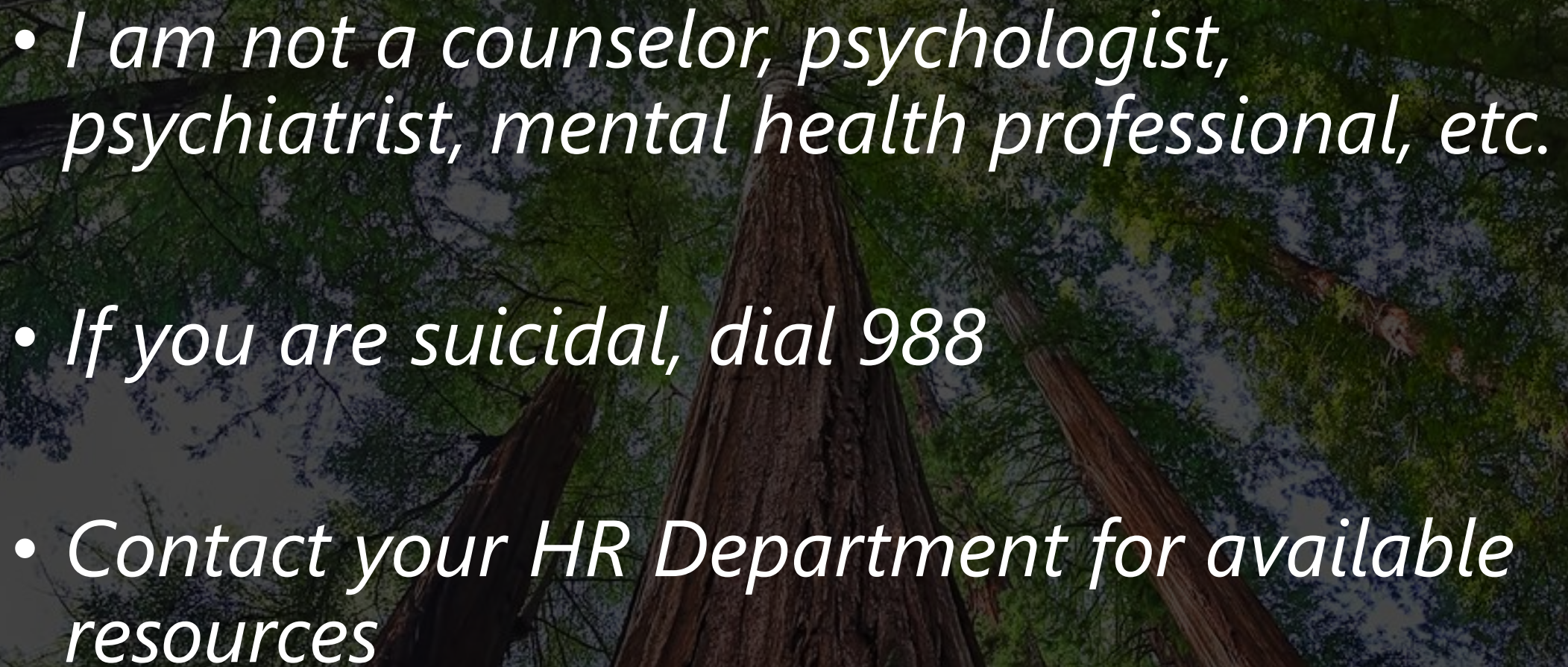
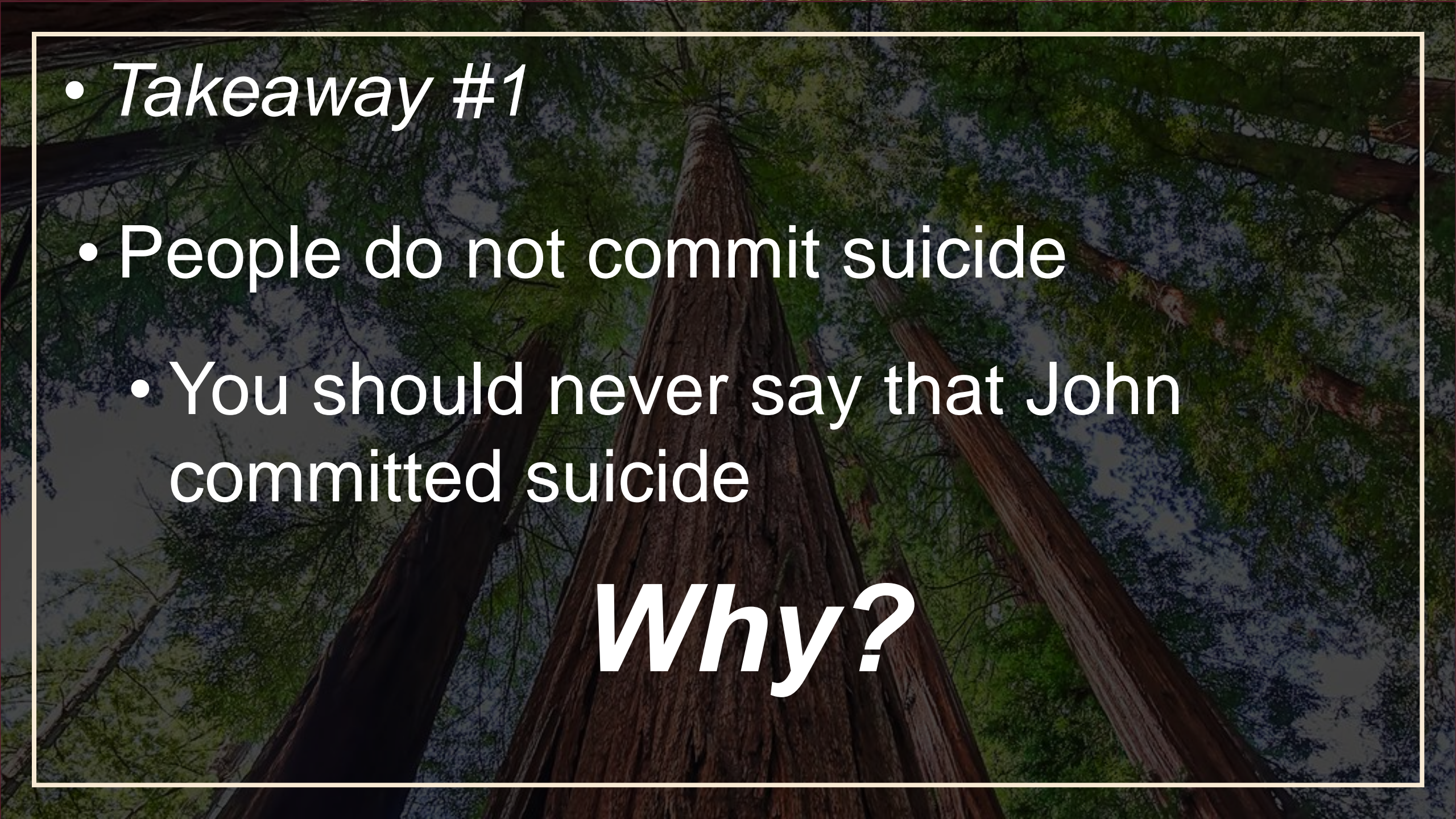



*Breaking the Stigma of Suicide
in the Asphalt Industry
Alabama Asphalt Pavement
Association*



- 
- *I am not a counselor, psychologist, psychiatrist, mental health professional, etc.*
 - *If you are suicidal, dial 988*
 - *Contact your HR Department for available resources*

- 
- *Takeaway #1*
 - People do not commit suicide
 - You should never say that John committed suicide

Why?

- 
- *Background*
 - Who am I?
 - Ajax Paving Industries of Florida, LLC
 - Qualification to speak on this topic

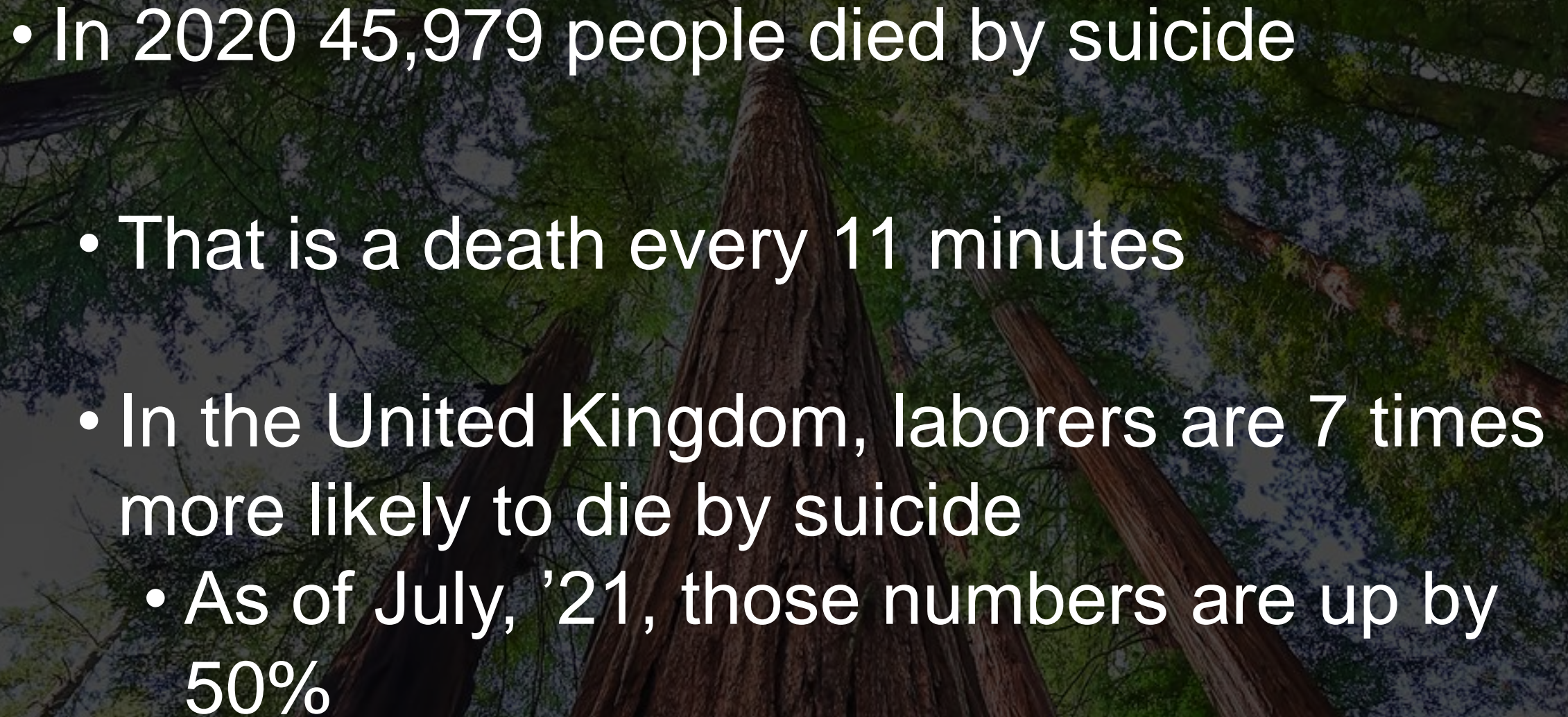
- ***Stats (Centers for Disease Control)***
 - The national suicide rate is 12 / 100,000
 - Construction suicide rate is 52/100,000
 - Construction suicide rate is more than 4.3 times the national average
 - Laborer suicide rate is more than 6 times the national average



- ***Stats***

- Today, 2 to 3 workers will die from work related fatalities.

- ***Today, 10 to 15 construction workers will die by suicide***

- 
- In 2020 45,979 people died by suicide
 - That is a death every 11 minutes
 - In the United Kingdom, laborers are 7 times more likely to die by suicide
 - As of July, '21, those numbers are up by 50%

Economic Impact

- According to the CDC (2018), suicides and suicide attempts nationwide in one year surpassed \$70 billion in medical and work-loss costs
- **Lower productivity is not included in this cost**

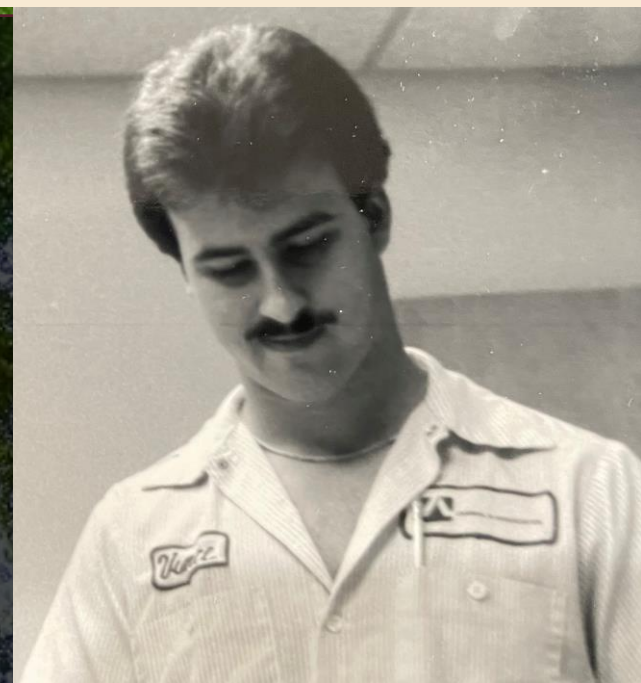


First Grade –
1967

Happy 60th –
2022



my personal **JOURNEY**



10th Grade - 1978

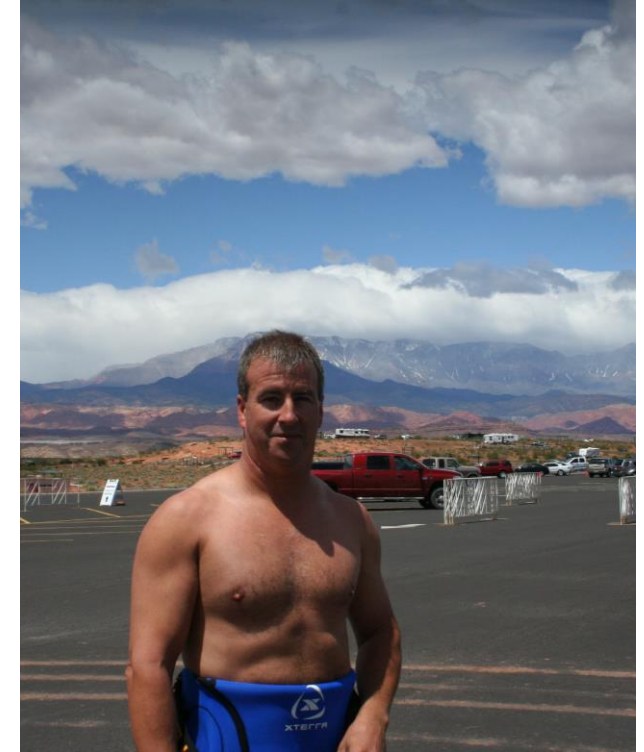




Training with Heather Jackson & Wattie Ink



114.6 miles down. Only 26 more to go.



Training swim, Ironman Utah – water 54° F





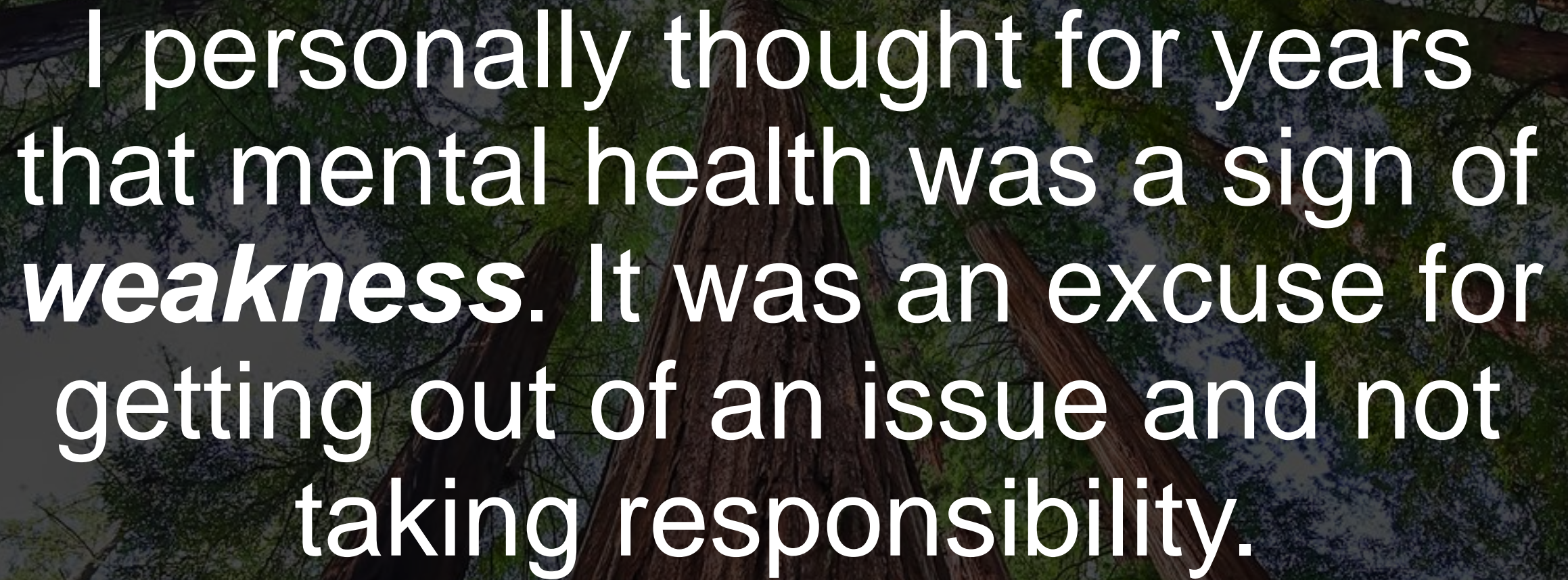
- I have not always been in a happy place
- Sometimes life gets tough – family life gets tough



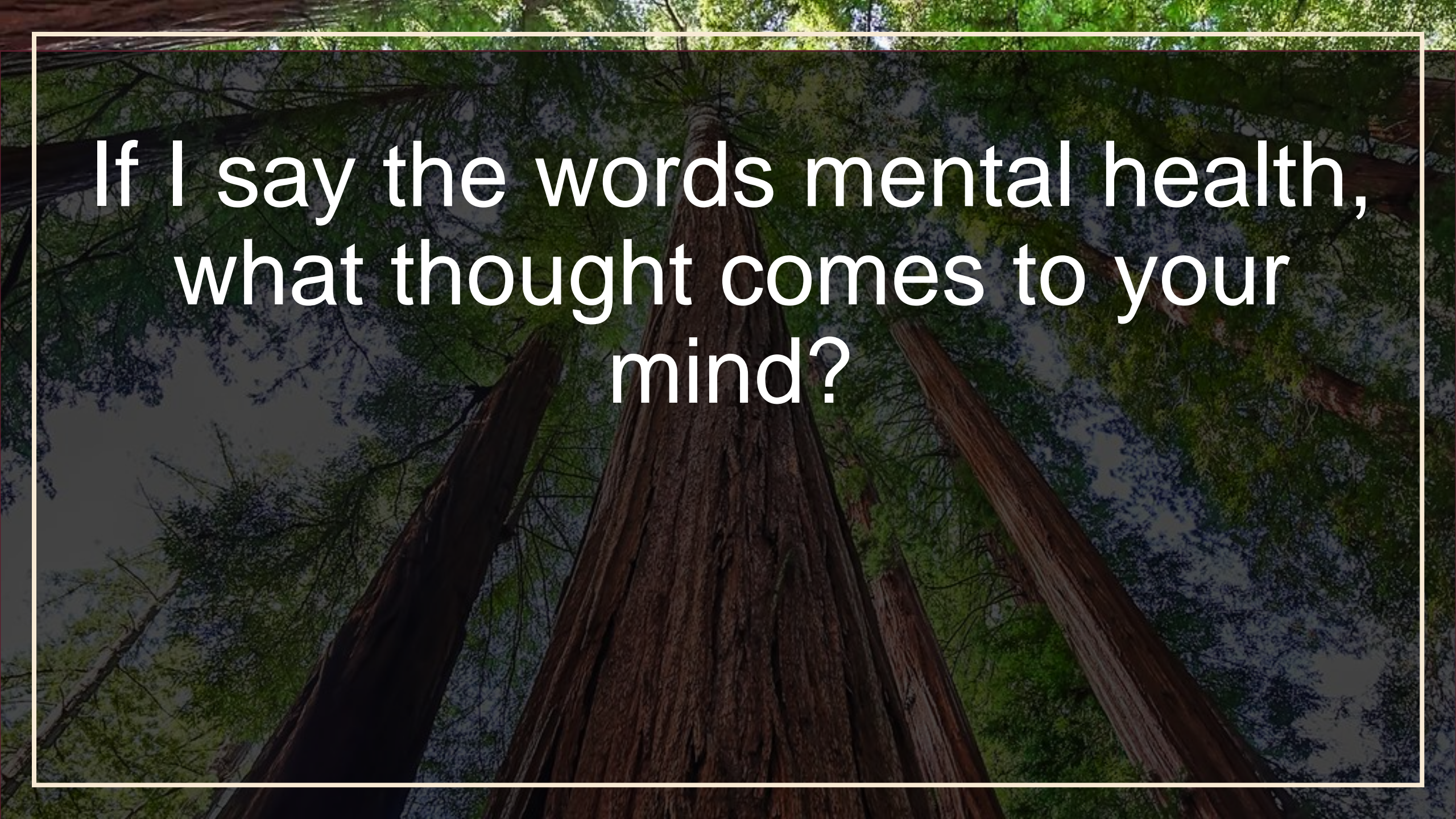
- 2007

- I think





I personally thought for years that mental health was a sign of ***weakness***. It was an excuse for getting out of an issue and not taking responsibility.

A low-angle photograph of several tall, thick tree trunks reaching towards a dense green canopy against a blue sky. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

If I say the words mental health,
what thought comes to your
mind?

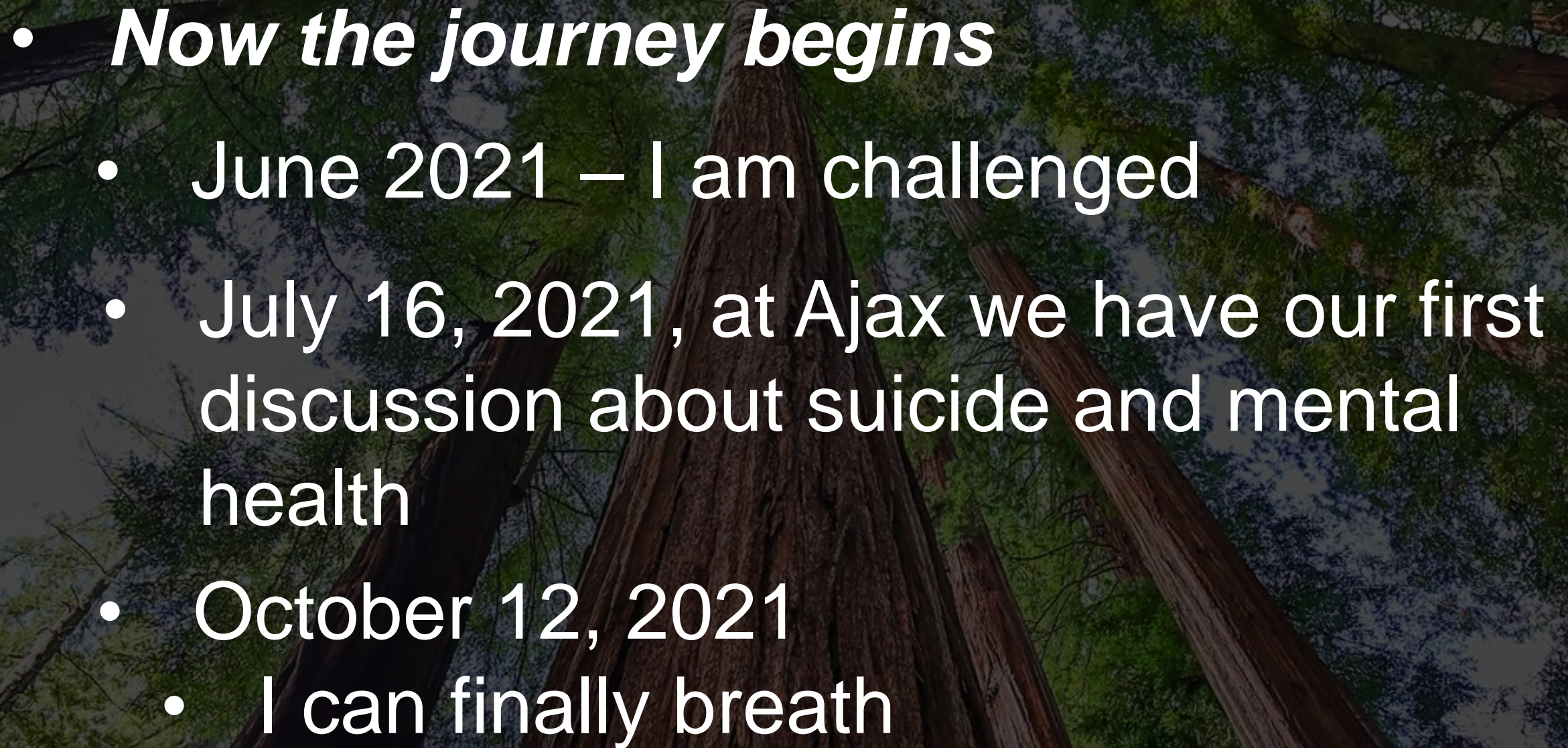
Takeaway #2

A low-angle photograph of several tall, slender trees reaching towards a bright sky. The trees are the central focus, with their trunks extending from the bottom of the frame towards the top. The sky is a clear, bright blue, and the foliage of the trees is a vibrant green. The overall scene is a lush, natural setting. The text 'Takeaway #2' is overlaid in the center of the image in a white, sans-serif font.

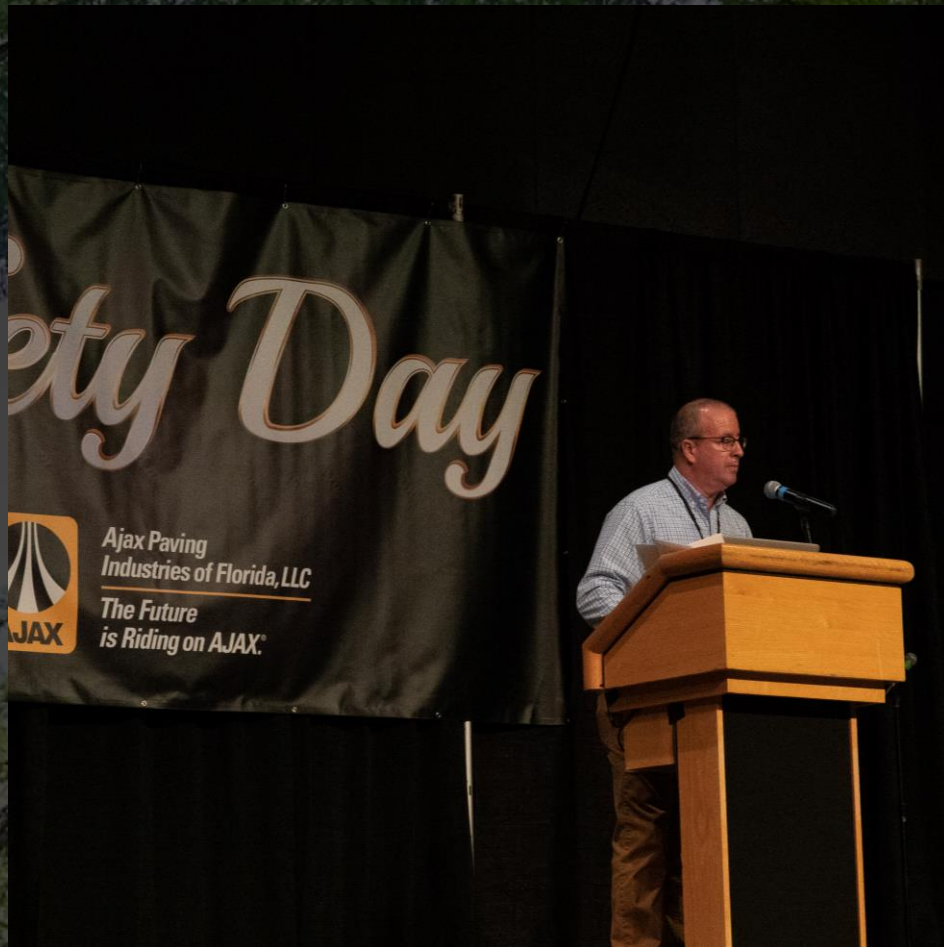


Takeaway #2

Mental health does not equate
to mental illness.

- 
- ***Now the journey begins***
 - June 2021 – I am challenged
 - July 16, 2021, at Ajax we have our first discussion about suicide and mental health
 - October 12, 2021
 - I can finally breath

Safety Day January 3, 2022



Safety Day July 22, 2022



January 3, 2022

I wanted to thank you for addressing the topic of mental health and suicide yesterday. My superintendent, confided in me about his mental health struggles, and I shared mine as well. Your talk facilitated a much-needed conversation.

July 22, 2022: Mid-Year Safety Day Mtg.

That employee confided in me that he is now on medication and we saved his marriage and his career.

***March 2, 2022 – Women of Asphalt
Webinar, Hafeli & Cal Byers***

“ I just wanted to thank you for sharing your story. In my life I have had family members that attempted or succeeded in suicide. I even saved my own mother from it as a teenager. I have thought about it myself. After your talk today I feel less ashamed.”

IF SUICIDE EVER
CROSSES YOUR MIND,
JUST KNOW I WOULD
RATHER LISTEN TO YOUR
STORY THAN ATTEND
YOUR FUNERAL.



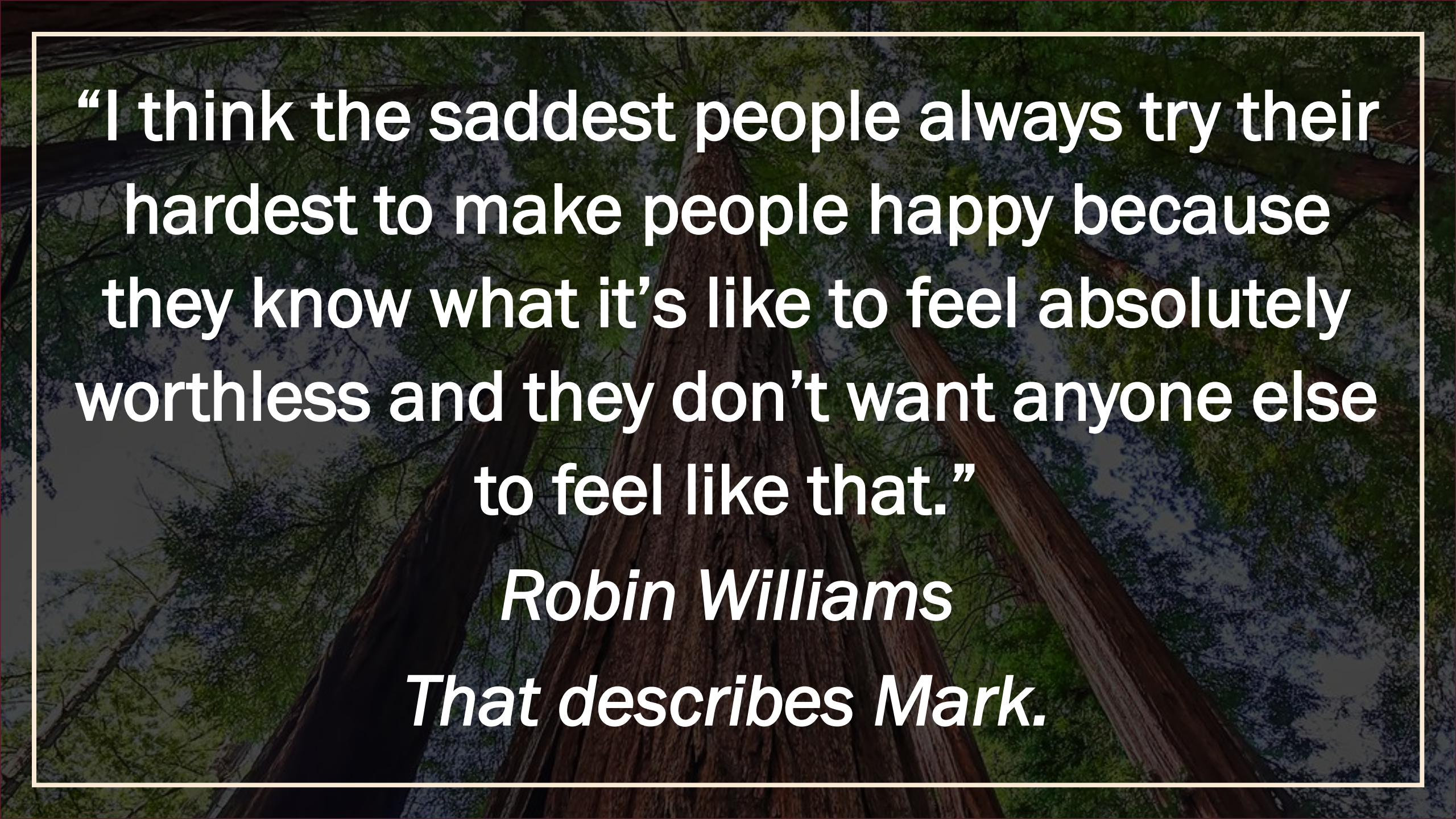
?????, I echo what your
sister said. Hang this by
your workstation and
carry a copy as a
reminder.

You have my number,
Vince

September 5-9 Was Construction Suicide Awareness Week



- Mark, an Area 1 Project Manager, succumbed to Suicide on September 3, 2015. Mark was the office clown and always had the office laughing. Beginning in September of 2022, we will remember Mark each September. Take care of your family and coworkers and pay attention to warning signs.



**“I think the saddest people always try their
hardest to make people happy because
they know what it’s like to feel absolutely
worthless and they don’t want anyone else
to feel like that.”**

Robin Williams

That describes Mark.



Takeaway #3



Warning Signs

- Conversations about feeling hopeless
- I feel like a burden to others
- Mood swings
- Increased use of alcohol or drugs
- Offering to give you their tools
- Not hanging with the crew like they used to
- Military Veterans

If You Have Concerns - ASK

- Do not be afraid to ask have you thought about suicide
 - If the answer is yes
- Ask them if they have thought about how they would take their life
 - If the answer is yes
- Ask them if they have the means

If You Have Concerns

- Ask them if they would like for you to help them call someone
 - 988 is the national suicide hotline
 - What about your employee assistance program
 - Pastor

While not construction related, let's look at our youth – “our future”

- Since 2008, teen suicide is up 150%
- 19% of high school students consider suicide
- 16% make plans to die by suicide
- 10% attempt suicide

Suicide in our nation and this industry is real

- Nationally
 - During this presentation 4 have died by suicide
 - Today while at his conference, 43 will die by suicide
 - Today in our industry, at a minimum we will lose a worker to suicide every 2 hours

Takeaway #4



Takeaway #4

- How do we address it?
 - We have more days like today
 - We encourage organizational leaders to address the topic
 - Safety day meetings, daily huddles, tool box talks, association board meetings, just be open to the discussion

Takeaway #5



Takeaway #5

- Sometimes these men and women look and behave like me

Suicide Prevention Is Everybody's Business

Construction Hike for Hope

Saturday, April 15, 2023

**LET'S BUILD A CULTURE
THAT'S SMARTER ABOUT
MENTAL HEALTH**



afsp.org/construction

- Jacksonville
- Panama City Beach
- Pembroke Pines
- Orlando
- Tampa



We can all play a part in Suicide Prevention!

Platinum
Sponsors:



Florida Transportation Builders Assoc. Orlando, Florida (Feb. 7, 2023)





R

***QR Code to Digitally Sign the Proclamation
For Suicide Awareness in Construction
Asphalt Pro Magazine***



***QR Code to Digitally Sign the Proclamation
For Suicide Awareness in Construction
American Road & Transportation Builders
Association***

