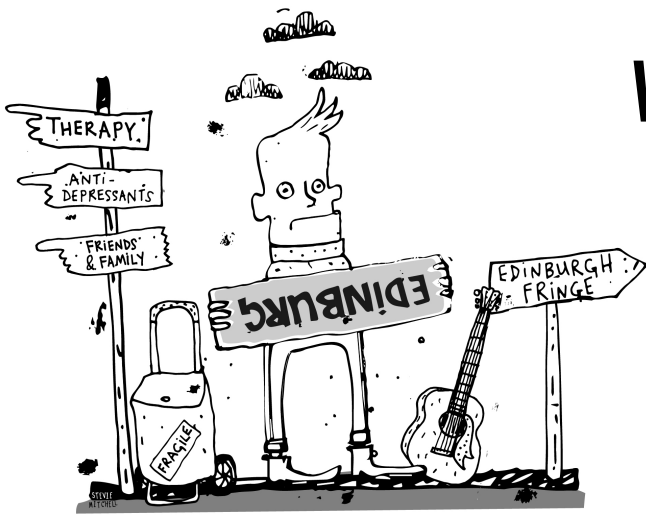


# WE ARE WHAT WE OVERCOME

by Matt McGuinness

One man's journey to good mental health via a very bad idea.



There's no such thing as a straight line; from Liverpool and Antony Gormley's naked torso to a nightly, very public counselling session - a journey not recommended by the NHS!

**2018:** rather than see a psychiatrist, Matt, a musician, with no theatrical experience, chose to perform an unwritten show at the single greatest arts festival on the planet, the Edinburgh Fringe.

**Now:** weaving tales of how he got to and came back from the brink of suicide, this is the path one man took from breakdown to talking publicly.

Matt delivers personal, difficult, and eclectic stories interjected with original songs performed with vocals and guitar. In the full-band version of the show, the music is filled with saxophone, percussion, bass, piano and more. Nothing is left to implication or to whispers, he talks directly to the audience conjuring an atmosphere of openness and understanding. Split into two halves, the show moves fluidly between spoken word, comedy and music - a mix of heartfelt stories, self-deprecating humour and original songs. And, there's always time for a chat post-show.

*"If you're going to create a space where you allow people to open up, be prepared for honesty, hurt, empathy and overwhelming emotions."*



The songs rise from a cappella to full on 50s rock n roll.



The full band, two-set theatre version of the show is also touring as solo, and 50 minute fringe versions.

Alongside the live shows there's also plenty of supporting activity:

**A BOOK** – capturing the stories in print and bringing a literary audience.

**AN ALBUM** – available in different formats, bringing specific engagement with music fans.

**PODCASTS AND ONLINE CONTENT** – enabling a reach to audiences through a different medium.

**CONVERSATIONS AND CONNECTIONS** – with a team reaching out to industry, businesses, individuals, and supporters in each geographical area.



We work closely with venues, partners and other organisations to develop great relationships and build audience development.

- We have developed relationships and working in partnership with local and national mental health care providers, both within the NHS and in the private sector.
- Promotion opportunities in local and national press and radio, through increasing focus on mental health; the story around the show's conception; the release of songs - each with an accompanying film, publications and promotion of the book.
- We are developing specific relationships with journalists who have a bias towards mental health in general and men's mental health in particular.
- We use the monthly podcast that Matt records (alongside a therapist and an improviser) to spread the word about the show among the regular audience and through guest spots on other mental health and music podcasts.
- We target publicity through forums and groups for whom the subject matter is relevant, both online and within local communities.
- We continue to build and nurture relationships with national and local services in each performance area, such as: barbers, men's wild swimming groups, NHS strategies like Thrive, Network Rail, Mentell, sports and activity clubs, local authorities, MPs, music shops and Samaritans in each area.

Illustration by Steve Mitchell, Photography by JJ Beardsley and Graham Whitmore



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## GET IN TOUCH

**BOB** 07980 624457 (show booking, tech...)

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