

00;00;10;05 – 00;00;19;05

Sarah

Welcome to Brains, a podcast exploring the inner workings of our brains, mental health and disabilities, and how film and television portray them. Hosted by me film and television editor Sarah Taylor.

00;00;19;11 – 00;00;39;10

Heather

And by me, writer director Heather Taylor. Before we begin, we want to acknowledge that the lessons from which we recorded this podcast and from where you are listening are part of territories that have long served as a gathering place for diverse Indigenous peoples. And we are thankful as guests on this land to be able to live, work and gather here together.

00;00;39;13 – 00;00;43;22

Heather

We continue to learn about the history that came before us and encourage you to do the same.

00;00;43;25 – 00;01;07;04

Sarah

I'm so excited to have an old and dear friend on the podcast. A counselor and advocate, Marc Power works with former inmates to help them reintegrate into life after prison. In Mark's words, the slippery slope around the company we keep or worse, relational disconnection reemerges in most second chancers stories. The pull to reunite with old associates, friends, and even criminal families is often the path of least resistance.

00;01;07;06 – 00;01;35;27

Heather

Today, we discuss a wide range of topics around justice, reintegration and forgiveness. This includes conversations around the mental health implications of prison and the impact incarceration has on both those locked away and the families they leave behind. We also discuss programs such as Blindspotting and Orange is the New Black, amongst others. Mark's dream is that we start building reintegration programs that are so effective that recidivism radically goes down and we can start closing prisons.

00;01;36;00 – 00;02;00;05

Sarah

A quick reminder to our listeners that this interview should not be taken as medical advice, and it is for informational purposes only because everyone's brain is different. Please consult your health care professional if you have any questions. A content warning for our listeners as we talk about crime and suicide in today's episode. Now, Mark. Marc Power I have to always say.

00;02;00;06 – 00;02;06;23

Sarah

Mark Power. I can never just say Mark because your name is so awesome.
Mark Welcome to Brains.

00;02;06;25 – 00;02;33;26

Mark

Thank you. I'm so flattered you asked. And for what it's worth, I have had invitations to speak on other podcasts, but this is the first one that I've accepted. Oh, wow. Yeah. I think I tread cautiously when I publicly talk about matters of justice and reintegration and forgiveness. So you all are a safe place for me to begin to talk about some of these things.

00;02;33;29 – 00;02;42;25

Sarah

Well, that's really great to hear. Thank you. Thank you for for trusting us in this process to start things off. Can you just tell us a little bit about who you are and the work that you do?

00;02;43;01 – 00;02;49;28

Mark

Who am I? Isn't that the isn't That's the question you are all trying to find out.

00;02;50;01 – 00;02;50;27

Sarah

Yes.

00;02;50;29 – 00;03;24;07

Mark

I'll give you the simple answer. Marc. Power is loved just as Sarah and Heather are love. And what I do is I remind people of the truth and the fact that they are loved. I know it sounds simple, but we are increasingly entering a chapter of history where people believe they're unlovable and therefore they are hopeless. So what I've done, I'll give you as a Coles notes on some career stuff.

00;03;24;09 – 00;03;50;24

Mark

I started out as a counselor many years ago in the late 1990s, working in addictions, working mostly with young people and their families. I think it was after my mother passing away suddenly I couldn't give what I didn't have, and that is love. But luckily I stumbled into television and became a bit of a pseudo journalist for a while.

00;03;50;29 – 00;04;13;21

Mark

And I think what made me a half decent journalist is what made me a half decent counselor because asking questions and being curious and

being genuinely interested in not just getting to know people, but understanding them. You might remember my overly long interviews that would be 90 minutes, but only probably we use one minute of yes.

00;04;13;24 – 00;04;19;23

Sarah

Which is great. You got to the heart of whatever story you're trying to share. And that's what I connected with, working with you.

00;04;19;26 – 00;04;50;00

Mark

Yeah. And I think people felt, heard and understood, and I think it helped me parlay my career into one of a documentarian for almost another decade. And as I grew and healed and was loved, I got married, had a child, a couple of dogs. I had the capacity, again, to help, you know, to be a friend, to be of service to people.

00;04;50;03 – 00;05;18;16

Mark

And that's really where my heart lies, is serving people, not fixing people, but helping them overcome these limiting narratives that we install in our operating systems, from trauma, from our childhood wounds. And I help them transform that into something new. When we look back over our history, it doesn't seem like it right away, but ten years, 20 years from when the worst day of your life happened.

00;05;18;23 – 00;05;20;13

Mark

There's a lot of perspective you can gather.

00;05;20;18 – 00;05;44;20

Sarah

One of the reasons we do this podcast is how we see things in film and television is how we think they really are. And so you gave us a lot of great examples of films and even news stories and shows that show a part of being either incarcerated or coming out of jail, the experience that people have. One of the ones you send us a news story, the father daughter dance, and it's also a short doc, I believe.

00;05;44;24 – 00;05;45;08

Heather

And a TED.

00;05;45;08 – 00;06;04;02

Sarah

Talk to an attention, please. Yes, very impactful. And it details the idea of like, what does it mean when a parent does time and how does it affect the families? So what is the impact on families and inmates during incarceration? And the post-release I know is a very big question. But then how did the how did these this doc.

00;06;04;03 - 00;06;10;11

Sarah

And then there's even the TV series Blindspotting, where it's about the family around somebody that's incarcerated. Yeah. What's the impact?

00;06;10;14 - 00;06;32;06

Mark

I'll start a little story. Like a few years ago, I've kind of led and participated in a few different fundraisers, so we used to make these kind of steampunk style lamps on an iron pipe that was thrown away and we would, you know, make it into the base of a lamp. It was always a metaphor for how we can take something broken and reinvent it into something new, just as we do with our own stories.

00;06;32;08 - 00;06;51;28

Mark

One of the years we did have an excess of money, we usually use that money just to be able to, you know, maybe take the men or women out for dinner or to go bowling, just some leisure activities. That's what we do on the Saturday nights when we hang out. But when I ask the men, we have this extra ten, \$15,000, what would you want to do with it?

00;06;51;29 - 00;07;15;00

Mark

You got to buy season tickets for hockey games. You can. That was an option. Or do you want to put it towards money for your children's education or do you want to donate it? And unanimously, the men had said, we want to give the money to women's shelters. And, you know, I thought it was sort of misplaced guilt at first.

00;07;15;08 - 00;07;34;06

Mark

And maybe there was a little bit of that. But when I ask why, a number of the men said we are raised by a single mother and they need all the support that they can get, a couple other guys said yes, when we went to prison, we left our wives and children high and dry with nothing. They were the breadwinner.

00;07;34;09 - 00;07;56;07

Mark

They were the primary income. And so, yeah, some of those families ended up having to go to shelters to survive. On the other side of that, I can talk about the women a little bit because we made these projects with the Women's Reintegration Group as well. When I asked them where they wanted to donate the excess of funds, they said an organization here in Edmonton called Little Warriors.

00;07;56;09 - 00;08;27;26

Mark

Little Warriors helps children who have been sexually abused and traumatized. They have little warriors that existed when they were a child. They would probably not be incarcerated today. And so that's the stuff, you know, that's the narrative I want people to hear. Now, these aren't monsters, you know, in cages. These are like living, thinking, conscientious, loving human beings.

00;08;27;29 - 00;08;53;00

Mark

When you ask the question, you know, how does it affect the family when as a member, more often than not, a father or a son is absent? I would kind of liken it to a whatever the sentence is, a seven, ten, 15 year sentence, a cloud that covers the sun for that amount of time. And just what happens to the ecosystem without sunshine is things begin dying.

00;08;53;00 - 00;09;22;14

Mark

And if you're not growing, you're dying. Hmm. And it just ripples out and kind of makes everything miserable for a while. You can say that, you know, a alcoholic father does the same thing, or an abusive father casts a long shadow for a long time. Mm hmm. But it's a devastating impact to families to have, whether that's a son or daughter or father or mother absent, they have stopped growing.

00;09;22;15 - 00;09;42;22

Mark

Sometimes people have described it to me as a death without a funeral because they're just gone. Yeah. Yeah. And sometimes people don't want to tell their children where their father is or where their mother is. So it ends up being sometimes a a fabrication of the truth. I hope we can start to have more honest conversations that break some of the shame and stigma.

00;09;42;29 - 00;10;09;16

Mark

Mm hmm. That's associated with those who have been incarcerated. Yeah. C.S. Lewis used to say, We need to know we're not alone. Mm hmm. And I think it's the same with film, is we watch and consume and curate films to remind people that they're not alone, that the struggle is real. And more often than not, can be overcome.

00;10;09;20 - 00;10;44;20

Mark

Mm hmm. BLINDSPOTTING reminded me of Hughes brothers and John Singleton films, and even, frankly, films that they actually referred to as the hood genre. Mm hmm. So usually black or Latino populations who are facing injustice somehow in their communities. This is the plot. It's funny because I don't know. I didn't hit it right away. The

title Blindspotting is acknowledging those blindspots we have when we are interpreting the world.

00;10;44;23 - 00;11;04;29

Mark

Mm hmm. Or refusing to see the big picture. And that's. And the thing is, if we're all honest, we all have blind spots. We all have bias. Mm hmm. We judge things. There are things that make us feel unsafe, and therefore, we avoid them. And that. And that's okay. But they really started questioning what are my own blind spots?

00;11;05;00 - 00;11;29;09

Mark

Colin and Miles, Colin has just gotten out of prison and placed into a halfway house. I would say that was a nice halfway house compared to what I've seen because he had his own bedroom. Mm hmm. Halfway houses. I have been in sometimes two or three guys stacked into a bedroom. Is it more overcrowded than having your own cell while in prison?

00;11;29;14 - 00;12;07;03

Mark

Wow. Sometimes prison seems preferable to some halfway houses. But he reunites with his old pal Miles, really his best friend. And for all intents and purposes, his brother. His brother gets him. Who gets the call in into trouble sometimes for Colin. Miles is his blind spot. On the surface, it's not. You might not think it's as deep. Yeah, I didn't at first, but there is a depth beneath the surface that speaks to brotherly love and loyalty and abandonment and betrayal.

00;12;07;06 - 00;12;20;28

Mark

All of these things are part of almost every relationship. You know? Yeah. It's just turned the hero's journey kind of on its head because you have this anti-hero who's going on that journey of redemption.

00;12;21;04 - 00;12;47;12

Heather

And I think what's interesting is the TV series occurs six months after the film. So they look at Miles, gets incarcerated and leaves behind his partner of 12 years, Ashley, and his son. And then they have to move in with Miles, mother and half sister, to make ends meet. So it becomes this thing of you see the her in-laws and the relationship she has with them.

00;12;47;12 - 00;13;07;07

Heather

And then the absence of that one person in their life. And how do they find ways to, I don't know, in some ways are covering over the cracks of that. But it's it keeps coming back like they can't hide it. And they all have different opinions of of how to exist while they wait

for him to come back into the family.

00;13;07;12 - 00;13;33;28

Heather

And so I think just it reminded me of what you were saying about that shadow that goes across the family. This is created by the same people who created the film. They are wanting to continue to explore past that initial relationship between those two friends to now. What is the bigger impact on the family that surrounds them? And so I just thought it was really interesting that they've created these like continuing narratives because it's so important to talk about.

00;13;34;01 - 00;13;57;01

Mark

Yeah, and it speaks to the cyclical nature. I wanted to watch some of the TV series, but one of the headlines that I noticed is that Blindspotting, the TV series, accomplishes what the film couldn't. Mm hmm. You know, when we talk about those shadows, it's these narratives. There's the story that we author to make ourselves so sometimes for self-preservation.

00;13;57;03 - 00;14;26;01

Mark

Mm hmm. And then there's the actual story. There is something that we are blissfully ignorant of. It's sometimes that actual story. Mm hmm. Yeah. In the movie, they have this. There's this silly little metaphor of green juice that he buys, and it tastes awful. And then there's another scene where Miles orders a hamburger, But it ends up being a veggie burger at the end of the movie because they kind of make fun of this green juice throughout the film.

00;14;26;01 - 00;14;52;23

Mark

And at the end, Konner says, Yeah, but it's good for you. Mm hmm. It's just about finding ways to make the truth palatable. Mm hmm. The the actual story palatable. Yeah, Because the truth is, if we can accept the terms of reality, it actually liberates us to be free and strong. But it's. It's a long road to hoe to unlearn everything we've been conditioned to.

00;14;52;26 - 00;15;15;29

Mark

Mm hmm. Yeah. Hmm. But. But it is in, like, our undoing sometimes. Going to prison. Mm hmm. Where we finally have permission to fall apart. Mm hmm. Yeah. And begin again in my counseling practice. What I do is I help people get clear on what those limiting beliefs and stories and narratives that are keeping them stuck. Mm hmm.

00;15;16;06 - 00;15;38;07

Mark

And maybe becoming aware of. Maybe some of the familiarity and safety they have in staying stuck. Yeah. But then also helping them become aware of this greater story that they might be missing out on, that they are missing out on by remaining stuck. I've been in chapters of my life where I have been stuck in my own prison.

00;15;38;10 – 00;16;00;24

Mark

Mm hmm. Right. Because my own limiting belief that totally. I'm not qualified to do that. I'll never be able to, you know, make that money. Even for a few years, I chased money. Mm hmm. You know, until I realized I think I was becoming mentally ill, you know? Yeah. So, again, it's self-awareness. I think the other part is humility.

00;16;00;27 – 00;16;21;12

Mark

Mm hmm. Like, just asking for help requires us to summon some courage. I have found that everybody wants to be a hero. Everybody wants to help somebody in need, and they're actually just waiting for the opportunity. So I just want to encourage people not to be shy, to ask for help.

00;16;21;14 – 00;16;26;02

Heather

I can identify with that for sure.

00;16;26;05 – 00;16;30;12

Mark

It's not weak, I guess, is what I'm saying. It's actually takes courage and strength.

00;16;30;17 – 00;16;32;01

Sarah

Lots of strength. Now, I.

00;16;32;04 – 00;16;54;29

Heather

Had an opportunity when I lived in England. I was worked more in poetry and I had an opportunity to go to what they classify a Class B prison. And it was in Bristol and I was writing poetry with some of the men in there that would never leave prison, that they would be there for life. And I heard some of the most beautiful poems because we had a chance just be people with each other.

00;16;55;01 – 00;17;20;07

Heather

And for a moment we got to just tell our own stories and hear the stories only that people wanted to share. And that's how we were. Like, You come as you are and as you'd like to be, and we'll just be in the space together. And I think that was really a seminal moment

for me, you know, to have that opportunity and to see a space much differently than what we believe those spaces to be.

00;17;20;10 - 00;17;22;10

Heather

So and are the people to be, too.

00;17;22;13 - 00;17;50;22

Mark

Yeah. It is so transformative to spend time with people who the rest of the world is running away from or avoiding. Mm hmm. And that when you get to know someone as a human being, 1 to 1 or in a small group, it really destroys any bias or preconceived notions we might have. I'm just so heartened that, you know, very few people get to access these isolated places.

00;17;50;22 - 00;18;02;02

Mark

And even if we just because you can't go in there and take pictures of anything. But I think the conversations we have around those experiences are important.

00;18;02;04 - 00;18;08;13

Heather

What led you to work with I think you used the term Second Chance community, which I love. What led you to work with that community?

00;18;08;17 - 00;18;37;00

Mark

I was working for the Government of Canada for the National Film Board, and I almost found myself a little bit peopled out. I was on the phone a lot all day, and I went to one of our local charities here, the Mustard Seed, and I asked if I could volunteer and just stock shelves in their food bank. I just wanted to do something mindless because I have a tendency to have ruminating thoughts and looping and just staying stuck and frustrated.

00;18;37;01 - 00;18;59;29

Mark

The volunteer coordinator at the most you see it at the time had said, Brother, your resume is amazing. We have this small cohort of men who we get together with on Saturday nights and we just get to know them as people, and maybe you should give that a shot. And if you still want to stock shelves, we're happy to have you stock shelves.

00;19;00;03 - 00;19;24;02

Mark

So that was how I kind of got my foot in the door with kind of getting into the Second Chance community. Working with those who are oppressed or incarcerated is baked into my DNA. I consider myself to be the

comeback kid. I've overcome a lot of suffering and adversity, but even deeper than that, when I look at my father's father, my grandfather, you know, he came back from war.

00;19;24;07 - 00;19;46;07

Mark

He was put in prison because he was a morphine addict and he hung himself in prison. I didn't find that out till just two years ago for a while. But it's it's like these echoes primarily are, you know, reaching out to us. And I'm living a story where I'm actually restoring his story a little bit. I'm kind of providing the support that maybe he required.

00;19;46;10 - 00;20;09;17

Mark

And so this is all kind of subconscious stuff, but I'm rescuing him, too. I'm honoring him. If we examine the muses that peak our curiosity, we should probably chase it because it it may be something deeper in our lineage and our story that is calling to be helped or restored. Healed.

00;20;09;19 - 00;20;19;01

Sarah

Just need to take a second and breathe it in. This is a very you're being very poetic and I don't know, like really it's just I don't know. It's really inspiring. So thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

00;20;19;03 - 00;20;40;19

Heather

One of the other television shows that you mentioned was Orange is the New Black. And I know that it showed a variety of situations that led to incarceration. So and then one of the compounding issues sometimes can be mental health of people going into the system. So I know that we talked you talked about, Suzanne, crazy eyes, Warren, and that she had mental health issues.

00;20;40;19 - 00;20;49;05

Heather

So how is the justice system dealing with cases that may benefit from, let's say, therapy and support versus incarceration?

00;20;49;08 - 00;21;26;03

Mark

Yeah. Boy, so I'll say that, you know, sometimes it's a little bit of luck for people because they do do forensic assessments like pre-sentencing assessments. But I will say even the best intentioned psychologists bring in their own blindspots, biases and if somebody has been found guilty and you're doing a pre-sentencing assessment and you're carrying around maybe an old wound of a sibling or family member who had been assaulted, say, I don't know.

00;21;26;07 - 00;22;03;13

Mark

Sometimes the assessment of the mental illness gets lost in that bias. I have worked with men and women who I questioned if they were even fit to stand trial. Mm hmm. You know, only because it ended up condemning them. Let's say somebody with a learning disability. One of the things I have to do is take larger abstract ideas and compartmentalize them into smaller, palatable, digestible bits, because I also am seeking the truth and the facts.

00;22;03;15 - 00;22;36;13

Mark

So I might just go. True or false? Life was lousy for you as a kid, you know? True. But if you just put somebody on the stand in court and say, Tell us what happened, it's just too big. Yeah. Yeah. It's an overwhelming, sweeping question. Mm hmm. Yeah. And. And sometimes depends on the lawyer or prosecutor. Deliberately. So that's how you how you win cases is by making somebody feel ashamed for not knowing the answers.

00;22;36;17 - 00;23;00;09

Mark

Mm hmm. Right. And so you're saying the justice system isn't always fair? I think it tries endeavors to be. I know that the assessments that are in place should. But sometimes people's minds are made up. Mm hmm. Mm hmm. Mm hmm. About. And it doesn't matter. And so, yes, there are people who fall through the cracks that probably need the hospital more than they need a prison.

00;23;00;14 - 00;23;34;21

Mark

Yeah. And it's not to excuse any crime or undermine what victims have experienced because it's a lose lose situation. Yeah. Yeah, totally. And when you look at Suzanne, crazy eyes, you know, scenario of what led to her incarceration is is that question. She's always changed chasing because she has this fear of rejection and abandonment, right? Mm hmm. That ruminating question that you can identify as OCD, maybe a dash of autistic traits in there.

00;23;34;28 - 00;23;55;07

Mark

But when you're chasing that question, she's not even aware. She's not hearing it, but it's there in the subconscious. And I wanted him. I wanted him. I wanted them. I wanted She will city cops on to this child to enjoy spending time with her. Mm hmm. I think she's fun. But then it leads to tragedy with him falling off a balcony.

00;23;55;10 - 00;24;17;10

Mark

We sometimes, in our desperation to make the answer to these questions, like, am I wanted a yes because we can't stand to be in the know. Right. We do desperate, careless things. And sometimes I'll say one of the big questions is, am I safe? Anybody who's been traumatized or hurt as a child. That is their question as they go into adulthood.

00;24;17;16 – 00;24;40;05

Mark

Am I safe from my safe and my safe? And yeah, we were so desperate to make that a yes. Sometimes the wrong people will love and accept you to make it a yes. Mm hmm. Mm hmm. But it becomes an sometimes exploitive relationship because people are so thirsty for the water that they'll drink the sand, you know? Yeah.

00;24;40;07 – 00;25;02;10

Mark

I don't know. Yeah. They don't know the difference. One thing during COVID, because of social distancing and masking, I know that there are a lot of counseling and appointments with psychologists that were suspended. Mm hmm. Yeah. There is increased isolation. And human beings are social creatures, even if that's the one outlet at that point of contact. It's important.

00;25;02;13 – 00;25;10;25

Mark

My intention is not to oversimplify matters, but during COVID, when I felt like I was in my will, my house became my prison.

00;25;10;27 – 00;25;12;08

Sarah

For a lot of people. Yeah.

00;25;12;11 – 00;25;45;16

Mark

Yeah. I asked myself, What does the world need in such a time as this answer is pretty simple. A friend? Mm hmm. Mm hmm. And I'll say, a friend is sometimes better than, you know, a counselor or a therapist. Yeah, Because especially in prison, if somebody has been whatever assaulted. I've worked with a lot of men that have said, I can't even tell the prison psychologist this because they have a duty to report and everybody will know I ratted somebody out, then I'm going to have a target on my back.

00;25;45;18 – 00;26;14;28

Mark

And that's really what it was just how do you make a bad situation even worse? Mm hmm. You know, again, when things unfold that way, we end up not being able to trust even our therapist. Mm hmm. So when somebody shares with me something traumatic that's happened, it's. It's sacred ground for me. Yeah. And even if they tell me I want to

kill somebody or I want to kill myself, you can say that out of some training, your reflex is to report.

00;26;15;05 - 00;26;38;13

Mark

But usually the three words that will save a life is. Tell me more. Mm hmm. Because it's really easy to get self-righteous and start lecturing somebody on right from wrong. Mm hmm. Mm hmm. Or they're going to get. But when they say tell me more, sometimes the reason why they want to enact violence comes from a place where it might be rightfully so.

00;26;38;15 - 00;26;55;22

Mark

They're. They're hurt. They've been hurt real bad. It doesn't make enacting violence. Okay. But I find that somebody being able to share it and saying, I'm sorry that happened to you, it reduces crime by maybe percent.

00;26;55;24 - 00;27;10;22

Sarah

Yeah. That brings me to a question. This is shows us that, you know, one of your approaches to to restoring the mental and emotional wellness of former inmates having a place that's safe to listen. But so how do you how do you do that? What and how does your work help reduce re-offending?

00;27;10;29 - 00;27;34;15

Mark

You know, I will truly say the I spend a couple of nights every two weeks. I usually get together with a group of fellows and you know, these I don't refer to them as the reintegration group. They're they're my Saturday night group. They're my men's group. Mm hmm. Right. I'd like to say that I'm helping them, but I get more out of, you know, spending time with them.

00;27;34;20 - 00;27;58;18

Mark

Some of them I would call very dear friends. It's just from all walks of life. But I think what we do well is if somebody has been, for all intents and purposes, been banished from society, I'm the dog. Like, if everybody could be as happy to see each other as our dogs when we come home, when the world be a better place.

00;27;58;19 - 00;28;27;23

Mark

Yes. And so there is just so much like honestly, it's all hugs. I know what you would think are hypermasculine men that are going to tatted up and, you know, jacked. They are sometimes just the biggest sweethearts. And there's something real honest that happens in those

rooms because everybody is kind of there for a similar reason. Everybody knows that they have done wrong.

00;28;27;26 - 00;28;50;17

Mark

Yeah. They are broken. And when you get that kind of honesty in the room, the world is, you know, the honesty pool is really shallow. There's just not enough people in it. Yeah. So it's. It's easy. It's easier to stand out. Yeah. Here's what happens in. In a meeting. We go around the circle and we share. We check in something good about a week, Something not so great about our week.

00;28;50;20 - 00;29;14;16

Mark

Mm hmm. And what happens is, by, you know, me listening to these men's stories, they feel heard and understood. Right. And then I benefit because I have now been of service to somebody. Yeah. I don't want to even call it group therapy. We're just checking in. This is like me texting their friends, and they haven't heard from me in a couple of weeks.

00;29;14;18 - 00;29;39;12

Mark

How are you doing? And I think it's that the fact that somebody if somebody is not there on a Saturday night, we worry. Mm hmm. Right. They worry that they could be dead or they could have relapsed or whatever it might be. But I think the fact that there are people who want to spend time with them and not just want to like I enjoy spending time with them as people.

00;29;39;14 - 00;29;47;07

Mark

Mm hmm. Right. And that's I think the whole you know, it shouldn't be a secret, but we prefer to spend time with people who like us.

00;29;47;07 - 00;29;48;21

Sarah

Yeah, totally.

00;29;48;23 - 00;30;14;13

Mark

You? Yeah. What I'm trying to practice is a level of genuine authenticity where I go, I'm not getting the flavor of your soda, but I'm trying. Sometimes being genuine, authentic means being a little bit socially awkward, going, I think quite figure you out. And if I. And, you know, I'm not going to let anybody take digs at me.

00;30;14;16 - 00;30;36;10

Mark

I love self-deprecating humor, but if someone is going to insult me,

I'm not going to let them hurt me. Mm hmm. Mm hmm. There's boundaries, too, that have to be put in place. But often when you have been isolated, well, number one, if you're isolated with people who have antisocial personality disorder, it stands to reason it's going to be a contagion that you start adopting.

00;30;36;16 - 00;31;02;12

Mark

And so this group is part of unlearning that. Right. And the other part of it is it's not an excuse. We always have to think about the victims. But most offenders, especially offenders of certain crime, have been victims themselves. And there's something called trauma reenactment that I can see perpetuated. It's only because I'm looking at the long game of this story.

00;31;02;13 - 00;31;28;06

Mark

Mm hmm. Right. So for me to truly understand somebody, I have to know their backstory. Yeah. Like the villain in a movie didn't just become the villain. There's a backstory to them maybe being victimized themselves. And there's that old saying, hurt people. Hurt people. So what I believe is that trauma not transformed like trauma that is unprocessed is transmitted.

00;31;28;09 - 00;31;54;20

Mark

Trauma not transformed is transmitted. Mm hmm. And so when I say I'm not getting the flavor of your soda, I'm saying I'm uncomfortable. I don't know how to respond to you. I would like to, But then they make clarify. Right. It's just being able to sit in the discomfort and acknowledge it. And sometimes the knowledge to the person in a way that is somehow kind and diplomatic.

00;31;54;22 - 00;32;03;05

Mark

And I think I'm really trying to understand where you're coming from, but it's not computing. It's like Microsoft Windows talking to Apple, you know.

00;32;03;07 - 00;32;07;09

Heather

Yes. They don't talk very well.

00;32;07;11 - 00;32;34;04

Mark

Love is spelled to me. It's whoever puts in the time either which way you're going to put in time. What they're doing is serving time. But you can put on the time on the front end in a preemptive way. Mm hmm. Or you can put it on the back end in crisis. Mm hmm. But I and I way would rather put in the time on the front end in a way that's

preemptive and proactive than I would visiting somebody in prison.

00;32;34;04 - 00;32;55;27

Mark

I'd rather see them out in the community on a Saturday night than on the other side of it. And that's where I think if you ask a lot of the fellows what helped it was that they had friends in the community who stood beside them during their parole hearings. Right. Endorse them. Yeah. And said they're honest, trustworthy and reliable.

00;32;55;27 - 00;33;21;05

Mark

They show up week after week. If it's a voluntary program, they don't have to. Mm hmm. Guys that have been out long out of prison, many, many, many years continue to come back. Mm hmm. And it's because it's like family. I would love to track the data on it, because my dream is that, you know, we start building reintegration programs that are so effective that recidivism goes down to such an extent that we start closing prisons.

00;33;21;10 - 00;33;21;21

Mark

Oh.

00;33;21;23 - 00;33;23;12

Sarah

Yeah, that would be amazing.

00;33;23;14 - 00;33;40;08

Heather

The stuff that you shared to like the there's a documentary You Sherbert, they said they're comparing Norway to the US and they're like 80% of prisoners in the U.S. that are released are re-arrested within five years while in Norway that believes more and rehabilitation versus kind of revenge. 20%.

00;33;40;10 - 00;33;40;19

Mark

Yeah.

00;33;40;25 - 00;33;44;03

Sarah

So this is some of the numbers are out there. Yeah, we used to do it.

00;33;44;07 - 00;33;44;24

Mark

Yeah.

00;33;45;00 - 00;33;58;10

Heather

Just on a general basis, that idea that different approaches have great impact. What have you seen as the biggest mental health impact on those who are incarcerated? And then how does it change post-release pre incarceration?

00;33;58;16 – 00;34;28;09

Mark

Often there is already a malfunction that's happened maybe starting in childhood. So they're already going in with this maybe lack of attention to detail and impulsivity. What I see set in is depression, anxiety, rightfully so. Another strange thing that I believe happens is insomnia, because when you don't get natural sunlight, it can just mess with your your circadian rhythm.

00;34;28;12 – 00;34;53;09

Mark

And, you know, if you don't have a good sleep, you don't have a good day. And like I said, antisocial personality disorder as a contagion. We come with some of the people we spend the most time with. And so if they had any antisocial personality disorder going in, you could say that it's exacerbated by overexposure. You know, and I've also seen people come out with post-traumatic stress disorder.

00;34;53;09 – 00;35;19;19

Mark

Some of the things that they have witnessed and that they've seen in prison, the inhumanity that they've witnessed, the indignity that they've experienced, you know, leaves shellshocked and sometimes helpless. Because for us and, you know, in the real world, we're making hundreds, if not thousands of decisions a day. And like that part of our brain and our heart is a muscle.

00;35;19;19 – 00;35;23;01

Mark

If you don't use it, you lose it like you get good at making decisions.

00;35;23;02 – 00;35;24;23

Sarah

I never even thought about that. Wow.

00;35;24;25 – 00;35;46;11

Mark

Yeah. And when you're told what to wear or when to eat, what to eat, you don't even get you don't have a choice in these things, right? You can just become dull. Brain fog is just a malaise that sits in and you're kind of on autopilot or whatever. But I think that getting good at making small choices. Do you want peas or carrots, French fries or mashed potatoes?

00;35;46;13 - 00;36;08;17

Mark

Those little micro decisions add up to big gains. And so, you know, part of that reintegration is providing choice. If we go back to that question of mental health, you know, should have that time been put in on the front end with a mental therapist or a counselor, the time wouldn't be putting getting put in on this back end.

00;36;08;20 - 00;36;38;04

Mark

And so I don't know. It's I'm not big on the labels. I don't enjoy the labels. I think there are some organic diagnoses that are entirely legitimate. But yes, my label comes down to it comes down to somebody being hurt or they're hurting. And so acknowledging that there is suffering at play, you need to ease that suffering in order to quiet down that amygdala for somebody to feel safe.

00;36;38;06 - 00;37;00;21

Mark

And so, like I said, a lot of people's question is, am I see for myself. So we make random statement AM safe and make it true, right? You are safe with me. You are safe here. That's step one. Because the question people are asking themselves is what happened or how did I lose love and connection? And then they're asking themselves, what can I do about it?

00;37;00;23 - 00;37;24;05

Mark

You're asking yourself these questions intrinsically. But sometimes that's where a counselor comes in to make it tangible. Just like crazy Eyes from Orange is the New Black. She's trying to answer that question through living. But I can watch the behavior and say, this is the question that a character or a person is living. That's the motivation and driving force.

00;37;24;07 - 00;37;48;10

Mark

So what I'm saying is you need to get under the hood. You people are so busy pretending to have it together that they're just, you know, lying. Really? Yeah, that's what we're doing When we're pretending to know what we're talking about. We're pretending that we're sane or pretending that we're okay. We need places where it's okay not to be okay.

00;37;48;11 - 00;38;16;25

Mark

Mm hmm. Right. And that you would think a hospital or prison would be those places. But if you're upset, you are restrained. And put into solitary confinement, where, again, somebody just said, Tell me what's going on or let's step into the other room, you know? Yeah. Like, it

seems that we've lost this piece of de-escalation and we go to this reflex knee jerk of forcible restraint.

00;38;16;27 - 00;38;38;11

Mark

Yeah. Or asserting authority. Like one of the jokes. I kind of make it just because I've observed it. I've picked guys up from a halfway house or a prison, and the staff will go, You behave yourself and be like a good boy. And as if the guard is going so I can act like a man by telling you what to write.

00;38;38;13 - 00;38;58;23

Mark

And it's just like it's that talking down to them. But here's the thing that as a counselor that I have to resist is I have to let the man figure it out for himself. Right. And say that's not nice, because even saying that to a guard might land you in, you know, losing privileges or being labeled as obstinate.

00;38;58;25 - 00;39;15;05

Mark

Mm hmm. Because, believe me, there's always there's been many times I want to advocate, but I know it would make a situation worse. Mm hmm. So, you know, that term walking the line, That's what they're doing. But we, as friends have to be aware that that is what they're doing. Right.

00;39;15;06 - 00;39;31;27

Heather

That must be hard, though, for a hard balance of being in a space where you are, have no no choices and no control to a space where you still have to exist with, in some ways, no choices, no control, but also lots of choices. And so, like when you say walking that line, that's what it makes me feel like.

00;39;31;27 - 00;39;38;22

Heather

And I'm sure that is a really difficult place to be in Many capacities like including mentally difficult.

00;39;38;25 - 00;40;06;07

Mark

Yeah. Like, the enforcement becomes different because sometimes a fella has a dirty piss test, could get him sent straight back to prison. But sometimes it's just to make an example of somebody to send a message to the rest of them. I don't want to say that this is commonplace, but it's pretty clear that there are frameworks where you will be made an example of in order to get compliance from everybody else.

00;40;06;08 - 00;40;12;11

Mark

Right. So being over punishing one makes the rest of the herd quieter.

00;40;12;18 - 00;40;30;29

Sarah

It's like all these, like, unspoken rules that you also have to play by when you're released as well. Or like, maybe they're spoken. I feel like the way you're describing it, it's like this sense of you're always on guard. You always have to be like that. Getting that trust back is probably really challenging.

00;40;31;01 - 00;41;00;29

Mark

Yeah. Let me try to give you like, a little picture of what it's like to reintegrate. I guess this is only the observer in me watching the struggle. And there's different ways people carry it depending on the crime. You know, I worked with former sex offenders who have had their faces plastered all over the Internet and newspapers. I've been out for coffee with one where people grab their phones and start recording them and throwing coffee at them.

00;41;00;29 - 00;41;24;00

Mark

And I understand the outrage. People are angry and scared. That's what happens when people are angry and scared. And so what happens is you kind of push the person back into the shadows where they self isolate. And our worst decisions are always made when we are by ourselves for too long. So that's what happens when we publicly shame people.

00;41;24;03 - 00;41;49;26

Mark

We force them to hide. But I talked to a guy a couple of weeks ago and he was coming out of a halfway house and he had applied for an apartment, a nice upgrade. He'd been working while he was in a halfway house in Tacoma. Assistant manager. There was a workplace and he had put in an application to rent an apartment and the landlord called and said, Are you the same?

00;41;49;26 - 00;42;09;25

Mark

Let's call him Joe Smith. Mm. It was in the newspapers, yeah. And he said, Yeah, that was me. But I want you to know it's it's all ancient history. They said, We'll get back to you. They got back. Jim said, We can't rent to you. He calls the landlord back and he said, There is what was in the newspaper and that was the worst day of my life.

00;42;09;28 - 00;42;29;12

Mark

But I am not the worst day of my life. I'm not the worst decision I

ever made. And I think if you got to know me, you would understand that I'd actually be a benefit to your community. I'd be helpful. And what do you say I can come meet you? And they accepted the invitation. They met him, and then they gave me the apartment.

00;42;29;12 - 00;42;30;09

Sarah
Well.

00;42;30;11 - 00;42;49;26

Mark
All right. Yeah, but it is that taking of personal responsibility going. I'm not going to remain ashamed. I'm going to show them who I really am. Because if I go by the narrative that was printed in the newspaper, that is only just a little piece of a much bigger story. Yeah. Yeah. And I think that's where context matters.

00;42;49;29 - 00;43;14;08

Mark
And I think he kind of went into a meeting going, You can ask me anything. And then they knew that he was an honest man. So I encourage people who are struggling to reintegrate because it's a risk and sometimes you will be judged on your honesty, but sometimes it's like a breath of fresh air. And again, a world that is sometimes very dishonest and you don't know who to believe.

00;43;14;14 - 00;43;47;05

Mark
You know, some people can't believe the media, the government, sometimes because of these narratives, we can't believe ourselves. One of the exercises I'll do with clients is after we have a foundation of trust and safety established. And sometimes we just invite them to close their eyes and unlearn some things. It's not hypnosis or anything new agey, but it's say, can you say out loud I am loved, I am capable of loving, I am loved and I am capable of loving.

00;43;47;12 - 00;44;18;04

Mark
And sometimes they'll have their hand on their heart because that's the part that hurts. And you'll still choke on those words. They can't believe it. They won't believe it. It's because it's just been conditioned out of them that you are unlovable. You are. It's something I've dubbed a lost cause syndrome. When you believe that a broken past means a broken future and you're stuck in that narrative and you believe yourself to be a lost cause, that's not even worth wasting time trying to help me.

00;44;18;06 - 00;44;44;13

Mark
I'm beyond help. And that's that. Beyond help is it goes past, Believe

me, you're unlovable. You actually believe you're hopeless and without hope, you got nothing. Almost every client or every friend that I asked is a participant that will exercise just can't let those words escape. They are choking on those. It would be in their mind. It would be a lie.

00;44;44;16 - 00;45;16;14

Mark

Right? But it believing you are unlovable and beyond hope is the lie that you've baked into your narrative. But if we invest the time and, you know, the emotional safety, we can help people unlearn that lie. So I don't know. I'm in the business of saving lives. And it doesn't mean talking people off the bridge, but I'm saying if I do that, if I in the re-integration world, if I'm helping with some preemptive work on the front end, it's saving lives.

00;45;16;14 - 00;45;36;22

Mark

There are lots of people who in a psych ward a couple of days prior to committing their crime. This is the thing, whether it's a prisoner psych ward, sometimes people pretend to be better in order to get unlocked to be free. So if we make these places just a little somewhat therapeutic, it's well worth the investment. We just got.

00;45;36;22 - 00;45;54;04

Heather

To bring it back to the idea of film and television. And I know there's some great examples of that you gave us of things that felt true in some way. But what would you love to see shown more on film and television that would be reflective of these experiences of prison and reintegration?

00;45;54;06 - 00;46;13;28

Mark

One thing that I would like to see is, you know. I practice something called restorative justice, and that's where an offender and a victim can come together. And I'll give you an example of that. I have a friend, Jim, when he was on the streets and he was a heavy drug user, he broke into the home of a couple of senior citizens.

00;46;14;01 - 00;46;37;01

Mark

And while he was in prison, he actually, I think, had the I don't know, conscientiousness to read the victim impact statement. And in the letter it said it's just seems senseless. We don't know somebody's stake on our house and watches for when we leave or was somebody angry at us and we're trying to get back at us. Jim took that and went, I don't want them to be scared.

00;46;37;03 - 00;47;01;28

Mark

Like, that's the last thing it was because the truth, it was a just check and unlocked doors. Right. And they found one. But in facilitating that session and watching Jim give this couple this peace of mind that they aren't being watched and that there's nothing malicious or anything for them to look over their shoulder about. They became friends like we go for coffee together now.

00;47;01;28 - 00;47;35;29

Mark

And I'm just saying like it's really transformational. And this is the arc of every great story. Unlikely friendships, overcoming adversity. Right? Woody, if you're from Toy Story, you know, read an Andy from Shawshank Redemption. And so when you had mentioned being able to go into this, you know, prison in England, that is a willingness to soften maybe whatever preconceived notions you might have and dare to be friends with somebody who is unlikely.

00;47;35;29 - 00;48;07;27

Mark

This restored of peace is just so important. And it doesn't like in our justice system, it doesn't reduce any time off anybody sentence. Right. The the victims have to be willing to participate in that process. But if the offender has read a victim impact statement and said the last thing I ever wanted somebody to be was scared, you know, or traumatized, if the victim can know that and then go into a space where they can be seen and heard and say, this really hurt me.

00;48;08;02 - 00;48;34;12

Mark

I'm an offender, you can genuinely say I'm sorry because they have nothing to gain because there's no time cut off for doing so. Right. Yeah. But in indigenous cultures, you know, restorative justice is part and parcel with how communities work. Mm hmm. It's part of the reintegration process is to acknowledge the harm that you've caused, provide some peace of mind, that it's not going to happen again.

00;48;34;14 - 00;49;04;23

Mark

Yeah, and I found myself in the cataclysm of events where I had a patient I was working in health care who was killed by a drunk driver. So I spent a lot of time supporting, consoling the parents. And of course, fast forward a few years. The man who was behind the wheel of the car is now in my Saturday night crew and I and I didn't know if I should ever say anything to either party.

00;49;04;25 - 00;49;26;25

Mark

Mm hmm. And I spent some time with the man who was behind the wheel, taking him home to see his family at Christmas. And seeing what these

children and wife had lost to. Again, it's a lose lose situation. Everybody loses. Yeah. On the side for the victim. The parents actually took it all the way to parliament to have laws changed.

00;49;26;25 - 00;49;48;08

Mark

Well, part of my role was just if this is what's going to bring you peace, like I want to help you. My job's really easy. You tell me what you want. If it's in your best interest to help you get it. Yeah, right. But it just. It it was such an honor to be at the cataclysmic abstract of tragedy because, I don't know, holding space for both parties.

00;49;48;13 - 00;50;20;09

Mark

I hope one day there are some restera. Yeah. For the loss of a child is runs deep in my head. I've already been authoring a narrative, but it's that kind of narrative that is the manifestation narrative. Yeah, right. This manifestation of forgiveness. Because I don't want to see the parents holding on to resentment and bitterness. I don't want them to hurt unnecessarily because they've already been hurt unnecessarily.

00;50;20;15 - 00;50;45;17

Mark

And I can say that for the fellow who was behind the wheel, I have come to believe he's an actual transformed man. Yeah, he's. I've learned so much from him. I really try to interrogate my own bias. Right. Go. This guy just going slow or is he legit? But when I see him with his family, it's real. Yeah.

00;50;45;20 - 00;51;08;20

Heather

We don't often get to see that part of the narrative. Very often, like in terms of stories, a lot of storytelling is more, I think said we see things in prison, we sometimes see a little bit of afterwards like we were talking about with Blindspotting. But then yeah, you don't get to see that piece of those unlikely pairings, those people coming together and having a moment in a safe space.

00;51;08;25 - 00;51;34;21

Mark

So other things I'd like to see is I'd like to see us stop being soft on some of the language. They'll call it segregation. No, it's solitary confinement like. And it's just like, it's like the word misinformation. You're saying. You're saying somebody's lying. Yeah, you're lying, right? Yeah. And it's not to be brutal about anything, but we're sugarcoating things to make it palatable for the public.

00;51;34;28 - 00;52;08;01

Mark

But it's not necessarily honest. It's just wordplay and, you know, makes it maybe makes us feel a little bit better about the crimes against humanity that are done. Yeah, I haven't really seen any meaningful depiction of a Canadian prison. I would like to see some depiction of a you know, we have institutions for largely indigenous men. I tell you what I used, I worked up in none of it for a while, and there's a medium security prison up in none of it.

00;52;08;04 - 00;52;14;27

Mark

I thought it would be a great a great premise for a escape movie because it's cold.

00;52;15;00 - 00;52;15;12

Sarah

Yeah.

00;52;15;17 - 00;52;41;13

Mark

And and dark. And it would be very difficult to escape. But here's the funny thing. I could go up to the fence and I could trade cigarets for, like, a soapstone carving that they had made in the prison. And I'm just saying that this artwork that people are making amidst their suffering is really beautiful. Some want to call it art therapy, but it was more than about just doing an art project.

00;52;41;13 - 00;52;50;26

Mark

It was about channeling it into making sense out of the madness. So that is, I think, part of the secret sauce of restoration.

00;52;50;28 - 00;52;59;07

Sarah

I like that a lot. On that note, we're going to ask you, where can people find out more about you? Maybe about your counseling service you have?

00;52;59;09 - 00;53;23;03

Mark

You can go at love. Well, why? E.g. at love? Well, YPG, that's the Instagram and Facebook connections. You can also check out my website, Love. Well, dossier, it's love, life and, well, dossier. And yeah, you can find out about some workshops that I'll be holding. And if you want to just come and have some friendship therapy, I'd be happy to see you.

00;53;23;03 - 00;53;24;18

Mark

I'll be the dog.

00;53;24;20 – 00;54;00;26

Sarah

Oh, God, it's so great to be able to connect like this. You know, I've known you for many, many years, and I've seen you evolve from producer, filmmaker, and IFB worker like you. And you're always connecting one of the. I'm just going to have one little small anecdote. The biggest thing Mark has really helped me stretch my career, and it is from Mark's recommendations, I have been able to be a very successful because he has referred me to a lot of filmmakers that I continue to work with today, and I don't know if I'd be here if it wasn't for Mark's, just his friendship and his love.

00;54;01;04 – 00;54;02;06

Sarah

So thank you, Mark.

00;54;02;06 – 00;54;08;21

Mark

Full circle. I really love you, Sarah. What? You're. You're a beautiful human being and easy to endorse.

00;54;08;23 – 00;54;09;29

Sarah

Oh, thank you.

00;54;10;02 – 00;54;25;11

Mark

Thank you. So. And you made me look good. But really, as an editor those are those are good years of growth for me. Like, I was getting a different kind of confidence there is. Thank you. Thank you. That means a lot to me.

00;54;25;14 – 00;54;46;27

Sarah

It was such an honor to have Mark agree to come on the podcast. I didn't realize that he'd been asked to be on other programs and hasn't been ready to speak yet, and I think he does such important work and I'm so, so, so glad that he was able to sit with us and hmm, some of the I got to he's so poetic and the way he speaks and it was just very impactful.

00;54;47;04 – 00;55;07;05

Heather

I do a story editing. Sarah does the editing, the hard work of editing, and I do history editing. So I listen to it and like, you know, move things around. And I kept going to cry the entire time I listen to it. So I hope our listeners are doing okay right now because I wasn't at the edit, but I think it's all really important conversations.

00;55;07;05 - 00;55;09;24

Heather

I realize it's just we are not having exactly.

00;55;09;26 - 00;55;17;08

Sarah

If you are feeling the feels, drink a glass of water, go for a walk, do something to ease your emotional system.

00;55;17;10 - 00;55;56;24

Heather

And and talk to the people who can make changes. Yes, talk to whoever you may change to create better prison reform to do it. This is coming out on the 12th of September. So I will have be experiencing TIFF, which I'm super excited about. I have yet to even look at what's happening, but I have an industry pass thanks to the wonderful folks at Respectability, they really want to give us opportunities to go to major festivals such as TIFF and so I'm just thank you for the pass and also I'm just excited to go.

00;55;56;26 - 00;56;10;25

Heather

I've gone as press before so that I could go, so I could afford to go, but It puts a lot of work and extra pressure on you and I'm really excited to just go and experience some films, which I love to do.

00;56;10;27 - 00;56;14;27

Sarah

That sounds like awesome. It'll just be right after Heather's birthday. So happy birthday, Heather.

00;56;14;29 - 00;56;17;15

Heather

Thanks. Thanks, everyone.

00;56;17;18 - 00;56;26;22

Sarah

And if you are going to attend TIFF this year or you are there right now, go check out Aviator is a film that I got to give it a watch.

00;56;26;25 - 00;56;28;17

Heather

Yep, Canadian film.

00;56;28;20 - 00;56;33;04

Sarah

Canadian film and shot in Alberta. Yeah, go.

00;56;33;04 - 00;56;34;23

Heather

Canada.

00;56;34;26 – 00;57;08;07

Sarah

So I have been working in an office out of my house for at this when this podcast comes out two months and it's been glorious. If you observe our rules, you've noticed some of them coming out. We'll be in a different background because I'm in my new office space. They have a podcast studio. Anyway, it's very exciting. I didn't realize how much small interruptions I was receiving in my day to day, like working from home just because, like, I have dogs and and I would like, Oh, I'll just go do the laundry.

00;57;08;07 – 00;57;29;04

Sarah

Like there's always things that were kind of like pulling me away from work. And I was talking with my therapist and they were like, That's actually quite for somebody who has generalized anxiety disorder that can be really deregulating because then you're stopping and starting and and they were like, Was anybody that's hard on your mental health and you're just levels of like focusing and whatnot.

00;57;29;07 – 00;57;48;03

Sarah

So they were like, yeah, this could be really beneficial for you to go have a space outside your house. And so I did, and they were right. It's wonderful. But my new problem is that I have to remind myself to like, get out of my chair because nobody's interrupting me. Yeah, I'm like, in this moment of, like, super focus when I'm working.

00;57;48;05 – 00;57;51;15

Sarah

So I'm getting a lot of editing done, but I do need to be mindful of my body.

00;57;51;17 – 00;58;05;02

Heather

Yes. A reminder to those that of the time timer or any timer you'd like, you can set it for up to an hour and then it goes off and then you have to stand and stretch and walk around for 5 minutes and then you sit back down and set your timer again. Do I do that all the time?

00;58;05;02 – 00;58;09;12

Heather

I do not, but it's very useful. And my therapist recommended me do that.

00;58;09;14 – 00;58;14;24

Sarah

A time timer, like you're just have a timer that you set or is it

something that like, stops you from using your computer?

00;58;14;28 - 00;58;21;28

Heather

Oh, no, no. Sorry. A time timer. You can look these up on. I mean, whatever evil sorts of.

00;58;22;00 - 00;58;23;11

Sarah

Corporate.

00;58;23;13 - 00;58;42;19

Heather

Zaniness you want or wherever it is, a time timer shows you the actual time that's passing. So it's very useful for people with ADHD who have time blindness so that you can actually see visually the time it's worth it versus a timer that just counts down seconds and you don't see the visual representation of time.

00;58;42;19 - 00;58;47;02

Sarah

So these are ones people I think I've seen where you buy like it's like it's a little squint kind of thing.

00;58;47;02 - 00;59;06;07

Heather

You Yeah. And it has a color so you'll see the color bar moving. Oh cool. And it's just a way of going looking at time, so you don't have to have that. But I find it useful because I look up, I'm like, Oh, so much time has passed because you can see visually that time has passed by the amount of color that's still left on the timer.

00;59;06;07 - 00;59;07;23

Sarah

That might be something I should look into.

00;59;07;25 - 00;59;11;00

Heather

Because yeah, yeah, you can do any timer, but I like it. And it's also colorful.

00;59;11;00 - 00;59;35;17

Sarah

So yeah, who doesn't like color? That's actually that's one of the most fun parts of this office is I'm actually sharing the space with my dear friend Dallas, who was on the podcast once, who is like, visual. She makes she creates beautiful images with her camera, but also she just has great style. And so our little office spaces like so cozy and we have a lot of pink and it just I walk in there and I'm like, Oh, it's so pretty.

00;59;35;17 - 00;59;38;13

Heather

So they're creating environments that are best for your brain.

00;59;38;19 - 00;59;43;08

Sarah

It's the best. So yeah, amazing office.

00;59;43;11 - 01;00;05;21

Heather

Well, so much to celebrate. 10th birthdays, new offices. And with that, thank you for listening to today's episode of Brains. Brains is hosted and produced by Heather and Sara Taylor and remixed and mastered by Tony Bowe. Our theme song is by our little brother Dipesh and our graphics were created by perpetual motion.

01;00;05;23 - 01;00;21;23

Sarah

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01;00;21;25 - 01;00;23;23

Sarah

Until next time I'm your host, Sarah.

01;00;23;25 - 01;00;30;18

Heather

And I'm your host Heather by.

01;00;30;20 - 01;00;31;06

Sarah

Brenda.

01;00;31;06 - 01;00;31;27

Mark

Awesome.