Chris Barbin: Talk Overview

- Fundraising event featuring Chris Barbin, who rowed solo across the ocean to raise money for mental health and addiction causes
- ~$600K raised (still ongoing) split between two organizations:
    - Providence Farm: sober living community model, not traditional lockdown rehab
    - Project Healthy Minds: web portal ("Expedia for mental health") connecting 65M Americans to services
- Chris self-funded the expedition; 100% of donations went to the causes
- Recently won Humanitarian of the Year award from Project Healthy Minds (last year's winner: Prince Harry)

Will's Journey and Family Reflections

- Will struggled with addiction from age 14; got sober ~28 months ago, stayed sober for 26 months
- Relapsed ~6 weeks ago at the Imperial reunion; now on day ~20 of rebuilding sobriety
- Warning signs were visible: stopped seeing sponsor, therapist, psychiatrist, and attending groups
- Key insight: "the opposite of addiction is connection"; isolation preceded the relapse
- Chris carries guilt over Will's early years, when gaming and isolation were rationalized away
- Kate (daughter, now married, works as a teacher at an inner-city school) bore the cost of attention going to Will
    - Chris plans a 10-day trip to Japan with Kate, just the two of them, next year
    - Quote: "From 0 to 18 you spend 18 years with your kids; once they turn 18, you spend one more year with them for the rest of your life"

The Row: Preparation and Lessons

- 18-month journey total: 8 months planning, ~10 months physical prep, 38 days on the water
- Physical prep: 117 days in the gym; 4 boot camps in Monterey Bay (2, 5, 7, then 10 nights on the boat)
- Original route (Sea of Cortez) was scrapped in planning; currents made it unrowable
- Rowed 14–16 hours/day; only 2–3 hours of sleep per night
    - Sleep deprivation was the hardest part, harder than weather or shipping traffic

- Two goals: finish, and have more good days than bad (not a race mentality)
- Did 250 extra miles due to drift; pace dropped from 50–60 miles/day early on to 10–12 miles at the end
- Biggest mental shift: accepting drift rather than trying to control everything

Frameworks Shared

- SEEDS framework (for mental health support):
    - Sleep, Exercise, Eating, Doctor's orders, Sobriety
    - Applicable for leaders checking in on struggling team members
- Wind/Currents/Sea State framework (life analogy):
    - Wind = physical and mental health
    - Currents = work life
    - Sea state = family
    - When all three align, take advantage; when they don't, adapt
- "Enough" bracelets by Blake Mycoskie (TOMS founder): gifted 100 boxes to attendees
    - First Enough bracelets to arrive in India
    - $50/box; proceeds go to 3 mental health initiatives; goal of 1M bracelets over coming years