

warning message: (00:00)

This podcast series, will share personal moments of connection and deeply felt experiences. If anything you hear has a triggering effect, please reach out to someone who can help keep you safe. Or remember you can find lifeline at any time on 13, 11, 14

Joe: (00:19)

My people, which are your people to have walked this earth for at least 120,000 years. If there was zero suicides, pre colonization, what the old people, what our ancestors were doing was working. What we're doing now is not working.

Beverley: (00:40)

Welcome to lifelines, holding onto hope, a podcast in which people who have attempted suicide share their stories. Joe Williams is a proud, Wiradjuri man. Here he describes his struggles with self doubt and explains how he's connected with his culture to reduce the frightening suicide statistics amongst his people.

Joe: (01:03)

You know, were only 99 days into the year. And we've already had 44 suicides to first nation people, aboriginal people, Torres Strait Islander people of this country and 25 of those being male and 19 female. It's, it's heartbreaking to say the least. You know, it's, and there's, there's a hell of a lot of undiagnosed mental health issues. Don't get me wrong. Um, but you know, a lot of, a lot of these communities that, that we're losing people. It's, you know, it's not specifically related to mental illness. It's um, you know, a lack or sense, a sense of hopelessness. You know, many, many people don't just don't see a way out. If we've had three suicides at 12 year old, our young people are in immense grief and pain. And, and I get that there are other issues underlying, within communities that, that may, that may impact this pain. I get that. Um, but for a 12 year old to think that my life won't get any better, my life is better off with me not here anymore. That's a concern. That's a concern for the entire country. Not just, you know, it shouldn't be an aboriginal issue. It shouldn't be an aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issue, it's a people issue. You know, we have to ask ourselves as a country and we need to ask, the leaders are so called leaders of this country, how on earth we have a 12 year old sitting there contemplating whether they deserve to be here or not. That's a sad reality for a lot of our communities.

Beverley: (02:59)

It's often presumed that people in dark places feel they have nothing to live for. But Joe was an NRL star playing for South Sydney Rabbitohs, Penrith and Canterbury,

Joe: (03:14)

I'm a regular aboriginal boyfriend, the Bush. You know, I, I didn't see myself above anyone or, um, I can't sit here and tell you that more story was, was horribly sad growing up because, because although there wasn't a great deal of money in the house, there was a hell of a lot of love, hell of a lot of love, hell of a lot of compassion and understanding and, and, and care. Everyone knew who we were. Everyone knew my family, everyone knew my dad's side. Everyone knew my mom's side. Small towns, that what happens, you know, so. I was role modeled a lifestyle that, that, you know, my dad went to work, my mom went to work. I was role modeled a lifestyle, that, that, that you've got to work hard for things that in your life, you know, um, which I'm thankful for.

Joe: (03:55)

And then with dad being an NRL player, an ex NRL player uh, and then, uh, an amateur boxer as well. I was always in and around sport. You know, I always wanted to be, always wanting to be an always wanted to be like my dad. And I always wanted to be like my big brother as well. Like, you know, uh, when it comes to sport, you know, my dad was, as I said, fairly noted sports person in town and my brother was, you know, he could play footie as well. So, um, I just wanted to be everything like them, you know, it was, that was my life and that was the way it was headed. And I would practice and try and do absolutely everything I possibly could to be that.

Joe: (04:34)

With any sport, you know, country footy year, you know, the old you play hard, you drink hard type thing. But you know, but for me it was a little bit different when I was younger than, than playing first grade. I had a massive concussion. Um, and that, you know, for anyone who's had concussion, it rattles the brain fairly severely and there's, there's enormous confusion and you, your brain talks to, you know, and so, so on the back of that first concussion or head knock, uh, I started to have a conversation inside my head pretty much implanted three questions, told me I'm not good enough or never amount to anything and then I don't deserve to be alive. So for me yeah, I was playing rugby league against men at a, at a young age. So I was copying some, some head knocks again at a young age, but then mix that with that drinking culture. That's when I started to experiment with, with drinking and people could, could look at it and see is it, yeah, it's just under age drinking. Kids do that all the time. But for me it was different. For me, it wasn't about what it did to me or the taste of it or how it may be feel, drinking copious amounts of alcohol. Even the, the, you know, the substance abuse, the sniffing, all of that sort of stuff was about altering my mind state. To take me away from the negativity that was happening inside my mind. So the more I drank, the

quieter that my head got, you know, the more I would alter my mind, that's when that that head noise would slow down. That's when that head noise would stop and put me away from that terribly dark and daunting place that was telling me to end my life. So that happened from a young age, 14, 15, 16 and then that's, when I moved to the city and when you moved to the city, you know, you're not in a small town, you don't have to hide as much. You can go out and you know, and drink for days and, and people, you just blend in with the crowd. Um, so for me, although I struggled with, with substance use and abuse from the early age, going to Sydney exacerbated that without doubt.

Joe: [\(06:41\)](#)

It's important to say that when I was, when I was on the field, it didn't affect me as much. Is because I was in the moment, I was in the present moment, I was watching what was going on around me, my position, I was a halfback. So I had to be on top of the game. I'd be thinking all the time at what was going on, where I was, two or three plays ahead cause I had to control everything. You know, that was my job. Um, it was more so when I was off the field, you know, the halftime talks, the fulltime talks, everything that, you know, sitting behind the try line when, when, uh, when, uh, you know, when the opposition scores, you know, those times are when the negativity just scream at me.

Joe: [\(07:22\)](#)

I had self doubt in my mind every single day anyway. I was, I was, I had this, this, this thought process, this, this voice that was telling me that I didn't deserve to be here, that, that, that I didn't deserve to be in the place that I was, I didn't deserve to be at the level I was at and told me to quit and give up. Right then when I've got coaches on my shoulder barking at me, telling me that it's not good enough and I'm not doing it well, I was literally trying to stay alive. I was literally fighting everything inside my head now as it, as it was behind the closed doors when I'm at home and then I'd go to training, I'm getting told that I'm, that I'm worthless again, you know. So again, I can't blame, I can't blame coaches or I cant blame that system of that what was, cause it was a sign of the times, but I can say that it had an extremely negative effect on, on me.

Joe: [\(08:08\)](#)

Cause the thing is with me as a, as a rugby league player, for the people who remembered me playing a lifetime ago, I was red hot for three weeks and then I, you wouldn't see me for three weeks. You know, it was very, it was this severe ups and down's of bipolar disorder. I'd be consistent, I'd be training well for three or four weeks and then I'd go down again. Was it a choice to go to training every day? Yeah. It was a choice to go to training every day. Was it a choice that was what was happening inside my head telling me to be alive or not. That wasn't a choice.

Beverley: [\(08:37\)](#)

But one good thing Joe discovered in Sydney was boxing. While football played havoc with his mental wellbeing. Boxing seem to help.

Joe: [\(08:45\)](#)

I was up and down in, in, in first grade when I was at the Rabbitohs. And, um, I was working a couple of jobs and you know, I, I saw, uh, Johnny Lewis, uh, Johnny Lewis at a local coffee shop and Johnny said to me, if you ever and want to come and you know, have a hit on the pads, mate, you're more than welcome, so. Um, it was then I met up with him and then started just doing some work and I started realizing that, that when I was, when I was working on the pads with Johnny and working on the bag and even doing some sparring, as much as I was working in, and getting physically fitter, it was teaching me how to be mentally stronger as well. Boxing trainers are usually the most gentle, humble and, uh, motivating people because boxing trainers have to convince you that you can do it when everything inside your head tells you you can't.

Joe: [\(09:41\)](#)

And that's where, you know, guys like Johnny Lewis, um, guys like Billy Hussein, guys like my dad, um, you know, that, that, that have had the ability to teach me and just reiterate and convince me that I, that I can do it. So boxing taught me how to make the choice in a tough situation and fight back. And what that was doing over a period of time was teaching me to be resilient, teaching me to be mentally strong and mentally tough in those tough times when I was having that fight mentally and emotionally outside the ring. So even when I was in a boxing ring, that was my training for what was happening outside the ring

Joe: [\(10:20\)](#)

Depression and these type of illnesses, it, it tricks you, it robs you of reality. If I could, if I could silence or do or if I could control it and manage it, um, for a long period of time, then that was okay. That's, that's when I was going well. But when it got so overbearing, so confronting and inside my own mind that, that it affected me so much mentally and emotionally that it started to affect my physical behaviors. That's when things started to go downhill. I was doing everything I wanted to do since I was a kid. You know, I had money in my pocket now because I'd always playing in the NRL. I was earning you know, more money than I ever saw. Um, so, um, you know, again, with that comes money, greed and ego. And then the ego of being out on the town every weekend and getting pats on the back and, and you know, the drinking was out of control by this stage. There was drug taking. You know, again, I was, everything I wanted to do and wanted to be was rugby league player, but

nothing I was doing or wanted to be was being a rugby league player, you know, um, I was taking ridiculous amounts of alcohol, ridiculous amounts of drugs. And I've got to say again, not be, not because of how it made me feel, it was because I was trying to silence what was going on. So the only time I was free in the mind was when I was in that, when I was on the footie field. When I lost love for the game was, was when I, I gave away, I gave away drinking, I gave away drinking and recreational drugs, um, which then obviously made the noise in my head scream even louder.

Joe: ([12:13](#))

I realized that the only thing I had in common with my teammates was, was playing footie and going out and partying. Now. Now I wasn't enjoying my footie anymore. It became a job. It became a chore. And I just, I just wasn't enjoying it and I wasn't going out and partying and drinking anymore because I was, you know, I started my journey in sobriety. So, um, I just realized that I had nothing in common with my teammates and I just, I didn't have answers. I was looking for answers in life, not in football, you know, and that's when, you know, I, I guess at the end of 2008 season, I walked away from playing in the NRL.

Joe: ([12:56](#))

And when I moved home, you know, there was no, there again, there was, there was issues with relationship back home and, um, you know, even in my first marriage breakdown, and then when I read, when I separated in my second relationship, um, I was pointing the finger, I was pointing the finger at everyone else. That was, that they were the problem. When I didn't realize I didn't, I didn't, uh, I needed to identify that I was the problem. I was the only common theme in both of them. Right. Um, so maybe it was me, that was the problem. It was after that second relationship breakdown where I found myself in probably the toughest mentally, emotionally place in my entire life. And, um, the day I attempted, not to be here anymore.

Joe: ([13:46](#))

If someone looked at me and said, do you love your kids Joe? More than anything in this entire world, more than anything in this entire world, I love my children. But in those dire moments, when you've got everything in your head telling you not to be here because everything in your head is telling you that they are better off without you. So it was one of those things where I found myself on the shower floor and, and, and, and I was, it was like I was pulling my hair out with, um, with, with mental pain, not physical pain that you can feel, but a mental torture that, that was screaming at me telling me not to be here anymore. And again, I, I was using those tips that I was learning in boxing, those, those resilient tips to try and stay in the fight and then, and grind back in each round and just poke my jab out and keep going and moving

forward. But everything inside my head was trying to counter box that, you know, it was telling me, you know Joey, you're going to be here for your kids and then it has to say no your kids hate you. Your kids don't love you anymore. You left your kids. What about your parents then? No, you know mom and dad love you, no they don't, they hate Ya. What about your sisters? What about your brother? Like your family love you Joe. No they don't, they, they don't want you to be here anymore. They hate you. I know my kids love their dad. My parents love their boy. My, my siblings love it there, there, there brother. But everything inside my head was telling me that they didn't.

Joe: ([15:29](#))

You know, that night I did everything in the power of my two hands to not be here anymore.

Lifeline: ([15:36](#))

Through connecting with others. We can hold on to hope. To speak to a crisis supporter, please call 13 11 14, 24 hours, seven days a week.

Joe: ([15:49](#))

You know, when I woke up the next day, I didn't know whether to be disappointed that I was alive, all thankful that I was alive. I honestly don't, I honestly don't know. Now, I had a conversation the night before in a completely out of it state. I didn't, I didn't know that, that I call one of my best mates and it was her that that raised alarm bells with, with family. Um, so I'm, I'm thankful of that because, you know, my dad rang me and, um, and he questioned, my friendship with this girl, because he didn't want to believe what she was saying. He said, would she, you know, would, would she make something up like that about you? I said, Nah, she wouldn't make anything up about me. Well, she said that this happened last night and it was like the weight off my shoulders, you know, it was like, right in that moment I could have said, oh, no, no, no, no. That never happened. Or thankfully I said yeah dad that's true. Um, and then dad was, was over in Cowra which is two and a half hours away. And um, he said, I'll be there soon. And he got in the car and he'd come over and um, you know, it was, that was probably that day and that night did, did you know, my, my dad loves me and I love my dad, but it was probably that day that we bonded as father and son, and as best mates. You know, it was, um, it was a really, really tough time.

Beverley: ([17:18](#))

You heard Joe talk about the positive effects that boxing had on him, but to understand that, here's one of his coaches, Billy Hussein. He aims not only to build champion boxers, but better people.

Billy: ([17:30](#))

A lot of gyms around the world it's about Egos and pride and not smiling and it's like, it's rubbish. It's a, it's a rubbish mentality to have. Um, um, walking into gyms. So what I try to make sure that when you walk in, you say Hello to everybody, you're on the same level as anybody else in the gym. Doesn't matter if you've come from an NRL background or whether you're three times world boxing champion, means nothing. Like you know when you've got kids that are 14, 15 and look up to you, you've got to set an example. So you've got to walk in, you've got to go shake everybody's hand and this is before training, mind you. So you've got to get there a bit earlier and shake everybody's hand. And if you're going to say, you know, a few things, how was your day and whatever, do it, get it done. Train, respect the trainers, so you, you're quiet during the session. Take it all onboard. And then when you finish training, you do the same. You shake everybody's hand, um, build that bond, build that respect, build the relationship. Because it's more than boxing. At times, you might need to help each other outside the gym. And you got to get to know each other. With Joey, I had to be firm with him and explain to him and say Joe if your going to be a professional athlete. It's, you're not just professional by your registration on a piece of paper. The way you conduct yourself outside, outside of the gym, you win a fight, you don't go out and drink and celebrate by drinking or having a cigarette or, or a lot of cocaine, you know, all these bullshit that, that, that are, um, that are harmful and that, uh, that are illegal to you, not for worldly illegal, but illegal to yourself and what you try to preach in your life. So I had to explain to him that you're a professional outside the ring in your livelihood. You know, the way you raise your kids, the way you are with your wife, the way you treat your parents, um, dealing with the other human beings. That's, that's what it's about. Anyone can get registered as a, as a professional boxer or a professional, whatever you want to call it on, on a piece of paper, but it's the way you conduct yourself, outside of the gym where it counts. Thats where you get tested. I got Joey at a later stage, that was, it was more difficult than having him at 14 or 15 year old. I got him when he was vulnerable, when he had quit, you know, alcohol and, and, and all this. The temptations of life is always going to be there for these kids and we've got to stay on top of it and teach them. We got a really, really, really teach him and he's evolved into a great young man, still young in my eyes.

Joe: ([20:12](#))

I thought that I could get through it myself, um, and I white knuckled it and tried the best that I could, but I , but it was too much for me. I had to go get some help. Um, and that's when I was, I was admitted into the local mental health unit, um, and started to put me on a, on a journey to recovery. I thought if I go up there into this mental health unit, you know, I'll be able to get the help I need, I'll be able to do it by myself and I'll be able to do it in the, in a, in a spice where it's, it's private. And you know, I played in the NRL, I was, I was a profile person in a small town. And this woman come up and he, and she goes

Joe Williams. Oh, I didn't know you were as mad as what we are.

Joe: [\(21:01\)](#)

And she come up and security obviously said, come on, leave him alone. And she goes no I just want to have a chat with him, I want to have a yarn with him. And we sat in there and we laughed and we yarned and then, uh, and, and you know, it gave me a sense of compassion that, that, you know, we, we look at people like they're mad. You know, was I just as mad as everyone else? Yes I was as mad as everyone else. But what is mad? You know, mad for me was I had a chemical imbalance in my brain that, that I didn't know what it was and didn't know how to deal with it, manage it. Um, and you know, it, it, it just really lightened the mood in that, you know, in that week that I was in there and that stay in that unit put me on a, on a path.

Billy: [\(21:46\)](#)

I think boxing plays a, a big part in people's lives. Having a goal is very, very, very important. Because these kids need structure in their lives, and they've got to follow a structure they got to follow, they gotta be disciplined. So when you're giving them 10 weeks to prepare for a fight, those 10 weeks are very solid, uh, regimented. There's a structure, there's balance in it and there's a goal. I mean, you got to live a clean life. You've got to, you've got to cut weight. You've got to make a certain weight. You gotta being in conditioned to spa, you gotta be conditioned to run. You gotta being conditioned to swim. So your food's on point. And that 10 weeks can lead to a life changing, um, result, mentally. Because it might take him 10 weeks to get in shape and get ready for that fight, Then he'll continue that same lifestyle after it. Um, and that's why boxing is very, very, very important that you've got that. Where in any other time where, uh, I've got nothing to look forward to, or go to the gym, I'll do it half hearted, get out of the gym, you know, I'll have a beer or recreational drug use is very easy these days. So they'll have a recreational drug and um, before you know it, you know, they can get to sleep. So they get on the Stilnox's and it affects them mentally. And, and today doctors are just putting you on any, any so called medication and it just, it just mentally going to stuff you around. And if you're not mentally strong, you can easily, easily fall into that category. And before you know, you're down and out. If I find that they're on this and that, if they can't live clean and I would never put him in the ring. If they don't want to do for themselves, then hey, there's a million other kids that are crying out for help too. That want it, That your by their side, that you're going to get a call from them at midnight. You know, little things like that, but I really believe boxing is very, very important to all these kids because it gives you that structure, that discipline that they need, the foundation in your life and it teaches you for life in general.

Beverley: [\(23:47\)](#)

Joe became junior welterweight, WBC Asia, continental boxing champion. Back in Wagga, he set up his own boxing gym, met his current partner, Courtney, and surrounded himself with more good people. In 2014 he set up a support group for people struggling as he had. He called it The Enemy Within.

Joe: ([24:09](#))

Working with some schools, I always knew that that that my story would empower people on a sporting level, but I didn't know that it would empower people on a mental health level. The amount of people that came to me saying, you know what, Joe, I go through the exact same thing. I just didn't know how to articulate it. I didn't know how to tell people because I thought everybody would judge me. Um, and that's how it started. And you know, it went from working in a high school five days a week down to four days a week, then down to three days a week. And you know, the, the, the enemy within work, slowly growing and slow, slowly picking up to where I am now. I'm now in, you know, 80 odd communities a year. Um, you know, speaking to, speaking to different people and, uh, from all walks of life, just normalizing a conversation and helping people with, with tools to, to get out of tough situations.

Joe: ([25:08](#))

The thing is with our people, our people heal differently as well. Um, you know, when it comes to mental health issues and, and even a lot of these communities they have absolutely no concept of what mental illness is, because again, it wasn't around, you know, I'm, I'm talking where only suicide has only been in these communities in the last couple of decades, you know, the last 20 or 30 years. So, um, these are communities that have never experienced these things after living a certain way of life for thousands and thousands of years, many, many, many generations, to now have, having to juggle, you know, the, these seriously impacting issues that are happening in our communities. It's, it's tough. So it's about coming in and understanding the two worlds, our cultural world and our way of healing culturally and then the non indigenous world and the way of, you know, clinical psychology and so forth as well.

Joe: ([26:07](#))

It was a conversation with a couple of elders that said, you are not mentally ill. I don't care what the doctors tell you, you will spiritually ill, as soon as you start to heal your spirit, that's when you'll come good. Um, and I, I connected to that a little bit deeper. And then, you know, this is over progressive over a number of years of course. But, and then another, another elder I said to me, and I tell this everywhere I go, I tell this story between, between those two elders uh, he said the stuff that you learn out here, I was out in the Bush, he said, the stuff that you learn out here, if you connect to this and you continue to connect to this, all your mental health problems go away. And I know that

when I am not, when I'm mentally unwell, I connect back to that stuff and I get well, right.

Joe: [\(26:52\)](#)

So, so those elders were right when I, when I heal my spirit, when I connect to, you know, the, the same practices that the old people are work, walking with and living with for thousands of years, that's when I'm most, well. Now, you know, I'm on the road a hell of a lot. So, and, and, and my people, we don't heal inside four walls of psychologists and psychiatry and medication. Um, and I get, and I acknowledged that a lot of people do, but, but, but for my people, a lot of us don't. We heal outdoors. We heal, around a fire. We heal where the old people are with the spirit and connecting to mother and connecting to the country.

Joe: [\(27:32\)](#)

When we talk about culture, culture gives us identity. Identity of who we are, gives us purpose. When we have purpose, that's when we know where we're going through life. When we, when our life has a purpose, the opposite to that is hopelessness, right? So when we take away hopelessness and give it purpose, that's when we're going to keep people alive. Now the thing is, culture gives identity. Identity gives purpose. It's that line, that ladder, that we've got to climb to find it. We've got to help nonindigenous people understand that it is our way of life that empowers us, not your way of life. And that's no disrespect by any means. I'm not saying that you know your less than me because your way don't work for me. I'm just saying that I want to be empowered to. So let's empower me. Right? And, and how, how my people get empowered is through culture and identity.

Joe: [\(28:43\)](#)

Again, culture gives identity, identity gives purpose. Purpose gives us a direction in life. The number one conversation I guess, and the number one rhetoric that we hear right across the country, right around the world, is reach out for help when you're doing it tough. But I understand that people can't reach out for help. So, so probably the biggest, the biggest piece of advice that I give communities everywhere I go, is reach in to people who aren't doing it well. You know, don't wait for someone to reach out to you. Reach in to them. You know, if you're noticing behaviors, if we're noticing people's behaviors, what they say, how they do it, you know, mannerisms, then, then we can prevent a hell of a lot of unfortunate circumstance in our communities. You know, for me it's because I know that in the tough times I don't reach out for help.

Joe: [\(29:39\)](#)

I tell, I tell thousands of people every month to reach out for help, but I don't

do it when I'm doing the tough. Right. So am I hypocrite? No, because I've got a fairly severe mental health issue that that probably doesn't allow me to reach out when I'm doing it tough. That's not any sign of a weakness. That's just because it is what it is. For me exercise is a big one. When I'm walking around the house kicking stones, um, and taking my bad moods out on everyone else, the first thing Courtney says to me is, when's the last time you went for a run? Or when's the last time you exercised? Um, and I'm like, it's not that, I'm just had a bad day. Look answer the question. When's the last time exercise? Last week. Well, go for a run and then we'll talk. Right. So I come back in the house. I'm like, how long was it like that for, you know, it's like, um, you know, it's the little things that, that help people every single day. Um, I often tell people that you, you don't have to improve by massive margins for it to be improvement. Um, the thing where we get into issues, um, is that, is that we could be at 90% on top of the world for a week. And then we wake up at 10% and think, how the hell did I get here. To get back to 90% you've got to get to 11% first and then 12 and then 13. And so I just tell people to do, to make this the smallest improvements every single day. And how you do that is by identifying again, the things that you have to do. Um, and then the final one, um, for me was acceptance. You know, I get, I get so many people saying to me, I've just been diagnosed with bipolar disorder. I hate it. Well, if you're 25 and you only, you only just diagnosed with bipolar disorder, that means you already had it for 25 years without knowing what it was. Right when I was, uh, diagnosed, and then later in my life did I start to understand the genetics of addiction, the genetics of mental illness. And you know, how it's, how it's passed down from family to family. Um, did I start to understand and to understand, I had to accept that I've got this illness for the rest of my life and there was every chance I was born with it. So it's not something I caught and it's not something that will disappear, you know, I don't have to beat it. And this is, you know, the, I, I've said from day one, you don't have to beat it. You just have to manage it. All right?

Joe: [\(32:22\)](#)

So I accept that what I've got I'll have for the , to the day I die. I don't have to beat it, I just have to manage it and also accept that there are people around me who don't understand at all what it is that I go through. I just have to help them understand it a little bit better. So, you know, that's on me. Um, so acceptance, uh, improving your life by 1% and you know, reach into people who might be having an issue rather than waiting for them to reach out. Learn to live with the simple values that our old stories have been telling and teaching for thousands of years. More love, care, respect, humility, compassion and sharing those things. I hate seeing people go through pain and if I can empower them in one way or another, then that gives me hope that people are going to be able to do that as well.

Joe: ([33:15](#))

You know, we're, we're, we're in a tough climate at the moment in this country. Um, you know, we're struggling to accept what it is that our past is, that has happened in their past and what we've done in our past. To a place where there is more acceptance and more love and more kindness that gives me hope. The amount of non aboriginal people in this country that are starting to connect with our people and wanting to learn and uh, discussing different ways to, to help each other. It gives me hope. We're your people too, you know, we, we are the first people of this earth, the oldest documented people of the planet and we are the first people of this country. That means you should be proud of that. We're your people.

Joe song: ([34:09](#))

This country calls me home and I'm feeling all alone, back on to my place as the tears roll down my face, back to hear what's broken and back to where I'm from, long road home feeling all alone, back home where I belong, long road home feeling all alone, back home where I belong.

Beverley: ([34:40](#))

Thank you for listening to holding onto hope. Lifeline Australia is grateful to all our interviewees. Who share their stories in the hope of inspiring others. We also acknowledge all of you who provide support to people in crisis and those on their journey to recovery. If you found this podcast helpful or inspiring, please share it, rate it, write a review, or subscribe wherever you download your favorite podcasts. If this story has affected you and you require crisis support, please contact lifeline on 13 11 14 you can do this at anytime or visit lifeline.org.au to access web chat every night from 7:00 PM to midnight. If it's inspired you to be a lifeline volunteer or to donate, please visit lifeline.org.au. With thanks to Wahoo! Creative for interviews, editing and production, and the voice of lived experience, which is essential in the development of our work.