

John Boccacino:

Hello and welcome back to the 'Cuse Conversations podcast. I'm John Boccacino, senior internal communications specialist at Syracuse University.

Tracey Marchese:

If you are looking to who you want to be, that's great, but who are you and where are you? And just to look at yourself not as a negative and to say, I'm a work in progress, not that I'm a failure, right? And I have to be better. Hey, I'm work in progress and I'm going to be a work in progress my entire life. So, I think that's some of the worst problems that we, especially Americans have, is we're always comparing ourselves to everything and everyone else, some sort of higher level of whatever that we're supposed to be that society tells us we're supposed to be, instead of just accepting who we are right now and then saying, okay, and what would I like to maybe change about myself and how can I begin that?

John Boccacino:

Our guest on the 'Cuse Conversations podcast, she is Tracey Marchese, a professor of practice in the School of Social work in the David B. Falk College of Sport and Human Dynamics here at Syracuse University.

Now, I don't need to tell our audience, but we're coming off of a month that was spent celebrating the holidays with our family, our friends, and our loved ones. And with the arrival of the new year, many people view this as the ideal time to figure out the changes they'd like to see in themselves, and make in themselves. You know, new year, new you.

But as we all know, keeping those resolutions and achieving change is not easy work. It takes commitment and patience and dedication, and it can be easy to fail if instead of focusing on a few small changes, we make these huge sweeping plans for our life in the new year. The reason I wanted Tracy to come on the podcast, she's a big proponent that small tweaks can lead to sustainable change, and she also is going to help lead this important conversation about self-care and self-help tips for the new year. She'll also offer up her advice on how you can achieve the change you want to see in yourself in 2025. Tracy, thanks for making the time to join us.

Tracey Marchese:

Oh, glad to be here.

John Boccacino:

Now, before we get started with our themes of this episode of self-care and self-help, give our audience a little background on yourself. How would you describe your research and your areas of expertise?

Tracey Marchese:

So as a professor of practice, I actually come from the practice field. So I'm a licensed clinical social worker, and I've been in practice for, oh, I don't even want to admit it, 31 years. And so, I was in the field for 15 years before starting at SU, and now I'm full-time faculty here, but I still practice. So I have a small private practice on the side, and I actually do some training in a treatment for trauma called EMDR. So my area of expertise is trauma, but I also have always had an interest and always practiced in the area of mind-body wellness as well.

John Boccacino:

Where did that interest come from for this line of work in this field of study?

Tracey Marchese:

It's interesting. The mind-body piece actually started in high school. I took a high school yoga class and learned how to meditate, and I said, wow, this is really kind of cool. And then I went to college and some of my coursework, I was a psych major in undergrad, and some of my coursework kind of took me in that mind-body realm again. And then when I went to graduate school for social work, it just kept showing up. And when you move into your practice field, that's when I started to learn more about trauma because I started realizing how many of my clients experienced, whether we call it Big T or little T, Trauma. And so the big T's are the big events that happen to people. I don't want to trigger anyone, but like a car accident or something big.

The little T's I think most of us experience. So that could be a bad breakup, it could be a breakup with a friend, it could be the loss of a job, even if it was for a better job, but you still leave behind your colleagues. So there's big T traumas and little T traumas, but I saw that most of the population experiences that across their lifetime.

And so, started getting interested in working in trauma. And that's how I found EMDR because it is a treatment for trauma, and other wonderful techniques to work with trauma as well. And I realized through the research that I was doing, through the trainings that I was doing, that there's always a connection. Trauma is held in your body. And so there was that perfect connection for me because I knew that the mind and body were always working well together. And then, this area of trauma that I became interested in, it shows up there as well. And so that everything, all of our experiences are held in our bodies.

And so how do we take care of ourselves? How do we heal from the things that have happened to us? How do we maintain when things are going well for us and how do we prevent ourselves from getting further traumatized in our life?

John Boccacino:

It really is fascinating when you think about if you had a problem with your car, you wouldn't ignore the brake pads needing to get replaced, or your windshield wipers. But when it comes to mental health, we really do seem to still have a bit of a stigma around admitting that, hey, it's okay to not be okay. It's okay to seek help. How have you seen, I guess, since your time working in this field, what kind of progress have we made to maybe chip away at that stigma?

Tracey Marchese:

I think there's been a lot of progress. I think that there is still a stigma. Absolutely. And I think we've done a lot to tackle that stigma as well. I think that having celebrities come out in public and talk about their struggles with mental health. Although I'm not a big fan of social media, that we have social media influencers who are coming out and talking about their struggles with mental health. And so that's making it more okay to not be okay.

And although I don't advocate for everybody being able to do something via self-help, I think that some people really do need professional help. So I move away from those places in social media that say, oh, you could just do this and you'll be fine. And I don't believe that the whole world needs therapy either. So there's kind of a fine line in that.

But I do think that we've done a lot, but there's still more to go. I think that the pandemic really changed things for a lot of us. It made it very obvious for certain people that they needed help. And for others, I think we still have some people who are kind of walking wounded, not even realizing the impact that the social isolation, or the fear of dying when we didn't know enough about Covid and we didn't have any vaccines or cures, has really held onto people. It's really held in their nervous system, held in their bodies. And so, I do believe that there might be people who are still in need of care who haven't realized that they're in need of care.

John Boccacino:

And you brought up a term. I want to hear in your own words how you would define self-care, and the different types of self-care that are out there that are applicable to our audience.

Tracey Marchese:

I think that self-care is a term that gets thrown around a lot. And I think that not everybody realizes what it exactly is. And so I'm really glad that you asked me that question, because I think that self-care for some people is, oh, I have to do it all by myself. I can't, can't do anything with other people. It has to be something I do for myself.

And I think that self-care can show up in a lot of different ways. So the simplest ways are things like, do you feed yourself nutritious food? Hopefully you have access to that. So I'm not making assumptions that we all have access to nutritious food, but if you do, can you feed yourself nutritious food? Can you find regular times to sleep? So in other words, do you have a sleep routine, or do you just kind of wing it and you go to bed at different times every night?

And so is your sleep a good consistent seven hours, that is the recommended amount, minimal amount of sleep that we need to have in order for our brains and our bodies to function as well as they can. Many people don't, and they have very disrupted patterns or not even any kind of routines for sleep. Do you exercise your body? Do you move your body, if you are able to do so? And in what ways are you giving yourself your system, your body, the movement that it needs and the exercise that it needs in order to be well?

When we talk about holistic health, there's five parts that make us whole, and that's our physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual parts of self. And so when there's sort of a disruption or a problem in one area, it's going to permeate all of those other areas.

And so I'm giving you some kind of really concrete physical things, but what about the social pieces? Do you make time to call people that you care about, or to spend time with people that you care about? Do you do things in your life that give you meaning and purpose? That's the spiritual side. It's not always about religion. It's about what gives you meaning and purpose in life.

And so how do we feed these different areas? Can you find a work-life balance? And that for a lot of folks is really hard, how you find a work-life balance. But not all of that has to be you, you, you, you, you. And you are responsible and you have to do it. Yeah, some of it I think you do, right? But I also think that in settings like workplaces, could we have shared care or communal care that's going to help everyone's wellbeing?

So in other words, if you're in the workplace, does your work environment, do your supervisors, promote taking your lunch break or does everybody sit at their desk and work through their lunch break? Do you take time off? If you work overtime, because there's work to be done, not just because you can't get your work done, but because you're trying to help out the agency that you work for or the organization that you work for. And are you allowed to get what they call, comp time, or in other words, there's a day that you have a doctor's appointment, do you have to take your sick time to do that? Or because you worked overtime that now you can take that time and not have to take days off to just go to your doctor or to pick your kid up from school because they're sick that day?

So I think that there's ways that yes, we are responsible for our self-care, but also that our friends, our agencies and organizations we work for, our community can be helpful in self-care as well.

John Boccacino:

I think it's easy to feel isolated or lonely or even fall prey to comparison syndrome during the holidays and during the new year. Commercials don't help. The advertising doesn't help. It's a complicated minefield. If you did happen to have advice, words of wisdom for people that maybe were feeling like

they were battling with comparison syndrome or feeling isolated, what are some ways that people might be able to seek further help or try to pull themselves... Besides of course, the professional piece, which is a very valuable component to this. What's the best practices you might have for those audience members?

Tracey Marchese:

Yeah, I mean, I think especially coming off of the holidays, we have to keep in mind that life is not a Hallmark movie, and it's not a commercial. And what's interesting is as a therapist, the holidays are our busiest time of year, because it's kind of returning to the scene of the crime. So in other words, any family dysfunction or stress or things, you're going home to see all those folks again. And for many people it's very stressful. And then if you're comparing to everybody who's posting on social media only their best self and, oOh, everything's wonderful and I have the best holiday and here's my big family and all this other stuff, you can easily fall prey to comparison. And I think it's hard sometimes not to recognize, to miss the boat in that people are just putting their best moments on social media and that's not their whole life.

And so really just having an honest conversation with yourself about, okay, this isn't me versus them, and that the reality is that many people struggle during the holidays. And so, what can I do now that we're past the holidays to move forward? And how do I get myself out of that feeling of, wow, that was a stressful time with so-and-so in my family or friend group or whomever I saw over the holidays. What can I do to kind of move my mindset out of that?

And I would say that folks are feeling isolated. What are ways that they can feel more connected? And so, do they have some friends at work, even if they're not their best friends, some people that they can connect with socially? Are there organizations or groups, or even online communities, that could provide just a way of connecting with other people with similar interests?

Most areas, even some of the rural areas have meetup groups, and that's a whole website, meetup.com, where you can find just about anything, and find other people that are interested, and they have connections either in person or online, or... So what are some things that you can do that would help you feel more connected? If you went home wherever home is for the holidays and now you're back in your home, or if you're a student, it's a temporary home back on campus, who can you reconnect with that would help you to just feel more connected in the way that you like to feel connected, versus those strained connections that you might've felt?

John Boccacino:

We are always trying to think of ways to better ourselves, and the natural inclination with, again, the new year, the new you. Let's focus on some changes for ourselves. From your professional perspective, what do you think are some of the best tips and best practices you can offer for coming up with resolutions that are both achievable and gratifying and sustainable?

Tracey Marchese:

What I would say is, I think a lot of us enter the new year with high expectations, and I think that oftentimes we're setting ourselves up for failure. So it's really the small changes that are more attainable and sustainable. And so, there's an old saying that says, three weeks is a habit. And so I would say that if you have this enormous goal for, I'm going to go to the gym five days a week and I'm going to do these kinds of exercises over here and I'm going to make myself do this over there, because I'm going to do this over here, and it's over committing, over committing to something. What's one thing that you could start with? Maybe you do have a goal and it's, I want to go on, I want to run the New York City Marathon, so that's usually in I think November.

So okay, do I even run? Am I a runner? So if the first answer to that question is no, it might not be this year that you want to do that. So maybe your goal is next year, and that's not a bad thing. What could you

start doing this year that would then get you ready for your attainable goal to be able to run that marathon? So maybe this year you run a half-marathon, and you do that, you look at what's available maybe in August or September, so that you give yourself eight, nine months to start training for that. So you see the difference between the pie-in-the-sky kind of goal that I've never run before, but I'm going to run a marathon in 10 months. Or could I run a half-marathon in 10 months or nine months? And so think about shifting your goals so that, yes, I still have this long-term goal, but what could I do in the shorter term? So that would get me to that goal.

So what do I do now? Well, if I don't exercise at all, maybe I need to start with walking and maybe not running, at first. And so what's an attainable goal? Well, maybe I'll start with 15 minutes a day, and let me do that for a week. And then let me go to a half an hour a day and see how my body takes to that, and then build from there. And there's my three weeks is a habit. Now I'm walking a little bit every day, but I'm not saying I'm going to walk an hour a day and I'm going to that. And I'm using this, this is kind of a silly example, but think about people have weight loss goals. I want to lose 50 pounds by June. That would be dieting in a very unhealthy way to lose that much weight in six months.

So instead of saying, I need to lose this much weight, what things about my eating could I change and make different? And it can't be, I need to restrict everything that I eat. It's let me start with one thing that I'm going to change. Maybe I could change what I have for breakfast and let me focus on that for three weeks or a month, and then let me see about how could I change maybe the types of food that I'm eating and not necessarily the amounts. Or maybe I know that this is my worst time of day for snacking, and so what snacks could I change? If snacking is my biggest problem, then what kind of snacks could I change, instead of let me try this diet.

Everybody's going to do the diet and most diets aren't sustainable. Things like a Weight Watchers might be because that's more about natural food instead of very restricted, and I'm only going to eat this type and I'm only going to do this and that even a change to a Mediterranean diet, for example, is going to be much more healthy and you're going to be eating differently, versus let me try this bad diet that I'm probably going to get sick of or it's going to fail me after the first few weeks.

Being able to set smaller, more attainable goals, and then tweak the goal moving forward, it really leads to much more satisfaction. It leads to much more ability to feel proud of an accomplishment because you set a smaller goal instead of this long-term unattainable goal.

John Boccacino:

And I think it's really important. I want to hammer home, too, this point, start where you are. It's not about where you want to be. It's where you are currently in this moment and what can be done to then find that version, that better self, that happens to be out there.

Tracey Marchese:

Absolutely. If you are looking to who you want to be, that's great, but who are you and where are you? And just to look at yourself not as a negative and to say, I'm a work in progress, not that I'm a failure and I have to be better. It's, hey, I'm a work in progress and I'm going to be a work in progress my entire life.

So my work in progress right now is I'd like to do this. What's the first step in doing this thing that I want to do? Let me start there. Because that's really accepting who you are. And I think that's some of the worst problems that we, especially Americans, have is we're always comparing ourselves to everything and everyone else, some sort of higher level of whatever that we're supposed to be that society tells us we're supposed to be, instead of just accepting who we are right now, and then saying, okay, and what would I like to maybe change about myself? And how can I begin that versus just saying, oh, well, I'm awful the way I am and I have to do, anything will be better than what I'm doing.

John Boccacino:

And I think another piece that I want to talk about with you is the accountability component as well, whether it's keeping a journal, whether it's an active list of I walked 15 minutes today, five days a week, and you kind of build upon that. What are some recommendations for accountability you can offer up that will help people reach their goals?

Tracey Marchese:

Yeah, I think that trackers, because now everything is electronic, either your phone or your Fitbit or whatever, we can track ourselves. And sometimes those things can be extremely helpful. Sometimes they can actually be harmful. So I think that, if people are looking at their fitness tracker and, oh my God, I didn't get my 10,000 steps in today. Oh, I'm a failure. If we're into all-or-nothing thinking and we know that about ourselves, that's not going to be helpful because all it's going to serve to do is defeat you.

And so what are the things that can serve to motivate you versus defeat you? And so maybe, again, each person is going to have to decide that for themselves, but if you find yourself using fitness trackers and then beating yourself up for not being perfect, that's not helpful. And that will actually, eventually cause you to feel so defeated, you'll probably give up.

So for some folks, it'll work great. For some folks it will not. I think that oftentimes buddying up and having a buddy to do stuff with, that keeps you accountable, and it also makes things more fun.

Journaling can be super helpful for people, again, if it's done in the right context to say, hey, I'm just kind of tracking my progress, how I go. And can you allow yourself, well, I had a really bad cold, so I really didn't do my, whatever my fitness goal today, or whatever I was going to do. Maybe my writing goal today, maybe you promised yourself you were going to journal every day or something like that and you didn't write because you weren't feeling well. Can you cut yourself some slack? And maybe when you do reflect on it the next day to say, but taking care of myself and having that extra sleep was my self-care in order to allow myself to heal, so that I could get back to these routines again instead of going into the automatic negative, beat myself up because I didn't do it all right kind of thing.

John Boccacino:

Besides the obvious ones of, I want to lose weight, I want to become more active, what are some other maybe lesser known but still impactful self-care, self-help resolutions that should be focused on maybe in the new year?

Tracey Marchese:

Well, something I would love people to focus on is, one of the greatest self-care strategies is a way in which to keep yourself regulated. And how do we do that? We know that life is stressful, and the antidote to stress is the relaxation response, which is different than relaxing, putting your feet on good book, watching a movie, that's relaxing. I get that. The relaxation response is a response that you can elicit in your own body, and when you do, it literally counteracts the effects of stress. So stress causes havoc in the body, the stress, when we're in a stressful situation, the same chemicals that get released in your body during fight or flight are released during stress just in lower amounts, but for longer periods of time. And it's quite unhealthy for us, not only physically, but mentally as well.

And so, one of the greatest things that is available to us that we don't actually need money to pay for, is using our own bodies to help us relax. And the research that's been studied, if I told you, you would probably say, and your listeners would probably go, yeah, is she kidding? So here's what I'm going to tell you. The research says that doing these types of techniques 20 minutes twice a day, and that's the part that I said, your listeners are going to be like, what is she kidding, is what's been studied. But I'll tell you what it shows, and then I'll tell you what's realistic, okay?

So the research shows that people that do these types of things 20 minutes twice a day actually go to the doctor eight times less frequently. And so what we find is that people do better. They do better on

wellness scales, scales of general wellness, and depression scales, people who use these techniques. And so, I realized that for the average person who's feeling stressed and really busy, 20 minutes twice a day sounds absolutely unattainable.

I can tell you as a therapist, and I can tell you that I know dozens of other therapists who will say the same. If you could do five minutes twice a day, it will make a tremendous difference. And so anything that you use, and there's a lot of stuff out there. So there's a lot of apps and many of them have free versions. They're either completely free, or they have a free version, and then you could do a paid version if you want.

I use YouTube myself, and I just don't watch what's on the YouTube. I just close my eyes and I let somebody guide me through either affirmations, which are positive statements about the self that you just listen to and sort of repeat in your own mind. And they have been shown over time to literally register in your subconscious so that they can actually help raise your self-esteem.

You could do guided meditation or guided imagery, and you just do simple searches on YouTube, for example, and you'll find dozens and dozens of YouTube videos. And like I said, just close your eyes and let the person's voice guide you.

I always suggest to people starting out with this, to begin with a minute or two minutes. Because when you're trying to quiet your mind, which is what meditation is all about, and you're trying to do it without somebody's voice guiding you, I've been in practice with this for a long time, and I don't do well without somebody's voice guiding me, so I own that. So some of us just need that. There's way too much chatter going on in my head, but when I have somebody's voice to guide me. And you might have to try out different people's voices, how frequently they come in or not, but to find something that works for you, you can even just take deep breaths.

You breathe into your diaphragm, which means all the way down into your belly. And if you've never done this before, you can put a hand on your stomach. And when you take that deep breath in, your hand should rise. And then when you breathe out, that hand should fall back down again. And so, that's how you practice taking some deep breaths. And you might just choose to start your practice by, I wake up in the morning, let me just take 10 long deep breaths. Let me do that to a count of four, 1001, 1002, 1003, 1004, and then I breathe out to that same count of four, and I do 10 of those. And maybe I do that somewhere later in my day too. And maybe that's how you start. And so no one's saying, oh, it's got to be the five minutes that she said, or it's got to be the 20 minutes. Anywhere you could find.

But what the research shows is that the more you do these things when you don't need them, when you do and you're in a stressful situation where you have anxiety about something, you're going to remember to do them because you've been practicing. And then when you start to do it, your body's going to remember, there's actually a term for this that's called, remembered wellness, that our bodies know what it's like to feel well, and our bodies want to go back to that feeling. So all you need to do is really just start a couple of those deep breaths and your body will go, oh, they're doing that thing, and your body will start to relax. And so, that to me is one of the most important or most beneficial things that people can take away, and start using right away. And it's just, even if you just do 10 breaths twice a day, that's easy to fit in.

John Boccacino:

I know with the holidays in the rearview mirror, it's easy to feel bummed out about the conclusion of the holiday period. And that kind of leads into seasonal affective disorder, which we're prone to here in central New York with our colder temperatures, our snowfall, and our gloomy skies. How would you define seasonal affective disorder, and what are some of the big symptoms, and how prevalent of an issue is this?

Tracey Marchese:

Yeah, seasonal affective disorder is real. It happens often in the fall, because our days get shorter. And so what happens is it can start to happen as soon as the days start getting shorter and shorter, and we have less and less sunlight. So we know that the shortest day of the year is the day of the winter solstice, which is December, I think, somewhere around the 21st, and then it'll start to get lighter again. But during those dark months, we get less sunlight, and it's believed that sunlight actually helps to trigger serotonin, which is the thing that helps us feel less depressed or feel more happy. And so if we have less production of serotonin, we might have more symptoms of depression. The other thing that's also being studied is melatonin, which is the sleep hormone. And again, that kicks in when it's dark out.

So those combinations of things can really affect our brain chemistry. And so for some folks it mimics it can go from anything from some more mild symptoms, like fatigue, and sort of feeling like I want to sleep more and maybe having trouble getting up in the morning. We may be craving more carbohydrates and maybe eating some more. And those are kind of the symptoms, but you can also have some symptoms of depression.

And so in the more severe cases, people can go into a full-blown depression that only happens during those months where there's less light. And so I will tell you, I don't get full on seasonal affective disorder, but I will get fatigue, which will usually set in for me sometime around beginning of February. So I actually take proactive steps to counteract that.

John Boccacino:

What are some things people can do proactively to deal with a seasonal affective disorder?

Tracey Marchese:

So for me, I actually use something called a light box, and these are, it's bright light therapy. And so believe it or not, I'm originally from New Jersey and I've been using a light box since I lived in New Jersey. Up here, it is a lot darker, a lot more cloudy days thanks to our lake effects snow machine up here. So I use a light box.

Now, light therapy is something that has been shown to help with seasonal affective disorder, especially the folks who don't go into full-blown depression. And how it works is you would need to get not just turning on some bright lights in your house, there's actually a special machine that, they're a lot more accessible than they used to be. So the one that I have is by a company that's been around for 30 years that specializes in light therapy. And any of the light boxes, but you can get them on Amazon now and they're about the size of a tablet. The thing that you want to look for is something that has 10,000 lux, L-U-X. So the light itself is 10,000 lux. Now, depending upon the size of the machine that you get, is how close you need to sit to it and for how long you need to sit in front of it.

So I have a very small little machine and I have to sit about 14 inches away from it, so it's pretty close I have to sit to it. Now, you don't stare at it or anything like that, but it needs to be shining on, shining near your eyes. You can be looking down, that's perfectly fine. You certainly don't have to stare at it, but you start with about a half an hour, and you do it every day, because it sometimes takes two or three weeks to start to see the results from it. And so you sit in front of that light or that light box for about 30 minutes a day. For me, I do it during my morning routine, so I might be eating breakfast or putting makeup on, so it's again, nothing that I have to just sit and do, right? Because who's got time?

I get it. But could we have it nearby with our morning routine where you might be able to do that. Certain people will need more time in front of that light box. The thing that's important if you decide, if your listeners decide, to do this is that you have to do it in the morning. You don't do this in the afternoon or the evening because it can actually disrupt your sleep cycle. But the bright light therapy has been shown to help. Vitamin D is another important piece. Even if you can just get outside in the light, it can be very, very helpful, especially if it's a sunny day. But vitamin D is the other piece of this. Vitamin D deficiency



is very common up here. Regardless of my routine and such, I have been vitamin D deficient since I've lived up here, at least twice in 16 years.

So it's very common in areas where we don't have a lot of sunlight in the wintertime. And that would be a blood test to go to your doctor and ask to have it tested because you might need vitamin D therapy, particularly in these winter months, and that can deplete your energy as well.

So there are ways to navigate that that have been shown. Like I said, both the light therapy and vitamin D, just even getting outside. Some folks will need professional help. And if you say to yourself, but why don't I feel this way? I'm usually fine. Why am I all of a sudden this way? Well, it might depend. This winter might be worse than other winters or with the lack of sunlight, we've had a lot of gray days recently. So that might be a contributing factor.

And so don't hesitate to ask for help. And it might be that your doctor tests you for D first before considering doing something like medication. They might suggest you get some therapy first, before they're going to go run right to medication. But not to say that medication, some people do need it just during those winter months, and then they don't need it in the spring and summer months.

John Boccacino:

There's a strong connection between how our mental health and well-being impacts our overall well-being. It's not two parts of the house that are separate from each other, they're codependent. They rely on each other and they feed off each other.

Tracey Marchese:

Absolutely. Our mind and body are always working together. And to ignore one is ignoring both, because one will affect the other, regardless.

John Boccacino:

It's really been a fascinating conversation. I hope our audience has enjoyed hearing the insights of Tracey Marchese, Professor of Practice in the School of Social Work. Really appreciate your expertise, sharing some pointers and tips for us on self-care, sticking to New Year's resolutions, and focusing on the mental health and well-being. Tracey, thank you for the time and best of luck with all your future research and your teachings.

Tracey Marchese:

Thank you so much for having me. I hope your listeners get something out of this.

John Boccacino:

Thanks for checking out the latest installment of the 'Cuse Conversations podcast. My name is Jon Boccacino, signing off for the 'Cuse Conversations podcast.