

Scot McKay (00:02.21)

All right. How's it going gentlemen? Welcome to get another episode of the world famous mountain top podcast. As always, I am your host, Scot McKay. You can find me on a myriad of social media platforms, not all of them, but close to all of them at Scot McKay on Tik Tok on X on truth social and on YouTube. You can find me at real Scot McKay on Threads. Don't go there. It's terrible. And especially on Instagram.

Guys, if you haven't been to the mountaintoppodcast.com lately, I don't know why I'm shaking my head while I say that. That's like a subliminal, you know, non sequitur. I definitely do think you should go to my website. Yeah. And so does my guest. And when you go there, you'll be able to check in on the latest Masterclasses, download the free book, Sticking Points Solved, check out all the show notes. It's generally a lot of fun over at mountaintoppodcast.com. The Facebook group, as always, we welcome you with open arms. See.

Peter Moore (00:34.11)

Yes, not yes.

Scot McKay (00:56.834)

That was the right gesture for the right moment. For those of you guys who are watching is yeah, even Peter will welcome you to the Facebook group, which he hasn't joined yet, but I'm assuming he will. And that's at The Mountain Top Summit on Facebook. So who is this illustrious guest who is already mirroring my actions? Cause he knows how to be social. Well, his name is Peter Moore and he's a columnist, a writer, an illustrator, and former editor of Men's Health magazine, which I have been a contributor to.

I don't know if it was your time or not, but maybe a little bit after that. He's also got a SubStack which is just excellent reading. We'll send you guys to that later. he lives in Fort Collins, Colorado, which is just a beautiful place. Hence look at that studio he's got. It's so Colorado. And today we're going to talk about perhaps ironically enough, given how well he and I are already making friends, the pandemic of loneliness. Well, Peter, here's your formal welcome to the show. Thanks for being on man.

Peter Moore (01:55.038)

It's great to be here and to meet all of your many thousands of guys who are on here and we all have that in common, right? We're navigating what masculine life is these days and that ain't easy as I know because I used to be the editor of Men's Health Magazine.

Scot McKay (02:07.651)

Yeah.

Scot McKay (02:11.308)

You also have a lot of unhealthy men. So it's a raging topic. Yeah.

Peter Moore (02:14.206)

Yeah, Yeah, you know, it was one of the big mysteries for me when I came on at Men's Health. I was aware of the age gap between or the longevity gap between men and

women. Women can expect to live four or five, six years longer than the average guy. And, you know, I started looking into that as the editor of a health magazine. And really, you know, the topic that we're talking about today, loneliness, the ways that guys interact is one of the main

theories behind it that because we don't interact as well as the women in our lives do, that that's going to be a death sentence for us if we don't take action. not to threaten your listeners with sudden death or anything, but it's really, this subject is that big and that important.

Scot McKay (03:01.964)

Or it could be that women are killing us softly.

Peter Moore (03:04.41)

Well, yeah, mean, but honey, have an extra dessert, that kind of thing.

Scot McKay (03:09.294)

Well, you know what? I kid. Because the truth of the matter is peer-reviewed study after study says that married men actually live longer.

Peter Moore (03:19.76)

And they have more sex too, so thank goodness for that. But yeah, mean, I consider it like the healthiest thing I ever did was, you know, that cute woman who I interviewed for a job at a magazine company I was working for, this was, you know, several decades ago. You know, I saw something in there that, you know, we were relating in a great way and she's been with me since then and, you know,

Scot McKay (03:22.924)

Well, that depends on how much game you have.

Peter Moore (03:49.2)

A lot of what I do to be healthy is because of Men's Health Magazine and editing that for 20 years, but also a good portion of it is that Claire McCree is in my life and she's urging me in that direction too.

Scot McKay (04:02.082)

Now she your main squeeze or a business associate?

Peter Moore (04:04.638)

She's my wife. Yeah, as of three decades. Yeah, okay. Thanks for that.

Scot McKay (04:06.868)

Okay, all right. Yeah, that wasn't quite clear, you know.

I didn't know if this was a Batman Batgirl thing or a husband wife thing. So thank you for clarifying that.

Peter Moore (04:15.678)

God, I wish we'd have cooler cars than we do.

Scot McKay (04:21.004)

That much is true. Although my wife probably has a cooler car anyway, cause she's mama and that's what she gets. So let's talk about this pandemic of loneliness. You kind of joked about personal loneliness during our brief time getting to know each other and making a little bit light of it, but it's not funny at all. A lot of guys out there are just absolutely alone. A lot of people in general are. And you know, I want to let you go ahead and riff on

Peter Moore (04:26.686)

Yeah.

Scot McKay (04:49.004)

what you believe to be the reasons why that is and how we got here before I say anything. Have at it, first person.

Peter Moore (04:54.45)

Yeah, so I'll just briefly share my own experience here. My wife and I had two sons. This is back during my men's health days. we used to call ourselves the Wolf Pack, the three of us, because we did everything together. Then they turned 13 and all of a sudden, it was obnoxious of them, but they insisted on having their own friends and their own lives.

I could see them turning away from me to the things that were most important in their own lives. And when they turned away, I realized that I had been focusing on my career and my family to the exclusion of something that I used to be really good at, which was making friends and having like a wide group of male friends that I could play basketball with, that I could go on hiking trips with.

that I could get together with if times were tough. And somehow I just let those skills atrophy in my life. And I'm not the only one. I just did a post on my SubStack called The Cure for Loneliness. And one of the stats I came up with when I was working on that post was that as of 20 years ago, more than half of men had

five or more what they consider to be close friends. So we're only talking about like the turn of the century here in the year 2000. Fast forward to today, only a quarter of men have, say they have five close friends. And then as you mentioned, the medical studies, you line them right up and guys are walking into an early grave if they let their friend group lapse. since I had that stark realization that

I don't have friends, you know, when my kids were in their early teens, I started developing what I think of as the skills to seek those friends out and, you know, make sure I get together with them. And it's, there's nothing hard about it. You just have to get over that whole, I'm lonely now. Then the next leap can be, I deserve to be lonely because I'm a jerk and who would like me anyway? That's one way that you could go. The other way is, oh.

Peter Moore (07:15.464)

Why don't I call up my friend Duggan, see if he wants to go out to lunch, or go on a bike ride, or go on a hike. All that stuff that guys love to do, other guys love to do. So the potential is there, but you have to be the instigator. And that was

something I was uncomfortable with before. I'm not uncomfortable with it anymore.

Scot McKay (07:32.578)

You know, you brought up several wonderful points, several of which we have covered on this show and at least one that we haven't. I've never heard the angle that it, it's kind of a self esteem thing or self confidence thing that would prohibit, prohibit us from picking up phone and saying, Hey, Hey dude, you want to go out and do this? You want to go out and do that? Thinking we'd be rejected by this guy. Like, you know,

Why would I want to do that? What are you gay? Are you hitting on me? Why would you want to hang out? You know, it seems like we as guys have this weird aversion to hanging out with other dudes because A, we're afraid we're going to look gay for hitting on them and B, you know, because I don't, I really rather not. I just want to sit home and drink beer anyway. I mean, you're to make me go out and do something. That part we've talked about before, but I think

we project that feeling onto other guys. It's really our own insecurities. You always

Peter Moore (08:28.988)

Yeah, you know, and the other thing I think of it, the natural world is full of solitary males of various species. Every fall, I go up to Rocky Mountain National Park, which is near my house, and go there for the elk rut. And, you know, it's basically a bunch of dude elks, like gathering together a group of ladies to have sex with. And, you know, I fully support elk in that. But what they're not doing when, like when they're not having sex with the lady elk,

Scot McKay (08:41.474)

Yeah.

Peter Moore (08:57.148)

they are battling those great horn antlers clashing together to drive off other males who want to have sex with their lady. Most of us don't really have to worry about that, I hope, anyway. that instinct to drive off the other males to compete with them was certainly something I felt in the office, largely a male office at Men's Health, was like...

Scot McKay (09:10.351)

other guys not being of our ilk, right?

Peter Moore (09:25.618)

There was a lot of competition going on there for our daily bread, we felt like. So there was like, you were in your silo, you were trying to do it better than the other guy. And if possible, you could undercut that other guy to get ahead of him. So, you know, that whole male competition thing is, I think it's a real thing. The solitariness of males is a real thing. But I also think that, you know, deep down inside us, we're all marshmallows too. We want to be loved. We want to seek out love.

We want to feel like we have a good crowd of friends to watch the Super Bowl with, or right now the NBA playoffs are on, who am I going to watch the big game with? All those questions come up. And it's that self-esteem thing is, oh gosh, if I put it out to my friends and ask them if they want to watch the game with me, they might laugh at me. Maybe they don't want to be with me. Maybe they don't want to be with me for three hours watching basketball, whatever it is.

that self-esteem thing can get in the way of the thing we need most in our lives, which is to establish those relationships. And I'm not talking about a romantic relationship here, just talking about the guys hanging together and you're, know, gay guys and straight guys, they all have the same needs for friendships that are outside of a romantic relationship, but are giving them that food of connection that is so critical to how happy we'll be.

Scot McKay (10:50.68)

Do think gay guys and straight guys can be friends?

Peter Moore (10:54.256)

I gay friends, absolutely. Yeah, no problem there. mean, you know, it's like...

Scot McKay (10:56.558)

I too. I think it's easier now than it was 10 or 15 years ago.

Peter Moore (11:02.014)

For sure. And thank you, society, for making a turn there to just acknowledge that, you know, we're all in this together. So it's sort of like, you know, so I have one wife, that's the way I choose to roll here. But it doesn't mean I can't be friends with heterosexual women. It doesn't mean I'm going to have sex with them. What it means is that we have a connection based on all sorts of things that aren't included in the complication of sex and romance.

You know, there's a reason why.

Scot McKay (11:31.02)

I actually have two lesbian friends. They're awesome. Yeah. I don't know if I hang out with them regularly.

Peter Moore (11:35.804)

You know, it's like, yeah, I mean, so let's just sweep the whole sex thing off to the side, whoever you like to do it with. You know, we're talking about something very different here, which is who do you have to go to who you can just have a talk or just have a laugh or just have a hamburger? You know, it's like all those things.

Scot McKay (11:52.323)

Well, I think it is worth mentioning. I do think it is worth mentioning that the idea of feeling low self-esteem or like that I'm going to be rejected on the part of men is usually tied to approaching women and asking them out. That's the stereotype that I feel like I'm going to be rejected when I ask a woman out. That's, that's the context you usually hear that sort of talking in, but it's very true that if I'm

Peter Moore (12:09.214)

Mm hmm. Right.

Scot McKay (12:21.108)

approaching a guy and want to make friends with him. I think guys don't give it much thought. We don't really let it weigh on us. Like, gosh, I'm not going to get laid or anything. If I, if I don't approach women and get a girl, there's less of a biological need that needs to be fed there on the part of that guy who's looking at it as from a strictly from a pickup artist perspective, right? Which by the way, we're not around here, but I'm acknowledging, I'm saying salute to the guys who I know feel that way of which there are legion, okay.

Peter Moore (12:42.451)

Uh-huh.

Scot McKay (12:51.81)

But yeah, I mean, it takes something to go and make friends with another guy. I have seen the studies that you cited that talk about how more men have fewer friends. One of them that I saw said the average number of self-described close friends that men have, the average number is zero, which is horrifying. Right. And,

Yet what I do know about how men make acquaintances and turn those acquaintances into friends is they're usually gathering around a common mission or a common purpose, or at least a common interest. Like we're all Harley guys, or we're all in the volunteer fire department together in this rural community, or we all served in the Marines together, you know, military experiences. Anytime you see movies like American Sniper or watch Seal Team, all these guys who have been in the trenches together, perhaps literally, um,

they're buddies for life. You know, I mean, we watched the movie in 1917. That's about two best friends literally in the trenches together. And it's a great movie. You know what I mean? And I think we love those movies as guys. And we kind of long for having this camaraderie that, that is just is ride or die. Like, you know, these are my boys, dude. We all want that. But I think if we take it from, I don't know whether this is top down or bottom up, frankly, but if we look at it from the opposite perspective and go,

What am I, what am I not being a part of? What group that I should be a part of? What interest, what passion that I don't have is missing in my life. Therefore having my dudes who were in that passion with me are therefore also missing. You know I mean? Like, it's not like all of us are going to go play for the Indianapolis Colts, you know, or we're going to be in the NBA together or be in a minor league bus, you know, traveling from city to city. talked to a guy the other day.

Peter Moore (14:30.982)

You know, yeah.

Scot McKay (14:43.436)

that that was his lifestyle for years and he still talks to all those guys, know, Bull Durham stuff. A lot of guys just lack that passion, that interest in their

home, playing video games and watching porn and not even getting out of the house, especially post pandemic. And we just don't know anybody because we don't do anything. We just lay around being couch potatoes. So which is it? Where's that cart and that horse, that chicken and the egg in that situation? What say you?

Peter Moore (15:06.11)

Well, you know, when I moved to Colorado, especially the area in Colorado where I live now, you can't help but see Long's Peak, which is the only 14 or 14,000 foot mountain in Rocky Mountain National Park. You can't help see it from everywhere in town here. And as soon as I, you know, as soon as I moved to Fort Collins, I said, I want to go up there, which is appropriate for the Mountaintop podcast. And, you know, it took me a few years, but I found a group of guys who I also knew.

Scot McKay (15:28.674)

For sure.

Peter Moore (15:34.312)

were hikers and who were up for a big challenge. And one summer we just set our goal. You we set a date. We're going to climb Long's Peak on September 2nd. We're going to get in shape for it. We have a mission. We've got this awesome mountain that every year four or five guys die while trying to climb it. So we were like, how can we be? Yeah, really. You know what? It was our version of the trenches. I never served in the army. I don't know what it's like to be in a trench, but our trench was

Scot McKay (15:53.41)

That's no way to make friends.

Peter Moore (16:03.102)

was climbing Long's Peak, not falling off of it, and again, having a great day climbing Long's Peak. And we made it up there based on all the studying we did in advance, mutually, to plan the hike, the hikes we did to get in shape for it, and dividing up who's going to carry what, making the reservations that we needed to get into the park, all that stuff. We had a mission there.

But the mission was in support of a growing friendship that the three of us had. And just to continue another moment, I remember, you know, we were on the side of this sheer cliff going up Long's Peak. And at one point I came across a boulder that was bigger than a refrigerator that was like across the trail. And I just didn't know how I was going to get up there. Fortunately, my buddies were standing on top of the rock they had scrambled up it

and they both stuck a hand on for me. I reached up and grabbed them and they helped me, like, help pull me up that rock. And when I got onto the top, I just looked at the two of them and I said, you guys are my brothers for life because you helped me over that. And it was a big moment and they are still good friends and we still go on hikes together. You know, it's like that kind of difficult moment. Get through with your buddies. could be, you know, your marriage is failing and they're the ones who talk you through it.

Could be that one of your kids is sick. You lose a job Having your guy friends around to pull you up over that rock is is one of the most meaningful things and meaningful relationships You can have in your life

Scot McKay (17:44.13)

You know, in the first world, seems like we do live a sanitary culture, relatively speaking. There's a lot more danger. There's a lot more of a visceral existence in the developing world. And certainly in, in times past compared to now, we can sort of just door dash our way through life, watch other people have adventures on television and do what I call the suburban sleepwalk, unaffectionately.

And what that does is I think it breeds people who are entitled and they complain and everything sucks. And then what we do is we get on social media where we don't have to actually face the people we're criticizing. We can do that from afar and people just turn into monsters socially. You know, they're just real critical and they hate everything and hate all sorts of things as a friend of mine used to say, which is funny.

Peter Moore (18:34.056)

Mm-hmm.

Scot McKay (18:37.518)

And this is the habit we get into of being real cynical and being lacking trust for anything because, know, especially during COVID and we were fed so much by the media and got on social media and the height of misinformation and disinformation. There's even misinformation and disinformation about what the meaning of misinformation and disinformation is at a meta level. It's nuts. so, so people are so, so people nowadays are so,

afraid of everything that could possibly be hiding behind any bush, not just women, but men too. We're all scared. We're all cynical and we're all negative. And that's also another way not to go through life. know, fat, drunk and stupid is no way to go through life. Dying is no way to make a living and being cynical and negative and hateful is also no way to make friends. And then, you know,

Peter Moore (19:34.335)

Yep.

Scot McKay (19:35.98)

I don't want to gloss over the advent of virtual reality, literally, with the goggles and porn and social media and AI. We got to talk about AI here. And all of that's just replacing real visceral face-to-face humanity. It's even, you you talk about guys making friends. It's literally replacing sex for a lot of men.

And this has got to stop. We've got to snap out of it because none of this, especially when it comes to social media, the internet and now AI, none of that's a fad. It's not going away. That Pandora's box has long since been open. So how do we fight this? How do we snap out of it? How do we, how do we first recognize, Hey, you know what? This is going to make us lonelier. And then how do we force ourselves out of this suburban sleepwalk and motivate ourselves?

Peter Moore (20:27.23)

Well, you know, I think it's a self preservation thing. If you want to look at, you know, what's going to happen to you later on in your life, if you are that social loner, I mean, not only are you going to die earlier, but you're going to be, you know, at risk for any of the maladies that, you know, kill us guys, heart attack, stroke. I don't know if you're familiar with the Robert Putnam book, Bowling Alone. It's kind of the classic

book on this subject of the epidemic of loneliness. But the point he makes is that if you're not putting yourself out there, it's going to induce the spiral that's going to lead to your death. But let's not get all dark about this. It's fun. So I bought an E-mountain bike last fall. And I just wrote about this on my SubStack where

Scot McKay (21:00.364)

Yes.

Scot McKay (21:09.716)

It's going to make you sedentary too.

Peter Moore (21:24.318)

I was just noticing how layering in that major piece of technology, all of a sudden activated this whole group of friends I didn't know who were e-mountain bikers. So I was, you know, talking to a buddy of mine after church one Sunday and, you know, his eyes were a glow about his e-mountain bike, which was the reason why I bought it. But then he started inviting me to go with his buddies on these big mountain bike loops that he and his friends were riding. And, you know, I don't have a lot of skills as a mountain biker, but I'm developing more.

The best thing about it is that piece of technology looped me into a great group of guys who are extremely active, who, you know, every week I have several invites to go on mountain biking trips. And halfway through the trip, we stop at a brewery and have a beer and, hey, how's it going for you? So it's like, we've got the activity first. Activity brings the proximity of guys around you and...

that proximity means that you're going to be having beer and conversation with guys who you didn't know before. So is that better than sitting at home? Like even as great a game as I've been watching in the NBA playoffs, any game I watch alone, the NBA playoffs is not going to be quite as good as a hike or a mountain bike ride that I take with my buddies. And you know, this whole being focused on our screens, staring at our stupid phones.

These things are a barrier between us and the world and the people we need to be interacting with. And we need to put these suckers down and talk to people. And it's just going to make your life a lot more fun if you do it.

Scot McKay (23:02.594)

You know, going out and being social is definitely a great step towards building acquaintances and making some friends. I've noticed though that the guys I'm the

closest friends with are the same men who were either there for me or vice versa when something major, stressful, or perhaps life threatening was happening.

Peter Moore (23:25.522)

You know, one of my best male men friends right now is a guy who I met in a grief group. You know, again, my church, church is a whole thing there too, and you know, a great way for men to become integrated, especially if they're feeling isolated. You know, pick a church, any church, as long as you feel good about it, that's all you need to know. But anyway, I was going to a grief group in this church that we joined when we moved to Fort Collins, and...

Scot McKay (23:25.688)

You know.

Peter Moore (23:54.162)

there was a guy there who was going through, you know, his mother had Alzheimer's and he was looking forward, looking ahead to her end, the same time right after my own mom died. And, you know, the two of us got talking after when the meetings, it led to a very close friendship between the two of us. And it turns out that both of us had worked for the same magazines in New York. And here we were meeting in Fort Collins. So it's like looking at this guy across the room and sympathizing with him.

I wouldn't have known anything about him, but it turned out that, you know, as I, as I heard what he was saying and I reacted to it and shared what I was feeling too, it gave us a pretext to move our friendship, you know, beyond this grief group. And, you know, that was what eight years ago now. And, you know, I just went out to lunch with him yesterday. So it's, you know, it's that kind of, making yourself vulnerable and available and really listening to people as opposed to just being like,

into what you're feeling, what your problems are, how resentful you are of everything. If you can discipline yourself to look out, see what other people are feeling, ask them about it. Just shut up and listen when they talk. All of those social skills are super important. feel like guys, maybe on average, don't have them to the degree that the women in our lives do. But just because you don't have a skill doesn't mean that you can't develop it. If you're like a terrible putter in golf,

you're going to practice that. If you are lonely, you need to practice those behaviors, activities that will get you out there in relating to other people.

Scot McKay (25:32.462)

Yeah, I think that's a good word. You know, when stuff gets real in life, people get real. know, two people who really can't stand each other. And you're seeing this relatively recently, the president Biden disclosed that he had cancer and all the people who had been just shredding him were like, oh man, well, we didn't want you to get cancer, dude. You know, we didn't want that to happen. We just were glad you're not president anymore, but dude, that sucks. We hope you feel better. You know what I mean?

Peter Moore (25:38.14)

Yeah.

Scot McKay (26:02.494)

And, you know, also when Donald Trump was shot at and someone grazed his ear, you know, the, one of the first people to say, man, that really sucks, man, we're sorry that happened was Joe Biden. So, I mean, I think people realize as important as things like world peace and the economy and politics and, know, whether your kid beats mine, you know, on the soccer field or not, you know, there's some weight to that in life.

It's the life or death stuff, know, it's health, it's family. I mean, when that, when that, when that hits a crisis pitch, people get very real and very vulnerable with each other. And it's a shame it has to come to that.

It's a shame that something of crisis proportion has to happen before everybody, you know, lets their guard down and says, man, let's just be human with each other. We kind of need each other here. I've always kind of lamented that. I've always wondered how we got there because, you know, again, not to belabor it, but you go to a third world country, you go to a developing country where people, you know, it's very raw. Everybody's in the same.

somewhat desperate position in there helping each other through a day to day and life is a visceral existence Minute by minute those people are vulnerable and real with each other all the time You know unless they're a warring tribe or something, but I mean

We've lost that in this culture. mean, you you look at the greatest generation of all time during World War II, right? I mean, we were all united under the cause of, you know, beating the Nazis and beating the, you know, the Japanese empire. And nowadays we go around calling each other Nazis for political fun. I mean, it's just, you know, we've lost that sense of depth as humans and, you know, that Victor Franklian search for meaning that we're all going through together. think we just whitewash.

Scot McKay (27:50.784)

and go through life thinking, know, nothing really matters. I can say or do whatever I'm gonna do without consequence if someone else gets hurt. I call it the Siri effect. know, people have gotten so used to just being rude to Siri because it's not a human being that they're being rude to everybody. you know, social media and anonymous, the anonymity of being able to make YouTube comments doesn't help that.

But there is something to be said for this return to human vulnerability and getting real with each other that I think would allow us to feel a lot less lonely, if it unfortunately would signal we're probably having to go through a crisis to get there. It's ironic, isn't it?

Peter Moore (28:23.582)

Thank

Peter Moore (28:32.444)

Yeah, you know, it's just the, you know, it's one of the markers of our age that, you know, we go into cocoons now because our cocoons are really freaking comfortable with, you know, Netflix on 24 seven and food delivery to our door. But it's really cutting us off to what's most important in life. And let's be honest about it. It's awkward to reach out to people. You don't know how they're going to react. You make yourself vulnerable in

you could be laughed at or made fun of, but what we have to realize too is that, okay, that's a sure sign. If somebody's making fun of you or, you know, slamming the door in your face, that person isn't going to be a friend. But if we look around, you know, purposefully, look for maybe people who are hurting, people who can help, people who see that we're hurting and can help us. mean, that's where a real relationship is formed. You know, you're not going to have a real relationship

you know, with the cutie on sexygirls.com, but you are gonna have a real relationship with your neighbor who you talk to over the fence and borrow a tool from. Hey, I think I made that up, but it probably exists actually. But yeah, mean, so let's keep our focus on the real world. I mean, I'm not ruling out. I mean, I like to watch Netflix as much as the next guy, but.

Scot McKay (29:40.174)

Wait, let me write that URL down again. What was that? Sexy.

Scot McKay (29:47.52)

It probably does.

Peter Moore (29:59.356)

I don't do it to the exclusion of everything else that's worthwhile and vital in my life. So, you know, a ski day with my buddy is going to be better than whatever series I'm watching on Netflix. You know, that hunting trip I take in the mountains of Colorado, this can be a more intense bonding experience, you know, than I'll ever get, you know, from doom scrolling on a random morning to see what screwed up thing is happening in the world now. So let's make the circle.

Scot McKay (30:04.994)

balance.

Scot McKay (30:12.782)

All

Peter Moore (30:28.936)

closer, fill it with human beings, and that's where life is going to find us.

Scot McKay (30:34.264)

You know, about a year ago, I was really on the soap box about AI and, this advent of AI girlfriends and how, you know, if we are indeed created in God's image of having free will, it isn't going to be very fulfilling to have something do your bidding because it has to, not because it wants to whatever that entity is. And then, you know,

A year later that's starting to feel like people don't want to hear actors talk. chat GPT AI is moving at a fever, feverish rate forward. It's, it's horrifying to me. And I'm getting more and more people who are treating chat GPT like a rent a friend. They're having conversations with chat GPT.

You know, actually that was so six months ago. Nowadays I have people who will hire me to be their coach and they'll just text me what's going on. And then they'll text me their chat sessions with chat GPT and asked me what I think of the chat chat chat GPT sessions they were having. And I go, somehow this doesn't feel like what I do for a living as a coach. And finally, one day I just said to one of these guys, I

How many actual friends do you have? seem to me like a guy who could, who really needs a friend. Well, I need to do all this self work and you're going to help me with that. And Chat GPT is going to help me with that. And I need to run all this by you before I go out and make friends. I don't know. It seems to me you're treating us like friends, like you're treating a robot, like friends, you're treating your coach, like a friend. mean, I'm happy to be friendly with you, but you know, I have a purpose. I'm a hired professional in your life. I'm helping you get results.

Why don't we flip this script and go out and make some friends and see if it helps you get over some of these things that you're struggling with. And he's like, huh, what, what a novel idea. I'm like, you know, go figure. I really think there's a danger here that our priority priorities are going to devolve rather than evolve into thinking this is the way things are done. Now, probably we're going to say this is the way, cause we've been watching Mandalorian instead of going out and making friends.

Scot McKay (33:00.13)

But it seems like this is the new normal. you remember during the pandemic, we were talking about the new normal. The new normal seems like robots are our friends and people are expendable now. People are tools. It's bizarre.

Peter Moore (33:15.486)

You know, garbage in, garbage out still applies to AI. And just because there's more garbage being fed into that means that there's going be more garbage coming out of it. You know, we can't mistake things that happen when we open up our computers for personal interactions, because most of the times interactions with bots and bots by definition are stupid. And even as they get smarter, they're not going to be fresh flesh and blood human beings. So

Scot McKay (33:19.907)

Yeah.

Peter Moore (33:45.95)

You know, it's like, I mean, I use AI for work. I don't rely on it for relationships or, uh, or conversation because I'm having plenty of those in the real world. And there's just no way that, uh, you know, AI isn't going to hug you back. Uh, a friend will AI isn't going to support you in your time of need in the way that you need it. A good friend will. So, uh, you know, it's like, I'm not going to join the, uh, you know,

like the doomsayers, because like when radio came on, there were people talking about, radio is going to ruin the world. The same thing with television, the same thing for PCs, the same thing for social media. It's just you pick your technology of the moment. People are going to say, you know, that's the end of the world so far, so good, the world hasn't ended. So, you know, I'm not going to say that AI certainly is useful in a lot of ways.

It's not your best friend. So you need your AI and your friend, but you've got to make sure that you have the friend too.

Scot McKay (34:53.058)

What are your, what are your tips for guys who are really resonating with what we're talking about here, Peter, and say, you know, saying to themselves, man, I gotta go out and make some friends. I gotta go out and hang out with some real people. What are the first steps here?

Peter Moore (35:04.682)

Well, you know, it's a little challenging when somebody says, yeah, go make friends. yeah, easy for you to say, jerk. But what we used to talk about in men's health, what we used to talk about in men's health was how women specialize in face-to-face conversations, right? I mean, they're like, we haven't talked forever. Let's go out for coffee and talk. Like, I don't know a guy who's ever said to me, let's go out for a coffee and talk.

Scot McKay (35:11.598)

Exactly. Just like, be confident, you know.

Peter Moore (35:31.772)

Guys are more shoulder-to-shoulder socializers, meaning we're on a road trip. You're sitting next to me in the car, we've got tunes on the CD player, we're streaming tunes, and we're headed off for wherever, the mountains. That's shoulder-to-shoulder, so there's time there for, God, I'm excited about our trip, but there's also time for, so, how've you been?

Wasn't your older son in some trouble a while ago? What's going on with that? So there's time for When you're shoulder to shoulder there's time for the activity that you're pursuing But there's also lulls in the activity where you know some real interchanges happen So for guys who are listening to this thinking about friends. What are your shoulder to shoulder activities? Maybe it's The the local minor league baseball team baseball games are great place to go and talk to a guy because baseball is so

Scot McKay (36:13.762)

Yeah.

Peter Moore (36:27.934)

freaking boring and goes on for so long that you're going to be almost forced to have a regular conversation there. Same thing for watching sports on TV. There's always halftime. I apologize to you, Yomiuri Giants jersey wearing man. But you

know, what I would say.

Scot McKay (36:34.702)
especially if you're an Orioles fan this year.

Scot McKay (36:45.452)
I have no allegiance to the team. just went to a game and thought it was fun. So I bought the jersey. Yeah.

Peter Moore (36:49.737)
So what I would say is that there are, if you're a guy and feeling isolated, what you need to do is look around in your life. Maybe these are interests you haven't picked up in 20 years. Maybe you played the guitar in college, but you don't anymore. Find a group that's jamming and join it. Find a place where you can go to pursue your interests. Like my son belongs to one of these maker spaces in Denver. All sorts of guys in there working with all sorts of technology.

explaining it to each other, but also hanging out and, what's your project about? that's cool. I'm working on this one. It's like, you need to find your place, find your way into those places where your potential friends will gather and just invest in it, as opposed to all the time you'd say, you know, pounding your keyboard. Get out, close the computer, be where humans are.

Scot McKay (37:44.75)
Yeah, and that's a that's about getting out of your comfort familiarity zone too, because, know, we as men love our setup. We get everything the way we have it just so. And then we get into habits and we don't deviate from them. And the next thing you know, we're Ted Kaczynski, we're hermits. Yeah, I think that's good stuff. I think that was a good word.

Peter Moore (38:02.458)
Ted Kaczynski's, yeah, he's a perfect example, Ted Kaczynski. And it's also in the Robert Putnam book, Bowling Alone, talking about how men who are socially isolated tend to be the ones who become extremists of all sorts. So, you know, so the loner is the guy who hides in the bushes and picks off pedestrians walking by. You know, it's always the first thing that, you know, after a mass shooting,

Scot McKay (38:18.434)
That's true.

Peter Moore (38:30.578)
that go talk to the neighbors, did you know this guy was nuts? And they say, well, you know, he pretty much kept to himself. Keeping to yourself is the number one indicator for being a nut job. And we don't want to be nut jobs. We want to be out there in the world.

Scot McKay (38:36.237)
Yeah.

Scot McKay (38:43.63)

That could be the name of this podcast. Don't be a lonely nut job. Well, I'm so glad you and I met each other and we're not nut jobs and we're out there not being lonely. And what I want to do is I want to send these guys to your SubStack Peter that we talked about at the beginning of this show. It's Peter Moore SubStack.com more with two, two O's of course. think Sir Thomas More is the only more I know of it to who doesn't have two O's as a surname, but you're indeed,

Peter Moore (38:45.982)
Yeah.

Peter Moore (39:10.718)
you know, I lived in Pennsylvania and there were a of MOHRs there too, a German surname.

Scot McKay (39:16.765)
yeah, well, they're beside the point in this conversation.

Peter Moore (39:17.99)
Anyway, yeah, it's petermoore.substack.com is where you'll find me twice a week, delighting my 12,000 subscribers.

Scot McKay (39:27.342)
12,001 baby. I'm in. Yeah. Everyone counts man. Hey, you froze. You froze giving me one of these. It was kind of a cool moment in the video. was like, it was almost like it was done on purpose to highlight it. Like, like in an anime when they go, and they just like freeze it for a while.

Peter Moore (39:29.285)
baby, Woo!

Peter Moore (39:43.622)
Yeah, exactly. Well, I wanted to give the full thumbs up time to register.

Scot McKay (39:48.078)
Well, I'm so glad you did that was very cool actually and guys if you go to mountaintoppodcast.com front slash

Let's just make it Peter Moore, P-E-T-E-R-M-O-O-R, because I've had a Peter and I've had a Moore before, so let's do Peter Moore. And you'll also go to his SubStack if you follow that link, if you're listening along and it's too much to remember, which I don't think it is, but that's what we've been doing for nearly 500 shows. So why stop now? Mountaintoppodcast.com front slash Peter Moore.

What a great conversation. You brought up so many salient points. And I really think this is going to resonate with the guys. Thank you so much for joining us today, Peter. Hope you'll come back.

Peter Moore (40:26.13)
Yeah, I'd be happy to and hey, let's be friends.

Scot McKay (40:29.762)

Well, let's do that thing, You live in Colorado. I should come out and have a beer with you because there's some of the greatest beer ever in Colorado.

Peter Moore (40:37.006)

See there you are. already getting over your feelings of possible rejection and inviting me out for a beer. I'm there. I'll buy you a beer.

Scot McKay (40:44.77)

Thanks man. And I'll buy you the second one. you know, this is opening up a whole can of worms, but just for the record, and this doesn't require any additional feedback, I just want to make sure it's said in the show. A lot of guys who are recovering alcoholics or just don't drink often find it hard to make groups of guy friends because they always go to a bar. They always get a beer together and they feel like, well, I'm have to have a diet coke and be the designated driver or something. But I think that's the solution. It's baked right in, right? I think so.

Peter Moore (40:45.778)

Yeah. Sounds good.

Peter Moore (41:10.962)

Well, you know, it isn't like alcohol is the answer to anything. And I'm not even that big a drinker when you said you'd buy me the second beer. I never have the second beer because, you know, I'm out cold by the time I finished the first one. It's, you know, it's all about finding that moment to relate, which you can do on a bicycle. You could do it on a bar stool. You can be, you know, sitting in the bleachers at Wrigley Field. All those places are great places for guys to get together.

Scot McKay (41:16.258)

That's right.

Scot McKay (41:24.334)

What a well

Peter Moore (41:39.032)

and you'll find your moments to really connect if you do that.

Scot McKay (41:43.192)

Fantastic. Yeah. mean, so right on the money. Thanks again for being on, man. I really appreciate you in the work you do.

Peter Moore (41:49.286)

You're very welcome.

Scot McKay (41:51.702)

And guys, if you haven't been to mountaintoppodcast.com lately, we talked about the free goodies you can find there. Also be sure to sign up to get on the phone, talk to me personally for 25 to 30 minutes. I don't play a fictional character. I'm the same guy you think I'm going to be. my passport says Scot McKay on it. one time

somebody said, Hey, is Scot McKay your real name? I said, listen, if it wasn't, I would spell it right. If it was going to be, you know, a fake name, but

alas, my parents left that second T off. Saved me a bunch of keystrokes over the course of my lifetime, but a whole lot of correcting people instead saying, no, that's not me. That's some other guy. But indeed get on my calendar. Let's talk for 20, 25 minutes. You've got feedback on the show. That's cool. If we want to talk about how to get you a better life with more women in it, more male friends. if you just want to make acquaintance, Hey, I'm up for that too.

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And, until I talk to you again real soon. is Scot McKay from X and Y Communications in San Antonio, Texas. Be good out there.