continued while I started reaching out or simply enhanced my healing. And it wasn't selfish, motivated, I started seeing other people for their pain. And I think there's that there's the line right there that, wow, I see your pain. It's not my pain, there's a differentiation. It's your pain. That what I was talking about previously, is that I see that with a person, I'm just looking at my pain and I'm blind. Right? I'm actually blind to the other person. Yeah, I'm just looking out mine.

David Sandstrom 20:42

Well, you mentioned something a moment ago, Andy, and that is writing it down. One of the things I often encourage people is to try to notice your self talk, because we have, we all have thoughts that we're thinking inside our heads, we have a narrator in there that's interpreting the events of our lives. And sometimes that self talk is not at all healthy. And getting it down on paper can sometimes reveal some error to our thought. I love this quote by Michael Hyatt. He says, "Thoughts disentangle themselves over the lips, and at the ends of pencil tips." Love that. And sometimes when we write something out, and we read it out loud, it'll actually sound quite silly. But when it's inside our head, and those gears are turning inside, we don't recognize it for a lie the lie that it is,

Andy Ainsworth 21:29

Wow. So we're done here, man, I got a piece of speaking writing. I've got my journal in front of me, people out there. And I'm gonna ask David to repeat that. So I can write it down and go memorize it out the way he eloquently just spoke it How could I not?

David Sandstrom 21:43

Well, I'll give you that quote again. Right no w. Michael Hyatt This is not me; it's Michael Hyatt "Thoughts disentangle themselves over the lips and at the ends of pencil tips."

Andy Ainsworth 21:54

Wow. I don't think I'm the only one getting that that is not good. That's really good now. So yeah, yeah, that narrative can shift something can happen there. Another thing happens that I'm very excited for people because going back to isolation and withdrawal people have been traumatized will draw from their loved ones, their families, their wives, husbands. And they they won't share they don't want to burden we don't want to burden our family I don't burden my wife with m y trauma. Yeah, burden me right, just can be become a very selfish thing to do. Because our family wants to love us. Right? And and so it can become pride. We don't mean to or we don't mean to go there. It's not mean spirited. It's just you know, so for some reason, I just can't or a lot or there's some shame connected to it. But going back to guilt and in shame possibly. And and so we're just gonna keep it to myself. I don't want to burden the world. But what happens when I start moving through the growth work and my wife knows me. friends have known me and still do that the relationships are seem to be more embraced even more so and we all desire going back to what you're sharing earlier brother. We desire relationship. We hunger for it. Yeah, thirst for it. For relationship. The alternative is aloneness, or relational isolation, which is deadly. Yes. To our soul to our lives. So stronger relationships come out of it post traumatic growth work. It isn't just growth because you're sitting around as growth work to do. And and so those with my wife, my children might my brother's brother David sitting right here, community, there seems to be a larger embracing of that. So it's a team that then that becomes a self perpetuating healing process. Yeah. Because it's giving and receiving. It feeds on itself. Absolutely. Yeah. Um, one of the things that I'm also that I, that I see along with that is that there's an inner strength gained, there's an awareness of an inner strength. And, and I know where it's coming from, to space, the basic fundamentals, there's that there's an inner strength to overcome. As I walk through, I start by the pin, writing stuff out talking about it in all those different venues that are possible out there. Just gotta look there. There we go there. I have a strength because of him who's living inside of me? Yes. And he actually says this. It's not my opinion, "Greater lives in me that he lives in the world."

David Sandstrom 24:23

I thought you were gonna quote Philippians 4:13. Yeah, "I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength."

Andy Ainsworth 24:30

Romans eight and 11 says he lives inside of me. He says it two times in that context. Yeah. So so the same power that raised Jesus from the dead lives in you and me. So we have a lot of spiritual authority. It's not arrogance, it's not pride. It's, it's a truth that he gives us. It's not our opinion. It's not a feeling. It's where he's walking with us. So we have an awareness because of who he is living inside of us and around us. That Wait a minute, wait a minute, I'm, I'm I do I have a Caleb spirit in me Really? Yes I do. I'm not 85 yet. But he said at 85 he went to Joshua and said, Hey, brother, I'm paraphrasing, obviously, I've got more fight me in 40 year old, let's go, let's do the dance.

David Sandstrom 25:21

I want my inheritance.

Andy Ainsworth 25:22

I want my inheritance, let's go. So this can be there'll be an overcoming spirit that will if you will trust Him with all your heart and not lean on your own pain. I'll lean into your pain, they know lean on your own understanding in all your all your ways acknowledge Him, He will make your paths straight, he will give you success he will and and part of that will be an incredible strength to overcome the trauma that you've been gone through. Again, for a third, fourth time, we're not minimizing the trauma for a second, we're actually fully valuing it. Because God is going to use that as second Corinthians chapter one, verses two and three and four, speak to that the very comfort that I've received in my pain, I'm going to turn around and comfort that person there are there with the same comfort that I've experienced. It's it, there's, there's going to be that awareness, and that healing, so I can give it so I never want to forget my pain. I don't live in it. But I don't know, I don't want to ever forget it. I guess God has brought me around. So I can love people again on my tombstone someday, and I hope it's way out there. You know, I love Caleb's spirit. That's what I want. But in the day, he loved people that you know, then that comes from me his power. And another thing that comes to mind, and I have here before me is gratefulness, you'll experience gratefulness, you'll know you're in the growth process. When you start

being great thankful to the Father, grateful towards others, you won't be so self absorbed. So the growth process that we've been talking about, which requires that work and getting with people let your story be known. You'll know that you're embracing opportunities, and in embracing different models, different perceptions, different things going on, you're going to see it stronger relationships evolving, because you're putting yourself out there, this is the growth work well, what's going to happen is you're gonna start being grateful. It's hard to believe if you're in darkness right now, and I'm speaking to somebody specifically, maybe several, that literally you're you're saying this can't be everything that we're sharing here today, it's not possible, My world is so dark, it's, I'm Alijah taking an a nap under a broom tree, don't bother me, I'm out. I'm in a cave, I'm the only one I'm not coming out. And I'm paraphrasing, I know, there will be a shift, if you will make the call. Please make the call to your pastor, to your friend, to the counselor to whoever you need to call and start moving just a little at a time. Eventually you experience the light, you will see you will hear and you will feel his presence. And that's crucial to make that decision. It's not too late. You're not doomed. You're not, you're depressed. But But you're not done by far, in fact, this very darkness that you're in that we fully validate sitting here in this little booth here. We fully validate it, we have experienced it, we understand it, when you start moving, just a little movement, just a little movement. And you're gonna you're gonna experience Jesus's love. But it's going to be your responsibility to get moving just one little inch, not not a big step, I've taken a big step, just make the call.

David Sandstrom 25:43

Andy, let me interrupt you. A moment ago, you were talking about how we can actually not forget about the pain. But we can remember that pain with grace. And I think that really applies when it comes to forgiveness. You know, it's been said when we, when we forgive someone, we let the prisoner free and we find out the prisoner was me. So when we when we truly forgive somebody from the heart, we're able to remember that painful event with less turmoil. Our stomach doesn't turn like it used to, we can remember it with grace, when we're not going to forget what human beings we remember. But we can remember that event with grace. And I think that's kind of what you're talking about here is being able to move on, not forget the past, acknowledge it, but move on into a more productive response.

Andy Ainsworth 28:45

And one of the symptoms positive symptoms, if you will, is going to be the gratefulness. Mm hmm. That's what forgiveness will do. Yeah, you know, you may you may have lost your child to an accident. And it's been 10 years. And I'm convinced there's somebody listening who was experiencing this 10 years since that time, and you still haven't forgiven

David Sandstrom 29:50

That person, that drunk driver. Whatever it was.

Andy Ainsworth 29:52

So you've been drinking the poison and expecting the other person to die. And many of you have been in recovery, understand what I'm talking about. So it's So that very thing that you're talking about, it'll move in, if you just get up and start crawling towards the phone, literally crawl, someone have to crawl to the phone, pick it up, make the call, and allow yourself to just keep showing up one inch at a time. And it'll the forgiveness piece is gonna lead to that. And even more, so your spiritual life is going to shift that's going to happen if you continue to to go toward the as my friend, my warrior friend that I spoke a few minutes ago from Las Vegas. His spiritual life shifted. I just had an experience with the father, his loving father, who was holding him the whole time. He never left him. never will. He promises that we're talking about angelic hosts a while ago out of Psalm 91. Hebrews 11. I don't know how he does it, folks, I just know, he's present me and he'll enable us to shift in our faith, even though we're saying where were you got? How come you let this happen? Yeah. Why didn't you stop it? whatever questions you have. If we as we search scripture, and we trust Him, we see that he's weeping with us in those questions. And we've been for us he's not rejecting or judging us. He understands your questions. He's not, he's such a secure awesome, God. He's okay with all that quest. Keep keep asking those questions. Yeah. And he's just gonna love you. And, and you'll find a spiritual shift as well. Ask friends who won't lecture you, those same things, where was God and your friend will just cry with you, and understand you and be with you. And and just walk with you, it's going to be okay. And so that's going to be a journey and that you're so you, your spiritual life will shift a little at a time. So we're, we're speaking hope here, going back to Hebrews 11. One, I know a lot of what I'm speaking to is is kind of really kind of way out there for a lot of people who are in their Valley right there, deep valley, not trying to fix anybody out. They're not trying to lecture you out of your pain. In

fact, we're joining you in your pain, this very moment. And speaking words of life to give you hope, one crawl at a time, and it can happen. So we're not going to be really clear about this. So there's not a any any message on this, this cast here that that would speak as a fix or some spiritual strain spiritual language,

David Sandstrom 30:50

I don't want to minimize anybody's pain because it could be people going through such a great deal of pain right now. But one of the things that he just brought up is the interconnectedness between the body, mind and the spirit. They're all interconnected. And they're interdependent, which means what affects one for good or bad will, by necessity alter the other. So this guy that you're talking about the soldier, he experienced a healing on a mental emotional level, and it led to spiritual growth. Sure, that's a wonderful thing.

Andy Ainsworth 32:49

That's beautiful, man, beautiful thing. So your capacity to reflect, you'll see it shift, you'll be able to reflect your mood, your brain will shift, grow perspective about people in life, you'll see just some brief ideas here. Almost sound too simple, because of the complexity of post traumatic stress and the pain that's just so entangled on so many levels. The simplicity I'm talking about here sounds incredibly reasonable. You know, maybe some pill can take care of before any of this stuff. Yeah. And I'll just finish with this brother, that the key is going to be making the call, make the call, allow yourself to be known to the individual, the friend of the counselor, to the pastor, to the group, and to all of them. multitude of counselors, their success in that includes trauma.

David Sandstrom 33:40

So if somebody is listening in, they don't have a network like that. Are there are there some organizations that you could recommend that someone could reach out to online or?

Andy Ainsworth 33:49

Yeah, you know, I don't know about the Atlanta area. But I know, for example, Griefshare is that is an organization if you just push it typing Griefshare. It's a good start. Okay. Your local church may have a grief share meeting or there's unconvinced. There's a grief share meetings going on in the area here in the Atlanta area. And in terms of specific

trauma, there's the American Association of Christian counselors have have a whole program around trauma critical incident, and trauma and crisis response, okay. And they have counselors around the nation who have been trained in this area, you want to make sure if you are reaching out to them, make sure whoever you're calling when you call a just AACC.net. I think that's what it is. And yours. I don't know why don't have that, like, memorize better, but you let them know what your need is. And you need a referral to somebody who's trauma and Crisis Response responsible, if you will, yeah. And incapable. And they have a they have their list of people that that you might be able to to use zoom or FaceTime. If they're not in the area, and that works that works with people. We know now it's not face to face. But it's working for people. Yeah. And or immediate area. So those are a couple of ideas. Yeah, you can actually normalize your experience with somebody who is one has been through it, too who's got the kind of got the education, if you will, or the training? Yeah. experiential training, as well as an understanding get into your world

David Sandstrom 35:23

What Andy is saying here, folks is don't suffer alone. Get some help. If you think you're experiencing some of these symptoms of PTSD, don't suffer in silence. It's probably not going to get better on its own time does not heal all wounds. You need to reach out and get some help. And there is hope. Plenty of it, especially through a biblical counselor. so easily.

David Sandstrom 35:45

So Andy, before you go, I want to ask you one final question. Remember the movie Back to the Future with the old Biff got ahold of the time machine. And he went back in time and he talked to the young Biff and he gave him the sports Almanac. And that dramatically changed his life. If you could go back in time and talk to a younger Andy, when you were first getting started in counseling, what would you tell him?

Andy Ainsworth 36:06

Well, young Biff, you walk up and call me young Biff aerobics and you know, it's pretty simple. And I have a lot to be thankful for. But in my later years here, semi later years now, as I look at as Oh, Biff, if I could just speak in that guy's ear, it would be to stop, stop. And listen to me, because I want to talk to you to really sit with him and learn to listen to His voice that lives inside if you call yourself a believer. And young Andy was a believer at that time. And he wanted to speak, he wants to speak to all of

us by His Spirit. He might confession publicly, and I'll say it out loud to anybody. My greatest sin wasn't ignoring God. It wasn't denying God. It wasn't in some deep sin somewhere. And lifestyle. It was not being mindful of his voice, as an experience every day. I wasn't mindful of him. So I became mindless until Sunday or some serving project. I thought I was in the Scripture, I thought it was reading. I thought I was studying. I was I was being mind-less, much less well, and that that young Andy would say, Yes, sir. And start practicing that. And that would mean in His Word, that would mean music; that would mean listening to mentors, saying, hey, you thinking about it, you need to think about some things that might be going on in your life.

David Sandstrom 37:36

So do a little less talking and a little more listening. Probably God gave us one month in two ears.

Andy Ainsworth 37:41

Yeah. And he's still working on me on that one. Because I get I get going on my world, David, and I just get flattened and doesn't help anybody.

David Sandstrom 37:48

All right. That's a good word. Any Thank you. Thank you so much for being here. I appreciate you. Love you, brother.

Andy Ainsworth 37:53

I love you too, David.

David Sandstrom 37:55

Okay, I hope you enjoyed that conversation with Andy Ainsworth. He's a wealth of knowledge. I'd like to summarize what we talked about. Firstly, you don't need to be a soldier to experience the symptoms of PTSD. When people are experiencing symptoms as a result of their stress, we're often tempted to suffer in silence. We mustn't fall for the lie that things will get better on their own, they probably won't. We need to get some help. And we've got to seek out someone who's skilled in leading people through stress and out of trauma. What skills should we be looking for in a counselor? Well, first and foremost, we need someone who has empathetic listening skills, and hopefully they're skilled with emotional responding. When someone is suffering with acute stress, and they reach out for help, they're not ready to jump to the solution. They need to be

heard, what they've experienced and what they're feeling needs to be validated. They shouldn't be shamed. They probably already feel a level of shame. And there's no point in a friend or worse yet, a counselor throwing salt on the wound and increasing their burden with more shame. Another thing a good counselor needs to understand is that our circumstances didn't take God by surprise. A good counselor should understand that God's Word has answers for all the things we go through in life. An able counselor should be able to point out some of the appropriate passages from scripture that lead us down the road to overcoming the stressful event. We might want to seek out a good friend who's has some of these skills. Or we could look for a lay counselor at our church. Many churches have a ministry called Stephen ministers, where lay people are trained in coming alongside somebody that's going through something. You could of course, reach out to your pastor. Or you could also go to a professional Christian counselor. And as Andy pointed out, a good source for a good resource to find one is the American Association of Christian counselors, their websites is a ACC.net double A CC.net. And a good Able, Christian counselor will understand that God doesn't waste your pain. We need to allow God to be our Heavenly Father and shape us into the men and women he wants us to become. That way. On the other side of our pain, we can be a blessing to others that are going through the same thing. I hope you've enjoyed this episode. Don't forget to go to my website, DavidSandstrom.com. On the website, I always post a transcript a full transcript of the entire episode. You can read it there online or you can download it and take it with you on your phone and read later. And if you want, you can always leave me a comment there. If you leave me a comment, I will be sure to reply to you. If you know somebody that you think may enjoy this episode, share the episode with them. Tell them about the podcast. I would appreciate you spreading the word. As always, thank you for giving me some of your valuable time. I appreciate you spending some time with me this week and allowing me to serve you. I'll talk with you next week. Until then, be blessed.