

THE TRULY AMAZING LIFE SHOW

with Aaron Kennard

EPISODE # 10

BILL DOUGLAS BRUSHES DEATH TWICE AND SHOWS US A SUPER HAPPY PERSON'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS LIFE

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Bill Douglas: It's so wonderful to watch, but if I look down, all I'm gonna see is mud. Everyone else is in it too, so why dwell on the negative. It's there I gotta walk through it, I'm just gonna do it but look where I'm going and look why. There's good around me, I just have to seek it out, I surround myself with amazing people and all of a sudden I started really enjoying my amazing life.

Aaron Kennard: Welcome to the Truly Amazing Life show where you get to learn about the right attitude and approach to take the life from people who have nearly died multiple times so that you don't have nearly die yourself. What a deal! And not only do not have nearly die yourself to learn this stuff, but it's free. Wow! I'm your host, Aaron Kennard and I'm looking forward to introducing you to my friend Bill who has a stunning attitude toward life, let's jump right in.

Alright, welcome to the Truly Amazing Life podcast. I'm excited today to have my good friend Bill Douglas on the line and Bill, as a quick intro, is the founder and CEO of Essential Link. He's a serial entrepreneur, he guides day to day operations and drives the company strategic vision and Essential Link provides cloud host to services, remote backup and DR and IT infrastructure management to companies all over the world. So Bill and I meet at entrepreneurial, well in the entrepreneur organization, we're good friends and Bill is committed to giving back. He's participated in a 10-day relief trip to Haiti. Weeks after the 2010 earthquake, he's been an active volunteer with junior achievement and YMCA youth sports for years and previously volunteer for the Denver

homeless shelter and his local church among other things. And so I'm really excited to have Bill on the line. Bill are you there?

Bill Douglas: I am. Thank you for the flattering introduction.

Aaron Kennard: Absolutely, are you ready to rock and roll?

Bill Douglas: Yes.

Aaron Kennard: Cool. Well, I brought Bill on line everybody because he lives a

truly amazing life, he's an amazing individual and he has some stories from his life that have led him there, that I think people should hear, so that's what we're gonna get, we're gonna dive in today. But, let's just start right off. Bill, what's makes life amazing to you right now?

Bill Douglas: Oh! Everyday is a gift, I didn't always realize I had an amazing life but I thank God I always had an amazing life.

Aaron Kennard: Yah.

Bill Douglas: When I almost lost it, by lost I mean lost my life. My perspective changed. I mean I had two near death experiences and I have another lifelong challenge some people may even deem depressing. And I just don't know it, I believe it that life is a gift. It's a gift meant to be pursued, to be shared and enjoyed, and I try to live that everyday.

Aaron Kennard: I love what you just said.

Bill Douglas: Happiness too. It is achievable and it's infectious so we have to help each other out along this happiness journey.

Aaron Kennard: Love it love it. I agree everything you just said. I love how you have said it's infectious that's why I'm exactly doing this, I like, I just wanna share people excitement about life so I just love getting people with your level of enthusiasm on here to share that with other people. And what you have said at the beginning was you always have a truly amazing life you just didn't realize it. That is so true. That's the truth for every single person. You're alive on this planet that means you been given a gift of a truly amazing life. And it's now it's time to realize that today, right?

Bill Douglas: Absolutely, I mean when I came back from Haiti, I realized I hit the lottery just by being born here.

Aaron Kennard: Exactly.

Bill Douglas: Only Five percent of the population of the world that I got to be born

in United States as an American, and that was an amazing gift right there just realizing that.

Aaron Kennard: I mean you got, that's such a huge contrast, but then even take that further look at those people in Haiti. They got an amazing gift just for being born, right? For getting a body.

Bill Douglas: They are so happy and had absolutely nothing. They had their life, and their time, and their family but they had no things, like we're so attached to in our country.

Aaron Kennard: On that note, how would you relate their happiness how happy they were from your perspective compared to most people you see here in America.

Bill Douglas: Oh gosh dude. The kids where always happy, they could ball a duct tape and turn it into a game. All they wanted to do is play.

Aaron Kennard: Uh huh.

Bill Douglas: There wasn't the boredom phenomenon. People were glad, granted they were still in shock, you know there is death everywhere, piles of bodies. Then people were just glad to be alive, but I think that Haitian people are really like that to start with. It's lower than a third world country. It's considered a fourth world country. So that was a shock for me to go, I thought I gonna do construction, end up working in the hospitals to see both extremes of life, a woman having a baby in one room and somebody dying in the next. I'm not even in the medical profession, so it was quite interesting experience.

Aaron Kennard: Wow! That is interesting. Well let's jump into your story here. You mentioned you've a had, you've had the number of experiences so, take us back to the experiences that change of perspective made you realize how amazing the gift this life is. Bring us

back to one of those that made a huge impact on you. Give us more details.

Bill Douglas: Ok. I was 28. I was a corporate jock, quickly climbing the ladder you

know, at CEO aspirations fast moving always on track I thought I can conquer the world. This was a fortune 500 company and I was on the executive track. I was in great physical shape, I mean I used to race bikes, and play beach volleyball competitively.

Aaron Kennard: Uh huh.

Bill Douglas: And one day that all changed. I got bit by a coral snake, while building a deck for my parents as a gift, and within minutes I was paralyzed. I was in full respiratory arrest. I had no idea that I was bit. So, literally within five minutes I was in the hospital. They're trying to figure out what's wrong with me. You know, stripped my clothes off looking for entrance wounds.

Aaron Kennard: You got lucky. Luckily you've got somebody was there to take you to the hospital, right? Right away I guess.

Bill Douglas: I was fortunate that my dad my working from home that day. Aaron Kennard: Uh huh.

Bill Douglas: And he picked me up, and I'm a big guy, but he picked me up, put me in the car and drove about a hundred miles an hour to the hospital. And that is actually the wrong thing to do for anybody that was injured, just call 911.

Aaron Kennard: Yeah.

Bill Douglas: Yeah. If he had waited the red light, I would have died in the car. Aaron Kennard: Yeah.

Bill Douglas: But while you're in a respiratory arrest, you're conscious. You are paralyzed but you are conscious. You can see and you know what's going on, so your brain is thinking. And all of that stuff I mentioned, the money, the jobs, the sports, the travel, the busy, the friends, the tiles, none of them mattered and I didn't think about it not mattering. I just didn't think of it.

Aaron Kennard: Yeah.

Bill Douglas: Life mattered. The doctor came up to me and said "Mr. Douglas, you may not make through this, but this is what we had to do to try and save your life." Hearing that, that was far from pleasant. So

Aaron Kennard: Yeah.

Bill Douglas: That was fearful. I mean, it's terrifying.

Aaron Kennard: But it pretty quickly stripped away every other concern, right? I mean, there's no other thing on your mind at that point.

Bill Douglas: Nothing. Nothing. It's a survival mode. Aaron Kennard: Yeah.

Bill Douglas: You're down to the core basis of life. Aaron Kennard: Ok. So, what happened?

Bill Douglas: They're going to give you this anti-venom. It may kill you, but if we don't give it to you, you will die.

Aaron Kennard: Wow. That's crazy. So, what ha- so take us through then. What happened? What's so impactful about that?

Bill Douglas: Well recovery, I just had to stay in ICU by the week, so recovery left plenty of time to digest the feelings of fear, the feelings of accomplishment, the feelings of desire.

Aaron Kennard: Uh huh.

Bill Douglas: In few things with a much clearer lens on life. Not on things, but on life itself. It changed me as a person. It changed how I lived, because it changed how I viewed, and how I loved life.

Aaron Kennard: And that was kinda, a transformation in that week while you're, just that moment and then that week in the hospital, just really changed your whole perspective on everything?

Bill Douglas: It absolutely did. I decided when I was laying there in the hospital that I was dying with a corporate job. I always wanted to have a real company, you know I was a scrappy entrepreneur. As a kid, I wanted to have a real company. So I went and started one. I wanted to

stop waffling, playing with, being on the fence. So I begin dating very seriously, the woman that became my wife. And I wanted to start a family.

Aaron Kennard: Yeah.

Bill Douglas: We started saving money to build a house. Then I started doing more long-term goals that had substantial, where with all behind it rather than just shoot from the hip then won this title.

Aaron Kennard: Yeah, titles become pretty insignificant when you realize some of those things, right?

(Laugh)

Bill Douglas: Absolutely. Absolutely. And I did get away from that. I, you know it was easy to live that way for five or seven years, but then the kids come and you're in a routine, work-home work-dinner-bedtime-exhaustion.

Aaron Kennard: Yeah. I can relate to that one very much so

Bill Douglas: Yeah. I know. Different stage of fatherhood than I am, but

Aaron Kennard: Yeah.

Bill Douglas: I can relate, so you lather-rinse-repeat. And you do that

Aaron Kennard: Yeah. Also take us there then, you got into, you got into some kind

of a rut or maybe you fell away from this whole passion for life through that, getting into that rut or what?

Bill Douglas: I did. I fell away with it. From it, I got caught up in starting another business and trying to, you know do this vacation or get this car, or upgrade to this house. I did fall away from it. Guilty as charged and I've had a couple of experiences that bring me back on track since then.

Aaron Kennard: So take us there.

Bill Douglas: It's a matter of viewing those as not bad, but good.

Aaron Kennard: I really like your I'm really intrigued by this because some people, I mean I've talked to just have this one amazing experience and they're all on their way for life but sounds like you've

kinda have gone through a lot of life so far. So take us through what happens then. So you find yourself getting caught more back up in the things and accomplishments, some things like this, letting that dictate your happiness for a minute there, and then what happened next? What happened to get you out of that again?

Bill Douglas: I was told by a doctor that I had a medical condition that a lot of people wouldn't like. I'd rather not go into the details, but dealing with that is another grounding experience. Your kids are sitting in the office here with you and your wife and you know, you hear you're not gonna be able to do this, you're not gonna be able to do that. So that was downright depression for a few months of shock, you know?

Aaron Kennard: Yeah.

Bill Douglas: Almost 20 years to the day after I, let's say it was 19 years to the day after I had the snake bite. the USA Today got wind off the story and read an article about it. How near death experiences changed entrepreneurs lives.

Aaron Kennard: Yeah.

Bill Douglas: The very next day after that article ran in the USA today. Read in on

Tuesday, February, two years ago. The very next day I crashed skiing Breckon Ridge. Now I'm a lifetime snow skier, wasn't doing anything outrageous other than skiing fast. And I woke up six hours later, again, paralyzed, after a helicopter ride and a surgery that I don't remember in Denver.

Aaron Kennard: Oh my God.

Bill Douglas: And it happened in Breckon Ridge. Aaron Kennard: Wow.

Bill Douglas: So that was, you know 25 minute flight and six hours later I woke up with the bunch of my friends in the E.R room, not E.R, O.R. E.R waiting for O.R. Excuse me.

Aaron Kennard: So you were unconscious for six hours? Bill Douglas: I was. Yes.

Aaron Kennard: Wow.

Bill Douglas: I don't recall the first surgery, shattered 13 bones and punctured a lung and had aortic bleeding and a concussion and blew up my shoulder all the same time, like in one instant. There's all upper torso damaged, and that again was another, you know, you might not walk again story. You can't feel your toes, you can't move your legs. So as you lay there in the hospital room, you can either feel bad for yourself or count your blessings. And I chose to do the latter, because I didn't want my son to see me like that. I knew they were coming to the hospital. So I intentionally had to change my attitude.

Aaron Kennard: Yeah.

Bill Douglas: So that experience was two years ago, and now that was what I would call my refresher course.

(Laugh)

Aaron Kennard: It's funny how life hands us those so perfectly, right? When you need them for some reason, right?

Bill Douglas: Yes.

Aaron Kennard: I guess that's the way I choose to look at in anyway.

Bill Douglas: It was, it was good timing. I would much rather do something than own something now. That became very clear from that experience. I always pursue, I've personal core values that are clarified since then. I always had 'em but I know what they are and pursue unique shared experience like all those USE's. U- S-E.

Aaron Kennard: Uh huh. U-S-E?

Bill Douglas: U-S-E. I always pursue the USE. Aaron Kennard: That's cool.

Bill Douglas: Not how to USE something, but U-S-E is what I call Unique Shared Experience. Because, I could have a shared experience sitting at home on the back deck having a nice conversation with somebody while the sun sets.

Aaron Kennard: Yeah.

Bill Douglas: It doesn't have to be extravagant. I don't have to be on the other side of the world. It's the shared experience part that makes it special.

Aaron Kennard: So that was, did that come since that experience? I mean that reawakening, that refresher course as you called it?

Bill Douglas: That refresher course? Of course, yes it did. The last quote on USA Today article, they asked me to say something and I said "Life's a gift, meant to be pursued, shared, and fully enjoyed." And that was the last line in the article. So that's

Aaron Kennard: So, the next day is when you're just about died again?

Bill Douglas: The very next day. Around Tuesday, and then on Wednesday, I've been by 9:30 on Wednesday morning I was in a helicopter being flown to Denver.

Aaron Kennard: You said life was a gift, meant to be what? Can you repeat that for me?

Bill Douglas: Pursued, to be shared, and to be fully enjoyed. Aaron Kennard: Yeah. That's awesome.

Bill Douglas: So, you know my friends, they harass me about the guy that always says that life's a gift, but it is. Not all gifts are as nice as you want them but they're all gifts.

Aaron Kennard: Yeah. So you look at all those experiences then as gifts even though they were all insanely challenging.

Bill Douglas: I have to. Look at what I got out of them.

Aaron Kennard: Yeah. That's it. I mean what else are you gonna do, right? You can choose to be, you can choose to be ticked with what happened to you or you got sick or whatever, right? But what's that gonna do to help you in the end? I love your attitude on that.

Bill Douglas: Well, I uhm, I don't know. The one piece of advice people tend they tend to say what did you get most out of all these things?

Aaron Kennard: Yeah.

Bill Douglas: And honestly, the way I deal with it. Everybody has challenges. Everybody has trials and tribulations. We're all walking through the same mud of life, so to speak.

Aaron Kennard: Uh huh.

Bill Douglas: Like we're knee deep into it, let's pull it on our shoes. I choose not to look down. I choose to look on the horizon or up the mountain top where I want to go and it's not out of insanity or denial. It's just that, now if I look where I'm going and I look at the other people I'm on this walk with, it's so wonderful to walk, but if I look down, all I'm gonna see is mud. Everyone else is in it too.

Aaron Kennard: Yeah.

Bill Douglas: So why dwell on the negative? It's there. I gotta walk through it. I'm just gonna do it, but look where I'm going and look why. You know, there's good all around me, I just have to seek it out. I surround myself with amazing people and all of a sudden I started really enjoying my amazing life.

Aaron Kennard: That's awesome. That's such a great way to put it. I could not put that better. Thank you so much for sa-synclly sharing that with everybody. Well, Bill, let's just move forward to couple of question and more advice for other people and first off, you're familiar with the 12 pillars of a Truly Amazing Life post that I have? Of those, which one of those 12 pillars stands out to you most right now and why is that?

Bill Douglas: It's in joy. Have to be in joy. Pursue the USE Aaron Kennard: Yeah.

Bill Douglas: Unique Shared Experience. You rain joy, not just to yourself, but to others. So you get to positively impact others which is another personal core value in mine.

Aaron Kennard: Yeah.

Bill Douglas: So it's enjoying. If I had to pick a second it would be gift.

Aaron Kennard: Love it. Well, it seems to be the, that's kinda seems to be the core of what you are. What makes you so happy and you just, I like how you I like that

acronym. I've got another acronym from somebody else recently. I love when people have those acronyms that keep them on track, I mean like having that, sounds like it just keeps you on the track to remembering that core value of yours all the time, right? That USE thing. That's pretty cool. Well, what one book would you most highly recommend to someone to help them really start living a Truly Amazing Life?

Bill Douglas: Oh. Do I have to pick one?

Aaron Kennard: Yeah. Pick one. Pick your top one. I know it's hard cause there's a million good books out there, I mean that's why I wanna make this question hard on you. It can't be easy. What one book you say you'd recommend?

Bill Douglas: I'm not good at remembering how many books I've read. So, the last book that I found very, very helpful to me, it's not that spiritually even though it sounds like. It's by Dalai Lama. You know, I'm not even a Buddhist, but the art of happiness goes in discussing who we are as people, and how religions, many religions digest it, and how you can actually seek happiness and a lot of it starts with you looking inward, leaning into feelings and acknowledging them, not denying them. Realizing what you do have versus what you want.

Aaron Kennard: Yeah.

Bill Douglas: So the Art of Happiness is a ten year old book, but I just read it. It's probably one of the most impactful ever I've read in the past year.

Aaron Kennard: Awesome. Thanks for sharing that. That's cool. The Art of Happiness by the Dalai Lama?

Bill Douglas: The Art of Happiness.

Aaron Kennard: Yeah. Cool. Well, thanks for all the pointers you've given us and just sharing your story and being real with that. There's some amazing lessons you shared and let's just wrap up then, just for

the listeners, to get a hold of Bill, if you wanna see what he's doing in his company, it's essentialink.com. That's the, that's your website. Is there any other contact info or anything you'd wanna leave with

anybody besides that? Or any parting words of thoughts or advice before we wrap up Bill?

Bill Douglas: Parting words, one of my mentor told me "Slow down physically so you can listen more, and savor the relationships you already have." You can take that in any direction you want. Whether that's now or in the future, but surround yourself with those that want the same things you do. So my contact info is [bdouglas@essentialink](mailto:bdouglas@essentialink.com) and there's only one L in there .com. and you can call me 720 259 4975.

Aaron Kennard: Cool. Thanks for sharing that Bill and I'll put up all the info on this call on the call notes at trulyamazinglife.com/podcast. And with that, let's just wrap up, I'll let you get back to your day and have a fantastic day everybody and thanks again being on the line Bill.

Bill Douglas: It's been an honor Aaron. Thank you very much.

Aaron Kennard: Ok. Talk to you soon my friend. Thanks for tuning in today. If you like this call and if you think it would bless somebody else's life to hear it, please go over to iTunes and leave us a review. You can click the link to this show over at trulyamazinglife.com/episode10. If you want a direct link so you could just go over and leave a review. Also, over that website trulyamazinglife.com/episode10, you can get a link to the show notes, and the link to the book that Bill recommended here. And that's all for today. Thanks again and make today amazing.



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They share their transformational stories and key insights that enabled them to start living a life full of passion, love, fulfilment, and joy.

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Thank you in advance!

- Aaron Kennard