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John Moe: A note to our listeners: this episode contains discussion of suicidality.

I have two options for the beginning of this episode. Let's see what you think. Option A) Grief—intense, fiery, more powerful than you could imagine style grief is not a mental illness. But it can heavily damage your defenses. It's like not having an immune system, so every stray virus or germ has a great shot at getting into your system and causing problems. So the grieving person is vulnerable as hell to a mental health condition. That's intro option A.

Intro option B) When a very popular musician who is well spoken and has been through a journey of intense grief and mental health struggles releases a new album and calls it *Tell My Therapists I'm Fine*, and the publicists for said album reach out to you about being on your mental health podcast? Well, you say yes to that pretty quickly.

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

Music: “Good For Me” from the album *Tell My Therapists I'm Fine* by Bishop Briggs.

I wanna be a rockstar

I can be your all star

Someone that can go far

In the end, drinking in a dive bar

Driving in a fast car

Sun is coming up when the party ends

If I could have it all, I'd bottle it

Throw away my fear and swallow it

Even if I'm scared, I'll follow it

'Cause if I don't, then I know I would miss it

I'm dreaming...

(Music fades out.)

John Moe: The voice you hear is Bishop Briggs, her song “Good For Me” off the new album—yep, *Tell My Therapist I’m Fine*. It comes out this Friday.

Bishop Briggs is an LA based singer/songwriter, has released several albums, appeared on *The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon*, played Coachella. She's probably best known for her song “River”, which has over half a billion plays on Spotify. Bishop was also the winner of Season 9 on *The Masked Singer*. She was dressed as Medusa. Bishop's legal name is Sarah McLaughlin. She performs as Bishop Briggs to avoid confusion with the singer Sarah McLaughlin.

Bishop was incredibly close with her older sister, Kate, who was also her manager, occasional roommate, and definitely best friend. Kate died of ovarian cancer in January 2021, and it was devastating for Bishop. And things got very dark indeed. *Tell My Therapist I'm Fine* is her first album since Kate's death and since the birth of Bishop's baby boy.

Transition: Spirited acoustic guitar.

John Moe: Bishop Briggs, welcome to *Depresh Mode*.

Bishop Briggs: Thank you so much. You have the coolest podcast name in the world.

(John laughs.)

Let's start there. Yes.

John Moe: I think so. Okay, good. Speaking of names, *Tell My Therapist I'm Fine* is the name of the new album, which did—

(Bishop chuckles.)

Which made me think, “Oh, well, we've booked the right guest for this program.” Why did you go with that title?

Bishop Briggs: Oh my gosh. Well, I don't know if this is relatable at all, but I found myself going to therapy and not actually saying what was going on in my life. And you know, if anyone has done that, you know there's nothing to gain from doing that really—except your therapist is aware that you're doing it, and you're just having to pay more for more sessions. But part of that is a huge coping mechanism. And you know, your therapist—it could be your therapist, it could be society, it could be your friends—just saying you're fine when you have a lot more going on.

John Moe: Mm. So, are you fine?

Bishop Briggs: You know, (*chuckles*) right at this second, I really am. You know, I know there's space here for an inappropriate joke, but I was running late here because I was at the park with my baby. And you know, that has been a really big source of joy for me in my life.

John Moe: How old is your baby?

Bishop Briggs: He is twoooo!

John Moe: Ohh, what an adventure. Two is a wonderful age.

Bishop Briggs: Oh, yes. It really is.

John Moe: I want to talk about kind of the contents of the album and of the—because anytime a musician writes a new set of work, it's informed by the experiences that they've been going through. Tell me—let's talk about your sister, Kate. Who was Kate?

Bishop Briggs: Kate is and was my soulmate, best friend. She managed me. So, we worked together, we lived together briefly, and really was just my life partner. But yeah, she was also my sister.

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A huge inspiration for the album.

John Moe: And she passed away from cancer. What was that process like for you and for her? How long did that process take, and what did it involve on your end?

Bishop Briggs: Oh my gosh. Well, it all happened during lockdown. So, the world was really in a state of trauma. And you know, we basically lived at the hospital together. And it was a horrific experience. I feel like there was—because COVID was killing people, and everyone was overworked, it just was even more of a uniquely scary experience. Which I think anyone says about, you know, their loved one when they're going through this. But she had just turned 30. So, it was really unexpected and a really rare form.

John Moe: How long did it take from the time she was diagnosed to when she passed?

Bishop Briggs: I used to know the exact dates and times. I would say it was between seven and eight months.

John Moe: Oh, wow. That's fast.

Bishop Briggs: Yeah, it was really fast. And yeah, I definitely blocked out a lot of those specifics. I think when you're in it—you know, I was really her advocate. So, you know, I was the one communicating with the doctors, the nurses. And I had such a plethora of information about what was going on. I could have told you every single date and time of every single medicine, every single moment, every single symptom. And it was kind of

important for me to release that when she passed away, because it consumed so much of my being. I mean, it was—you know—my sister's life on the line. Yeah, I had to sort of release that information.

John Moe: What do you mean release it?

Bishop Briggs: You know, I was really—I was still holding on to, you know, papers that had notes on them of like, “Took this medicine at this hour, and this many minutes passed, and breathing was X.” And, you know, really acting like a medical personnel or something. It was a really high state of stress to be existing in on a day-to-day basis. And so, I had to allow that information to—I don't know if this explains it better, but I had to allow it to not be the center of my mind anymore. Yeah.

John Moe: Mm. Why was it so important that you knew everything, that you kept track of everything? Because there are medical charts out there.

Bishop Briggs: (*Chuckles.*) Yeah. The medical system is definitely interesting. I really recommend everyone having an advocate of some kind. And they're, you know, incredible programs. Because it was COVID time frame, they were really understaffed. And so, there wasn't—they were just spread really thin, you know. (*Sighs.*) So, basically I had to have all of that information and relay it. You know, sometimes my sister would be sent home from the hospital prematurely, because they needed those beds. So, it was a really—I mean, it was just the most chaotic, horrific time. Yeah, for everyone involved.

John Moe: Was there a sense that if you had all that information, you could save her?

Bishop Briggs: 100%. 100%. Yes. Yes.

John Moe: What did you do with that belief? Like, how did that manifest in the way you lived your life?

Bishop Briggs: Well, there was no awareness of—you know, my sister was someone that really, really believed in positive manifestation and positive thoughts. And so, I really didn't allow my brain to go anywhere other than what her and I discussed. Which is like, okay, we're gonna have to go to Bali after this and have some shaman cleanse us, because this was a crazy experience. Like, that was our goal at the end of this was like, “We're gonna look back on this, and we are gonna be like, ‘Wow that was crazy.’”

So, for it to go another way just wasn't in the cards. And I mean, something that we discussed, you know, throughout the journey of it all was—you know, as a musician, and she was managing me, and we were really partners, you know, we'd been given plenty of “no”s and, you know, “This won't work.” And as a musician, you take it on the chin, and you pivot. You're constantly pivoting. And it's how you meet great people, and you meet the right partners. And it's just a part of it. “No”s are a part of it.

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Rejection is a part of it. And it takes away the weight of that. And so, when we were told, you know, “There's nothing more we can do,” it was like, okay. We'll pivot. You know, there was like, “Okay, we'll look into another option.” Yeah. I mean, it was just a... um, yeah, a horrific time.

John Moe: So, did you know that you would run out of options by the time she passed, or were you still kind of—I guess bargaining really?

Bishop Briggs: Oh yeah. I mean, I up until—constantly looking for different options. And yeah, I even opened it up to, you know, the internet, when the hospital said there was nothing more they can do. You know, I reached out to like my amazing community, with Kate's consent, and got so many more options. And you know—and tried different things. And—but it was a really difficult time.

John Moe: I'm so sorry. Something that often happens with trauma and traumatic situations and scary situations is that you develop a very useful hypervigilance, because you're on guard for anything that could go wrong. You're completely aware. Anything is a threat. Anything is an opportunity. And it burns so much energy to do that. Were you—and it sounds like that's the situation you were in. Did that linger after she had passed, or did that go away?

Bishop Briggs: Yeah. I mean, if there was a night where I wasn't at the hospital—because, you know, visiting hours, and I didn't hide in a closet or something. (*Chuckles.*) Yeah, my phone would be on loud throughout the night, just in case there was any updates or phone calls. And it was—sorry, you were asking if it—?

John Moe: I'm asking—yeah, after she passed, did that hypervigilance continue?

Bishop Briggs: I found the whole thing to be so debilitating. Like, existence after she passed away was so debilitating that I think what you're describing is way too high functioning for what I was. I mean, I was just disassociating, and I had a lot of difficulty seeing any future for myself. That was really the state that I was in.

John Moe: It's so hard in that situation to tell what is, I guess, healthy grief—painful, but healthy grief, which is coming from the love that you felt for this person—versus things that are red or yellow flags that things are not okay. How did you navigate that situation?

Bishop Briggs: Oooh, that's a great question. And so true. Like, what a variety of angles to look at it. You know, when it all happened, I happened to be—my now husband, but then boyfriend—I happened to be living alone. I wasn't living with him at the time. And then we moved in together. I think there was some—there was something, like there was a tour he had, so we didn't end up— Like, we had lived together, then we weren't living together, and now we were going to live together. And when he saw how I was living on a day-to-day, that was when it became a different scenario.

You know, I think maybe the best way to describe it is—yeah, what are you really like when you're alone? You know, when I was going to—let's say I was going to a coffee shop, you know, I wasn't being—it's just not in my nature to be, you know, cold and cruel to someone

working and just doing their job. But when I would go home, I wouldn't nourish my body. I wouldn't move from maybe the position I was standing in for, you know, a few hours. You know, it was just a different thing. And even moving in with my partner, I didn't feel anything about that. There was no—it was something that made a lot of sense. I mean, we'd been together for a really long time and previously it had been our plan. But yeah, I think seeing me reflected onto someone else was a big, big shift.

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I also think it's worth mentioning just for anyone listening, but I think—you know, when you hear—I mean, can I say the words like suicide or suicidal?

John Moe: Yeah, we'll have a content warning at the top of the show.

Bishop Briggs: Okay, okay.

Transition: Spirited acoustic guitar.

John Moe: I'll reiterate that content warning here, because things get very dark for Bishop Briggs. As we go to the break, here's more music off *Tell My Therapist I'm Fine*. This is “Mona Lisa on a Mattress”.

Music: “Mona Lisa on a Mattress” from the album *Tell My Therapist I'm Fine* by Bishop Briggs.

Dancing, screaming secrets in the dark

Hell is knowing that you're perfect just the way you are

Is it crazy how we'll go and do it all again

Knowing we were done before we ever had a chance?

Cigarettes and colors in the sky

Little noncommittal in the middle of July

'Cause I was dating someone who just didn't understand

It's like you knew me before I walked in...

(Music fades out.)

Transition: Gentle acoustic guitar.

John Moe: Back with singer Bishop Briggs. When she lost her sister Kate to ovarian cancer, the grief was devastating, and it became pretty dangerous.

Bishop Briggs: I think when you—I think a big red flag—you know, obviously to put it lightly, but I think it's when you are having suicidal ideations and not seeing a future for yourself in any capacity. Yeah. And I remember having one that was so vivid. And I'm so grateful that I shared the vision I had with my partner on the couch. And it's kind of probably like one of the biggest—on the scale of like small to big, it was one of the bigger moments in my life sharing that I had this vision. And it was really pushed out of me. He was confronting me about what he was witnessing in living with me. And he asked if I had been having any, you know, concerning thoughts about hurting myself in any way. And I detailed something that I had been having difficulty getting out of my brain. So, it'd been on repeat that week, if not a little bit longer.

John Moe: An intrusive thought.

Bishop Briggs: Yes, a very aggressive intrusive thought. And I think the biggest misconception about suicide is that it's selfish. In having the experience of really, really, really, really in the depths and in the darkness, and in that headspace I will say, your first thought is you really feel as though you are currently being the biggest burden to everyone in your life. You feel as though you're really giving everyone nothing. And so, you feel like you can—oh my gosh, (*voice breaks*) I'm gonna cry just saying this, sorry. You really feel as though you're currently doing a huge disservice to everyone around you. And it will give everyone around you a lightness. They'll finally be able to breathe. You will be causing—

So, it pains me that, you know, I grew up hearing about the selfishness of it and to experience it, experience that feeling. And so, my partner voiced—when I described this, he voiced, you know, where would he be? You know, he would walk in on me? And I was mortified. I just was like, “Oh, no, no, no. Like kind of you're ruining this for me now. You know, stop. Like, this is now—you know, you're—no, no, no, no, no. You are now—you're making me think of something I don't want to think about.”

And he said, “Well, you're not allowed to do that.” (*Chuckles.*) And it made me laugh, which was so, you know, unexpected. But it made me laugh, because I was like, “I don't think you're supposed to say that!” (*Laughs.*)

You're not—well, you're not allowed to kill yourself. And it made me laugh, and it made me realize I really needed help. And interestingly, a few weeks prior to this, I had been—

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I'd been grinding my teeth so much that I basically like caused an injury in my jaw. And they had given me a steroid to help with this. And with this said steroid, it gave you a lot of energy. And I remember being in the grocery store. And it was only for—I was on the steroid for two days. It was just two days of the steroid. And I remember in the grocery store talking and sharing—I don't know what, but I was just sharing. And I was like, “What is this feeling?” And it was like, “Oh, wow, this is how I used to be. I used to be on this level all the time. And I haven't felt this in so long.”

And so, yeah, it introduced me to the idea of an antidepressant, which I hadn't even—I can't tell you how far away from your brain that is. Obviously, depending on your background and all those things—I have zero stigmatism surrounding antidepressants, I just was so in the dark that was the last thing I thought of. And then when I experienced the steroid, I was like, “Oh, right. People take medicine for their brain when it is off balance.” And so, yeah. And so, then that became the conversation I had with my partner, discussing medication. And then to get prescribed it.

And I'm so sorry. This is such a long-winded response.

(John reassures her.)

I just want to make sure I say just this part of it, because I really didn't know this. Because, you know, we're coming out of COVID times, a lot of people were in touch with psychologists. And to—you know, I really wanted to do it the right way and get properly prescribed. And they said that they can talk to me in—it would be after the holidays. And so, just to give reference, my sister passed away January 19th. So, December to January was just hell. And it was this crazy feeling to be on the phone and just know that I wasn't going to make it 'til then. I knew that for a fact, and that was something I shared with my partner. And then I shared this conversation or his advice with one of my best friends who just described, you know, going to your doctor, and that there's some very standard antidepressants. And you know, I do mean this in a dark humor way, but as you know, like there can be a side effect where you have suicidal thoughts.

And I really was like, “I don't know that it can get worse than this.” Obviously, I'll keep track of it. But for me, it was worth the risk, and I was able to get on the antidepressants within a few days. And I was on, you know, what you would call like a lower dose, but just the headspace that shifted of—because they say it takes months to really get into your system. I remember taking the first pill—and I'm just saying the psychological effects. I remember taking the first pill, and I looked around, and I'd never seen that we were living in a beautiful spot. I'd never recognized that. And I was someone that like walked in gratitude. Like, that was me and my sister's thing. Like we just—we were in awe of the world. We always looked around. We just took in everything. And I remember just being like, “Oh, I think I didn't even know this—I didn't even know we had windows like this.”

John Moe: Because you had this knowledge that you were making a move, that you were making an effort to try to improve something.

Bishop Briggs: To live.

John Moe: And by—yeah, and by recognizing the state that you are in, you turned a corner.

Bishop Briggs: Yes. Yes, and I had someone describe it to me as, you know, it's similar to—say you have like a leg injury, and you're wearing a cast. And you get to mimic the motions while wearing the cast. So, it's very easy for people that are not depressed to say, “Why don't you just go for a walk? Why don't you just meditate?” And for—you know. And for me, with medication, it allowed me to practice those things. So, those were the things that really—yeah, truly, truly saved my life was that conversation on the couch.

It's very different. I think something—speaking of therapy, I think something that's really difficult is, with therapists, you know, “Oh, are you going to harm someone else or others? And then we're going to report you, and we're going to put you in a psych ward.” It's like—it's such a tough thing, because it was really helpful for me sitting with someone, sharing something very uncomfortable, and having them have me walk through it. And then when I was describing walking through it, then it was—

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“Okay. And then I walk in the room.”

And you're like, “Oh god! Like, what do you mean? Uh—” And so helpful, because it's like, “Oh, I would never want you to experience that. I would never—” You know, now it becomes you're able to tap into the old you that always thought of that, you know?

John Moe: Yeah. Well, that's good medicine—whether it was psychosomatic when you first took it, or after the chemicals balanced out. Because, you know, it's the old knock that people have against psychiatric medication, that they're going to be happy all the time, or they're going to be a different version of themselves. It's not—that's not the intent.

Bishop Briggs: No. That's not the intent, no.

John Moe: It's to get you back to the person that you were. It's to get you to the place everybody else gets to without the medication.

Bishop Briggs: Yes, and I also— Out of respect for my sister, I never went down the drug and alcohol route. And I'm sure you hear this a lot, but I think a really common reaction and a lot of what I've heard from people is that, “Oh, I barely remember that time after, you know, so-and-so passed away. Because I just drank every single day, and I—” And so, because I had it in my head that I was not going to do that, it doesn't mean there weren't other ways—of course—I can punish my body. But I just mean that was so not the route I was going through. So, it was very sober. Very visceral, very present during all of it.

John Moe: Was it like recovering memory? Like, if the immediate aftermath of Kate's death was a fog, like were those memories restored when you started feeling better, or are those just lost to time?

Bishop Briggs: Mm. The memories of the good or the bad?

John Moe: The bad.

Bishop Briggs: Ooh. (*Beat.*) The bad was tough.

John Moe: Yeah.

Bishop Briggs: I think that was part of what was so debilitating was the intrusiveness of those thoughts. And I tried different things. I tried EMDR; I tried horse therapy; I tried art therapy, just different things. But, uh, I think you can have—

John Moe: Doesn't sound like you had much success with those.

Bishop Briggs: (*Chuckles.*) They were—I mean, I think the EMDR one I, think I did too close to what had happened. So, it really was just super traumatic. You know? And I think at that point, I didn't have any, you know, mood stabilizing drugs. I didn't have any antidepressants. So, that was a really, really difficult one to go back to.

And the other ones, I think—this is the thing. This is the thing people don't want to hear. Grief is something that I feel stays with you forever. I feel you find healthier coping mechanisms and things to help you when your brain goes to that place and goes back to those memories. That, I would say, is the thing that changes over time.

Transition: Spirited acoustic guitar.

John Moe: Coming up: grief doesn't just go away on its own. You have to carry it. Here's more from Bishop's new album—and man, has she come to the right show. This song is called “My Serotonin”.

Music: “My Serotonin” from the album *Tell My Therapists I'm Fine* by Bishop Briggs.

In the middle of the night

Every minute, every time

All I think about is you

Pain in my side, in the bottom of the wine

All I think about is you

I see your face when I leave

Fast asleep next to me...

(Music fades out.)

Promo:

John Hodgman: Et ego sum John Hodgman.

Janet Varney: Et ego sum Janet Varney!

John: And we're the hosts of *E Pluribus Motto*, a podcast dedicated to exploring the mottos of every state in the Union.

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[00:30:00]

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Ify: I'm Ify, a comedian who was on strike last year in two different unions.

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Drea: Listen to *Maximum Film* on Maximum Fun or wherever you listen to podcasts.

(Music ends.)

Transition: Gentle acoustic guitar.

John Moe: Back with singer Bishop Briggs.

Kate passed away—when was this? 2021?

Bishop Briggs: Yeah, something like that. It was a few years ago. Yeah.

John Moe: Okay. Okay. How are you carrying the grief today different than how you carried it back then?

Bishop Briggs: Ooh. Well, a big shift was choosing to have a baby. And I didn't know if it was in the cards for me, you know, with fertility or anything like that. But you know, previous to my sister passing, that was something I saw for myself—again, if fertility allowed. It was something that I thought would be an amazing experience in life. But I really saw myself raising my child with my sister. *(Chuckles.)* You know? And so, that was—it was like when she passed away, then that dream went away as well. Because, you know, we'd be raising each other's kids and, you know, providing the things that make both of us special or whatever.

But that was the biggest change. Because the way that I was speaking to myself or punishing my body—maybe through malnutrition or, you know, just not having the desire to nourish my body in any way—I would never do as a pregnant person, no matter how mentally sick I was.

John Moe: 'Cause you were fine with hurting yourself, but you weren't fine with hurting somebody else.

Bishop Briggs: Of course, 100%. And I think the minute that even became a discussion—at that point, it was because I had done a lot of mental health work for that to even be a possibility. You know, I now was seeing a future that I was interested in pursuing. But I do

think that was the biggest healer, because I found life really difficult—and I still stand by this—having everything be the exact same except she just wasn't in it, I really—I found that very unbearable. I did. I really— Having a huge shift like, you know, a brand-new baby— where it's a completely different world, different schedule, different everything—was very healing for me.

John Moe: Well, you could shift from the grief from the world that you thought you were going to have to the world that you did have. It was being replaced.

Bishop Briggs: Yes. Yes.

John Moe: Let's talk a little bit about the music then and the new music that you've been making. Was it important to you with this loss and this dark time following Kate's death and the recovery—you know, or at least the beginning on the journey of recovery that you got on—was it important to you to reflect all this in the songs that you were writing?

Bishop Briggs: Yeah, I wrote a lot of sad songs when Kate passed away. And I really was longing for this closeness to her. And I really don't feel like I found it. And then I started writing music that was similar to the music that she showed me growing up. You know, she was someone that went to Warp Tour and loved My Chemical Romance and Good Charlotte and introduced me to all these bands. And I found that when I wrote those types of songs, all of a sudden I felt her right next to me. You know? (*Chuckles.*) So, that was—which makes sense, because she was someone that just brought so much joy into every room she entered. She had just the biggest smile and just a brightness to her.

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So, it makes sense that when I was singing these sad songs, although the intent was—you know—from a pure place, it wasn't necessarily what was—you know—connecting me to her. And there's a song on the album called “Isolated Love”, and crazily with Travis Barker, featuring him. And I got to show Kate that song, because I wrote it with Travis right before lockdown. So, I got to see her reaction, you know. And this is like in the midst of her going through everything, I got to see this lovely and magical reaction, and I found myself chasing that feeling of her having that reaction with the other songs.

John Moe: So, was it a form of journaling, then? Writing all these new songs?

Bishop Briggs: I mean, there's definitely always a form of journaling, I would say, yeah. For sure! Mm-hm.

John Moe: Is there a goal when you do something like that? Like, you know, were you aiming to come out the other side of this like putting something behind you and like finishing processing it? Or is it just a snapshot of what's going through the artist's mind and what's happening in her life at that moment?

Bishop Briggs: Well, there's a song on there called “Hurt Me Now”. And I came up with that idea and wrote that chorus when I reached a point in my depression where basically I felt as

though the thing to hurt me happened, and I felt this defiance of, you know, “Try to hurt me now. Like, I dare you.” And it was really empowering! And by the way, I don't feel that now that I have a baby. Because I'm like, “Please don't hurt the baby!” You know—(*inaudible*).

John Moe: (*Chuckling.*) Don't hurt anybody!

Bishop Briggs: No, don't hurt anybody! But at the time—as if there's any control over that. But just saying, at the time it was such an empowering thought, because it gave me this fearlessness. You know, it was the worst fear that I never thought I would have to have. And so, I think there are snapshots of those feelings and those moments. And the overall theme of the album really is, you know, the human experience. And a lot of those lessons that Kate taught me as a little girl and growing up and—you know, for example, there's a song in there called “Growing Pains”, and that really is the biggest theme of the album and really represents the whole thing. And so, I think it's a mixture of everything you're describing.

John Moe: Yeah. Are you—you're not on tour as we speak, correct? You're not on the road?

Bishop Briggs: I'm not. I have a show. I have a release party at the Troubadour this month.

John Moe: Okay. How is it going to be to take these songs that often touch on this very difficult, very challenging time in your life and get up and sing them in front of people? Like, are you going to—(*chuckling*) are you going to be okay?

(*Bishop laughs.*)

Will you tell your therapist you're fine from doing something that personal?

Bishop Briggs: Oh my gosh. Yeah. I mean, nothing will—you know, not that it matters, but I'm not on that medication I was on before. But I... you know, nothing will really compare to that timeframe. You know, now the idea of—you know, now I'm someone that—you know, I go on a flight, and I am profusely sweating. Obviously, for multiple reasons. Like, flying is a whole—I mean, we don't even have to get into it, but like what an experience that is. But also, I sweat profusely because I so desperately want to cling to my future with my baby. I don't want anything to interrupt that. (*Chuckles.*)

(*John “wow”s.*)

And that's—you know, and that's such a different headspace than I had before. And so, you know, similar to that “hurt me now” thing, but it's just—I don't know that anything will compare to, yeah, that lifelessness that I had when I was doing—I was touring. I think I had a few shows. I actually had a lot of shows during that time, sort of these fly dates. And my crew that has been with me for years, you know, they were just very, uh... when I would confide in them—because there's this thing, there's this type of depression where basically at work you're very high functioning.

[00:40:00]

So, the way you present is one thing. But you know, the way I was describing sort of me zoning out for a few hours, not able to move, privately, they're not seeing that version. And then it would sort of be like, "And what's happening with you at home? You know, how's everything going?" (*Laughs.*) And then it—you know. So, touring in that way, I just—I think the pain was just a totally different scale. Whereas now I feel comfortable just crying about it on stage if I need to. You know? And just—and sitting in the pain, and then going off stage and curling up into bed with the baby and, you know, knowing that I have to wake up the next day at 5:30. And that is helpful for me. You know? Having a reason to get up in the morning.

John Moe: Do you have to make an effort to kind of protect your sense of who you are outside of your relationship with your sister and the grief of that loss and taking care of your baby? You know, are you able to get a sense of who you are outside of these other relationships?

Bishop Briggs: Ooh, that's a really interesting question. I do think they are all really a part of me. I mean, I'm sure you can tell from this conversation; I know this is a big part of what we're talking about, but they're all things that really have informed who I am. So, I do think that they—yeah, they're a part of my being, and I would say the part of me that was—that in-between, that the version of me that didn't have the baby yet and didn't have my sister—you know, I don't miss her at all. You know? So, it really is just like such a joy to be able to—yeah—have this experience. I feel like I get like a second chance at living.

John Moe: And two is such a fun age. You get to go to playgrounds!

Bishop Briggs: Oh my gosh, you get to go to playgrounds. Exactly. It's the best.

John Moe: The album is *Tell My Therapist I'm Fine*. It's by Bishop Briggs. Bishop, thank you so much for your conversation.

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

Bishop Briggs: Oh, thank you. You have the best questions in the world, and you have the most calming voice ever to exist in the universe.

(*John laughs.*)

And thank you for your sincerity and your generosity of spirit. I really appreciate it.

John Moe: *Depresh Mode* exists because people donate to it. People help make it exist. We make this show; it goes out into the world; we think it helps people. People tell us that it helps them, makes a difference. But it does cost money. So, please, if you haven't already given to the show, now is the time. It's super easy. Just go to MaximumFun.org/join, select a level that works for you. Whatever—you know, \$5 a month, \$10 a month, \$20, whatever it is. Make that work for you. And then just pick *Depresh Mode* from the list of shows. And then you're off to the races, and the show is supported, and we're in better shape. Thank you for

doing that. And if you've already given already, thank you so much for doing that. Be sure to hit subscribe. Give us five stars, write rave reviews. That helps get the show out into the world, where—again—it can help folks.

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](#). Our newsletter is available on Substack; search that up under *Depresh Mode* or under my name. I'm on Twitter and Instagram, [@John Moe](#). Join our Preshies group also. It's on Facebook. A lot of great discussion happening over there. People kind of formed a community around helping each other out, talking about mental health issues. It's a good and generous place. Our electric mail address is DepreshMode@MaximumFun.org.

Hi, credits listeners. Bishop Briggs' real name is Sarah McLaughlin, so she had to change it. Also in that category, actor Michael Keaton's real name is Michael Douglas. And there was already a Michael Douglas. And a Mike Douglas. So, he's Michael Keaton.

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

[00:45:00]

Building wings, building wings, building wings

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

Mike: Hi. This is Mike in Connecticut. I know it feels overwhelming. I know it's difficult. But I also know that when you're ready to talk, someone will be ready to listen.

(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!