



THE CHRONIC ILLNESS RECOVERY PODCAST

Episode 34

Harrison's Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Recovery Story

Toby: Hello, and welcome to another episode of the CFS Health Recovery Podcast. I am your host, Toby Morrison, and in today's episode, we sit down with a brilliant member, or past member, of the CFS Health Mentorship Program, Harrison Overall, 22-year-old male from Melbourne, Australia suffering from post-covid fatigue, post viral fatigue and chronic fatigue syndrome.

And this man's journey has been an incredible one, a very unique one as everyone's has been, and today we sit down and we talk about the trials and tribulations of recovery. What it's like for someone who's never had to experience hardship in their entire life, with their family, with their friends, to then being struck down with something like chronic fatigue syndrome and not knowing what to do. You can imagine how hard this would've been for Harrison, but also you're gonna hear the amazing story of coming out the other end and getting his health back. You'll hear all the things that he's up to these days. He shares some incredible insights and tips that are gonna help you with your own health, your own life, and your own journey.

Let's get into it. Big shout to Harrison, give him some massive love in the comments. Please hit subscribe on the YouTube channel and leave a review on the podcast link if you can. Enjoy, sit back and relax.

Hey everyone, it's Toby Morrison here, and on the other end of the screen is Harrison overall. Yep. The name says it all, like literally overalls! Welcome, Harrison.

Harrison: No worries, Toby, thanks for having me.

Toby: Man, thank you so much for coming on. In today's conversation, we're really talking about recovery from chronic fatigue syndrome, which is kinda like a serious topic, but we're gonna have fun with it today because your story's

really incredible. I'm getting shivers down my spine just thinking about it. We were just talking off-air about how before you found us, how you literally felt like you were the only person in your world, you know, in your suburb, in your community, that had experienced something like this before and you didn't know where to turn, you didn't know where to look, you didn't know where to go, and it was super overwhelming. And the other thing that you said, which I can't wait to dive deep in with you today, about your recovery and your journey and where you're at today, but also just the fact of reaching out and asking for help, and before this point you said something really fascinating, which was, as you grow up, you just think you're invincible. I'd love you to just speak to that just for a second, what you said before, it was amazing.

Harrison: Yeah. Well, I mean I was very fortunate to have quite a, I guess, sheltered upbringing and you know, there was no kind of problems with my friends, I had a very smooth transition from primary school to high school to, you know, all that schooling stuff.

I had a very sound and supportive family, so I kind of was brought up to have that mindset of, you know, I hadn't really been exposed to a lot of hardship really. And you know, you don't really kind of understand how lucky you are until something in your life, like chronic fatigue or something almost life changing or something really kind of just out of the blue happens, and looking back now you really do take that for granted, that safe upbringing.

Toby: Yeah, and you mentioned that you hadn't really met anyone up until you joined the program, when you logged into the private Facebook group for the first time, you're like, "oh my God. I'm not the only one!"

Harrison: Like I said, I had a very fun upbringing. Like I was really involved in sport from a really young age. I was a very active kid with a lot of active friends from school and sport and it was just a fun kind of risk free lifestyle I guess. And you know, that was awesome and I had so much fun just living life up until kind of late or early last year, which it all came crashing down a bit, but Yeah.

Toby: Let's rewind the clock: before you joined the program, just to give the viewers a understanding of what you were doing, where you were at- you know, at your lowest point, what was going on in Harrison's life?

Harrison: I first got sick with Covid 19 like the 1st of January, I tested positive, 2022. And then all my mates, because we went to a festival and all my mates tested positive and, you know, you kind of think, "ah, it's just a cold, get over it," and then all my mates started getting better and then I didn't, I just kind of

plateaued. I didn't really feel... I woke up every day, I'd describe it as feeling really kind of hungover and just so fatigued and exhausted and I just felt so wiped out. Walking up the stairs, I'd just be puffed and just really bad physically like that. And then a couple months went past and I just wasn't improving. And I kind of still was in that mentality of, "oh, well, you know, it will just get better. It will just get better," and then it didn't. So I went for a few blood tests and I ended up- I had antibodies of glandular fever. Yeah. Epstein-Barr virus in my system. So I would've gotten it probably around January, February 2022. And so that was really good to kind of get an answer. Kind of like, "okay, well there's a reason why I'm feeling so shit," but then all the doctors- you know, a common theme that you guys speak about in this program is, you go to kind of traditional doctors and some are really good and some they're quite dismissive and they'd be like, "oh, you know, just rest three weeks you'll be fine," and that's kind of the constant dialogue you get from the doctors. And I was believing that up until three or four weeks had passed and I was just plateauing, it wasn't getting better. It kind of got to June/July when I found you guys, when I was just like... I'd lost a lot of hope in terms of improving, cause I was like, "well, if I haven't improved, it's been four or five months and--" around that time as well, I started to discover what chronic fatigue was, cause I'm a bit of a hypochondriac, so if I have any symptoms of anything, I'm straight on Google. It's not good!

Toby: Dr. Google!

Harrison: Yeah, exactly. And in this circumstance, it actually did help because I was like, okay, I reckon it's postviral fatigue or chronic fatigue, and they're very similar. But then I found you guys and I watched a recovery video that you did with a guy called Blake.

Toby: Shout out to Blake, he's a legend. He's pretty similar to you actually, your story's a very similar, yeah.

Harrison: Well that's why it really resonated with me, the fact that he had kind of grown up in Melbourne like I have, and you know, he had played a sport, he played footy like I had, and everything he was saying was just so... I was like, "holy shit, you are like, I'm you when you were really bad. Like I just feel exactly how you were feeling, right now," and it was just a real light bulb moment and straightaway I just tried to get into your program. And lucky enough about a week or two later, I was in, and fast forward a few months it definitely got harder before it got easier. I think a lot of people who are experiencing chronic fatigue can kind of resonate with that. It's definitely not a linear progression. It's very up and down and you also speak a lot about the type-A personality being quite prevalent in the program. I'm that to a tee. So far in life, I've tried to do everything by the book. You know, I've done the good grads, I've gotten into a

good uni, done the course you're meant to be doing, you know, like all this stuff— sport, eating really well. And that's what also I was really angry about is, why is this happening to me? I've got mates, we go out every night, get pissed and just abuse their bodies.

Toby: For the people in Europe right now, pissed means getting drunk. FYI!

Harrison: But yeah, so I've never been that type of person, I mean, I really like having fun and all that, but. I've always been of the mindset of like, in moderation, you know? Watch what you eat, watch how frequently you drink, exercise all the time. Like I was so healthy up until, and I'd never really been in a doctor's room for more than a checkup really for my whole life. So this was really foreign to me. And it was really hard to deal with at the time, you know? Constantly going to doctor's offices and just kind of that mindset of like, "I'm unwell." That was really foreign to me and that was probably one of the hardest things to have to deal with, to kind of accept that I wasn't well. A lot of the time I couldn't really control the timeline on the recovery. But you know, that being said, I definitely still stuck to everything that the program taught me. And I learned a lot just about chronic fatigue in general, which I found really interesting. Yeah. And like, I think, like sorry, going back to— it's been a bit of a tangent— but going back to what you were saying, like the lowest point I think was... my parents were great during this whole time. They were super supportive, allowed me to kind of not work; so my job essentially was basically to get as healthy as possible. So I was really fortunate to have parents that allowed me to do that. But there was one time where my parents kind of... they were like, "why aren't you better?"

And hearing that from your parents, who've seen you in this journey, was like, "fuck, no one can relate to me," like I felt so alone, and it is a very lonely thing to go through, because you don't really know a lot of people who have been through this. Chronic fatigue was kind of a taboo topic. It's a lot better now with, you know, the prevalence of long covid and things like that, but not many people spoke about it. And I really had to dive deep to find people who I could chat to about it. But yeah, that was probably the lowest point: that feeling of loneliness was really hard.

Toby: God, so many people relate, so many people relate to this, because they're probably sitting at home right now watching this going, "that's me, my family don't understand, my spouse doesn't understand, my loved one doesn't understand." So hard. Did you feel that secondary depression and anxiety when you were constantly Googling things and like, "fuck, what do I do next?" Like...

Harrison: Yeah, well I've always been a very anxious person, which I think feeds into a bit of the type—a personality a bit. So when something like this

happens, it definitely heightened my anxiety, and yeah, the depression definitely kind of resulted from the fatigue, but I'd never really kind of experienced that type of depression before, it was very secondary, in terms of it was created by this.

But the anxiety was... the amount of times I'd spiral, like my mind would spiral outta control because, you know, I'd be thinking, "shit, I'm never getting better," and like, "what is the point at this point?" You know, when you get into that monologing, spiraling self-talk, it is really hard to get out of that, to kind of dig yourself out of that. If you can find that kind of strength within you, it's very intrinsic, that strength. It's not gonna come from any external sources, but it's really like, if you can find that, you look back, you know, once you recovered and it's kind of like you couldn't be prouder of yourself, because you know that you've been to those kind of depths before and you've dragged yourself out of that. So that's, yeah, that was something I look back on and really kind of admire about myself now.

I had a few things that really helped me in those times. I found that allowing yourself to kind of embrace the sadness was really helpful. Naturally, I'm quite a pessimist. That was one of the things that I think I've really changed: always putting a positive spin on things. Like I've actually noticed it, kind of subconsciously, that I have been really looking at things really positive. Like I tested positive on Christmas day for Covid last year. Obviously I can mope and whine about it, but you know, I kind of twisted that into thinking, "okay, well if I can get through this, I've really kind of jumped that next hurdle of--" cause I was always really worried about getting again with the flu.

Yeah. Something like that. Totally. But you know, I turned that into a positive, being kind of, "okay. I really dealt with that really well." Anyway, that's beside the point, but yeah, the acceptance was really hard initially, and it takes time and it's something that just kind of... you can't work on it by just trying to focus on it. Like, it's something that kind of just happens over time. That's what I found anyway, so yeah, like you said, I was really kind of trying to get back to my old self and like, with my mental health over the years, I've found exercise a great outlet. Whether that be gym, running, footy, whatever. And the fact that I couldn't do it was really, really hard and that was probably one of the hardest things I found and, knowing that getting back to exercise wouldn't look like it used to was really hard. It's a very long way back in terms of building up your aerobic base and lifting weight again.

Like, I remember starting the exercise program in your program with Steph and you know, that initially looked like me trying to bench press a pillow and doing that was like really kind of demoralizing.

Toby: Yeah, I vaguely remember talking to you, cause I think you've reached out on a coaching call and you were just like, you know, "this is embarrassing. I used to be able to bench press whatever—" you know, let's say 60, 80 kilos or whatever, and it's like, "now I'm lifting a pillow." And I think I just said to you, yeah, you are doing that now so you can go and do the bench press later. Like you've just gotta start now, and it's all about consistency over an intensity. And everyone's different. You are coming from a sporty background, so understandably this is a big deal for you. Whereas other members, you know, sport isn't their number one thing, so it's like, "yeah, I just wanna be functionally healthy and strong so I can function, and integrate back into life."

But for you, that's such an interesting turning point. But I felt like it clicked probably three months in when— and I don't know if you watched the acceptance video, or I don't know if it was a combination of trainings that helped you go, "all right, I'm gonna stop focusing on the past and just focus on what I can control."

Harrison: Bang on. It was definitely that. Watching that acceptance video and just kind of really listening to a lot of podcasts. And I wanna give a shout out to this guy called Hugh Van Cuylenberg. He's an Australian, I dunno if you know him, Toby?

Toby: Yeah, I do. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Harrison: I've found his content amazing. So he's written a book called the Resilience Project, and he's got a podcast called The Imperfects. And, you know, As I was starting to kind of build up capacity again, I'd be going on walks— very low K's like, you know, 1, 2km. Just very casual strolling. But, you know, on those walks I'd be listening to the audiobook of his book and also the podcast. And another person I think really helped me work through that acceptance was also a girl called Emma Murray. You might have heard of her as well.

Toby: Yeah, Emma Murray's great. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Melbourne lady, too.

Harrison: High performance mindset coach type of thing with a lot of sports people. But her content kind of... you relate it to yourself and your own struggles in life and anything like that, and it was really helpful with kind of accepting that, okay, I just need to sit in this— Emma uses the word energy— like sit in this energy of like, "okay, I'm here," and you just need to know, you just need to trust yourself that it's going to be okay. You know? You can't control what's gonna happen tomorrow, but if you just keep chipping away, you'll get rewarded. That's what you also say as well, like you just kind of gotta trust yourself.

Like motivation will wane and you know, it'll go as well, but like, if you can kind of find it within you, just keep that consistency— and like you say, consistency is

key, and that's exactly what's been the pillar of me getting back to where I am now.

Toby: 100%. And you know, I have that saying, hit singles every single day. Forget about home runs. You know? And if I look back through your journey, you know, when we worked together, you were just hitting the dailies every day. At the start, maybe you were looking for the home runs. You know, that's what we all do, it's natural. You settled in probably within three months, and then it was like, "all right, I'm getting seriously serious on just the daily doings," and I feel like the motivation is your routine. It's like, "what am I waking up for today? You know, what am I doing for myself today?"

And I noticed a big shift in your mindset, and it was like a commitment. You know? I wouldn't say it's motivation because like you said, it comes and goes, but there was this undeniable commitment to yourself and the program, that's all that mattered. And it was almost like this single-minded focus that it was so strong.

And correct me if I'm wrong, but this is what I observed from you. There was no distraction. Like you got what you needed from the coaching calls, you jumped into trainings when you needed it, but most of the time you were out there implementing the work, you weren't trying to consume more content to learn more, you were like, "all right, I need to learn this, I'm gonna go do it. Toby or Gemma, or Steph, what do I do next? Because I'm here now." And you just kind of kept building the blocks, and consistency over intensity, man. Like you did it.

Harrison: Yeah, and I think that's definitely like, I was so driven just to do those basics every day, because, you know, all the basics that I was doing were all healthy, and they were all part of healthy lifestyles. So it's like, I'm not really doing myself a disservice in any way. It may look like it's not working, but regardless of if it's working or not, it's still a good thing to do. A big thing that really helped for some random reason was ocean bathing. Well, anybody of water really that's kind of cold. Like I was able to go to the beach and go there every morning and you get a couple seconds of just like, "whoa!" Like a bit of a rush of adrenaline, and that kind of kept me going through the day a bit.

Another thing that really helped click was, I'd have a lot of brain fog, but it seemed to be a massive difference with eating regularly, like in terms of not eating like three meals a day, but eating like five meals, every two hours. I learned that from you guys and that was awesome, that really helped. Also I think as well, just being able to like kind of not stray from those key things you do during the day to get through the day, because I'm sure everyone who's listening to this would be able to understand, like, when you have chronic fatigue, days feel so long.

Toby: They can if you don't have a plan, right? Exactly.

Harrison: That's exactly also why I tried to fill the day with things that weren't gonna drain me, but were also going to kind of help me. So, you know, it's one thing to just try distract yourself for the whole day, but that's usually gonna be active activities and that will usually end up in you pushing and crashing. I was just trying to do things that would distract myself to make me not spiral out of control in terms of my mindset. All, you know: journaling or podcasts or walking or doing little stretches and all that type of stuff. That kind of broke down the day.

Toby: Did you use your daily planner? Did you have like a set kind of way that you did things, like an intentions list?

Harrison: I did for the first couple months and then I kind of just started to do it every day. And one rule that you said was really good was, when you're in that trying to break that pushing and crashing phase, which I suffered from for months, try do 50% less of what you think your full capacity is. Theoretically you're not gonna crash. I tried to have that mindset with most things, and I think that really put me in good stead to improving at a rate that was actually quite rapid. I wasn't expecting it.

Toby: It was pretty quick, yeah. For you it was fast. But it's because you weren't doing the right things for that whole time that you initially got sick with. The "less is more" theory and framework is only initially, this is what people don't get. And it's hard because you can watch a YouTube video and just take a two minute clip and think that's the truth, but you missed the 30 minutes behind that.

But when you're in the program, you get the whole thing of like baseline and "less is more" is just initially. The "less is more" theory is just initially to stabilize, to stop you pushing and crashing- and, you know, for you Harrison, like pushing yourself in the gym or socializing too much or, you know, not having a perfect day plan, and then once you stabilize, it's like, "and now I can build my capacity." And then that's when you hit your straps and that's how I remember you... tell me some of your milestones that you had throughout the program. I remember one, which was going back to the gym for the first time and how good you felt. Not that you were pushing yourself, because it wasn't about pushing yourself, but you got to the gym and you're like, "I'm here. It's good for my mindset."

Harrison: Yeah. And something that kind of helped the mindset was, "I'm gonna go to the gym, but I'm just gonna do what I was doing at home in the gym." Whether that be doing stretches and that's it, it was still just good for my

mind just to get out of the house and reintroduce that habit again of going, physically going to the gym. And that was great. But you know, obviously it wasn't smooth sailing. I did have, I reckon I had three setbacks in the time in the program. And you know, each time was quite similar- I'd honestly just do more than where I was at.

So, you know like, I remember one time I posted something, because I'd just kind of reintroduced jogging- and when I mean jogging, I mean walking for a minute, jogging for 30 seconds, walking for another minute, not, you know, running a marathon- but you know, I still kind of thought, you know, "that's nothing," because I still had a bit of that, "ah, well, before then, I was just going for runs all the time."

Toby: You're comparing, exactly.

Harrison: Yeah, and I still do that a bit occasionally, but I had a setback after that, and you know, all the setbacks are really disheartening. Like they are really disheartening, and it makes you sometimes question like, "what has this been doing? What is all this hard work? When is it gonna pay off?" But you just gotta dust yourself off. It is hard to do that, but you just gotta dust yourself off and think about it logically. It's like, "okay, well I went for a run, that was probably a bit too soon. I need to push back a bit." And, you know, it's trying to remove the emotion from what's happening. That's really hard to do.

Toby: Yeah. What was your most favorite "aha" training?

Harrison: I definitely think... like one of the tips was definitely the food. The brain fog was the worst symptom for me, I think. I couldn't concentrate and it felt like I was constantly hungover, like that kind of malaise and just, you know, airy head. So when I started implementing those kind of five small meals a day, it was really good. It really helped me, and I think you slowly wean off that to, you know, get back to kind of three normal meals a day, but yeah, that was kind of the biggest "aha" moment I think.

Toby: Just clicked. Yeah, I remember you were really stressing about your brain fog and you kept asking the same question most weeks. You were like, "but how do I get rid of this brain fog?" You know, like, "when's it gonna go away?" And we kind of just let you know like anything, over time as you get healthier, your symptoms decrease.

Did you find that over time that as you naturally started to get healthier, that those symptoms just started to decrease and decrease and decrease?

Harrison: Yeah, absolutely. I still sometimes get a bit of brain fog here and there, but I think that's just from...

Toby: Normal people brain fog?

Harrison: Yeah. And that whole time was just like chronic stress. So I used to get a lot of headaches, and because I'm always quite a stressed person, that kind of does result in headaches for me. So I think it's kind of a bit of that now. But yeah, I definitely think that the brain fog was really kind of hard to deal with. And that was the one that was lagging the most. So my fatigue was getting noticeably better, but the brain fog was a lot further behind and that kind of, yeah, only went in the past couple months. But like you said, it does sometimes come here and there, but yeah, a lot better. A lot better.

Toby: Just to give people like an idea of what you do day to day: so you've studied a Bachelor of Commerce, and you just did your internship at KPMG, is that right? Which is like one of the big four business companies in Australia—well, worldwide, right? You know, it's just so amazing what you're doing. And I want to get into kind of where you're at now and what you're doing. So you mentioned the food was a huge one for you. The acceptance piece was massive, and I love how you just naturally said, you know, over time; do you think being surrounded by other people and success stories and people sharing their wins— and I know you were part of that, sharing your successes with the people, and we had a call together: you, me, and a bunch of other guys, I think it was in lifestyle integration and you know, it was really powerful. Like you came on and you shared where you were and where you're at now, and you were giving advice to another member on the call, you know, in front of everyone. Do you remember that?

Harrison: Yeah, yeah. And I think the chats I had a lot with a lot of the people my age in the program have been really good as well, because I found out a lot of people were kind of suffering the same things that I was suffering from, and would help each other out, and that was really good. But also, I reckon one of the most valuable things for a number of reasons was the success stories. One, yeah, with Blake, and the other one that really resonated with me was the girl...

Toby: Oh, Carly Warson?

Harrison: Yeah, yeah, I'd always go to those two in particular when I was really kind of down, and that always instantly just made me motivated again, or just instantly made me see the light at the end of the tunnel, you know? Yeah, I found those really, really invaluable. And also just sharing with other people and getting ideas the coaches, but also the people inside it. To kind of see and really be able to relate to that because of the human aspect of things.

Toby: Yeah, it's pretty special. We've got a pretty amazing bunch of people, hey? Everyone's really cool. By the way, members who are watching this, we

have now private chats depending on your age group and where you're at and what you need help with, so make sure you go into the private community and find your group so you can do exactly what Harrison's done: reach out to some members who are at similar levels to you or similar age groups so you can relate and keep moving forwards together, which is amazing. Where are you at now, dude? When you left the program, you put up such a cool photo. I think you were at a party. You know, you're with a few friends and you said goodbyes to all our members and said, you know, "I'm ready to fly and I'm leaving," and you shared like kind of your wins and what worked for you and all that. And I love the photo because, you know, you're like, "this is probably not the greatest photo of me, but I'm at a party and I'm just feeling so happy within myself." Can you kind of explain that? Because I feel like you've been through a little bit of a self-evolution.

Harrison: In Blake's recovery story, I remember him saying at the end, "you look back and you kind of almost glad it happened?" When you get to that stage- and you know, I think I'm at that stage now- it's like, "I'm 22 now. I feel like I've really been through something that not many people in that age can kind of say they've been through, and I've learned so much. And I think I've matured so much. I look at people now and just automatically assume that you don't know anyone's story really. Like you don't know anyone's initial story. So treat them as if they're having a shocking day. Just like treat them with kindness and don't judge a book by it's cover. You have no clue what's going on their life. And I think that's been really helpful for me to kind of really understand that so many people are really good at hiding what they're going through and, you know, being able to kind of assume the best in people is a really good thing to learn. And I think, you know, this whole experience has really helped me do that. And like I was saying to you before, I feel like I've just learned to kind of put a positive spin on a lot of things now. And I think that's because I kind of had to, a lot of the times, to kind of survive a really bad time. You kind of have to create that self-talk of, you know, putting a positive spin on a situation that's really shit, you know, there's no way around. It's a shit situation and, you never wish it upon anyone, but it's out there.

In terms of where I'm at now, I've just started back at uni for my final semester. I've booked flights to Europe midway through this year, to kind of have a bit of a break and I'll probably go into full-time work next year in perhaps KPMG or somewhere else. And you know, in my exercise, kind of getting back to being able to go to the gym most days. I'm trying to aim to do about three or four days in the gym and two, three days of running. So trying to do exercise most days. Obviously it's not every week, but I try to do that most weeks. And you know, that's been going really well. My aerobic fitness has definitely taken a hit from last year, so I'm slowly building that up. That's something, you know, I've still kind of got those lessons ingrained in me of hit singles, don't try run a 5km,

6km. Try just really start slow and slowly implement those and build up, and like, that's been really good.

I Like to think I was really kind of healthy, had healthy habits before I got sick, but I mean, you can always improve. And now I'm kind of aiming to try not cut back on social life, but in terms of drinking, I'm trying to lessen my drinking now, and I think there's a really big shift in especially people my age this year, of like kind of embracing not drinking. I'm really enjoying that. I kinda like that trend. So, cooking was another really good way of coping, because it's kind of mindless activities that kind of preoccupies you and you know, at the same time you're doing self a service by cooking good food. So I've continued that, and this year I'm really just focusing on building up my capacity in my fitness and trying to just live a healthier lifestyle. And you know, like you said, once you kind of get over a certain period, you can add certain layers.

So, you know, add in business, you adding in relationships, you add in all those types of things. So I'm slowly, trying to just, you know, add in those layers. So yeah, that's kind of what I'm hoping this year will pan out to be like.

Toby: That's amazing dude. Your parents must be so proud.

Harrison: Yeah, no, they are. They were the ones that saw me at my worst. My friends would see me at my best because I'd preserve all my energy to see them, but my parents saw me at my absolute worst. And them and me can only kind of comprehend the transformation. And so yeah, they're very proud. And I'm very proud of myself as well, and I think anyone who's kind of been through this and going through this and who is trying to get better, would be proud of themselves as well.

Toby: Just want to touch on a point you just mentioned: only your friends saw you at your best, but they didn't see the hard times.

Harrison: Yeah, I wanted to talk about that as well. That was really hard. They want to see you at your old self, because they loved at your old self, and you know, obviously last year was so uncharacteristic of me in terms of I was just not in a good head space, and it was really hard and my social anxiety was through the roof a lot of the time. And, you know, it was really easy to kind of get peer pressured into staying out later or drinking. I tried really hard, I think for most of the year I didn't drink. So I'd go to these parties, stay at them for maybe two hours and not drink, but it was really hard- you'd hear kind of comments like, "as if you're not better yet," or, "oh, you still not drinking?" And stuff like that.

It was one of the hardest things to kind of stomach, was your friends not seeing your improvements. And that was really disheartening, and not being able to act like your old self, because before that I was always, you know, trying to

make everyone happy and laugh and, I was always a silly guy and happy-go-lucky guy, and you try to like say that, "oh, you know, I'm getting better," and then a lot of the times I'd say, "I'm better, I'm better," but you know deep down that you're not, and it's really hard to kind of get them to come to terms with where you're at.

Toby: As you got better- and correct me if I'm wrong- but I feel like you changed as a person, you know? You're still the same guy, but you've got wisdom now. You know, you've got an inner compass that you didn't potentially have before, and I don't feel like you 'feel like you need to be' the old Harrison, you are who you are. You're a bit of that, you're a bit of this, and you kind of just have a bit of fun. But like, is that true that now you almost own who you are and it doesn't matter what people think, almost?

Harrison: Yeah, yeah. And I've always kind of liked to believe that I've been very open about mental health and I like to think that I create an environment where, you know, a lot of people can come speak to me and open up to me. But I think I've just kind of gone to a new level with that, I'm a real advocate for mental health and, like I said before, kind of assuming people aren't always having a good time, so I like to always check in with my mates now and just, you know, text them once every two weeks or three weeks, like, "Hey, how you going?" Because I would've loved that. And I did have mates who did check up on me, being like, "Hey mate, how you going?" Like, really, just really authentic, but knowing how much I valued that, I try to do that now with my mates to them, because little things like that really help.

Toby: So good, dude. A couple of questions before we wrap up today: how significant has the change been for you in your life since joining the program?

Harrison: It's hard to kind of put into words. I do feel like a different person. I still act the same as I did when I was healthy- and that's something I really wanted to kind of keep is my personality, which I have- but you know, in terms of the way I think about things- you know, like I said, putting a positive spin on things, having that pushing and crashing stuff, like that really was ingrained in me of you don't have to achieve everything in one day. And like, being okay with just relaxing is something I had to force myself to do. And I'm not good at relaxing. I hate sleeping in past 10 o'clock, but, you know, sometimes you need that. And being able to kind of schedule those times where we can just do nothing, I think will help keep this at bay.

I think I learnt most of those things from the program. So yeah, it's things like that, like lifestyle changes. Yeah.

Toby: So good. And two more questions. I want to finish with your thoughts on what you'd like to say to everyone, but for people who are um'ing and ah'ing, if

the program's for them, and they're like questioning everything, what would you say to them?

Harrison: Everything you learn in the program is gonna be beneficial regardless of where you're at or where you want to go. It's all healthy stuff. Like the food, the advice, everything is just all positive. So you know, you're not really gonna do yourself a disservice by involving yourself in the program.

Toby: Well said. I remember I had a client years ago, 10 years ago, and she was like, "do you think the program's gonna help me, Toby?" In her American accent, and she was in a really bad way, like really, really bad. One of the probably worst cases that I'd ever actually seen. She had a list longer than I'd ever seen of diagnoses and health problems.

But I just said, "you know, at the end of the day you tell me. Would getting a baseline be helpful or not helpful? Would stopping pushing-and-crashing be helpful or not helpful? Would improving your sleep, improving your nutrition, improving your mindset, improving all these things: boundaries, progressing, thinking about your vision and your values, would any of that be useful or not useful? Like would any of that be harmful?" Exactly what you're saying. And she did join and she did get better after about a year and a half, two years, and, you know, just lives a full life. So, you know, it's fantastic advice. We're finishing up, if you could say anything to anyone who's watching this right now: they're at home, they're feeling kind of like you felt at the start. Googling everything and feeling like they're the only person on the planet experiencing this. What would you like to say to them?

Harrison: It's okay to not be okay. Like, it's very cliché to say that, but I think one of the big things I had to grapple with: it's okay to be unwell. You know, you're not gonna be 100% all the time and it's kind of inevitable that you're going to have bad days. So I guess, yeah, kind of firstly accepting that, but also knowing that, it's really up to you. And like you used to say, Toby, I think it was like, "if it's meant to be, it's up to me?" It's really kind of what you do and your willpower to kind of keep showing up, and that if you keep showing up, you are only just gonna help yourself no matter what situation it is. And consistency is what's gonna win this game.

And like I said before, being able to indulge in feeling shit- like I feel like that's different from feeling sorry for yourself. I watched this TV show called 'Afterlife' when I was at my worst, and I don't know, a lot of people have seen it, but it's such a good TV show, and it kind of allows you to explore those feelings of the "why me?" attitude. I feel like once you kind of delve into, you know, why you're feeling so shit, in terms of being able to help yourself change that in a kind of constructive way, that mindset is one of the, you know, big things that will help you as well.

Toby: Totally, because you're literally going from the victim: like, "this is unfair. Why me?" Which doesn't answer any questions. It just keeps you in the spiral.

Harrison: Yeah.

Toby: Or, "what can I do?" You become the victor. And it's like, "what can I do to change my situation today? What can I do to change my situation tomorrow?" And it's not the mentality that fixes the problem, it's the mentality that then changes the behaviors of you doing the work, that fixes the problem.

Harrison: Yeah, absolutely. I agree. Yeah, it's such a tough thing to go through. It's just kind of so tough just thinking about it again, it's so tough to go through that, but there are so many good learnings out of it once you get to the outside, because you will.

Toby: Amazing. We're gonna leave it right there, dude. Thank you so much for your time. On behalf of the members and people all around the world who get to watch this, big thank you to you. Thank you for showing up, doing the work, being consistent, not giving up when it got hard, because I know there were times when you felt like it, and it's just so great, man, at your age, to go through this and you know, the wisdom and the maturity and the world is at your feet. You know, the world is your oyster. Yeah, I'm really, really excited to see what direction you take and what you do, and yeah, stay in touch, man .

Harrison: It's a massive privilege to kind of be speaking on this platform and I hope what I've said can be of use to at least someone.

Toby: Dude, definitely, definitely. Thanks heaps, Harrison. And yeah, we'll speak soon.

Harrison: Thanks, Toby.

Toby: Au Revoir!

Hey, I hope this video was really helpful for you. If you haven't already, please hit the like button and feel free to leave a comment: what was your takeaway, your insight from today's video? It's really helpful to actually write your learnings down. We seem to embed it better and it seems to help us move forwards with life.

Here are three ways we can help you right now, whenever you are ready:

The first way is make sure you add yourself into our free information recovery group on Facebook. We'll leave a link in the description below. It's a really supportive, encouraging place. There's no negative venting, you can ask questions to other people. There's something like 7,000, 8,000 people in there right now, and I'm sure by the time you're watching this video, there's even more. So go over there right now. We share success stories, we share our latest free trainings that come to the public, and we always share upcoming information about upgrades inside our program, and also when we offer free

webinars or free information nights that can further help you with your own recovery.

The second way we can help you, which is one of my favorite, is through all our free trainings. We're gonna leave a link in the description with our favorite free trainings that we know can help you start your recovery, whether that's through our baseline training, which will help you stop pushing and crashing, our three stages of recovery, to figure out exactly where you're at and know what to do next, or my favorite, which is our guest panel workshop, which was actually exclusive for our members. It was so damn good that I actually asked them, "can we share this to the public?" They all said yes, all five of them. So thank you, past members! They share their five recovery secrets and it's really powerful. There's tears, there's "aha" moments, there's real key insight and inspiration. And so whether you're a 1/10 and you're really struggling right now, or whether you are further along in your recovery journey and you are integrating back into life, we have you covered.

The third way we can help you is through our actual paid online recovery program, the Mentorship Recovery Program. And if you are interested in getting proper help, a holistic, comprehensive plan, professional coaching from the best coaches in the world- whether that's with mindset, movement, nutrition, restorative movement, reconditioning, integrating back into life, integrative medicine, baseline, structure, routine, accountability, all things health and life- feel free to apply for the program today. All you need to do is click on the form, CFShealth.com/form. Fill out the short two to three minute form application, and the team will be in touch with all the details that you need to know about the program via email.

So make sure you check your spam folder for all the free trainings. If you've sent through an application, please be patient. My team are real people, okay? They're not robots. So if we don't get back to you within seconds or hours, it's okay. We will get back to you! If you don't hear from the team within two to three days, that means that it's basically gone to spam or junk and it's gone missing, so please send a follow up email to the team at info@cfshealth.com. If you have any questions, go check it out, but I would highly recommend adding yourself into the free group right now, go click on that link in the description. Go download all the free trainings. Honestly, the whole reason why this whole thing started is because when I went through this myself, it was so painful and so excruciating that I didn't want anyone else to have to go through it.

And some of these free trainings are so damn valuable, back then I would've paid thousands of dollars for them. We've had so many comments and emails and posts saying, "oh my God, the baseline training was a game changer for me." "Toby, I've been doing this now for three months and I'm feeling so much better, my symptoms are decreasing, I've got more stamina, I've got more

energy, I'm able to do more things." So, you know, whether you are learning from us and consuming our content through our free format, I'm so stoked. Whether that's in our paid program, I don't really care either way. All I want to make sure is that you are moving forwards, you are starting to really implement this work. And that's really what it's all about. Once we implement, we make change, and we start to move forwards. Sending you a ton of love. Of course feel free to consume as much of the YouTube videos as you like. There's so many really, really great ones, new and old.

Sending you a ton of love and speak to you very, very soon.

All the best for now.