

## Episode Number 17: Fundraising Marathons

*Podcast Transcript*

*Life with Alcohol and Drugs*

Host: Clare Morrison

Guest Speaker: David Wandrum

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### **Introduction:**

Welcome back to another episode of Life with Alcohol and Drugs, from the charity Scottish Families.

### *Interview Begins*

#### **Clare:**

My name is Clare Morrison, I am the Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs Community Fundraiser. I have been with the team for just over a year now and I liaise with our supporters, I help them and cheer them along the way.

#### **David:**

I'm David Wandrum. I am married to Lynne who works for SFAD. Just recently, at the end of last year, I was lucky enough (if that's the correct phrase), but I was lucky enough to be given the chance to run a marathon for you guys as part of the charity fundraising, and here we are now for a wee catch up.

#### **Clare:**

I know you say a wee fundraising event but David, you ran the Loch Ness marathon in October, and you raised an incredible amount. It was £1,156, which is just absolutely amazing. How did you feel raising that amount of money?

#### **David:**

Do you know? I was delighted. I don't know if it was me personally, putting myself under pressure, but I was conscious that there wasn't a figure that I was working towards, it was just the more the merrier. I don't know, certainly Lynn, my wife, she gave me...there was supposed to be two of us running the marathon in the first instance. One of my best friends, John, he had to pull out due to injury. The way the charity page works, you could see the money coming in for each person. Me personally, if I can be brutally honest, it was quite a lot of pressure. I felt, just for myself, absolutely from myself; nothing from you guys at all, Lynn and everyone from your end of things were the opposite, but I've done these things before, put myself under a huge amount of pressure to try and get more for you guys. It's just the best kind of money for you guys to get as it's completely no strings, it's just to be done with as the company sees fit. But yes, I was definitely panicking. I put myself under far too much pressure.

#### **Clare:**

You've mentioned before that, obviously, Lynn is your wife and she works for Scottish Families. Is that how you got involved with our charity?

**David:**

Yes, directly. There's no denying that. Again, for myself, I'm a serving police officer, so I've spoken to a lot of families who make use of your services, had I known about them during my time, when I say the word 'had' there, I'm no longer in that role in the police. I've got a different type of role now. So, it's something that, had I been aware of, that I would have had no hesitation in referring people because we dealt with a lot of families who were picking up the pieces of whatever has happened to them at various stages in their lives. It's certainly something that would have been perfect for me to be able to hand out a contact number for. I kind of missed that boat, but certainly from speaking to Lynn, I've been aware of the work you guys do. I'm totally behind it. I totally support it, definitely.

**Clare:**

You'll have seen the difference that Lynn has on people, the difference it's made?

**David:**

Yes. Definitely. It's knowing the support is out there, it really does make a huge difference. It was nice for me to be able to help with something, to kind of follow that and support it from my side of things.

**Clare:**

In terms of the actual marathon, I know you are kind of very fit and like to do different challenges, how do you actually prepare for these events?

**David:**

You know, I should mention my pal, John. John and I have been running together for years now. He's my 'running husband' - that's how my wife describes him to me! We've been training together for years, and we've done marathons. We've done all sorts of distances, longer races before, so we're quite fortunate that we are both quite used to it. It may sound trite or kind of pithy, but there's no... you just go out and run. There are loads of different things, but it's just small steps and you just keep going. It is difficult to fit it in with time, work and kids, and sometimes you just can't be bothered. I'm not going to lie to you, as the marathon approaches, you're looking at doing a 3 or a 4-hour run, maybe at the weekends, and sometimes there aren't enough hours in the day. But if it's something you've committed to, you just need to timetable it in and make it work.

**Clare:**

That's true, and it gives you a wee bit of focus.

**David:**

Yes.

**Clare:**

You know the end is coming and you are committed, as you say, it's coming up. Do you feel that you have a timeline where you're preparing for a marathon?

**David:**

You should do. This might sound a bit silly; I'm quite, I hesitate to use the word lazy, but I'm not very organized. Disciplined is maybe a better word; I'm not very disciplined when it comes to my training, but you absolutely should do, and there are loads of training plans out there, but, yes, I'm not very good in that regard. I've got to be honest; I lack discipline. I still do what I know I need to do, and that comes from having done it before and having done longer ones before. I've got an idea of how much I need to do in my head, so I've got an idea of what I need to do.

**Clare:**

We spoke about a kind of timeline in a sense, but when it comes to the actual week of the event, do you have to prepare your foods and such, or is it, again, something that you know what to do, you know what you have to eat to be prepared for it?

**David:**

Yes, yeah. All that stuff, you have to get your diet prepared, your clothing in terms of what you're wearing and making sure you're up to speed with that, and also things that you're used to doing and that you're comfortable with. Again, I'm quite fortunate that I'm used to doing them, so I've got an idea of what I do need, but there's a lot of work: you have to make sure that you basically have eaten enough because I've had it before when I've literally run out of petrol, you know? And it is as literal as that; you just can't go any further, there's nothing left. So, you just have to make sure that you're organized. And that is down to what you are drinking, how much you are eating, what you're carrying with you and various drop-off points along the route as well.

My friend John and I, who I run with in 50-mile races, we would literally drive out the night before and we would plant food and water at the side of the...we would hide it effectively because we used to run in the middle of nowhere when we were doing trail races, so that you knew where you would get to. It sounds ridiculous but that's what you'd have to do to get through it.

**Clare:**

That does take some preparing for. And in terms of actually on the day of the marathon, do you ever have a mental battle or is it something that you know you've committed to and you need to see through?

**David:**

The worst bit for me is always the start. You get this, I personally do, which is just like, ah, I'm not ready for this, I've not trained enough for this to be as comfortable as I'd like. Then, as ridiculous as it sounds, you start to look at other folk and think, they look faster than me, their trainers are shinier than mine! It's as ridiculous as that! But before the gun goes at the start, that's what I find the most anxious part. But literally, once it goes, once you start running, you kind of settle down and you find you just switch into your training regime, that sort of thing, and you just start going from there. But yes, at the start, that's never good. There's a lot of nerves at the start.

**Clare:**

I've previously said to you, David, I'm not someone who is a runner. Is there any advice you could offer to someone who is just starting off, in the sense of working your way up?

**David:**

Do you know, anyone can do it, I know you'll laugh away and say I'm talking nonsense, but anyone can. Just take it nice and slow. If you are getting out, just take it nice and slow, stay comfortable. You should be able to chat comfortably the whole way around. Nobody is Mo Farah, unless you are some sort of super athlete. Stay nice and comfy. Take it easy. If you go out and try something and it's horrible, you're not going to do it again, so it's small steps, small steps. It is all manageable.

I'm no superman and I've got myself to running marathons and further comfortably, and I'm not anything special. So it is very, very doable. But it's hard work as well at the same time - I'm not going to lie to you!

**Clare:**

It definitely sounds, from some of the challenges I've heard that you have done, that you are maybe quite a mini-superman?

**David:**

As you mentioned there, I'll need to catch up with you because I'm looking at doing another triathlon, which I'm looking to do for charity, for you guys. That's in five- or six-weeks' time. I can't remember the actual date. Again, I've not been very good for getting organized at all, with getting sponsors and getting it out there and promoted, but certainly, it's something I'm doing. I haven't learned lesson from the first time; I've come back for more.

**Clare:**

We'll get you there. That actually moves us on nicely, David, in terms of the fundraising side of it.

**David:**

It's just a continued awareness of what you do. It's very hard when you are fundraising. There are so many worthwhile charities out there, there really are. And everybody has a personal favourite or one that touches their heart. I've been in a position where I've worked for charities before I joined the police, and I've worked with and been involved with them. There are loads, so, so many, and it's just a matter of, for me, which one is the most relevant at this time. I don't know if that answers your question properly? It's the one that I have the most links with and I'm the closest to.

Touching back on my job, I've just changed job within the police and I'm now a campus officer, so I'm working with children and their families again, and it's going to be very pertinent in that role, kind of working with the support that you guys offer. It all kind of ties in with each other. I'm getting stuck into you guys at the moment as I continue to do that charity stuff.

**Clare:**

Is there any advice that you would offer anyone who is considering raising money for Scottish Families? Did you feel that we supported you, and what were the benefits from running for us?

**David:**

I was very well supported from yourselves, and this is where I perhaps fall down flat: social media. It's so massively overtaken what I would take to be the traditional kind of going round folks' doors with a

sponsor form. I've been doing sponsored events for years now. I tend to one a year-ish, and that's massively changed. That's something I'm particularly poor at, I'm not the biggest fan of social media, so it's something I'm conscious that I will fall short on. But that's massive, it has well and truly taken over cold calling. Definitely - get on board with that. That's all I can say.

**Clare:**

What would you say makes a marathon interesting? Why a marathon and not a 10k?

**David:**

Ooh, that's a question - you might not want to go there! I'll be honest with you, I might put that to vanity and pride, that's ridiculous, isn't it? I'm 45 years old and I'm still scrounging about for that. I have moved up through the distances as I've continued running. It was always just looking for an extra wee push and that extra distance. Aye, that's not a really nice thing to admit, but it is; it's a wee bit of pride there that you've done that kind of event. I've kind of stuck with that now, and because I've done a few of them, that's my kind of go-to distance if you will. I wouldn't think 10k or a half marathon is a big enough thing for me to do a sponsored event because I would like to do something quite significant and quite challenging, for me.

**Clare:**

If you think about it, it's like you say, it's something you've done before, so I don't want to say it's not a challenge, because obviously, it still is a challenge on the day.

**David:**

Absolutely.

**Clare:**

It's essentially something you've done a few times, so you do want to be challenging yourself and it's more of a reason for people to donate and to sponsor you.

**David:**

Yes, definitely. Not that I want to decry anyone else who is doing anything, you know, it's just about finding your thing yourself. At the moment, it's the bigger the better until I injure myself or something ridiculous like that!

**Clare:**

Why not? On the day, you feel that the support from the crowd is really cheering you on?

**David:**

Absolutely. I've done loads of different types of races, I've done races in cities where there's a crowd, like three or four deep the entire route, and that's amazing and it really does pick you up. Sometimes at the sides, they're giving out sweets and stuff or just oranges, and sometime people are gathering sprinkler systems and stuff to keep you cool as well. The flip side of that coin is that I've done races where you're in the middle of absolutely nowhere and you don't see anybody for 2, 3, 4 hours at a time,

and they can also be really good. It's a totally different thing. But on the day, the crowd is amazing to help you round the bigger races, there's no denying that. You do get a buzz doing that.

**Clare:**

I just wanted to ask; we've previously said that you did run the Loch Ness Marathon. How did you find that marathon in comparison to some of the others?

**David:**

That was fine. For me, I didn't have a great deal of notice to do it, so it wasn't overly...no, I was quite comfortable. The course is absolutely stunning. It's a lovely bit of the world. There are some monster hills to run up, I'm not going to lie to you, the weather on the day was also tremendous, so it was really, really nice. I really enjoyed it - mostly at the finish line - don't get me wrong! That's always a good feeling. It was really nice. I really enjoyed it.

**Clare:**

That's great. It has been described as being one of the nicest routes to run.

**David:**

Yes. As I mentioned, I've done a lot of trail running. I've done city marathons as well, but the Loch Ness was lovely, it really was. I'd thoroughly recommend it.

**Clare:**

Thank you. And again, thank you for thinking of us and supporting us.

If you are someone who is considering taking part in a running challenge for Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs, please go onto our website, and under the fundraising tab, there's a section that has fundraising events, and that lists all of the events that we are affiliated with.

Also, you could email myself, on [clarem@sfad.org.uk](mailto:clarem@sfad.org.uk), and I'd be happy to discuss any events that you are particularly interested in, or the distance that you like to run. As I've mentioned, Scottish Families are affiliated with a variety of different running events coming up over the next few months. I'm just going to list a few for you now.

We have discounted places at the Loch Ness Marathon in Inverness on Sunday 2nd October, which has been voted by Runner's World as one of the top 3 running events, and as David said earlier on, it is just absolutely spectacular views. We currently have 6 people running for us in this marathon, which is quite exciting to have a wee SFAD team there.

Moving on to our next event, we have three places on the virtual London Marathon. That takes place on Sunday 2nd October as well. And the benefit to this marathon is that you have 24 hours to complete this, meaning you can walk, jog or run, and you have the option to split the marathon over several intervals. Or if you are someone who is very fit and wants to take on the full marathon challenge, you can do it in one go. What happens is you download the official London Marathon app, and that will track you. After completing this marathon, you will receive an official London Marathon finishing t-shirt and also a London Marathon medal.

If a marathon is something that you think you need more time to train for, we also have places in the men's 10k and the women's 10k in Edinburgh. This takes place on Sunday 23rd October.

Following on from this, we've also started looking at events taking place in 2023. The first event that we are affiliated with is the Supernova 5k run. This takes place in Falkirk on Friday 17th and Saturday 18th March, and this takes place at night. This event is a great way to involve all of the family, and there's also an opportunity to explore the Kelpies lit up at night. This event is more about having fun with each other. There is no time limit and there are no age restrictions, so it's a great way to get the kids involved.

The final running event that I'll mention is the Edinburgh Marathon Festival that takes place between the 27th and 28th May 2023. There's a variety of distances that you're able to run over the two days. If you are interested in taking part in another running challenge or event, please contact Scottish Families or email myself, as we are always open to looking into different events.

I have mentioned that Scottish Families are affiliated with many running events, and with that, it does allow us to offer a free or discounted place into these. We do ask that you commit to raising a set fundraising target amount. I will be supporting you to reach this target, and we will also be able to send you our new fundraising pack which, again, has some tips about how you can go about reaching your target. We have Scottish Families branded t-shirts and running vests, which is something that you can wear on the day of your event.

If you do have any questions regarding any fundraising opportunities or particularly, any running events that I've mentioned, please contact myself. My email is [clarem@sfad.org.uk](mailto:clarem@sfad.org.uk). Thanks very much for taking the time to listen to this and best of luck with taking on a running event for Scottish Families.

*Interview Ends*

**Exit:**

Thank you for listening, if you're worried about somebody else's alcohol or drug use you can contact Scottish Families on 08080 10 10 11 or by email at [helpline@sfad.org.uk](mailto:helpline@sfad.org.uk). We also have webchat and further information on our website [www.sfad.org.uk](http://www.sfad.org.uk).