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John Moe: A little inside information for you here, a little behind the scenes glimpse. When I prepare for an interview, I always know what I'm planning to talk to the person about, what the focus of the interview will be. Because an interview is not a conversation. It's not just about visiting and getting to know somebody really broadly and generally. No, I prepare a plan for where I expect the interview to go.

And then sometimes, in the interview, the plan changes. Something comes to light that I was unprepared for, because the guest has never talked about it before and chooses to do so on their on this program, in this interview. In this week's case, about four or five minutes into the interview.

It's *Depress Mode*. I'm John Moe. I'm glad you're here.

Music: "I Hear the Bells" from the album *Haughty Melodic* by Mike Doughty.

I hear the bells down in the canyons

It's snow in New York, some blue December

I'm gone to the moon about you, girl

And I'm calling to you

Throughout the world

And well, I can (I can)

Hear the bells are ringing

Joyful and triumphant

And I can (I can)

Hear the bells are ringing

Joyful and triumphant

(Music fades out.)

John Moe: That's "I Hear the Bells" by Mike Doughty from his 2005 album *Haughty Melodic*. Mike is many things—musician, author, person in recovery from a substance use

disorder. Mike tours all over the world with his music, has a large and devoted fan base. He's written two memoirs and a book of poetry and released 18 studio albums, live albums, and EPs all since 2000.

Why since 2000? Because that's when his band, Soul Coughing, broke up. A very eclectic band, inventive and successful, with a devoted following of their own. The breakup of Soul Coughing was not a friendly one, and Mike was bitter. He was angry. He wrote about it in his 2012 memoir, *The Book of Drugs*. Mike was so mad in that book that he wouldn't even call his bandmates by their names, calling them instead the bassist or the drummer. The last band in the world you would ever expect to reunite.

So, I was really surprised to learn recently that Soul Coughing was going out on tour together later this summer and fall. I wasn't surprised to see they were selling out theaters all over the place, very popular band still. But the focus of the interview with Mike was supposed to be what went into that decision. Was there still acrimony? How did Mike overcome all that anger? In a larger sense, how do we all live with and manage our emotions and our traumas? And I think I get a lot of that in the interview that was conducted, but I got more. Again, you have to change the interview when new information becomes available.

Transition: Spirited acoustic guitar.

John Moe: Mike Doughty, welcome to *Depresh Mode*.

Mike Doughty: Hey, man. What's going on?

John Moe: So, I—probably like a lot of people—raised my eyebrows a little bit when I saw that you were going back on tour with Soul Coughing, because I remember that split being a pretty acrimonious. What led to this decision, and what led to this new tour?

Mike Doughty: I started listening to the records again, and I just felt there was a case that needed to be made for those albums. And I just felt like it was time.

John Moe: And what was the process of—I mean, were you in a place of forgiveness, or were you in a place of negotiation? What was the psychology that led to reaching out to these guys?

Mike Doughty: Well, it was quite straightforward. I just emailed them. And you know, there was a little bit of a back and forth, and then everybody got on board. It was pretty quick.

John Moe: What was it like internally for you? Because I mean, I went through some old interviews that you've done. You referred to Soul Coughing as an abusive relationship. And working in this situation, you use the term “big, fat cup of disappointment”.

(Mike cackles.)

And listening to those old songs. So, what changed?

Mike Doughty: I don't know. I guess I changed.

John Moe: How so?

Mike Doughty: Well, gosh. It's sort of nebulous, but I don't harbor those kinds of feelings anymore. I mean, I feel as distant from whoever that person was as, at that time, I felt distant from the person who was in Soul Coughing.

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John Moe: When did the band split up originally?

Mike Doughty: 2000.

John Moe: 2000. Okay. So, that's a long journey. That's a 24-year journey. Is it—and again, I keep coming back to this, because I find this idea of—(*sighs*) I don't know if it's toxic memory, but hard memory, traumatic memory, and then working through to the point where you are, I find that to be pretty surprising. I think some bands get together like this to make some money. I don't get the sense that's the impetus here. And so, I guess if you say it's how you've changed, what's been the evolution of your relationship with trauma and acrimony over the last several years?

Mike Doughty: Well, I do think I used to be a more resentful person. Which I have become much less of lately. I mean, the last two/three years has been pretty traumatic for me. And I came out the other side just much less resentful than I was going into it. I mean, all those bad memories are still real. And the characterization of the relationship is real. I'm just very different now. I don't know if I can articulate it more aptly than that. Honestly, it's occurred to me that until this conversation, I haven't been asked to articulate it more aptly than—

John Moe: (*Chuckles.*) Welcome to our show.

Mike Doughty: Yeah, there you go! Yeah. I mean, there has not been a lot of discussion of it within Soul Coughing even. Yeah. I mean, I suppose I'm just beginning to grapple with how I'm going to express and explain this publicly.

John Moe: Yeah. Yeah. How's that going? How's the—(*chuckles*) I mean, are you going to make speeches from the stage on the tour of kind of like a reset of (*inaudible*).

Mike Doughty: (*Laughs.*) No, there's going to be no speeches from the stage.

John Moe: Okay, okay. You mentioned trauma in the last couple of three years. What happened?

Mike Doughty: Well, I've been hospitalized twice for depression. Both times in 2023. The pandemic started off great for me. I was having a great time being isolated. I'm an isolator by

nature. I just worked on a bunch of music. I had this really, incredibly productive time in terms of songwriting. I eventually made that into an album. I loved the album.

And then I guess in 2021, I just fell off the cliff. And it just got very, very dark very, very suddenly. And it just kept getting worse. And I tried to transcend it—transcend? What am I saying? I tried to ignore it, and that didn't work. And eventually I ended up in an institution.

John Moe: When you talk about falling off a cliff, what were the symptoms, and what was it doing to you?

Mike Doughty: Well, depression, for me, manifests as an almost physical pain. Like, it's palpable. Like, I felt this pain in my heart that was so overwhelming, and a darkness that was just so overwhelming. Yeah, this is really the first time I've talked about this publicly. So, I'm only—I don't know how successful I'm going to be in my ability to express it.

John Moe: Yeah, no, that's—you're doing a great job, and we appreciate any light you can shed on it. I mean, I've been talking about depression on podcasts for eight years now, and I still find it incredibly hard to explain what goes on. Because it does transcend words. It's indescribable.

(Mike agrees.)

Yeah. were you—? What led you to finally get to the hospital?

Mike Doughty: I had this heart problem that wasn't really there. So, I constantly felt like my heart was racing, that I was short of breath.

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So, I went to the doctor, and the doctor said, “Congratulations, you're fine.”

I said, well, I'm totally not fine. I'm not fine at all. So, she ordered tests. I went got the test and they said, “Congratulations, you're fine.”

And I said, no! *(Laughing.)* Like, I'm definitely not fine. And I kept going through this process of like doctor upon doctor upon doctor. And they would—you know, they would say, “Oh, you're great!” And I guess, you know, heart doctors are used to giving bad news. So, they were like footloose and fancy free as they told me that like, you know, “Yeah, it's great. Your results are great.”

You know, in fact, I was feeling my heart racing, and my heart was not racing. They were like, “Your blood pressure's beautiful. Your heart rate is beautiful. Your thyroid readings are beautiful.” It was so crazy-making.

And I've never—I haven't really had that extensive of an experience with the medical system, period. You know, like I've never had anything that I've had to continually go back and get

tests for, much less this thing that clearly was totally psychosomatic. And boy, does it make you feel crazy to have this physical symptom you keep going back to doctors for, and they keep telling you that you're just imagining. None of them came out and said, "You're just imagining it."

But you know, what would happen is I would go to one, and they would tell me I'm fine. And I would say I'm not fine. You know, there's something that you're not seeing here. And so, they would refer me to a different specialist. (*Chuckling.*) And so, then I would go to that specialist who would then refer me to a different specialist. You know, I never saw the same doctor twice.

John Moe: Yeah. And so, what was going on in your mind when you were perceiving your heart racing, and you're perceiving your heart being in really bad shape? What was going on like mentally, emotionally?

Mike Doughty: I mean, I was just at my nadir. I was completely bereft, sunken, just—you know, utterly unable to function. I couldn't work. You know, I was coming off this extremely productive time in terms of songwriting, and then all of a sudden I could not work at all.

John Moe: So, your heart's—I mean, and psychosomatic gets a bad rap, I think, because people say, "Well, if it's psychosomatic, it's not real." But it's really fucking real, even if it has its roots that way.

So, that's going on, you're bottoming out. And then what happens? Do you drive yourself to the hospital, or does someone take you? And how do you choose where to go?

Mike Doughty: Well, eventually I call up my doctor and I say— Oh, the other thing that was going on was I was using a tremendous amount of Ambien. And I'm a recovering addict. So, eventually I began to look at this as an actual relapse. I'd been taking Ambien for years, and then I needed just a little bit more Ambien than they would give me. So, I started getting it from India. And so, I would get these (*chuckles*) massive shipments, these incredibly expensive shipments of Ambien from India. And I was taking like a ton of them every night.

And I was having like the classic terrifying Ambien symptoms of like I would wake up and find a pack of cigarettes in my kitchen with no idea where they came from. So, clearly I got up in the middle of the night and drove to the gas station, drove back with a pack of cigarettes.

(*John gasps.*)

Yeah. And like candy wrappers. And I found a pizza box in the bathroom trash can, into which it did not fit.

(*They chuckle.*)

Yeah, so it was like—it was crazy. So, you know. And I kept talking to doctors about the Ambien thing, and they would say, “Well, you should just cut back.” You know, because people just don't consider it a drug.

John Moe: Yeah. And they didn't know about—did they know about your substance use disorder?

Mike Doughty: They did! Now, I wasn't like super honest about how much I was taking, you know. I was like sort of addict-honest, kind of honest. But I wasn't, you know—

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I wasn't totally honest about it. But eventually I just called up my doctor and said, “I have to go somewhere.”

And she said, “Okay, you're going to get a call from—”, and she said a name. I don't remember what it was. “—sometime today.” Okay, great. Hung up the phone, waited a while, phone rang. It's so-and-so.

You know, he's like, “Hey, I hear you're interested in going into an institution. What's your insurance? And what's your timeframe? And you know, where are you located?” And this kind of stuff. And I told him all the information, you know. He says, “Okay, I'll call you back.” Calls me back an hour later and says, “Okay, you're going to—” And names the place. He was like this weird sort of consultant guy in the middle who found me this place. And then I was there two days later.

Transition: Spirited acoustic guitar.

John Moe: Just ahead, Mike checks in for treatment. Does it help? That's after the break.

Transition: Gentle acoustic guitar.

John Moe: Back with singer-songwriter Mike Doughty. When last we left him, he was checking in for inpatient psychiatric care.

And then what happened when you went there? What was it like inside?

Mike Doughty: Well, it was actually a tremendously good experience. It was tremendously positive. You know, it was all men. And I bonded so well with all of those guys. And it was just a really beautiful experience. Particularly considering, you know, how terrible the last couple of years were. It was fantastic. The therapy was fantastic. The environment was fantastic. It was just wonderful.

John Moe: Was everybody else in there for similar reasons to yours?

Mike Doughty: Yeah, for severe mental—not all depression and anxiety. Some, you know, other stuff. Major OCD. A lot of self-harm.

John Moe: What would a day consist of? Like, how much of it was therapy? How much of it was just hanging out?

Mike Doughty: So, it was kind of a literal inmates running the asylum kind of a vibe. So, I don't know what even to call us. Clients, inmates, patients? Whoever we were. We cooked for each other. We cleaned up for each other. We sort of ran the facility for ourselves, supervised. So, you would get up, and there'd be like a morning meeting. And there are different little rituals. Like, everyone got to pick their special motto, which was written up on a board.

And then you would go to your primary therapy, which was group therapy, which was in the same building. And you were—it was like five or six people per therapist. Then there'd be lunch, and then they had—you'd go to equine therapy or to recreational therapy. Or there'd be like a class. And interspersed throughout the week, you'd get individual therapy with your primary therapist and then also trauma therapy.

So, I did EMDR with an actually fantastically amazing EMDR guy who I wish I could shout out his name publicly, because he was really wonderful.

John Moe: Was the EMDR related to a specific event?

Mike Doughty: Many specific events. (*Correcting himself.*) Many—a few specific events in my childhood and related to Soul Coughing, actually.

John Moe: How long were you there?

Mike Doughty: Six weeks.

John Moe: Six weeks. And presumably without the Ambien?

Mike Doughty: Yes. They got me off the Ambien. Yeah.

John Moe: Okay. What was that like? Did you—were there withdrawals? Or were—?

Mike Doughty: Yeah, I straight up detoxed from it. I mean, I was very surprised that it had a physical hold on me. But yeah, I straight up detoxed. I mean, it's not as bad as detoxing from heroin or from alcohol, but it was not great.

John Moe: Yeah. How long did it take 'til you felt like it was out of your system?

Mike Doughty: A couple of days.

John Moe: Oh, just a couple of days.

Mike Doughty: Relatively not long. But you know, pretty much any detox is two to three days. It's then like the anhedonia and the aftereffects that are really bothersome, much more so than the physical detox. There was no—I didn't experience anhedonia from the Ambien detox. So, it was not—it's certainly not as harsh as getting off an opioid.

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John Moe: It sounds like you were improving while you were in there. What do you credit that improvement to?

Mike Doughty: Both the therapy and the environment and the—just the camaraderie with the other patients. Then I got out, and I relapsed.

(John “oh”s.)

Yeah. So—

John Moe: In what way? What happened?

Mike Doughty: Well, I got out, and I started drinking beer and smoking weed. Which I mean, I knew I'm an addict, and I knew it was a terrible idea. Got off of that pretty quickly, but I was doing a virtual IOP, like an intensive—

John Moe: Intensive outpatient.

Mike Doughty: Yeah. Probably everyone who listens to this podcast is very familiar with the acronym IOP.

John Moe: *(Chuckles.)* Mental health is so full of acronyms, especially three letter acronyms for some reason. Yeah.

Mike Doughty: Yeah, totally. And I just started saying crazy things on my IOP. And they said, “You should think about coming back.” It was run by the same facility. And I was like, I don't know. I don't have the time. It's summer, you know. And they were like, “You should think about coming back.” Then a couple of days later, it was “You really, really should come back.” And then a couple days later it was, “You need to come back now. You need to come back today. You need to drop everything you're doing and come back.”

John Moe: What were you saying in that IOP that made them say that?

Mike Doughty: Gosh, I mean it's—I was dissociated, so it's hard to remember. Definitely a lot of suicide stuff, self-harm stuff. I don't even know. Like, I've been doing therapy with the same therapist on the phone for years since I left New York. And I did a therapy session, and I just—I had to move; I had to get up. So, I was like on my ear pods and my phone, and I left the house, and I was in therapy, you know, talking on the phone and walking. And at the end of the session, I found that I was like three miles away from my house. I was like, you know,

pretty out there. And I—yeah, basically when they told me that, I came back like the next day.

John Moe: I think for people who haven't dealt with a substance use disorder or haven't been close with someone who has, the idea that you get out of what was a pretty good inpatient stay, you're feeling better, and then you start drinking and smoking weed—I think for a lot of people, that's going to make no sense. For some people, it's going to make lots of sense. But can you explain your thought process that led you to start doing that again?

Mike Doughty: Well, part of it was I was looking at the Ambien use, and I had been clean for a little more than 20 years, right? So, it was a tremendous amount of pride in looking at, you know, the use of this lame-ass sleep drug. I mean, I was getting wasted. I mean, there was—and it was a whole thing. There was like an eating disorder component, and you know. So, I would like take a couple of them and black out, and then get food, and then eat all the food, and then throw up the food, so I could take more Ambien, and then pass out, and then wake up and then take more Ambien. And I was wasted.

So, there's no doubt that it was a drug relapse. Right? But I did not feel legitimate in, I guess, claiming it as a relapse. So, I was like, you know what? I'm going to do a real relapse. I am going to do something that is just plainly self-destructive, so I can claim a relapse.

So, that was the genesis of it. And of course, you know, it takes over your life very quickly. But you know, it was like a week.

John Moe: Wow. It's a heavy week.

Mike Doughty: It was a very heavy week.

Transition: Gentle acoustic guitar.

John Moe: A lot of people think that with psychiatric care, with substance use care, that you go to a hospital once, you stay there for a few weeks, then you're fine. You're cured. It never bothers you again. But these things aren't tidy all the time, and getting healthy can be a long and complicated process. Just ahead, Mike tries to push toward a better life.

[00:25:00]

Transition: Gentle acoustic guitar.

John Moe: We're back with singer-songwriter Mike Doughty, who's been hospitalized twice fairly recently for mental health reasons.

What was that doing to—? And I guess what were the hospitalizations doing to your relationships? I don't know if you're a single guy, or if you have a partner, or if you have close friends. Like, what was that doing to the people in your life?

Mike Doughty: I think everybody was—everybody that I'm close to was glad I was getting help, because they could see. Like, people today—and I feel like I've just very recently come out of it. People today tell me like I am the person I used to be. It was like a different person for two years. So, there was general relief. My parents—I mean, I—you know, like a great many people, I don't give my parents the most detailed and accurate picture of my mental health every time I talk to them. You know, like I definitely accent the sunshine when talking to them. So, I mean, they were I think really surprised, but I think ultimately happy for me.

John Moe: So, you go back in a second time at the urging of people in your IOP. What's it like the second time?

Mike Doughty: Well, I was in IOP with a guy that had been there with me the first time. And he has like an amazing story that I can't tell, which is a shame. Because it would be great content, but I'm certainly not going to tell his story. But he was—his thing was self-harm. And during the IOP, he was sort of hinting that he was getting back into the self-harm and hinting that he was getting back into self-harm. Eventually, he showed it on camera, and he had been really, really self-harming.

And so, he went back in at the same time I went back in. And we were put in the same house. So, I immediately had this bond with somebody in the house. And he is now a very, very good friend. So, that was really wonderful, having a close friend in there. And it was similar to the first time I had been there. It was... I mean, certainly everybody—I was in a different house. I had a different therapist, obviously different patients, very different experience. But there was a lot of emphasis put on what are you going to do when you get out of here, you know? Because whatever you did when you got out of here the first time clearly did not work for you.

John Moe: How long were you there the second time?

Mike Doughty: Six weeks. No, actually—five weeks, five weeks,

John Moe: How do you know in a place like that, in a situation like that, that it's time to leave? Is that your decision to make, when it's time to leave?

Mike Doughty: Well, you're supposed to be there for 28 days. Both times I extended my time, because I saw that it was good for me. And some people are in there, and they can't wait to get out of there. Some people are—I mean, it's amazing the blend of ages and social strata, you know. And there were like 19-year-old kids there who had been sent by their parents who were like, “I don't belong here. What am I doing here? I'm just trying to get out of here.”

Then again, there were a couple of teenage kids that were like really down for it and really actually quite inspiring. But yeah, there's a bunch of people that just want out, just want out, out, out, out. Let me out. You know, just staying—if you leave early, insurance won't pay for it was the conventional wisdom. So, you spent two weeks there, and you leave, and insurance won't pay for it. It's tens of thousands of dollars. But I extended both times.

John Moe: And so, after you got out the second time, presumably you did not get some beer and some weed and go to town.

Mike Doughty: I did not, but I certainly thought about it. Yeah, I mean... what did I do? I certainly stayed in closer contact with friends.

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I had my friend I had been in there twice with, stayed in close touch with him, really, really ramped it up on the 12-step meetings. Oh, and I did TMS therapy. I don't know if you've talked about TMS.

John Moe: Yeah. I'm certainly very familiar with it. And this is you go to repeated sessions, and you have a magnetic stimulation on the side of your head.

Mike Doughty: Yeah, directly onto your brain. And I did that. And it was—I think it was pretty effective. I did it twice, actually. I did it again several months later. And I think it was very effective. Also, they changed my meds when I was in the second time. And I think the med adjustment was helpful.

John Moe: What made you go back to TMS for a second time?

Mike Doughty: Well, I talked to my psychiatrist about it. You know, the prescribing shrink as opposed to the talking shrink. And she said that some people found it effective to do it twice. And I got insurance to pay for it. So, I did it.

John Moe: Might as well go.

(Mike agrees.)

Yeah. The magnetic woodpecker.

Mike Doughty: Yeah. So, you've done it?

John Moe: I have done it. I went through—it's about a six-week session of daily appointments. I haven't talked about that on the show before, but yes, everybody; I've done this as well. It was a really interesting process.

As a musician, I imagine there was always a guitar nearby. What role did music play in this time in your life? Were you able to play music? Were you writing? What was going on?

Mike Doughty: I've always sort of steadily maintained a writing head. You know, I wrote while I was in there, wrote when I was out. You know, I release a new song every week or a new—I mean, sometimes they don't amount to songs; sometimes they're just pieces of music—on a Patreon every week. So, I have this kind of built in impetus to continue to produce. I honestly don't feel like I've really found a way to talk about it. When I was in the

worst of it, it was so, so dark. Like, so, so dark that like all the thoughts that I had, and the different impulses to write, they were so dark that I was like, “I don’t know that I would want to put these out into the world.”

And now, my thoughts are still pretty disorganized about it. Particularly now that I'm just starting to come out of it. I don't know how I'm going to deal with it. You know? Like, I mean, I assume I have to. At some point, it's gonna come up.

John Moe: To translate that chapter of your life into music?

Mike Doughty: Into music, yeah. Into songs. You know what's funny is I have this resentment of the suicide hotline number.

John Moe: 988.

Mike Doughty: 988, or the old long version. 988 started happening like a year ago?

John Moe: Something like that.

Mike Doughty: Something like that. And everything that involved suicide, they put that little number on. I would read New York Times obituaries that would not say that the subject committed suicide, but would have the number on the bottom. So, it was this weird kind of reverse taboo that was happening with suicide.

And I don't think that the—you know, I'm trying to say this in a way that doesn't get me into trouble. But I don't know that the people who insist on putting that number there really understand the suicidal impulse. I don't know. I've never called those numbers. I don't know what it's like.

John Moe: Do you think it encourages suicidality?

Mike Doughty: No, not necessarily. It did, however, make me feel like I was being trivialized in some weird way.

John Moe: Mm. Explain that more.

Mike Doughty: I don't know if I really can explain it.

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I just felt like infantilized. Or... I guess the idea that you can call this number, and they can just make you all better in a call. Or the other thing is, you know, negotiating the mental health versus insurance complex.

John Moe: Yeah, when you're least equipped to negotiate a massive, infuriating bureaucracy.

Mike Doughty: Oh my god! Yeah. And I was—I had just come from this thing that I was—I was dealing with the medical bureaucracy as well, vis a vis my imaginary heart problems.

They say like, “Oh, you call this number and get help.” They just sort of throw you into the system. Again, I have no experience with this. The only experience I have is just my own trying to get insurance to—and my insurance still doesn't pay for therapy. I pay out of pocket for that.

John Moe: Wow.

Mike Doughty: Yeah. Oh yeah.

John Moe: I guess I always feel like we—and we list 988 in the closing credits of our shows. I've always done that, you know. Or the number that came before it. But I feel especially compelled with 988 just to kind of burn those numbers into people's brains. Like, if they hear that it's free, that it's available 24/7. If they hear all that, that's great. But I just want to kind of brand people's actual brains with that number.

(Mike affirms.)

Yeah. I know you've talked in the past about your bipolar disorder. Was that flaring up during this dark time? Were there episodes of mania or hypomania at all?

Mike Doughty: Well, I'm not classically bipolar. I have these kind of rages, these sort of all-consuming just like storms of anger that are usually accompanied by—like, I get really sensitive to sounds or to like really—like, all kinds of weird, ephemeral stimuli just really freak me out when I'm in the middle of one of these things. And many years ago, a very smart doctor was like, “You know, let's deal with this like we would deal with bipolar disorder,” and put me on Lamictal. And since then, that symptom has been a lot better. I mean, for many years. So, I wasn't really experiencing that during this whole episode.

John Moe: That's wonderful. Does this period in your life with the two hospitalizations and all these things you had gone through, is that chapter now over? Or are you—kind of consider yourself still in it?

Mike Doughty: Well, so I have experiences of joy in the day, right? And they're often fleeting. And often I will have times where I get up and get out of bed and just go straight to the couch and lay on the couch and look at my phone for a couple hours. And I'm depressed. But that joy did not happen for a couple of years. Like, I had no experience of joy. That and the fact that people tell me that I am who I used to be makes me think that I'm in a very different place.

I don't know. I don't know what “out of it” really means. I mean, I know that I wasn't in it before I was in it. But I don't know if I'll be able to tell what out of it really means until I can see it in retrospect.

John Moe: Right, right. What was that like? That first moment of joy in a couple years. What happened?

Mike Doughty: Gosh, I don't know. I mean, I can't really remember. It's all very fleeting. It's all—you know. But I just—I guess out of nowhere I just had a good day.

John Moe: Yeah. Yeah. That's fantastic. So, then as you look ahead to this tour that you're doing with Soul Coughing, are you—how are you taking care of yourself for that? For all the new attention you're going to get, for the big crowds, for the touring schedule? 'Cause that's—that can be really mentally taxing. How are you preparing for that?

Mike Doughty: Well, work has always been a refuge for me.

[00:40:00]

So, I'm not wary of it. Like, I think that when I'm in that process, it's gonna be rejuvenating. Right? Being on the road is rejuvenating, travel is rejuvenating. That being said, I mean, I'm literally returning to an old relationship that has left me with some problems in my past. So, other than therapy and meds—I have a great therapist. I've been—you know, like I am a 12-step guy. I've been doing step work. And I've hit a toon, a ton of 12-step meetings. Like, really like twice a day sometimes.

John Moe: Okay. Well, that's good. I'm glad to hear that. Have those relationships required like a sit down of like, you know, “Now we're going to work this out, and now we're going to become friends. And now we're going to repair all that damage”? Or is it just “Now we're going to pick up here and go forward”?

Mike Doughty: Oddly, it seems that we all are very different people, and it's been a really good relationship thus far.

John Moe: You can find out more about the Soul Coughing tour at SoulCoughingBand.com. Mike Doughty, thank you for sharing your journey, and good luck going forward.

Mike Doughty: Thank you very much. It was great being on.

John Moe: Let's go out on a little more Mike Doughty music. This from his group Ghost of Vroom, a 2023 track called “Pay the Man”.

Music: “Pay the Man” from the album *Ghost of Vroom 3* by Ghost of Vroom.

*I been to Mars like Cantinflas
Stupendous; over-extend us
Headlock, rock the cakewalk
Can't tell the silk from the corn stalk
Repairman, spin in mid-air, man
Truth, no dare, man; truth wins out*

*Ides waters, direct from the spout
Stem-time Lemmy and you're losing your clout
Let's say it*

*Hey! Did you pay the man?
Did you pay the man?
Hey! Did you pay the man?
Did you pay the man?
Yeah*

(Music fades out.)

John Moe: Speaking of paying the man—our show exists because people pay, people donate, people want to keep it going so they can be helped by what we talk about, and other people can be helped by what we talk about.

Music: “Building Wings” by Rhett Miller, an up-tempo acoustic guitar song. The music continues quietly under the dialogue.

John Moe: If you are already a member of *Depresh Mode*, thank you. Thank you for the work that you're doing and the contribution you're making. If you haven't already joined, don't sweat it. Just go to MaximumFun.org/join. Select *Depresh Mode* from the list of shows. Find a level that works for you, a monthly level that works for you. And maybe that's \$5 a month. Maybe it's \$100 a month. I don't know. That's up to you. MaximumFun.org/join. Be sure to hit subscribe. Give us five stars, write rave reviews.

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline can be reached in the United States and Canada by calling or texting 988. It's free, it's available 24/7.

Our Instagram and Twitter are both [@DepreshPod](https://twitter.com/DepreshPod). Our newsletter, *Depresh Mode* Newsletter, is on Substack. You can search that up. I'm on Twitter and Instagram, [@JohnMoe](https://twitter.com/JohnMoe). Be sure to join our Preshies group on Facebook. A lot of good discussion happening over there—people helping one another out, people supporting each other, providing information and counsel. It's a really—it's a good hang. It's a good group of folks. Sometimes they even talk about the show! Please use our electric mail address, DepreshMode@MaximumFun.org to get in touch with us.

Hi, credits listeners. Mike Doughty recorded a song called “Move On, Bloom Like the Sunlight in My Song” back in 2004. And there's a line from it. It says, “I love my country so much, man. Like an exasperating friend.” I've been thinking about that line a lot lately. And for the past 20 years.

Depresh Mode is made possible by your contributions. Our production team includes Raghu Manavalan, Kevin Ferguson, and me. We get booking help from Mara Davis. Rhett Miller wrote and performed our theme song, “Building Wings”.

Depresh Mode is a production of Maximum Fun and Poputchik. I'm John Moe. Bye now.

Music: “Building Wings” by Rhett Miller.

I'm always falling off of cliffs, now

Building wings on the way down

I am figuring things out

Building wings, building wings, building wings

[00:45:00]

No one knows the reason

Maybe there's no reason

I just keep believing

No one knows the answer

Maybe there's no answer

I just keep on dancing

Heidi: Oh, hey. It's Heidi from Minneapolis. I just wanted to let you know you're doing a good job, and I'm so glad we're riding around on this pale blue dot together.

(Music fades out.)

Transition: Cheerful ukulele chord.

Speaker 1: Maximum Fun.

Speaker 2: A worker-owned network.

Speaker 3: Of artist owned shows.

Speaker 4: Supported—

Speaker 5: —directly—

Speaker 6: —by you!