

**Transcript of Podcast and Video Show of Johnnie Calloway, Sept. 2021  
(Machine-generated, may contain errors)**

Hi, everyone. This is Dr. Christine Sauer, with "Your Quality of Life, Healthy Alternatives. And today, I'm extremely excited to be with Johnny Calloway. Johnny is an author of three books, a certified thought coach and a trainer, blogger, teacher, speaker and storyteller.

He is extremely passionate about exploring the power of thought and more. Welcome, Johnny. Thank you, Christine. I'm so happy to be here. I'm so glad that we connected. I'm excited for what will unfold for the two of us going forward.

So am I. And for all those whose life we touch. Right. And I am - I heard your story, but I think it is so awesome. It needs to be shared widely. And I'm happy that you're doing that. Tell us a little bit about where you're coming from.

How did you end up doing what you're doing and why you're doing what you're doing? Well, where I'm coming from is - Man, in my life, my mother died when I was five years old and I grew up literally thinking I killed her...

I grew up with a very angry alcoholic, violent, sexually abusive father. And, by the time I was 13, I was diagnosed as an alcoholic. I've been diagnosed with several mental health issues, definitely bipolar disorder, PTSD, Clinical depression. Been diagnosed with all those, and I have found a way out.

And there was a time my alcoholism and drug addiction that carried me to a place where - I love to tell this part, at one point in my life, I was walking the streets of Sarasota with the only blue jeans I had were on, the only T-shirt I owned was on, and I had a size nine blue flip flop

and a 10 and a half red flip flop. I didn't even have a matching pair of shoes. So. Fast forward today, that same guy. Has - I own an air conditioning business, I have written and published three books, I'm a certified thought coach, I'm a blogger,

I do whatever I can to help people out of the darkness of depression. I've had four suicide attempts. And I really think of my whole experience of drug addiction as being a death wish because that's how I did drugs.

It's like a million doses of drugs that nobody should survive. And I know what it's like to live in the darkness and the pain of all you can think about is how do I take myself out?

That's a tough place. So my purpose in life. And I mean, that is my purpose, is to help people in that darkness find their way through. I like to say I just want to be the flashlight you hold as you work your way out of here.

Because when you're in that place, there's no light. And so I can just help guide people through that. With the thought coaching, that's what I do and how did I get here? You know, people ask me all the time about am I proud of what I've accomplished?

And my answer is, no, I'm not. And the reason I say that is because what I'd rather be and what I feel stronger about is I'm grateful. Because the reason I say I'm not proud is because to me, proud implies.

A presence of what I did. I have not done anything for my recovery on my own. There has always been someone. Standing there picking me up after I fell down, picking me up after I fell down. So I'm grateful for what we've done.

More than I'm proud of what I've done. Wow, that is a very strong statement because you did a lot on yourself with yourself. And together with those who were there to help you to achieve and transform yourself into the person that you are today.

Thank you. Now. Yeah, go ahead. No, no, you go ahead. No, I just I'd like to keep in the forefront of my mind that that, you know, there's there's a couple of people in my life that have said something about me being a self, a self-made man, and.

For me, that is not so. We made me. Granted, I had to do my part and I had to be willing to look in the dark corners and and face the ugliness. I had to do that. But even with that.

The big thing about that is that there were so many people that I got blessed with being in my path that were encouraging me when I got face to face with some of my greatest fear. Johnny, you can do this.

You can do this. I don't know if I could have done that without their coaching and cheerleading and and lifting me up. So - wow. And now you are the one that lifts others up and goes with them together on their way, and I totally agree.

I always say health is a team effort. Nobody can do it alone. People are social beings. We need others to thrive. Absolutely, and I I'm 100 percent about connection. Yeah. And because I. Nobody, not just me, cannot do what we're here to do alone, right?

You just can't. So. And I feel I have a responsibility today to connect to as many as I possibly can. And share your amazing story, how you came out of what many consider a terrible

victim's story. Because many wallow in their victimhood and let's explore that a little bit for all their lives.

They say, oh, my God, I can't do anything with my life because my mother died when I was five. Poor me. My father was an alcoholic, poor me. My father beat me up, poor me. I was sexually abused, poor me.

I was drug addicted. I am an alcoholic. I'm depressed. I'm bipolar. I'm schizophrenic. My life is done with all those lives. There's nothing I can do. I'm a victim. What do you say to them? Oh, well, that's about I have to relate it back to my own process of.

I had to do what I call today, I had to I and I have to do. It wasn't like I did it and I was done. It's something it's a daily. Mindset. I have to take what I call a spiritual responsibility for my physical experience.

And what that means is I believe I'm more than this body. I believe I'm more than these physical experiences that we see with these physical eyes. And there's a thing in the course in miracles. And that's another thing.

I'm a devout student of the Course in Miracles for well over 30 years. And. It says, I am responsible for what I see. I'm responsible for the feelings I experience, the goals I want to achieve and what everything that seems to happen to me.

I receive, as I have asked, no, that's not an exact quote, but what's that? The first time I read that, I'm like, what? I didn't choose all this crap to go on in my life. Today, I believe I definitely did.

Because I believe. I chose to come here to heal. And to help others heal. And the best way - tying it back into what we were saying earlier to help people heal is to help them where they are.

People identify and connect with that. Yeah. And when you've been there and done that, so to speak. People know it when you're trying to help them, they can hear it. They can feel it. They they they just know it.

And when you're someone and I do not mean any disrespect to anybody when I say this. But if you're out there trying to help and you're only helping from what you've read out of some book, people know that.

And they and especially you take an abused child. Some somebody that had an abusive childhood, they become keenly aware of what's going on around them. And you, like, acquire

this other sense that says. OK, this is crap or whatever, but you know, and so I believe I chose all of it and I don't believe I was a

victim to any of it. And one of the big things in the course in miracles is it says, I am determined to see this differently any time you're in a situation. That's uncomfortable. You can say I am determined to see this differently, which I do the thought coaching again, because the way I think about something creates my perception and

the way I perceive it creates my feelings and my feelings or where I operate from in my life. So if I can change my thought, my perception and my feelings, I change my life. Yeah. Wow. That is a great perspective that I really appreciate, and we both come from a place where we know what it is

like to be on the bottom. I was fortunate not to have been exposed to a that horrendous childhood like you did. So I didn't slip into a bad cycle of addiction and mental health issues that early. Which probably influenced your life in a great way.

And God knows what you would have become. And you would have become a different person. But it's great that you became the person you are today. And I appreciate you so much, Johnny. Well, thank you for saying. Now, ditto.

You know, here's here's an oddity that a lot of people may not really be able to wrap their minds around, but. When I first found the 12 step program. The man that I was led to as a mentor, what we call in the 12 step programs, my sponsor, after hearing just a little of my story, he said

, man, you got some stuff going on here that these 12 steps are not going to take care of. You're going to need some outside help. So I trusted him and I saw it outside help - therapy. And. I had two different therapists tell me this thing after they knew my story, at least part of it.

It's a good thing you had the drugs and alcohol because you would not have survived the pain of your life without it. It had a necessary purpose, but it's kind of like that thing of like when you're a child and you do the things that the child does when you're an adult, you let those toys go.

I had to let go of those toys so I could grow up and start taking responsibility for myself, because a big part of alcoholism and drug addiction is about not wanting to take responsibility for my life and wanting to be a victim to the world.

And I refuse I refuse to be a victim. There are things going on in my life right today that I don't necessarily want to be responsible for whether I want to or not. I know I am. So I have to take a look at all of it and only.

That's a big part of being a responsible adult, is taking responsibility for all aspects of your life. And many people get stuck in that victim mentality. All I can't do nothing. I am like you, I disagree with that, at some point, we have to make the decision.

It's not true. We can do something to improve our situation and start living our best life. And you are doing it. I run into often in trying to help. I'm going to say mostly people that have bipolar disorder.

Are. And. A lot of their go to, a lot of where they want to hang their hat, so to speak, is, well, of course, I can't keep a job. I'm bipolar. Or, of course, I can't do this - I'm bipolar.

And my belief is, if I've got enough presence of mind to be able to identify a problem, I've got enough presence of mind to be able to correct the problem. But it takes a lot of discipline, commitment, it takes hoping.

And having faith when you can't see the thing about hoping and having faith is it's about believing in something you can't see. So I have to believe working the principles of the 12 steps in a course in miracles.

It was real, even when I had what I would call no evidence that it was real. Even with everything my physical I looked on said, you know, you're just you're just being in denial. I think that this is going to change.

Well, if I was in denial, I'm so grateful I was, because if I hadn't have been in that place of believing it, when I couldn't see it, I never would have gotten out of it. So makes sense, Christine.

Absolutely. So would you say the 12 step program works? Oh, absolutely. Everything in my being says it works also because I have people tell me it doesn't work, and I think those are the people that are still stuck.

Well, this is what I will say. In an attempt not to be really controversial and at the same time, if it's controversial, just just be controversial, wouldn't be just. It's not for everybody. We even say in the meetings.

Often. The 12 steps are not for who needs them, they're for who wants them. Yeah, and my my deep seated belief is if you truly want to get better. If you truly want to change your life, you'll be guided to the right place and maybe the right place for you isn't the 12 steps.

But if you wanted. We don't give enough credit to the power of desire. There's a line in a course in miracles that says you have no idea the power of your wanting. Because deep inside you, I don't care how deep it is either of the deep inside your real desire is man.

I want to grow. I want to I want to become one of those responsible, productive members of society I hear these guys talking about. You'll be led there. Yeah, you'll be led right to the right person to guide you through the mess you're in.

But again, you got to believe that even when you can't see it. I believe in synchronicities more than coincidences myself, and there are certainly those. But I agree with you. Once you made the decision that you don't want to be stuck where you are and want to go forward with your life.

You will be eventually led to the right person to help you out, and I love that because you will be on the searching path. Now, let me ask you a question. If somebody is stuck in the darkness, what would be two or three books that you would really recommend to them?

The first one would be As a Man Thinketh by James Allen. Yeah, it was written in 1903. And it is all about how powerful our thoughts are, and it actually comes from and I'm not really what I would call a biblical person.

But I love this. It comes from Proverbs, I think it's Proverbs twenty three seven. And it says, As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he. Yeah. So that would be one it's a very easy read, it's a very short book, but it's all about.

There is one line in there that just is mind blowing. If you're willing to wrap your mind around it and he talks about and this isn't a direct quote he talks about, we live our life as though our circumstances create our attitudes.

When the truth is, we have that backwards. Our attitudes create our circumstances. Yeah. So in the way I translate that for myself is when I can when I can have an attitude of gratitude, even when I don't have the car I want, even when I'm not living in the building I want to live in.

Even when I don't have the girlfriend I've been looking for, if I can still have an attitude of gratitude. It changes the way I feel. I have this equation I use Christine. And that is a thought creates a feeling.

A failing becomes a belief. A belief produces our behavior and our behavior is our life. So if I can start, I can change my life. Well, if I change their behavior without changing the thought, it's like pulling a weed out of your garden without getting the root, right.

It's just going to come back. Well, if I can go back to the cause of the behavior, which is the thought that started that process. I can change at all. So how do you change a thought? First, you have to want to.

You have to take ownership of the thought. And you have to want to. You know, for people in early recovery. We have a tendency to believe that if we think it, it's real. So if you're in new recovery and you're freaking out because you keep thinking about using.

The thing that I tell new people all the time is I have this analogy that I use and it's if you rode a bicycle to school every month to work every day for 26 years. And then all of a sudden, you acquired enough money that you could afford to buy a car.

And you're driving to work periodically when you get up in the morning, you're going to think about that bicycle. But thinking about it doesn't mean you want to sell the car and go back on the bicycle. When you do something and it ingrains as a habit.

It shows up in your life every day. You're going to think about it from time to time. And but if you continually say, oh, no, that's not what I want. You're training your mind and eventually your first thought won't be.

I need to pick up. So it takes desire first to want to get better, to want to change the thought, it takes honesty to be able to say this is a thought that I do have control over. I don't have to always think this.

And it takes the three spiritual principles that we talk about so much in the 12 steps, honesty, open mindedness and willingness to be open to the idea that, wait a minute, maybe my thinking is what's producing this and maybe if I change my thought.

I can change my life. I have to be open to that. And of. So it takes the honesty, the open mindedness and the willingness first, the honesty, as I got to identify, there's a problem. Second, I got to be honest that I'm responsible for the problem.

And then I got to be open to a new way. One of the scariest things in the world for a human being to say is I don't know. And in order to learn anything, the first step is knowing you don't already know it.

Two. So, yeah, we have to we have to be honest, open and open and willing. I love that. I really do. I remember my mother always saying to realize how little, you know, you have to already be very smart.

Well, I said, go ahead, I'm sorry, oh, go ahead. I love what you're saying. I early on in my recovery, when I first started trying to mentor the sponsor, the newer guys I was setting with my sponsor one day, and this one guy that I was trying to help was going through.

And I said, this is what I know. And he just cut me off. He said, No, you don't. He said you don't know anything. He said, neither do I. It me or does any one of us really know anything?

He said, what we do is we acquire all the information we can acquire. And then we make our best guess. And I try to hold that. I mean, I've been doing this stuff for a long time and I'm not going to lie, there is a part of my mind that wants to say I know.

But in order for me to continue to learn and to grow myself, I have to try to take myself back past that thought that says I know I like, you know what, maybe I'm wrong. I have to be open all the time.

Well, maybe I'm wrong. Right. That's a tough place to be and a tough thing to learn for most people. We tend to think, oh, I'm right. We tend to think, oh, I knew that, right? Not a good thing.

Right. I agree. I agree. It is not helpful for yourself and for others. Well, the ego part of our mind is committed to being right. So what most people this is part of the thought coaching process for me.

What most people don't realize is when you've got a thought in your mind, like like, say, your deep seeded thought, that maybe you feel like you've moved beyond. But still underneath a couple more layers that you have peeled away at first, I believe from BLIC.

I'll never get that right. Yeah. Well, guess what? When you when you do that. Your mind sets forth looking for evidence or proof that that's true. Yeah, and in the seeking, you will find evidence that says you'll never get this right.

You'll never do it. So the thing is, I have to if I'm still creating a mess in my life and whatever's in my life, I'm creating. Then I have to immediately this is believing when you can't see, I have to immediately be able to say.

OK, I got to take ownership of this. This isn't happening because I'm not allowing it to happen. And I have to take ownership of that. It's important, and there is this little phrase that I use. There's two of.

One of them is nothing happens to me. Everything happens for me. The other one is we do not see what we look at. We see what we look for, huh? Yeah. So true. Yeah. So I'm looking over the baseline of my being is I don't trust people, I don't trust the world.

I'm going to seek out the evidence to say people aren't trustworthy and neither is the world. Yeah. And if I'm approaching. My life and so all this stuff is happening to me. I'm back in the victimization and I got no control over my life and nobody can feel empowered.

And powerless at the same time. Yeah. Wow. That is awesome. I would love to talk for you forever, and I am looking forward to our upcoming webinar, which will be the end of September this year. But you wrote a few books.

Why don't you talk about your latest book, which I really love, and I'm really looking forward to reading it. I know you sent me a copy and I really appreciate it. As soon as I get it, I will read it and.

Hold it. Thank you. Well, actually, the book that I'm sending you is not the latest book, OK, of the book I'm sending you is Dragons to Butterflies, The Metamorphosis of a Man. And that book is the down and Dirty Truth of My Story.

Because and it's so down and dirty and so. Graphic that when I started writing it, I had to go back to therapy because in order to write about it, to the extent that I did, I had to revisit my childhood.

I had to revisit my drug addiction, my codependency. I had to I had to revisit it all my my trips to the mental health wards and the homeless shelters and being homeless and. But that's what dragons to butterflies is, it's it's the story of like, look, I've been there.

I come through it. You can do this. That's how I see dragons to butterflies. The next book, The Bridge Where Souls Connect. Is about the importance of connection, and it's actually the first part of a planned trilogy. That carries us.

The three books, by the time you get to the end of the third one will be about. Being at peace, because we know we're not alone, and more will be revealed to me because the thing about my writing process is most when I sit down to write, I don't really have a plan.

And I just write and are. But this last one now, the bridge is not out right now because I'm making some corrections to it. But this last one, the final mile home Tales of Self Discovery is a very short book.

But in all honesty, it's the one I'm most proud of, the most grateful for, the happiest about, because it's for metaphors of the spiritual process of remembering our true essence. Wow. And , It's even though Dragons to butterflies was.

And it's really important to me because it tells the story. And makes me very vulnerable to the public, the people I would want to help. The final mile home is the. It's the pouring out of my heart. Because I, I when I first put that out there, I felt way more vulnerable putting that book out there than

I did Dragons to butterflies. Wow. Because it is an exposure of my heart, and I sent you that an e-book format in an email. And the cool thing is, I think it's a very deep, very, very. Important story.

But at the same time. It's very short. I mean, I know people that have read the entire thing in an hour. And it's also it will soon be available in audio book and dragons to butterflies already is. So.

But I make sure I put all those links underneath here and the link to our website, Johnnie. And I am so grateful that I'm connected with you and that I could talk with you. And as I said, I'm so looking forward to talking with you more at length and letting you explain to listeners and viewers what really

the process is that you're using and how they themselves can achieve their best life, live their best life, and be the person they always wanted to be. Yeah, well, my my belief is my thought coaching has one main goal.

As your coach, my job is to help you learn how to become your own thought manager. Yeah. Because without some help, we just let our thoughts run amok and we feel powerless over them. And well, you know, and you hear this thing that I believe it is an absolute lie.

You're not responsible for your thought first thought just how you respond to it. I am responsible for my first thought. And with training, it's no longer my first thought. That's why I say I'm responsible for my first thought.

But without training. It really does feel like I'm powerless over. Thank you so very much, Johnnie, for being on the show. I'm looking forward to talking more. Thank you for having me, Christine. It's been a joy.