

RRP Episode 101 – Building a Life After Prison: Austin’s Path Through Recovery and Service

Presenters: Julie and Peter **Guest:** Austin Cole **Length:** 1 hour, 28 minutes **Release Date:** 2/13

Summary

In this episode of the *Real Recovery Podcast*, Julie and Peter sit down with Austin Cole for a deeply reflective conversation about incarceration, recovery, identity, and growth. Austin shares how his time in prison became a period of education and self-examination rather than an endpoint, and how mentorship, community, and recovery principles helped shape his reentry. Together, they explore how recovery evolves over time, the importance of meeting emotional needs in healthy ways, and what it truly means to build a meaningful life after prison.

Key Points (with Time Codes)

- **[00:01:27 – 00:03:30]** Austin meets Julie and Peter at the Oregon Recovery Walk and introduces himself, sharing his background, age, and early context for his story.
- **[00:01:57 – 00:02:26]** Austin talks about meeting Mike Covey while incarcerated at the Oregon State Penitentiary and how that relationship helped shape hope and direction for life after release.
- **[00:24:07 – 00:25:00]** Discussion about mentorship and friendship, including the role trusted relationships played during reentry and early recovery.
- **[00:25:49 – 00:26:09]** Austin reflects on the length of his incarceration and the circumstances surrounding his release, including health considerations and opportunities for education while incarcerated.
- **[00:28:10 – 00:28:49]** Conversation about changing values, developing self-love, and how recovery evolves as core beliefs shift over time.
- **[00:29:32 – 00:30:04]** Austin discusses meetings, recovery environments, and balancing personal recovery while working within recovery spaces.
- **[01:03:52 – 01:06:00]** Reflections on recovery philosophies, emotional needs, transcendence, and how wisdom develops through sustained self-work.

- **[01:06:16 – 01:07:39]** Exploration of unmet emotional needs, conflict, communication, and learning to de-escalate and respond with compassion in recovery and community settings.
 - **[01:27:18 – 01:28:29]** Closing reflections on responsibility, service, and the impact of recovery work, including the idea that changing even one life has meaning.
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Quote

“I’m doing this for myself and I’m doing this because I love myself.” — *Austin Cole*

Links

- **Austin’s Book – *Chains to Change*** <https://www.amazon.com/Chains-Change-Addiction-Incarceration-Becoming/dp/B0G3668Z2Q>
 - **Cleanse Wellness Company:** <https://cleansewellnessco.org/>
 - **Listen to the Real Recovery Podcast:** <https://mdcr1.com/listen>
 - **Podcast Blog:** <https://mdcr1.com/blog>
 - **Real Recovery Podcast Website:** <https://www.realrecoverypodcast.com/>
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Conclusion

Austin’s story illustrates that recovery is an ongoing process of growth, reflection, and accountability. His journey highlights the power of mentorship, the importance of community, and the work required to meet emotional needs in healthy ways while building a life after incarceration. This episode offers insight and hope for anyone navigating recovery, reentry, or personal transformation.

Hashtags & Mentions

#RealRecoveryPodcast #RecoveryJourney #LifeAfterPrison #AddictionRecovery #Reentry #Healing #CommunitySupport #SecondChances