

Craig Melvin's Dad Got Sober, But That Wasn't His Only Major Life Change | Clips | Dad Saves America

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SUMMARY

Craig Melvin shares a transformative journey of reconciliation with his father, who struggled with alcoholism for decades. After years of resentment, Craig found forgiveness through therapy and the experience of becoming a father, leading to a deeper understanding of their relationship and ultimately a significant change in his father's life.

- Craig's father had a long history of heavy drinking, which he only recognized after entering rehab.*
- Their emotional reunion in Georgia marked a turning point in their relationship, showcasing his father's growth.*
- Craig emphasizes the importance of forgiveness, which he learned through therapy, stating it benefits the forgiver more than the forgiven.*
- The birth of Craig's son motivated him to forgive his father, realizing the importance of familial bonds.*
- Craig's father recently purchased a new truck, symbolizing his newfound happiness and willingness to embrace life.*
- The relationship between Craig and his father has transformed, with Craig's father now actively participating in family life and enjoying simple pleasures.*
- Craig reflects on how forgiveness has not only healed their relationship but also positively impacted their entire family dynamic.*

- John, what is this, 2023? That would've been 2020. I hadn't had a drop of booze since, it really has been, you know, transformational. Part of the treatment program requires you to go and you have to help him make amends. and we each had to do it individually. I flew down, I took a morning off from the show flew down to Statesboro, Georgia, and as soon as I walked in and we hugged and he's crying and I'm crying, and I knew then he was a different person, and he was like the mayor of his treatment program.

He's taken me around, introduced me to all of his addict friends as he called them. (John laughing) And he was like, "oh, you know, Melvin." they call my dad by his last name. Like, "Melvin's been talking about you for weeks." He was so proud. He was so proud of me and his other two boys, and you know, it was one of those things, John I was only there for eight hours and we walked around,

we played Frisbee, golf, it was very strange, but I left there knowing that, you know he was going to be different and he has been.

I mean, it's remarkable
when you think about a man who had been drinking for 40, he said 45 years pretty heavily. We didn't realize the extent
of it until he got into rehab, but he would take breaks at work and go out to the car
and down a few tall boys. When I went down to visit him in Georgia, he developed these relationships with the other addicts, and he said to me at one point, he's like, "Listen, you know, I get it.

I had a problem and it cost me a lot, and there was a lot of things
I wish I'd done differently. But I tell you, Craig, you
sit in some of these sessions, but these guys, I mean,
they're really messed up." (John laughing) I was like, "Dad, I don't
think you're supposed to go judging your addict friends." And he is like, "No, no." And he started pointing 'em out. He's like, "That guy, he's only 16, he's been in jail three times.

He can't kick the meth." He's like, "This woman
over here, she's 76, she's been drinking for 50 years. She's on her third husband." And I think it helped him knowing that- - I'm not so bad. - Right, right that's my dad, He also had a very dark sense of humor. Still does, by the way - You know, you've talked
about this in interviews, and it's in the book, forgiveness. - Yes. - You obviously had
already forgiven your dad when you were on this
journey to write this book.

- Yes. - Why is Forgiveness important? How did you do it? How did you take that toxicity and clean it out of your heart? - Therapy, the short answer. I'm a firm believer in therapy and have been for a number of years, and over the years my therapists have helped me understand the importance of letting things go, and you don't forgive for the other person, you forgive for yourself.

And for years I've held this bitterness in my heart and my soul toward my father, 'cause I wasn't gonna give him the satisfaction of forgiveness. I'm not going to let him take any credit for any modicum of professional success I've had. I'm not gonna have him
come up to the show. No, no, no, this son of a is gonna know how much his behavior over the years disgusted me. I'm gonna carry it to the grave and then you grow.

You grow up, you get older,
you have kids of your own, and you start to realize that my dad's got fewer days ahead of him than he does behind him, that tomorrow's not promised and that God's been very good to me, John. How dare I not forgive, when I have been forgiven
of so much in my life? And so I wrote the book

as a love letter to him.

I wrote the book to help me heal. I wrote the book to help other addicts and other families out there who have someone in their family that they think might be too far gone, as a little nudge, it's never too late. But the forgiveness aspect of it, John, I gotta be honest with you, it really has been a gift, like when I let that go. - What changed in your life, like, really tangibly? - I think it was probably me having a son, I think it was my nine year old.

And you start spending time with your own kids and you realize parenting's hard. (John laughing) It's hard when you're sober. It's hard when you have all the tools at your disposal, and I want so much for my son to be proud of me, to respect me. I couldn't deprive my dad of that gift. And so I really do think it was when I became a dad that led to that road to forgiveness, and it hasn't just transformed my life and my dad's life, it's transformed our family.

I wrote about it in the book. My father took great pride in never having a car payment. He bought a 1970- - Just paid cash? - Oh yeah and took hand me down cars from other people in the family. My father, I'm 44 years old has not had a car payment my entire life. - There's lessons in that - And also doesn't have a debit card, mind you, he's a bit of a Luddite in a number of ways.

- He's gonna outlive us all. - Oh no question, (John laughing) but about about three months ago, I was on the phone with him and he's talking to me about like being out in the yard, working on some car. And not to sound, whatever, It's like, "You know, pops, I could help you buy a car. You know, they pay me okay at the show, we could probably cobble some money together." He said, "No, no, no, no, no, no, no."

I've offered for years to help him buy a car. And it's like a little game we play. - I offer, he is like, "No, no, no, I don't want your money." Calls me up three weeks ago, it's on a Saturday. Calls me up and we talk pretty regularly, but usually, you know, the game's on or there's something, we're talking about something. He calls me outta nowhere. It's like, "Pop everything okay?" And he's had some health issues so I thought it was related to that.

He's like, "Nope, nope. Hey, you know how you offered to buy that truck?" I said, "Yeah." He's like, "I think I'm ready." And I said to him, "Are you sick?" He said, "What do you mean?" It's like, "Are you dying? Like, is it stage four?" I was like, "no, I don't think so, unless

you know something I don't know." He's like, "I just think it's time." I called my younger brother. I was like, "Dad, just called."

He's like, "He called you about the truck?" I said, "Yeah." He's like, "He was over here earlier." - He's like, "I just saw this Tacoma. I'm telling you this is, it's time." - He's like, "He was over here. He was talking about wanting a new truck and he was gonna call you. I thought he'd started drinking again." That's what my younger brother said. (John laughing) I said, "No, he called." And I said to my younger brother Ryan, I was like, "Is everything okay."

He's like, "Look fine to me." So I said, "Ryan, take him out before he changes his mind, Take him out to look at some trucks." The next day, John, they go to some car dealerships. My brother's sending pictures. The next day he gets a white Chevy Silverado 2023. My mother calls. They've been married for, you know 40 plus years. "Craig, I have never in all my life seen your father this happy."

I said, "Ma, he's got three sons and grandchildren." (John laughing) She's like, "I know, I've never seen him this happy." He's driving around town. My father goes three places. He goes to Walmart, my brother's house, and up to like the corner store, to like kill time to get away from my mother. She said "He's been driving around town, visiting family." I mean, it really is surreal. My brother sends me this video of like my dad in the truck.

Every conversation we've had since then, it's been about the truck. He's like- - They are like family members. - Oh John, (John laughing) he calls me one day, he's like, "You know, they got these cameras in the trucks (John laughing) and when you back up, the closer you get the louder and faster it beeps." He's like, "It's amazing." He's got my mother in the truck. And I said to my mom "If I had known it was going to bring him this much joy, we would've done it years ago."

And my mom's like,
"Craig, you couldn't have he wouldn't have taken it years ago. He's just at a point in his life where he wants to enjoy things." We're going to the beach in a few weeks. We go every summer, we take a week we go to Hilton Head and I'm like, "Pops I can't wait to see you at the beach." "Oh yeah, I'm bringing the truck. (John laughing) I'm gonna take you for a ride in the truck and show you the truck."

It's surreal. (wooshing) - If you enjoyed this clip, we've got more where that came from. Be sure to check out my full conversation with Craig Melvin, and one of the best ways you can help support us is to subscribe to the channel so you won't miss our interviews and short videos as

they come out each week. (bright music) (wooshing)