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Dear Dr. Phil:

I have watched your show and would like to tell my story. I have noticed that average people sometimes get your attention, and their story becomes bigger than what they had known for most of their lives. People like me. Some of the stories I see presented on your show deal with issues related to justice or injustice. Sometimes the stories touch upon issues of health care in America. I mention these things because that is precisely what my recent book describes – justice/injustice, health care, mental illness.

In my autobiography I have described at the climax of the book a profound and disturbing – horrifying – account of the injustice I experienced some time back. The fact that it happened a long time ago might not make it seem relevant to current events. However, despite the fact that the events took place between 2004 and 2006, it was in December of 2019 that I made a deliberate attempt to end my life. It wasn't a cry for help. It was about the injustice I had experienced previously.

My career has been in the mental health/psychiatric field. I worked as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker – a psychotherapist. I dedicated my life to helping others. That is the kind of activity that brings me joy and makes life meaningful. In fact, I am not just talking about paid employment but also activities I would do as a volunteer. In fact, to transition from undergraduate studies in engineering to graduate studies in social work, I first volunteered at a state psychiatric hospital – Georgia Regional Hospital in Augusta, Georgia. That is what I began to do in 1990.

I had hoped to live a “normal” life and had no idea that would be a problem. That dream and all my hopes were destroyed by the criminal actions of an individual in 2004. I was harmed in a brutal and bloody attack by a woman. If that is not bad enough, this individual had gone to the police in Durham, North Carolina and stated that I attacked her. She further lied by stating that I tried to undress her. I had no idea what she had reported as I sat in front of two detectives who refused to believe that I was the victim. It was Kafkaesque to sit there in a police station covered in blood from my face – my shirt, shorts, socks and sneakers were covered in blood – while these detectives kept looking for me to offer an account of the events that they wanted to hear.

I spent 7 months in jail. North Carolina was holding the victim of the crime in jail while the perpetrator went about her life. Those who have read my book come away shocked.

Most of those who hear this as female which is relevant in light of the #MeToo movement which I have supported fully since the beginning. People like Brett Kavanaugh get to experience a different set of rules. They can shout that it is a “political” attack on him. Dr. Christine Blasey-Ford was not the only one who detailed a pattern of bad behavior by Kavanaugh but that didn't stop him in his career advancement. Meanwhile, people like myself who never did anything remotely aggressive, forceful, or sexually inappropriate see their entire lives and careers destroyed by the lies of one individual.

I don't know what should be done to remedy situations like this because I wouldn't suggest that we stop believing women. I wouldn't suggest things like "the pendulum has swung too far." In fact, so much more must be done to address these issues related to how women have been hurt by men. I am constantly shocked by what I see on Law & Order: SVU when I hear the excuses that men or teenage boys use to justify their actions.

Getting back to my story, there are so many aspects of our system of justice that are shockingly problematic. For starters, let me describe the plea deal that was offered to the victim – me. Most people think that a person chooses to take a plea which implies some form of thought and reflection. In my case, I was not even given any indication by my lawyer (a public defender) what the reason was when I called, and he told me to come to court. He had told me there would be a trial and that he knew that the jury would know that I could not have done what I was accused of doing.

Instead, I was being told about how I would go to prison for 10 years if I didn't accept a plea deal that he and the prosecutor worked out. I also was not given any time to think about the matter. This was happening in the hallway outside the courtroom with the prosecutor standing right there. I was out of breath, traumatized and I was allowing him to make decisions for me. The federal government shortly after this approved my federal disability claim and it was dated back to 2003. That meant that I had an argument where I could claim that I was unable to enter into a plea deal due to a psychiatric condition. I had Major Depression, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

It didn't occur like I observe you reading the court proceedings on your show. I wasn't asked if I was on any medications that would impair my thinking or if I had a psychiatric condition that would similarly impair my judgment. I wasn't asked to elocute to anything – to state what actually happened. If I had been asked that I would have described my victimization and it would have been far clearer that I was rejecting the plea deal. I was so shy, scared, and quiet that I could not state clearly enough for the judge to understand that I did not want to accept the plea deal.

In my book I have described the decade I spent helping others as a psychotherapist. I describe how I have treated women. In one part of the book, I describe a relationship with a very thin woman who had anorexia – she was 4 foot eleven and weighed 60 pounds. In one instance I saw her slipping and wondered where I could catch her to keep from letting her get hurt because she looked so fragile. I also describe a life that I knew with Lynn Denise Krupey who was born with a genetic illness/disease – Cystic Fibrosis - that affects breathing and digestion. She had trouble keeping weight on her, but she was not noticeably underweight.

I need to bring attention to these issues so that they become issues that the country as a whole considers. The assumptions that Americans make about our system of justice do not match reality in many ways. Most of us are not like Roger Stone who was arrested in his mansion and was out free just a few hours later. Then he started a GoFundMe and got donations while normal people like me cannot begin to imagine what it might be like to raise funds to deal with emergencies.

My book also touches upon health care issues in America. Lynn and I lived as husband and wife for years. However, we couldn't have a wedding. She had to qualify for a state health insurance plan. It was literally a matter of life and death. Our combined incomes might disqualify her. She also could not get pregnant because her disease made it hard for her to get the proper nutrients from her food and she needed help with digesting her food properly.

My sister has worked for an insurance company and I have struggled to deal with these issues because the insurance companies don't want the government to get involved in health care, i.e., keeping people alive. It is a difficult conversation that must be had. I cannot imagine that anyone who reads my book would come away thinking that the status quo is simply fine. I certainly would not respect such an individual or a position.

I don't know what people think about the issue that this puts people like us in. As a Christian, I was raised to believe that sex should only occur in a marriage. Yet, Lynn was my fiancée. I have since lost my faith but from the point of view of a "Christian" I would say that our union was more blessed and holy than most others – at least more than those that I have seen.

It would be an honor if you would contact me to discuss these issues on your show. I had overcome my shyness in the 80s and 90s but for most of the first two decades of the 21st century I retreated back into my shell, as it were. I am now emerging again and seeking to get my life back.

I am applying to get my credentials again as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) in the state of North Carolina. How I lost that is also discussed in the book. It's in a section that also describes the "conspiracy theories" of "satanic ritual abuse" that existed in the 80s and 90s which have morphed into QAnon. I don't remember that the previous "satanic panic" had a political nature. It did have some political and cultural elements back then with the belief that Nazi scientists working with the CIA were torturing kids to create a Manchurian Candidate who would have multiple personalities – Dissociative Identity Disorder or Multiple Personality Disorder.

I am attaching a copy of my book to this email and I look forward to hearing from you.

I call the book "Memoirs of a Healer/Clinical Social Worker – Autobiography of Bruce Whealton. It can be found here <http://brucewhealton.com/autobiography>

Thank you for your time,
Bruce

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