

**Introduction Guest (Unknown):**

Hi, welcome to the BCEN and Friends podcast. In the second part of our two-part podcast, Brigid Flood and Janie Schumaker and Jonny Boucher, we dive into this season of the spread of COVID 19 and how it has truly placed a remarkable strain on our doctors and nurses. We will talk with Jonny, ask how we can come together as a community to ensure that we are understanding his motto, "It's OK to not to be OK," and how we can reach out to our fellow colleagues to ensure their mental as well as physical health are top priority. Now over to Brigid and Janie, in our conclusion of how, "It's OK to not to be OK," with our special guest, Jonny Boucher.

**Brigid Flood:**

Janie, do you have any questions?

**Janie Schumaker:**

I do. So, Jonny, I would like to talk a little bit specific to our listening audience, who are largely professionals in the emergency spectrum. They work in, a lot of the emergency department, flight nurses, trauma nurses and, you know, and I think that as an E.R. nurse, being an E.R. nurse myself in the past, you know, I know we get considerable training and guidance and hopefully we're doing a good job recognizing people that may be in need of help and that's so very important because, you know, that visit that we have, that one encounter that we have with our patients could be the matter of life and death for them.

But I'd like to talk a little bit, or have you talk a little bit, rather, about any tips that you might have for the health care team themselves. You know, there's a lot of articles that I read about physician suicide. I know it also happens in nursing and in other very important roles that various health care team members play and so, I'm just wondering if you have any tips for how nurses and other important members of the health care team might talk with their colleagues or take better care of themselves? You know, we're caregivers, so we're always focused on that patient or that family member or our own family members. It seems that we're taking care of everybody else and oftentimes our own mental health and care comes last. And so, I think I think sometimes we can start to feel very, very we can feel various things. And I think that does lead to people taking their lives in health care. And so how can we help ourselves and our colleagues? Would you have any tips around that?

**Jonny Boucher:**

Yeah, absolutely. Well, my partner, Caitlin, she is an occupational therapist, and we talk about this all the time as she has had to be there

for a lot of her colleagues during, you know, pre and, you know, during COVID times. And so, we had a discussion that led to a discussion that I had with our clinical oversight committee about the power of structure.

And one of the things that health care workers right now is they have more of a structure than most people in society right now. That can be a good thing or that can be a bad thing. Right, because they might have family and kids they have to deal with, too, but they still need to go and, you know, be on the front line of the health care industry. So, it's really important that within your routine, however it is, that you do dilate daily time for yourself.

And I know it sounds cheesy, but the power of taking 15 minutes, no phone in hand, maybe going for a walk outside if you just catch up on fresh air in your backyard, on your patio, wherever you live; that is so crucial to your success and I tried to find time for me to do that in the morning as well as in the evening, which, again, some days, you know, you forget the shower. So, you might be knocked down for the 15 minutes for you to do but it is important that we see these opportunities throughout the day. So, maybe if you go on shift, it's not just sitting there and you go through digital death scroll on Instagram; it's having a book, having it, having a good spot to go to just read, maybe doing some meditation, you know, doing things that are within your reach that aren't going to add more weight to your daily bag and whatnot. When I look at yoga, right, as a big, bigger guy, you know, I never used to be able put, like, touch my toes. I could put my hands all underneath my feet now and I can do that wherever the hell I want to because I'm just, I'm just dropping really quick. You know, I'm just aligning my spine. I'm just feeling that little balance and so, when we talk about self-care. Right. We got to talk about in the sense of like we know what a soda bottle looks like and we know what happens when the soda bottle gets shook up and what happens if, you know the soda bottle cap doesn't come off. Right. What happens? It eventually comes off. Right, because it floods, right?

**Janie Schumaker:**

Right.

**Jonny Boucher:**

So, throughout our day, whether wherever we are, whatever industry, we gotta build our tools that help us take that cap off and just ease it off a little bit, because if we take it off all the way too quick, again, if there's so much pressure, we're going to spill over and that's where we see people, unfortunately, get to a place where they might harm themselves

or harm others if it's not talked about or, you know, really taken care of as fast as you can.

And so, for people who have very limited schedules, I always I mean, a big list believer. I'm a believer in get up, make your bed and if you're a coffee drinker like I am, make yourself a pour over or something, but interact with that. Don't do it with a phone in your hand because we are so quick to grab our phones. We use them for everything. Our alarm clocks are dietary journals. Our deepest, darkest secrets... you know, like we can have a positive relationship with our technology, but we don't. It doesn't need to be attached to us at all times. But I mean, being honest, you know, how quick did you both grab your phones this morning and maybe go on Facebook or wherever your social media networks are? Right.

**Janie Schumaker:**

Oh, yeah. About five minutes after I woke up to be honest. Right.

**Jonny Boucher:**

Right. Yeah. Yeah, absolutely and that's OK. That's the society we're into. So, I try to challenge people. Take time for yourself. I try to give myself forty-five minutes in the morning before I look at anything on my phone. And that might be hard because we might need to, you know, we might have to have a potty break. We might need to look something up to do something like maybe, you know, cook a meal or what have you. But I just challenge people like build that in your schedule and build it into your routines, because that is for you. Because then once you get through your day and you've given it your all to everyone else, what do you do? You're going to come home and just Netflix and chill. Of course, you can. But if you do it seven days a week, it's not healthy. If you're going home and cracking a bottle of wine every single night for seven days a week, that might not be the healthiest know opportunity for you to take care of yourself. So, I just challenge people to go, "What is within my reach?" You know what music are you listening to? Are you even listening to music on your way to work? Like, how can you build yourself up throughout the day while then taking that cap off because it's chipping away at you and if you get to a place where you're pouring from an empty cup, it can be dangerous for yourself because again, health care workers. Right. We're worrying about everyone else other than ourselves. So, we're the last ones to probably eat, you know, a healthy meal. We're probably the last ones to have a healthy routine because we're just trying to be there for our people. So, it's important that, you know, instead of just relying on the fast food on the way home, that maybe you pack a meal and or you get you have a meal to cook when you

get home. I love cooking when I get home because I can shut everything off and just cook and as we know all know, if the food, it's quite obvious.

**Janie Schumaker:**

Yeah, that's some really great advice and I have to say, there's been this joke ever since I've been in nursing, particularly with nurses that work in the emergency department. You know, they pride themselves on that twelve-hour bladder. They can go twelve hours without using the bathroom and they've got that twelve-hour bladder. And yeah, that's kind of funny, but that really, it's not. So, we, I think you're I think your message to us about taking time to relieve that pressure on the bottle is spot on.

**Jonny Boucher:**

Yeah.

**Janie Schumaker:**

Now, Johnny, I'd also be curious just to see, you know, this global pandemic has changed so much of our world and our daily routines. Some of us more than others, obviously, as you pointed out, with our health care professionals, they probably do have more of a routine that didn't change so much for them as it did some of the rest of us. But thinking of your vision and mission for *Hope for the Day*, what did you have to do differently or what's changed as far as how you're reaching people with your resources and messages?

**Jonny Boucher:**

Yes. So, we've always had a strong digital presence on social media, but we had built in a virtual education program that we were going to actually launch in September for suicide prevention month this year and when we were looking at 2020 in general, we're like, "All right, we want to educate twenty thousand people in 2020." And it was because in 2019, we educated over 14,000 people with our education. And that's awesome to know that and so, going into the year, we were very ambitious, we're like, "All right, we've got to have quotas. We got to hit 5000 people every quarter." Real simple math. And January 1st to March 12th, we had educated forty-two hundred people face to face. But the reason I bring up March 12th is because that was the last day that our staff traveled. And then that following Sunday is when we shut down our coffee shop here in Chicago. And so, I immediately told everyone to work from home and talking with my education department, I said, "Hey, we might need to turn this on very quick." And they said, "All right, well, it's good to go."

And we turn on our digital education workshops on March 27th and as of today, we have educated over 26,000 people in 2020.

**Janie Schumaker:**

Wow. So, you were in a good position and it sounds like, you know, I remember the middle of March was when everything kind of fell apart and things started shutting down.

And so, for you to be ready to roll with even more good stuff by March 27<sup>th</sup>, that's impressive. Very impressive. So, you didn't really mean you did all that's amazing.

**Jonny Boucher:**

We have a very dedicated team and the power of having, you know, many people be a part of that team. It's just, it's how we get through it, really. We just don't know any other way when it comes to the work that we do at home for the day. So, it's been a mind-boggling experience, but we've expanded our education and we're offering it in multiple languages and we're working with a lot of our European partners right now that we would traditionally be doing outreach with them right now and getting people on the ground educated to be our educators in those communities, because that's the biggest thing. No matter where we come from, our background, financial structure or not, our status like we are all human beings. Right. And when we are going through school, we weren't told about the good days and bad days.

We were taught about sex ed and drug education and then, you know, your general core and obviously then physical health and lo and behold, we're still trying to get people to understand that our physical health is directly related to our mental health. They work together and that is very important, especially for the health care industry to practice that same, you know, message, too, because that's the world that everybody in health care is facing. Right. Our physical health don't have the best experiences with their, you know, their patients or the clients that they're serving and it's solely because they're also having to adjust to people feeling completely disheveled from their whatever the traumatic experience that they've been going through my heart. My partner, Caitlin, talks about it all the time where she'll maybe have a gunshot wound victim come in, who was a star athlete and now has no, you know, isn't looking like they're going to be walking anytime soon, but they can get there. It's with that determination, but they are unfortunately experiencing some real times. So, they don't always have the opportunity to really do the best job of understanding that, you know, the health care worker that's in front of them is there to support them, not against them.

And that's rough; It doesn't make getting up bright and early the next day as easy as you would hope. Right. So that's where, again, we're having those outlets to take that pain and that and then that and maybe take it just home but take it to others that are part of your field, right, to get that experience of how this is how I felt. How did you feel? There's so much power in that conversation. You know, it's hard conversations that are the ones that people have the most difficult time having. But after we have it, right, we feel good about it. It's like the sense of relief and so my heart goes out to the all the health care workers because it's some place you don't want to help those, that person in front of you, even though they need your help so bad.

And maybe they have a family member who is there, you know, that is supposed to be supportive, that is being actually not supportive and that's difficult, too, because you're just trying to do your job. So, it's very important to understand that you do have those tools and that you do have the ability to not carry that with you, but to get rid of it and become more mindful and understanding on how you can be more successful even though you did a damn good job. It's how can you be more successful of those people? Because over time that becomes successful for you, too. How do you channel that and how do you take that home? But it's so crucially important that wherever you are in the health care sector, whether you're just getting out of school and getting your hands dirty to being, you know, 20, 30-year veteran of this community doesn't matter like you're still a human being. You have good days and bad days, and if you're having a string of bad days and then you start having bad experiences with others, your bottle is going to get shook up more and more. And we understand that the health care industry has been impacted by suicide and mental health and it's because of these very reasons, but we still only react to these things where we can be proactive and we don't have to have the hard conversations, "Oh, I would have never thought that was so and so would have did that to their life, because they were always so good. They were, everyone loved them like they were great on the pediatric floor." It's like, that's great. But we missed something and are we just going to sweep it under the rug and wait for, you know, another tragedy to happen for us to sweep it under the rug? Or are we going to learn and do something about this? Because we're going to learn and do something about it. We can, but it all requires us to lean in and have those conversations and so why it's so important that what we do in the workplace and work with H.R. and work with leadership is because it needs to be a top down mentality where people aren't going to believe I mean, like, "I don't know, my CEO" and "Oh, I can't relate," where if we take the time to have the conversations

at the end of the day, we all can relate to one another one way or another, you know.

**Janie Schumaker:**

Yeah. That's sad. That's some really great things for us to all think about. So, thank you for that. And Brigid, I think its probably time for our favorite part of the whole podcast, right?

**Brigid Flood:**

It is. Jonny, these are great conversations, great points but we're gonna go to Rapid Fire questions. It shouldn't feel like a test, but we just have a couple of questions. If you could just respond like with what comes to your mind. So, the first one is how did partnering with Demi Lovato in Marshmello happen? And by the way, I had to go listen to Marshmello because I didn't know who it was.

**Jonny Boucher:**

It's all good. My mom did the same exact thing.

But, you know, our partnership with Demi Lovato and Marshmello came very organically. We have been working in the music sector for a long time as an organization. Our partnership of live nation put us in front of a lot of different people.

And we had originally reached out to Demi's management team Scooter Braun, who also handles Justin Bieber and Ariana Grande. A couple of years ago, we were like we should link, and we never heard anything. And then one day someone tagged me in a post and was like Scooter Braun said, "It's OK not to be OK." I was like, "Wonder what's up?" And then about a month later, I got an email from his team saying, "Hey, we'd love to talk to you about a song we're releasing, and we want to partner with Hope for the Day." So, I get on the phone and I have no clue who we're talking about other than all right, it's gotta be someone. And they're like, listening to you and the organization that you started really have inspired one of our artists on Scooter Braun's team. And then we have Marshmello's team on here, too. And I was like, "All right, Marshmello, I know Marshmello. Who else would work? And then they said, "Marshmello and Demi Lovato wrote a song together called Okay to Not to Be OK," Inspired by the work that Hope for the Day does. And we to talk about how we can release this with you all and make some impact together. And my jaw, I think, like slammed through my computer screen, and that's like it's all right. What do you want to do? And they're like, well, we want to hear from you. What do you want to do? And I was like, "Oh, wow, this is real, OK?" And we had this opportunity to just be open

and honest and talk about, like, experiences that, you know, we've seen in the past about how, you know, if we're going to do things the right way instead of right away, we want to have resources and we want to have education, we want to have all these opportunities. But, you know, the world is really our oyster. And so, it came together very organically. And I had pushed their team to release a song in September. And they're like, all right. How does September 10th work for you? And I was like, "That's World Suicide Prevention Day." That's perfect. Let's go.

And so, it's just been this beautiful opportunity for us to engage with new audiences, a new audience that again needed to hear this same conversation that no matter where you are, that you can, you can ask for help. And it starts by understanding that it's okay to not be OK.

**Brigid Flood:**

Yeah, and I love how it all fell into place without really trying. Listen, what's the best moment you've had since starting Hope for the Day?

**Jonny Boucher:**

Wow. I have no clue.

**Brigid Flood:**

Sure.

**Jonny Boucher:**

I have no clue. I, I often try to remain very humble about the journey. And I remember the earlier days. I remember the first event that I ever put on down at that Nazarene University down in Bourbonnais with a friend of mine and the first time someone told me about losing, you know, in a very heartfelt way that they said, but you've helped me, to speaking to twelve thousand individuals at Wembley Arena last year.

There's so much you know, there's so much and I think that the moment that I will always look back on them is the moment that I challenged myself to think about more than just myself and how I could do something different and it's been a wild journey. I mean, you know, from being told by Barack Obama, "I'm one of five individuals who inspired him in 2018" to doing a track with Demi Lovato to bringing our message to over 28 countries in this world and doing it all on a shoestring budget and just believing that by starting the conversation, we can have the conversation and having conversations with people internationally where language barriers were once an issue. And over time, I learned how to say, you know, "It's okay not to be okay," in German. So, imagine being in a room with two thousand Germans and saying, "Es ist okay, nicht okay



zu sein” and the whole place just erupts like it is like the biggest party there is and it's because people are craving for this message and understanding that we're all works in progress. So, I really, it's hard for me to identify what is my most I mean I mean, one of those moments is right now with you all, because I think about it, too, to understand that at one point in time hopefully it didn't exist. It was a thought. It was a feeling. It was an emotion. It was an action.

And to do it and to know that next year, our 10-year anniversary, and we employ over 20 people and we have thousands of supporters around the world. I don't know.

I mean, there's days I'm just completely blown away by the power of just wanting to create and do something, because that's what Steve Jobs asked us to do, right? He said, you know, think differently and the only way to get people to think differently is to do differently. And look at, you know, everyone has their flaws. But, you know, the outcome is look at the impact that he was able to make and continues to make for technology and so many.

And I just look at my life as an opportunity to help others and when I take my final breath, my goal is that this organization continues on and fights everything that is thrown at it because we need people and we need to talk about mental health more than ever.

**Brigid Flood:**

That's great, Jonny. You know, I don't think it's really fair that I ask you for your best moment, because I know there's a lot of moments.

**Jonny Boucher:**

Suck it up. When people ask me the same thing about music, I'm like right now. I mean, I'm a frickin' jukebox, folks. Whatever your vibe is, I got you.

**Brigid Flood:**

All right.

**Janie Schumaker:**

So, Jonny, if we're tagging onto the to the question, sort of, it's sort of another piece to the question Brigid just asked if you think about your vision for your organization, what does that, so when you achieve that vision or as you think about what that vision looks like, what does that what does that look like for you? What would it look like if you really, you know, 100 percent achieve that vision you've got?

**Jonny Boucher:**

I mean, I think that it really comes down to the numbers, right? Being data driven, especially mental health, where we're fighting the invisible killer. I think that it comes down to just knowing that we are, we keep growing and every single day we keep growing. We've been very good at tracking our efforts and seeing where some of our shortcomings are. And we've over the years, we've gotten better at forecasting. But I just I close my eyes and I don't know what 100 percent looks like because I feel like we're only getting 10 percent right now. We got some big milestones. We have partnerships with entities around the world that we're working on right now that will just allow us to keep gaining more and more access. But my goal is that, you know, down the road that we're able to provide education to anybody and everyone, no matter what language and right now we're talking about because we're in the coffee business as well, we know all the coffee that we buy and provide for the shop and online all comes from these very, very honest, ethically sourced, responsibly sourced communities. And so, we're talking to our partners right now in Papua New Guinea. I mean, there's 800 languages, eight languages spoken in Papua New Guinea. So that's a that's a definite hard one to figure out how to provide that. But we've already broken through the chastity belt. We are talking with people in Papua New Guinea about how we build these systems. And I believe that we can have those conversations in every country that we want to. It just requires people from those areas to want to be the voice for their people, because I am a white, privileged man who can only speak from my experience and I will never speak from anyone else's experience. I will listen to them and I work with them as my team to provide for them and I live by that because we need to build more tables and chairs and keep inviting people to share their experience so we can then build real resources and support in their community that they can lean on the days that Hope for the Day might not be in the neighborhood or doing education for them, what have you, that them as a community, they can they can thrive together. So, I believe in a world where eventually we can all be talking about mental health. It's going to take a very big group effort but the other side of that, too, is just over time seeing these horrible stats start to go downward. It is also proof that it's working.

And so I just I don't know how to answer that question, because I'm also stubborn and I want to make sure that I do the best job that I can, because what the hell else am I going to do with my with all this air in my lungs?

**Janie Schumaker:**

Yeah, well, it sounds like you are tenacious and certainly I can tell you're going to keep going until you reach every possible person you can. That's what I hear you saying and that's pretty awesome.

Now, my last question for you, Jonny, is tell us, tell us quickly about your favorite book on leadership. We always ask people for just a favorite book.

It doesn't have to be on leadership, but what book is your go-to that you would recommend that that kind of shape to you or it's a favorite.

**Jonny Boucher:**

Oh, wow.

Now, this this is a fun one. This is a real fun one. I know that's hard. I started building a library recently because I was like, I have so many great books, but I think there's one book that I think that is really good by Tim Ferriss *Tribe of Mentors*. It's all about short life advice and there's over one hundred and thirty different people that Tim Ferriss interviews and ask the same questions, too. And one of them is, how are you getting better at saying no to things? And you have such a wide spectrum of people from different, you know, actors, actors, actresses to entrepreneurs, to scientists, to athletes. And it's just so amazing because there are times where we get lost in the what ifs and we get in that doubt.

And so, I usually reach out to *Tribe of Mentors* to really, really drive drive home a little bit of just a oh, you know, like they felt the same way, too, you know, like interesting.

And, you know, I don't know this individual other than, you know, by way of maybe like what would they do in life and whatnot. But I just feel that I can really relate to them more and more. But I really, I really do believe that that's one of the best, one of the best books out there. But there's so there's so much I mean, you can you can read a lot about, obviously, you know, Andrew Carnegie and just, you know, there's so many books out there that I feel that are necessary for people to read. And it's kind of like a reason I also lean further into books than podcasts because a lot of people can podcast. When we'd need to do a lot more listening and so I feel like we listen more when we read. And I think that it's very valuable there. But there's many books out there that, you know, help people. And I just again, I feel like it's what fits you the best. I am very open with the fact that I'm I was never a good reader growing up, I was not good, I was not the best student. I definitely learned more about the streets that

I did, you know, then just from life experience than I did out of a book. But I'm do believe in the power of reading and that's also one of the many ways that I look to wind down every single day as I try to read at least fifteen minutes. Again, people need to realize that 15 minutes is a powerful amount of time.

Take a little 15-minute nap, even though it's not that that Einstein with twenty five or twenty six minute nap. But like nap, you can go for a walk, you can read. You can take a moment for yourself. But there's so much out there that is there for you and it's just what you do with it.

**Janie Schumaker:**

Yeah. Yeah. Well thank you for that. Jonny, I want to make sure before we wrap up here that our audience knows where they can follow you online or on socials. Can you tell us?

**Jonny Boucher:**

Absolutely. You can Google *Hope for the Day* and you can find us on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn. You can find our website, which is a huge asset for resources and free education opportunities, you can go there and support the organization as well. So, it's just [hopefortheday.org](http://hopefortheday.org) or [HFTD.org](http://HFTD.org) or however you can. And if you're drinking coffee like we are at hope for the day, you know, Google *Sip of Hope*. And that's our coffee line that we use as a social enterprise to help fund as much free education as we possibly can, because I believe in allowing people to be able to learn and not have to pay for it because it's something we're supposed to do a long time ago in society. Over time that's going to help us get to that place that more people can get educated, the more we can really drive the need for these tools to be integrated into every community and industry possible because we are human beings going through a thing called life and the more we can talk about our mental health; more will realize that we're not alone.

**Janie Schumaker:**

Great. Well, thank you for that. So, wow, this has been such a great conversation. So, Brigid, I'm going to turn it back over to you for our closure.

**Brigid Flood:**

Thanks. You know. I want to take this time to thank you for joining us on this episode of BCEN and Friends. You're certainly leaving some great footprints. So just a big thank you, Jonny. It was a great conversation today.

**Jonny Boucher:**

Oh, it's my pleasure. It's not about me. It's about we. So, I appreciate y'all because together we can we can tell stigma how we really feel, right?

**Brigid Flood:**

Absolutely and to our listeners, we hope your stay tuned as we continue on with this series and bring you new and impactful content and perspectives and if you have a suggestion for an episode, topic or speaker, please, please email us at [BCEN@BCEN.org](mailto:BCEN@BCEN.org). I'm Brigid Flood here with Janie Schumaker and on behalf of the entire BCEN team we thank you and celebrate for all that you're doing as professional nurses across emergency spectrum and until next time.