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Season 06. Episode 02

Podcast Title: Interview with Frank - Part 2

This is episode 2 (Part 2 of 2) of season 6.

In part 1, Frank shared his story of his early life as a member of a highly dysfunctional family. His father decided that being with a woman other than his mother was worth the hurt, while his brother made the long ride down the slope of alcoholism and ended up in poverty and despair.

He spoke of leaving home at the age of fifteen, never to return to the scene of the crime, and of his life as a bone fide drug dealer. He told the story of his friend who was saved from a near certain death by a woman who gave him the structure and the genuine care he needed at a critical moment.

He tells part two of his story:

"Dick was a guy I ran into in BC (British Columbia,) at an art centre of all places, where he was working for God knows what reason, and I also cannot remember why the hell I was there anyway.

We were both into drugs and into the girls that hung around drugs and bikers. We both had bikes and rode around high and picked up various ladies and they discarded us before we could discard them. Easy come, easy go.

In any event, one day Mother Earth lady shows up at Dick's rundown house and he falls crazy in love with her. She has five kids by God knows how many men. Claims she doesn't really know who the fathers really are, except that a couple of them look like their dads.

I hung around that scene for a while, but it turned insane, if it didn't already start that way. Mother Earth was an out and out stoner. The children ran from five years old to eleven, which means she had been giving birth to a new one almost every year. She didn't work except to help deal marijuana, meth and cocaine. Her main addiction was to marijuana and to her new love Dick. Squalor and the stink of pot.

Now I know I was not exactly in my right mind at the age of 29 as I recall.

I got completely disgusted with the situation and it was at this time that I decided to go back to Thailand to be with a lovely Thai lady with whom I had fallen in love and would eventually marry. And for the record, we have now been married for 32 years and have a fantastic daughter who has a great career going for her in Toronto.

Dick and I were soul brothers, or so I thought. I was taken aback by his infatuation with a strange woman who seemed to have cast a spell over the poor bastard.

He was caught up in the insanity of dope and sex and riding his Harley high as a kite through the hills of BC. I could not keep up, to

tell you the truth. After a while, I just gave up trying to talk sense to him. Seemed like he got twisted beyond recognition.

I later surmised based on what he had hinted at that he had suffered sexual abuse as a kid and that he was running from the pain. But as we all know, you can run, but you cannot hide. He tried and it almost cost him his life one night in the rain in the hills of British Columbia.

I have not spoken to him in years, and I pray he made it out of that hell.

Marty is another story altogether. I went to Malaysia to get a 30-day Thai visa extension. The way it works is that when you enter Thailand as a tourist, you get an automatic 30-day visa, but if you stay longer, you have to re-enter the country from elsewhere like Cambodia or Malaysia. So, there I was in Malaysia just for that purpose.

And I run into Marty, and it turns out we know the same people in Toronto, of all places. We are nine thousand miles from Toronto, and we know the same people.

He was a true heroin addict, and he was living with his prostitute girlfriend in Bangkok. I didn't accompany him to his place there, but we did spend several days chipping horse and smoking dope.

I liked him as a fellow Canadian, but he was way too hard core for me. Some guys undergo a personality change when they get drunk or high, and he was one of them. He became mean-spirited as hell toward me in particular, and even after he had quit the hard drugs, he reverted to an ugly person when we hooked up later in Thailand. I'm talking about vicious verbal attacks I could not and should not have had to endure, especially from a guy who is supposed to be a friend.

Glad that is over, but here is the lesson: if I were not also a user, I never would have been there to begin with.

You ask how these experiences have shaped my worldview.

I know that I am way oversensitive to people who drink and do drugs. I myself put them all down, even though I do drink once in a while. I still struggle with the idea that some people have lost the power of choice, and I still somewhat judge them and see them as weak.

But I do know that my life experience has given me more empathy for those who have fallen down as well.

I learned about ACOA, Adult Children of Alcoholics, and I learned that there are 12-step groups for these now-adults who help each other overcome the long-term psychic damage caused by a parent's drinking and abuse.

I am glad to have had the opportunity to tell my story, and I am glad that I made it in good shape and in good health, and I hope that I may have helped someone".

So ends Frank's story.

We at SafeHouse Rehab are most grateful to Frank and for his courage to share some of the most intimate moments of his life.

This is in service to those who need to hear the truth about those who made it and about the unfortunates who lost the battle. The truth cuts both ways in this struggle.

Thank you, Frank.