

INTO THE WILD

Being in nature makes me feel calm, it allows me to decompress, and I know that something positive is happening to my body as soon as I step outside.

My name is Shea Emry, and I'm a retired football player.

When you get out onto the football field you have to battle guys that are twice your size, or twice as fast as you are, and for me it was exponentially more difficult because of the fact that I was also battling my own demons within myself.

I struggled with depression when I was younger, and in 2011 when I suffered a season-ending injury, it came on full force and it was a very difficult time for me.

I trapped myself in my apartment, I socially isolated myself from my family, my friends, colleagues. I didn't want them to see me as weak, and I thought that if I reached out the team would let me go because he's not mentally tough.

My life started to turn around when I started to re-engage in nature, because you realize you're not even this big in the grand scheme of things, and that your problems are even smaller than that.

One of the critical steps for me to getting happier and healthier was for me to throw out all that garbage about how men can't be vulnerable and have real conversations about real issues that are happening in their lives.

I created a men's adventure club – it's called "Wellmen" – to inspire other men to get back to using their hands, to dis-engage with the technology that we carry around 24/7 and engage in real genuine conversations.

You get your blood rushing and your endorphins are going through the roof. When you come back you're more creative, you're more attentive, you're more focused, you're more compassionate.

My goal as a father is to take my kids outside, for the specific reason that it's been extremely pivotal in my well-being, and me finding out who I am, and finding my passions and really dive-in into what I enjoy doing in life.

Discovering the benefits of nature has shown me how to be a good father, a good husband, and has enabled me to take pretty substantial risks in my life.

Emotionally, where I can put myself out there and be vulnerable and really see the light at the end of the tunnel anytime I do it.

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