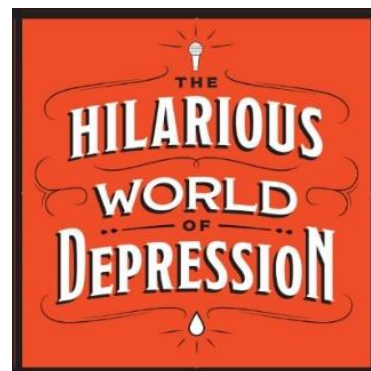




Bonus: Listen to John Moe's interim episode "Placebo" where he sits down with Peter Sagal

Peter was the guest on episode one of our program. He talked about his long standing depression for the first time ever with someone other than a medical professional. He opened up to me and our audience. But like anyone who has been open about their mental struggles, he was nervous how that was going to go over.

"Oh, I'm Peter Sagal and I'm here in the studio at WBEZ Chicago, Illinois."

"So, Peter, we talked to you for the very first episode of this podcast and it was your grand coming-out-of-the-closet moment as a depressive. How has the world reacted since you emerged from that closet?"

"Basically with the horror and contempt that I feared. On that day I became Quasimodo and the rest of the world became the mob. No. In fact it has been very gratifying. One of the things I had said to you at the time was I hope that my example, with whatever weight it has, would perhaps indicate to some people out there who heard it that hey, if I have this problem managed maybe they can as well or they can be open about or feel better about whatever they are going through and sure enough I got a lot of messages from people on Twitter. Somebody said they signed up for Facebook which they loathe just for this purpose. So they can let me know that the episode of Hilarious World meant something to them. So it's been really great. I have to say though, it is a little weird in person. And I just need to get used to it. Because people come up to me when we do a show and they come up afterward and say 'I wanted to let you know that I heard that episode of Hilarious World of Depression and wow. It was really great. It's so brave of you.' And I just feel odd. It's like 'congratulations on being a depressed person.' Well thank you. It took a life time of effort. But that's just me. If I wasn't the kind of person who looked for the dark side of every encounter then we never would have had the conversation in the first place. Am I right?"

"There you go. Nothing like despair to bring people together. That must be odd, after taping Wait, Wait, as we talked about before, a comedy show, or at least a funny news show, to then have a strange approach you and say 'Oh, remember that time you revealed your inner-most secrets?"

"That's what I mean. It's almost like that joke 'Do you have any nude pictures of your wife? Would you like some? May we discuss the incredible, intimate knowledge I have of your emotional life?' 'Well, I'd love to except there's somebody behind you in line who wants me to sign Karl's bobble-head.' It's fine. I've always said, you put something out into the world, you have to be ready for people to react to it. Nobody has said to me 'This is inappropriate!' or 'How dare you?' which is very nice, I guess. I sense that a people that think these things don't get in touch. Or what am I talking about? This is 2017! Of course they get in touch!"

“Everyone comments on everything. You know this from being in radio for so long, but even more so in the age of social media, there’s always going to be some people who hate what you are doing and can’t wait to tell you.”

“That’s true and for some reason that has not happened in this particular case, which I’m grateful. And I’ll tell you in all seriousness, perhaps the most gratifying response I got, which was from somebody that I am pretty sure would not be pleased with my airing various bits of familial dirty underwear in public, and that was my father. My father who is 80 now, comes from a generation...I would go so far as to say a ‘particular population of Jews’ who do not believe in parading one’s problems in front of the Goyim, perhaps as my grandmother would have put it. He wouldn’t. But the idea being that if you are having domestic difficulties or personal problems, you do not talk about them. You do not expose them to the world.”

“Because you didn’t talk about him explicitly during the interview. You made references to your childhood.”

“And I did. I mentioned my parents in passing. But, of course, I also referred to an event at which they were intimately aware of: my childhood. And involved in as well. And I frankly didn’t know what they would think. Would they feel, for example, criticized? I.e. I was suffering as a young depressed person, and you never noticed, I hate you mommy and daddy forever. Would they feel challenged by this? Would they disagree? Like ‘No! You weren’t like that at all!’ So the time went by and after the podcast came out, my mother called first. And my mother is also 80 and a little...I won’t say added, I’ll say confused about this brave, new social media world that we live in. And she said something to the effect of ‘I saw your blog, and I just think it was wonderful...it was wonderful.’

“Did that surprise you?”

“Well no. My mother, bless her heart, has been praising everything I have been doing since my first solid stool. Because of that, because of my mother’s unhindered enthusiasm for me, I wasn’t that worried. But like I said, my father...another story...just a few weeks ago, months after the podcast came out, he called me up and said ‘Well, I listened to that podcast. So you came out as a depressed person.’ And I said ‘yeah.’ And he says ‘you know there’s a family history of this.’ To which I said, ‘yes, I did know that.’ And I did not say ‘and we have never discussed it.’ And then we proceeded to discuss it. We talked about various family members. My grandfather in particular who, long before anybody would have diagnosed anybody with this problem, evidences signed he was a difficult guy, somebody who was often in a dark mood which caused people around him much grief. I was very young when he died, so I have no particular memory of that. And then, he asked me about what I’ve heard. Much like you did. And I said ‘the feedback has been very positive. People are very appreciative of being open. Coming out of that closet. A message of, if not encouragement, solidarity. People similarly situated. And he finally said, ‘Well, I’ll give you some positive feedback. I think it was very brave. And I think you did a really great thing by doing it. I think people will hear it and be encouraged and comforted, because some like you in a public position that you have, came out like that. And I think it was a very good thing that you did.’”

“Wow. How did that feel to hear him say that?”

“It felt un-ironically wonderful. Which is not something I am capable of talking about very well. It was very nice. Because as I said, I had worried about and I don’t whether to say he rose to the occasion or my dark expectations fell.”

“Well, you met in a good place, regardless.”

“It’s true. If you were to ask me the single best thing about it, and I don’t want to diminish the many people who have gotten in touch with me who might be listening to this, and I want to say to those people ‘I’m really glad that this thing, that primarily John did and that I participated in, helped you and made you feel better for a minute or a day or a week...but for me, that has to be the highlight of the result of this particular little exercise of self-expression.’”