

Baehr & Curadh Podcast

Episode 001

Premier Episode

Baehr: Hello from Baehr and Curadh, a podcast from the Land of Awes Information Services.

Baehr: I love you, Curadh.

Curadh: I love you, too, Baehr.

Baehr: This is the Premier episode of The Baehr and Curadh podcast. We're going to tell you a little bit about ourselves and answer a few questions.

Baehr: What's your first question, Curadh?

Curadh: Why do you call me Curadh?

Baehr: There is a banner over there on the wall from the Notre Dame football team. You're a big Notre Dame football fan. Yes. And the banner says, Play like a champion today. Well, you are my champion. And the word champion in Irish is Curadh.

They say that couples who have names for each other do better. Couples that have their own idioms and expressions are more successful couples. And I think that this is definitely a thing for us and it works and we're going to continue to do it.

Curadh: I agree.

Baehr: Why do you call me Baehr?

Curadh: Obviously, we're part of the gay community. Part of the gay community is the Bear community. You kind of fit that stereotype, the bigger man, hairy. It might sound funny, but I don't call you Bear. I call you Baehr. It's kind of different. It sounds silly. It's just a nuance in the way that I call it Baehr. Like you said, not pet names. They're names for each other. They're endearing terms that we use for each other. It's an easy way to get your attention in a public place. And you're my Baehr.

Baehr: Like when we go to a restaurant where we have to place an order and pick it up, we'll ask, What's the name for the order? And I'll say, Baehr.

I suppose if my name was actually Bear Gryllis, that would make more sense. But sometimes we get some quizzical looks. And sometimes I don't always speak very plainly. So, people often say or ask what that is. I remember one time a woman asked what name on the order, and I said Baehr, and she put it on the ticket and it said, B-A-R-E.

Curadh: Or the one time when they called out your name and they said, "beer".

Baehr: Yes.

Curadh: So, I don't think it's that you're very quiet. You're not a loud individual. You're very soft spoken. And I think that's why sometimes they have a hard time gathering what you're saying.

Baehr: Especially in a noisy atmosphere.

Curadh: Yes.

Baehr: How long have we been married?

Curadh: It was six years this past May 30, coming up on seven years. But I don't know if you're aware or not, but this coming November 18, we would have known each other for ten years. We would have met ten years ago this November 18.

Baehr: It does not seem that long ago. And how do you remember such fine details like that?

Curadh: I have a weird memory like that. I can recall weird things like that. I can remember conversations with what people were wearing, where the conversation took place, who was all there? It's just kind of strange. I joke with people that. Yeah, I used to consume a lot of beer, but I still have a pretty good memory because I can remember odd things like that.

Baehr: In fact, didn't we get married just right after the Supreme Court decided that it was legal?

Curadh: It was shortly before we got married May 30, and the Supreme Court federally recognized it sometime in early July. I'm a terrible gay person for not knowing the exact date. But I remember you actually calling me at work in tears because you were so excited that it was federally recognized because you never thought that you would ever see this in your lifetime. And it was a very monumental time in any person's life to be viewed as equal.

Baehr: I suppose that's true because it was legal in our state for a few months before it was federally recognized. But we got married almost immediately as soon as it was available to us.

Curadh: We were together for a few years. Obviously, you proposed me on Valentine's Day, and I said, yes, of course. Do you remember how you proposed?

Baehr: Yeah. I Bought a lottery ticket on Amazon, that was a scratch off ticket that said, "Will you marry me?" And because I have Amazon set to send me announcements when things are shipped, we were in the car and we have Alexa in the car. When they shipped it. It said "you have a shipment arriving, and it's a proposal scratch off ticket" or something.

Curadh: We were driving to Dillon's. It gave a complete description of what such and such "Will you marry me" has been delivered. And you were yelling at the car. **"Google stop! Google stop!"**

It was rather amusing, but I was still surprised.

Baehr: Well, I guess you were surprised then. You weren't surprised when you scratched off the ticket because the cat was already out of the bag on that.

Curadh: What was your first impression of me?

Baehr: Okay, we met through a hookup app. I believe it was called Growlr. Something like Grindr, but it was for the bear community. And we thought pretty much it was just going to be a hook up. That's all it was.

But I remember when you took your shirt off. There's something in my head that said, "this guy is interesting." And after we talked, you were even more interesting. And you're a very handsome man. I know you don't always believe that or want to believe it. But it's true. And that was my first impression of you. It was a very good one.

Baehr: What was your first impression of me?

Curadh: I remember meeting you because we set a place to meet, and I remember you're like, "I'm going to wear a hat that says bear." And I remember walking into the bar. I was watching football with my friends all day long. I'm a big sports fan, and I remember walking in and looking at you at the end of the bar. And I was like, oh, ho, damn. Yes, he is a bear.

And I was just incredibly enthralled with you. You're very sexy. You're even more sexy now.

I don't know. But like you said, it was supposed to be a hookup and where we are now, it wasn't too long before we knew it was going to be more than that. No, we tried to keep our distance.

I remember having a conversation after coming over after because we met. It was a Sunday night, saw each other, like, two or three more times that week. And I remember you setting me down that Wednesday. Actually, you sent me down. You're like, okay, this is fun, but this is just a hook up type thing. And then I think it was two days later, you called me up and you're like, I want to talk to you. And we talked. And I think you told me people at work had never seen you so happy. And I was enthralled at you at that moment.

So, I was so happy that you said that to me because I really didn't want to break it off with you. So, yeah, after that, we've been together ever since through thick and thin.

Baehr: And there were a few times early in the relationship that were extremely challenging.

When you ended up in the hospital because of your diabetes and you had your leg amputated. It was a tough time.

But I met your mother at that time. She came into town, and I met all of your friends. I remember I came into the room and there was, like, nine people in the room who loved you. And I don't think, well, I was kind of rude to them because I said, "could you all please leave for a few minutes so we could be alone together." But you dealt with the amputation pretty well.

Curadh: Yeah, I think I dealt with it pretty well, but I had such a good supporting cast. My friends, my mom was in town. I think I was kind of in denial in the beginning.

I remember when it kind of all hit me when I got back to the apartment, probably about a week and a half after I got amputated. My mom was still in town. You weren't there. It was early. I think it was sometime during the week, and I just lost it. Just lost it. I was throwing things around. I got mad. I think I tripped. I was in my walker, and I joked with my mom. I said it was a good thing those walls were concrete because I was pretty upset. Rightfully so.

And my mom, she knows how I am. So, she just kind of got up and walked out of the apartment. Let me do my thing. And after I got that out, I was there. But, yeah, I think I handled it pretty well.

Like you said, we've had our ups and downs. But when that happened, I knew you were there for the long run. I knew it was kind of like an epiphany like you were there. No matter what. If you could deal with all my friends, my mom and me losing my leg, that you weren't just some fly by night thing.

Baehr: Well, I think that's interesting because it never occurred to me that I would be. How do I put that?

We were obviously very much in love, and I wasn't going to end that because you lost your leg.

Curadh: Yeah, but, I mean, sometimes big problems like that can separate people. I mean, there's smaller problems that people go through and they give up on each other. I was getting out of a pretty bad relationship, with a pretty toxic relationship. I guess I was pretty jaded.

Baehr: I guess that just really proves the level of love that we have for each other.

Curadh: Yeah.

Baehr: Without a doubt, even though we are just so totally separately. Different, complete polar opposites, there is nothing that we're the same in.

People are amazed at how well we do with each other. People who know you, people who know me, comment that we couldn't be any more different.

Curadh: Yeah. I mean, my coworkers always constantly complement you, complement me, complement our relationship. But, yeah, we are completely different interests. But I guess our biggest interest is in each other.

Baehr: Yeah. And we complement each other. My strengths are your weaknesses and your strengths are my weaknesses. So together we make a pretty good team.

Baehr: Yeah, I completely agree.

Baehr: What's our secret way of saying, "I love you?"

Curadh: We both do it, and we seem to do it when the other person needs it the most. I think. We basically put our right hand over our hearts and just look at each other. And it's our way of saying, "I love you" in a public place without saying it out loud. But it's our way.

And I think it's more sincere than just verbally saying. It makes me smile and warm inside. It sounds hokey every time that we do it, though.

Baehr: It is very heartfelt when our eyes lock, our hands go over our hearts like that, and it has its advantage that you could do it in a very quiet place that would be disruptive.

Curadh: Yes.

Baehr: And we can do it in a very loud place where we can't even hear each other. It's like our secret handshake. I guess it's another Idiom that we have developed, kind of like our names for each other.

Curadh: Yeah, our secret language.

Baehr: And it works well for us.

Curadh: I think so, too.

Curadh: What's your favorite joke right now?

Baehr: What is my favorite joke?

Okay, what is the stickiest substance in the universe?

Curadh: What is the stickiest substance in the universe?

Baehr: A stick.

Curadh: God. Okay. Got me again.

Baehr: What do you think we should talk about in future episodes?

Curadh: One of my biggest interests, sports.

Baehr: I don't think anybody could be a bigger sports fan than you are.

Curadh: There's probably some out there, but I don't know many.

Curadh: If there's any kind of sports on TV, you'll watch that over anything else.

Yeah, I'll admit that readily. I'll admit that. You joke, if there's a ball in it, I'll watch it.

Baehr: Not even if there's a ball. I mean, you watch swimming, you watch skiing.

Curadh: Yeah. When the Olympics are on, I'm in hog heaven.

Baehr: You can't see me in this podcast, but my eyes just rolled at the mention of the Olympics.

Curadh: You probably heard them roll.

Baehr: And it's not necessarily just Olympics because it seems like any kind of competition... You seem interested in it.

Curadh: Yeah.

Baehr: There was a game show. What was it called?

Curadh: College bowl.

Baehr: College bowl, which was really like a trivia or a knowledge competition where they would ask questions and these college kids would answer it. And you watch that. And that's not really a sport.

Curadh: No.

Baehr: But obviously you enjoyed it.

Curadh: Yeah, it's a competition. I watch Jeopardy, which you despise.

Baehr: Yes. I don't care for Jeopardy because there'll be important questions, like "who discovered that the Earth revolves around the sun" and

they'll get that wrong. But they'll ask a question, like, "how many balls of lint did Napoleon have in his pockets when he died" and they'll get that answer right?

Curadh: Yeah. It's kind of silly.

Baehr: It's silly trivia, especially the way they word it sometimes. So I find it annoying.

But then I don't like any kind of games.

Curadh: No.

Baehr: I mean, not really any. Not video games. Nothing. Not board games. I never really have. As a child, I played games with my sister because she wanted to play games, and it was just my sister and I, but I've never cared for games, especially Monopoly. So boring.

I think there is a perception that computer programmers like me, (that's my profession), that all computer programmers are gamers. But that's definitely not true for me. I don't care for video games at all.

Curadh: Absolutely no interest whatsoever. Whereas I play video games. I play every Friday with friends from back home in New Jersey.

Baehr: It's definitely a minority opinion. Think I most people like video games. I think most people like games of some kind.

I don't know if it's the competition? I don't think it's all the competition. It just seems like a waste of time to me that I could be doing something productive.

Curadh: Yeah, that could be it.

Baehr: We'll probably also talk about Star Trek because Star Trek is a really big thing for me.

Curadh: Very big.

Baehr: I am an original Star Trek fan. I watched the original episodes back when it was on once a week. In the evenings. There was a time when my mother wouldn't let me watch because there was an episode called Arena, which had a big lizard guy who was fighting Captain Kirk, and she thought it would scare me. But I loved the show, and when it went into syndication, I could watch it every afternoon after school and it just became a part of my DNA. So that's something I'm pretty sure we'll talk about.

For instance, I'll probably ask you questions about things I don't understand about sports, and you can ask me questions about what you don't understand about Star Trek.

Curadh: Sounds good.

Baehr: We'll probably talk about gay marriage. We talked about our marriage a little bit already. It's something that I never thought I would ever see in my life.

Curadh: Neither did I. Just a really, totally surprising thing that I think most gay people would say they really never expected to see it in their lifetime.

Baehr: We'll also talk about diabetes. We're both diabetic type one and type two.

Curadh: I'm type one. You're type two.

Baehr: A lot of people probably don't know the difference, but they're treated about the same. I think there's quite a lot to cover there.

We'll talk about disabilities. We should also talk about our smart home devices. It's kind of related to disability. We have a lot of smart devices in our home that turn on the lights.

Curadh: Yeah. Heat and the air conditioner and everything. I think that has a lot to do with your love. Star Trek, though, too.

Baehr: Yes, I definitely am living in a Star Trek future where I can say "turn on the light" and it comes on. And when you have a disability, you don't have to get up with a walker or get up with the scooter to turn on the light. You can just say "turn on the light". It does make things a lot easier.

We should talk about AIDS and survivor guilt.

Curadh: Yes.

Baehr: I think everybody knows that AIDS is the global pandemic.

Survivor guilt is a little bit more of a complex topic. In the late 80s and early 90s, up until Y2K, I ran a computer bulletin board system called The Land of Awes, spelled A-W-E-S. I had a lot of resources of information. My bulletin board exchanged information nightly with other gay bulletin boards in the United States.

This was before the Internet when your computers connected to each other over the phone lines, and I had access to all these resources, and other people in town didn't. So, I opened the Gay Information Line, and the

number was listed in the phone book. People could call if they had questions about anything, if they needed counseling. Most of the people were visitors from out of town, who wanted to know where the gay bars were, but there was all kinds of information available.

I worked with a lot of really great people -- who were people who had AIDS, and all of those people are dead now.

Curadh: It's heartbreaking.

Baehr: I'm the only one left. They call that survivor guilt. That's a topic that I think we should cover in the future.

Curadh: I think so, too.

Baehr: Well, that's probably enough for our first episode. I hope everyone's enjoyed listening.

This is Baehr...

Curadh: This is Curadh... signing off.

Baehr: You have been listening to the Baehr and Curadh podcast A production of the Land of Oz Information Services. We can be contacted via email using the address podcast@awes.com and Awes is spelled A-W-E-S.