Chef Charles Mattocks On Creating The First Diabetes Docu-Series

May 3, 2017 By Charles Mattocks

This is a guest blog by Shahzadi Devje, award-winning media dietitian and TV nutrition expert for ReverseD.

Celebrity chef, Charles Mattocks is on a mission to change the face of diabetes. Nephew of the late reggae legend Bob Marley, Charles is bold and a zealous champion of the cause. The award winning producer, turned international diabetes advocate is gearing up to witness his long-awaited vision become a reality - in the creation of Reversed: the first diabetes docu-series, to air on Discovery Life Channel in July.

Filmed at the exquisite Millbrooks Resort in Montego Bay, Jamaica, Charles brought together five guests struggling with diabetes, along with health experts to support them.

In a recent conversation, Charles discussed with me his relentless commitment to bettering the lives of those with diabetes, as well as his own personal struggle with the condition.

SD: So, Charles we've just finished shooting the show and I was thrilled to be part of your expert team as the nutritionist and diabetes educator. Am eager to hear how it all began. What was the inspiration?

CM: It all started when I was diagnosed 8 years ago. I didn't know much about diabetes and thought I was going to die. It was lonely and scary. I took it upon myself to search online and felt lost with the overwhelming amount of information. I decided to document my experience to better understand my journey. I refused to accept that this couldn't be beaten. I knew I needed to lose weight and change my diet and start exercising. And, it was this change in lifestyle that changed my vision. My uncle, Bob Marley inspired my vision. Like him, I want to leave something very special for others and I feel this is my way to do that. I know people are hurting from diabetes and I have a responsibility to not only fight for my life, but for others as well, especially since I have a platform being on TV and other media circles.

SD: How did the idea of a diabetes docs-series come about? I mean, it's never been done before

CM: I had created the first ever diabetes RV tour five years ago. I was in a parking lot at Walmart one day, and saw the big red bus. It made me think, why isn't there one for diabetes - for testing and education? So, I got to work on making that happen. I bought a RV, wrapped it and went to

many states to educate people on diabetes and wound care. Whilst we reached some, I noticed that there were scores of people we couldn't reach. I wondered, what would be the best way to reach them. TV, of course! So, I wanted to create something people could engage with in the comfort of their homes; where they could receive the information right in their living rooms. Many struggle to go and see their health team, but if we could bring them all together to educate and inspire - that would be a powerful tool.

SD: Congratulations on filming the first season. How do you think the show has impacted the guests?

CM: The highlight has to be what I've seen after the filming of the show. In a short time, the guests have reported weight loss and have become diabetes advocates themselves. They're reporting that they're exercising regularly and have improved their food choices, making simple but effective changes. It's amazing to hear that even their medications have been reduced by their doctors.

SD: That's incredible to hear. A show of this nature must have taken considerable effort. What was your biggest challenge?

CM: I wouldn't say challenge, rather I faced a lot of let downs. After months of making many calls to all sorts of companies, including pharma and healthcare, I kept hearing that they didn't have the funds or some other excuse that didn't make sense to me. I mean, these companies spend over 100 million dollars to market just one drug. So, to constantly hear that they were not willing to give this venture a small amount of money, was a big letdown. I am a big fan of Martin Luther King and Gandhi. When you stand for something like they did, it's never easy; it's never going to be a walk in the park. But I have met so many with diabetes worldwide who are hurting and dying, I knew I had to do something and wanted to leave my own small legacy. Thankfully, we were able to find a great company that has a wonderful product for diabetes, Afrezza. They came on board and thanks to Mike and the team, they helped us get this show to the masses.

SD: Indeed. A tough road to get to this point. How do you think a show such as this will help those with diabetes?

CM: This show is for those with both type 1 and type 2 diabetes because in both cases, people have somewhat similar challenges that they're facing daily. The intent is not about reversing diabetes as such. The name reflects that we want to reverse the mental, physical, and emotional state of those with this condition. We successfully achieved this by changing our guests from the inside out. Our goal is to give the guests and the viewers, the tools and inspiration to better manage their condition and realize that a healthy lifestyle is not hard nor expensive. But, instead can give them a better quality of life with their loved ones.
I believe, the show will also benefit those trying to prevent diabetes as well as diabetes caregivers.

SD: I for one am really looking forward to watching the show when it airs in July. So, what's next? Will there be more?

CM:Yes, yes and yes! We're working on season two and looking for more partners that want to help others. We have something very good here and this will give hope to so many. Let's be frank, it's well overdue.

Watch the Reversed intro here and check out the website at reversedyourhealth.com

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