

# World Meningitis Day: USA

5th October 2022



## A podcast centering on the extraordinary stories of seemingly ordinary people.

John Grimes, a meningitis survivor based in Texas, runs Ambiguously Blind, a podcast dedicated to providing the space to talk about life after meningitis.

For World Meningitis Day 2022, John spoke to Andy Marso, a fellow meningitis survivor. Andy, like John, lives with the permanent after-effects of his battle with meningitis. He survived somewhat miraculously thanks to the fast action of a friend and local doctors which he discusses in his book, *Worth the Pain: How Meningitis Nearly Killed Me, Then Changed My Life for the Better*.

This Ambiguously Blind episode hears Andy and John talk about their experiences of meningitis

alongside their experiences of life after meningitis, centering deeply on the overarching understanding that Andy outlines: "we are entitled to nothing but can accomplish anything." This sentiment certainly plays into John's own motto, "I will succeed when my desire exceeds the limits of my disabilities."

For John, whose experience of meningitis resulted in partial blindness, as well as various other neurological impairments, the podcast provides the space to explore the process of overcoming

### Organisation:

Ambiguously Blind

### Location:

Texas, USA

### Background:

Ambiguously Blind is a podcast run by meningitis survivor, John Grimes. The podcast offers the chance to listen to the stories of those who have been affected by meningitis, and/or to the lives of those impacted by partial/total vision loss.

### Contact:

John Grimes, meningitis survivor and Founder of Ambiguously Blind.

### Change objective:

To spread awareness about meningitis and give people the forum to express themselves, grow and work through the challenges they may be facing.





## ANDY MARSO

*"The podcast has been a tremendous opportunity to connect with and be inspired by the extraordinary stories of steamily normal people. There are so many incredible stories out there just waiting to be told. We're looking for those, everyday. The human spirit is amazing and always prevails."* - John Grimes

challenges in the context of living with a disability, as well as developing a community of people sharing in that experience and growing from it.

### Result and impact

Since starting the podcast in August 2020, John has published over 70 episodes exploring various themes, including, life after meningitis and living as a member of the blind community. He has interviewed more than 50 people to broadcast their stories on his channel and in turn, has created a community of people wishing to share their experience of living with partial/total blindness, or of

adapting to life after meningitis, or in John's case, experience of both. The Ambiguously Blind website also lists an extensive selection of literature written and published by those who have shared their stories with the podcast.

### Key Learnings

**Connecting and sharing stories is powerful.**

Story telling is such an innately human condition, and you can really see how well people listen and respond to the stories shared on the podcast. Creating a platform that drives connection and centers on sharing personal stories really enhances awareness-raising.

**Resilience is built into the human spirit.**

It's so important to remind people of their inherent resilience. Inspiring people to tap into the wealth of resilience they have through sharing stories of where others have done this is instrumental in reminding people that they are not alone, and they can accomplish whatever they put their mind to, despite their situation.

### Advocacy tip!

Look for a diverse range of people with different stories to share and distribute them across multiple social media platforms to maximise audience reach.

### Further Resources

- [World Meningitis Day episode.](#)
- [Ambiguously Blind meningitis episodes.](#)
- [John's story.](#)
- [Andy's story.](#)
- [Andy's book, \*Worth the Pain: How Meningitis Nearly Killed Me, Then Changed My Life For The Better.\*](#)

### Contact details:

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