**How many years were you addicted to drugs and/or alcohol?How long have you been sober?**

Addicted/ Sober First Race sobriety years First Race

2 Dave 5/ 18 12 years 2016 Monterey 10k (OCR 1st)

5 Lucas 23/ 3.5 10 months 2019 SJ injured -2019 Monterey 10k

4 Royster 16/ 17 2 years 2018 (TM 1st)\_\_\_\_\_

3 Brice 5/ 7 2 years 2019 Monterey 10k

6 Kyle 7.5/ 3 6 months 2018 Sacramento 5k

8 Jesse (40) 18/ 10.5 1 year 2012 Ontario (did Warrior Dash 1st)

1 Eddie 18.5/ 8.5 6 months 2013 Monterey Beast

1. Nick 15/ 7.5 Just over 2 years FL superQ

**Q1 What circumstances led up to the last time you used drugs and/or alcohol?**

**2 Dave:** I had gone to jail a couple times. And then it was like the last time I went to jail. I got arrested, went to jail. And then it was like oh, like a month later, got arrested, went to jail. Then like a week later, got arrested, went to jail. And then got out started using and was back in less than 24 hours and I was like, This is fucking stupid. And pretty much if I pick up again, I should just walk straight to jail. So I was like, I was just over it. Like, I was living in a fucking storage unit, like being hassled because you're not supposed to live in a storage unit surrounded with a bunch of dismantled bicycles and bullshit and I was like, I've I have had enough.

**5 Lucas** Ah, well, things I knew I was an alcoholic and I wasn't willing to admit it. Things were going on in my marriage that I wasn't happy with. And I didn't want to talk about my feelings but I could sure drink about them. So finally, I got the balls to confront my wife on what was going on. And she told me I was an alcoholic to one of the divorce. They said, You're right, you know, and I'm okay with it. , I just wasn't willing to admit until that day

**4 Royster** Yeah, I got arrested. NEED MORE

**3 Brice** I got sober in prison because I realize if I didn't get sober, I would not make it out of prison.

**6 Kyle** I, there was a multitude of things. Um, the first thing was, I lost my job. I was caught using heroin and methamphetamine at my at my job and I lost my job. And then shortly after that, like a month after that, I lost the house that I was living in. And then so I was living on the streets for roughly like six to seven months. Like in and out of hotels, I wasn't I would sleep in my car occasionally but mostly like in and out of hotels, dealing drugs and things like that. So I had like a roof over my head, but I was, I was technically homeless. And I think my mom My mom saw a big change, you know, and she's the one that came forward and she wasn't the first person that confirmed me, but she's the one that said that. You need to get help, right. And I was hesitant to get help but eventually I conceded and drove myself to rehab.

**8 Jesse** Sitting in apartment you and old people smoking crack. Looked around roomWas in an apartment with people doing crack and asked himself is this what you want for your life. Are you going to be 40 or 50 still doing drugs. This isn’t what I want. Prison 6-7 months at age 19 started lifting and eating regularly put on strength. Made me feel good about myself. Feeling of hope. Prison ate regularly couldn’t do drugs or alcohol an started using weights and felt good about himself. Had desire to become a personal trainer.

**1 Eddie that** had gone trouble using some kind of stolen credit cards and just was really sick of the lifestyle. There's like just like you know, a picture in myself like if I were if I was like sober, would I be really hanging out with these people or going through that this whole drama mess and just basically sick and tired of being sick and tired?

**7 Nick** You know, this is an interesting one, because I consider myself a very lucky drunk. As, as well detailed in the book, my last trunk was very public. And you know, it was, I was ashamed. And there was nowhere to hide from it. There was no way no way to excuse it. And I had to face it. And it was a problem I was already well aware of, I just, it wasn't for me, it wasn't even whether or not I accepted that I had a problem was simply when did I decide to do something about it?

**Q2 What significant damage do you think addiction has caused you (consider personal, physical, mental, social, spiritual, and financial aspects of life)?**

**2 Dave:** Oh, I fucked up my credit. I fucked up relationships with other people. Not like I'll say like childhood friends. Relationships with girls. Relationships with my family, employment, like everything. I mean, like people like if you really stop and look at it, it fucks up everything. Like, you know your body, like your health, like I mean, God, where do you begin?

**5 Lucas** all along those years from I've been I was mentally I was mentally spiritually and monetarily, you know, dead and broke like I was a shell of a person. What I wanted to be and you know, and alcohol took that away from me.

**4 Royster** That's all the above so emotionally you know you when you're living in that lifestyle you don't you know, you don't care for people. So you forget you know, you don't know what love is you don't know how to you know, treat you know your family the way you're supposed to. So that's one aspect right? And there's just so much so, you know, financially obviously hardship I'm around doing participate in criminal activities to support my high so yeah, I have no money. So I'm sitting here doing all this crazy stuff to support my habit, you know, when I'm in the addiction, you know, and all that so, you know, for me, personally, I've damaged a lot of things along the way, and so on all assets of my life were just completely dysfunctional. However, you can look at it, it doesn't, you know, in that moment, you don't care about anything else. You just care about. Your next adrenaline rush your next high your next, whatever it is. Starting to emotionally start a lot to me.

**3 Brice** I'm a father. I'm gonna see my son in over 10 years due to drug and alcohol being in prison. And financially I don't have nothing's basically starting over. So it's been Yeah, hardship, a lot of hardship. And emotionally you're fighting chemical imbalance and it does a number on you. So you know, all the above all the above diction heights.

**6 Kyle** I could actually see the emotional damage that I was causing in my life, you know, first and foremost. And then physically, I was coming down with ailments and getting sick and so physically, it was starting to cause a lot of damage and I could see that and that was affecting me emotionally and mentally, mentally as well. As far as damage goes it in a in a short amount of time when I started using on a daily basis, it pretty much took everything from me so you know, which it does to most people you know, it's an everybody has. Everybody has different levels of that, you know, everybody hits the rock bottom at a different time and, and, and mine was that it just took everything from me it took it took my value it took my worth and my self worth.And it was starting to take my family and so that's yeah, it's a very, it doesn't give you much back.

**8 Jesse**  It sucks everything decent out of you. What gave him comfort eventually almost destroyed his life. Physically addicted and eventually mentally addicted. Had to stay high or drunk and if I wasn’t I wanted to die. Lost the girl I cared most about. Kicked out of school. In and out of course. Disappointed my family. Got into fights. In prison at 18 years old.  didn’t eat, couldn’t sleep, I was so skinny you could see every bone in my body, I would avoid looking at myself in the mirror at all costs, I couldn’t talk to my parents or brothers, I was kicked out of school, not good at anything, the darkness would turn to anger and violence when I drank. I lost a lot of friends and the respect of the people I cared about the most. I didn’t like one thing about me and wanted to die. Every day I would get on my knees and ask God to take my life instead of someone else’s who didn’t deserve it, I would see someone suffering with cancer and say to God I deserve that, give me that instead of them, why is that child or mother sick and not me I deserve that. 2 ½ in and out of prison 18-23 years old. Depression and darkness. Didn’t want to live no more. Couldn’t stay sober the last night he ever saw his mom. She died of cancer. He drank more. Guilt and shame, hopelessness, sadness, dying inside. Didn’t se happiness or success in future. He begged God to take his life.

**1 Eddie** Like the shame. Like you know from like, losing your inhibitions. Like putting yourself out there. Going to jail probably causing pain on my mom and you know, family, and stuff like stuff I stuff you know, stuff that got stolen, that, you know, people trusted me with, you know, I can never ever get back that was probably like really valuable. I mean, during those times, it was really, you know, nothing. None of that really mattered. Like, you know, you just lived off whatever you had and you know, just got by getting you know, with whatever little you had, so, like financially probably didn't really have no finances then so.

**7 Nick** So because of that, you know, I had an opportunity to, to, to make a change. And I went to my first meeting, and I did not lose my job, though. I should have. I did not lose my girlfriend, though. I should have my friends stood by me. It's tough to you know, it's, it's what you call it a false bottom drunk, right. Like, there's a lot worse of things I could have continued on. And but what I realized now, and I mean, very recently, specifically, as I kind of reflect upon my career, you know, that was a big part of my life, I worked at one place for 14 years, from when I moved to Florida, when I got married, divorced and met my current wife, like that was my friend center was there my travel my Vegas trips, my drinking buddies, it was a lot. And so what I'm kind of realizing now, is I just look back to the person I was during that time, you know, the, the decisions I made, how I spent my time, my attitude, my in consideration of others, like things that I didn't have to be drinking, to actually do anything really shitty. And so honestly, I just think that damage was the it was more of the, the quantity I guess, or the time that I was in a position of influence over a lot of people you know, invariably by I had a responsibility to be better for them and the way I kind of see just how I was as a manager or leader, those are behaviors that whether or not it was directly due to drinking or not, there was a lot of growing up you know, a lot of selfishness and self centeredness and you know, and that's what I realized the damage for me I don't think was greatly physical, although I'm a type one diabetic, but you know, financial Sure. Because just a waste of money and of course, spending money on food you don't need hotels, you don't need things that you don't need when you draw you know, when you're when you're not drinking, but I didn't really have to lose anything bad to make it happen for me, you know, I came as close to the edge, but I was on that edge.

**Q3 When was your first OCR and/or first Spartan Race? Where you already in shape?**

**1 Eddie** My very first OCR race was a sport and it was 2013, six months into sobriety.I saw the Monterey beast in I saw a Spartan Race, advertise on Facebook and then I was looking for local races, and Monterey was the closest first race that I seen and I signed up for it.

**2 Dave**: My First Spartan was my second race. Monterey. I ran it again, with my wife and like her friends like yeah, we're gonna do a team. And it was like, and I always had this like little thing we wondering like, like, I know, I could go faster than this. Like, I want to try to see like how good I could do you know? Where you already in shape? I was. I was not in bad shape. I’ve never been in like bad shape. I've just like, you're either like my work is physical. So it's like you're either focused on it or you're not. And but I definitely like not running like No, like I didn't have any cardio stuff down. I wasn't in shitty shape like I've never been like overweight or anything like that so but I don't know I don't remember if we like trains specifically for that first race. I needed help with every obstacle so that tells me I was yeah we had not been going regularly.

**5 Lucas** So I didn't know any of this stuff existed and there was so my first Spartan Race I actually, I paid for and so that actually changes things that change is one of them. My first Spartan Race was supposed to be a San Jose in 2019. But I ended up having surgery on my foot, so I had to miss that race. So that my first Spartan Race that I actually showed up for was a Monterey and 2019 I think it was 2020. I forget I'd have to look at the app and it'll tell me which day it was, but it was Monterey. So June of I think, 2020 or 19. Yeah, I had a planter wart and they cut like a dime sized section of bottom of my foot and I couldn't run. Where you in shape? So I was on my way. So I've lost about a about 100 pounds total. Well, I've lost over 100 pounds because I don't know what I weighed or above 300 pounds. Because I didn't want to hit the scale then but you know, the coming into that Spartan Race I had lost close to 100 pounds. So I was in better shape. But I wasn't quite running like I am today. I was just you know going to the gym and like running on the elliptical but not actually getting the miles on my feet. But running outside. So yeah, I was about a year prior to getting sober is when I got into the gym because I thought going to the gym was going to make my alcoholic life better. 2019Monterey Super

**4 Royster** Tough Mudder was my first one. 2018.How many years sober at time? 2 Were you in shape?The Tough Mudder I was I didn't really I mean, I was in shape didn't really know what shape was until I went to tell her. Sorry, I was in a shape but you know, I was in shape. I was in shape. Sweeping I was.

**3 Brice** I did my first Spartan we had to Super Monterey 2019.How many years sober at time? 2.Were you in shape?I was prison shape but not cardio or anything like that. It was not up to par you know, and I see these other fit people and realize my standard fitness is not the standard of fitness. So I was not in shape.

**6 Kyle** It was, it was my first OCR. So my uncle, he is a big part of my support group. He's, he's been sober for 20 years now. I moved to closer to him and his wife, my aunt, because they had a solid base and are in recovery. And they've been at it for a long time. And I figured that if anybody would be willing to help me, like get through those, that the early stages of recovery they would, and so he turned 50 And he wanted to do a Spartan Race on his 50th birthday or right after he turned 50. And just to see if he could do it. And, and I was like, totally down for it. I was like, Yeah, I'd love to do it if you want to. If you want to involve me, I'm totally, totally down to go and do a Spartan Race. I didn't know what really what it entailed at the time, but so yeah, my first race. I think I was six months sober. And I just did it on a whim, you know, like very, very little training.

**8 Jesse** I did my first race in 2012. And it was at hardwood hills in Barrie, Ontario. 1 year sober **1 Eddie** six months into my sobriety around my first marathon and in between that time that I had already sent out by saying I seen Spartan on Facebook ad and it was like a couple weeks after so 6-7 months in sobriety then I signed up for my first race Monterey Beast 2013 Were you in shape? Not as in as good a shape I am now but I was running you know what I mean? Just getting active, staying active and running miles. I mean, it was a half marathon. I ran, you know, 13 miles before but not with all the extra obstacles and stuff like that. And it took me like, probably like three hours. My first beast. Yeah, it was. Definitely struggle. But well worth it. Because I came back. way out of shape probably in better shape than I can average beginner but emotion wise was like this is like the hardest thing I've ever done going through it was like you know what all the stuff you been through in life isn't does not compare this isn't compared at all the stuff that I went through in life in any pain agony and I will provide permanent you know all the stuff that I was trying to overcome basically like raining in on fire to take down that path and I really didn't finish I wasn't it was more like yeah I'm gonna do this again but I'm not gonna be committed to it was more like oh my do it once a year type thing you know what I mean I was just expressing myself riding in and I was

**7 Nick** December 2016. Jacksonville Bunnell, or whatever it was called Florida. It was the super and I've been sober for just over two years. Where you in shape?

**Q3 How did you first learn about Spartan? What circumstances led you to sign up?**

**2 Dave** I think her friend at the time had run a couple of them, I think and was like, oh, like if you think this is fun, like, it was like you got to try a Spartan like if you think this like the urbanathalon or whatever those are like child's play compared to Spartan so it was like, Oh, you think this is fucking cool? You ought to try one of these and we're like, I'm in like, let's do it. I was just like a an okay athletic looking person, had seen my wife do similar type Races and it looked fine. it wasn't a spartan race it was like a men's health urban athalon and it was like oh that looks kind of cool. then her friend was like oh we should do that we should sign up to do the AT&T SPARTAN and she was like oh yeah you should do it. I was having fun jumping over crazy shit of course.

**5 Lucas** And you um, a couple of my alcoholic buddies were doing so um, for Spartan Race, I ran with four other sober dudes. And they have more sobriety than I did, and they ended up just hearing about it for you know, just like word of mouth and then they were doing fitness stuff and getting healthy and I thought they were stupid. And I'm like, okay, you know, I am gonna join and tag along and then, you know, before I knew it, I fell in love. After my first partner Bill, actually my first Spartan Race I signed up for it was the I thought it was a spring but it was a super in Monterey and I about died and thought it was the dumbest thing ever and then, you know, I'm like, wait a minute, I am addicted and I have to keep doing this. I was addicted. I was addicted to the feeling after completing that race, even though it sucked.

**4 Royster** That's how I discovered Spartan was through Jericho.

**3Brice** Yeah, Jericho. It's a big part of what we do here. And so, yeah, I met Spartan through Jericho. It's a good community and how did Jericho project find out about it? I remember so, we had a an individual that used to be a staff member in the program. And he used to run all the social events and he would do the tough motors and stuff. So we the programmers really started with Tough Mudder and then we just he discovered a there's a Spartan you know, and so that we I was actually on the first crew that Jericho did Spartan, so I was on that first team.And so that's how we kind of we, you know, tough mudder kind of, fizzled out a little bit and got kind of rough and then we're like, hey, there's another thing called Spartan, it's like right here in Sacramento. You want to do that it's closer. And so that's how we that's how it all kicked off.

**8 Kyle** It was, it was my first OCR. So my uncle, he is a big part of my support group. He's, he's been sober for 20 years now. I moved. I was moved to closer to him and his wife, my aunt, because they had a solid base and are in recovery. And they've been at it for a long time. And I figured that if anybody would be willing to help me, like get through those, that the early stages of recovery they would, and so he turned 50 And he wanted to do a Spartan Race on his 50th birthday or right after he turned 50. And just to see if he could do it. And, and I was like, totally down for it. I was like, Yeah, I'd love to do it if you want to. If you want to involve me, I'm totally, totally down to go and do a Spartan Race. I didn't know what really what it entailed at the time, but so yeah, my first race. I think I was six months sober. And I just did it on a whim, you know, like very, very little training. Um yeah, I've always just generally been in kind of good shape i but I will admit, I didn't like train for it at all. So you know, I kind of went to the went and worked out on some gym equipment and stuff and I didn't get into running until after that Spartan Race, I think so I would say no, my cardio wasn't very good. I just kind of limped my way through but I actually ended up doing it relatively fast. So I was I was, you know, I was happy with the results and that sort of like the net. I think the next day I went signed up for a super

**8 Jesse** Well, to be honest with you, I actually did a Warrior Dash not too long before. And I loved it. And then I did some more research. And I found Spartan Race was coming not too far away. And yeah, we did. We did that one. I think I know. I'm ashamed to admit it that I did. Warrior Dash and Tough Mudder first, and then before I found Spartan. Yeah, I think we just looked up obstacle course races, we loved it, and then found Spartan. I honestly just did it with a group of friends. Okay. Same thing with Tough Mudder. I didn't know much about it. But I gave it a go. And I had an idea of, you know, what was what it was the five kilometer race with some obstacles on a mountain. I wasn't sure what the obstacles were. But uh, I wasn't too worried. I was like, I was running cross country. And I had a strength background. So I knew I would destroy

**1 Eddie** We saw it on Facebook. at that time, it was like a little video about like, how like, how bad do you want it? I how bad you want to breathe? Like, underwater or something like that. like everybody looked all muddy and struggling, There's like people all shapes and sizes doing it and you know, it just looked like a really good time. And just, it was local, of course, you know, I didn't have to travel really far like 30 minute drive.

1. **Nick** Nine weeks prior to that My boss was a good friend of mine and walked into my office and said, Hey, I want to do a Spartan Race, and you're gonna do with me. And I looked at him and I was like, no, no, fuck no, not doing that. Like, you know, I ran a little bit here and there, I was kind of getting back in shape. Sorry, my dogs are going a little bit nuts. And, but what I realized that I went home that night, it was a Friday night. And I always just uncomfortable. I was uncomfortable the way that I was. And you know, the reason I didn't want to do the Spartan Races, I didn't want to be uncomfortable. I didn't want to run long distances. I didn't want to do obstacles. No, I didn't want to get in the mud. Like, I didn't want to have my heart rate up. And I just didn't want to be uncomfortable to get up and train for get up early and change my life and my routine and but as I was kind of sitting there just emptying, like what am I doing when myself I already was uncomfortable. So I said, All right, let's see what happens here. And that was it. And it was we trained hard for nine weeks followed a plan did the race and that was that was a lot of races ago.

Q 4 **Describe the feelings and emotions you had at your first race?**

**2 Dave** I was excited. It was fun. And But definitely, I mean, dude, we're talking like, compared to like what I could do now. it was cool. I was accomplishing everything. So that was like rewarding feeling and killer. So that was like really good. I was excited and a little nervous like the course. I go ahead never done that before but like oh that should be fun and I mean it feels good cause you're never the eve haven't touched any of those things or done any of those types of like obstacles are challenges so it's like of course that was a different and new and like oh wait I was kind of neat of this is fun says it like a good feeling satisfaction. like oh finishing it even though even though at that time I was just running in the oven it was like I didn't really know the difference at that time so that was neat like I will do another one of those for sure and that was kind of like oh I thought and then then I think we were signed up for I think Monterey after that because we weren't like junkies. we were like oh yeah like there's one coming up that semi-local we should sign up

**5 Lucas** I was so nervous to actually be there but to see the atmosphere and to see everybody coming together. You know, even before the race, I had all these random people talking to me about their race. You know, I didn't know what to expect, but like when I first started the race, I was super scared and nervous, but then, you know, watching everybody else run and then you know, like passing a couple of people definitely was an ego boost and then getting past you know, took a little bit another way, you know, so just by the time the race was done, I was surprised that I was able to do it but so excited that I completed my first Spartan Race.

**4 Royster** That was foreign. No, that was that was that was eye opening. That was pretty cool, you know, different atmosphere. Then obviously my first you know, race, but my first Spartan is completely different that people are much more fitter. A lot more camaraderie. Seems it's for me, I know it was it was kind of tough mudder more like Team base and so Spartan for me. So getting clean, getting sober all that individual. So the feeling for that, you know, everything is individual, you know, on the obstacles and everything that was a big thing for me like to challenge myself. So it helped me you know, realize where I was at, in push myself to the limits because in a negative life, I push myself to the limit. So now in the positive life, I'm trying to do the same thing, right. So for Spartan, I mean, that was a huge thing for me was to go out there and you know, I think I missed like one obstacle, you know, and it was like a fluky thing. I missed it. It wasn't even but anyway, so yeah, it was good. It was pretty, you know, it's good. So ever since then, that always the sport after that first part and it was Spartan, from there on out, you know,

**3 Brice** As far as my first race was eye opener, seeing the camaraderie meet people there and realize no, this is something I can do for life. This is a community this is something I can you know, come take my friends and family to and something I'll be doing for a very long time. So it was Eye Opener I mean every their camaraderie there and fucking see nice for people talking to them socializing. And I never showed slides before my life. And so meeting people like that, and socializing was like here, this is gonna work and they're not. And they come up and ask us Do you guys Marines who are you guys? And we tell them no, we're a drug and alcohol program. And they're like, very supportive what we do so it was really good, the camaraderie everything there was good.

**6 Kyle** Oh my god. The drive home was euphoric. Everybody was like, completely pumped up and like super excited and it was like it was like a high that drugs have never given me. You know that feeling after you do something like that. But beforehand, we'll start it beforehand. I was obviously nervous. I didn't know what to expect. I'm a pretty competitive person. So I like I obviously wanted to beat everybody, you know, at least everybody that I was with, you know, and, and so I was nervous and but an anxious but like a good sort of anxious feeling, you know. You know, you're, I'm, I'm pushing myself to the limit the whole time pretty much so I'm not there's not a lot of thought going on in my head and not like reflecting on too many things, but you just feel good like after you after you get over an obstacle. It just gives you an overwhelming sense of sense of joy and accomplishment, I guess. You'd say.

**8 Jesse** while I was really it was a lot more exciting. I would say I knew it was one where I was going to compete at and get a time I knew that there was an elite sheet. And then I would be competing with some of the best guys. And that excited me, I knew it was gonna be hard and challenging. So it was a whole different whereas Warrior Dash and Tough Mudder were fun. You know, and I did work pretty hard and whatever. But Spartan was, you know, it was a lot more exhilarating, it was a lot more intense, it was a lot more exciting, hard, meaningful at the finish line.

**1 Eddie** I was really nervous at first when I got there, but I was really like ready to go, I got the monkey bars. I didn't know how to do that. Really get to know how to do climb a rope. I didn't know how to throw a spear. I didn't know how to do a lot of the obstacles like Z wall, and stuff like that. But it was really challenging because I had nowhere to practice at the time and went after like the first two races. It was basically just going to the races and learning my technique and watching people there. So, you know, if I wanted to get better, I guess I had to race more, because I had nowhere to practice.Stuff like,, the basic stuff wasn't too bad, but like when,, doing like obstacles I've never done before. You know, it was really, really hard. You know, learn how to do a rope climb and you know, doing like 150 burpees every race.

when I when I first got committed and when I first started to really put in the work towards the race in the competing and stuff like that then played a big part of my sobriety because right then and there I think I was like 2 1/2 maybe almost 3 years sober and I was just like wow I need this to keep pushing me and pushing me forward and keep pushing me in life to do better things find a better job and I was working like passing tables washing dishes at that time I'm just doing whatever I could and then finally kind of landed like a decent job and I just needed something to keep pushing me forward so that commitment to the races in the training just it I feel the void that I needed at the time it was fill in the void that I that I needed and since I only had one job now I needed more to fill that void so SPARTAN was perfect I'm going to step back a bit after that

**7 Nick** that, hey, I was just tired. Um, you know, I felt like that metal was a symbol that all the world would know. I'm literally just going back to the hotel and like they no stranger looking at us. They see the mud. They know, they know what just happened here. And there was definitely accomplishment, you know, but it really wasn't, I think until the next day, my wife girlfriend at the time we went over to Flagler Beach after the race and we've had breakfast and there's a finite number of times in my life, I can say that I just kind of felt relaxed and serenity, true serenity. And that was a that was one of those moments. And you know, I mean, I go to travel anywhere, and I can pretend that I'm going to want to enjoy all day, Sunday, wherever I am. But all I start thinking about is man, I want to get home now. It's like you need to get ready for tomorrow. And it was nice. We just cruised up and down the street of the beach. I grew up around I missed the Atlantic. That's where my tradition of ice cream post race local ice cream came from. So we found a spot there. And so for me that post race feeling was just it. It was that level that I wanted him all along.

1. **Have you ever experienced the Runner’s High or Flow State during and/or after a Spartan Race (i.e., state of euphoria, timelessness)?**

**1 Dave** you're almost in like a trance like a euphoric state where you're just like, like, just cruising. And I try to explain it to people that are starting to run for this reverse time. They're like, I'm so fucking tired. Like, this is horrible. And I'm like, Dude, you got to make it past like, the three quarters of a mile because anybody when you take off running it I equated to like an airplane taking off, right? So you like you're heading up, you're trying to get into the jet stream. And if you hear that airplane working hard, and then all of a sudden it gets in the jet stream, and it kind of throttles back and it's just cruising and your body feels the same way. Like, this sucks. It's super hard, all of a sudden, but if you just stay there, you don't even realize it. Your breathing evens out. And you just kind of go into autopilot. And you're like, oh, and now you're jammin and it's killer.

**5 Lucas** Yes, so that is 5 beers deep on an empty stomach is what I can equate it to. it's just not so much like you know, you smoked a joint or you actually drink but you kind of get the like I get like a little bit of a I feel like I'm levitating a little bit. I'm just kind of high on my own emotions and what I've accomplished, you know, just like, especially when I'm on a nice slow run out in nature is when I feel it the most.

**4 Royster** During the very beginning, right in the right in the beginning Oh, like the beginning of the race. Like the energy Yeah. And then I was gone for you know, I ran for miles without you know, oh, we already went through three miles, whatever it was four miles like jeez, that was like right. Yeah. And that was like my first Spartan and how about you Spartan Yes. for you in the beginning all see the vibes everything's good. Suppose you go in Jericho. I mean, everything's good. And then hit that finish line. You know, hit that finish line, you just get more amped up to and seeing everybody cross that finish line that you can want. Yeah, then afterwards is it's on the ride home. It's man. So yeah, it's good all the way through.

**3 Brice (See Royster and survey data)**

**6 Kyle** Um, yeah, yeah, absolutely. Yeah, I mean, there are times where you know, you just kind of go blank while you're while you're on it, you have a good stride and you're in you just your mind just sort of goes blank and you kind of feel like you're floating through the course. You mentioned those long runs, you know, I actually, when I did Tahoe, there was a some long run sections and I've just during those long run sections, I felt like I was sort of floating through those and making up a lot of ground on those on and you just feel good about that. And I don't know exactly what a runner's high feels like, I mean, I think that I felt that I've ran probably hundreds of miles in my life, you know, so I'm sure that I have felt it but yeah, if we're talking about the D overall feeling of enjoyment from exercise, then Yeah, most definitely. I've felt that

**8 Jesse** Like, during the actual race? Mm hmm. Yeah, well, I'm definitely never thinking about anything. Bothering me during the race. For sure. Like, I don't think I've ever been in any kind of euphoric state, like during the race where I'm just like, whatever. But I would say after the race, you know, just so pumped up, you're feeling so good. Even if you had a not the best one. You know, and yeah, you're there is no worries, and you're not thinking about nothing else. And everything is all good. And yeah, and that's actually interesting, because, you know, I joined my own friends and during my training, you can let those a lot of that negative stuff in your head. And, you know, sometimes you get anxiety, even when you're freaking training and running, your thoughts are running wild, but in a Spartan Race, that's, you know, that's not the case. You're, you're out there, you're challenging yourself, you're, you know, there's not only and not just the pros around you, like just the fact that there's so many people out there for so many different reasons, fighting so many different things. And it's a it's really powerful. There's not a worry in the world when you're out there on the mountain

**1 Eddie** Oh, yeah, pretty much.Pretty much like in the beginning, yeah. You know, when I was just like, getting after going, going, you know, and like, you know, like the first stages of sobriety. I felt like that pretty much like all the time and but like lately now, it's been like more when I'm kind of doing more intensive work. So, if I'm doing like, a two hour like, run at, like, you know, 80% of like, you know, my max, you know, it's, uh, yeah, it's way different type of high. You know, like, it's it got intensified from the beginning.

**7 Nick** go no, no, I've had just to suffer. I think I've gotten that feeling several times. Like when jumping the fire last year, Jacksonville after the after the shutdown to 2020. Awesome that line for the first time last year like I remember just feeling that rush of like, positive feeling like a motion come over me. And I imagine that's what that is. But I've never had something like that during the race. It's pretty much like what hurts now how do I get through this? Is it over yet? How am I doing? Drink water? Check your sugar. next obstacle. that's that time for example? Absolutely. Like, I remember what I remember jumped in a fire and it was just like, like, almost like fighting back tears. It just felt like that rush of emotion and just kind of walking through the festival area. Like, it was surreal, just everything that was coming back. And I was thinking, man, just how lucky we are to be doing this and to have this and, you know, like, John Palmerton, actually, this year. So ironically, Palmerton usually lines up with my anniversary. And so it was on July 14, the first year that I did it. And like that trip is about that for me. Like I don't my wife doesn't come with me. Like I want to just be me do what I want to do. However, I want to do it, which is basically just, I don't want to think about anything, you know, I'm gonna go hit that mountain on give it hell. And hopefully I'm still around celebrate a little bit later. And this year, you know, I did a couple of things. I challenged myself I did the hurricane heat the night before then the super. And then you know, when I like crushed the sprint, and I just remember leaving the venue that day. Like everything all the way to the airport. I was I was just on fire all the way to the airport, it was the best feeling I was just riding so high, especially because like I did get to just see so many people too. And really part of that community aspect. And you know, that's, I mean that that place still some souls. Yeah, everybody's got big smiles on their faces. And so for me like, I do feel like that weekend is sort of like the anniversary of me beating my darkness. And that feeling doesn't go away very soon.

1. **Does Spartan race help you maintain sobriety?**

**2 Dave** Yes, because and I I'm a firm believer I think like what Joe says like put a date on the calendar. And now you're accountable. Like you have a goal. There's a date you're leading up to it. I am a huge believer in that. So it's like I know I'm gonna run some races like every year or a lot. It's just how many I can afford to go to so I'm kind of like, you know, I'm wanting to stay like keep the sword sharp like all the time. You know, I don't want to have a race. Think of it as like, oh, you weren't ready and plus the older you get if you're like, Oh, I'm going to be a piece of shit for three weeks and the horrible and like not train all of a sudden you're like, Oh, what happened? It takes you like three months to get back to where you were doing like a four day a week. workout routine and eating pretty good. So, you know, if you kind of stay on it, then I'd rather you know stay ready, be ready.”If you have any drive whatsoever to be successful, then I'm looking for any leg up. So I'm not thinking of a line of coke and a 12 pack, but more like if I eat healthy and I do some more training, I can be faster.” He mentioned the excitement, fun, and adrenaline rush of racing and the encouragement he received from his competitors. Spartan 2 described the struggle in this way: “I feel like no matter how hard that struggle is out there, I'm stoked to be here. I'm not in a jail cell. Your worst day there [at a race] is still better than your best day out.” I think it helps I think it helps maintain sobriety especially if you if you have any Drive whatsoever to be successful at a work out or any sort of race. I'm looking for any leg up on anything to do better at it so I'm not like other dude do you know what would make me a better racer is a line of Coke and a 12 pack so you're not thinking. oh if I eat healthy and I do some more training and some more running late I can be faster so that's like how my brain works

**5 Lucas** Yes, because I choose you know, God is my higher power and I up you know, 10,000 feet 9000 feet on a Spartan Race is where I really connect, and is like, I will have heard something in a meeting or have heard something you know, like talking to somebody else who's sober but then I really reflect on it when I'm out in nature on Spartan run. I have to stop sometimes and just you know, soak in my gratitude on where I am today.

**4 Royster** Yeah, with Spartan it's almost with anything but with Spartan you know, it's the whole work helps me like if I know there's an event coming, then I have to train for it. Right. And so with Spartan that's, you know, all that leads up to that, you know what I mean? Like I have to sit here, you know, that's what helps me stay focused and on track is to have to train for the next part. You know what I mean or train for the next event. So that's what helps me you know, that's how it keeps me motivated to want to do that. I'll put the thing on the calendar, okay, I'm going to that one, you know, and then we go from there, and then I'm building up to that, you know, and it keeps me on track and, you know, it goes all the way down to the diet.

**3 Brice** Yeah, I just say the training aspect of it. Know, when you're getting ready to go do a big Spartan Race, you're training you're going out and just having that day on that calendar and say, hey, you know, I got to get in top physical shape to go do this far from here. So if you plan them out through a year, I mean, you're pretty much set on your goals and pretty much your physical and so you're, it's good to have that focus and goals. Does it help that you go as a team like you want to be strong for the rest of the crew here? Whoa, it does, but like, it's individual racing. So you go there I'm here to compete just like any kind of man I'm here to fucking I'm here to cross that person for you get going people, you know, they're going to push you it's good to go there with a bunch of people because you're like, No, I'm going to finish and so the drive is good. But only that he but I see somebody on the trailer in front of me and I'm trying to I'm trying to jam so I get it.

**6 Kyle** it's a Spartan is not the sole thing that keeps me sober. It's definitely one of the one of the things that has helped me get to where I am today. You know, you feel a sense of accomplishment. When you when you spend a certain amount of time say six months training for an event, and then you do well or you exceed or you do better than you thought you would. And it just gives you it gives you a sense of motive, motivation and gratitude for like, what gratitude and value for what life actually is all about. Ay short, instantaneous high, you know that you that you that you bought, you know, you know a Spartan, you've worked six months for this for this high you know, and you achieve that, right. And there's, there's something, there's something, it sounds a little cliche, but there's, there's something that really that euphoric about that I guess. If I were to go down the path of drugs and alcohol again? Yeah, like how that would affect your athletics and all that. You know, if it had gotten to that point, you know, being physically fit isn't even something that's in your realm at that point, you know, it's that at least for me, you know, I when I was on drugs and alcohol, you know, doing anything to for my health was, was just unheard of. You know, I'm, you know, with heroin addiction, you're pretty much living for that next high in anything you can do to get that high, you know, so, so, it may registered to be honest, I've never really thought about it. But yeah, that I may think about, wow, this is this is not great. And this is going to affect my performance not only physically, but also mentally.

**8 Jesse** I would Yes, I would agree with that. You know, it's more of a rush, it's more of a, you know, I love the that it's a you know, a sport and you're competing, you're trying to be better, it gives you purpose in your life, it gives you purpose in your training. You know, for me, I was trying to get on that podium, I was trying to get the top spot of that podium. So you know, and it was you know, going to the some of those races and how hard they were like when you get on some of those big mountains. And yeah, again, a lot more gratifying when you get to that that finish line so um, you know, for one, you want to damage your body less because I was still probably I was still kind of getting off the cigarettes and what not. So and again, just given me something to live for. I started a gym based around obstacle course racing and it created a community of Ubuntu friends for me and that was also huge. But yeah, I think they were Spartan Race like what were your dash tough Mater was fun, there are challenges that you do. Great when you get to the finish line, you have a you know, you have your beer, you have some smiles, you tell your stories with your friends, but like, you know, to me, that's not going to keep you kind of coming back eventually people get tired of running around in the mud. And I love the compete factor the you know, getting time trying to be better. And yeah, and I think for me that that, you know, my addictive personality, you know, getting addicted to kind of that that highIQ because there's a measurement there if you want to have a bud right. Okay, you had fun at that word. My friend just said that he's a rugged maniac. I said no, I'm not interested. He's two laps. You could do two laps and you get a training workout. I was like I'd rather not get muddy and be stupid. I'd rather have it the hardcore gym like you have I have one here I go to I'd rather do that and get a real sport and workout then waste money on the tough motor. So I feel the same way. measure yourself every time and new people come into your Opinion on age groups: Yeah, and I love that I love how Spartans doing that. And I love what they're doing this year with the age group championships because that's your that's where you grow. The sport is in the age groups. You know, if you look at Ironman, there's like 20 people in the pro heat, but then you go to the age groups. And there's 1000s Yeah. So they're smart.

**1 Eddie** the community is always good. Like, I've met so many people through it that like, if it wasn't for Spartan, I wouldn't be hanging out with those people. we come from different backgrounds and stuff posted and the calendar and obviously the competition keeps you wanting to wanting to grind more and keep getting after it.a competition with yourself to be a better person to like to keep you competing and pushing forward. coming from a small town everybody knows your business and they're just waiting for you to mess up you. I've relapsed and stuff so many times and not really focused or cared about anything else is getting high that it was just like OK I'm gonna prove myself wrong and you know maybe some other people and that was kind of like the driving force then I started.then you started to meet some really cool people know the date and meeting the type of people actually need in my life. not just say I'm gonna hang out with people to get high with your actual good honest people. it was just like I'll get high in alcohol he's drunk and kind of like earning my way back into Society, earning my inner respect back from you know people.I turn into a different man now for the better and still not done so not done it still and now it's like OK now you're getting a little bit more as you know can you recognize a little bit more like respect and like you know like affirmations from like the people that like

I've seen me grow in a sport like you know like I remember when you first started in your life by 20-30 pounds heavier and like that wow you're like very nice and yeah it's a good feeling I said I try to stay humble as much as I can so the competition so that's your driving force

what about when you're on the what is it about the course compared to say the marathon so because you're not doing marathons right you're choosing Spartan so what's the difference or like my restarts every race starts with like some good worship music I get to see the two songs that I've been playing forever and I just the guiding force with the song is just like a course in life and everything is laughing at you like a giant like a live life now you like waiting for you to fall like you're telling me that you're gonna feel you're gonna feel and you just like praising God in the hallway like I got this like I might know all I've been through I'm gonna pull it all I'm you're crushing it right now there's times that I know came and 25th you know even in good shape and it's just like I gave it my all and that's all I could do regardless of what place I come in I'm already a winner because I got an a half years sober and I'm still learning how to not let things go and live from the past and when I said it's a different struggle especially with Mike know

structure kind of like a NA program and they have the book and you had to go through all the steps I know

I was just like I'm just gonna go call turkey and not worry about all that stuff and I don't know explain no that makes sense and so you kind of made your own image what's different and six yourself on the courses the more rugged terrain that they have and just the fact that it could be any split decision that you make something new something old that because you're a mess up and ruin your perfect race and having to do those penalties and actually maybe even catch up to the people the past you or past them and still get on the podium to be like you guys help me but daddy came back but that's really what it is because like it could be like you're going you're going you're going and you're just in that zone and you're going for that second chain and you just slap you like now I got to do Burpee's I see Dave I see Dustin I see all these people just coming in and I'm like I need a bus is out and I need to go like there's no oh I messed up I'm gonna just chill now no it ain't over till it's over so just know that high level of intensity and just I don't know what it is just it's addicting the competition is addicting on the addiction topic do you think that this could spartan race and Kayden sobriety of people who've like you were only sober for about six months if he could help watch them into a greater chance of success with their sobriety I think so if the person is willing and able and ready to turn the turn the point in their life around you know if you're willing to go cold turkey and do it if they're just at that point in life that they need a little extra boost yeah it's fine will totally do it but if it's going to be for like the right people like us obviously you know those pro athletes already people are already really good in fitness and they have these alcoholic problems but they're not you know there I don't know how to explain it I can't explain if it's somebody that just like more I'm not saying like you know like more like from a different upbringing or whatever but if it's somebody that he's got nothing in life and I mean they don't come from a good family struggling on the street and they just need something in life to be like

I'm gonna be somebody that I know I am somebody like I'm not just a piece of shit that's without getting her doing drugs like you know I was hanging out with people that steal stuff and we're just like you know using peoples credit cards and shit like that like I can be somebody better than that you know I can actually make honest friends

I don't have to worry about people stealing my stuff at the races leaving my backpack wide open with my wallet and my phone in there like you know I can be that person you know that you know it decking so if there were to be like a spa in recovery program safe for people in your position I would like six months sober

**7 Nick** Spartan not the race itself, but what it forced me to do is what tied together mind body and spirit. I'm already been sober. I've been in a program, I was developing a spiritual relationship, I was making better life decisions. But, but I was lost, I was still very empty, without purpose. And when I did the first part, and it just started to add some discipline and commitment to realize that I can do things, you know that if I'm not just lazy, and then that got me to the first race, you know, I just kept knowing and proving that the excuses I told myself for you bullshit. So going forward, as I continue to race, that meant I was going to train and run and if I was going to train and run, I was going to I needed to work on my diet. And if I was going to work on my diet, I you know, in addition to that, I needed flexibility in the stretch and that's where really I kind of became I finally put together like a meditation routine that I do every night still. And I mentioned in the book, like I do rom WOD every night, not every night, but most every night for a good 30 minutes or so. And I say my prayers at the beginning of the routine, and I just deep breathe and it's my meditation time. And that's really what has helped tie the mind body and spirit for me to other But even now, like I spent a lot of 2021 on employee and I haven't been unemployed since I was like 15 You know, I left a job in a very good high paying job in a really, really, really bad situation. And I took a gamble on another company because I just had to get out that's also something I just don't do. You know, and that was also financially okay, but it was miserable. It made me sick. I was there like seven weeks in my life. I've never done that. And I did it without a next step. No job, no income, no insurance. We squandered our savings in 2022. There was literally no safety net, but I knew I could do it. Just Spartan helped me put in perspective, all of the other challenges it actually whether or not I'm just rationalizing to myself or Not I can assign meaning to all the bad shit that's happened to me. And I know for a fact is there's zero evidence that I can't conquer whatever is gonna come next and whether what whether Spartan did that for me or not Spartan has helped me to realize it. And so sobriety how does that because if I have a purpose and a relationship with God, like, I don't, I can sit in a room with a bunch of drunks that I mean, annoying drunk is an annoying drunk, regardless fun, drunk or sober. But I mean, the booze don't bother me. I don't I don't see it or I see skull and crossbones.

1. **Do you consider exercise another addiction?**

**2 Dave** Well, it's a positive thing. Like nobody's gonna be like, Oh my God, look at that guy. He works out and eats healthy like what a asshole. You know? I would say like, yes, because I wouldn't want to give it up like, and, I mean, anybody who's ever got into and I would say anybody who's ever run three Spartan Races and wanted to come back and do more. Don't tell me that you heard there's a Spartan Race. You could have gone to it and you didn't. Don't tell me that you don't have a little FOMO that you didn't show up and get to toe the line. Like that's just that's how I feel about it. But I think like, I like the festival vibe. I like seeing all my Spartan family like the friends and people there because I've never seen such a positive supportive community. And just like everything around it, like the working out and the different challenges I like all of that. And like I've always liked, you know, that competitiveness and challenges and like, you know, I think it's good for you and you describe that him and it doesn't be scientific just like just your concept of how you think it might connect to why they're attracted to it or why it might just help us you know thank him so like me personally like I like that typo I like that type of feeling because typically like when you're in that type of feeling you're right I'm either in a competition with somebody else or I'm training in there happens to be somebody else there it's definitely hot I think it's definitely harder if you're doing it alone like in countering the runners high OK but you know for like example if you're if we're doing a work out like even want to Eddie's crazy ass workout so you put together and you were like in the middle of it drooling on yourself and you're like oh my god this is you hit this point in your life I kind of just want to stop but my body can keep going through the motions and I'm just like you're in like a euphoria of still like working out I’m grinding and you just keep pushing forward and doing it and the same thing with like running you know like I tell anybody and say you takeoff hard running and it's like your 1st mile I kind of attribute it to like taking off in an airplane you know I mean like you're coming up hard and you're just like me and then you hit this and it's like dude you're trying to get there and it's ago and you're breathing hard and then all of a sudden you get up in that jet stream and it's like your heart rate drops just a little bit and you're still at that fast pace and then you can just fucking go forever that's it right now G that's perfect and actually I lied one last thing talk about the struggle on the mountain now do you think all the struggles that you've been through in the past and how hard life wasn't cutting everything you owned it not knowing who to trust and just the struggle of that is replaced by the positive struggle on the mountains with the positive reinforcement and all those positive people to similar yeah I feel I feel that and at the same time I feel like in the back your head especially if you've been through anything hard is an addict like no matter how hard that struggle is out there you're like you can always look around and you're like even if it's 40° and pouring rain I can still look around and I'm like this is nature is beautiful this is awesome I'm stoked to be here I'm not in a jail cell like wearing shitty clothes eating crappy food or hanging out in the doghouse or whatever there's you're still like your worst day there is still better than your best day out some crazy way to put it that's awesome thanks state anything else you wanna add I think I don't know I think that's it yeah hi sweet

**5 Lucas** 1,000% Yes, it is in addiction but this one is healthy. I've had a lot of unhealthy addictions. With this is one that is healthy.

**4 Royster** I mean, it can't be but it's depends on how you look at it. But no, you know, I mean, it's just, it just depends on you know, because I look at it but that I mean, for me, yeah, I workout twice a day. You know, I get up early before I go to work, do my cardio run, roll machine, core, all that stuff. And then I go to work. And then I come here and I go to work and then I go hit the gym after and do my heavy weight, my training and all this other stuff. So I mean, would you call that an addiction? I don't know about that. I guess I'm addicted to healthy lifestyle. You know what I'm saying? So I mean, if you want if that's yeah, in the damage wouldn't be obviously wouldn't be severe like a drug. No, it's you know, it's for me, it's a healthy addiction.

**3 Brice** You know, I mean, I feel it's an addiction for me. I mean, I was an extremely drug addict and going from one extreme to another, I needed something to replace that. So yeah, I love going there like crosswords my thing because you get your heart rate up there. And you're so physically pushing yourself and you're just you get that runner's high and you're just fucking like, that's what I need that so I fucking push myself to fucking where I'm just completely laid on the floor fucking tacked out. And then by desert mental it clears me out and fucking like running to mean you get in your zone. You're just fucking you're gaining so physical. Yeah, it's a fucking it's a healthy addiction. I mean, and then along with that the diet too. And that goes hand in hand.

**6 Kyle** absolutely. Yeah. addiction. Addiction comes in many forms. I wouldn't say that it's a bad addiction. You know, some people tend to take it to the extreme. You know, I think that it's a it's a healthy outlet, more than more than an unhealthy outlet. It's certainly a lot better for you than then heroin methamphetamine and alcohol. I know that. So yeah, I'd say it's a good thing if you if you're, if you can use those healthy outlets like that, you know, so and on that know that all those drugs seem to be a very high intense experience.

**8 Jesse** I yeah, I actually don't because I don't find myself addicted to exercise in the same way I as addicted to. Obviously, I wasn't but like in the same kind of sense. Like for me, and maybe in a sense it is because I'm more if I feel like I haven't been doing my training. I'm like, Okay, I gotta get out there and that's where the addiction may come because I start getting hard on myself and down on myself for missing it. And then but, you know, to be there because I see I you know, run a gym and I see a lot of people in my gym, that are literally obsessed with training and it's not even healthy. So, you know, I've never been like that with training and exercising to the point where it's, you know, it's unhealthy. Like these people are at my gyms and it's funny because, you know, some of them you know, they don't struggle with alcohol or drugs or haven't so yeah,

**1 Eddie** It's a lot more expensive.They're both expensive, huh? Yeah, I think I've spent more money doing sparring and running and doing you know, when I was on drugs, but it's a it's a healthy addiction. So, you know, it releases all this, you know, pretty much the same endorphins Like you know, the dopamine and all that stuff is, is pretty much all released. But there's this time, but now it's just like, released naturally, you know, instead of like, you know, just getting bombarded with it, you know, what I mean? Just, you know, with like, euphoric, high that you know, you would get on drugs. You know, there's sorry, you know, it's actually released you know, when it's supposed to be reversed.

**7 Nick** Yeah, absolutely. I mean, it's addiction for sober people too. So, you know, there are worse things to be addicted to, you know, I mean, yeah, it might make you a bad spouse if you're working out eight hours a day, but you know, your buddies don't really give a shit. So whatever, you're probably still doing work. And, you know, like, what sides of that guy was like, addicted to exercise? I don't know. But the so I mean, if you're, if you simply decided to trade one addiction, say I and that's part of the I think the slippery slope to is going to meetings isn't what keeps me sober, right? There's a journey here, there's 12 steps for a reason. There's literature for a reason, there's reasons that there are people I go to meetings with who have been there for 65 fucking years, and are still going like my dad's pushing 70 Next year, he goes to six meetings a week, like, he's not going to drink anymore. It's, I knock on wood, I don't think about alcohol, I don't need a right now to keep me away from a drink, I need it. So I can live life like not an 11 year old child. And that's, that's, that's a process. And that's, you know, that's a journey. So, but if one were to immediately, you know, just say, Hey, I'm going to, I can't stop drinking on my own. So I'm going to do Spartan, the very moment that Spartan lets them down all they're left with a drinking problem. So they have to be able to address that spiritual part. I mean, I just told you at the beginning of this right, seven and a half years in, and I'm still learning about ways, and I could have been a better person, you know, eight years ago, and it's not like, I'm not sitting here regretting it, right. But I'm finally learning that lesson. You know, if I had not done a nothing in the world would have helped me get there. I wouldn't have the spiritual mental part, like because I wouldn't be learning spirituality. Maybe I find my way to meditating at night, but I'm just reading it that way. If that makes sense?

1. **If you could compare the intensity and rush of participating in a Spartan Race with the life of drugs and alcohol, how would you relate and compare the two?**

**2 Dave** Yeah, I guess. I mean, it's, it's a different rush. But, you know, I've had a long time to not be in touch with that other rush, so there's no consequence of the Spartan rush, I think. Yeah, no, it's just like it. It's definitely a rush. I mean, there's like little battles like all the time and stuff that will always stick out to you. Every single race is unique.And you will always have something that sticks out with you from one race, whether it was like oh, you and this other person battling for position or you and this other person going through shitty situation and overcoming it together. Like, you know, just the sights that you see the internal fight that's going on with you like, like, I kind of want to walk right here. This sucks. So I'm gonna push a little harder, or, I mean, there's so many little things I got going on. I think, yeah, to me, it's everything about it too high.

**5 Lucas** So I was still drinking or doing drugs for me was, you know, like, I never like foresaw a longevity in it. But like you know, running in OCR is something that I can see myself doing for years to come. And you know, in the so called high that I get from this OCR stuff, I can kind of maintain that by you know, go into another race or go into the next gym, or, you know, going on the next training run.

**4 Royster (check Survey Data) 3 Brice (check Survey Data)**

**6 Kyle** I would say it's a little more intense than other activities. I'm one of those people that tends to get bored with, you know, going for a jog. Or maybe I don't go in for a bike ride. You know, I would say it's a little more intense than that. It's hard for me to compare it to like a state where I've been like high on drugs, but there's definitely some adrenaline and you do get addicted to that adrenaline and it does attract people that are thrill seekers, I would say a lot of a lot of drug addicts and alcoholics at least from my experience. They they're adventurous people right and they get bored with mundane life and they and they seek out adventure and thrill and that's why they seek out drugs and alcohol you know, because it's it just gives them that it fills that void that they're that they're not getting.

**8 Jesse** I think Spartan like you mentioned earlier has the certain exciting elements that are maybe you don't have to be addicted the Spartan but it still triggers an endorphin release. But if you have a tendency to go extreme, I think Spartan gives you that excitement with a healthy extreme. **If you were to go cray.**Yeah. Yeah. I would agree with that. Yeah.

**1 Eddie (look at survey)** I'm definitely an intense person. I got a lot of hyper ADHD and yeah, I got a lot of energy.It's just a little bit more intense but you know, road running and trail racing are just as intense.You know, I mean, it could be a 5k You know, half marathon, you know, it could be like two mile raceLike, you know, like, I know, depending on how you're running it, it's gonna you know, and it's, it's, it's gonna seem to be more intense. Obviously, the faster and faster you run, it's going to be more intense. Because, you know, some people say, Oh, it's just a 5k Yeah, but how fast did you run it? Did you actually try to like, you know, like puke after the race or something or I mean, like, did you go all out like at 85 90% of your of your of your heart? rate, which is, you know, it's really taxing on the body.

**7 Nick**

1. **In what way does being part of a Spartan community contribute to your sobriety?**

**2 Dave** What do they get? Well, I think that they I think they have it laid out like their festival experience is really good. And it's set up and kind of like, you know, promotes that I love the fact that they have the DJ, and stuff all the time.I feel like everybody's just so supportive of each other and I don't know if that's just likethat and that is just kind of like the Spartan way everybody's everybody is supportive of somebody else like, I have never done any, any other sport to where you could be, you know, trying to beat somebody. And they're like, they're not acting like an asshole about it. And neither you you're not like, I'm going to try to like, cut this guy off here or step on him or whatever. Like, I mean, me and Ed will pass each other and it's like, we're given knuckle bumps, like go get it like encouraging the other one, whether he's passing me at a time or I'm passing him rarely. And but it's like, we're 100% supportive of each other and that's not just him. That's every other dude. In the race. Just like oh, hey, like you did a great job or Oh, yeah, I saw you like Damn, that was killer. Like.It's just everybody, everybody I've ever come across as super supportive. And my wife says the same thing. Social I think that the festival venue aspect is so I think that's a super important component in the face to face in the friendships that you make because whether you say it or not there is like unspoken friendships and a connection between all those people because if you've gotten to that level or you do it on a regular basis and you see people a race you're like hey that that's like that's like your SPARTAN family that you see there and you know you're gonna see the same people especially as you like I'll say like work up the ranks like in any other competitive type brackets it's like you know you say you're used to seeing like who is in front of you who is behind you if you see an x-ray sure like I recognize that guy and I mean my own personal experience and I'm sure a lot of people would agree you really don't come up on many douche he people like everybody is so cool it's like you know like Eddie's ass hole past me and I'll give him a fist bump and tell him to go get it or I'll pass him and he's like hell yeah brother like yeah we're stoked for each other even if they're like one of us is getting beat like it doesn't matter you're just pushing like to your boss the whole time you know that's my experience with it so say this so there's a person in recovery within the first year do you think it would matter if they did open her age group or just the fact of just being in that environment. there's a camaraderie with the person next to you who you've never met before that's going through the same struggle you are and that you now instantly have a connection because you're both like all you got this I keep it up like. I mean I remember like I want to fucking stop and stand for a second or whatever and some person you don't even know gives you a couple words of encouragement and you're like fuck standing here I can keep going or year you're that person for somebody else who is wanting to stop and sit out and same thing. you see some total stranger like struggling to get like the last couple holes and they get it and everybody's like cheering them on .that's like a boost for you and then you're like oh that was killer you know there's just so many of those situations. you can have a moment that might last 5 to 10 seconds with some other person out there and worry that they were passing you were you were passing them or you were both going through t a struggle at the same time and they are now a key part of your memory in that race and you might see them again or next thing you know you see him on Facebook or Instagram or whatever and you're like oh what's up .

**5 Lucas** Just like you said, there is a, you know, there, there was an atmosphere, an atmosphere in a positive vibe and attitude, but a Spartan not that I haven't gotten that from you know, doing a couple of the road races around town, but I've never, you know, been able to, I guess, have the friendships that I have at Spartan Races because there's people that I don't know who they are, but I see him at each race, you know, and we high five and we talk and we catch up, like I saw multiple people from road races, you know, that multiple races never once for like, Hey, man, I remember you. It's like, you know, not that I wanted that connection, but it'd be kind of cool to talk to somebody. Mean, honestly, walking around with crystal sometimes I feel like you know, she's a celebrity because she's been doing it longer than I have. And she knows everybody. It's not just me that feels that way because I've had a couple other friends that have run with us or stayed with us and like, damn, I feel like is still walking around with her because she's, you know, she just knows a bunch of people. And to see that. No, it's exciting because I've now made friends because of her. keeps me spiritually sober and a Spartan keeps me physically, you know, sober, basically. You mean? Because the way I drank I, you know, I wasn't going to run a mile down the street, you know, now, now, now I'm running 10 On the weekend with my wife, you know, and that's because we, you know, want to stay fit.

**4 Royster** obviously when you complete the racing like along the way, so for us when we go into group as a group like that, you know, we bring a lot of energy into the onto the course. So when it's all said and done at the end of it, everybody's asking like he said, asking Who are you Where are you guys from? And we tell him how Jericho you know from we're a drug program, and that builds those relationships. And so you get linked up with people and that's obviously how, you know, we're having this conversation. Right. And so that's, that's how that kicks off. you meet people from around the world. And then telling them our stories and stuff like this and seeing people just like holy fuck supporting our story and support what we do here. Not judging the guys some of our guys now they look like wow, you know, anyway, when you hear the story, like you won't care about your past care what you're doing now. So having that dude is a big part of our development. The guys need to see that hey, there's a community out there gonna welcome you. So you don't have to go back to the gangs or nothing like that. You actually have a community that's gonna support you not judge you by your past.

**3 Brice** Community iceberg is one of the kind. I mean, more than anything like volunteering is you get to hear other people's stories and find out that addiction runs through Spartan I mean, there's a lot of people battling with addiction and especially with Spartan trail law, those are long distance runners and over half of them are battling with addiction and that's what they do to fight their addiction to Spartan trail long distance runners. And so that's it's good that we have a community out there that embraces and what we do here in our journey, so it feels good to have a community out there that supports what we do.It's, you know, it's big for it was big for my development. You know, I mean, where I'm at another reason why I'm clean, you know, is to be able to go participants in those events and realize there's other things out there, then go and go, Rob somebody or do something stupid, Or go to the bar and get a drink or whatever.So for me, that's it's, you know, that's how it's, helped me, and still, it doesn't matter. It's, you know, Spartan, all kinds of events, showing me that a community will welcome me anytime, you know, I can go to any kind of sporting event and get that vibe there. It's good. I mean, I haven't experienced anything like that my life is worse. I'm I've been sober since I was 15 years old. So I've never experienced a community like that. So experiencing that now. That's, that's good. That's all I need. And then having those days on those calendars where we're training and stuff like that known and also volunteering. I mean, I love volunteering on these events. And that's probably one of the best aspects I like, going to sporting events now and volunteering is helping other people out.

**6 Kyle** So Spartan does have a does have a good have a great community. And I think part of the reason why they do is because they have an attraction on social media, you know, when people see them on social media or like saying, on TV or whatever it may be they people are automatically drawn to that and attracted to it and so there's a large following for it. At least I think I'm totally off social media now. But I used to be on all the you know, west coast Spartans and all the Spartan groups and, you know, I would, it was it was so funny, I would see people on social media that I've never thought that I would ever run into ever in my life and I see him all over the racecourse. I'm like, Oh my God, you're such and such person. You know, you're this person here. I've seen you know, some of the Pro. This the pro Spartan racers out of races and I was just like blown away by it. I was I was in I had, I don't want to call it starstruck, I guess but yeah, they do they have a better community then. Then most of the groups that I attend like, like you said, that gym, I pretty much just stick to the main like three or four guys at the gym. You know, it's a it's a and you don't really bring branch out. Everybody keeps their head down at the gym and they don't really talk to each other that much. With trail running. Yeah, there's some sense of community. There trail running groups that typically meet up on a at a certain time at night. And that's usually a pretty friendly social environment, you know, where people share stories and take pictures and things like that. But there's not really any other groups that I can think of that at least that I'm a part of that have a sense of community like Spartan. It did Yeah. Yeah. I more or less like have those people in my life and I found those people through your traditional like in a recovery program, you know, I just that's so I have those people in my life and the core group of us sort of like just started doing Spartan Races together. So and we've kept we've kept that that core group. Not a single one of us has ever gone back to drugs and alcohol, you know, so we haven't lost a single Spartan. Single Spartan since then. So. So, yeah you do build a community,

8 **Jesse** Oh, well, honestly, I think the community is huge. Having like minded people around you having those positive people around you training for the same thing living that life of trying to be better trying to chase finish lines, Congre goals the physical, the kind of the mental health that comes with the actual physical training and being healthy and you know, eating better because you want to perform better and training and exercising and changing your entire lifestyle because you want to be better at the race is going to obviously make you feel all around better. And then you know, that mental strength you get from crossing that finish line of something you worked hard and sacrifice for, like those three things are, you know, three fold and huge and it's, it's what I center, my gym around to be honest with you emotional strength, physical strength, mental strength coming from that community, those people around you coming from crossing those finish lines and coming from, you know, following a program and training and all those three things coming together are what's you know, life changing and can what can keep people you know, off of dope or off, whatever, but I've seen it myself. The fact that Spartan sends emails to everyone, me, you can't avoid a spark email. They're everywhere. From the pits to when's your next race or hey, you left something in your car did you forget or? Yeah, all the sport, you know, because I think Warrior Dash and tough mudder is now part of Spartan, but I think a lot of the other OCRs have less of the community than Spartan. Um, well legit just help. So you know, you're not alone out there. You know, it's when you meet fellow Spartan Races, in your own cities, in your own races, and you build those friendships with people you always have people to go run with. You always have people to talk to, you always have a gym, you can find that you can go to so you don't have to go partying on a weekend you can go do you know a class somewhere like at a gym like mine, you can find a trail run, you can find a race, you know, and have a weekend, you know, I'm literally putting together an Airbnb for Kelowna, like right now as we speak. So that's, you know, 14 people who are going to stay and spend five days together in a chalet in Kelowna and have something to train for and look forward to. And, you know, build those relationships and friendships and how, you know, I brought people in put together Airbnb’s and how people are done or whatever, course weekend long workshop, through my gym, and those people, you know, 5678 years ago, those people are still friends today. So you know, it's really cool. It's really powerful. And yeah, just given that something to look forward to is my, you know, my past life, I had nothing to look forward to. I was like, What are you doing? I was, you know, looking forward to the weekend, the party, my next drunk or high and kind of live in life aimlessly.

**1 Eddie** It helps you, it helps you stay accountable. Just, you know, what I mean? keeps you on track, Because then, you know, I mean, you have a bad day, or something that you'll be talking with people, you know, and just, you know, you'll be like, Nah, you don't need to be doing that kind of stuff. It's just in general and I mean, addictions, is there and you know, sparring obviously, you know, what I mean? They give you the free beer and stuff like that after we that's just that goes with any endurance event, you know, what I mean? They, you know, it's kind of like a reward, but just kind of have to, move away from that. And, you know, I just find that people like that like you know, keep you positive and stuff like that, which is good because there's a lot of people who are in recovery and Spartan

**7 Nick** that help, yeah, that, uh, that's part of all like that. It's, you know, it's funny, it's, it's, it's evolving, you know, we went from one, doing one thing for me to everything I just described, but what you brought up, like, that's where the community and lifestyle just continued to expand. What's interesting about 2020 is that these online relationships became the only relationships, they became no different than the relationships of the people who live in your community. And the fact is, I see people from for over example, more than I see people who live down the street from me. So these aren't like, Tinder, or, you know, relationships like these are, you're making real relationships with real people. And in that you share experiences, obviously, I'm very open about my history. And one of the reasons that I have done that is so that others who are like me, or think they might be, like me feel comfortable to reach out, you know, and that's where I think silver sparkles is huge. You know, the amount of people that reached out to me when I put my book out, like, that was the reward for me, you know, just the people who were either, you know, broke their in intimate anonymity to me or otherwise just said, their concerns about themselves or a loved one. But not for nothing, that's, I get far more than I give, like, there's just so many, the actual community of people. If you, that's way of saying it, I guess, to be able to achieve something and share it with others without feeling like you're bragging, because you're just getting the support of people who were all out trying to do the same thing. You know, that you're not alone, anywhere, like that's physically or otherwise, I mean, just to know that there are people who go through the same type of challenges, and yet still put ourselves into these insane things. Dumb as it may seem, I think the community is one of the things that helps differentiate this from a hobby and a lifestyle for me, too. You know, where maybe, again, that's just me rationalizing how I spend my money but so that said to me, I'm a physical therapy, I mean, actually, for all therapy, I mean, I listen to a speakers on YouTube as well so But anytime I have an injury, which is pretty much all the time I take to YouTube and when that doesn't work, there's a lot of people who were actually qualified to help out in that information who volunteered, whether it be you know, actual medical diagnosis stuff, or at least sharing their own experiences. So and that's not just for the OCR world I mean, there's I'm sure if I need a good mortgage broker and ask that question I'm gonna get about 75 dm so

1. **How would you compare Spartan’s community to other athletic communities such as trail running, other OCRs, gyms or anything else you can compare it to from your personal experience?**

**2 Dave** Oh, that's a tough question. I'm gonna say Spartans better than that, because I don't like. I mean, obviously, like, the trail runners and stuff because I've showed up to those events. They have like clicky little groups or whatever, maybe or they have like a good following. You see the same people there but at the same time, you see a lot of people that are like, crossing over from other stuff. You know, you see a lot of them show up at a Spartan Race and want to challenge themselves a little. Do you think the community element is the same?No, I don't think so. I mean, I'm not saying that they're like stuck up assholes, but they're there. It's not it's not the same. I don't think there's the same, like, excitement. There's not the pre same pre race like, I mean, because even people that aren't running competitively, are like, they're nervous. They're psyched out because they've never done this before. They're like, you know, so there's, I mean, Spartans got a more intense cool vibe. say like oh trail running or Street running now yoga any of that you're not you're not being bitch slapped in the face with some crazy obstacle. that you really are never gonna encounter like in a real world. yoga OK like are you gonna stretch yeah you could stretch but well you can stop put stretching or reaching a certain amount when it's starting to hurt or whatever. like trail running hear you’re out of breath and your fucking tired and you're trying to push as hard as you can at this hill that's great but now you're fucking tired and you got a 60 pound bucket on your shoulder. what are you gonna do? like you don't have a choice or you're halfway up the fucking rope trying to climb something and I don't know if I can pull any further well you got two choices you can dig deep and try to survive or you could fall the fuck off so there's a lot of just different challenges.

5 **Lucas** Yeah, I mean, even then, you know, like people hang around for a minute and after that, but it's not like I, you know, at Spartan events, you see a lot more people hanging around, you know, and giving high fives then at you know, at the trail runs, they kind of, you know, people get their time and they take off. Spartan has a lot more vendors, they have a lot more stuff going on and they honestly are a lot more kid friendly.Now, do you think if it was just marathon running, you'd have that same rush of excitement, as opposed to a Spartan Race?No, cuz I have run a marathon and I didn't you know, um, when I first got sober I decided I was gonna do something crazy that I you know, like, if I could run a marathon anybody could so I proved it to my family that I could get sober and then I could run one and I did. And you know, I, I did it in I'm glad I did it, but like, running on the road is not for me. I like the OCR because I am a part of the thick boy running club. As you know, I still have a few extra pounds, but I can still hurt my body around a Spartan you know, course.

**4 Royster** Well, well, just the Tough Mudder is like a lot more family orientated, I would say.And the Spartan isn't, you know, it's more it's more like a brotherhood. It's like a little more rugged, I guess. Oh, you know, areas. I mean, just the whole training and the community aspect.

**3 Brice** **would you say there's a bit of a high and intensity to spartan?** in the way that would be to go because when you said the wrong thing, I was like, oh my god, scary. Like, but maybe there's like a rush to, when you look at that rope.You know, you've never climbed a rope in your life. Yeah, you go, you know what, you start trying to use your feet for the first for the first foot or whatever, and you say, You know what, forget your feet, and just muscle it.That's that feeling. Right? You just climb up with your arms and you climb back down. That's all I did. Was like Screw that. I don't need my feet. I'm just going all bustle. Let's go. Sure.

**6 Kyle** You know, I, I can't, I can't think of any comparisons of like, something that totally like completely compares to Spartan Is that what you're saying? Like a group of people that compare to Spartan or any like the like the gym community trail running like,

**8 Jesse** ALSO PASTED ELSEWHERE Part of a community powerful where everyone knows your name. Oh, well, honestly, I think the community is huge. Having like minded people around you having those positive people around you training for the same thing living that life of trying to be better trying to chase finish lines, Congre goals the physical, the kind of the mental health that comes with the actual physical training and being healthy and you know, eating better because you want to perform better and training and exercising and changing your entire lifestyle because you want to be better at the race is going to obviously make you feel all around better. And then you know, that mental strength you get from crossing that finish line of something you worked hard and sacrifice for, like those three things are, you know, three fold and huge and it's, it's what I center, my gym around to be honest with you emotional strength, physical strength, mental strength coming from that community, those people around you coming from crossing those finish lines and coming from, you know, following a program and training and all those three things coming together are what's you know, life changing and can what can keep people you know, off of dope or off, whatever, but I've seen it myself.

**1 Eddie**, it's kind of like because you have to be like on point Like, you know, you have to you know, if you're gonna do good, you're gonna strategize. You know, okay, I'm going to hit this obstacle, and I'm going to try to like get out of this obstacle. Fast faster than this. Every little split second counts, obviously it does like any other kind of race too, you're not you're not carrying stuff, Like, you know, you can, you can like, you know, be kinda in the back of the pack, you know, what I mean, during a race, but then you got to carry something heavy than that could be your strength and you can like pull forward and, you know, make some ground on people and, just being like that and strategizing is a lot different than road running, which is kind of the same but you would do that like maybe like on the downhills

Where do you like Excel more than like on the up hills or some people are probably excel more, or like on the flat you know, you just kind of like, stay with him, but not I don't know how to explain but yeah, so you're saying Spartan has more elements of, of variety where you can switch your strategy on and off we're running you might have a downhill and uphill or flat but the Spartan has other things. And then plus with sparring, like you kind of have to be like on point because if not, then you got to do your penalty. Burpees you know, what I mean? And then that, you know, you're struggling from that, trying to recuperate from that and trying to gain back time and trying to get back into lead.

So it's a little bit more, a little bit more intense, like, you know, like mentally because, like any, just any little slip and fall, you know, it could be something just like you know, you're just in the zone too much and you'd like you know, you'd like you missed like the ring or something then you end up falling. Well, from what I've heard is um you know, there's a lot more love and a lot more fun and you know, at sparring and stuff like that, but you know, compared to like, other trail races and stuff, I hear from what I heard from other people, you know, that are like, more, you know, like at a higher level than I am that it's kind of more like corporate a Spartan. Like, the venue. I mean, like, this isn't this, you know, like, when I did Broken Arrow, it was more laid back like chill vibe. There's a lot more different than sparring, but sparring is really fun. I like the people over there. You know, obviously because I probably know a lot more than I do at the trail races but and what do you think about you said, you know, a lot more people Spartan versus the trail races. I mean, especially now with the age group, because if we're just all like, you know, like, hard working people, They have like, you know, careers or we have different types of jobs, and we're all just you know, getting after it as, you know, as much as we can, you know, what I mean working From like, 40, like 60 hours a week, you know, and still being able to, like, you know, put in the work to you know, I mean, go out there and grind, And you know, some people are single moms, They work 50 hours plus you know, Kid Care and, and then plus workout and all that kind of stuff and you know, they're out there grinding and doing the best they can to. So, I think it's just it just prints a lot.

You know, it's kind of like a little bit more suffering. You know, you suffer more through sparring than you would you know, just a regular trail race. so yeah I'd say both the sparring would be a little bit more intense little bit more competition wise for like faster pace six I like trail running to so anything that has to do with running and working out it's just it's gonna be the same you know if the commitment to commitment the commitment to be better to be faster to be stronger to well think about a spartan race and all the elements about the race and think about the San Francisco Marathon and all the elements involved in this so the spartan race he would have to be like "decision making quick decision making in a plan strategy we got a deal with we're running to buy plan strategy with the carries how are you going to attack this and basically you use all that into like maybe life how am I gonna do you know what happens if I lose my job what am I gonna do you know I'm in Owen I’m out I might lose my license you know I am I gonna wallow in what happened and you know go down the drain again or am I gonna like start asking questions are people if you're hiring at this nation army something local where I don't have to worry about where am I going to get paid extra to have to worry about going on unemployment or anything stupid like that and I was just you know attacking check in the obstacles just like life attack life just like the articles I can't stop you gotta go you gotta make quick decisions if not you know you make it hurt anything else you wanna add I love being sober that's awesome and a half years being sober and it was it was hard for me because it was hard for me they're offering free beers and stuff at the race after race it's a hard race people are celebrating with beer I just had a girl when I first started I can't I don't wanna be around it I don't wanna be around that and that's why I was just I would like to talk to people and I hang out with like you girls are having beers I'm like I don't want to don't care like you know and there's been a couple of times were still been hard after a tough race and you're just like stupid shit like what is it gonna I just want something I need a reward put it in a reward on they're offering that as a reward like society does that they offer that stuff as a reward at all events every event you do for running marathon I don't care you know race car so alcohol beer celebrate with alcohol and try to overcome that being sober is crazy I don't even care about still going to the park so fast it's kind of behind

**7 Nick** tricky To answer and so and as such because you know, I'm part of different groups but four Oh is my primary and despite the Spartan in everything, you know, people run every race and it's more a personal preference like Iren savage when it's here in Florida I've never traveled for savage yet I don't know much about I think Spartan is a brand does a much better job of making you want to run multiple throughout the year you know. And I guess it's not everybody can get a season pass to every type of event, so I just don't know if there's a race specific community if that makes sense. Like the OCR community to me is yes, it's more Spartan only because I do more spartan. Again, I mean, I don't know if there is a race specific community if there is like, because or put it this way I just haven't been exposed to it, you know, I mean, that's just the choice I seem to have made at this point was I'm, I dive into Spartan more, you know, but I am gonna do savage race this weekend, but at the same time, I'm not. I am part of some of the other groups but you know, I don't there's clearly some Spartan specific more Spartan focus communities, but I don't know, you know, I'm part of the Arbonne frog thing too, is just not when there's not as much and they're not spread out, you know, you kind of have a lesser sample size. But I mean, again, if you troll the four Oh, page, I mean, right now you're gonna see Arizona and Jacksonville, but like, you know, two weeks ago, you're gonna see a bunch of five K's and random obstacle race down the neighborhood like it's, it's the OCR lifestyle community, instead of just a race specific community, in my opinion.

1. **What areas of your life has Spartan positively impacted? (Consider physical, mental, emotional, social, personal relationships, finances, and work)**

**2 Dave,** It keeps me focused on staying healthy and exercising, which I think is I think is hugely important. And in my personal opinion, if you rewind to like the 50s and 60s there was there was nothing like that going on anywhere to where it was encouraging. All say, like, the human race to like, stay active, stay fit. Do hardship. You know, I think those challenges and doing hard stuff, even when you're like, quote, unquote, doing it for fun, you know, I mean, like climbing this mountain, or like carrying a fucking kettlebell for no goddamn reason all over the place. That's the kind of shit that makes you resilient and strong, physically and mentally. Because God knows there's plenty of times like fucking Joe like carrying that dumb kettlebell. It's like, there's plenty of times he's probably want to put that motherfucker down. But he doesn't, because he knows like, I got to carry it for this, or people are expecting me to have it or whatever. But you stick with it. And that's the I mean, you kind of get that mentality like, like, oh, I need to train for this race. So, I'm gonna run and you just end up holding yourself more accountable and it's all when you go to eat. You're like, I'm thinking I got this race come out. Maybe I'll option the chicken or the veggie option or whatever, and I try to eat a little healthier and so it's just like, it's like a snowball effect. You know, that like, good healthy vibe.is just kind of like snowballing through your life but for a good reason.yeah and you're like buddies from now on and it's like that knew him like if I feel like every time I come away from race in it and it could've been you know and compare if you're competing and sat for since I go I beat them like I'd be all those dudes but somehow nobody's jealous for anybody there like fuck yeah good job bro and like super psyched like I remember that dude he's from over here like oh you're right that's right I seen him there or like all that got a solid bike is that huge fucking fast you know there's like a huge friendship and respect in this world which I am I am I don't know of any other sport cutthroat against other people and all friends and stoked on at the same time how is that different from so your time and drives like hustling to get them and get home how different is the culture there and turn your time at all this camaraderie is it more like you got a look out for people and not trust them and now you're an invite but you can't trust people when I was doing drugs and selling drugs and getting high there was the only camaraderie was people that wanna steal your shit and help you look for it that's not a friend ha ha and they don't care about anything but himself you know mean right you don't care about anything but your own hi I would like I remember times Pat like passing out or going to sleep and having my shit on me and you're like falling asleep clutching that shit for your life heading in your pants cause your "" friends you're worried they're gonna steal your shit from you are you watching totally different lifestyle now it's part would you leave your gear at the DJ tent and trust that nobody would take your gear fuck yeah I do it all the time with your phone in there yeah I mean think of that think of the bag that you know me and like I know like normally it's like OK like just to clarify this is a dude who doesn't trust anybody will because of my past yes sitting on our front porch no yeah hundred percent yeah full of hundreds of dollars of stuff connected to a hook.show up and you probably know 100 different people there that you see all the time at the races so it's like you know the DJ you could be like oh hey can I leave my bag here for a minute is I am marks like oh yeah cool like no sweat bro can you leave it there and you don't feel bad like I mean me and Kaitlyn flew to Florida and did the savage race down there and it's like I don't I am I mean I saw a couple people who I knew from over here on there but it's like I don't have any I don't know that festival I don't any of that shit and it's like my whole life to get back home across the country is in that bag and I'll still like yeah I'll hang it up and check it and feel comfortable about it I don't feel like there's shady people cream in the festival grounds looking for your satchel you know it's just a different a different lifestyle so I'm going to point out one more thing and I want your opinion on this now the runners high

**5 Lucas** yeah, but I have a couple of you know, $100 selections so financial. You know, it’s gonna just, uh, it helps me stay mentally and physically, you know, within spiritually fit because you know, I need that in my sobriety to still be here on Earth, but training for a Spartan Race helps maintain all of that stuff.

**4 Royster 3 Brice**

**6 Kyle** Ah, yeah, absolutely. All those things right. And I can't like solely attributed to doing Spartan Races but I can tell you that it's, it's given me some self-worth. It's made me feel When I it gives you a sense of accomplishment, you know, knowing that you can overcome obstacles, not just like physically, but like, mentally and emotionally. You're able to come overcome these obstacles. And that's like, almost a metaphor for life. You know, it's, it's something small like that can really manifest itself into something larger further on down the road, right. It gives you it gives you the courage to, to face your fears and overcome, overcome obstacles and going that's the most important lesson, I've learned from doing that first, first race and then and then progressing from there.

**8 Jesse** that's actually an interesting question. Because I was you know, you do develop really good relationships with people and you know, I'm always do it nice. There's a whatever family event, you know, sometimes I'm like, oh, sorry, I got through the race that weekend. But it's really cool, because now I have my older brother and younger brother who had gotten really into it, especially my older brother. And we're all going down to a couple races this year, and they both got themselves training. So it actually gives us something positive to talk about, because other than whatever, right other than hockey or sports or whatever, on the news, which is not which is not good. And then so that's given us probiotics closer together, my dad's come down to watch a couple races and you know, it's, it's really cool because it's allowed me to kind of stick out to you and give something for my family and be proud of me of because, you know, obviously I disappointed them and let them down for a lot of years. And then for them to see me come around and you know, it's, it's, it's fun. You know, when my pictures on something or I'm on the protein where I'm getting sent to Abu Dhabi or whatever like it makes it makes them real air they like when my brother has been following kind of Ryan Atkins and Lindsey on watching them on YouTube, when you find out that I'm on their team for the team championships. Like it's really cool. So, it's exciting that gives us something to talk about, brings us together that way. And then he I had my little cousins come out to Spartan Races and yeah, it gives. If I had kids, they'd be there and it would be an amazing kind of family weekend to doin Spartan makes a place for kids too, which is nice. Their little race. Because my favorite.

**1 Eddie** definitely like boosted self-esteem. made you feel like you know, like, you're a better person in life. Just, you know, I'm not you know an extra drug addict, but wow, look at me now. I'm putting in work and I'm making way better friends than I was when I was on drugs. You know, I'm actually like, you know, like you, you inspire people in the, you know, behind closed doors, you know, like in the light. You know that you inspire people without even without even knowing

**7 Nick** helped in every way, except for Financials? Although, candidly, um, you know, when I got this job back in September, I didn't negotiate for salary, I negotiated for time off. And when I told them the pretty much open PTO policy, I was pretty much demanding was the question was, like, really for, like, for these things, or something. And I basically told them, like, if it wasn't for this lifestyle, I could afford to work in a far less stressful job. And so, I need to be able to do the things I want to do otherwise, there's no point in me working in this type of capacity. So, if I were to stop racing, I'm sure I would find another place to flush my money, but or maybe I would just be in a, maybe I built a good career because of it. I don't know. But, I mean, like I said, physically, I train, it's not you know, it's not like, hey, doing a races, changed my life. It's the lifestyle and commitment that goes into it. So, I train I watch my diet, and my diabetes is better. No, actually, it's far more difficult to manage, but it’s more control. You know, I don't think the lifestyle is expection to drinking for me. I mean, I just think it's the purpose that I have now. And it's one that's expanded, and I think, hopefully, a few more years of it, that higher purpose of inspiring others will be able to continue, even if I'm unable to participate, if that makes sense.

1. **Has Spartan Racing enhanced your spirituality as you understand it? Please explain. Has Spartan made you a better person? If yes, in what ways?**

**2 Dave** Um, yes. Yeah, cuz there's plenty of times we're like, oh, shit, like, you know, like, there's plenty of times on the course where you're like, oh, God helped me with this or helped me with that, you know, and I'm a Christian like, I believe in that and I, I think it's it. I think overall, it just helps you it just helps your life, and you can. It's just better to stay healthy and positive. And, you know, like a lot of people will see like on the Star Line, anytime you see me on the Star Line at any race, I'm gonna kneel and pray before I take off. And it's like, that's like, my own little thing. Add meals with me then like now there's like more people like doing that with us. So, it's like, I think that's a great thing.Yeah. 100% And it's like, yeah, easily. So yeah, some people could but at the same time, I'm a big believer in like, karma on that aspect of like, what goes around comes around and it's like, you know, their video on that you're gonna get your card pulled one day like you can only get over and cheat or do short reps. And you're at the I always say you're only cheating yourself and you really are. Like, if you if you practice doing 25 burpees thinking nobody's seeing you and you practice cutting this corner and cutting that corner. Well then that's all you've trained to do is cut corners and do a shitty job. And if you train with integrity, and make sure you're doing all your reps and all that stuff, then that's gonna transfer over everything. And if you practice having integrity and doing all this stuff, and all the other aspects of your life, it's just gonna, gonna snowball again, I think you're gonna do it more.

**5 Lucas** That's just it like, I feel you are gonna reflect you know, what you're taking in, you know, I took in a lot of negativity for years, and I spewed it, you know, and I wasn't a good person. Now, you know, training and running and participating Spartan Races. I have a good you know, a good attitude, you know, so I'm putting down when I'm picking up

**4 Royster** Absolutely. So obviously, I help run a state license program, right. And so, I mean, how I mean, I mean, you know, how it helps me as I'm saying persevere as a program trying to figure out the next treatment option for the next individual that needs to go to one of these events. Right. And so that helps me help the next man and that's my definition is projected is helping the next person you know, inspiring to be great. So, you know, it's constantly a challenge. To figure out, you know, as far as from a treatment aspect, which clients this would work for, you know, what I mean? And some of them obviously, can't, some of them are socially so it's a, there's a huge balance in that, But it's a constant battle of, you know, to try to get these guys engaged in some and then you know, gear them towards Spartan or whatever events come in. And it really helps it helps me up because then I see the change you know, I mean, so that to me is spirituality, you know, I'm saying what I see a person come through the door, and six months down the road go to their first partner, they go from completely socially awkward to completely out there and the loudest guy in the group and loving it, you know, that's a whole that's a whole nother high for my you know, I mean, for myself,

**3 Brice** So, that's how I mean, you know, might not go to every event or everything, but you know, I'm constantly you're pretty you guys are tripping on that. Figure out who needs that who needs this environment? Yes. So, it's Christianity. Better person by no goes back to her. Jericho structure is helping these guys now find that spirituality that I did. So, getting these guys there. And hoping they see what I see with the community, and everything was Spartan, because it's just one of a kind. So, when you see these guys, they're like, socially awkward. Never been like that. But when they go to these events and see all these people, and they're not judging around like that, and they're just fucking amped they're just fucking you guys. That's more rewarding than anything right there. So that's, it's priceless. When you see someone come out of their shell, who's been quiet for six months, and hasn't said a word. And now they come back and they're know they're talking and now they're like, you know why you finally broke me out of my shell. And it's priceless. So, life changing and it's often Yeah, do they talk more amongst each other when they come back to like connect more with people because you build a bond with you guys that you went? You built that bond you see him fucking hit, fall down, get back up and you're cheering them on? You're like, man, yeah, so you built that bond with the guys ago, but you also share your story with the next man in our community. So then now you're know you're building people's persona. And you're now these people say next, like fuck, I want to go. I want to feel that I'm socially awkward, like, so. Yeah, so we got to pick the guys who's gonna best benefit and so they can see what we see.

**6 Kyle,** It's allowing me to become more mentally and emotionally clear and focused. So yeah, so absolutely. And then that, that's just like the basis of spirituality.It's having a clear mind clear body and clear soul, you know, so yeah, absolutely. do you think it's made you a better person? Yes, absolutely.

**8 Jesse** all it the Yeah, like, I don't know, I'm not a very spiritual person, to be honest with you. But, you know, Spartan Race has given, you know, my life you know, purpose, it's, you know, it's played a huge part of my entire life, from my career to the people, I've made friends with. How I live my life today, like you know, you know, half the people I know are through Spartan racing. I think I swear, three quarters of my friends on Facebook are from Spark Spartan Races. Has it made you a better person? Oh, yeah, for sure. Okay, in what way? Um, I would say it's made me a better person because it's, um, I would say it has helped me even in simple things like social skills, like, you know, I was a pretty introverted person, I would say not feeling confident, feeling insecure, in a crowd and then going to a Spartan Race weekend and being at the venue, it was my like, almost escape. And like my home, it was a place where I could go in and say hi to everybody and allowed me to kind of know like, similar to almost drugs and alcohol, not other worries in the world, and I was happy. And then it's funny because I was always like, and then even my own gym, they're like, the race venues and my own gym. They're like my comfort my Happy Places. And I was like, shoot, why don't I feel like that everywhere else in the world. My I need to Yeah, for me, I'm like, I gotta like, focus on like, he's I get so along with Spartan Races and people know me, they think I'm like, the nicest guy in the world. And, you know, I'm not the nicest guy in the world, you know, I'm, I'm a pretty nice, but I find that like at the Spartan Race, and I'm just so happy and in a good mood, and then, you know, it really brings the life out of you. And then when you go to challenge yourself, there's nothing better at the end of the race when you're talking with people you just raised with and cheering your friends on that are going in the age group, Pete's in the open heats, and, you know, trying to translate that I'm like, Okay, I need to start living being like this, everywhere else, and not just here. So I see what you mean, trying to bring that with me where in other places where I'm not, you know, you know, feeling awkward or socially at a place like, you know, I still have a lot of residual effects, obviously, from you know, living lives and addict alcoholic for 15 years and ruining relationships and having people hate your guts and being completely alone. And then, so there's a lot of insecurity and a lot of permanent kind of damage or whatever emotional damage that comes with that, that insecurity and stuff sticks with you. So, you know, having Spartan Races and obstacle course races that escape and then being like, Shit, I gotta work on something. So that that's not my only, I get to bring that another place everywhere else I go. So

**1 Eddie** Yeah. Like we always get like, you know, we always do like a prayer, you know, before each race. You know, before we start, you know, in the starting line, Just to give things, for all like, there are shortcomings for you know, being you know, for all that for all the struggles in our life, you know, I mean that made us who we are now and, you have to take all the bad in life and you know, turn it into a positive it's, you know, without bad there's no good so, you know, you got to have both. You can't just be good; We're also just going to be playing. do you think it's made you a better person? A little bit. Just a little bit?But overall, yeah.

**7 Nick** It's absolutely like, like I said earlier, the working on my mental toughness is what really got me looking into meditation. And you know, it was the physical act of the stretching and yoga that that kind of helped me to combine that practice and for I guess, I say that I'm a spiritual person, not a religious person, you know, I do believe in a higher power. I was the same buddy of mine that got me in racing asked me once, like, you know, as he's very, he's a religious person. And I basically told him I'm like, Dude, we believe in the same God, I just don't have the same rules. Okay, I get that, I guess. So., I mean, for me like that. The it's almost like it forced me to take the time to communicate with a higher power and to just shut up. You know, that was the hardest thing to do, especially for a recovering drunk whose mind refuses to stop arguing with itself. It's that simple improving the all-around lifestyle is what brought me to that place and that place is tied it all together.

my job of 14 years by the way without having another job. It was I was doing a ROM on the night before. And I had said my prayers and there was just one of those moments of serenity came over me it was like it's gonna be okay. And I walked in the next day, but that's because that time that would, I was poisoning me, and it was actually a threat to my sobriety so.no sport? I will say that that Spartan. And again, I think it depends on how people approach Spark, you know, like you always see on the Facebook post was at least one person a week saying, hey, training for my first race, what should I do? Well, it's like, what are your goals? You know, like, are you just trying to finish the race? Like, are you trying to win the race? Like, there's a big difference there? Right, like, you know, if you're trying to actually compete, yeah, you need to run more than like, five minutes a week. I'm glad you have your CrossFit gym, but we're, you know, you got to get some let's where the 30 Miles like, let's go. So, for me, I went all in, right. And again, like, all in so it kind of just kept the circle for me because I had a spiritual path, right? Like, I just didn't really have. I didn't under the 12 step Bay is about carrying the message, it basically comes down to helping others and I don't think I wouldn't have a vehicle of helping others if it weren't for this lifestyle Leaside in the same way, you know, just I mean, it's not just like the Shosh it's not just like the a thing, but with all the physical stuff I've had to overcome. And you know, at this point now I'm like, Thanks, it made me stronger. And so Spartan tied all that together. And you know, like, it's because again, the way that I just kind of jumped all in. So, in that, in that same sense, that means I'm able to know I'm not afraid to look back at myself and see when I was immature. Or if I was an asshole yesterday, you know, like in it's not like jumping to the monkey bars doesn't make me think about that. But all that preparation, it was all the community and then just, you know, also one decision about you know, kind of go back to the book is when I published it, I remind myself every day after limit. So that means I'm possibly looking on self-improvement in any way. I can an ECA. So, it all ties together.

1. **Have you ever been in prison or received drug or alcohol rehabilitation treatment?**

**2 Dave:** Yep. I went to at that time there was a I want to say it was called prop 36 or something. There was like a, like a drug court. So, you had a chance at it. If certain people were eligible. You had a chance at a program to go to a program and live at a clean and sober house. And if you completed it, then you were avoiding, hefty like prison. Sentence. And I was like, I if I failed, I had like four and a half years on the line. And I was like, and mentally I was like, I am all done. I'm going to accomplish this. Fuck everybody. Like, I'm ready to do it. And if I put my mind to some, I'm gonna do it. **And to do to be eligible?** I don't even remember somehow, I just like met the criteria. Maybe it wasn't like violent crimes or anything like that. I was just a fucking dope fiend.

**5 Lucas** answer, um, I spent a night in the drunk tank, and I got made fun of because I got arrested by a park ranger. Drinking at Lake Natoma. So that that is you know, my ex-wife is more hardcore than I am because she did a few months. You didn't get the respect you deserved. Yeah, nobody respects me cuz I've got because I got arrested by a park ranger. So I tried to get into a alcohol program but I had been a couple of days sober and there was other people hurting more than me is what I was told so they weren't going to accept me It was New Dawn downtown. And they said if you hadn't drinking within like 72 hours, the likelihood of them accepting you was slim to none because there's other people that walk in off the street and I said, what do you mean? So, I got a drink and tell you I'm going to kill myself and they're like, Yeah, basically. Like, okay.

**4 Royster 3 Brice**

**6 Kyle** I was in a 30-day treatment program they call it like a spin cycle because it's you know, your, you know, they just basically take you out of your environment for 30 days. Jam your head full of Na and then and then kick you out on the street, right but no, there wasn't any physical activity. It was mostly just like group sessions and like talking about your feelings and what's going on and your life and trying to work out trying to work through some things, you know, but no, like physical activity unless you actually wanted to go outside and play basketball or something. Like that, but they didn't have group sessions. And would you say it worked? To an extent, I think. it obviously was a stepping stone in my recovery. It gave me some knowledge on how to go, you know how to go about it and what to do, and it sort of gave me a little bit of hope that, you know, there isn't there is an alternative way of life that you can live like you don't have to live that way. We offer a better solution, but there it was. Obviously, most rehab centers are heavily like a NA involved places, but I didn't really take to that to be honest I didn't really it's not that I didn't get it. I just didn't I just didn't fall into the normal like person that that really enjoyed going to meetings and sharing their feelings. And I like I like my way of recovery was going out. And being active and doing active things like hiking, mountain biking, running, and eventually that sort of led into like that I found Spartan and that's sort of where it where it began from there. Okay. Um, which is your leading right into the questions which is great. No, but I have I do have a drug charge? Yeah. Okay. So no, I've never been incarcerated.

**8 Jesse** yes to both. what did you think of the traditional rehab?so I thought so I did a 28-day rehab stint one time and I thought it was I thought it was good. It you know, it got me away from drugs and alcohol for 28 days. Number one. Um, I was able to kind of get a head start. I was able to eat regularly. It was exercise in involved. There was a meetings aside from that, like there was courses and learnings. You know, I couldn't tell you one thing I really learned. You know, it did allow me to escape it did allow me to get the hell out Head start and feel healthy again.

**1 Eddie** Never in prison, been in like a county jail a few times. And you know, the rehabilitation programs are, they don't do much, And that's really what it's all about, if you really want it, if you're ready, then you'll be ready. Doesn't matter what kind of program you go to how intense the program is? Because in reality once you leave the program, that's when the real struggle is because yeah, you can be in a program a year do good. What are you gonna do once you hit the streets? Yeah, that program is not going to be there for you. I mean, it could be but in reality, like, it's not, you know, you're done. You know, time for the real world. And that's kind of where the struggle is. Because then you start you know, going back to where you were, you know, you're working, Next thing, you know, you're just going to the store, you know, you see people that you used to use with or, Or you know, I mean they don't like that you're sober so they like you know, it's, may try to get you in trouble again and stuff like that.

**7 Nick** No, and I was arrested for DUI, I spent about three hours in jail.

**Are you involved in AA, NA, or any similar sobriety community that is not affiliated with Spartan Race? If so, how is Spartan different from the non-Spartan sober groups?**

**2 Dave** Yeah, I went in the beginning. Mainly because I had to get stuff signed. On, sign up for the court, myself personally. And it may be because I have a strong connection with God, and I pray mentally all the time. I started to feel like a lot of those people that were there were what I call white knuckling sobriety. And maybe they didn't have something like Spartan in their life or they didn't have some other goal or some community to help them with but they're all showing up like white knuckle in that chair hoping to use again and like chain smoking. Cigarettes and like, wishing they could still be out drinking and like counting every day they've been cleaned. Which if you do that, that's great. I fucking don't, because then like I couldn't even tell you my exact clean date because I don't remember I could probably figure it out if I look it up. But I was like, I'm headed forward, not back. I'm not looking back. So, I'm not sitting and focusing on that. I'm headed here, follow Me or get the fuck out of my way. where maybe 100% I feel like I feel like so many people there, it's you're in that moment. They're romanticizing that, that fuckin your past and that garbage and I think that's fucking stupid. Like, you need you need tools to move forward and honestly, like, I don't care what anybody says if you're, if you're wanting to get clean, you need to put some fucking distance between you and other like-minded shitty people from where you came from.

**5 Lucas** I'm a part of Celebrate Recovery to through my church, which is another. It's more faith based, but it's like a 12 step program. But a to compare the two I mean, you have to be prepared. I know that for each and prep for each one and you have to put in work so honestly don't know how to answer that question because

**4 Royster** yes to prison and AA3 **Brice** yes to prison and AA

**6 Kyle** No, I don't Okay. Um, so, you know, like I said, in my early recovery, I did, I did do some NA and some AA and, and, you know, later on, I sort of fell out of that and got into got into other things other ways to like progress my recovery I just I just sort of separate separated myself. Not because I didn't like it, but I just I just felt like I was I was moving in a different direction. So I found my recovery community and athletics like Spartan backpacking. You know, just doing outdoorsy things, right. So and I do have a I do have a, a support group, you know, so, and how would Um, can you put a finger on why you don't continue a or NA like, well I guess just the just the format of it is, is a little it's a little mundane and sort of never changes it's sort of the same thing repetitive thing every week. You know, if you if you go to a weekly meeting, you know, you pretty much hear from the same people about the same stuff, you know, and so I just I'm not I'm not saying that it's bad and I'm not saying that. It doesn't work. I know it works for a lot of people. It just didn't necessarily work for me it right. And that's what I was asking and I would never I cannot write up this report and bash anyone a NA any organization. That's not my goal. I have my own ideas of why it doesn't work for some people. And that's all I'm asking. And it will never be attached to you specifically. And some people that I've interviewed said oh, a comes first like that helps me more than any sport and Spartans supplement. And that's their belief.

**8 Jesse** No, I'm not. And I said, No, I should maybe elaborate on that a bit. For me. I was I was I used to go to **AA**, and religiously every day. And it did help me for the very for the first year or two. But after a while, I was like, this isn't freedom. Like, this isn't life. I don't want to be dependent on having to go and sit in a circle for the rest of my life. Like I don't, like I go when I see guys that are there. 510 2025 years, I'm like, holy shit. I'm like, I don't want to have to be coming here and 25 years dependent on these meetings for to stay sober and unlike, you know, that's not that's not freedom. For me. That's not living life. So I think this this life and obstacle course racing has given me a you know, that almost that that support that you know, one other outlets, so it's not like, you know, work, a meeting work a meeting family, you know, you're so yeah, I thought it maybe elaborate on that a little bit more.

**1 Eddie** No, I was never involved in the program itself. I have gone to meetings. Last time I went to me it was probably like two years ago. Just to go was kind of like you know, you're in a bad in a bad spot, you know, mentally and you know, I decided to go hit and hit up a meeting and then I left and I never went back. Why didn't you go back?I was like, I don't know. I guess my problem is burning.I don't know. I mean, it's, it's I mean, it could work. You know, it could definitely work. But like, you know, it just you know, that person would have to be ready and willing, because, you know, it's yeah, there's gonna be a lot of people like in like a lot of bad shape. It's not going to be just hey, let's do this. when I when I first when I was on drugs, I couldn't even run like a mile.I'd run like a half a block and that'd be dead. So it had to be like a slow, steady grind. Like to get people in shape. It'd be like walking, mixing jogging, but it's possible. I think it's possible.

**7 Nick** I wouldn't, I wouldn't compare him at all. A is a lifestyle for me, and one that keeps me sober. Sober Spartans is a community of people who racing are also trying to stay sober. But I mean, there's, there's no 12 STEP program in there, you know, not everybody shares the same, the same things that that's one of the things about a is like, No, we read the 12 steps, every meeting, it's, you know, part of that repetition is what, what kind of keeps things there. So I wouldn't compare them at all, if somebody I mean, you know, it's not for me to say about somebody else kind of thing, but I was gonna say, if somebody was looking to get sober, a Facebook group is not the place to, to get you sober. But then again, that's not my business for somebody else. So I could be wrong. At the same time, it might help me stay that way. And I think it's a good place of information if somebody was looking to get it and there's a lot of people who have awesome inspiring stories and I think that's a huge part of it, too, as opposed to a where it's anonymous. silver sparkles is not. And you know, I think that's part of it, though. You do want to see the other people that are like you who are doing things like you, you know, and see some of the things that they've overcome and you know, like There's it humbles me when people tell me how I inspire them, because it's usually the people that inspire me

**Do you think Spartan Racing can aid in substance misuse recovery programs?**

**still under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol? within the first year of sobriety?**

**2 Dave** It's creating good hardworking humans that are resilient and I think a lot of people use drugs and use alcohol as an easy way out when different situations in life get to be in a relationship or any other random thing. I think it's you're getting these things and that bothered you in life before that made you turn to drinking or drugs or whatever. Those are, fucking pedal shit to you now because you're, you have this new tool in your head that you're like, I accomplished this, or I accomplished that or, you know, you're you just feel so much stronger and healthier. And plus, you'd have a community of other people training and working out with you like, like that. I mean, I know our like local community here fuck we have no problem driving 50 to 100 miles to go see one another for a fuckin workout on the weekend. You know if you had all that in one house, and you could do some fucking regular training, cool little encouragement, little meetings and stuff like that, because I've lived in a clean and sober house. I think that's a fucking home run. Like home run. And what do you see? Do you see there a difference? There's a difference between within that one year like you were sober. sober when you did your first start sparring? Say the difference between somebody like three months sober and they're in this house learning obstacles versus like, still kind of detoxing and coming in. Do you think it could be damaging too soon to introduce Spartan or do you think it could be introduced to anyone Oh, I think it could be introduced at any level. I think obviously for somebody new coming from fucking drugs and alcohol, alcohol like that. Like, you're gonna get your ass handed to you on some of those like first workouts or whatever at the house. But when you see that your ass is getting handed to you and these other people feel just fine and go about their day like that. Like, you would have to be like, Fuck, how do they get there? I want to be able to do something that fucking gnarly and be like, it ain't no thing.I personally feel like a specially high statistics and at helping any new addict because any new addict needs to redirect massive amounts of time attention to something different than they have been because when somebody's newly sober you basically left one lifestyle that has consumes so much of your daily hourly time in a day you've been putting so much time in the hunting the drugs doing the drugs. the time you're high like all of that so now all the sudden and then OK leak that's a stop so now there's no hunt for the drugs and there's no time doing the drugs there's not a time spot high you end up with a lot of idle time so what do you do without idle time and I feel that idle time is the killer to peoples sobriety so like if you can replace as much time with some else. I would like also if somebody's newly sober and they don't have a job or something like that you're fat you need you need to have a focus or something to spend your time on like rewind 16-17 years ago when I first got clean it was like I woke up went to work, probably like 9-10 hour days at the shop and then did side work after and I work till like 11-12 at night grub while I'm in the middle of working go to sleep wake up to the next day like. I stayed so busy there was no time to fuck up and with SPARTAN or training for starting or something in general your life I will you're naturally get it OK now I'm spending time like preparing for this race I'm gonna do a little work out during the day. well now I'm tired and I need to eat so no matter what you're starting to occupy and use up more of that idle time but in a positive way you're focusing towards a positive a positive goal and focus. I think the fact of just being in the environment because even I look back when we first started and like the first couple races that I ran open I think a I might even say that that's better for somebody new to recovery because those people I would say aren't like they're in a serious to where they could still kind of talk during it so you'll find you'll see yourself out on the race course in some unthinkable circumstance and people encourage you. so you find yourself in the middle of that rose hill that is just like what the actual fuck when you're going up a hill so steep you can stick your arm out and touch the ground in front of you that you're trying to stand on life and you think you're at the top and then it's a surprise like fall somewhere you so you're halfway

**5 Lucas** Ah, yeah, I mean I that's a hard one because if you're not willing to see anything, you know, if you're not willing to see a problem, you just not gonna see it. But I think you know, if Spartan helped plant the seed, you know, if they threw in a little, like a, you know, a little paragraph about addiction or something, you know, signing up or even a booth here and there, you know, I think that might help. But I don't know really what the question was, Heck, yeah, I think it would, I mean, I think most people, you know, realizing they have a problem. I mean, and most people who get sober, probably have a few extra pounds to lose. So, you know, doing a obstacle course race, you know, or even doing some training, seeing what they can achieve and just seeing, you know, a little bit of progress that they're gonna want to, you know, eventually, you know, beat the course. Or finish the course.

**4 Royster** So if you if you get to take a couple of drug addicts putting together and in and get them involved in something positive, then what are they going to be talking about positive stuff? So that's, yeah, absolutely. That work, you know, to do that, it's kind of what you're doing. Could it help people under influence? I don't know. I mean, I know me, and I know if I was in the lifestyle and somebody said hey, you're going to the Spartan I don't know if I would do it because I'm so socially awkward. It's so out of touch with reality, completely not in shape. You don't I mean, I don't know if that would actually work. But there's different levels to it. You know, I mean, so if somebody if you got different stages of addiction, different forms, different levels of addiction, so some people have my work, , but for my background, and where I came from, it probably wouldn't work. So I'm, I'm an extremist, you know, I mean, and so, if I'm going all in on something and that means I'm using whatever addiction, whatever I'm using, then that's what I'm doing. I don't think you would be able to drag me to a Spartan Race. But if you got on the flip side of that, you got the professional that's a lawyer that does cocaine in the bathroom on Friday nights and does you know what I'm saying that whole thing, then that may be an individual that that may be an individual that we could probably get to this far, you know, I mean, cuz he's not out of his mindWithin first year? I'm getting high and committing crime. So if you had to say like just a arbitrary number of like, how many days like you said some were 45 days like for yourself if you say okay with I think after I was sober like 20 days, I think I could have done it. Like what at what point it's, it would be different for everyone but just for you. What do you think? Well, I mean, being for me being so chemically dependent.

**3 Brice** Yeah, it's good positive because you're taking you go to NA meeting when you kind of meeting like that. You're there with a bunch of drivers talking about a bunch of, you're basically glorifying what you guys did. So you're glorifying all your negative experiences and what is it what the fuck don't want to do that for but if you had a Spartan house where I was involved in fitness hitting the gym, I mean, there's a positive come out of that. So you're focusing not focused on the fucking past and what you're glorifying. You know, you're focused on what the future is we got the sporting events, we need to get the best shape possible and diet and everything so it's definitely a positive outcome.So within that first year, how crucial Do you think Spartan could be it? Just keeping people on the right track during that crucial time? Huge, because, I mean, that's how that's what worked for all of us. You know, I mean, that's it was in that we went to a Spartan within the first year or two, you know, I mean, so it'd be huge first 90 Days soon as somebody gets their nutrition up and all that stuff. We've had people go foot 45 days in and go to a Spartan Race and turn their stuff around and be like, hey, you know, I want to do that. Forget, wow, I'm not tripping on any of that. I want to do that again. When is the next race? I'm going to get ready. Yeah. So absolutely. Yeah. Within the first year, and what do you think about the still under the influence and versus within the first year, personal experience, forest influence? You can't push me this and I was. I said, No way. I said, socially awkward. That's people that I'm not vibing with as people that are fucking out of my element. I'm not going anything like that. I got no stretch. So I've been socially awkward because I'm hanging with a negative network. So I'm not going to go to fucking anything like that. No, it's not my element. I'm getting high. Coming off drugs is pretty severe. I know. For me, I took me probably good 45 days to get fucking right and chemically imbalanced. Your emotions are so fucking out of whack. You're crying. There's a lot of motions going on. You're been under the influence of drugs for years. I mean, I didn't get right for a fucking pie almost a year. Until I fucking felt like you know, I'm 100% I could say that. So I would say it maybe after 90 days. Because I don't know I was fucking gone. So that's understand we've come a long way. That's for sure.

**6 Kyle** Yeah, I mean, generally speaking, you know, it, it helped me. so yeah, absolutely. Can and certainly will. It's, I think, I've mentioned in my summary that I that I wrote out to you it's a very like specific form of recovery and exercise, you know, but it would, it would absolutely attract certain people like me, you know, and people who aren't exactly like me, maybe people that just want to change, addictions to overeating or something like that. I can tell you what my personal experience was I when, when I went into rehab, physically, my body was absolutely depleted. I could I don't know if you have any experience with opiates or coming down on opiates but it took me at least the pretty much the whole month I was in rehab I was very sick, but violently ill for the first week or two and in very weak and feeble for the for the following weeks after that. And it's a long overdue or drawn out process good like depleting those drugs from your from your body that is and it leaves you with acute effects. Long after like six months to a year after your last dose. If you if you do it happily, I guess. So. I was fortunate and that I bounced back rather quickly, but for the first month I was barely able to pick myself up off the floor. Yeah, so but like I said I was I was six months sober when I did my first race. So let's say that, you know, in that amount of time, I was able to, you know, regain my strength and I like said I with no training or anything I actually did pretty well on that on a spread my first sprint so yeah, I'd say your window there is anything after a month and or two months up to six months. I think that's perfect or a year. That's the perfect time. yeah so I was pretty ill the first month into my recovery and didn't have much motivation to do anything physically whatsoever you know, I was I was strong enough to go for walks and things like that and then keep in mind you know, before all this I was I was very active person I did sports my whole life and then so fortunately for me, I was able to regain my strength relative relatively quickly. And, and I did my first Spartan at six months of sobriety, and I think that's totally possible for people that are like me, and maybe people who aren't as good a shape or young or as myself, so

**8 Jesse think** that’d be freaking amazing? That would be exactly what people would need. And I would go volunteer my time myself. It sounds it's Yeah, like that would be the most incredible thing for a recovering addict or alcoholic because you know what Spartan Race represents and overcoming obstacles and community and everything. It's all the you know, the physical, the healthy lifestyle, the lifestyle of a Spartan Race, you know, the attitude. It would be Yeah, like that would be exactly what We'd like a band of brothers and sisters, you know, coming together in a house and you know, eating together healthy getting healthy, it would be perfect. That's a great idea. You're thinking, yeah, that's Oh my God. Now, that's a frickin dream, that would be amazing. And you know what, that would work very well, because you do have a lot of people that struggle that find their way to a Spartan Race. And honestly, it doesn't even have to be, you're gonna have some that are drug and alcohol base, and you're gonna have others that are just people struggling with mental health issues. I had a meeting with an employee of mine yesterday, because they were they were struggling, and they were trying to find their way. And they were, you know, wanting to, you know, spinning and they are wanting to sign up for something in in live, you know, put a little more purpose in their life. And, you know, I signed them up for a 10k right now, and then next up is, is going to be doing like a Spartan Race or an obstacle course. But that sounds amazing.I would 100% love to be a part of that. And even some kind of, I bet you you'd have a whole lot of people from around the Spartan community from all around the world that would come together and some kind of fundraiser to get that going to help people exactly what this world needs.

**1 Eddie ,** and how do you think Spartan could bridge that gap between those people say coming out of rehab, and having no positive community think it could bridge it?I mean, it, it could I mean, it'd be, it'd be hard. I mean, if Spartans rolling as part as far as willing to dish the money out and probably get nothing in return. Like, you know, financial wise.It's a possibility. But I mean, if they're looking to make like, money off it then, you know, probably have to like go to like the higher client, you know, not clientele, Like Celebrity Rehab or something if they're trying to make money off it or trying to be sure about it, but if they're just trying to help the average person I mean, it's possible I mean, I don't know think I see Spartan doing it with like, just average Joes. That's just my that's just that's just, that's just where I'm you know, I mean, like I said, they're gonna dish out all that money and not gain anything back.But you know, yeah, I mean, you get the Kardashians on drugs and having to do kind of rehab programs. Oh, we're gonna. Yeah, that's makers television show about it. Nonprofit doesn't matter about money. We're Spartans included as part of that rehab when people were coming out of a normal traditional program just to transition them. Do you think learning obstacles would help them? Yeah, yeah. I mean, there are obstacles, , but it's got to be like, you know, career oriented, too. Because, you know, like, what are you gonna do just learn obstacles? Like, you know, you got to work, you know, I mean, like, obstacles, ain't gonna pay our bills. They don't pay my bills, and I'm in I raised pretty good, you know, but all that's coming out of my pocket, so. I think if they're ready for it on their own, then yeah, definitely. They would be ready to be worth it. But it had to be you know, it can't be forced on anybody.

**7 Nick** We preface by saying, I'm not entirely comfortable answering that question. So take my answer with a grain of salt. The thing that makes a successful is singleness of purpose. So I would do that with anything that said, somebody was looking to supplement something, the problem is that can it's putting conditions on sobriety. Like okay, well, I have to be part of this and do all this other physical shit. Like those are two different things. In my opinion, it's a slippery slope to combine them. So I can go to eight no matter what, there's only one thing I have to do is have a desire to stop drinking, doesn't mean I have to stop drinking, I just have to have a desire to stop drinking. I don't have to go do a workout to be part of a I don't have to do a race. Nobody can be judging me about anything else. Or at least not they can't throw me out. Unless I do some, like break a law. I don't have there. It's drunk, stop, go get into a program that puts a bunch of rules on it's got to be like getting a two year old to eat their vegetables. Because for otherwise we don't show up or we don't stay. So you know, would I be interested in doing a sober Spartan mind type thing where it's a Spartan event for sober people? I think that could have tremendous impact and building community and building relationships of other like minded people trying to accomplish the same things. You know, I would feel I wouldn't feel comfortable suggesting a any prerequisite attached to somebody trying to get sober.So two answers to that. Do I think it would be beneficial for someone in their first year of sobriety to find their way into something like Spartan? Absolutely, I mean, even if it's a distraction, or, you know, if it's into addiction, fuck it, there are worse things. Right. And, for me, I didn't need something to fill my time. You know, I drank till four in the morning at the local shithole. I was happy to get some sleep again. I didn't need something to fill my void. Well, at least I didn't think I did. You know, so do I think that, you know, there's a good friend of mine who raises and absolutely, he does this instead of that. Um, and, you know, but like, so is that helpful for people? Sure. To the second part, or to kind of answer that question. Definitely. Again, I think they need to be separate paths, because what if they fail at the Spartan part? Most of us, that means we fail at all of it. That's the excuse we meet today. So I really think it's a slippery slope to anything other than show up and try to get sober is a slippery slope

**Do you think the party atmosphere and free beer ticket may be a trigger for someone battling addiction?**

**2 Dave** No, it's not a threat to me. But I consider myself a very strong person. Maybe some people I think maybe if so I feel like Spartan. Spartan does a good job of making it just like whatever like there's a fuckin free beer right there. Honest to God. It's not if it was like the centerpiece of the festival. People might feel differently about it like oh, like if it was like right in the middle and like all the other booths with health supplements and things like that. Were around it and then fucking merch tents right there. It'd be a little like, Fuck, I'm kind of stretched. Like honestly, I've been to 100 Spartan Races. I couldn't tell you where the fuck the beer tent is. I could give two shits about the beer 10 I have every one of those tickets that ever came in the sleeve with my number that it came in. I gladly give it to somebody else. And you know what, maybe your race will be a little shittier and I'll be you next time if you want to pound all those beers.Are the high the runner's high that oh yeah, nah, I don't think so. I think if somebody if somebody like even feels that way or says it I feel like you're grasping at straws. Like I feel like you're like you need to shift your thinking you need to like do you need to be like cuz like let's say you know the DJ is playing some certain song you remember smoking crack in the bathroom at a fucking club too. Well, guess what? You got a new memory now? Because you just kicked ass at this Spartan Race and accomplish something. And you should start remembering that fucking song that you did that to not your past.

**5 Lucas** Honestly, I think what you're doing for your sobriety ties into that, you know, if you have a good sobriety program, if you got a you know, if you're surrounding yourself with the program for me, that's, that's a, or you know, connecting with my alcoholics. I like, you know, at least that's what I call them. They they're just my mind sober peaks. I let them know where I'm going. I want to know what I'm doing, you know, and my wife happens to be one of those so she helps out but I think if you stay connected to your sober group, I give away my drink tickets to other people. I see people drinking a beer and I say, Hey, here's my ticket. I don't drink and for me, the non alcoholic beers, almost like an insult, because why would I drink decaf coffee, it's not going to do anything for me. You know? So the non the non alcoholic beer. That is not even appetizing. That's just like, you know, like, if I'm going to drink I'm going to drink.Does it make you want to drink though when you see other people drinking does it Does it spark a thought in your mind? No, for me, I'm okay to be around it. You know, I still have a lot of friends who partake and I still like to hang you know, I'm still me. I just don't, you know, I choose not to drink anymore. And you know, I but I feel I have enough tools in my, you know, toolbox to get me through those situations. DJ and music: That's that to me, that's a free high. I earned that because I just ran a race, you know, or I train. So that's the best kind of high

**4 Royster** Any reason why is it like when I finished when I finished the race, and I was like, Yeah, okay, this was happening. Yeah. You know, I was tripping because I've never really drank like that, but I can see how if somebody was a full blown alcoholic and trying to get clean and using that, how that can affect them.

**3 Brice** Yes, it could be a trigger mean someone use it. That was a drug of choice, alcohol. I mean, seeing that and how easy it would be to consume. I mean, we get here all the time. So yeah, it'd be easy especially I'll give depends on the person's out and development of addiction and development where they're at. I mean, because I mean, a lot of the times it's like if you're an alcoholic, or even if you're not alcohol, but if you drink what happens, you do something good. You want to celebrate you celebrate with alcohol. So if you're dealing with an alcoholic and you finish the finish line, and he's supposed to celebrate that he said, Here you go. Then that might not be good enough. It's like juice, juice or something. I don't know. Juice areas and make juices Some call it clean stuff clean energy clean something you know, like super healthy stuff, you know, a wheat grass type deal. He knows maybe massages or theragun booth or something like that you know it's you know something to trip on and say no, yeah, we did celebrate you did win a race that's perfect, but it shouldn't resort to that should be like hey, man, I need to go into recovery. Here's a drink for recovery. There's some there Yeah. Spartan two, do you think that celebration hyped atmosphere party atmosphere relates to drugs as well or more like an alcohol party thing, or could it be any substance? Oh, I mean, so I don't feel that with Spartan I mean, afterwards, you know, I take the guys you there's usually Marines or army boots. So I'll take the guys over there and you do pull up challenge and stuff like that. So after we do the race, and we'll go celebrate like that. We'll go do the pull up, you know, the boosted the positive boosts that they have there. We'll talk to recruiters and talk to them a little bit get the guys no haze, you know? And so yeah, there's something like that they had more of like that. You know, instead of doing have the beer garden stuff, like that kind of atmosphere, but have something for the people or not.

**6 Kyle** Yeah, well, it's definitely relative. Everybody's a little different. You know, I'll say for me, it helps to be with a sober group at a you know, like say you're a you're a sober racing sorry, you're sober Spartan racing team you know and obviously, you know, you're not gonna go drink behind their backs right. So every those type of people hold you accountable, but I'll tell you that I have felt slightly triggered you know, when I see that sort of environment after the race, everybody's feeling good. Everybody's on a high and they do offer you a free drink. Obviously, I've never taken, nor have the people that I've been with ever taking it but I don't think that's a I don't think it's a negative thing. I wouldn't want I wouldn't want to affect, you know, normal, normal people's lives, you know, just because I don't like alcohol or can't handle alcohol and after the race, so I wouldn't want it I wouldn't want to change that, for other people. Because I think that's a good thing. I think that's healthy, like social atmosphere for a lot of people but for people that use drugs and alcohol, it's not so if you do, go to a Spartan Race, go with a silver friend, And what and it'll help you at the end of the race when everybody else is having a good time and you so badly want to go get a beard.If there's if there's people that come to the race with us, that are say watching, we typically just give them give them our ticket, you know, but aside from that, I just throw it out. Yeah. Yeah. I've, I've, I've progressed enough to be able to accept that sort of thing you know that other people are going to have a good time you know, and in drinking alcohol as part of that for a lot of people in America, you know, and that's, that's, I'm totally accepting of that. I just don't allow myself to do it and people that are recovering shouldn't either, obviously so yeah, it could be a trigger to some people.

**8 Jesse** so that's a good point. I you know, I like getting the free beer and give it to somebody who you know, wants two beers. Yeah. That's funny. That's, that's a good point. I'm trying to think like this last time when I quit drinking, there was nothing that was gonna make me drink again. However, before that, you know, one times. You know, I remember I had gotten seven months, sober one time, and I relapsed at our national cross country championships. Because you know, it was you finished the race. Everybody's in a good mood. At a hotel in New Brunswick. I don't you probably I don't know if you know what that is. But it's a Yeah, it's a little tiny province out east Canada, and you know, and I had a bad weekend and I was struggling and you know, those boots round I did relapse. So, I don't know it's a tough thing is if someone is struggling with something and they are at that Spartan Race in their in their first weeks or months of sobriety and maybe they made a couple mistakes on the course and they're being hard on themselves and they get that free beer and then see everybody having a good time at the end. You know, that might actually be hard for someone at the same time. Whether it's free or there and you're paying for it. It's there anyway. So, you know, I would never want to take the free beer. I have a friend someone saw Yeah, it's in different like, honestly, like, at some time. It has to be your responsibility. And if getting a free beer, at the end triggers you to drink. You know, you weren't ready yet anyway. And the beer is there anyway. And you definitely can't. You can't just tell everybody, no beer around so I'm struggling, right. Like for me, I'm like, it makes me really, really uncomfortable when people don't drink because I'm around, or whatever I'm like, and I'm even bad. It's still the alcoholic me. I'm still like buying people drinks, trying to get them wasted. It's probably not even good. But uh yeah, that's a tricky one. But, uh, yeah, I think that was a good answer. I said before, if you know, free beer, triggers you to drink. You weren't ready, and you were probably going to drink anyway.

**1 Eddie** It just depends on where they're at in their recovery. You know, even you know, with the non alcoholic beer they have and stuff like that. I mean, I don't even partake in that. And that's just you know, that's just because I'd probably end up getting mad and wanted to get a real beer. But it just depends on where you're at in your recovery. Because, you know, there are people that can, you know, if I didn't have a drug problem, I would drink I would partake in alcohol and I would partake in you know, smoking pot, but I can't go down that road because I'm a drug addict. But, you know, there's people that smoke pot and have fantastic lives, and that doesn't affect them. And there's people that have a drink one or two drinks, you know, every year and it doesn't affect them and you know, more power to them, but someone like me, that's just either all in or all out. I can't go down that road. So how does the party atmosphere affect you? In the beginning, I think I would just like kind of like leave, you know, I mean, I can't be around this and stuff like that, but you know, throughout the years, I've kind of grown to like, just accept it and you know, it's just drink water, you know, drink water and pretend I'm having fun just like them, and I probably have more fun than they do.

**7 Nick** For newly sober people, they, I can only make a suggestion of you always, well, you know this too, for any person trying to get sober, you gotta have a plan. You know, like I say, I'm comfortable around booze, but that doesn't mean I'm always gonna be. So I don't go anywhere without knowing my exit strategy. And that's number one. Like, because I'm not going to stay in a situation that's going to be bad for me. So I mean, even the other night, the formal party was they gave us throne room, but it was like downstairs dark. And it was just the bar pretty much. And it just, it struck more like a drinking atmosphere. And so another sober friend of mine was like, Hey, let's go eat upstairs. Right, cool. Let's go. You know, so as far as like, the, the drink tickets come. So whatever that cider is, isn't going to threaten me. But I do tell you, I actually really enjoy being like, hey, who spectating today, and I like giving away my giving away my drink tickets. You know, it is a I don't know, it's a festival area. I personally, I can't speak for others, because like I said, I like to be at the party. And love that atmosphere. You know, like, I like, I don't mind other people drinking, you know, like, I like so for me, it's like, I get to just go beyond the world again, you know, like, I don't have to hide from anything. And that's where, again, no race brand, or bootcamp is ever going to do that for me. You know, that's got to be some sort of a spiritual journey. And for me, that's gotten through a. And so I can be anywhere, you know, is, there are parties, but I mean, that's you got to make a decision. I mean, you don't have to have a party to get drunk. Like, nobody ever got me drunk before. If there wasn't a party, I was making one. I mean, I brought booze to where booze was not supposed to be. So if it's a trigger for someone, unfortunately, you know, like, again, I can I go to the store, and everyone's for a while I look for my wife's favorite wine. And I bring that home to her. Some people can't walk down that aisle. And so that's a personal decision for each of them. I tell you what, though. It's not like I'm cure. You know, I walk down that aisle, and I don't need the beer, ladies. I don't even look, you know, I can go down the aisle, but I'm not looking over there. So.take it. Still take it. The life goal with that book honestly, would be the virtual equivalent of reading it of seeing somebody read in the airport would be for some group that I'm part of**And last question, do you think intense exercise helps you more with your recovery, or just any basic exercise like yoga or something? Eddie**lightweights think it's intense stuff that helps you more the moderate three personally, it's the race and competition in sport and the you know, the camaraderie you know what I mean that we have there, we're out there battling. That's probably a little bit more better than just you know, going to yoga that I've never done.