

[CLATTERING]

[HEAVY BREATHING]

SCOTT: The following program contains language or images of a frank or sensitive nature, which may be considered objectionable by some. Listener discretion is advised.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

(SINGING) After hours. After hours.

SCOTT: Oh yes. You've tuned in to *After Hours*, a continuing tradition on KPFT, Houston, 90.1 FM.

The crew of *After Hours* is ready to bring you news, interviews, and music, geared for gay and lesbian people.

Here at *After Hours*, we may be diverse, but we have one thing in common. We are out of the closet and urge everyone to come out of their closets.

That means, standing up for yourself, taking responsibility for your own life, and being proud of who you are.

Realistically, we know not everyone can do that because of age, job, or frame of mind. That's OK. We're here for you, too.

So sit back, relax, and enjoy this week's edition of after hours.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

SCOTT: Howard, where the hell are you? Howard, we're trying to-- we're going on air with a radio program, here.

HOWARD: What happened to that wild music?

SCOTT: Howard--

HOWARD: [INAUDIBLE] with my testicles hanging out. And you're talking about wild music?

SCOTT: Yeah, that's--

CREW: So, we've been meaning to talk to you about that, Howard.

SCOTT: Wait--

HOWARD: I apologize. I really apologize.

SCOTT: Could you put those things away? Please. Until later, anyway.

HOWARD: Well, you know, Korea has that ban on nuclear weapons. I thought [INAUDIBLE]

SCOTT: That's more like a scud missile. But anyway--

[LAUGHTER]

I said scud, not stud.

HOWARD: What are you saying? What happened to that wild introduction that all these people screaming and carrying on.

You know, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom and all that wild music.

CREW: We changed when the people are sleeping.

SCOTT: We-- [LAUGHING]

So what are you up to, Howard?

HOWARD: Oh, what a wild night in Houston.

SCOTT: It has been a wild night.

HOWARD: Trying all these bunny parties. What the hell is going on with all these baskets and Easter? And what's-- is this a pagan holiday?

SCOTT: The party we just came from was.

HOWARD: You gentiles are all alike.

CREW: No, honey, they canceled Easter. They found the body. It only takes three days,

SCOTT: I tell you.

HOWARD: What are you doing tonight?

SCOTT: Anything but you, Howard. Anything but you.

HOWARD: Here, I'm in my Daisy Dukes. But we've been out partying tonight, having a good time.

SCOTT: That Peter Cock-n-Tail party was the deal.

HOWARD: What do you mean, I slept? They passed out NoDoz as we went in.

SCOTT: That was actually as we went out. But, anyway. That was after you began singing.

HOWARD: In fact, they were cheering and clapping as we walked out.

SCOTT: I can't imagine why after you did that great impression of RuPaul and Elton John, doing "Don't Go Breaking My Heart."

HOWARD: I did Liza Minnelli, and they just started spitting.

SCOTT: Well, you know, see, her teeth are her own. So that's where the people weren't buying it

HOWARD: They said, you need a hair weave, bitch.

SCOTT: [LAUGHING]

HOWARD: Anyway, what's going on tonight?

SCOTT: Not you in those shorts.

HOWARD: Listen, I've seen you in your underwear. Like, I've told them, 100 million people. Who're we saying hi tonight?

SCOTT: The people out at Greenway Plaza

HOWARD: Are you out there?

SCOTT: Are you out there? Was it, LC and BC and BJ and all of them.

HOWARD: Protecting them cars out of Greenway Plaza.

SCOTT: Or the summit or whatever.

HOWARD: We want to say hi to you. Now, you got to give us a call tonight because we almost came out and visited you last weekend.

SCOTT: But--

HOWARD: We came to our senses.

SCOTT: But we took a wrong turn, somewhere, and we ended up at the arena. I don't know how it happened.

HOWARD: The arena was a bookstore. What do you mean? We were looking for them. And didn't find them anywhere.

Are they out there, tonight? Hello, hello?

SCOTT: So tonight, we have a short show.

HOWARD: We have a short show. Kind of like your crotch. [? Damn, but ?] Go ahead.

SCOTT: Not that short. It's time change. At 2 AM it becomes 3 AM, so we're only going to have an hour show.

But at 1:30, *The Queer Music Zone*, so we only have an hour and 1/2 show.

HOWARD: An hour and 1/2 show.

SCOTT: An hour and 1/2 show instead of two hours. I mean, it's a two-hour show, but we'll only be here for an hour and 1/2.

HOWARD: And we have guests in the studio. George Bush, right here, tonight.

SCOTT: George Bush will be here, tonight.

HOWARD: George Bush will be here, tonight.

SCOTT: And we're going to make him wear Barbara's pearls.

HOWARD: Yes. And Mama Neva to talk about her new Jane aerobics.

SCOTT: [LAUGHING] Mama Neva aerobics tap.

HOWARD: Mama Neva's aerobics tape. Oh, God, I hope she isn't. Listening. Get the taco out of your mouth, woman

[LAUGHTER]

SCOTT: You know, but she does have some really good shrimp-stuffed jalapenos.

NEAL: She sure does. I've choked on them many times.

SCOTT: Her jalapenos?

HOWARD: No.

[LAUGHTER]

SCOTT: Just as long as you don't have those margaritas over on Navigation.

HOWARD: They're terrible.

SCOTT: Oh, the worst.

HOWARD: They taste like Mr. Clean.

SCOTT: Oh, my gosh. Oh, wait we're getting an update on the traffic, here. Memorial eastbound exit to Capitol Avenue, bridge is closed. Be sure and use a detour. Just wanted to keep them updated, here, on *After Hours*.

HOWARD: Well, your bridge has been closed for years.

SCOTT: Yeah, at least my bridge isn't in my mouth. Anyway.

HOWARD: Anyway, what's going on in Houston, this weekend? You know, there's a volleyball tournament.

SCOTT: Right. The uh--

HOWARD: George Brown Convention Center.

SCOTT: Uh-huh.

HOWARD: Yes, they're out there bumping their balls.

SCOTT: Just as long as they're not bumping my balls.

HOWARD: That's right. They couldn't find them.

SCOTT: Yeah that's that-- what's it, lesbian, gay, gay volleyball-- whatever.

HOWARD: They're raising money to go to Stonewall. Are you going to Stonewall?

SCOTT: No. Hell no. And you know how I feel about that.

HOWARD: Well, heck, you couldn't make the games. What do you do? Anything athletic?

SCOTT: You don't have to be athletic to get in the games.

HOWARD: Yeah, but you need hair, honey.

SCOTT: Oh, let me borrow yours. It does disconnect with scissors. And we'll sew it right back in, later, when I get back.

HOWARD: Anyway, what else is going on in town, tonight?

SCOTT: Nothing.

NEAL: There's a leather run in town, also.

SCOTT: Oh is there?

HOWARD: I'll be running from them leather boys. Let me tell you.

SCOTT: I've never run I've never seen you run from leather boys, ever, especially on that ripcord patio show.

HOWARD: I've never been on the ripcord patio.

SCOTT: Not on your feet, anyway.

HOWARD: Hey, who else are we saying hi to, tonight?

[LAUGHTER]

Hey, come on, I have my band-aids. Anyway, we're saying hi to--

SCOTT: Yeah, same here. Those are the special knee size.

HOWARD: We haven't been here in a while.

SCOTT: A month.

HOWARD: I know. What happened?

SCOTT: Time.

HOWARD: (SINGING) Time--

SCOTT: Time won't give you time.

HOWARD: I know. And--

SCOTT: Time makes lovers feel they have something real.

HOWARD: Hey, we want to say hi to all our friends? Who is the nice girl out there in Tomball? Who was that? What was her name?

SCOTT: I've drawn a blank.

HOWARD: I've seen your forehead. Or your datebook. But that sweet girl who came out of her high school. Is she out there, tonight?

SCOTT: Oh, her and her weird friend that kept calling in.

HOWARD: And the girl's on a Greenway. And someone was talking about Mike Stubblefield, last week, remember?

SCOTT: Vince.

HOWARD: Vince, Vince.

SCOTT: Remember, Vince? Size-11 boots.

HOWARD: Size 11-boots is it [INAUDIBLE].

SCOTT: Who is probably at the Rip Cord, right now. He said, normally, he's at a Rip Cord on a Saturday night.

HOWARD: Smart people would be, tonight. What do you mean?

SCOTT: We'll be there, later.

HOWARD: We will. We will, signing autographs.

SCOTT: Get over to the ripcord. We'll be there.

HOWARD: Bring your studded jockstrap because here we are. Anyway.

SCOTT: So let's gear up and talk to our first guest. Our first. We have one so.

HOWARD: We do. And that I see several, several men staying around us tonight.

SCOTT: Well, there for the segment later.

HOWARD: Oh What segment is that, Scott, tonight?

SCOTT: It's-- we'll talk about it later.

HOWARD: OK.

SCOTT: You know we can't do these things till after 10 o'clock. We'll do it right after the Ikea commercial.

HOWARD: Ikea commercial. We're going to talk about that. And, then, we're going to talk about-- let's talk about this whitewater crap, Driving me crazy.

SCOTT: I have some jeans that were washed in whitewater before they put them out.

HOWARD: I said, I still don't have health insurance. Who gives a helck about whitewater, here? But let's talk about our first guest and--

SCOTT: Going to do a song, first, and get geared up?

HOWARD: As long as it's Go West.

SCOTT: I'm going to send you west. We'll be right back after this song.

[MUSIC PLAYING] (SINGING) They can come true.

(SINGING) Know you got to be strong. Dreams can come true.

SCOTT: (SINGING) Da, da, da, da, da, da, da.

HOWARD: You know, I remember, in sixth grade, I used to dream about this altar boy named Kevin Filpatrck or whatever his name was.

SCOTT: I remember in sixth grade, I was doing the altar boy and the priest, at the same time. We were having three ways.

HOWARD: Lighting candles, a woman. Let me tell you.

SCOTT: So introduce our first guest, or our only guest. Not our only, but--

HOWARD: Tonight, we have a gentleman with us.

SCOTT: Well, you're being a little generous. We know him, Howard.

HOWARD: We haven't seen him naked. But he is a--

SCOTT: Well, but if you have a VCR, you might have.

[LAUGHTER]

HOWARD: Several times throughout the year, we have-- several times, when we do the radio show, we have people who want to come and talk to us about personal things.

And because we want to add personality to our radio show, we often talk about things that deal with problems in our culture. Correct?

SCOTT: Problems in our lives, our personal lives, issues, personal issues. And that's what we're going to do, tonight.

We're going to talk about an issue that is important to-- it's an issue that, kind of, plagues our community, or a problem that plagues our community, maybe, greater than any other than, maybe, with the exception of, AIDS. And that's alcoholism.

We have an incredible amount of alcoholism in the community. And here with us, tonight, is Neal LaFay, who is a recovering alcoholic-- isn't that right because you're always an alcoholic?

NEAL: You're always an alcoholic or drug addict.

SCOTT: OK. Oh, oh, so you're an alcoholic and a drug addict?

NEAL: Yes. Yes, yes, yes.

SCOTT: OK. So you're always those things. And so you're a recov-- when you're not doing it anymore--

NEAL: You're in recovery.

SCOTT: You're in recovery because there's a chance you're going to go back.

HOWARD: But Neal, do you like that word, recovery? I mean, doesn't it sound like something went wrong and--

SCOTT: But didn't something go wrong?

HOWARD: Not really. I think what happens is society throws us into this thing. And that we find ways to shelf other things and to crutch other things. So, all of a sudden, they call you a recovering alcoholic. Don't you think that, maybe, you're just a human being who's adjusting?

NEAL: You have a good point, there. But, also, I do believe in the recovery aspect of it because there's always that one chance that you can always go back.

And you're always there. I mean, I know that I will always want to do some more cocaine. I mean, I know where I cannot go. I know I can go out to the bars, and I can have a good time. But there's one bar that I can't go into because that's where--

SCOTT: That's where you were always doing the cocaine. You always got it or whatever.

NEAL: That's where I was always doing the cocaine. I was purchasing it. And so--

SCOTT: What bar was that, Neal?

[LAUGHTER]

HOWARD: They pay for advertisement, here. But on a serious aspect--

SCOTT: Did it start with an R, Neal?

HOWARD: What are some of the beginning warning signs, because a lot of our audience is real young. And what are some of the warning signs that may conclude you to the fact that things might not be going right?

NEAL: Let's see. How about losing a car?

SCOTT: Tree that pops up in the middle of the road when you're driving down it?

NEAL: Yeah and being unhappy, always pushing yourself. I was constantly working-- I was that total commercial. I worked so I could buy more cocaine, so I can make more money, so I can buy more cocaine, so I can work harder, so I can buy--

I was doing all that stuff. And you know, some of the things that I was watching was, you know, I was watching myself set myself up for the total crash. You know?

And just waiting for it to happen. I saw all the signs. You know, staying up-- I was up for nine days straight.

SCOTT: Oh, my God.

NEAL: It was horrible.

SCOTT: Did you go to Venezuela?

NEAL: No, I didn't. I wish. Colombia.

SCOTT: Did you see Juan Valdez while you were there?

NEAL: Yes. Had Juan Valdez.

HOWARD: We all have, in our dreams. Is there a point where people can sit back and-- because I know this has been a tragedy in your life. Do you think that, maybe, at one point, there could have been a changing point?

And what advice do you have to our viewers, tonight, saying, hey, you know--

NEAL: Maybe-- the viewer, like-- saying what did I go through?

HOWARD: Yeah, exactly. What--

NEAL: They say that you never learn until you hit rock bottom. And when I hit rock bottom, I lost everything. You know, I ended up in a hospital. I slit my wrists.

You know, I was unhappy. I was very unhappy. And it just came down to the point where, I walked out of the house and rode my bike through Montrose with my wrists, you know, wide open and everything and very unhappy.

And I had to take control of the situation and say, this is time for stop. I have to go and get this-- I lost everything. You know, I had my inheritance. And I spent all my inheritance that my mom had left me.

And lost everything, my roommate took all my stuff. And it was all gone. I mean-- and I had to realize this has got to stop. This is insanity. This is crazy for me to live my life like this.

I don't want to live like this, anymore. I go out and I see some of the people that I used to go out with, and they're still doing the same stuff.

I will be nice and, you know, I will talk to them and everything. But I cannot comprehend to myself, right now, to go back to that.

HOWARD: Do you think that a person who has a full dependence on this, do you think they're hiding from something or something that's crutching-- do they use drugs and alcohol as a crutch?

NEAL: Yes.

HOWARD: And in your life, do you see something in your past where you were hiding from something or something was wrong or you were unhappy?

NEAL: Oh, definitely. I was very, very unhappy. I moved here when I was 13 and ever since then, my whole life went down the drain. My whole family has just passed away-- my sister, my father, and my mother.

And I really-- I think I'm a strong person for everything that's going on, that has happened. And with the other people, I can never say why the other people are using their drugs or alcohol.

But I know for, myself, that I was running away. Because when I drank and when I did use the drugs, I was a totally different person.

I was stronger. I felt like I was better looking. I walked up to people with no problem. I'd very good self esteem and everything.

I would walk up to you on the street corner and say, hey, I've got some drugs. You want to go to bed? And just crazy stuff like that.

And it totally got rid of all my inhibitions. And I hated that.

HOWARD: Well, how has that changed, now, because there are many people who drink, now, for reasons, because we can't understand because they're trying to hide things.

And, finally, how did you come to grips with this? And how did you turn it around and change it?

NEAL: I went to a very good program. I went through Harris County Psychiatric Center. And they just whipped me into shape.

And I used the tools of what they tell you to use in your sobriety-- sponsor, the big book, you know, praying, just anything that you can use to make this sobriety work.

HOWARD: There has been talk, and I've heard this many times, that when you're in these programs, they're not altogetherly able to deal with gay and lesbian people.

Because being gay and lesbian in a society where we're condemned, you're ostracized. You're put down. Did this happen to you in these programs?

NEAL: No, because, when I when I went into the program, they were-- everybody, you're more or less like a family because no one's better than anybody else because you're all drug addicts or alcoholics.

And that's how I see it. And there was a major bond between everybody because we were all there trying to get well and in the hospital.

But when I went out into the real world and did, you know, going to different meetings and everything, people are-- pretty much, they're very inviting and everything.

And I go to a gay and lesbian AA meeting. I mean, that's my home group. And, then, I go to my CA meetings and go to other AA meetings. And I go back to the hospital and chat with them.

HOWARD: Were they ever-- did they ever teach you things that gay and lesbian people have to deal with separately from straight people?

The abandonment, the rejection, I mean, these were all part of your alcohol and your drug dependency, is it not?

NEAL: That's true. But in the hospital, we had therapists. Our, individually, own therapists. And when you go to an AA meeting, when I go to the gay and lesbian AA meetings, we talk about that stuff.

If you have a topic that you want to talk about and get off your chest and someone else can help you about it, they ask you, does anybody have a topic. And you raise your hand, and you give your topic.

If you don't have a topic you, just sit back and someone will raise their hand or the chairperson will start the topic and will converse about that.

HOWARD: And your personal life, can you honestly say some of the beginning signs? You know, what really happened in the very beginning?

I mean, we all go out on a Friday and Saturday night. We all have a couple of drinks. And, sometimes, recreational drugs are often a factor in our lives.

But can you notice where it all started?

NEAL: Oh, yeah. Yeah. I, um--

[LAUGHTER]

SCOTT: I know. We shouldn't giggle.

NEAL: Oh, no. I totally became infatuated with this one person. And I let them move in with me.

And they were a drinker, and I started drinking. I mean, there was always beer in the house. I kept on drinking, keeping up with that person.

Then, the cocaine came into the picture. And we started doing that. I was bringing the cocaine to work, having the drug dealers come up to work.

You know, staying up all night long, getting up, just everything-- all the money that I made, I gave to the cocaine dealer. You know?

When you're spending your money on cocaine and not food, I would say that's a major sign.

HOWARD: What really-- and I want you to jump back into your life. And I want you to tell me about things. But what was it like being high all the time?

And what is it, now, like, being sober?

NEAL: Being high all the time? It was crazy. I mean, it was totally crazy. It was-- I was very obnoxious.

I drank to come down, so I can go to sleep. So I can go to work. I can't say that I didn't have some fun times. But there was a line that had to be drawn. I definitely crossed the line.

I hated-- I hate the high. Right now, I cannot see myself being high. I drink a pot of coffee in the morning, and I feel like I'm going to have a heart attack.

HOWARD: What's it like being sober?

NEAL: It's great.

HOWARD: What's the difference? I mean, does it scare you to the fact that-- I mean, because I like to go and have a couple of beers. I like a little buzz.

And, sometimes, I even think to myself, maybe I've gone too far. And, maybe, I should stop and how should I stop. And I never envisioned myself really, actually, being sober, not ever drinking.

Is it a scary feeling?

NEAL: It's a scary feeling to think that I just-- like, when I go into a restaurant, if I want a dessert, I have to make sure that that dessert does not have any alcohol in it.

Haagen-Dazs ice cream has alcohol in it. It has chocolate liqueur in it. And that was my favorite. I wanted chocolate, peanut butter chunk ice cream from Haagen-Dazs. And I can't have that.

And it doesn't have enough alcohol in it that would make me drunk. But if you are that-- if you're that much of an alcoholic, that little bit of alcohol can just trigger something in you and can send you back out, again.

I mean, a lot of people-- my cousin, who's an alcoholic, she can't wear her perfume because it has alcohol in it. So she has to lay off of it. So she just uses, like, body oils.

HOWARD: What scares you about being sober?

NEAL: I don't know if I'm scared about being sober. I'm just learning to rebuild myself, again. When I when I went out, I drank. And that's when I loosened up.

And I was able to walk up to someone and say, hello, how are you. My name is Neal. Would you like to go out to dinner, and all that stuff.

And, now, I am so-- I just, I go to the bars, I dance, and I leave. I don't talk to anybody. I don't do anything.

And that's what scares me is that I'm trying to rebuild my confidence. And you're a whole different person.

HOWARD: Well, you know, they said that we're born in this world sober, and we acquire all these tendencies to be an alcoholic. Do you attribute most of these the reasons why you went to these problems on society?

NEAL: No. No. I--

HOWARD: Where do your problems stem from? Purely personal?

NEAL: I think they're purely personal. Honestly, I think it just comes down to dealing with my mother's cancer, having all that stress, fighting with my brother about, you know--

HOWARD: But Neal, there are 10 million alcoholics in this country. I mean, it's an outrage. Is there some kind of social pressures out there that you think that might contribute to this factor?

I mean, it can't be all personal. It's got to be social, isn't it?

NEAL: My aspect of it was personal. Other people's aspect of it can be social. I can't make up the decision for those people.

But, in my eyes, I can see in society today that being the pressure of being a gay male in this society, being unhappy, not being accepted, only being able to go-- yes, I did drink because I was unhappy.

But I was very happy with my sexuality that I really didn't care. When I went out, I didn't care what people thought about me. The hell with you. You're going to have to accept me for who I am.

HOWARD: Do you think gay culture has grown around alcohol?

NEAL: Yes.

HOWARD: Do you think it's a responsibility of gay leaders and gay bar owners to turn the tide? What do you see happening in the future, maybe, that might bring-- because there are so many young listeners in our audience, tonight, that they sneak into their mothers' and fathers' pantry and drink.

And they think that it's an escape. And, then, they turn 18, and they can't wait to turn 21, so they can drink.

They can come out. And they can be with all these gay people and-- where does the responsibility lie?

NEAL: Well, what I've seen a major change, in most of the bars, is because they're now serving a lot of the nonalcoholic beers, the Perriers, the Clearly Canadians, and everything, which is making a good step forward. So the people who aren't drinking can go out and drink.

When I go out, and I drink, and I run into someone from an AA meeting, and I'm drinking Coca-Cola, they come to me, and they say, so are you sober?

And it's because I have a Coke in my hand. I can have a rum and Coke. I can have a Jack and Coke. I can have anything, you know.

But the bars, now, they're trying to cater to the people who aren't drinking.

HOWARD: OK. Say for instance if someone.