

Acting, Recovery & Counseling with Scott Schiaffo, MA

Scott Hoye

Hello everyone, today I have the pleasure of speaking with Scott Schiaffo. Scott is an actor, musician, composer, author and counselor. What else can we say about you?

Scott Schiaffo

That's actually really plenty.

Scott Hoye

Today he is here to talk to me about his life, the universe and everything. How is that?

Scott

Yeah, that sounds fine to me.

Scott Hoye

I'm going to keep that as the cold opener then and we can just get going.

Scott Schiaffo

Sure, you know I have the Masters and I did the internship, but after I graduated that was the end of it, I didn't really go into the field at all.

Scott Hoye

Technically you had you're counseling degree?

Scott Schiaffo

Right and I still have my National Accreditation and I owe the dues to keep that up, to keep DNCC.

Scott Hoye

So, you basically took the exam and then you passed that and you were starting to work and you didn't quite get the three million hours that you have to have post-graduation.

Scott

That close just because of my whole situation with my heart, because I was on disability for quite a while for my heart. It was like a very expensive labor of love to get that degree because I love the field.

Scott Hoye

We kind of set this up earlier when we were like what are we going to do and what would we talk about? The of course would be to talk about your life trajectory. You are someone who is in recovery successfully for many, many years. I'm a former actor and you're still acting out there, I mean, you're still pretty heavily involved in creative stuff, like music and doing scores and stuff and your own music. You wrote a book, an autobiography about your experiences when you weren't in recovery.

Scott Schiaffo

It's more like a poor man's Charlie Bukowski trip, is what it was.

Scott Hoye

Yeah, it's still a fine little book you know.

Scott Schiaffo

I'm very happy it finally came out because it resonated with people in a way I never saw coming.

Scott Hoye

Let's get that title out there? What is the title?

Scott Schiaffo

The Vicious Dog. Vicious Dogs Attack Me in Sleepless Nights of Summer.

Scott Hoye

That's not a good summer [chuckles 0:03:38.0]. How did this book resonate? What is it specifically about? Maybe we can use that as a launching off point?

Scott Schiaffo

What has happened which I didn't see coming when I was releasing it, it doesn't promote the lifestyle and it's not apologetic for the lifestyle, it just sort of is. It's sort of like an alcoholic junkie memoir, a good five, six, seven, eight years' worth of bizarreness under the influence.

But because we all know thankfully for my sake mostly I survived and I'm okay now. Somehow there is a recovery element that's not technically in it but because I am okay now and I'm out and about an active people realize that I've recovered. I think the recovery element was touching people in a way I didn't foresee, because it's not a recovery book.

Scott Hoyer

How is it resonating with people? How is it touching people in that way?

Scott Schiaffo

A lot of people who have given me feedback and reached out to me over the years who have purchased the book a lot of them suffer with their own addictions. The feeling of knowing somebody that they—because you know how it is, with something like *Clerks* where I was incredibly lucky as an actor, character actor to be in a film where I played a character that's fairly memorable.

Scott Hoyer

The *Chewlies Gum Rep*, yeah.

Scott Schiaffo

The fans really kind of remember him, he's kind of an asshole but yet people really like him and like me as a person. I always found interesting because the character is pretty despicable [chuckling 0:05:49.2]. What is the point I'm trying to make here? Sorry, I lost my train of thought.

Scott Hoye

We were talking about how the book resonated with people and then we kind of got into it, yeah.

Scott Schiaffo

A lot of people who suffer identified with the fact that somebody they know from the screen, because people feel like they really do know you with a film like that because it's the kind of movie that, if you're a fan you've sat through it like *Rocky Horror*, like dozens of times in your life. So, you really begin to feel like you know the people on screen which of course you don't at all.

But they felt so close to all the characters to find out one of them was really drowning in alcoholism and drug addiction and made they're was through it by whatever grace you would like to say. I think it's given the people that are suffering or have had friends or family suffer something very tangible to sort of identify with then to have hope for, I believe.

Scott Hoye

Basically everybody from all walks of life, we suffer from our own internal vicious dogs, right?

Scott Schiaffo

Without a doubt, nobody gets out of this gig. I don't care what kind of childhood you had story-book or nightmarish, everybody has their shit, everybody, and if you don't deal with it, it eventually deals with you.

Scott Hoye

Absolutely, you have to wrestle with your own demons or angels. Nobody is unaffected by pain and suffering, it's the hero's journey and hopefully you turn it into a hero's journey rather than stagnant.

We all reach those points in our life where I think things work as coping skills or ways of getting by in life that don't work anymore, but sometimes some of us don't realize it till very later on, it isn't the way to go 24/7 or anyway.

Scott Schiaffo

Absolutely!

Scott Hoye

It's having that insight and figuring out that you need to get you're craft together, but you did and the book is resonating with people. You just created an audiobook of it and recorded all the chapters, right?

Scott Schiaffo

Correct, thank you to the Pandemic [chuckling 0:08:28.7].

Scott Hoye

You had a lot of time on your hands. Is that what you were saying?

Scott Schiaffo

Exactly! Originally years ago, when the book was first released there was a budget and we were going to do a thing where there were going to be a lot of guest readers, actors, friends of mine were going to read, and comics I knew were going to read. You know, no "A Listeners' per-say, maybe one or two people who were bigger names than others but it was going to be all guest readers.

Fast-forward *Audible* of today was not what it was when the book came out and *Audible* was not the monster it is now. Audible strongly suggested to me "if you're going to do that, that's fine but do that as a novelty release. Do the author version with just you reading it because you're the guy and you are in those films and people are going to want to hear that. If you're going to do the other thing do that more as a novelty version?"

Scott Hoye

Absolutely! We talked about quirks a little bit, what are some of the other things you've been working on, just in case people would like to check them out? I know you were in *Vulgar*, right which was in early 2000?

Scott Schiaffo

That was another hairy film, crazy, crazy independent film by a guy named Brian Johnson whose part of Kevin Smith world. *Lions Gate* released that; very controversial film.

Scott Hoye

It was about a clown whose is abused or raped, right?

Scott Schiaffo

Exactly, and again, I go head-to-head with Brian O'Hallaron which is kind of nice. Our two characters are going head-to-head and I've got the big standoff scene with the police. What character actor doesn't want to have a big standoff with the police? Telling them to 'Fuck Off' and you won't take me alive kind of shit.

It's funny to me now but I didn't tell too many people at the time, granted it wasn't real close to some of my incidences but I was no stranger to getting in the cross-hairs of the men in Blue back in those days, like that was not that bigger stretch.

Scott Hoye

Yeah, okay so you [chuckling 0:10:59.6] did you're prep work.

Scott Schiaffo

I had plenty of years of research [chuckling 0:11:04.4].

Scott Hoye

Well, I've had some rough nights. I think anybody who has acted, it's kind of like you're on a manic high for a while and then you go into a depression. There is a lot of booze or there can be, some drugs involved and after-parties if you're doing theatre or movies or things, it's kind of a crazy scene. Is that how you found yourself kind of like getting into trouble?

Scott Schiaffo

Well, that's a part of it, I think personally I was destined for a number of reasons. It's in the blood. My father was a slamming alcoholic. I had uncles on my mother's side of the family that were slamming alcoholics; a lot in the family.

I do believe heavily in the genetic pre-disposition, so I know that was ripe and ready to happen. Probably, no matter what I had done or what paths I may have taken I think I would've feel into it because it was a love affair as soon as sort of found it in a sense.

Scott Hoye

A lot people speak of it like that almost like a girlfriend. A lot of my training was in drug and alcohol facilities oddly because I've had my own experiences with those things. It is spoken of like you're habit can be kind of like a relationship, and a twisted one.

Scott Schiaffo

Sure, very dysfunctional obviously. There is a funny line in *Clerks* where Dante is talking with Randal, he's talking about his childhood and his mother said, "He's never one to rock the boat" and he would sit in a dirty diaper rather than learn to potty-train; this is the character.

A lot of us will sit in our own shit forever before we take what it takes to get out of that shit you know, like its familiar, the unfamiliar is what scares the shit out of my alcoholics and addicts. The familiar is people wonder "Why does he keep doing this his life is insane and he ends up in jail. He ends up on blackouts where he comes-to in places he doesn't remember."

As full of madness as that is that was familiar enough to be comfortable after a while, the unknown was more uncomfortable.

Scott Hoye

I think that metaphor not only applies to people with addiction problems but people of all walks of life, I think everybody just simmers in their own diapers until they get uncomfortable till the diapers get really cold and uncomfortable.

Scott Schiaffo

Or you start chaffing [chuckling 0:14:26.7].

Scott Hoye

Start chaffing and they leaky and stuff yeah, I mean that's gross. I think it is very much a metaphor for how people work and it's just unfortunate you can take a turn for the worse in other incidences.

I don't think we've ever really talked about this Scott, like what got you into going into counseling? Why did you decide to take that route? You loved the field so I assume that's one of the reasons why, but why?

Scott Schiaffo

Into counseling to study it or into counseling in my personal life, because that was a big part of it?

Scott Hoye

Well, to study it but I guess maybe that's got you into wanting to be a counselor because you took up counseling and psychotherapy, yeah.

Scott Schiaffo

I was in therapy a large chunk of my adult life. Although, I struggled and I never really cleaned up fully until I finally did I got the most clarity and enjoyable sobriety through one-on-one counseling over the 12-Step Programs and the meetings, and those types of things.

I was never a big fan of the *Twelve Step Programs*, but I felt like I got more out of one-on-one therapy. I had a handful of very good one-on-one therapists throughout the years and I just fully believed in the process.

I was a big Carl Roger's guy and although in the wrong hands that could be deadly in the sense of 'Unconditional, positive regard for somebody who is either a narcissist or just self-absorbed' that's not going to help but you know unconditional positive regard for somebody who is kind of been told they are 'A piece of shit' from just about everybody is one of the most exhilarating and refreshing things you could have or feel.

Scott Hoye

Yeah, just being heard right. I was speaking with someone who had a guest on a day ago and we were talking about "How to hold space for people who might be depressed and suicidal? What to do for them?"

My feeling is largely. if you can just be there and listen because they don't feel attended to or there is an immense amount of shame for the feelings that they have that are dragging them into that kind of head space where they want to kill themselves. Part of it is accepting that they do want, not that you want to you know convince them that it's a good idea or anything, but to hold that space so they feel heard.

So, many of us we're so interconnected now with this that and the other screen, but we are so disconnected from each other as human-beings.

Scott Schiaffo

Absolutely, I think a big part of it to be what you touched on being heard, being genuinely heard and most people in my experience and also from my own experience, you want to be heard and understood.

We don't want the answer necessarily, we don't want to be fixed. The issue with [0:18:07.7 PH] is a big thing in the sense of, men fall into a terrible trap with women. Instead of listening to they're women go on about something that's bothering them they try to fix it and put a band-aide on it and move on and that's not what is wanted they just want to be heard.

Scott Hoyer

Well, sometimes it can be the other way around. I know people who have relationships where the woman wants to come up with the solution. I guess it depends on how much of these "Muscular, feminine ark-type or aspects of the personality are there." Somebody whose wife might be a professional or just comes from a family of fixer-uppers, where you fix a problem and you don't talk about your emotions.

So, it's not always men, but I think, yes by-in-large it is what men want to do, which is of course is to not go into emotional stuff. I think as men we don't like to feel things, if we start to feel emotions, we get off balance, like we're not supposed to have those things.

Scott Schiaffo

So, much of it is in-bred in us. I was raised by a very strong single mother and till this day I am in a lot of ways pretty much an emotional nervous wreck. I know how to handle it now and I'm much better at it than I have been most of my life, but I'm extremely, anxiety ridden individual even on a good day. I'm not sure where I'm going with that but you are right.

Scott Hoyer

It sounds like you are in touch of those emotions but sometimes till the point where they are overwhelming.

Scott Schiaffo

Absolutely, and it's important that you are feeling the right amount of empathy and support and nobody necessarily is trying to fix all you're problems they just want to say "Hey, man that must suck, I feel for you."

I believe most of us know somewhere in there, and for me with therapy, like my ultimate goal would've been if I were in practice, aside from the positive unconditional regard, I think the ultimate thing I wanted to do was help somebody learn how to navigate themselves to their own solutions.

Scott Hoyer

Well, yeah that is kind of therapy in a nutshell yeah.

Scott Schiaffo

But there are other therapies where people really want to be told what to do “give me A, B, & C” some people want that in a pragmatic way and there are some therapists who work that way.

Scott Hoyer

I think you're kind of looking at it like rational motive behavioral therapy or (CBT) Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. If you watch those people and you've ever watched Erin Beck or Judith Beck for instance the CBT gods, the two creators of it or David Burns. David Burns has even gone away from that, he's like, “I'm not CBT I was just part of that crowd and it seemed to work.”

When they do it they do it with panache, and if you watch Judith Beck doing therapy on video she looks like a Carl Rogers, she looks like a person sending her clients to a therapist for a great period of time while she's doing the work. Then she might bring in like, a Socratic dialogue to do something.

It's a lot more subtle than it's the way it's being trained because it has been manual'ised because it has all those like Likert Scales and ways to measure things pre and post, so all the insurance companies were freaking out about how great because of the efficacy studies.

Scott Schiaffo

You bring up a great point, they want results within a window.

Scott Hoyer

Well, it's impossible.

Scott Schiaffo

It's the insurance companies of course, yeah.

Scott Hoye

You were onto something and I think that's basically what you would've been doing in psychotherapy to one degree. level or another. If somebody comes in and they want solution-oriented stuff or something that's more CBT kind of oriented solutions, the trick is—I hope I don't lose anybody from my caseload who might be spying in on this.

The trick is to show them a little hope with those techniques but then to kind of bring them around to the fact they still have to accept who the heck they are, which is the 'Unconditional Positive Regard or the Therapeutic Alliance' whatever the 'Counter Transference stuff' however, you deal with that. I think the nuts and bolts of therapy is still the same?

Scott Schiaffo

Sure.

Scott Hoye

So, you did the counseling degree and it sounds like some health conditions didn't allow you to continue with that to launch into getting those hours and then setting up your own practice.

Scott Schiaffo

Right or going and chasing after the LAC or the LPC rather as opposed to ... even the LAC was a daunting task because of the disability. Then I had kicked around the idea of just doing pro-bono and was even offered a gig at the place I did my internship.

I love everything about the talk therapy field, I just always have. I believe in it. I guess maybe you could agree being an actor to, I got into acting because I'm fascinated by people and I'm fascinated by my own behavior let alone other people's behavior, and studying, and observing it.

The key is you're not always going to understand what is behind somebody's MO and playing characters that no matter how possibly despicable have other redeeming qualities, you know where human-beings.

Scott Hoye

I basically got into psyche because of acting. I think we were talking about this earlier that I was really interested in Michael Chekhov's techniques. I didn't study his techniques under anybody who was training people, but the idea of using imagery is very much like hypnotic

techniques. So, I said “well hypnosis is cool” because I was studying some NLP stuff “well I’ll do some hypnosis.”

So, I got certified by an organization that technically would give anybody a diploma, that kind of thing. I was very diligent about pursuing the heavy-hitters within the field who were actually like psychiatrist like Milton Erickson. I basically worked at Positive Changes Franchise in Manhattan in beautiful Bay Ridge doing hypnosis, sometimes 12 hours a day with people, just many short-term therapy stuff with people.

I opened up my own practice because it’s not regulated in most states, I think outside of Texas, right. I was doing these mini-therapy sessions with just simple breathing behavior changes, but I was seeing people who obviously had deep personality issues that were potentially life-threatening and I would have to tell the family or the person “Here’s a card for a psychiatrist why don’t you go and see them and talk to them.” I obviously saw what was not within my bandwidth in helping people and that’s largely what got my back into it. I’d toss myself back into the role you could say of been a therapist and I enjoyed it.

So, I tested the waters pretty heavily having had some therapy myself earlier as well, but I tested those waters pretty heavily in that role and it just seemed to fit well. Yes, I think there is a lot of overlap between how therapy works when it’s working well. When graduates from programs step into that role and they embody themselves wholly, I think there’s a lot of similarities between acting and therapy. It doesn’t mean you’re putting anybody on when you’re doing therapy, but there are some elements to it that are very similar.

Scott Schiaffo

Absolutely and I was so excited for you to watch you continue to grow and pursue it after working with you in the film because you were one of my favorite people in that cast.

Scott Hoye

Oh, thanks yeah.

Scott Schiaffo

You had that other level of something that’s intangible that you can’t always put your finger on for me, with other actors and it kind of jumps through the screen, it jumps through the camera. I think, it’s something somebody has or doesn’t have, it can’t really be taught. That’s how I feel about some of that and I saw a lot of that in you and I loved the piece you did with the tone.

Scott Hoye

Like the spoken word thing?

Scott Schiaffo

Now I'm forgetting the name of it but you were the Anti-quorum.

Scott Hoye

Oh yeah, yeah, yeah you're dragging up my acting past here on my Podcast [0:28:58.4 laughs]. No, the Hapless Anti-quorum.

Scott Schiaffo

That was a wonderful piece. Visually you edited without dialogue and you really brought it.

Scott Hoye

Well, I am a teenage Ed Gorey character, yes [laughter 0:29:16.8]. I think, secretly I stepped out of the pages of *Amphora* or whatever [laughs 0:29:27.5]. I think everything came together with that film.

My friend Anthony Pena who's now directing and producing an *Indie* documentary, which is really cool called *We Kill for Love*. It's about the erotic thriller markets. The thing back when *Clerks* came out, right when I saw it in the theatre when it first came out like '92 or '94.

Scott Schiaffo

Ninety-four theatrically, yeah.

Scott Hoye

Theatrically, yeah, and I saw it in the state theatre in Ann Arbor and I was like "Wow this is cool like *Indie* Films" but at the same time there was this whole burgeoning straight to home video erotic thriller market when *Block Buster* was still around.

Tony is doing this really pretty in-depth interview with all the directors and actors from that whole period, which almost got swept away. I think there is some interest in film criticism about that genre and how it's succinct from film noir and other things. He's doing that but his humble start were things like, HP Love Craft adaptation of the *Hound* which is verbatim and *Hapless Anti-quorum* film.

Scott Schiaffo

That was great stuff, it really was and it takes a deeper mind to be doing that as opposed to—I don't want to insult anybody and say other things are "fluff" but that's sort of a—What is the word I want? There was a sophistication to that production.

Scott Hoyer

I mean, you have to think about it, it's a rare find Ed Gorey's little tones, right and it is a book about a book and it's kind of got to look crafty and book in it. It's got a whole lot going on, there's a lot of Meta, Meta, and Meta stuff there [laughs 0:31:39.8].

Scott Schiaffo

Right and it's beautiful to, a film about something because now where we are with books 20, 30 years later now book stores have almost vanished. I do miss the old days of book stores and records stores, DVD's, laser disks, and everything.

Scott Hoyer

Yeah, and speaking of the '90s, I used to work in bookstores. I worked at the first *Borders Books* that was in Ann Arbor. It was a strange and great and just amazing, it didn't make me a whole lot of money but I had a good time, it was a lot of fun.

Just the fact that people would go in and talk about ideas, a place where you could get a cup of coffee and hang out, you could ask somebody who worked at a bookstore who probably was knowledgeable in the subject matter, so yeah it was a great place.

Scott Schiaffo

Exactly!

Scott Hoyer

I had a great time, I guess for the landline years. \

Scott Schiaffo

Yeah, I tell you, in fact I was just talking to Carrie my partner in crime, my lovely Joel Carrie. Technology, even recently like we had been doing web design for a number of years back in the very late '90s into the early 2000's. We kept it right up till the current day, but I didn't stick with technology with that, I went to the music and film technology.

I still did web work but I didn't keep up with it, but the point I'm getting to is, never did I see how the phone has become everything. Our phones are our computers and our cameras, I see people editing movies on their phones and that's just so bonkers.

Scott Hoye

It's insane they are like little *Star Trek* type technologies you know and plus they are transitional objects you can't leave home without it; it's like a teddy-bear.

Scott Schiaffo

It's mind-blowing.

Scott Hoye

What's going on for you now? What projects are in the works?

Scott Schiaffo

I probably will be involved in on some level on Kevin Smith's *Clerk III* sequel. I did a lot of work over Covid, I was part of a couple of films that actually were produced and were distributed and got there audience. A web series which was a lot of fun but I was doing more of the music for that, that I was on camera.

I'm very fortunate, I stayed busy and a lot of it was *Indie*, wackiness and what not but I love it and I feel fortunate and blessed that although I've always juggled a number of things to keep the nut covered as they say, that I've been able to do that with other choices obviously.

I was never married, and I don't have any dependents so that keeps you very free to have that feast or famine lifestyle which it is. Sometimes there is fun money sometimes there is no fun money, but I love the fact that I get to stay in the creative arts and things like the convention worlds. A lot of the promotional things that came up over the years as the culture changed.

Clerks became a thing that I was able to monetize through many different means as opposed to the old school way which you got paid to be an actor and then you got your residuals. A film reaches a certain popularity and all of a sudden on the convention circuit you become a bigger fish in a smaller pond and then there's revenue streams to be made through that.

Scott Hoye

Awesome, so selling your book for instance, things like that?

Scott Schiaffo

Right doing the Mingree where you sell the items with the Mingree and the selfies and personalizing the items. Let's face it to you could probably identify with this. As a child all I could think about was music or acting and fantasizing like "oh my god to have a career would be so amazing" like just the notion that somebody would ask for an autograph was mind-blowing.

Then you fast-forward 30 years later and now there is this whole culture that's a revenue stream [chuckling 0:37:06.1], which I never coming. At first it was a little uncomfortable for me because we grew up at a different time you know but you're on a dance with people like West and William Shatner, so the meter is running with those cats [laughter 0:37:30.1].

Scott Hoye

Star Trek conventions were big back in the '70s, I remember reading magazine articles of people going to these conventions and thinking 'wow' but I wouldn't do it now per-say, but like back then when I was really into *Star Trek* the first series, yeah that would've been cool to meet Leonard Nimoy and William Shatner and George Takai. That's been going on forever, right?

Scott Schiaffo

Yeah.

Scott Hoye

I think you're eyes open up in a past field you know past—what is the silly term now? You jump the shark pretty quick or you push the envelope, or whatever the term is, but you figure out there is more to life than just been in front of a camera or stage with what you can do.

Scott Schiaffo

Right and because of the way things have changed so drastically in the business DVD's almost been dead, which was a big revenue stream for a lot of film companies and for actors. Direct to DVD used to be a very big thing, now it's direct to streaming but the profits that are available from streaming as opposed to the tax isle, DVD's are night and day you're getting like micro-penny's per stream as opposed to a DVD, literally the dollars and cents of it has changed amazingly like crazy.

Scott Hoye

I agree, like 2012 I did something through a very popular platform, I won't mention it but I put an album out and a few people bought it. I don't think I've actually paid-off what I put into like purchasing equipment and what-not to make it but the worst thing about it is that platform now will no longer sell an album for you.

I don't think you can actually buy an album but maybe you can through *Amazon*, but it's all streaming now. Who the hell is going to buy that album or any album? I was listening to the *Stones* and Iggy Pop last week and I didn't buy it, I'm just streaming it.

Scott Schiaffo

Right, you're absolutely right.

Scott Hoyer

I know what they get per stream, it's like a million people are going to listen to *Iggy Pop* all over the world they're not going to listen to me.

Scott Schiaffo

Even Iggy is not getting those royalty checks that he would've if they were actually buying disks, it's a completely different world. It's funny you bring up *Amazon* because they cut their program this summer so now it's all streaming. I have a number of titles on *Amazon* DVD's, and audio CD's and now it's steaming only, no more hard copies; it's heartbreaking.

Scott Hoyer

Wow, okay so that's an income revenue for the artists. He who controls the spice controls the universe, and the spice my friend is the gatekeeper and whatever the platform is they're going to make the cash the Barron Halycons of the world are going to make the cash.

Scott Schiaffo

Bezos.

Scott Hoyer

I'm curious you mentioned the conventions in talking about the book there, what is your interaction? We've had Suzanna Flores on who wrote a book about the *Wolverine* as a PTSD survivor and she kind of interweaves her own PTSD survival story in it.

She's gone to comic book cons and sold and plugged her book, but she mentions a lot of people coming up in tears and saying "I finally understood why I was behaving this way and I'm not alone." Do you get kind of some of that from *Viscous Dogs*?

Scott Schiaffo

I do actually, and again, the stigma with alcoholism and drug addiction is it's still a pretty terrible thing. Alcoholism and drug addiction elicits some of the most fierce resentment, anger, and confusion from family members and society that you can imagine. It's a terrible, terrible thing because yes, the alcohol and addict needs to be accountable for what they do yet by the same token much of what they do somebody else is behind the wheel.

It's a heart-breaking scenario and families just get crushed by it, but I've gotten a lot of that over the years since the book has come out and to me, I didn't see that coming at all but it was

a wonderful, wonderful opportunity to get to a deeper level of communication with the fans when it was appropriate. Whether, it was through a *Facebook* message or in personal at a convention, and I'm very open to speaking about all of it.

Scott Hoye

I'm glad you're able to touch people that way and they can put a face to the name they admire through a really awesome film, awesome career and see preciously how everyone is human.

Scott Schiaffo

Yes, and we're super frail.

Scott Hoye

But at the same time in our fragility I think that's where we find our resilience, you know our strength.

Scott Schiaffo

Sure!

Scott Hoye

Have you ever thought about writing a bit of an autobiography? I think we mentioned that before talking about you're recovery and experience and what-not? Maybe through the lens of your counseling education?

Scott Schiaffo

On and off now for the last seven or eight years I had actually begun a project with an artist named Scott Mene who I've done a lot of work with who is just a phenomenal artist in his own right, He can illustrate, he's a film director, I did a film with him called *The Puppet of Apocalypse* which is a hilarious send-off. Alien Puppets Invade the World and we all get turned into puppets [laughter 0:44:32.3] and it's really fun.

He's a mad genius the guy but he had suggested 'What if we were to do a graphic novel' and it was a huge undertaking unfortunately which is one of the things that made it maybe not practical for us to approach it that way. I read a lot of actor and musician autobiographies and biographies and of all people Andrew McCarthy put out his book and he kept it really brief, and focused on the years that were his biggest years.

I love the book, and I love what he did with it and it made me start to realize "maybe if I could focus on those key years; alcoholism, drug addiction, where I'm at now, how I view it now.

Touch a little bit on my upbringing that maybe there would be something there and it would be a fun project and maybe something that could perhaps help somebody.”

I really respect the craft of writing, but I don’t consider myself a writer but I really respect the process and if I can’t do it 110% I definitely would want a co-author just to keep me in the zone and focused. Once there was a budget for it but that changed when the original *Clerks III* was off the table, now that it’s back there might be a chance that could happen within the next year or to.

Scott Hoyer

What would the budget? Oh, I get yah, just to be able to sit and write something like that. Yeah.

Scott Schiaffo

That and also to be able to have somebody as a co-author.

Scott Hoyer

Right, to hire them.

Scott Schiaffo

Right.

Scott Hoyer

My initial background was in visual arts so I know how it is to switch between these different realms and sometimes to get into writing for me it’s almost like you have to go down a rabbit hole and just really be in that zone. Then when you come back you have to look at it and go ‘well that’s crap or this is pretty good here, let’s try this trial’ it’s a different ball of wax than music or acting, that’s all I have to say.

Scott Schiaffo

Oh, absolutely and I have a handful of what I started to call ‘preliminary chapters of ideas’ I started throwing things down and with my creative writing with *Viscous Dogs*, because it was poetry, prose, and short-stories based on somebody who was sort of in a very strange consciousness I had a lot of liberties I could take.

Scott Hoyer

What if you were to add something like that in there because like what I'm getting it's almost like you have a dialogue with yourself as the Scott of today versus the Scott of 1992. You could literally write a dialogue since you're an actor and you used to look in your scripts maybe you could have the two talk about the scenes and set up the scene. The scene could be the chapter about what happened.

Scott Schiaffo

Right, that could be an interesting way to approach it.

Scott Hoye

Even if you don't go with that entirely those dialogues might be a way to sparse.

Scott Schiaffo

It's almost like going back and watching a performance on film how critical we are. That's it those words would be set in stone so to speak once you're done. So, much of it I would read and go 'oh, god I thought I loved it while I was writing it and then when I'm reading it back I wasn't loving it at all.' This is why I would probably be looking for somebody I could really trust as a co-author so to speak.

Scott Hoye

Well, hopefully you can find someone who can bring that spark out of you. Is there anything else you'd like to add? Maybe this is a good spot to sign off Scott.

Scott Schiaffo

Well, Scott I want to thank you for your time and all the support you've shown me over the years and the friendship, I appreciate it.

Scott Hoye

Absolutely, my pleasure Sir, my honor.

Scott Schiaffo

I do admire everything you are doing and have done since we've worked together as actors. I think the biggest takeaway what I'll usually end on is, I feel very blessed to have had the opportunities I've had as a result of that crazy little filthy black-and-white film. That is somehow the gift that keeps on giving.

Scott Hoye

Well, that's awesome and it's a kickass film and it still holds the test of time I think. If you think about that it's one of those films back in the day that launched a lot of tours making independent film. It launched the whole independent film craze and a lot of people have a lot to thank Kevin Smith and you folks for putting the time into that. I'm sure it was a crazy shoot.

Scott Schiaffo

I'm glad you mentioned that, that's one of the most beautiful things about it to. One of the things we all hear quite often is how the movie inspired me to write, the movie inspired me to do my own movie, and the movie inspired me to do my own comic book. People were very inspired by the film to do their own art and that's an amazing thing.

Scott Hoye

Well in a way it's the least glamorous film ever [chuckles 0:52:19.8].

Scott Schiaffo

One of the funniest critiques we were ever given was 'A sound-bite makes absence of style of virtue' [laughter 0:52:37.3]. Is that not the greatest thing ever, right?

Scott Hoye

It's such an honest fucken film, I mean, it really is, I mean, it takes balls to make that film it really did. Something else that is kind of along those lines but it has a little bit too much ... or maybe just a little bit too much style to be of that same caliber [chuckles 0:53:07.6] *Living in Oblivion*. Did you ever see that with Steve Buscemi?

Scott Schiaffo

It's one of my favorites [laughter 0:53:12.2].

Scott Hoye

That film is so watchable and so funny. I watched it the other day not too long ago with my wife and she's like, "I've never seen this, this is great" and it's so refreshing to see a film that's honest and doesn't attempt to try and use any kind of slick edits.

No, *Clerks* is not glamorous film, I was even going to add, and it is a working class person's film. There are very few films that are from the gut like that's a Jersey or it could be a Detroit or be anywhere working class. I think that's what people identified with many, many people you know it was like 'Wow this is really honest.'

Scott Schiaffo

There is a punk-rock aesthetic to the movie, even though he isn't a punk-rocker, a DIY got a punk-rock sort of feel, and that was another thing that really appealed to me once I saw the finished product and then we got that wonderful sound track from *Sony*.

Sony came in and they gave Kevin almost his pick of the litter of some very high-end music and for years I remember a lot of people telling me 'Geez it's the best thing about the film is the sound track' [chuckling 0:54:51.1] which was funny.

The sound track has dialogue sound-bites so you get a little bit of the movie in the sound track which is fun. It's just been a ride that I never could've anticipated and again, just really blessed to have seen the ad, to have showed up to have Kevin say, "Yeah, that's the guy I want to come back to read from the script" and eventually say, "Yeah, that's my Chewlies gum guy" it was the most wonderful experience because it just opened up a lot of doors. It closed some doors and it opened up a lot of doors, obviously.

Scott Hoye

Awesome! Well, on that note thank you so much for staying up late [chuckles 0:55:46.1].

Scott Schiaffo

I'm a vampire, I'll be up all night anyway.

Scott Hoye

All right, well I'll call you for another interview in a couple of hours here. If you're sucking blood out of somebody's neck I won't bother you [laughter]. Don't pick up the phone [chuckles]. Cheers. Bye.

Scott Schiaffo

All right, brother.

Music Plays

Narrator

Thanks for listening to the *Psychology Talk Podcast*. Did you know that the *Psychology Talk Podcast* has a *Facebook* page and *Instagram* page, its true? You can find more information about other guests, episodes, as well as more information about psychology and mental health.

If you liked this episode go ahead and like us on *Apple Podcast*, *Spreaker*, *Stitcher*, or *Spotify* and leave a review. It helps us grow our audience and provide more quality shows.

All copyright material of Psychology Talk Podcast

This is for informative and entertainment purposes only. If you need a mental health professional please seek one out.

Music

Provided by the band Serenade

[AUDIO ENDS] [acting_recovery_7_counseling_with_scott_schiaffo_ma_ncc]

[0:57:35.6]