

Casey Mullooly - All Things Are One - Transcript

Tim Mullooly: Welcome back to Living with Money. This is Tim Mullooly. On today's episode, I am joined by my younger brother, Casey Mullooly. Casey, thanks for coming on the podcast.

Casey Mullooly: Thanks for having me, Tim. Only took 59 previous guests for you to ask your own brother to be on the podcast?

Tim Mullooly: I was just going to say that, actually, yeah.

Casey Mullooly: It's cool.

Tim Mullooly: Obviously, me and Casey are a year apart in age, so we spent our entire lives together, so I know your background very well. For the listeners out there who might not be familiar with you, do you want to talk a little bit about yourself and how you got to where you are today and anything else about you that you would want people to know?

Casey Mullooly: Sure. I was born and raised here in Wall, New Jersey right along the Jersey shore. Love spending time at the beach, playing golf, just being outside, in general, and being active. Went to McDaniel College my freshman year to play baseball there. Ended up transferring after my freshman year to join you at York College, joined the fraternity, finished out my three years there, graduated with a degree in business administration. Shortly after that, I started working here at Mullooly Asset, got my Series 65 license, and been here ever since.

Tim Mullooly: One of the main reasons that I wanted to have Casey on today was that he's recently launched a new website called All Things Are One. Do you want to talk a little bit about what made you start that website and what the name All Things Are One means to you?

Casey Mullooly: Yeah, so I was writing on the Mullooly website, but I wasn't really writing about financial topics, so I wanted to continue writing but not writing about, necessarily, finance or investing, so I created All Things Are One as a platform for me to be able to just write about anything that I wanted. The name kind of works on a couple levels. I didn't want to paint myself into a corner, so All Things Are One could literally be about anything, so it works on that level.

Then it's also kind of just like a ... almost like a strategy that I use. It's like a viewpoint that I try and use to see myself in everything, not in a self-conceited type of way like I'm the center of the universe. That's not what it is. It's kind of trying to see my pain or my happiness or my life isn't unique to just me. It's all of humans together, not just humans, but nature as well because, when you think about when you really zoom out and take a universal viewpoint of the world, it's hard not to believe that we're all in this together. So yeah, just trying to broaden my perspective away from myself and see all things as one.

Tim Mullooly: Right. I mean it's hard, like you were saying, not get existential about it, but we're one person in a country on a planet in a galaxy in like ... You know.

Casey Mullooly: Yeah.

Tim Mullooly: In the universe, we're just a little ... As a human race, we're all just one little speck on whatever else it out there.

Casey Mullooly: Yeah, but it's like you take that view, and then it's so hard to not think about just yourself. I think that that is the main point is, sometimes, I just get caught up thinking that my worries or my concerns are the biggest things ever in the world when, when you really zoom out, it's not.

Tim Mullooly: Yeah, or that they're unique to just you, and it's-

Casey Mullooly: Yeah, everyone goes through a lot of the same stuff, but we just get so absorbed in ourselves that it's kind of hard to see that sometimes.

Tim Mullooly: Yeah, definitely. We're going to dive into a handful of posts that you've written on All Things Are One and also back on the Mullooly Asset site as well. We'll link to all of those in the show notes for people who want to go read those posts. Before we dive into them, I think it'd be a good idea to kind of take it back to this time last year. Odd coincidence that it's pretty much this week last year. Do you want to share with listeners kind of what transpired in March of 2018 for you and just what happened?

Casey Mullooly: Yeah, kind of a monumental shift, in terms of my life, happened almost exactly a year ago. It was March 8th. I was diagnosed last March with chronic myeloid leukemia, which is a type of blood cancer, so I was in the hospital for about a week.

CML is different from a lot of other cancers. A lot of cancers, you think you'll be in the hospital for an extended period of time, get blasted with chemo or radiation or have surgery to remove it, but I'm lucky in the sense that it's one of the most treatable forms of cancer. I just take a daily pill called a TKI, tyrosine kinase inhibitor, which stops the immature white blood cells from getting produced in my blood. It's not an abrupt stop and start. It's more of a gradual, slow-moving cancer, so it's required more of a lifestyle change. It's been a challenge, for sure. I still get to do a lot of the things that are important to me. Each day is different, so I'm just trying to keep putting one foot in front of the other.

Tim Mullooly: Yeah, and definitely, like you said, a lifestyle change. I mean I just remember the weeks before you were diagnosed. It all started from ... You want to talk about how you even found out that you had cancer?

Casey Mullooly: Yeah, it's crazy.

Tim Mullooly: It went from one problem thinking like, "Oh, this sucks," to finding out that you had CML. It's like, "Oh, wait. That doesn't matter at all. This is what actually matters."

Casey Mullooly: That was actually a good thing that happened.

Tim Mullooly: Yeah.

Casey Mullooly: Yeah, so it was early or mid-February last year. I went to a yoga class and, towards the end of it, I hurt my knee, so I went to go see an orthopedic doctor who sent me to get an MRI. While that was happening, we were supposed to go on a big snowboarding trip to Vermont, so I was super bummed, so upset and angry that I wasn't going to be able to go snowboarding. I ended up snowboarding anyway despite on the bad knee.

Tim Mullooly: Don't tell the doctors.

Casey Mullooly: Yeah. We came back from the trip, and I got the MRI results. The doctor told me that I had a strained MCL, no structural damage, which was a really ... I was really pumped about that, but he told me that my bone marrow looked suspicious of what's called a myeloproliferative disease. I didn't really think much of it until I got out in the car and googled the doctors that he wanted me to go see. He wanted me to see an oncologist, which is a cancer doctor, so that was the first time I was like, "Oh."

Tim Mullooly: Wait. Yeah.

Casey Mullooly: "Oh, man," like, "What do you mean?" I kind of stumbled upon it, but looking back on it now, if I didn't hurt my knee, who knows how long it would have been? So I kind of view that as a blessing now.

Tim Mullooly: Right, just like a total change in mindset that you-

Casey Mullooly: Just like-

Tim Mullooly: ... went from hating the fact that you hurt your knee to realizing that you were grateful that you hurt your knee.

Casey Mullooly: Yeah. Yeah, time can change your perspective on anything, I think. That's something that I've learned over the last year.

Tim Mullooly: Yeah, definitely. Okay, so you were diagnosed in March. In August was the first time that you really shared any takeaways or insights into your journey with CML thus far. For anyone who might not have read that post, do you want to tell everybody what the main points were that you were trying to get across?

Casey Mullooly: The post was titled You'll Be All Right, which was something that, the first couple months, everyone, doctors, family, friends, strangers I didn't even know but knew I had cancer, everyone was just kind of saying this to me. I really grew to resent that. I was like, "How do you know that I'm going to be all right? You don't know that. You don't even know what it means for me to be all right, so you saying that ..." I know that it's with good intentions that everyone was saying that, but it was just like it started to bother me, so I wrote about it.

It really was just about knowing what it means to be all right internally, meaning yourself, because it changes day to day. I viewed it as talking with my doctors, and I also compared it being an advisor. Just because someone tells you you're going to be all right, don't settle for that.

Ask questions. Make them go deeper and explain why they're saying that to you. It's not going to work on the level that everyone wants it to unless you truly believe it yourself.

It was also about how you can learn to be all right with not being all right and how being in pain, being all right aren't the same things. You can learn to be all right when you're sad, when you're upset, when you're feeling guilty, or when you're in physical pain. You can be all right with that. It takes a lot of work, which is something that I've worked on and am continuing to work on. Yeah, it's just kind of viewing your ... the negative parts of you, the pain or the weakness or ... and just being all right with not being fully all right.

Tim Mullooly: Yeah.

Casey Mullooly: I don't know if that makes sense.

Tim Mullooly: No, it does. I feel like that's something that's probably huge for a lot of people. It might be hard for them to get there, but if you think about it, think about the percentage of the time that you're truly pain-free or you're feeling great, you're happy, everything's going right. It's like if that's the only time you're just all right, that's no way to live your life. A majority, not a majority, but a big percentage of the time, you're probably going to have some sort of physical pain, or emotional pain, or stress, or worry, or tired, or something's going on, learning to be okay with that and knowing that it's not a terrible thing.

Casey Mullooly: Yeah. I think that that's the hardest thing is we're programmed to ... We feel pain or we feel negative emotions, and the first thing we want to do is try and fix it and try and make ourselves not feel that way anymore, but sometimes, like in my case with cancer, you can't change that, so it's kind of forced upon you. It doesn't have to be forced upon you. You can learn to do that in everyday life.

Tim Mullooly: The next post after that, it was about a month later at some point in September of last year. You wrote a post that was titled Smile On, continued your discussion, your findings with CML and realizations that you'd come to. For me, one of the favorite parts of that post was when you said that time management is actually energy management in disguise. Do you want to talk about that idea and any other key points that you were trying to touch on during that article as well?

Casey Mullooly: Yeah, so I think, for me, time manage ... Everyone knows what time management is. You have a certain amount of time in each day to get your to-do list done. Proportion it out in however long it takes you to get it done. You get it done, and then you move on to the next thing. I was thinking about it, and it's like we really just ... Time is one way that we measure our energy, so I think we just align our energy levels with time.

What caused me to think about this was, with CML, sometimes I wake up, and I just don't have it. Sometimes I just am tired, and I need to lie on the couch or do nothing all day. It's this idea that you have a certain amount of energy and not time in the day. Say I have two hours of energy. I have to know how much I have, first of all, so energy management is actually listening to your body, and checking in with how much energy, and trying to evaluate how much energy

you have on a day-to-day basis. Then it's deploying that energy as efficiently as possible, so what is the number-one thing that I want to get done with the day? That is where I'm spending the most of my energy.

Some days, I can't do everything that I want to get done, so I have to pick and choose what's really important to me. With time management, you have all of the things that you need to get done and, no matter what, you're going to get them done, but with energy management, it's picking and choosing and being more selective in terms of which ones are actually more meaningful to you.

Tim Mullooly: Yeah. I feel like that's probably a healthier way to go about it, and some people might be healthier. People without CML might be taking it for granted that you wake up with the same amount of energy every day and it's-

Casey Mullooly: You just assume that you're going to be able to get everything done.

Tim Mullooly: Right. It's like, "I'll be able to get all of this done."

Casey Mullooly: You don't even think about it, honestly.

Tim Mullooly: Right, and they're probably doing themselves harm physically and mentally by pushing the limits of ... or not realizing, "All right, I'm out of energy," or, "I don't have the energy to do all of this today," but it got magnified for you with CML.

Casey Mullooly: Definitely, yeah. Yeah, it's more about just being ... Time management, I think, is very static and rigid while energy management is more fluid and flexible. I think it's just being open to that flexibility of you don't have to get everything done that you want to get done.

Tim Mullooly: I feel like that kind of ties back to being all right, coming to terms with the fact that you're not going to get everything done today because you don't have the energy for it.

Casey Mullooly: It's all just one learning lesson, man.

Tim Mullooly: Yeah. Like you said, all things are one, right?

Casey Mullooly: All things are one.

Tim Mullooly: Exactly. The next post after that was called Mental Warfare, and it relates back to your own personal experience, but I feel like this can apply to anyone, as well, not just someone you know going through what you're going through. You talk about the battle in your head between the worrier and what you call your rallying squad. Do you want to talk about that battle and what the two represent?

Casey Mullooly: Yeah. I think mental warfare, it's not really warfare. It's just a catchy title. It sounds kind of crazy because I'm talking about different voices in my head, but it's just really just outlining different ways that I think about things. The worrier is kind of self-explanatory. It's

the person who gets a little piece of news and then extrapolates into the worst possible situation ever, which that's kind of been ... My worrier has been really hyperactive since I got diagnosed with cancer, so it's-

Tim Mullooly: Naturally.

Casey Mullooly: Yeah.

Tim Mullooly: It makes sense.

Casey Mullooly: I have a little bit of neck soreness, and I just do the freak.

Tim Mullooly: Yeah, go down like a rabbit hole like, "Oh, what's wrong with me? This is-"

Casey Mullooly: Exactly.

Tim Mullooly: "This can't be good."

Casey Mullooly: Yeah, so it's like so that's the worrier. Then the rallying squad is the counter to that, which is it started out with the rallying squad trying to lift me up, but it kind of changed over time because that's where the warfare was happening. The rallying squad would want me to lift me up, and to feel good, and to get rid of the worry or the negative things that I were feeling. The ways that I would do that would be exercise, do something productive physically to get me to feel good about myself again, but with CML, again, I'm not really able to do that on a consistent basis, so the rallying squad had to kind of change its approach. This is where the idea of self-compassion comes in, treating yourself, all of yourself, even the ugly, negative parts of yourself that you don't like at all, like the worrier, treating them with love and compassion and not trying to get rid of them but more of just accepting them for what they are.

That's where the peace kind of came in with the rallying squad shifting from a uplifting force to more of a soothing and calming force. I think that, I mean, self-compassion and acceptance has been the two main themes of how I've dealt with my diagnosis, but yeah, I think it's really hard to love and accept the really ugly parts of yourself because we're just not conditioned that way at all. We're conditioned to make ourselves feel better and avoid those feelings, but it's in that avoidance that I think a lot of the dangerous habits are bred from.

Tim Mullooly: Yeah. There was a situation that you outlined in the post where it was like something in your...

Casey Mullooly: I had a weird feeling in my abdomen, yeah.

Tim Mullooly: Yeah, the two, through the rallying squad and through self-compassion and the soothing that you were talking about, you were able to kind of actually sit down and break down the worry. There were two different like, all right, what's best case, what's worse case? You came to a realization that both of them ... you'd be better off not worrying about it at all, right?

Casey Mullooly: Yeah, because I mean when you think about worrying, it's not fun to worry because your mind can play nasty tricks on you, but think about what your worrier wants for you. Your worrier is trying to protect you. The self-compassion and the acceptance kind of just gave myself space to come to that realization that whether or not this problem with my abdomen was serious or not, and it wasn't, either way, I would have wanted myself to enjoy the moment more. Best case was it came back clean, and I would feel stupid for worrying so much. Worst case was I would have to go back into the hospital, and I would have wished that I enjoyed my time not in the hospital more. The compassion and acceptance is just giving yourself space to come those realizations and actually unpack feelings instead of just attacking yourself and trying to get rid of them.

Tim Mullooly: This was more of a finance-related article, your next one, during the market downturn in December of last year.

Casey Mullooly: You mean the recession?

Tim Mullooly: Yeah.

Casey Mullooly: The December recession?

Tim Mullooly: Yeah, yeah, the bear market, the whatever, three-day, four-day bear market. You posted a piece. It was called *It Doesn't Have To Be This Way*. You listed a handful of points for people to think about when they were dealing with strong emotions of fear. Obviously, it can tie back to sickness and personal well-being but also ties into what people were feeling in the market, at that point, while their accounts were going down 20% in a quarter. Do you want to talk about a couple of those points that you outlined for people and how just keeping those in mind could really benefit someone during a time of fear?

Casey Mullooly: Yeah, so I think it's not fun being scared, especially when we're losing money, because our money is like our how. It's how we do the things that we want to do. When we see ourselves losing money, it's really we see ourselves losing ourselves. We see ourselves losing future opportunity of-

Tim Mullooly: It's like part of your identity.

Casey Mullooly: Exactly.

Tim Mullooly: Things you can't do.

Casey Mullooly: Or future peace of mind or ... It is really scary, but I think ... and it's going back to what we were just talking about. It's we see those red numbers, and we see this big down days, and our first reaction is to stop it, to make ourselves feel better, and to get rid of those red numbers, whether that means moving to cash, or getting more defensive with your allocation, or just getting out of the market completely. Those are the exact wrong things to do in that time.

I talked about something that I try and do, which is not believing every single thought that you have. You're going to have these scared thoughts of wanting to make it stop and wanting to feel better, but you don't have to act on those thoughts. It's like this radical idea, I think, because we think we have thoughts, and they're like, "I need to act on these now. I need to do something," when it's not the case. If you just let your thoughts pass, they're just thoughts. They literally mean nothing.

Some of the ideas for dealing with this fear and these thoughts is to just create space, whether that's by doing a breathing exercise, if you're just taking deep breaths, or maybe it means setting a timer for 5, 10, 15 minutes and just saying, "I'm not going to act on this urge for 10 minutes." Then I think a lot of people will find that, if you can do that, then the urge is going to pass. It's going to come, and it's going to go.

Another one of my favorites that I do and recommended was to try and watch your emotions. It's like this idea that a lot of people call it your monkey mind, which is your emotional and ... it's all your thoughts and your feelings, but then I think that there is another person deeper inside of you kind of behind that all. If you can get to that person and just watch yourself having these thoughts, then I think that that kind of gives them less power...

Tim Mullooly: In the sense it makes you see how impulsive or like crazy-

Casey Mullooly: It's like, oh, I'm feeling fear. That's it.

Tim Mullooly: Yeah, but it's hard to realize that in your own head in the moment.

Casey Mullooly: Yeah. Yeah, definitely. It's hard to do. It's like but just try and think about is as yourself is ... I didn't come up with this. I read this, but yourself is ... Your mind is the sky, and your thoughts and your feelings are the clouds. Some days, it's going to be a bluebird day without a cloud in the sky and, some days, there's going to be hurricanes coming through. It always changes, and it always ... The clouds always pass no matter what, so just allowing yourself to feel that and letting them pass sometimes.

Some of the other things were just self-affirming, just kind of talking yourself down a little bit and trying to talk yourself out of the fear. I talked about some self-soothing things that you can do and, also, this goes back to the time or about just meditating and just trying to remind yourself that, "Just because I'm losing money doesn't mean that I'm necessarily a bad person." I think our mind often extrapolates losing money with being a bad person and not being able to provide for our families or whatever it is, and that's just not the case.

Tim Mullooly: When you were saying just letting feelings pass or letting a thought happen without you actually speaking it or acting on it, it got me thinking, just like social media today, and it's like you're exposed to so many things. I feel like, in today's society, everyone thinks they need to have and express their opinion on everything. I mean tell me if it's something that you do, but for me, personally, over the last couple of months, I've been trying to ... You see something, and you immediately want to type out a tweet and respond to it. It's just like

something I've been trying to do is step back and say, "You don't need to have an opinion on that. It's okay." You don't have to have an opinion on everything, I guess is my point.

Casey Mullooly: Yeah, totally. I agree with that. I think it's you're going to have those initial reactions, but I think, just again, creating the space between yourself, your thought, and your reaction to it is so crucial for everything, just generally, in life.

Tim Mullooly: End of last month, you launched your own site that we mentioned before, All Things Are One. The first post is titled Strive Purely. I've seen you tweet that line before as well. Do you want to tell us what that means, what the post is about, and what strive purely means to you?

Casey Mullooly: Yeah, so it's something that I struggle with each and every day. Strive purely is this idea that you're doing things for the right reasons and that you're doing things because you actually believe that those things that you want to achieve are what's best for you. Strive purely, I think, for me, before my diagnosis, I got ... I was kind of in a weird spot. I was feeling sick, but I wasn't admitting to myself that I was feeling sick, and I had this image of myself that I needed to uphold by doing these things each and every day. When I didn't get those things done, I would really feel guilty, and feel a lot of shame, and think that I was a bad person because I didn't do these things. I've learned that that's just not the case, so it was more of I needed to do things to feel good about myself and not because I just wanted to do them because I thought they were what's best for me.

I think it's strive purely is this idea that you should strive to get better each and every day. I believe that to be true, but I think it needs to come from a place of your motivation needs to be pure and healthy. A lot of the times, it's like, "I need to get better each and every day. I need to do something to feel good about myself," when if you need to do something to feel good about yourself, that's a fragile and dangerous place to be in, I think-

Tim Mullooly: Yeah, definitely.

Casey Mullooly: ... because what if you get cancer, and what if you get diagnosed with leukemia? Then what? It's like this internal struggle that I've been having to deal with and just ... It's a constant battle because I want to get better but, sometimes, getting better means not doing anything.

Tim Mullooly: Yeah, so just doing things for the right reasons and that's...

Casey Mullooly: Yeah. You don't have to do anything to be worthy of love. Just by existing and doing nothing, even if you do nothing all day, you're still worthy of love. You're still a good person. You're not going to get left behind. You're not going to lose what you have. I know I thought that way for a while. I still kind of do sometimes, but a lot of people think that way, that they have to get 1% better each day or else they're going to get left behind and torched by their competitors when ... It's kind of an insecure place to be, I think, just not appreciating what you have and not being able to be content with what you already are.

Tim Mullooly: It kind of reminds me of the episode of Game of Thrones that we watched last night. This just randomly popped in my head, so bear with me if this is not correct.

Casey Mullooly: All right.

Tim Mullooly: The episode that we watched last night, Margaery was in prison, and she had come to the realization that she would only go and see the poor people and be nice to the poor people because other people saw her doing it and not because she actually loved the people that she was visiting, so it's like-

Casey Mullooly: No, that's totally spot on there.

Tim Mullooly: Yeah, so-

Casey Mullooly: It's like doing things just ... It's like you have to uphold this image of yourself.

Tim Mullooly: Right. It's like, "Oh, I need to go visit with the poor people because that's what I should be doing or that's going to make myself better," not because you actually want to or it's something that you feel like you need to do.

Casey Mullooly: Yeah, but I think it's so hard to separate that in your mind. It takes a lot of honest reflection, honestly, about your motivations about why you're doing things. Sometimes you're not going to like the answers that you come to. Yeah, I think if you can get to the place where you're doing things just because you want and believe that they're what's best for you, then I think that that's the sweet spot.

Tim Mullooly: Yeah, definitely. The next post that you put out this past weekend was called Rememberall. It didn't really contradict or negate Strive Purely, but it kind of built on that idea but from a different point of view. What was the purpose for you for writing Rememberall in conjunction with Strive Purely?

Casey Mullooly: I wrote some of Strive Purely in the past tense, which was a mistake on my part. It's not like it's over and done with. It's not like it's something that I don't continuously do, but I think it kind of came off that way. It's not like, "Oh, I love myself and accept myself now. It's over and done with. I'm never going to have to face this lesson again." It's realizing that you're going to have to learn the same lessons over and over and over and over and over again throughout your life, and not getting frustrated with that, and not thinking that the answers are something different. You know a lot of the answers already. It's just reminding yourself you have to do that again and reminding yourself gently because I think, when we forget lessons, it's easy to attack ourselves and pounce on ourselves and be like, "Oh, you forgot that." Like, "You're an idiot. How could you not remember that?"

Tim Mullooly: I've made this mistake before. You know?

Casey Mullooly: Exactly.

Tim Mullooly: It's like, "What am I doing?"

Casey Mullooly: No, it's not that. You have to be like, "Okay this is it. This is what I'm feeling. I know what to do in this situation, so this is what I'm going to do." Yeah, Rememberall is just kind of clarifying the point that it's continuous. It's ongoing. It's not a singular event.

Tim Mullooly: The Remembrall, for Harry Potter fans out there, is that little glass ball that Neville gets in the first book.

Casey Mullooly: It reminds you of when you forget something.

Tim Mullooly: Right, exactly.

Casey Mullooly: If we had those, that would be great.

Tim Mullooly: Yeah.

Casey Mullooly: But we don't, so we have to do it internally.

Tim Mullooly: Yeah. A lot of these topics aren't things that you traditionally hear about. It's a lot of tough conversations that you either have internally or with someone else. Kind of a big question here, I guess, but what would you say is the overarching goal of sharing these posts? If someone could take away just one main thing from everything that you've been trying to write, what would you try and summarize that as?

Casey Mullooly: You're not alone. I'm writing about a lot of the struggles that I'm having because I think it's really one-sided on social media today, whether it be Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, Snapchat, whatever.

Tim Mullooly: It's all the good parts.

Casey Mullooly: People put up the best parts of themselves. It's like, "Oh, look how cool I am. Look how much fun I'm having." It gives off this false impression that it's all good and no one struggles, so I'm trying to kind of counteract that with what I'm writing about and show people that it's okay to have these battles going on inside of you, and a lot of people are going through the same things.

I remember, it was before my diagnosis last year, but Kevin Love, who's a basketball player for the Cavaliers, wrote a piece for The Players' Tribune about dealing with mental health. I was like it's so important to just balance it out and make sure that you're having these conversations. I think, for anyone listening or for anyone who reads my stuff, I write about these things that I'm struggling with in hopes that you won't be as isolated in yours and know that it's natural to feel these things, and you're not a bad person or crazy because you're feeling the things that you feel.

Tim Mullooly: Yeah. I feel like that ties in perfectly with the name of the blog. We're all the same.

Casey Mullooly: Exactly. We all have an innate connection, and I think there's this saying that happiness is only real when shared, and I think suffering becomes less real when it's shared. When you talk about your suffering, it's hard to break out of your self-silo where you're thinking that all of your problems are the biggest problems in the world, and you feel alone in your suffering. I know I do sometimes, but sharing them, whether it be online or with a friend or a trusted family member, just talking about it, in general, can make those feelings of isolation kind of go away, not necessarily go away, but feel less like a burden.

Tim Mullooly: Right, yeah. I know personally, and you've mentioned a couple readings and the stuff that you've been reading over the last year. Are there any books that you've read that you would recommend to some of the people listening if they want to do more reading about the things that you've been talking about?

Casey Mullooly: Sure, yeah. The first one, I think, would be *Self-Compassion: The Power of Being Kind to Yourself*, which I think you're still working your way through?

Tim Mullooly: I'm about halfway through it now.

Casey Mullooly: All right. Cool, cool.

Tim Mullooly: I'm not beating myself up over the fact that it's taking me a while.

Casey Mullooly: Yes. You're learning quickly.

Tim Mullooly: Yes.

Casey Mullooly: Yeah, so that one, *Self-Compassion* by Dr. Kristin Neff, I've read it twice in the last year. I think I could read it every day. Another one would be *Loving-Kindness* by Sharon Salzberg. She's kind of been my guru, so to speak. I've gotten a lot of my inspiration about my how to view things from her. She has another good one, *Real Love*, that I just finished. Then the next, the final one would be *Radical Acceptance* by Tara Brach. That one, she talks a lot about this trance of inadequacy, she calls it, where we're in this mindset of constantly feeling like we're not good enough, so she talks about how to counter that. I've read all of those books. I'm kind of continuously just reading all of those books. It's kind of like a self-help. There's a lot of Buddhist principles and ideas in these books. If anyone has any books that they think that I should read, let me know.

Tim Mullooly: Yeah, definitely. Along the lines of the blog posts that we'll put in the show notes, I'll put links to those books as well-

Casey Mullooly: Link it up

Tim Mullooly: So you guys can check those out. A couple more questions for you here. If you could go back in time over the last year and change one or two things of how you handled your CML diagnosis, would you change anything, and if so, what would they be and why?

Casey Mullooly: I try not to think about what I would change a lot because I think that that just implies that I would want things to be differently, but I definitely have a couple things that I would change.

Right after I got diagnosed, I was ... I kind of wanted ... I pretended like I didn't have cancer. I wanted everything to go back to normal. I started work like 10 days after I got diagnosed. I was trying to do everything that I normally did just to get back to normal because that's what I thought I was supposed to do. It went on for a couple months where I was just acting like that, and it was really, really hard, and it ended up ... I ended up in some pretty dark spots in that time. Then, one day, I just finally accepted it. I finally accepted that I have cancer. I have to change how I'm acting and how I'm feeling. I think I would change resisting it so much at first. It's like I mean that's the first step is denial. I was definitely in denial for a while, and I resisted it for a while, so I think I would want to accept it a little bit sooner.

Then the other thing I would change would be I went through a three or four-year stretch where I didn't get my annual physical from my doctor, so no blood work. We don't know exactly when the CML started, but I could have detected it a lot sooner if I had gotten my physical. For anyone listening, even if you think you're healthy, even if you're in your early or mid-20s and you don't have any health concerns, it's still super important for you to get at least an annual physical and get blood work done.

Tim Mullooly: Just piggybacking off of that, CML is an extremely rare type of cancer, right?

Casey Mullooly: Mm-hmm.

Tim Mullooly: I think you said yesterday or the day before the average CML “haver” or person with CML is like 60-something years old, right?

Casey Mullooly: Yeah.

Tim Mullooly: For you, I mean being-

Casey Mullooly: The average age is like 66, so it's like one in every 100,000 people, or under the age of 40, one out of every 100,000 people get CML, so it's pretty rare, yeah.

Tim Mullooly: Yeah, especially for ... I mean you were 24 when you got diagnosed, right?

Casey Mullooly: Yeah.

Tim Mullooly: It might not be something that you expect, I guess is what I was trying to say.

Casey Mullooly: Yeah, and I thought that I was healthy for that entire stretch of time, but clearly I wasn't.

Tim Mullooly: Yeah. I mean you were-

Casey Mullooly: You think you'd be able to know. My white blood count was 240,000 when I got admitted to the hospital, and normal's like 3,000 to 10,000. You think you'd be able to realize that, but you can't.

Tim Mullooly: Yeah, exactly.

Casey Mullooly: There needs to be feedback even if it's just once a year.

Tim Mullooly: This might sound like a weird question, but what would you say is the best thing that CML has given you?

Casey Mullooly: I think it's given me myself. I think it's given me myself back. It's been really hard just dealing with it in the day to day, but I feel more comfortable in my skin now than I did before I was diagnosed. You hear that a lot that suffering, any kind of suffering, can kind of change how you look at things. It's made everything different, but I think I finally learned how to love myself no matter what, and I think that that's the best that CML has given me.

Tim Mullooly: That's definitely a great thing. I mean I wish-

Casey Mullooly: Yeah, it's the best thing.

Tim Mullooly: I didn't want to say I was thinking in my head I wish everyone could have that, but I-

Casey Mullooly: You can. You don't have to have CML to get it done, though.

Tim Mullooly: Yeah, exactly. That was the point, yeah. I don't wish CML on everyone, but I wish everyone can get to that point.

Casey Mullooly: Yeah, totally.

Tim Mullooly: All right, last question. I wrap up all these podcasts with the same question so, for you, what's the best piece of advice that you've ever gotten?

Casey Mullooly: We've actually gotten this advice. You've actually heard it too. It's a piece of advice that Dad used to say before our baseball games, and it was, "You play baseball against yourself. You play to the best of your abilities." It's taken me a while to realize the power in that statement but, at first, I was like, "Dad, what are you talking about? You're stupid. There's nine other players on the field that I'm competing against."

Tim Mullooly: Yeah.

Casey Mullooly: Then-

Tim Mullooly: You play against the other team.

Casey Mullooly: Yeah, like, come on.

Tim Mullooly: The kid's pitching you the ball.

Casey Mullooly: Yeah. Then it was this idea of competing against yourself and trying to ... That's where I think the mindset of trying to get better each day came in, trying to be better than your former self. Then it's evolved into this whole other thing where it's all you have is you, and all you have is your abilities, so as long as you try your hardest and give everything that you have, no matter what you're doing, that is enough. It's this idea that you're all you have, and there's no good or bad. There's only you.

Tim Mullooly: That's all the questions that I had for you, Case.

Casey Mullooly: That's it?

Tim Mullooly: Yeah. One last question. How many games do the Mets win this year?

Casey Mullooly: Putting me on the spot. I tend to be optimistic, which is weird for a Mets fan, so I'm going to say 92.

Tim Mullooly: All right, and that wins the division, I'm guessing.

Casey Mullooly: It's going to be tight.

Tim Mullooly: It's close. Okay.

Casey Mullooly: They're going to make the playoffs.

Tim Mullooly: Yeah.

Casey Mullooly: Wildcard or division.

Tim Mullooly: You heard it here first. Case, thanks for coming on the podcast.

Casey Mullooly: Yeah, this was a lot of fun.

Tim Mullooly: Like I said, we'll link in the show notes to all of the posts. It's been a year of CML for you. Just want to wish you well in the next coming years and, hopefully, you can continue to share some of this awesome stuff with us.

Casey Mullooly: Thanks, Tim.

Tim Mullooly: That's going to do it for this episode of Living With Money. We'll see you on the next one.