

**Tri-Cities Community Action Team presents:
Peer Photo project - Humanizing the Tri-Cities: Day in the Life Of**

“Be Okay with Janco”

Present: Janco, Roxanne and Samantha

Janco’s song recommendation: Hands up - Georgiou Music



Interview:

TC CAT: First question is, what brought you here to this place? What is your back story

Janco: I'm originally from South Africa and I came to Canada, first to go to school, and they roughly, and then I decided to take my permanent residency and become a citizen.

...make the life for myself here in Canada.

TC CAT: How long were you in South Africa for?

Janco: ...Well, first time I came to Canada was 15. So I was about 15 years in South Africa before I came to Canada, but I kept on going back.

But when I made the move permanent here for myself, was when I was 19.

TC CAT: Were you by yourself?

Janco: Yeah, yeah... By myself.

TC CAT: Wow, thats huge.

TC CAT: Anything else you'd like to add to the your backstory?

Janco: I just struggled with mental health and addictions from a very young age.

I was prescribed codeine when I was six months old and by the time I was three years old. I found my way into the medicine cabinet and I overdosed for the first time in Middle School.

TC CAT: At three. May I we ask why you were prescribed codiene?

Janco: Well, because it was colic.

TC CAT: And they prescribed codeine? That's such an interesting practice.

Janco: I've been struggling with addictions since a very young age and depression since I was like 10 years old. Was my first suicidal thought....

TC CAT: Is there anything more you may want to add?

Janco: Well, I'm clean and sober now for over two years and, you know, longer depressed and I'm not dependent on any medication. And so yeah, big part of that is, you know, my faith and how the Holy Spirit has, you know, kept me safe.

And how I've been molded by accepting Jesus Christ, as my lord and savior. Like that's that was the biggest reason why I'm still here and yeah, he's been, he's been working in my life, which is, which is great. Yeah.

I'm not depressed anymore and I don't think about hurting or killing myself anymore and I'm starting to be okay with Janco.

TC CAT: I like that to be okay, Janco.

Can we title that this be okay with Janco?

Janco: Yes..

TC CAT: So what did you hope to gain by contributing to this project?

Janco: I'm just a sense of you know, giving back to my community, being involved, a sense of purpose and you know, a sense of service I'm getting out of myself and, you know, be a part of the solution and not a problem, is this key for my recovery.

TC CAT: That's amazing. That's a solid answer.

TC CAT: What is one thing you want people to know about you that they cannot tell by tell by looking at you?

Janco: I have, I have a big heart. I've a lot of love that I give towards others and I'm learning to give that toward myself.

TC CAT: Think that's a really big common theme that I've found.. A lot of people who do struggle, they give it outwards and they often forget to, they gotta care about themselves too. I like that, you said that.

TC CAT: Is there anything else you want to add?

Janco: Yeah, just that that people won't know about me, is that, I'm a born again Christian by just looking at me.

TC CAT: Right. What is your hope?

Janco: What is my hope? Well, that is the reward for, you know, accepting Jesus Christ as my Savior and walking the path with with him is his everlasting life. Is that, you know, all things will be made, will be made new and he will fix everything. You know, there is the promise of, you know.. life after death and You know, like my hope is to see him.

That would be scary but be real as well.

TC CAT: What is the message you want to share?

Janco: Well, I don't want to, I don't want to go with with the cliches because they're so true. I don't know. I want to come up with maybe
"It's the imperfections of life that makes life, perfect"

TC CAT: That's wonderful.

TC CAT: I like that. That's good thing. It's good for me. We can learn so much from each other. Yeah, you know, if people might not have had a substance use in their background, but lots of people will have had depression or mental health issues and they kind of relate to that striving for perfection, and they're always missing , lacking on reaching for perfection, but you're so right is all of those little ups and downs.

That bring you the perfectness. We don't need to refrain how we look at things. I really love that.

TC CAT: Yeah, you can you can you can use that one.

TC CAT: Are there any other messages you'd like to share?

Janco: I guess like there's a lot I would like to share, but I guess the biggest one is just..

I want to say something about perseverance. I don't want to sound too corny... Once you give up the war is lost.

Janco: Keep strong.

TC CAT: Thats a good way to reframe that.

TC CAT: Have substances changed the way you see the community.

Janco: Yeah, in a huge way.

I think. It has brought out the the good and the ugly. The beauty and the ugly in humanity... You will have people that, you know, see addicts, struggling addicts, in active addiction. As you know, you human beings that is hurting that is suffering and that they understand the disease of addiction and they try to make change.

Like you guys.. reaching out with mental health, and bringing awareness, and stuff like that. And

and but then you have the, the flip side to it too, where people is like look at them as in human and that they've lost their souls and that they've lost their humanity and they don't understand that.

You know, it's it's a disease of the mind and and allergy of the body that just, you know, it's a disease and Like yeah, it's like if someone comes here and they say well I have cancer or diabetes or something and feel like yeah, okay, understanding, and you know, you won't see them as less human or, you know, in your mind before that disease.

But somebody comes to you and they have the disease of addiction and then you see them as, you know, like scum of the earth, you know... So I see a lot of people with with their blinders on just trying to, you know, ignore it and just try to stay or far away from it as possible and not to get involved.

Then I see people that that do get involved, that's sort of like, you know, just like try to eradicate them like, you know, like especially with like the tent cities and stuff like that. Like yeah, you know like go in there and try to rip out you know like rip away little left and you know not being part of like a real solution.

It's a very complex, like that's that's one thing to like, how complex our society is and how fragile the The links are that, you know, like that interlink usually,

TC CAT: The interceptionality of all of it, right?

Janco: Yeah.

TC CAT: I understand that.

Janco: Yeah, yeah.

TC CAT: Thank you. Yeah. That's a for the formal questions we have but if there's anything else like you would like to add to this?

Janco: No, just like add.. I guess I would say.

Recovery is possible.

We do recover.

TC CAT: I Like that, we do recover and it's a hashtag right now, isn't it? I think so you do recover.

Okay yeah I see a lot of the stories. Yeah. Yeah. That's wonderful. I'm like that a lot. It's a good way to tie it back into that.

TC CAT: Thank you so much.

Janco: Thank you for the opportunity to work with you guys and to be a part of it.

TC CAT: Absolutely.

Janco: If you guys need help with anything else is, let me know.

TC CAT: Oh, we will be in touch. I'm sure together.

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