

Baehr & Curadh Podcast

Episode 002

Plagiarism

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 episode two of the Baehr and Curadh podcast. We're going to answer a few questions that will tell you a little bit about ourselves.

Curadh: Okay, Baehr, what is your biggest pet peeve?

Baehr: That's pretty easy. That would be people who park in handicap stalls who shouldn't be. You see it from time to time. It bugs me so much. I have to comment on it, and you probably get tired of hearing about it.

Curadh: No, not really. It's a pet peeve of mine, considering my disability, but it happens way too often. Probably see it on a daily basis.

Baehr: Well, the place where you work has two handicap stalls just right in front of the doors. And pretty much every time I go there to drop you off or pick you up from work, somebody is parked in one of those stalls who shouldn't be.

Curadh: Yeah.

Baehr: They have no tag with the handicap icon. They have no placard now. Granted, I suppose every once in a while, somebody who legitimately has gone through the paperwork and gotten the handicapped paperwork and should have a tag or a placard. They just forgot to put the placard up. Every once in a while. That happens to us. We just forget.

Curadh: Yeah, I would agree. But I still think most of the people who park there are doing it illegally and not. I think they're just lazy human beings.

Baehr: And I think if they realize that in our city, it is a \$500 fine.

Curadh: Yeah, but the problem is the police don't guard against it or do anything against it, which is, I can understand, but they don't police it. The police don't police that.

Baehr: And maybe if they just happen to be going into a business and they see it, they might write a ticket. I don't think they're actively ignoring it, do you?

Curadh: No, I don't think so. I think that's the case. There's bigger fish to fry per se.

Baehr: Yeah. And I guess there's kind of a confirmation bias when people do it, the more times they do it and get away with it, the easier it becomes for them to continue to do it.

Curadh: Yeah. Well, do you remember the other day when you pulled up the drop me off? There was a gentleman that pulled in right before us, and he parked. His wife jumped out. We parked right behind them. I went in the front door. One of my coworkers saw them do it, ran over to the woman and told her, you need to move now. And I was kind of proud of my coworker for doing that. It made me feel good. I was proud of her, but the gentleman immediately started backing out.

But it needs to happen more often where I work. Like you said, the stalls are right in front of the front doors, and I work right in front of those doors, and I see it constantly over, over and over again. But I can't go out and tell people to move, because first off, I'm busy in the first place. I just can't stop what I'm doing. And then if the placard is not up in the window, it doesn't say that they don't mean they could still have a tag, and I don't have the time to run out. Look behind the car, see if there's a tag that says handicap, so I just can't do it myself.

But it was kind of nice that my coworker stepped up and made a comment. And apparently there's another coworker that does the same thing on a daily basis.

Baehr: That's interesting. I believe our city also has what I think they call the ambassador program, where people who they're sort of like deputized. When they see a car that's parked in a handicap spot, they take a picture of the car and take a picture of their tag and send it off. And I believe the city mails them a ticket.

Curadh: You were telling me about that. I'm not that familiar with it, but yeah, from what I understand, that's maybe something we should look into.

Baehr: Yeah, because something that bugs me that much that would give me a feeling that I can do something about it instead of just complaining about it every time I see it.

Curadh: Yeah, something we could look into further.

Baehr: Okay. Next question. If you could go back in time and give your teenage self some advice, what would it be?

Curadh: That's a really good question. Probably to be proud of who I am and not second guess myself so much. It took me a long time to come out of a closet.

Baehr: How old were you when you came out?

Curadh: I believe I was 34 when I came out, about 33 or 34 when I came out.

Baehr: But you were in a relationship.

Curadh: Okay. I came out to my mother when I was 33. 34. Friends of mine known for years. So, I guess I don't know. I guess when I say coming out, I guess what it means to my mom and my mom's, my world.

I love my mom to the moon. So, in my first relationship, I was 26 years old when I first had a relationship or interaction. But, yeah, I didn't come out to my mom for more than nine years after that.

Baehr: You said that you would tell yourself to be proud. What do you mean?

Curadh: I question myself all the time. I have a lot. I'm full of self-doubt, anxiety, silly things.

I question everything I do. I don't know. I used to, not so much anymore, but I still worry about it. I still have anxiety over it.

Baehr: Do you mean like how you deal with people or how you appear to people or what?

Curadh: All of it, all of it.

Baehr: Well, do you think that you're following your advice that you'd give your teenage self?

Curadh: Yeah, I think so.

I don't know. It's something that I still deal with. I guess maybe if I addressed it when I was younger, more head on, then it would be better. I guess it's just part of my personality. It's just who I am.

Baehr: Well, I believe in the time that we've been together, you've improved enormously. You don't have as much self-doubt as you did when we first met.

Curadh: Okay.

Baehr: Do you think that's true?

Curadh: I think so. I think you've helped quite a bit with that.

Baehr: I think if you could see yourself the way other people see you, it would be such an improvement.

Curadh: Yeah, but you really can't. I think if you could bottle that, people would be able to solve a lot of problems. But people are their biggest critics.

Baehr: Do you think I'm critical of myself?

Curadh: No. You're very comfortable with who you are. And I'm not saying everybody's like that. You're lucky in that way. You're not very critical of yourself. I'm jealous of that. But whereas I am critical of myself, I know it. I admit it.

Baehr: I think in my life, there came a time when I just decided there was no need for shame.

Curadh: Yeah. We discussed that in the previous episode.

Curadh: If you could go back in time and give your teenage self advice, what would it be?

Baehr: My advice to my teenage self would be you are stronger than you think you are.

I remember most of my early life. I was afraid. I went to a Catholic school where we were taught to fear God, fear our own thoughts, fear our actions.

I didn't do a lot of things that I probably could have just out of fear. I think I would have a more rounded life if I wasn't afraid to do those things.

Curadh: Like what things?

Baehr: Like, even small things, confronting, like bigotry when I saw it or going to a different place, meeting different people. I was always afraid of those things I shouldn't have been.

My advice is that I can handle things that I didn't think that I could.

Curadh: Would you consider yourself an introvert or an extrovert?

Baehr: Definitely an introvert. I think you would agree with that.

Curadh: Yes, very much.

Baehr: I don't have a lot of friends. Most of the friends that I did have died, and I was always sort of a behind-the-scenes kind of person.

I guess I should say I have anthrophobia and anthrophobia is when you're terrified of being close to people. I don't mean emotionally close. I mean physically close.

For instance, one of the most terrifying things that can happen to me is if I'm in an elevator and the doors open and a whole bunch of people come in. Being that close to people just terrifies me. I don't know why.

They say that phobias are usually pretty deep-seated, that you have them pretty much from birth. But I don't recall in my youth being afraid of people being close to me. It's something that developed in adulthood.

I learned to deal with it. For instance, in the situation with the elevator, sometimes I will just excuse myself and get out and wait for another elevator, just because I can't deal with it.

Probably the most difficult thing for me to do is to get my hair cut. I don't have a fancy hairdo, so I cut my own hair. I cut it short, but it looks okay. So that's my way of dealing with that.

Going to the dentist is a terrifying thing for most people, but it's even more so for me. Having somebody up in my mouth.

I've learned various techniques to try and relax, to be hyper aware when something's going to happen.

Also, in some social situations, there'll be a case where somebody just part of their personality. They want to reach out and grab you or hug you. And I try to be prepared for that inevitability. Every once in a while, it surprises me. I'm pretty sure I've offended quite a few people with this look of horror on my face when they touch me, but I can't help it.

The definition of a phobia is an unreasonable fear of something, and I don't have any control over it.

Curadh: No, I've witnessed it, and I try to protect you from it. But like you said, sometimes it just happens. I've explained it to people and they completely understand when I do, and then they apologize.

They feel terrible because I'm a complete extrovert. You had to put up with me going out with me, and I know I have a very large group of friends, so it kind of goes back to what we said on in the first episode, that we're kind of completely different from each other.

I would say a large social circle. I don't go out to the bars anymore, but in my teens. When I was 20s, 30s, early 40s, I was out all the time. That's what I did. And so, I have a lot of people that I know.

So, to answer my own question to you, I guess I'm an extrovert. So, when you've gone out with me in those some occasions, I've tried to protect you in those situations where you're uncomfortable.

So, I remember going out for one of my birthdays. I believe it was we went to local bar at a friend of mine owns, and we moved actually over to a corner so you were more comfortable and your back was against the walls. People couldn't come up and surprise you.

Baehr: I do that every day, like restaurants and things just so I can be aware somebody comes up. But I'm sitting down in a restaurant and somebody sits down in the bench behind me, and all of a sudden, the seat kind of shakes, and if I'm not aware of it, it'll drive me crazy. So, we always try to sit someplace where I can sit with my back to the wall, where nobody can sit behind me without me knowing it.

Curadh: Yeah. We've been pretty good about it.

Baehr: I suppose it's another case of where your strengths are, my weaknesses and vice versa.

Curadh: Yeah. 100%. We've learned how to adapt.

Baehr: Do you think that my introversion limits you? Do you feel like you don't do as much because you don't think that I can deal with it?

Curadh: No. I mean, I could choose to do whatever I want. We're in a marriage. We're not in a lockdown (you tell me what to do, I tell you what to do). I just choose not to. I mean, I choose to spend my time with you. I have no regrets with that. I know if I want to go out, I can go out. I just choose not to before it was more of a social thing.

I don't drink anymore. So, I'm not going to the bar unless it's at a certain hour and I'm in and out. I don't want to be around drunk people, and it's nothing. My friends drink. It's just I choose not to be around them when they're intoxicated.

Baehr: And when you're not drunk yourself, drunk people aren't really a lot of fun to be around.

Curadh: And I love sports like we talked about in the last thing.

And one of my pet peeves is (I have a lot of pet peeves). But one of my pet peeves is when I go to a bar and I want to watch the game, I want to watch the game. I don't want to blather on with drunk people who aren't interested in the game.

So, if there's a game I'm interested in and I happen to be at the bar, I get up and leave before that game that I'm interested in, because I want to watch the game and not deal with drunk people. So yeah, Notre Dame's on and the 49ers playing the Red Sox. I'm out before the kickoff or the first pitch because I don't need some idiot blathering in my ear about stupid things. Sorry.

Baehr: And you have to realize that people go out for all kinds of reasons. It's a great big universe out there, and for every person there is there's a different reason for being where they are.

Curadh: Yeah. That's why I mastered the Irish Goodbye.

Baehr: What's the Irish Goodbye?

Curadh: Irish goodbye is when you excuse yourself, you say, hey, I need to use the restroom. Next thing you know, you're skirting out the front door without saying bye to any of your friends.

I've mastered it over the years, and all my friends know it. So, they'll try to keep an eye out and they still have never caught me.

Baehr: So, they expect it now.

Curadh: Oh, yeah, they know full well that I'm just going to disappear. I'm like a magician. I will up and just disappear.

Baehr: Did you learn that from me?

Curadh: No, I knew this years ago because I would go out. And when I decided to leave, I wanted to leave instead of sitting there and saying goodbye to people for a half hour to an hour. And I learned how just to sneak out without saying goodbye to anybody and jump into my car or getting a ride home. And that was it. And people will say, oh, just one more shot and you wind up staying half hour or 2 hours or you wind up shutting the bar down.

So, it's easier just to not say goodbye and you skirt out the door and I've mastered it. I'm a technician at it.

Baehr: I've never heard of it called the Irish Goodbye before.

Curadh: Yeah, that's what it's called.

Baehr: What was your favorite subject in school?

Curadh: It's going to sound silly. Probably art. I enjoyed art. I still sketch. I still illustrate. It's a way for me to escape, a way for me to deal with my feelings.

So, it was free period in class or school to do what I wanted to create what I wanted. I mean, I had other interests, but art was definitely my favorite.

Baehr: So, you doodled a lot.

Curadh: I doodled. I did everything I sketched. I painted. I doodled.

Baehr: Did that ever get you in trouble in school?

Curadh: No, I kind of hid it and just very nonchalant about it. I still did my studies. I still went to all my classes.

Baehr: Well, I went to a Catholic school, and if you doodled, I mean, that was just an ultimate sin, because you weren't paying attention. You weren't under the thumb of the nuns controlling your every thought and action.

Curadh: See, I went to a very large public school in South Jersey where the teachers probably could care less.

Baehr: And I suppose when you're in a boring social situation, like a family reunion or something, if you sat down with a pad and started sketching, nobody would question it. Nobody would say you shouldn't be doing that. It's completely socially acceptable.

You took a lot of art classes in school?

Curadh: Yeah, I took as many as I could.

Baehr: Kind of like I took a lot of English classes in school.

Curadh: Yeah, I took as many as I could.

So, what was your favorite subject in school?

Baehr: Probably science. And that's probably because I'm a Star Trek fan and have been since I was a little kid. And I always liked the science part of science fiction. A lot of the science that I learned. I learned through science fiction because a lot of the best science fiction writers like Arthur C. Clark and Isaac Asimov, they not only talk science, they explain science in the stories.

Curadh: Okay.

Baehr: Which made it made it more interesting for me. Possibly that wouldn't be the case for other people.

Curadh: Yeah, I didn't know that.

Baehr: Did you have a lot of science in school?

Curadh: Not really. I didn't enjoy it. I found it to be a bore. I was one of those students who really didn't apply themselves. I was a Jock. I couldn't wait to get out in the water. I had other things to do.

English was okay. History was fine. Science and math. I did not enjoy it. I made the excuses. As many young kids do. It's like, I'm not going to use any of this stuff and I regret it, but it's a part of life.

It's something I don't regret. I regret, but I don't regret it. It's part of just my personality. Some people are into it. Some people aren't.

Baehr: I never really liked math. Maybe because it was kind of boring.

Curadh: I agree with that completely.

Baehr: Teachers never really made any effort in making it interesting or fun, and there's, like, millions of wrong answers, but only one right answer. And I didn't care for that.

Although I do wish I had learned more calculus in high school and college because programming is my profession and a lot of programming is calculus

When they say "solve for X." X represents a value that is unknown until it's processed in some way. And programming is the same way. Instead of X, you have what they call a variable where you could put anything in that variable, and you have to write the program in such a way that if anything is put in there, that the program will still continue to work correctly. So, you have, like, an infinite number of possibilities in your software that you have to provide for. So, I think if I had spent a little bit more time on calculus, it would have made learning programming easier in the beginning.

Curadh: That's interesting.

Baehr: In school, I would have thought you would be more interested in sports.

Curadh: Yeah, it was very much so.

Baehr: The PE class was probably your favorite.

Curadh: PE is okay, but I had a scholarship to go to school. I had a scholarship for rowing. I couldn't wait to get out of school so I can get in a boat in row. I did it all four years in high school, fall, winter, spring, summer PE was okay. But the only varsity sport that I got interested in was rowing or how they call an East Coast was crew because it was an all-year thing.

There's a lot of kids who would play football in the fall and then winter sports would be basketball, and then spring sports would be baseball. Rowing was all year round, and I wanted to be in the boat. I wanted to be working out, getting ready for rowing. I couldn't wait to do it.

Baehr: My high school had no rowing team or any rowing activities. Most of the popular kids played football, I suspect at your high school, the popular kids were on the crew?

Curadh: Yeah. If you didn't make the rowing team, you went and played football. The basketball team was very good. But the rowing team was by far the biggest thing at that school.

The year after I won National Championship my senior year in high school, in the class that I was in the year after I left the Varsity Eight boat actually placed second in the world. They raced in the World Henley Regatta, which is holding the teams in London. You have to be invited. And they got second in the world.

Baehr: So that's how you got your scholarship for college. Was rowing?

Curadh: Yes. Mike Vestpoli makes some of the best shells in the world, which are the boats. The actual boat that people row in, is one of the best boat makers in the world. And he was a coach here. People race Vestpoli shells all the time. You'll see them in the Olympics, you'll see them in high school, College. You'll see them all over the place.

Baehr: And that's a local company?

Curadh: It's not a local company. But he was a coach here. He was one of the head coaches here. So, there's not much to row on, around here. Where I grew up, we had the Intercoastal Highway. Here, we have the Little

Arkansas or the Big Arkansas. And it's a lot of turning around. Where I grew up, I basically could row as far, as long as I wanted, before I had to turn around. But here, there's a lot of turning around.

Baehr: If you could live anywhere in the world, where would it be

Curadh: Well, I have to speak on someplace where I've been.

Baehr: Not necessarily.

Curadh: Probably Ireland. Probably Ireland.

Baehr: And you visited Ireland?

Curadh: I visited Ireland. I've been in Hawaii. I've been to Mexico. I loved Ireland. I love the people. I love the culture. I am Irish, but, it's the temperate weather. Some people don't like the gloomy wetness, but I do like that. It has a lot of that. But I like that.

But there's days of sunshine and stuff like that. A lot of people don't believe me, but like, I've been to Hawaii. Like I said, Ireland is greener than Hawaii. It's absolutely beautiful.

Baehr: Yeah. With all that rain and fog, it's such a temperate zone. Seattle is like that.

Curadh: And I mean, Hawaii is beautiful. But the reason I wouldn't want to live in Hawaii if I did live in Hawaii, it would be on one of the smaller Islands

like Hawaii would not want to live in Waipahu because it's like New York City on the beach.

Plus, it's the most remote chain in the world. So, for me to get back to mainland and, like, say, something happened to my mother, it would take me, like, 12 hours to get back.

If I lived in Hawaiian, and I had to get back to my mother. It would take, like, five to 6 hours.

Baehr: You've been in Ireland?

Curadh: Yes.

Baehr: How long did you visit?

Curadh: I visited for ten days.

Baehr: That's quite a long time.

Curadh: I went on a tour of island. It was with my mother and my sister a year after my father died.

Baehr: I imagine there's a lot of bars there.

Curadh: Oh, yeah. A lot of pubs. A lot of pubs. It's part of Ireland tradition. There's a lot of drinking.

Baehr: Did you do traditionally Irish touristy things, or did you visit, like, did you trace your family or anything like that?

Curadh: No, I didn't do that. But, yeah, we went on a bus tour of Ireland. My mom didn't want to rent a car.

Baehr: That sounds like my kind of vacation. The tourist. Do you think on a bus where you wouldn't have to worry about driving or where you're going to stay?

Curadh: Yeah. I mean, it was okay. It was neat because it was all set up, but I'm horrible when you get me into a moving vehicle. If I'm not driving, I'm falling asleep. And so, I slept a lot and they would talk. The bus driver would talk. I would wake up whenever we would stop and see the Castle we were going to or whatever.

And then we'd have dinner that night with the people who were young, it was mostly older people in the group.

Baehr: I think that there is sort of a reputation that bus tours are mainly old people.

Curadh: Yeah. And there was a few young people in the group, and we went out at night and we walked to the pubs and did stuff like that. So that was a lot of fun. But, yeah, it was interesting. I loved it. I learned a lot, but I would have preferred having my own car and doing and seeing him going wherever I want it to, when I want it to. Instead of being such a regimented trip.

Baehr: See, we're completely opposite again.

Curadh: You would have loved it. Yeah, I could see you just standing there with a summary of the trip. Time to go. Five minutes. We're getting on the bus. You would have loved it where I would have been like, I'm sleeping for another 30 minutes. I have a hangover.

Curadh: Where would you go?

Baehr: Honestly, it doesn't matter. I don't really care where I live as long as I'm near the people I love.

Curadh: Well, that makes my answer look shallow.

Baehr: There would be some rules. I would have to say it would have to be some place where I speak the language, you know, England or Australia or someplace where they speak English because I'm not going to be one of those people who goes somewhere and just fumbles around and doesn't know how to ask for something.

But I've never really been hung up about where I live. I don't have a huge wonder lust. There are things that I'd like to see, like I'd like to see the Smithsonian. I could probably spend a month there.

My first vacation that I ever took. When I had a really good job and had a lot of money, I went to Disney World for a week, but it was a package where you pay one price and you can do absolutely everything that you wanted to do.

And I figured out what I wanted to do each day and made my hotel reservations. And I made on a calendar. My restaurant reservations. Counted back the number of days that it took to get that reservation, and I put them on the calendar. And on those days, I called in and got my reservations like a month early.

It was a pretty good package. I believe I paid \$1,200, not including the airfare. And every time I did something, they give you this, like, credit card.

And every time you do something, they would swipe the credit card and give you a receipt. And when I got home, I counted up all of the things that I had charged on that \$1,200 card, and I had over \$2,000 worth of charges.

Curadh: If anyone's listening, how long ago was this trip? So people don't think because this is quite a while ago for \$1,200.

Baehr: Yeah. That would have been in the early 80s.

Curadh: Yeah. Okay.

Baehr: I believe I've heard complaints that Disneyland doesn't really have an all-expenses paid package.

Curadh: Now, if you did that at Disneyland, I think if you signed up and paid for a trip like that, it would probably cost about \$8,000 to \$10,000.

Baehr: But it doesn't really matter where I live. There are interesting things to do, no matter where you are.

Curadh: Yes, I agree.

Baehr: It doesn't even have to be expensive things. We don't go to concerts or things like that. We like walking in the park. And I have learned that I like putt-putt golf, and I can do bowling as long as it's the handicapped bowling with the ramp and bumpers up.

Curadh: Yeah.

Baehr: I don't have to live high on the hog. I think the fact that I'm unemployed now, lost my job a few months back. It's given us a chance to be together more. I mean, granted, we don't have the money we had before, but we don't have to spend a lot of money. But we do get to spend a lot of good time together.

Curadh: Yeah, definitely. I'd agree with that. 100%

Baehr: If you could be remembered for one thing, what would it be?

Curadh: That's a really tough question.

Probably that I'm just a nice person.

Baehr: I would agree with that. You are a nice person. You have lots of people who love you.

Curadh: How about you?

Baehr: I would want to be remembered for having helped people, even people who didn't realize that I was doing it, or that they were being helped.

I had a gay board system in the late 80s and early 90s. Well, up until Y2K.

I sponsored the gay information line in town so people who needed information could get it. After the bulletin board closed -- it closed because the computer I had literally could not handle Y2K -- and I couldn't patch it well enough to keep the bulletin board running. And after that, I didn't have the access to the resources that I had before.

And that year, I got the American Bear Award from American Bear magazine for outstanding service to the gay community.

The local gay organizations found out about it when they had pride. That year, they gave me the Lifetime Achievement Award, and I gave a speech, gave a nice little speech, and people applauded. But I remember thinking I'm just way too young to get the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Curadh: Yeah, that's a lot.

Baehr: After I kind of eased out of doing that, I really haven't helped people nearly as much. I've kind of withdrawn. And I don't know, maybe I'm resting on my laurels, but most of the people that I worked with in those days died in the AIDS pandemic. And I don't think there's really anybody left to remember that I did anything.

Curadh: That's too bad. That's really too bad. But I'm aware of it.

So, like we did last week, what is your favorite joke right now?

Baehr: Well, since we agreed that this is going to be a regular segment on each episode, I'm kind of under some pressure to tell a good joke. I hope I can live up to the expectations.

Here goes. I invented a new word today. Can you guess what it is?

Curadh: I'm afraid to even try. I don't know what word is it?

Baehr: Plagiarism.

Curadh: Oh, my God. Okay, well, with that, I have nothing else to say.
So that's enough for this episode. Sorry. I hope everyone enjoyed listening.
This is Curadh...

Baehr: And this is Baehr, signing off for now

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.