

53. Joe Hastings (final)

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SPEAKERS

Joe Hastings, Rebecca Toal, Hattie Butterworth

Rebecca Toal 00:01

Hello, hello, hello. We've got a fantastic episode for you today; we sat down with Joe Hastings, Head of Music Minds Matter to speak about his journey from film composition to working for the charity Help Musicians, and how the scope of this UK charity's work has changed over the years. We discussed the groundbreaking study from 2016 entitled "Can Music Make You Sick?", as well, of course, as the magic of fizzy iced tea, legwarmers, and glitter. If you or someone you know, is a musician looking for support with their mental health, then please see our show notes for Music Minds Matters' 24/7 helpline. All of our usual socials are linked there too and we're currently crowdfunding to support costs for the next six months of the pod. So you can find information there about that and so much more. Thank you so much to everybody who's already donated, we are beyond grateful. It's been a busy all the time for TMDTA. There's been lots of stuff going on. One of the most joyful things that we experienced recently was that Hattie and I headed up to Manchester, in fact, yesterday from when I'm recording this, to take part in a panel discussion at the wonderful Empower International Women's Day event, hosted by Sinead and Hannah. It was just, you know, those events where you just kind of turn up, you don't know what you're expecting, and then you come away from it just feeling totally inspired and ready to keep on working for... I wanted to say the greater good, but you know what I mean. Just keep on, keep on striving for a better world. I always record these spiels being like, "Oh, I'm gonna tell everyone what I've been up to!" But I genuinely can't remember other than the fact that this week, I've been up in Derbyshire with my partner and his dad doing some DIY. So if anybody needs a kitchen installing, I've got some of the skills to do that. Apart from that, just been preparing for an audition...feeling quite thinly spread at the moment. Definitely struggling with feelings of letting a lot of people down, which I think is quite a common thing as a freelancer. It's like ... I don't know, as soon as you get a great gig or something, then you're letting your students down because you have to get deps to cover teaching or you can't find deps to cover teaching. Or, you know, maybe you're tired from your gig and then you feel like your quality of teaching isn't so good. Or if you're really busy fitting in your teaching, then you're not seeing your friends as much and yeah, just been struggling with feelings of inadequacy a little bit in terms of ... Yeah, spinning all those old plates. Anyway, back to cheerier things... Without further ado, here's Things Musicians Don't Talk About.

Hattie Butterworth 03:07

So hello, everyone. We are here today in Help Musicians offices with the wonderful Head of Music Minds Matter charity, Joe Hastings. Hello, Joe, thank you so much for being here. How are you doing?

Joe Hastings 03:20

I'm good. I'm good, thanks. Yeah, I'm good. We're we're busy as usual, but it's it's really nice to get to talk to you.

Rebecca Toal 03:27

It's really nice to come and see like a ... because Help Musicians and everything feels so ...

Hattie Butterworth 03:32

Online.

Rebecca Toal 03:33

Ethereal.

Hattie Butterworth 03:33

Yeah.

Rebecca Toal 03:34

It's like nice that it's a real place as well.

Joe Hastings 03:35

Yeah, well, it didn't feel like that for obvious reasons, during the pandemic.

Rebecca Toal 03:39

Yeahhh.

Joe Hastings 03:39

And I think people coming into the space and it being so central in Kings Cross is something that was always really nice before the pandemic. And then since, you know, since we've, we've all returned to the office, it's been really nice to ... and we've sort of rejigged areas of it so it's more ... it's much more kind of welcome-... welcoming to chats and people coming in. It feels really nice to be back and to have ... to be able to welcome people in.

Rebecca Toal 04:05

Absolutely. So we really wanted to talk to you today about Music Minds Matter in general and a kind of music and mental health specific charity. First of all, could you just tell us like, why, why this charity? Given ... like what's the reason behind it? Why do we need it?

Joe Hastings 04:25

So Help Musicians, formerly Musicians' Benevolent Fund, has existed for over 100 years. And as a charity it's always done a lot of the work that continues, albeit in a much more significant and larger fashion now for people working in music, and particularly for performing musicians and, and people sort

of in the background of events. And when I joined the charity, we we were doing that work, and it was ... but you know, I think it's fair to say it was a relatively ... the numbers weren't as high as they are ... if I'm being kind, the numbers weren't anything like what they are now in terms of how much, how many individuals were engaging with them. And actually the breadth of engagement across the sector, as opposed to probably when I started, we ... 70 or 80% of people we were working with were from the classical music area, so that's been a, you know, a huge shift over the last 10 years. But the other thing that changed about six years ago was we started to do, to... Well, we wanted to understand what the key issues were for people who were ... who were applying to, for support here. And it might sound ridiculous now, but we didn't really have those insights because we weren't, we were dealing with people on a case-by-case basis. It was all very paper-based, so it was quite kind of, you know, people's case files sat separately, and we didn't really have that integration. So we started with research. So we did a big piece of wellbeing research in 2015, roughly 2014, 2015 which, which showed that musician... the main, the primary issues that people were finding challenging in terms of their careers were around hearing health, vocal health, muscular skeletal health and mental health was by far the largest kind of impact on people's careers. So we undertook research to look specifically at the mental health support needs. I mean, and we also did research in all the other areas and we continue to that were important, but the mental health research was was was was the first piece of key research we did, and that went out to ... well, we got about 2200 responses to that research from across the sector. And it shows really sort of troubling levels of mental health precarity across the piece, so to speak. So 71% of people responded saying that they experienced anxiety regularly, and performance related anxiety, and about 68% of people said that they were experiencing ... regularly experiencing depression or low mood, so it was quite profound and that's rough-... just to put it into perspective, that's roughly three times the average in society. So, you know, we were looking, we were looking at much higher levels of, you know, of those kind of presenting issues in the sector, which obviously, then led us to think about what we were going to do in response to the research. It would have been, you know, it wouldn't have felt like we were completing the circle, if we just did research and said, "This is a problem", especially because we are an independent charity. You know, we, we have the ability to, to shape our support based on the needs of people and based on what people present with. And that ... so that led to, in 20 ... late 2015, us developing and creating the Music Minds Matter service. And it's run, since then, and obviously, I'll talk more about how it's changed. But it was, it was set up in response to that big piece of research.

Hattie Butterworth 08:00

And this was a piece of research separate to the subsequent "Can Music Make You Sick?".

Joe Hastings 08:00

No, that's it.

Hattie Butterworth 08:05

Oh, that is it. Okay, sorry.

Joe Hastings 08:06

I should have said the name.

Hattie Butterworth 08:07

No, it's all good. Don't worry, because that is...yeah, I think that whole study has been a big part of our kind of ongoing reading for the year.

Rebecca Toal 08:15

Yes, I'm still making my way through it.

Hattie Butterworth 08:18

Like, it's taken me a while to make my way through it.

Rebecca Toal 08:20

Just because there's so much in it...

Hattie Butterworth 08:22

...to highlight and like think about ...

Rebecca Toal 08:24

Yeah.

Hattie Butterworth 08:24

Especially the case studies and what people have said it's ... it kind of brings to life these numbers, which can feel quite alien, I guess? Like ...

Joe Hastings 08:31

I think the the numbers tell a really important part of the story, but getting that kind of, you know, the qualitative information with the ... the rich feedback, and, and the personal responses is really important, which is why we often do focus groups as well, on the back of research. And we'll, we'll, you know, we'll actively engage with people to get their ... to get their kind of more personal responses to pieces of research to to understand in more detail, what, what are some of those kind of prevailing issues are.

Hattie Butterworth 09:03

Right, okay, so before ... so at the moment you've taken on this role of being Head of Music Minds Matter, that's like your title. Can you talk us through your journey through the charity? Like, when did you start at Help Musicians and what has your role been within the charity?

Joe Hastings 09:18

You're testing me on the dates...

Rebecca Toal 09:20

We don't need exact dates don't worry.

Joe Hastings 09:22

So I ... I have a background in music, so I'd studied music and went on to work in film and TV, as a kind of arranger, and then I wrote soundtracks, not massively successfully, but I did, I did enough work to, for

it to eke out a living for for a reasonable amount of time. But I was always, I'd also done work when I was studying music, working in bail hostels and prisons and other kinds of therapeutic environments ... but they're not therapeutic environments, but work in therapeutic capacities in those environments.

Hattie Butterworth 09:56

You wish they were therapeutic environments.

Joe Hastings 09:57

Yeah, exacty yeah. And yeah, and so so I, when I left university, I kind of had a career, but I was also paying to kind of continue to develop my understanding of sort of therapeutic support. And then, and then, after a point where things got a bit more tricky for me in terms of music work, which was roughly around the time of the financial crash...

Hattie Butterworth 10:20

Right.

Joe Hastings 10:21

... I started to do, because there was less work and because I was not that successful, I wasn't getting as much work as I had been previously, there wasn't as much being funded, I started to train properly and I was working in London, and I did a therapy course basically, I studied therapy for for about three years. And and in that time, as well, I also ran a service in Camden, which was a a homeless outreach service for people with mental health issues. So it was people who were in really, really desperate, really difficult states.

Hattie Butterworth 10:57

Wow.

Joe Hastings 10:57

So yeah, but that but that was my job and I was working on the streets around our office actually.

Rebecca Toal 11:01

Wow!

Joe Hastings 11:02

I know that car park next door quite well, because we'd often find people rough sleeping there, and um, it was I walked past the building and saw this slightly old fashioned logo for the Musicians' Benevolent Fund. And I was trying to remember trying to work out exactly what benevolence was ... "I sort of know what it means... it's like, kind of yeah, sort of altruistic support, like charitable support," and then and then I looked them up and they had this, again, very dated website, even for then. But it looked like they did really good work, and it was a kind of marrying of two areas of very, that I was really passionate about, which was music and support and the kind of supporting the needs of people who are vulnerable and who were experiencing hardship. So I phoned them up and I said, "you know, do you...? Do you have any work?" And they said, "Yeah, we've got actually this job. Are you...? Are you phoning about the caseworker? The senior officer role, the caseworker role?" And I said "what does that entail?" And

they said "well, it's making grants to people who've got health or other issues that are affecting their ability to manage, and, and making decision-... grant decisions, going to see people, assessing, writing reports and, and usually saying yes to the support that they need." And I thought, "oh well that sounds much better than the situation that I was starting to find myself in," in street outreach, which was often not being able to find the support that people needed. And it was also, yeah, it was it also felt like a kind of progression. I'd been training and learning and then this was a role that would maybe...

Hattie Butterworth 12:43

Tie it all together.

Joe Hastings 12:43

Yeah, yeah. And so I didn't I, I went for the interview, got the job. And then, and then obviously, when we when we, when we got a Chief Exec. like James Ainescough who I know, you've probably both met, that's just, you know, the the amount that we've, that we've moved on, from where we were, has been, you know, has kind of, you know, it's just shifted really, really fast to the point where now I think most ... I like to think the most people in, in this indust... industry, at least know who we are as Help Musicians. And equally, you know, as Music Minds Matter, now, I think we are beginning to build, you know, build that kind of that awareness across the industry as well.

Rebecca Toal 13:23

Yeah, I definitely think that's true. And it's ... it's always, you always feel like there's not enough support, given the scale of everything. But it feels like you're right, that that progression from where it was to where it is now has been just ultra-fast to try and catch up to where it needs to be, and I think that's completely commendable. So talking about this research that happened for their launch research, can you talk a little bit more about what the research kind of showed and what the main needs were for the people...?

Joe Hastings 14:06

The recent the "Can Music Make You Sick?" research showed that precarity of employment was was a massive contributor to, to people's ability to manage their mental health, you know, and, but actually, it's not, it's 72%, roughly, of people across the industry are freelance, which is massive compared to the other employment sectors...

Hattie Butterworth 14:27

Wow, yeah.

Joe Hastings 14:27

... but 85% of classical people working in classical music are self employed and freelance. And so I hadn't, and I hadn't really taken that on board until the day it was it was published in research that Jane Ginsburg and Susanna Cohen who ... Dr Susanna Cohen, we were kind of involved in some small way with that research. But it really brought home to me that some of the some of my presumptions were wrong about classical music.

Hattie Butterworth 14:55

You know, you were saying that your partner he's having his ... he's been graduated, what how long now?

Rebecca Toal 15:03

Almost four years?

Hattie Butterworth 15:04

And it's like the first position that's come up in the UK for a tuba player...

Rebecca Toal 15:09

In like 10 years...

Joe Hastings 15:10

Wow.

Rebecca Toal 15:11

And it's really striking, but you're right. It's a huge percentage of people being freelance, and it's ...

Hattie Butterworth 15:17

I don't think that's something that college made us massively aware of, in a funny way.

Rebecca Toal 15:23

I don't know, I don't think I was ever told that I would be employed, ut there was always the...

Hattie Butterworth 15:27

Quite murky.

Rebecca Toal 15:28

Yeah, there was always this narrative of trying to get a job, but then never the kind of all but you're still be, it will still be precarious after that.

Joe Hastings 15:36

I mean, the other thing I'd say is that it's not all bad news that, because there is a lot of, you know, there are a lot of people who enter the music industry, because of this because of the nature of freelance work, because they, because they move from job to job or because they move from venue to venue or, you know, and that's... there's nothing wrong with that. So I wouldn't want to completely conflate those two issues as in, if you're self employed...

Rebecca Toal 16:02

You're stressed.

Joe Hastings 16:02

Yeah, precarity of employment is an issue for you, because there are loads of self-employed people who work in music who have really stable employment, I suspect less so since the pandemic, for

obvious reasons, but yeah, it's not, it's not a it's not a given that because you're self-employed, your career is harder than it would be if you're working under contract. And there are lots of things working under contract that can be challenging as well.

Hattie Butterworth 16:27

But in terms of support, I guess you are limited in more ways. I mean, you know, I don't know how much you've seen if the ISM's Dignity at Work thing. And that was quite interesting about, you know, the law of ... employment law, and how musicians don't know, by being self-employed, what rights they have, and what being a worker means. All of this can, like, have added stress, because you just don't really know where you fit so you kind of tend to put yourself on the back foot and just assume you shouldn't make a fuss or whatever.

Rebecca Toal 16:37

Oh yeah.

Joe Hastings 16:58

Yeah.

Hattie Butterworth 16:58

So all these kind of things have like, impact don't they?

Joe Hastings 17:02

So this came through the research, the Can Make You Sick research, but it's come through subsequent research, quite profoundly, and through the casework team in health, health and welfare who go out and visit 1000s of musicians or did and have been doing phone calls in lockdown and are now going out to visit again, is the level of social isolation in the industry. And again, it's like another thing that's like "Oh, yeah. It's so obvious that that would be common, commonplace, particularly in younger musicians and people across the industry," and and that um, that's also reflected. But when we, when we set up the support groups that's really reflected in the popularity for support groups for sessions, you know, the kind of group of ... group or collective activity and engagement. And I think that tells a quite a sort of troubling sort of story as well, which is that often people don't know, don't know where to reach out about the things that are experiencing. So if you're having a hard time, you may have someone, a supportive friend, but if you don't, then you don't have necessarily what we have here, which is, you know, an office full of very, you know, empathetic people you can talk to, if you ... if you felt comfortable doing that. And I think that's really common. So for composers sitting in a studio for 12 hours a day, 14 hours a day to, you know, musicians touring with a group of four people that they have, they'd love to hate. And you know, and or, you know, or in an orchestral environment, sometimes as well, where there's, you know, there's potentially 90 odd people in in a space but but not necessarily the people that you might feel comfortable talking to about what you're experiencing.

Rebecca Toal 18:40

If you do feel comfortable to them, it doesn't always feel like the time and place if you're in a rehearsal, or it's like a tea break, and you want to keep things light or whatever.

Hattie Butterworth 18:48

Exactly.

Rebecca Toal 18:49

And it's, yeah, I found that the other week where I'd been like, "I feel like I've seen loads of people, but I still feel really lonely." And it was because I'd been to lots of rehearsals, but I hadn't spent quality time with anybody, I'd just been working.

Joe Hastings 19:02

Yeah.

Rebecca Toal 19:02

It's not the same thing.

Joe Hastings 19:03

No.

Hattie Butterworth 19:03

From the research, I remember reading it when it came out ...2018? Can Music Make You Sick?

Joe Hastings 19:10

No, 2016.

Rebecca Toal 19:11

20...?

Hattie Butterworth 19:11

Oh, my gosh, okay, well, maybe it was a bit after it came out.

Rebecca Toal 19:14

We all lost a couple of years.

Hattie Butterworth 19:15

But that was, you know, my kind of peak shit time in college. And I remember reading that statistic of seven ... now you're going to get numbers out, Joe. But there's a percentage of music-... of musicians who have experienced mental illness basically, or depression.

Joe Hastings 19:31

So 70 -71% anxiety, 68% - 69% depression.

Hattie Butterworth 19:37

Yeah, I remember reading that. And I remember looking around my orchestra feeling awful. And being kind of angry at those numbers, because I was just thinking, "yes, that might be true. But I don't know one of these people in here has suffered...

Rebecca Toal 19:51

Yeah.

Hattie Butterworth 19:51

...at all". So I'm just really curious about obviously, that was back in 2017 - 18 when I, when I read that and felt that isolation and anger. And since then, I know, the conversation's, thankfully, grown and through lockdown, and everything, people are more vulnerable and we are noticing that, but how are you hoping that Music Minds Matter, this new subsidiary arm of Help Musicians, can open up that conversation and encourage musicians to support each other? Or be honest about where they've been?

Joe Hastings 20:24

Well, I mean, I'd argue that it's not just Music Minds Matter, but I'd argue that that's that's already been happening. I think, you know, from the research, we are ... I'm not ... sorry, I'm not I'm not suggesting that we need, we need to have an argument, I'd suggest that...

Rebecca Toal 20:37

Argue with us!

Hattie Butterworth 20:39

That's what we're here for!

Joe Hastings 20:41

And what was really ... what I was really keen to ensure we did when the ... when when the research was published was that we that we build something, that ... that helps, that gives people that really important piece of help that they need in that moment, but that also we try and learn because it felt to me, like the start of something not "it's complete, we've done this research, here's the service, this will solve all the problems." And also that we made sure that we were we were working in partnership with other organisations, you know, like Music Support and Tonic Rider and BAPAM and the Royal Society of Musicians and PRS, Numbers Fund, and many other organisations that we work with a lot and commonly and we work really well with, to to continue to learn and build insights. And that and that's been key a key part of understanding and shaping the service. But it's also enabled us to, to say that we are building and developing services based on the insights that musicians and people in the sector giving us and, and therefore, I think we get really positive feedback, because the services reflect what people need. Not necessarily what people tell us they need, but what people actually need, because, you know, we have that level of engagement with people now so it's not an ideal place we're in now, but I think we're a long way from where we were when that before that research was published. Those conversations are now a point where collaboration, connect connectivity, you know, sort of, for moving on from conversations into action are happening. And that's and that's really positive. And it's more than I expected, I have to say, when we first went, you know, when we first launched Music Minds Matter.

Hattie Butterworth 22:27

That's the great thing that you see, through Help Musicians is there's always signposting on the site...
...and in general in the work you do and and in the event that we attended on World Mental Health Day,
that was very much a celebration of partners, and the work people are doing not just like, "look how
great our work is, you know," I've always had that vibe from from you guys.

Rebecca Toal 22:30

Yeah. Yeah.

Hattie Butterworth 22:45

I just have a question about whether you have an insight through your whole time here and everything,
of maybe why, in terms of stigma, there's still this, this kind of issue of musicians talking to each other,
that they might now have confidence to talk to Help Musicians, BAPAM or whatever, but I still sense a
bit of a, what's the word?

Rebecca Toal 23:08

Resistance?

Hattie Butterworth 23:09

Resistance to speaking to each other and being open about having a harder time. Do you have an idea
of how maybe that ... Help M-... Music Minds Matter could help that change ...or?

Joe Hastings 23:20

Yeah, I mean, I think I think the peer support groups in particular, which we run in collaboration with
Tonic Rider, that they're, they're telling a story, which is that people, you know, we set ... they're run
over six weeks, the sessions, they are run and sort of led by a BACP accredited, so it's a
fully-accredited therapist, and the therapist is not there to, to impart wisdom. They're there to be part of
encouraging a safe conversation to happen. And it can ... people can talk about whatever they're
finding difficult. And what they see in this ... in these small groups of 12 people over six sessions is
the building of this kind of peer network, and, and that approach is, has been well-researched and it's
actually really impactful. But I don't think there's enough of it happening, I'd say in society, actually. But
the one of the big insights from the peer support groups is that people don't want it to stop at six
sessions.

Hattie Butterworth 24:20

Aww yeah.

Joe Hastings 24:21

So they want, they want to, not everyone, but most people want to continue that contact. They see the
value in these new these new friendships that they've built, you know, these new sort of safe, healthy
friendships that they've built. So I want us to do more about that, and I think that the potential for that
and if you think about the kind of the, the, the, the number of people you can you can interact with and
engage with through that. And the number of people who are benefiting from having a support network
is significant. And it's something that knowing how much social isolation is there is in this industry is
definitely needed.

Hattie Butterworth 24:57

You could say that, though that that is still very much, although people know it exists and it's there for them, it could that...

Rebecca Toal 25:05

Yeah.

Hattie Butterworth 25:05

Is that a way of destigmatising the issue like industry-wide?

Joe Hastings 25:10

Yeah, I mean, yeah. So we ... it's kind of funny ... it is that part one of the one of the potential areas of development for us is looking at that more broadly.

Hattie Butterworth 25:21

Okay.

Joe Hastings 25:21

And actually, so I don't want you to think that what I'm saying is that the peer support groups are going to be extended, so that so that they continue to be this sort of, you know, this fairly finite resource and support structure for people. Actually learning from those insights and thinking in thinking as an as a, an organisation that has a lot of insight, thinking and and has the ability to actually develop services on the basis of of insights, what, what can we do to kind of propagate, promote those kinds of communities. And I think that's something that is really interesting and potentially quite exciting for us and for others in the industry as well. It's not just us who, who are recognising the potential benefit in that.

Rebecca Toal 26:05

I suppose also being kind of supported and empowered in these groups makes those people within the groups more comfortable about talking about these things, amongst other peers, not just in those groups. And I think it's really great that there's a therapist there to kind of lead them in that conversation and kind of perhaps provide them with language or the right questions or something. I was actually going to ask about the therapists and also on the helpline. In general, are the people that the therapists and whoever's helping out with the mental health support, are they musically trained or are they musically informed, or...?

Joe Hastings 26:44

Sorry, I should have started with that shouldn't I?

Rebecca Toal 26:46

I was just wondering, because from a personal point, I'd love ... I'm training as a counsellor at the moment.

Hattie Butterworth 26:46

No!

Joe Hastings 26:50

Okay.

Rebecca Toal 26:51

And I'd love to work in music. But the first thing that comes to my mind is that music is such a small world, how on earth could you work as a ... Within confidentiality, if you know everybody, and..

Joe Hastings 27:02

Yeah, I mean, that's not come up as an issue, actually in the service, so ... the service as it as it function for three years initially was, was was a kind of, you know, a collaborative ... partnership with an organisation who delivered similar services. And the service was you would call and speak to a helpline trained advisor, and then you may then... you may be able to access some therapy based on an assessment, through their network of therapists and the partner's therapists. And one of the big things that changed when we were reviewing the service in 2020 was ... which was the end of that kind of three year period, was was to look at what what people were benefiting from through the service, but also to do research and ask people what they what they wanted, and ask people who used the service, but also ask people who weren't using the service, what they would, what would they look where they would like from the service and, and there were two key findings from that. One was, they wanted to talk to a therapist immediately, they didn't want to talk to helpline advisors. There's nothing wrong with people being helpline advisors, but they didn't want that. They wanted to talk to therapists, so they wanted that conversation to be with someone who was who is appropriately accredited and trained to deliver a therapeutic conversation. So we call it you know, it's kind of a listening ear service. But actually, the majority of people who use Music Minds Matter, use that service as a standalone, and it's sufficient for them to, to go away and sort of take into practice whatever they've discussed with that with the therapist in the call. So that was one key point, and then the other the other key development was that people wanted access to therapy with therapists who had a very good understanding of the industry. So at first, I kind of was a little uncomfortable with that, because, you know, I still believe a good therapist is a good therapist, and it's probably more important, the kind of the mode of therapy that you're accessing based on your presenting issues. So I'm going into technical stuff here, but but you know, that, that, that that, that being such an overwhelming need and such an overwhelming response from people, you know, overrode my kind of, "well, no, a good therapist is a good therapist." And actually, now I see how how much of an impact and how much of a change that was and how much positive change it was.

Rebecca Toal 29:24

I think that's one of the things that I found so frustrating in the past, no matter how good a therapist they were, there were certain things that I just felt like I couldn't get my point across about how precarious the work was, or like they couldn't quite understand why I still wanted to be a musician. I feel like I've been blah-ing on about CBT a lot recently...A lot of my, yeah, kind of issues with the CBT that I've received, it's always been like, it's come down to "Okay, well, why are you stressed?" "It's because of music." And they're like, well, "then maybe you could leave the music." And it's like, "no, that's not the answer."

Joe Hastings 30:02

Yeah, that was that was I remember that being a quote in our, in a focus group was from someone saying, "I went to see ... I had had therapy, I spoke to a therapist. I told them that the irregular hours were making it hard for me to sleep and it was affecting my mental health. And they said, 'well stop well to stop working at 10 at night or whatever it is'. It's like, 'okay well that's my job like...".

Hattie Butterworth 30:26

Yeah, it's the same with the musculoskeletal stuff.

Rebecca Toal 30:30

Yeah, with the GP being like, "if you've got pain ... just stop playing."

Joe Hastings 30:34

Yeah.

Hattie Butterworth 30:35

Yeah.

Rebecca Toal 30:36

An invaluable resource to have people like BAPAM, specifically trained therapists. Yeah, for sure.

Hattie Butterworth 30:42

Within your new role, and obviously having both the music background and the counselling, mental health kind of background, how do you feel it's been like running this whole thing? An overview, like seeing an overview of it all, how has the experience been so far, from your kind of personal perspective?

Joe Hastings 31:03

Um, amazing, you know, having a board that ... of such experienced professionals from across the industry, with a with a real passion and understanding of mental health is ... Yeah, it's completely it's yeah, it's, it's, it's, I, it's early days, but it already feels very different. Because I have this, this collective of people with, with, with a, with an incredible love, I'm going to avoid saying 'hive mind', but this incredible kind of, you know, knowledge that can that can, can help shape the service, and we're set to spend well over a million pounds next year within the service. And that, you know, that is incredible. And it's and it's you know, it's testament to the to the wider charity, and it's an it's an acknowledgement of the importance of this, of this area, that, that we are committing that but also that we're, you know, that we're that we're kind of growing the service, but it's also reflective of need, because, you know, we last year, we saw an 118% increase of people using the service, and this year, we've seen somewhere around 34 -35% increase. So those numbers have gone up significantly.

Rebecca Toal 32:18

My kind of final question was going to be about, it feels like it's getting harder and harder to be a musician in this day and age. And it's it's amazing to hear about how much support there is for musicians, but what are your thoughts around what it is to be a musician and where that's going?

Joe Hastings 32:44

I mean, yes, I agree with everything you're saying, but I also think that there are a lot there are lots of good examples of people who have really, who have very healthy careers and they're doing very well. And in ... across the industry, that's that's the case, I don't think everything is bad. We are also in a really, you know, I mean, I don't know how many times over the last few years, people have used the word 'unprecedented', but we are in, we're in a different unprecedented time of need. And, you know, the the research that we did recently told us that 88% of people were struggling to manage, you know, on what ... on their income. And, you know, that's, that's a that's a really shocking situation that people are in so ... and how much of that is, is, is going to be the same in two or three years? I think is this is the tricky part to answer. But where we are right now, and where we are as a charity right now is, is this responding to the need, but also trying to kind of get some answers that will help us to shape the services in two or three years.

Rebecca Toal 33:49

Yeah. It's hopeful. It is good, because you can, yeah, you kind ... of as a, from my perspective, it's very easy for me to get caught up in like the next six months of like, finance or whatever. But actually, you're right, like looking to two or three years down the line, it has to get better. There are people that are making it work, and we can learn from them.

Hattie Butterworth 34:11

We normally end these conversations with like a little win of the week, or like a little positive thing from your week that you want to share.

Rebecca Toal 34:20

For the first time ever, I already have mine.

Hattie Butterworth 34:23

So I think you should go first.

Rebecca Toal 34:24

My ... my win of the week is that I've been climbing twice, and I've stayed relatively on top of my emails.

Hattie Butterworth 34:31

I thought you were gonna say I've stayed sober.

Rebecca Toal 34:34

No, I haven't stayed sober. How dare you!

Hattie Butterworth 34:37

You have very good on the emails.

Rebecca Toal 34:38

Yes. Thank you.

Hattie Butterworth 34:39

It's unprecedented.

Rebecca Toal 34:40

It is unprecedented.

Joe Hastings 34:42

These are unprecedented times.

Hattie Butterworth 34:44

They are unprecedented times.

Rebecca Toal 34:45

Yeah, in positive ways as well as negative.

Hattie Butterworth 34:48

Do you have an idea of positive...?

Joe Hastings 34:50

My what... so my win of the week ... so yes, something positive that I can ... that I...

Rebecca Toal 34:55

However small... or big! We've had some really big ones recently.

Joe Hastings 34:58

Oh, that's... that puts pressure on me to think of something really big.

Hattie Butterworth 35:02

No no.

Rebecca Toal 35:02

Well, mine was that I replied to some emails, so I think you'll be fine.

Joe Hastings 35:08

My win of the week is actually a little bit of a cheat because it was less it was last week.

Rebecca Toal 35:11

That's fine.

Joe Hastings 35:12

But I ... my dad's been unwell and we bought him for his birthday this carpentry course because he's... my granddad was a cabinet maker.

Hattie Butterworth 35:20

Awww.

Joe Hastings 35:21

So I did it, because he couldn't do it.

Hattie Butterworth 35:23

Awww!

Joe Hastings 35:24

And I built some ... I learned how to do dovetail joints and actually you know what... .. it reminded me of what it's like to be really focused on a piece of music and really focused on creating a piece of music or performing, which is just that the the sort of attention to detail but also being completely in something and there's something in the brain going on there. I mean, it's a long time since I've read that Oliver Sacks book but if the brain is working differently when you're in that that kind of mode and it was very similar and and just, you know, the the feeling after three days and having something that I'd made and looking at it and going...

Rebecca Toal 35:29

No way.

Hattie Butterworth 36:00

Woah.

Joe Hastings 36:00

"It's really not bad", was was...

Rebecca Toal 36:02

Yeah!

Joe Hastings 36:03

...incredibly...

Hattie Butterworth 36:03

What was it you made?

Joe Hastings 36:04

... well it's ...

Rebecca Toal 36:04

It's a violin.

Joe Hastings 36:05

No, it's a it's a recipe stand like a... It's like light oak and it's very pretty and so it's it looks it looks nice. It's looks looks like something you find in a sort of, you know, a sort of turn of the century church or something.

Rebecca Toal 36:19

Ooh lovely!

Joe Hastings 36:20

But it's very nice.

Rebecca Toal 36:20

Are you gonna keep it or gift it to someone?

Joe Hastings 36:23

Well, I think I'm gonna be selfish and keep it ...

Rebecca Toal 36:25

Yeah definitely!

Joe Hastings 36:26

...because I'm proud of it.

Hattie Butterworth 36:26

Your dad wasn't like "whatever you make is mine."

Joe Hastings 36:28

Well, I didn't think it would have been nice to gift it to him, but then ... maybe I will, I'll see how I feel.

Rebecca Toal 36:33

Maybe it could be a joint thing. You could be like, "we're both going to use it but it's going to be at my house."

Joe Hastings 36:38

And the my other small win of the week was that we managed to ... I'm a class rep for my son's class and we managed to find ... they're doing Fame as the Christmas ...

Hattie Butterworth 36:50

Oh, that's cool.

Joe Hastings 36:51

Christmas musical.

Rebecca Toal 36:52
The classic Christmas...

Joe Hastings 36:53
Yeah, they're doing Fame and we managed to source all of the 80's whatever, you know, the gear the...
what do you call them? The ...

Rebecca Toal 37:01
Leg warmers.

Joe Hastings 37:01
Leg warmers and, and glitter and ...

Rebecca Toal 37:04
That's a lot.

Joe Hastings 37:04
...We managed to sort it all for very little money, so it's not cost us...

Rebecca Toal 37:08
Again, big wins of the week.

Joe Hastings 37:09
Yeah.

Hattie Butterworth 37:09
Is this a secondary school doing Fame?

Joe Hastings 37:10
No.

Hattie Butterworth 37:11
You're joking me!

Joe Hastings 37:11
No, he's six. Yeah, yeah.

Hattie Butterworth 37:13
He's six?! They're not doing the whole musical?

Rebecca Toal 37:15
Fame?!

Joe Hastings 37:16

Well, he's ... so he's doing a track, he's got ... He's got the moves down. He's showed me last night in the lounge.

Rebecca Toal 37:22

Is he a dancer in the... back up dancer? Or is he part of a main plot?

Joe Hastings 37:26

That I don't know you actually, because you don't get much out of kids at that age. But he is ... he is on stage and he's going to be moving...

Hattie Butterworth 37:34

That's so sweet.

Rebecca Toal 37:35

That's a lot.

Hattie Butterworth 37:36

Do they not do the nativity anymore?

Rebecca Toal 37:37

That is the nativity now.

Hattie Butterworth 37:42

It's the new nativity. Oh, brilliant.

Rebecca Toal 37:46

And Hattie?

Hattie Butterworth 37:47

Oh, I knew it was coming down to me.

Rebecca Toal 37:48

Well, everybody has to do one so of course it was.

Hattie Butterworth 37:51

Mhmmmmmm.

Rebecca Toal 37:53

You can do it.

Hattie Butterworth 37:56

Come on brain. Well, I guess it's a win. I went abroad for the first time since COVID, and it was quite stre-.... I went to Amsterdam over the weekend.

Rebecca Toal 38:04

As you do.

Hattie Butterworth 38:05

As you do. And it was ... I had some new ... I had some old emotions come up, that feeling of being in a new country and like being a little bit homesick and like wooh! It's quite a horrible emotion.

Rebecca Toal 38:17

It's not nice.

Hattie Butterworth 38:18

So I had that...

Joe Hastings 38:19

And that's your win?!

Hattie Butterworth 38:20

No!

Rebecca Toal 38:21

The win was that you...

Hattie Butterworth 38:22

... I came back and I...

Rebecca Toal 38:23

You came back!

Hattie Butterworth 38:23

... had a great time! I got through those moments, the difficult moments.

Rebecca Toal 38:29

The win was that you came back to the UK.

Hattie Butterworth 38:31

My win was that I arrived back.

Rebecca Toal 38:34

You guys.

Hattie Butterworth 38:35

The one thing they have in Europe that is like ... I wish they had here, is the Lipton iced tea that's sparkling. Can't get that here.

Joe Hastings 38:43

No, that's true, you can't.

Hattie Butterworth 38:44

And that is so good.

Rebecca Toal 38:46

I've never had that.

Hattie Butterworth 38:46

You only have the still one. The sparkling one ... Anyway,

Rebecca Toal 38:52

Very good. Alright, well, thank you so much, Joe.

Hattie Butterworth 38:56

Thank you.

Rebecca Toal 38:57

It's honestly been so lovely talking to you.

Joe Hastings 38:59

Yeah likewise.

Hattie Butterworth 38:59

We can't wait to see what's gonna happen over the next year of this charity and...

Rebecca Toal 39:03

And beyond.

Hattie Butterworth 39:04

And beyond.

Rebecca Toal 39:05

Look to the future Hattie.

Hattie Butterworth 39:06

Always. Thanks very much.

Joe Hastings 39:09

Thank you.