

00:00:00:00 - 00:00:22:12

Devin Morrissey

I am a consistent work in progress. I'm consistently under construction, but it's the way that I can grow and the better for the person that I was yesterday. And that's something that I really hope that anyone that reads my blog or listens to my podcast or even watches Love on the Spectrum, they see that, oh, even though he had a lot of odds against failure at life, he still persevered.

He still is. A lot of people now like, Hey, you can do anything that you want to in life, you know, regardless of where you come from.

00:00:53:04 - 00:01:14:10

Eileen Lamb

Welcome to Adulting on the spectrum. In this podcast, we want to highlight the real voices of autistic adults, not just inspirational stories, but people like us talking about their day to day life. Basically, we want to give a voice to a variety of autistic people and I'm Eileen Lamb, an autistic author and photographer and I co-hosted this podcast with Andrew Komarow

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00:01:14:16 - 00:01:56:01

Andrew Komarow

Hey Eileen. And I'm Andrew Kamara, an autistic entrepreneur, software engineer, co-host of the podcast and a much faster runner than I am today. Our guest is Devin Morrissey. Devin is a California native, straight out of high school to receive his bachelor's degree from Whittier College and a master's degree from University of Southern California. He then launched his blog Autistic Superpower, where he talks about everything autism related from his early beginnings, learning how to communicate through music to promoting DNA for all autistic adults in the workplace and life.

00:01:56:12 - 00:02:20:13

Andrew Komarow

Devin recently launched his new podcast, Artistically Unapologetic, where he explores all topics relevant to the world of autism and speaks with fellow autistic trailblazer, Trailblazer-ers in a variety of fields, although clearly not enough because I haven't been invited to his podcast yet. Devin is supporting cast member of Netflix's three time Emmy Award winning series Love on the Spectrum.

Welcome. Thank you for joining.

00:02:23:21 - 00:02:29:06

Devin Morrissey

Thank you so much for having me. And Andrew, I do need to get that invitation out to you to join my podcast.

00:02:29:10 - 00:02:32:24

Andrew Komarow

I'm very sarcastic. Just I throw it out there.

00:02:33:10 - 00:02:34:23

Devin Morrissey

I know, but I'm going with the flow on it.

00:02:35:04 - 00:02:45:19

Andrew Komarow

Thank you. I appreciate that. I know I ask a lot for the people who appear on the podcast. So if you've listened before, have you listened to our podcast before?

00:02:46:07 - 00:02:51:10

Devin Morrissey

You know, just snippets here and there, but not the full episodes in full detail.

00:02:51:21 - 00:03:10:23

Andrew Komarow

So we like to ask each guest how they prefer to identify, and we don't necessarily mean pronouns such as she, her, he, them, we mean autistic on the spectrum, a person with autism, Asperger's, etc. or if you don't have a preference, so do you have a preference? And if so, what is it?

00:03:11:11 - 00:03:25:08

Devin Morrissey

You know, I actually don't have a preference. As shocking as it sounds, I'm the type of person that's very free spirited and very open minded. Like like seriously, someone could tell me that my pronoun is a vulture and I'll just say, Hey, all right, I guess I'm a vulture for today.

00:03:30:06 - 00:03:45:15

Andrew Komarow

So we we actually have we actually went back and we collected the data. So is it okay with you if we add a column category for Vulture instead of no preference. So. Oh, have like the one vote there or is it no preference?

00:03:46:02 - 00:03:51:09

Devin Morrissey

Honestly, it's no preference.

00:03:51:09 - 00:04:15:12

Eileen Lamb

And yeah, you'd be surprised. But the answer we get the most is actually no preference, which is crazy because there are like more than just two terminology. You know, there is person with autism, autistic on a spectrum and no preference. So yeah, by far the winning answer is no preference. So let's dive a little bit into your your journey, your life. Can you take us back in time and tell us about your diagnosis journey?

00:04:20:06 - 00:04:50:16

Devin Morrissey

Yes, my diagnosis journey started when I was three years old. I was officially diagnosed at that time. I remember very, very, very vaguely, although from what I did hear from my parents was that when I was diagnosed at the time when I was diagnosed, it was the time of the nineties which was basically seeing autism as a death sentence, you know, and the doctors were pretty brutal with my parents.

He's not going to go to school, he's not going to get a job, he's not going to live on his own. He's not going to have the basic daily living and social skills that every single human being has. And basically my parents took that as a chance. You're like, okay, you say that now, but within maybe a few years you just watch and see what happens is going to make something out of his life.

I had an inkling, though, that I was different. I would say around the time that I was maybe eight or nine years old and I was starting to miss out on other extracurricular activities. And not even to mention I had an eight all throughout elementary school, all start preschool and things just weren't starting to add up. Okay, wait a minute.

00:05:35:01 - 00:05:54:00

Devin Morrissey

Why am I the only one that's happening in this classroom? Why am I having to miss out on certain subjects or certain extracurricular activities to go to all these different therapies? And I was actually kind of getting a little bit pretty angry. I just wanted to live life like any other child, and it was very, very, very confusing.

So right about the time when I was about to start junior high, my parents were like, okay, there's been something for the past year that we want to tell you, but we feel that now is the right time. You have autism. And I'm just like, Wait, what's autism? They basically just said like, it's the type of disability where sometimes I might not get the best eye contact or may not understand, you know, the best social interactions or understand social cues.

00:06:20:20 - 00:06:27:20

Devin Morrissey

And it made sense in that moment and made so much sense. I can't even tell you how much sense it made.

00:06:27:20 - 00:07:01:11

Andrew Komarow

So thanks for sharing that and, you know, a topic where I think there's really truly no good answers, like how a parent tells, you know, the child, you know, when, how, you know, etc.. So it also just like looking back was there and I know like you're into music, which is an extracurricular activity. Right. And you had therapies which I, I don't know what they were but and I know and if your parents are listening like no, I know they did the best they could.

Like, hindsight's 2020, right? Like, my mom feels like, so bad. And I tell her, don't feel that, but that I make her feel worse to mess with her. But that's neither here nor there.

So when we got it, looking back, if in a perfect world, if something could have been done different, would you have had, you know, would you have not preferred the aid you think you think the aid was helpful? Would you have preferred to know sooner? And do you think, you know, going to, you know, more extracurriculars of a subject that you wanted, not like one you get?

00:07:43:01 - 00:08:01:08

Andrew Komarow

And I was the kid where my mom enrolled me in all of the things I didn't want to do, you know, like literally all of them, you know, short Jewish, autistic kids shouldn't be playing football. Oh, yeah. And that was like, the funniest thing I think she ever heard in her life when I told her I played football for two years.

But like, what if what, if anything, you wish, like, could have been done a little bit different? That was long winded even for me.

00:08:09:20 - 00:08:30:14

Devin Morrissey

Oh, gosh, that's a great question. You know, to be honest with you, I don't really think I would have changed anything if I were, to be honest, looking back, because I honestly believe that everything that I've gone through has really in a strange way, actually shaped me into who I am now. And it's sort of a question about ABA therapy.

I honestly started at the therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy pretty much immediately right after the time that I was diagnosed. And, you know, looking back was just like, I don't think that there was a day that I didn't have off phone therapies. Well, maybe except for one day a week. But I was during the pandemic, I was getting this binder of AP reports, occupational reports that was about this high for four months from the time that I was four years old.

00:09:01:24 - 00:09:32:17

Devin Morrissey

And looking through the reports, I got to be honest, it was pretty mind boggling to think of just

how hard I actually worked to get to where I am now, because people may look I mean, are like, is they really autistic? It doesn't really have autism. And I'm just like, okay, I can actually pull out the the official documentation and of the official diagnosis that was given to me by my doctors, like, hey, Devin Morrissey is autistic or has autism or whatever you want to call it.

But to be honest with you, I would not change anything because in a way, because I had the ADAS are sorry, in addition to having the APA, I did actually do a lot of extracurricular activities somewhat than I think I actually did. Like I ended up playing a wide variety of sports, growing up. I think like any child, what I played everything.

00:09:55:20 - 00:10:10:02

Devin Morrissey

I pretty much start going back to like I played every sport that you can imagine growing up. I swam for many years, I played soccer for many years. I played baseball for one year. I played basketball for.

00:10:10:14 - 00:10:11:05

Andrew Komarow

Football.

00:10:13:05 - 00:10:37:07

Devin Morrissey

At school, at school, during recess, at school, during recess. But it wasn't like tackle football like because we weren't allowed to be doing that. We did flag football. Well, we kind of did technically did tackle football when we got older in the yard due to people watching. So I guess I can say as well, just trying to balance all that out, which honestly wasn't easy.

00:10:37:07 - 00:11:01:15

Devin Morrissey

But I think just looking back to where I was as a young child, still trying to figure out who I was at that time, I honestly wouldn't change anything because I truly believe that what I went through as a child really, really, really enables you to grow and to become a better version of yourself that you were yesterday.

00:11:01:15 - 00:11:09:18

Eileen Lamb

You have a blog where you talk a lot about communicating through music. Can you tell us more about the role music has played in your life?

00:11:10:17 - 00:11:35:21

Devin Morrissey

Oh, gosh. Okay. So I guess just starting out on music was the first language I ever learned. I was basically told that I could basically harm or stain before I could even talk. Basically, I was

company from the moment that I was born. I have to say, as crazy as it sounds, my love for music really got started honestly, through all different genres.

I'll never forget the records that my parents used to play growing up, whether it was Nancy Face, the Police, Bob Dylan, or even the music that I was introduced to very, very, very young as a child. So all the Disney film stuff like Little Mermaid Being the Beast, a lot of The Lion King, I was introduced to that very, very, very early on, and I really gained a lot of, you know, just even learning just the basic words through that type of music, I would have to say as I got older though, that was when I really became more interested and like the pop, like all different types of genres.

00:12:16:17 - 00:12:42:11

Devin Morrissey

So whether it's pop, hip hop, R&B, alternative rock music became more important to me as I grew older, and especially when I had those very turbulent junior high and high school years. I've been very open and honest on my blog that I went through a very, very, very traumatizing teenage years and an even pre-teen years for that matter as well.

I struggled socially, I struggled figuring out, okay, how do I fit in when I'm autistic? So I basically ended up masking it for many, many, many years until I moved out of my childhood hometown of Danville, California, to move out to Los Angeles. And in a way, music has really saved my life in many ways. And I talk just a little bit about how, you know, certain songs from certain artists have really kind of been that, I guess you could say look like you're going to be able to make it through the storm.

00:13:15:15 - 00:13:42:20

Devin Morrissey

You know, just, you know, these lyrics that you listen to their whole deeper meaning as you get older. And when I listen to them now, it's like, Wow, I can't believe that I was listening to this song that was helping me through one of the most tumultuous times growing up. So I really owe it to music to really thank for even helping me not just communicate, but for help me get through a lot of the trials and tribulations that I had to endure growing up.

00:13:43:05 - 00:14:00:11

Andrew Komarow

I have something very embarrassing to admit, and that is I went through a very short period where I like Insane Clown Posse, and I would very much choose to want to believe that their lyrics do not have a deeper meaning as you get older. But I would believe that for the vast majority of music.

00:14:01:04 - 00:14:29:13

Devin Morrissey

And it's interesting too, because a lot of a lot of the music that I listen to, like as I got older, even

from just like, you know, the Christina to Backstreet, even to like Missy or, or Leonard Skynyrd or I or even Beyonce with Destiny's Child. I did not know about what a lot of those songs meant growing up so I could hear myself saying a word that I didn't know you're not supposed to say.

And then I said, A lot of my parents look at me like, Why didn't you just say so?

00:14:36:09 - 00:14:48:11

Andrew Komarow

I think that's the case with like so much. I think I mentioned you like how inappropriate, like even like movies, like Mrs. Doubtfire is as an adult. Like, you look at that now, you're like.

00:14:49:02 - 00:14:56:10

Devin Morrissey

Well, yeah. Yes. And actually fun fact. So the restaurant scene where Mrs. Doubtfire is quote unquote exposed.

00:14:56:22 - 00:14:58:15

Andrew Komarow

I only know Disney. Mrs. Doubtfire.

00:14:58:19 - 00:14:59:14

Eileen Lamb

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

00:15:00:03 - 00:15:01:17

Andrew Komarow

Whoa, oh.

00:15:02:07 - 00:15:26:03

Devin Morrissey

Oh, I know. What I was going to say. Was that so? You know, Mrs. Doubtfire, the restaurant scene when Mrs. Doubtfire is, quote unquote, exposed. That's right there. Okay. That bridge is one of the best restaurants. I kid you not. You ever go to. It is it is such good food. And there's actually like an autographed poster of the movie from Robert Williams himself.

So it's pretty amazing when you walk through there and you're just like, wow, like, you know, your hometown and one of your favorite restaurants was a part of cinematic history.

00:15:34:15 - 00:15:35:15

Eileen Lamb

Wow, That's so cool.

00:15:35:21 - 00:15:44:14

Devin Morrissey

Yeah, yeah, yeah. I will say I sometimes have to, like, double check the stalls. And again, I'm like, okay, no, Martin Hubbard in here. We're all good.

00:15:49:02 - 00:15:57:24

Andrew Komarow

You started a new podcast artistically unapologetic. What made you want to start a podcast?

00:15:59:03 - 00:16:21:19

Devin Morrissey

Oh, gosh. What did it make me want to start a podcast? If I were to be completely honest, I started my blog a few years before I started this podcast, and I had really opened up quite a bit about what I went through growing up and talking all about different topics that are related to autism. I wanted to expand myself.

00:16:21:20 - 00:16:40:05

Devin Morrissey

I kind of got to a place where I got a little bit too comfortable working on the blog. I got a little bit too comfortable of just kind of having myself the not blog zone. I'm the type of person that really wanted to just sort of kind of stretch myself even further. And so by launching this podcast that's now authentically unapologetic, it's been a lot of fun.

00:16:41:11 - 00:17:03:06

Devin Morrissey

I've had the opportunity to interview quite a few guests so far. Eileen I actually had her on my latest episode and that was a lot of fun to shoot. And what had really was inspiring about doing this podcast was that I got to hear other people's stories as well, and we got to have really meaningful conversations for we're able to sort of like compare like our own experiences growing up.

As I've gotten to learn a lot about other people's autism and other people's lives as well, because for years and years and years I thought that I was the only one that was autistic. I was the only one on the spectrum because not very many people that I knew were autistic because I messed up so well and so I thought that I was the only one.

00:17:24:12 - 00:17:48:07

Devin Morrissey

But being able to do this podcast really has been like, Oh, you're not alone in this journey of life. You know, you have so many other autistic siblings around you that know exactly what it's like, regardless of whether you agree with them on all aspects are not. And so doing this podcast is really in a way an another reintroduction to myself that sort of makes me want to do even more in the future.

00:17:50:00 - 00:18:12:16

Eileen Lamb

Nice. Yeah, I can relate to that. My Yeah, my blog has helped me a lot to connect with people, as you know, podcasts do. So we actually have a mutual friend, Dani Bowman, who was on Love on the Spectrum US And you were too. You were in the in the first episode. Can you tell us about that experience.

00:18:12:16 - 00:18:44:01

Devin Morrissey

Considering that the show won three Emmys and just had this massive reaction? I don't even know where to start. You know, just being I would have to say that to sum up my love on the spectrum, my time on the show for season one was beyond life changing. When the trailer dropped, I was actually on a work trip and I had gotten a text message, and once I sent it to my girlfriend who is not autistic, I don't know.

00:18:44:01 - 00:19:10:06

Devin Morrissey

It was like my phone just started blowing up out of nowhere and it was really insane. People were just like, Wait, you're on the trailer? So I literally rushed to my phone and took a look and there I was on the trailer and I'm just like, How? When did just like just in complete shock. And then literally just leading up to the premiere of the show, it was kind of the surreal moment and just being able to do that.

I was actually speaking at an all autistic high school graduation ceremony in Phoenix, Arizona, literally the day that the show premiered. And kids were coming up to me being like, I swear you looked familiar. That's why because I saw you on the trailer and I'm just like, Oh, my gosh. Like, I'm only on for one episode. You guys need to chill.

00:19:32:22 - 00:19:51:16

Devin Morrissey

But, you know, just being able to shoot with one of my best friends who was on the show looking for love as a main cast member, you know, it has been kind of a surreal experience because I had never really even been on reality TV before, let alone either with Netflix. This was my very first time even doing this.

So it was all such a learning experience. But I really gained such not just friends, but kind of a little tight knit family, as was all of us cast members, whether were on the main cast or whether on the supporting cast. We all keep in touch, not just in the US but in Australia as well. And so that's sort of been probably the best thing that I've gained, not to mention that I've really been able to rediscover my roots from the show as well of realizing that, you know, I am autistic, but I too was looking for love at the time outside of the show and they actually ended up finding that was my beautiful girlfriend for the past. I believe I'm saying this two and a half years now. Time is really going by when you're that much in love. But it's been amazing. You know, the whole

experience has been amazing and it just makes it that much more appreciative of a lifetime itself.

00:20:50:01 - 00:21:02:16

Andrew Komarow

I think you kind of answered the next question, so which case, I'll make it back up. But like, what were some of you mentioned some of the positives that came out of the show. Were there any negatives?

00:21:03:06 - 00:21:24:21

Devin Morrissey

There were actually not any negatives. There actually were not any negatives at all in the slightest. You know, this whole experience was just crazy in itself, especially when we had shot this coming right out of COVID. You know, we were still having to take COVID tests to make sure that we were negative. But all in all, there were no negatives at all.

Like the experience was absolutely incredible. And to be able to work with this incredible cast and crew was so much fun. And then to top that off, like the US version that I was on, I mean, we won like three Emmys. I mean, that really shows a lot about how, you know, autism is now becoming more prevalent in today's society and in today's mainstream culture.

00:21:46:04 - 00:21:53:02

Devin Morrissey

And to be a part of that, even if it's just for an episode, it's just such an honor all the way around.

00:21:53:02 - 00:22:05:11

Eileen Lamb

That's really awesome. Yeah, the show of the show is so great. I was telling you before we started recording, like, I didn't I didn't want to watch it because I feel like every time I see somebody.

00:22:05:11 - 00:22:20:22

Andrew Komarow

Just do it because I told you to. That was probably the me I get it. And just so I know nobody actually watches the videos, but we do have nicely edited videos. Even I noticed Eileen's eyeroll in that moment it was that big.

00:22:21:01 - 00:22:32:10

Devin Morrissey

So anyway well seasons to kind of be coming out very soon so you know you definitely got to watch it before the next season pops up.

00:22:32:10 - 00:22:36:04

Eileen Lamb

So you said you're dating someone who's not autistic.

00:22:36:16 - 00:23:04:08

Devin Morrissey

Yes. Yes. So I actually have a girlfriend for the past two and a half years. So so kind of in a way, we want to when I to episode one of love on US and Danny asks me, how is your dating life? And I said his exact words, I got myself a fourth date coming up, same girl. So that is actually my girlfriend that I was seeing the fourth day on.

And we had met during the pandemic. But because COVID was just kind of crazy in California, because we were complete our master's programs, we didn't actually end up going on our first date until April. And then we started to get to know each other more in May and then June and July, our relationship just really took off. And in a way, what has been so special is that, you know, she had no idea that I was autistic.

And I'll be honest, my girlfriend, whose name is Andrea, I was very, very, very scared to tell her that I was autistic because this was the first real relationship that I ever had. And I did it. Why my autism to come across as a partner, anything like that. But in a way, though, I didn't have to tell her because she found out through my blog, Autistic Superpower.

00:23:56:12 - 00:24:19:23

Devin Morrissey

So I was just like, okay, the block beat me to the punch. I got to, you know, get better at this. But no, but she's been incredibly supportive. She's been super supportive of my career being an autism advocate, a blogger and a public speaker. And she's been super supportive every step of the way. You know, she always asks, you know, sort of like certain autism traits in here.

And I'm just completely open and honest about it with her as I am with everybody else. Because if we don't talk about these traits, who else? Well, you know, and I am really, really excited to see where the future takes my girlfriend. And I'm just super even excited to see that thinking about it.

00:24:37:05 - 00:24:39:03

Eileen Lamb

That's great. I'm excited for you.

00:24:39:24 - 00:24:40:18

Devin Morrissey

Thank you.

00:24:44:04 - 00:24:59:04

Andrew Komarow

Employment is also a big topic for you on your blog and your podcast. I have a lot of opinions about this, but can you share some of yours on something we can do better as a community in this space?

00:25:00:15 - 00:25:03:10

Devin Morrissey

A community in this space in terms of.

00:25:04:20 - 00:25:24:21

Andrew Komarow

How can we make employment better for autistic people? I feel like it's one of those things where we all talk about it, but we never do it a bit like New Year's resolutions. But what can you share about that?

00:25:25:14 - 00:25:50:22

Devin Morrissey

Yes, absolutely. So I guess in terms of employment, it is super, super, super important that, you know, companies and particularly even people that are hiring, they notice that autistic people are actually capable of working in an environment as long as they have the right support and accommodations. Now, it doesn't mean that every single person on the spectrum needs accommodations.

00:25:51:05 - 00:26:17:22

Devin Morrissey

Some keep. Some autistic people may need accommodations. Some people on the spectrum, like myself, don't barely need any accommodations, are making no accommodations at all. But it depends on the person, because the reality is not every single person on the spectrum, no one's autism is the same. It's all different. You know? And I think that really keeping an open mind that when you're hiring someone on the spectrum is super key and super important.

00:26:18:12 - 00:26:41:22

Devin Morrissey

And I think also to just like highlighting the gaps instead of seeing communication as a weakness in the job that I'm currently working in right now, people have seen me as incredibly detail oriented and super, super, super organized. Well, we have a point company meetings. I'm actually the one that's literally typing down notes at literally as fast as I can snap my fingers.

00:26:41:22 - 00:27:04:05

Devin Morrissey

But really knowing that you're knowing your strengths and what you can bring to the table is super important for job employers to really get a better understanding of that. Because, you know, obviously right now it is National Disability Employment Awareness Month and the reality is the statistics and people with disabilities, particularly in getting hired, are still very significantly low.

00:27:04:21 - 00:27:16:13

Devin Morrissey

But I hope that I'm the living proof that anyone that's working for somebody that part time is the living proof that we can make those numbers up if only society gets us that chance.

00:27:17:12 - 00:27:47:03

Andrew Komarow

And I think one of the one of the interesting things that you said is how you don't have any accommodations. And so I bet you you do not any formal accommodations, Right? I mean, there's the term again, there's limited disclosure. Like you said, everything with autism is different. Almost everyone has had a hangover, especially I mean, I lean, right, a migraine from a hangover that morning and, you know, a headache and like, light bothers their eyes.

00:27:47:03 - 00:28:26:04

Andrew Komarow

Right. So I don't like light. You know, it's easy to say the light gives me a headache. Like that's something people can understand. That's that's an accommodation. So but like saying you're autistic, that could mean nothing. They could relate it to whoever they know or Rainman or something. So, you know, I just want to say that like, you know, and as you know, again, for employer of, you know, a company where the vast majority of everyone is autistic, it's like, well, yeah, if somebody once needs something to do their job better, why wouldn't an employer want to give them that, Like when you phrased it that way.

But when you say accommodation and I you're not saying the wrong term, it's technically the correct term. You know, it sounds scary, right? But it's like, no, you're just giving them something they need so they can make you more money. That doesn't cost you anything. Just do it.

00:28:45:14 - 00:29:08:18

Devin Morrissey

And that's the thing, too. It's like everyone is so fixated on making money these days when it should be taking care of the employees, particularly those that do have disabilities that may not always understand certain things. So really, I think that important, you know, accommodations or even modifications to make it a safe and enjoyable working environment.

00:29:09:00 - 00:29:25:22

Andrew Komarow

But that really it's like either companies that are more inclusive are more profitable. So even if in theory they only care about profits, they should care more about the employees. And that makes sense.

00:29:25:22 - 00:29:54:00

Eileen Lamb

I'm going to ask you the last question and then we'll do quick final question. But okay, here is a question. So your blog name implies that autism is a superpower, but for many people, autism is not a superpower. Like for my son Charlie, for instance, it's definitely quite the opposite. So can you tell us a bit more about why you chose that name for your blog?

00:29:54:24 - 00:30:19:02

Devin Morrissey

Absolutely. The reason why that I chose the name Autistic Superpower for my blog is primarily as a way to represent myself. I knew that when I started this blog, after years and years and years of journaling that my experience growing up on the spectrum as my own, it doesn't make anybody else's experience, right or wrong, or more right or even more wrong.

It's just my own experience and something that I really, really, really wanted to portray is that, you know, I did have to go through a lot growing up. I did have to go through a lot of things that other people didn't. I went to the public school system and I endured a lot going out because I mass so much and I lost sight of myself.

00:30:39:00 - 00:30:59:00

Devin Morrissey

I was bullied, antagonized, harassed, the point where I attempted suicide on my life twice. I ended up in the hospital for mental health problems twice. And yet I'm still here. I moved out on my own when I was 18 years old to Los Angeles, one of the biggest cities in the world from a small town in Northern California.

And I was able to literally go straight into college, get my bachelor's degree, then go straight to USC and get my master's. In a way, I really, really, really talk a lot about sort of overcoming life's obstacles and of how I overcame the obstacles that were thrown out my way and how I became a much stronger person as a result of that.

00:31:22:01 - 00:31:44:18

Devin Morrissey

And as I said earlier, and I'll say it again, no one's autism is the same. You know, we are all completely different. And as you say, sometimes it's much more different. It's sometimes autism is much more severe than some. And that's okay. That's the way that life works. But the reason why that I chose that name is particularly as a way to represent myself.

00:31:45:15 - 00:32:08:21

Devin Morrissey

I'm a I'm a consistent work in progress. I'm consistently under construction, but it's the way that I can grow and be better for the person that I was yesterday. And that's something that I really hope that anyone that reads my blog or listens to my podcast or even watches me all over the spectrum, they see that, oh, even though he had a lot of odds that were against him, probably, or at least he still persevered.

He still is letting people know like, Hey, you can do anything that you want to in life, you know, regardless of where you come from. It's as long as you have that mindset, you know, but just also keeping an open mind to, you know, not everyone gets the same opportunities as you. So being able to do it for those occasions.

00:32:27:12 - 00:32:52:21

Eileen Lamb

I love that. Yeah. And it's exactly right. I mean, we're all different and for some people it's a superpower, and for other people it's not. And you know what I only take issue is that people saying autism is a superpower. If they say that it's the truth for everybody on the spectrum. But you're like so good about, you know, recognizing that we're all different. So.

00:32:54:01 - 00:32:54:09

Devin Morrissey

Yeah.

00:32:54:17 - 00:32:55:12

Eileen Lamb

I respect that.

00:32:55:23 - 00:33:18:12

Devin Morrissey

Yeah. And I think that it's important to also keep in mind that everybody's story is different. Like, I can't lie. I know that I can't, you know, compare my life story to you, either you, Andrew, or you guys can compare your story to mine. You know, we all come from different backgrounds, but being able to be open and honest about it and talking about it on a really large platform, it's huge.

00:33:18:19 - 00:33:41:18

Devin Morrissey

And after years of journaling and keeping it all to myself, I was tired of holding it to myself. Then I wanted to be able to talk more about it and be like, Hey, you know, you think that autistic people have it easy all the time. That's where you're wrong. And really being able to open up in ways that honestly, I would have never, ever, ever even imagined in the slightest.

00:33:41:18 - 00:34:03:08

Devin Morrissey

And so, you know, yeah, autism is a superpower for me, but I'm very proud of that the other day. And sometimes you know, I may slip up on social communications or sometimes I slip on slip about eye contact, or maybe I see something the wrong way, and that's okay. You know, that's the beauty of human life. Then it's not like we're all human at the end of the day, you know?

And I think that it's the true statement that we spoke about. I linked a few weeks ago. If you've met one person with autism, the reality is you've only met one person with autism and one.

00:34:18:05 - 00:34:25:02

Eileen Lamb

I'm going to ask you some quickfire question and then you'll be able to tell people where they can find you on social media. Are you ready?

00:34:25:13 - 00:34:28:02

Devin Morrissey

All right. Bring on the rapid fire questions.

00:34:29:18 - 00:34:32:21

Eileen Lamb

So what's your favorite sea animal?

00:34:33:15 - 00:34:58:02

Devin Morrissey

Oh, gosh. I would have to say it's either the dolphin or the jellyfish. I don't know why. I just like watching jellyfish. Just, like, swim around with like the little tentacles is very calming. It's actually very serene to, like, watch stuff, just swim around and just mind their own business as long as you don't get too close to them to the point where you get stuck.

00:34:58:21 - 00:35:01:23

Eileen Lamb

Who's your favorite autism trailblazer.

00:35:02:19 - 00:35:31:13

Devin Morrissey

Oh, my God. Again, that is such a hard one. You know, that's like, I would honestly have to say if we're talking about, oh, gosh, I, I would honestly have to go with perhaps, let's say, Susan Boyle. I remember watching her audition on Britain's Got Talent and just being like, you know what? She may have come across as socially awkward or people may have flocked to her, but she silenced all the haters the minute she opened her mouth the same.

00:35:31:20 - 00:36:00:03

Devin Morrissey

And then when she revealed her autism diagnosis years later, I was just like, wow, you know? And then I think in a close, close second, it would actually have to be Anthony Hopkins. I've active for many, many, many years and have always admired Anthony Hopkins, and he's an incredible actor, said another. He was actually autistic And want to ask, I'm just like, wow, you know, it's really going to show that, you know, there is a place for autistic people and the entertainment industry.

You know, we just have to break down those doors. But hey, is a challenge that I am definitely not afraid of taking on.

00:36:07:10 - 00:36:10:15

Eileen Lamb

Favorite actor or actress. Not sure if you just answered.

00:36:11:07 - 00:36:45:07

Devin Morrissey

That is such a very, very, very tough one. I guess, in terms of just I would honestly have to say right now, in terms of movies right now at this very minute or even just growing up, I absolutely. Okay. Hold on a second. I need a minute to think about this because this is a shortcut. Well, it's difficult, you know, because it's like, oh, my gosh.

00:36:45:07 - 00:36:46:21

Andrew Komarow

We could ask you an easier question.

00:36:47:15 - 00:37:14:19

Devin Morrissey

Though. I actually like the tough questions. See, this is good because this is like, you know, do in my mind. I you know what? Right now, since, you know, I literally just watched this movie a few weeks ago, I would have to say right now it is Benedict Cumberbatch because I watched Doctor Strange a few weeks ago and I still need to watch the multiverse sequel.

00:37:14:19 - 00:37:33:21

Devin Morrissey

So Marvel fans, please don't come after me with Thor's Hammer because I just also watched the third installment of the Spider-Man franchise and he was in it. And so it's really cool that he was able to do all like the oral time openings. I'm just like, Okay, that would actually be kind of fun if I could do that in real life.

00:37:33:21 - 00:37:40:13

Devin Morrissey

But obviously we know that a lot of CGI is much needed involved with that.

00:37:40:13 - 00:37:42:07

Andrew Komarow

I just like saying his name.

00:37:43:19 - 00:37:45:10

Devin Morrissey

And it was like a tongue twister, too. It's like.

00:37:45:10 - 00:37:51:03

Andrew Komarow

Benedict. It's like.

00:37:51:03 - 00:37:57:21

Eileen Lamb

Okay, very tough question for you and NSYNC or Backstreet Boys.

00:37:59:13 - 00:38:31:14

Devin Morrissey

Considering that their music literally was this, considering that they're both of them. Music's Destiny's Child, Christina Aguilera and Britney Spears were the soundtrack of my life growing up. Now that's even a bigger hurdle for me. But I will say, I think just by maybe just a slight, slight, slight margin, it's the Backstreet Boys, because I always said that I would want it to be the six Backstreet Boys, but that never happened.

00:38:32:18 - 00:38:38:16

Devin Morrissey

The high, high, high standards that my seven eight year old self set for me at that young age.

00:38:41:10 - 00:38:47:22

Eileen Lamb

Another question, Living in L.A., In-N-Out Burgers or Shake Shack.

00:38:48:10 - 00:38:52:17

Devin Morrissey

Oh, In-N-Out Burgers down. I mean, you know, I.

00:38:53:09 - 00:38:56:02

Andrew Komarow

Grew up here in L.A. If you answer the question I.

00:38:56:10 - 00:39:16:19

Devin Morrissey

Know I grew up eating in and I grew up in and out for years and years and years. So, I mean, it's like, how could you not go in and out like a real California man is going to choose his. And now any day, any day of the week, any day of the month, any day of the year.

00:39:16:19 - 00:39:27:09

Eileen Lamb

I love In-N-Out. We have them in Texas now, in Austin. So good. Yes, we do. Okay. And so where can people find you on social media?

00:39:28:01 - 00:39:59:14

Devin Morrissey

Okay, so my social media, I have my Instagram. I just **Devin Morrissey** my blog is on WW w dot autistic superpower dot com and my brand new podcast called Autistic unapologetic whatever. Marci you can find that on Apple Podcasts. You can find that on Spotify. Or if you want to see the full, you know, me talking to someone in actual picture form, you can find all the episodes on YouTube.

00:40:00:08 - 00:40:12:11

Eileen Lamv

Thank you for joining us. Devin That was that was great. I enjoyed speaking with you and I can tell Andrew that to speaking for you. And you see, speaking of our other autistic people.

00:40:13:02 - 00:40:13:22

Devin Morrissey

It's an absolute.

00:40:13:22 - 00:40:21:19

Andrew Komarow

Thing for other autistic people. You can only speak for yourself. I know I did enjoy speaking to you, even if you don't know who the Spencer Morrissey are or not really.

00:40:21:19 - 00:40:30:11

Devin Morrissey

But it was an absolute pleasure to be on top of the spectrum with you both. Thank you so much.