

Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee

Oral evidence: Reality TV - HC 2203

Wednesday 4 September 2019

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Members present: Damian Collins (Chair); Philip Davies; Clive Efford; Julie Elliott; Ian C. Lucas; Brendan O'Hara; Jo Stevens; Giles Watling.

Questions 393-590

Witnesses

I: Yewande Biala, former "Love Island" contestant, Marcel Somerville, former "Love Island" contestant, and Chris Williamson, former "Love Island" contestant.

II: Dwayne Davison, former "Jeremy Kyle Show" participant, and Robert Gregory, former "Jeremy Kyle Show" participant.

Examination of witnesses

Witnesses: Yewande Biala, former “Love Island” contestant, Marcel Somerville, former “Love Island” contestant, and Chris Williamson, former “Love Island” contestant.

Q393 **Chair:** Good afternoon and welcome to the Digital, Culture, Media and Sports Committee. Today’s sitting is a further evidence session as part of our inquiry into reality television. We are delighted to welcome participants in two reality shows of interest to the Committee: first, Yewande Biale and Marcel Somerville, former contestants on “Love Island”. On the second panel, we will talk to two former participants in “The Jeremy Kyle Show”.

Will you start by explaining your journeys to “Love Island”, if you like? How did you come to be on the show? Were you approached to be on it, or did you apply to be on it?

Marcel Somerville: Basically, I have had an agent since I was young, and the year before I participated in the show, “Love Island” contacted my agent to ask, “Do you have anyone who would be good for the show?” My agent put me forward. I spoke to a couple of the casting producers and did a medical, but they wanted me to go on for the last two weeks of the show.

During my conversation with psych from their production team, I said that I wasn’t too sure whether I wanted to go on to the show at that time, because it didn’t look very diverse to me. I said, “I don’t want to be the first black person on the show, as a bombshell”—because you have to go on there to try and steal someone’s girlfriend—“and I’m not sure that should really be my character.” So they held off on putting me on that year, and the following year they got back in contact with my agent to say, “Can Marcel come in for another meeting?” I met with the casting producer again, then the exec producers, and did a medical again. Then they said, “We want to put you on from the start of the show”, and I was like, “Sweet!”, and that was me getting on to “Love Island”.

Q394 **Chair:** At that time, what sort of work were you mainly doing?

Marcel Somerville: I was doing account management for a big music publishing company. At the same time, I was still doing little shows with my band, “Blazin’ Squad,” but they were very few and far between. Obviously, I jumped at the opportunity to do the show because it would have been a big difference. At the same time, the company I was working for was merging with another company and I was going to get made redundant, so it was like a blessing. I thought, “Sweet, let’s do it.” I got the show, and life is a bit different now.

Yewande Biala: I applied myself. I thought that I wanted to do something different. I went for an interview, and once I got through that, we went to psych and we discussed how I would handle the media, fame,



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tabloids and stuff like that, to see if I was mentally fit to go on the show. Once that was assessed and I was, I had my physical evaluation, and then we went into lockdown, where I was seen by psych and the casting producers and exec producers. Then, I went on the show. When I was dumped and it was my time to go home, straight away I was seen by psych again. I went into lockdown for two days and was seen by psych. I was then returned back to the UK and was seen by psych.

Q395 **Chair:** Obviously, you would not have done anything like “Love Island” before, but had you been on television before, or done performance work?

Yewande Biala: No, it was my first time.

Q396 **Chair:** From your experience of being on “Love Island,” being with other contestants on the show and meeting other people who have been on other series of “Love Island”, what do you think is the common route into the programme? Some of the evidence that ITV has given us suggests that, on average, more people are approached, as you were Marcel, than successfully apply, as you did Yewande.

Yewande Biala: Are you asking why I applied?

Chair: No, do you think that most people on “Love Island” are recruited—approached by agents—or are they people who applied as you did, as members of the public who wanted to be on the show?

Yewande Biala: I can only speak about this year. I wouldn’t say there was an even split, but perhaps 40% applied and 60% were recruited by casting producers.

Marcel Somerville: In my year, a lot of the original cast all had some sort of management or someone looking after us. I think there would have been a couple of people who applied for it, but quite a few of us had management before we went on the show.

Q397 **Chair:** Do people on the show know each other before they go on it? Have they worked together before, had the same agents or been up for the same parts?

Marcel Somerville: I didn’t really know anyone who had been on a show, apart from Mike, who I knew from the area that we lived in. There were a few people who had met each other previously. From my year, Chloe and Kem knew each other previously; they weren’t matey but they knew each other from Essex, where everyone kind of knows each other.

Q398 **Chair:** Yewande, do you feel there is a difference between the contestants who are already on a journey to being performing artists, who are used to going up for parts and are actively seeking roles, and people who have never done anything like that before? Is there a difference in the way they approach being on the show?

Yewande Biala: In my year there were not many people who had done reality TV or were in the industry, so I do not think it made a difference.



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Chair: How did you both feel when you started filming? It is a false reality—it is a place that has been created for television and is being filmed. Did you feel like you were being given direction on how you should interact and what you should do, or was this something natural—the scenario is set, but they just let you get on with it?

Marcel Somerville: On the first day, when you walk into the villa and meet all the people you are going to be chilling with, they just want you to go out there and do it how you are going to do it. Whatever the aftermath of how you came across was, that was how you were perceived. They didn't really say, "Marce, go out there and say this," or anything like that. It wasn't like that. It was very much, "All right, cool. You're about to walk down now. Are you ready? Go do your thing." So you would go down and just do what comes naturally to you.

Yewande Biala: I don't really think the producers have a heavy hand in how you do things and what you say. At the end of the day, it is like reality TV. There were instances where, if I was sitting down having a conversation with somebody and saying how I felt about this person and that person, one of the producers could come up and say, "Well, if you feel like that, would you not speak to that person?" I feel like things like that have to happen in order to get the storyline and how I feel out, so that the public can better understand me and the situation.

Q399 **Chair:** Do you get feedback during the course of filming, when people might say, "Avoid talking about these topics," or "Maybe you could be clearer in speaking about this," in terms of an emotion or feeling, or is in entirely left to you to be yourself?

Yewande Biala: It is entirely left to you to be yourself. There is no feedback given at all.

Q400 **Chair:** Is that the same with you, Marcel?

Marcel Somerville: I wouldn't necessarily say that they would listen to what you are saying and then say, "You need to go and say it like this," or anything like that, but there were times when, say, you would be having a conversation about something that was going on in your experience. There would be times when they would ask you to hold off on talking about something until a time when they could set up and capture the moment. Maybe you would start talking about something and say, "I'm feeling like this," and then someone would come in and ask us to hold off from talking about it until a later date. But they would not necessarily say to you that you need to talk about something or explain it in a certain way. It was more like making sure that they could get it for the camera, so that they have that moment in its best light.

Q401 **Chair:** So if something had happened and they thought, "That's great," they would say, "Can we do that again, so that we make sure we capture in properly?"

Marcel Somerville: Basically, you could initiate the story. Obviously, they have cameras and someone listening to what you are saying the whole time. If they feel like it's going to be good for the storyline, they will 100%



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make sure that they capture it in the best way. That is necessary for them to make the best TV show that they can. If you are talking about something in a corner and there is only one camera capturing it, you are not capturing it in its best form. That is more where they intervene.

Q402 **Chair:** But it is to capture something that has happened naturally, but in a better light, rather than inventing it.

Marcel Somerville: Exactly.

Q403 **Chair:** Do both of you feel that you were satisfied with the way you came across? Obviously you are being constantly filmed, but a programme is made that is inevitably edited down. Did you feel that it reflected your experiences of being on "Love Island", and did you think it was a fair portrayal of the other people who you were there with?

Marcel Somerville: The way I was portrayed—I was the first boy on the show. I had a bit of tough first week. At the start of the show, the boys walked down and five girls were waiting. They asked, "Does anyone fancy Marcel?" Then you are waiting for someone to step forward. No one stood forward, so I was like, "Oh my god, this is the worst day of my life." It is basically on you to own that moment and go through it. In the back of my head I was thinking that I would be going home at the end of the week, because no one fancied me, but as the week went on, my personality came out.

Obviously, you can only come across as you come across. My personality shone through, and I developed friendships with everyone. After that first week was done, I realised that I could definitely handle myself in there. That is when I thought my journey actually began. I think that when you watch my series of the show, you can actually see that happening. I got to the final, so I feel like they definitely put me across in the best light that they could. I think I gave them only good stuff to work with.

Chair: They had no choice!

Yewande Biala: I think it is important to remember that we are there for 24 hours a day, but what is shown is only an hour. I feel like there are different sides of everyone's personality. In terms of editing and being shown or perceived in a certain way, they could have shown 15 minutes of one side of your personality—maybe that was what was shown. It is different for everyone. As Marcel said, if you are there for a long period of time, every single side of your personality is shown and the public can fall in love with you. If you are there only for a week, you could be perceived in a certain way—because of the edit, because of how you were, or because of the situation you were put in—but that is not really because of the editing; it is because of the situation that you might have been in at that particular point in time when you were in the villa.

Q404 **Giles Watling:** On that point, do you think the editing was fair on you and others as you look around? As you say, it is 24 hours. The other question is: do you forget about the cameras after a while? Do you just start existing there? I understand that you have no phones or television,



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so it is a sort of social experiment and you have to relate to other people. Do you think the editing is fair? Was it fair for you, and do you think it was fair for the others?

Marcel Somerville: Obviously they have to try to tie in humour and a lot of different things. In the first week of the show, they made a big point of me saying that I used to be in the Blazin' Squad. They kind of edited it together to make it look like I said it all the time, but I actually did not. It is one of those things.

In the first week, they try to get everyone to interact with everyone. One of the villa producers would come up to me and say, "Marcel, do you want to go and have a conversation with Kem? You haven't really spoken to him. Maybe just drop into the conversation that you used to be in the Blazin' Squad." I would be like, "All right, cool." So I did it, because I was thinking, "It's TV—I might as well do it." It was not until a couple of weeks in, when one of the new cast members came in and asked, "Marcel, what band did you used to be in?". I was like, "Blazin' Squad," and they were like, "Aaah!" I did not realise that it was a thing until I came out and saw that there were t-shirts made with, "I used to be in the Blazin' Squad" on them. Obviously they edited it into a little parody thing, which added comedy to the show.

The show works a lot on slogans, so they will make big things out of people saying things, to add humour and that kind of stuff to it. With the edits, they obviously have people who sit there and do the funnier bits and the more serious, detailed stuff. For me, that one kind of got on my nerves a little bit when I came out and everyone was doing it to me, but I learned to manage it, because I feel like the rest of the edits did me justice.

There were a couple of other elements. One of my best mates on the show, Jonny, got made to be a villain because of the storyline that he had. But from being on there with him, I know there was a lot more that they could have shown. Each person has a storyline each week. The longer you are in there, the more storylines you will get and the more you will show different sides of you, like Yewande was saying. It comes down to the length of time that you are in there. If you are in there for a short amount of time and are thrown straight into drama, like a love triangle or whatever, you will get only that side of your character shown. It will affect you—the storyline that you get, and how they would edit it to make you either the hero or the villain of the said storyline.

Q405 **Giles Watling:** But you didn't mind what they did to you, clearly.

Marcel Somerville: I was a hero, so I couldn't really complain.

Q406 **Giles Watling:** Yewande, did you think it was fair?

Yewande Biala: With editing, they can show only what you have said and what you have done. Obviously, you need to remember that it is an hour of 24 hours. With me, and the way I was shown, before I left, I had a storyline, so I was shown in the way I acted and what I had done. It was



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exactly the way it was. Obviously you cannot show the whole situation, but it was how it was, and I was happy with it.

Q407 **Giles Watling:** What about the others? Do you feel that any of the others were depicted badly?

Yewande Biala: I don't think they were depicted badly, but I think they just did not get enough of everyone's personality out. But that is so hard to do, because we are talking about an hour and so many storylines. You have to make TV, but that's just the way it is really.

Giles Watling: So everybody understood. Thank you.

Q408 **Chair:** You both used the expression "storylines" quite a lot. In the context of the show, could you describe what a storyline is, for the benefit of the Committee?

Marcel Somerville: A perfect example for me was that obviously I had a shocking first week, and the nation, from looking at Twitter, were saying, "They need to send someone in for Marce." Basically, for the second week of the show, they made a big thing of a blazin' barbecue. I had a barbecue and then, all of a sudden, they sent two girls in. I was like, "They have sent the girls in for Marce, because it is the Blazin' Squad barbecue." Then that week was more about me trying to win a girl. As the weeks go on, it is about developing the storylines. If a bombshell comes in and tries to get into your relationship, that adds to the storyline, because it becomes a love triangle. Throughout each week, there will be different storylines for each character and their relationships. That is basically where the storylines come into play.

Q409 **Chair:** I thought you said that the storyline is created by the show. They create a scenario and put you in, effectively.

Marcel Somerville: Yes, because they put in the original cast of five boys and five girls, and then they will throw in a bombshell, who will be the first storyline. It will be, "Who is she going to pick?" That is the storyline for the first couple of episodes. She picks one of them, and then, all of a sudden, it is the next person in, two new boys or two new girls, and that adds another storyline.

It is about throwing people into the works to try to see who they are going to go for and see where the drama is going to come from. That is "Love Island", and that is the process of the show. There are literally 40 cast members each season—10 originals, and who they send in to stir up the pot.

Yewande Biala: I would say the storyline is created by you, because it can go in any direction. Fair enough, the producers could send someone in, but they don't know who they're going to go for; they don't know what is going to happen. I feel like you create your own storyline. Every week is different.

One week, my storyline was that someone came in for me, and the nation got to see how I opened up and got to know this person, and how he was



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taken away. That was my storyline. The producers could not have created that storyline for me, because they would not have known how I would have reacted to him. Everyone creates their own storylines, and every week there is a different storyline of what is going on. The storyline is literally what is going on in the villa at that moment in time in that episode.

Q410 **Ian C. Lucas:** I have a quick question. What surprised you most about the show?

Marcel Somerville: In what way?

Ian C. Lucas: Was there anything about it that you didn't expect that actually happened, or something that was done differently? Was there something that you were surprised by?

Marcel Somerville: I don't know. Because they had asked me to go on the year before, I had watched a lot of the previous season.

Q411 **Ian C. Lucas:** So it was what you expected.

Marcel Somerville: Yes, I knew the process of how it was going to work. I didn't find anything that was, "Oh my God, I can't believe this is how it is done." Because I had previously done TV shows. I had done a TV show back in 2006 called "The Games". We had to live in a place and learn Olympic sports and all that kind of stuff. I was semi-used to how those processes worked, so it did not shock me how "Love Island" was put together.

Q412 **Ian C. Lucas:** What about you, Yewande?

Yewande Biala: I wouldn't say that anything really shocked me. I thought it was going to be more intense, because when you watch it there is so much drama, but most of the time, you're just lying around.

Marcel Somerville: You're just chilling out, until it's challenge day. When it is challenge day, you are literally running down steps doing challenges. That used to be the thing that took a lot of the days up, but other than that, it was—

Q413 **Ian C. Lucas:** So it was less intense than you expected.

Yewande Biala: Yes, it was very chilled. That was why I say you create your own storylines. All you do is sit down and gossip, really.

Marcel Somerville: Yes, you are gossiping in the day time. Some of the things you'll be saying will be juicy, and most of the juicy things got shot and happened at night time. The best conversations happen at night because they can say it more than in the day time, when you just have a brief chat about something. You'll say something and the producer will say, "Stop, wait."

Q414 **Jo Stevens:** In a previous session that we held on this inquiry, we heard evidence from the producers of the show. We asked some questions about the contracts that you have to sign to go on the programme. I



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have all the paperwork here—it is quite a hefty contract. Yewande, you applied and you were given a contract to sign. At any point were you advised to get impartial legal advice about what you were signing up to?

Yewande Biala: No, I wasn't. If I felt I needed to, I would have. I am very equipped for stuff like that, so I just sat down and went through it very thoroughly. If I had any questions, I just called one of the execs.

Q415 **Jo Stevens:** You went through it yourself, you raised questions, they answered your questions, and that was fine. Marcel, you said you had an agent anyway, so I assume they deal with your contract stuff.

Marcel Somerville: They had a litigation team.

Q416 **Jo Stevens:** So you didn't have any qualms seeing a contract of that size.

Marcel Somerville: No.

Q417 **Jo Stevens:** Do you think there were downsides to the show? If there were, with hindsight do you think they were properly explained to you before you started on the show?

Yewande Biala: The obvious downside would be social media, how you adapt to your new reality and how you manage with fame and being in the public eye. I can only speak for my season; I think it was explained really well. At the end of the day, there is only so much they can prepare you for. We see psych and they ask, "How would you handle fame? Do you think you can handle it? How would you handle trolling? Do you think you would be able to reach out? How would you reach out?" I felt that I was fully mentally prepared for going on a show like that. But at the end of the day, there is only so much they can do to prepare you mentally.

Q418 **Jo Stevens:** With all the stuff that you described that they did for you, did they do that before you signed the contract or afterwards?

Yewande Biala: Yes, that was done before they told you that you were going on. They did a psych evaluation to make sure you were mentally fit. Once they agreed that you were, they sent you the contract.

Q419 **Jo Stevens:** How about you, Marcel? Was there a downside, and were you prepared for it?

Marcel Somerville: The whole time you are on the show you are fine. When you come off the show, you'll be fine as well. But because you come off the show and you are in such a spotlight, there is so much going on. No matter what you do—anything could happen—there will be a story about it. The press will jump on anything. It happened to me. Most of the time on the show you are in a relationship; when you have a public break-up, everything that happens during that time is magnified. There was a point when a story would come out and the press would "@ me in the story. I don't need to be @-ed in a story—I know what is going on in my life. You don't need to make sure that I see what you are saying about me.



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When that was happening, I started thinking to myself, "Oh my God, this is the worst time of my life." Then you get the trolls who add fire to it. For me, that was the worst part of doing the show.

Doing the show is a massive gift because you get to do things that you would never expect to do. Your life totally changes for the better. But with all good things there will be some negative things that come along. In my year, the aftercare was very different from Yewande's year. They do the psych before you go on to the show. They do your medical evaluations and all that kind of stuff. When the show is finished, on the first day when you come off you do another psych, and a week later you do another one. For me, the real time to be doing those psych evaluations and talking to people would be three or six months down the line, because that is when you are fully in the midst of being famous and dealing with your new lifestyle.

Anyone can ask you, "Do you feel that you are prepared for the fame?" But you may not have spoken to anyone apart from the production team, your family and your friends. You have not been out there in the world and dealing with all the new stuff that will be coming your way. I think they have changed it now; obviously, with the stuff that happened to Mike and Sophie, they upped it and were more aware of their role in supporting everyone after the show. In the newer seasons, they definitely put things into place to give you more support. When my year finished, the aftercare situation wasn't as drawn up as it is now.

Q420 Jo Stevens: Thank you. I think some of my colleagues might ask you a bit more about that area afterwards. I have one final question, which I will ask you first, Marcel. What role did money play in your going on the show? Were you motivated by money? When we looked at what was in the contract and the payment that you get, we think it works out at about £2.80 an hour for your participation. I appreciate that you might financially benefit afterwards, but was money a motivation for you?

Marcel Somerville: As I said previously, I was going to be made redundant by the company I was working for. It came to a point that this was an opportunity. You don't get opportunities like this all the time. You have got to think about how many apply for the show each year, and there are only 40 people each year who will get on as the cast.

Even if they are on for a week, they still see it as a massive achievement, because there are thousands—hundreds of thousands—applying. To be given that opportunity, it was a situation of saying to myself, "Marcel, you can stay and get your redundancy package, or you can do this show and see where it leads, and who knows?"

Really and truly, I am glad that I did it, because it literally changed my life. It gave me an opportunity to do things that I have always wanted to do. It has benefited me in a massive way. If anyone was to say that money is definitely the reason they are going on the show, I don't reckon it is that.



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Obviously, the amount you get paid is not loads of money. The more weeks you are on, the more money you get. If you are only on there for a week, I can't remember how much money I was getting, but it wasn't massive amounts of money. It is always afterwards when you make your money.

Q421 **Jo Stevens:** How about you, Yewande? What was your motivation?

Yewande Biala: I didn't even know we were getting paid until I saw the contract—I was just so chuffed. I just wanted to go on because I wanted to do something different, fun and memorable. For me, it was about going on a show like "Love Island". That is why I went on. It wasn't really anything to do with money.

Q422 **Brendan O'Hara:** Thank you for coming along. Can I just check, in which year did you both appear?

Marcel Somerville: 2017.

Yewande Biala: 2019.

Q423 **Brendan O'Hara:** You said that you were given pre-show psychological testing. Do you know who provided that pre-show evaluation? Was it one individual, a company, a group of people or a number of different individuals?

Marcel Somerville: I did mine with Marcie. Did Marcie do yours?

Yewande Biala: No, for me it was Dr Scott and a lady called Lou. We stuck with both of them throughout the show and after the show as well.

Q424 **Brendan O'Hara:** So you both had one individual point of contact throughout—before, during and after? Was it the same person who provided that support?

Marcel Somerville: During the show there were not really times when I felt that I needed to speak to anyone. If you felt low at any point you could go to the beach hut and say, "I'm feeling a certain way." A couple of my mates went up and had a little bit of time out from the villa and all that kind of stuff. For me, it was Marcie before I went on the show and then, when I first came out and I was out there and had literally just left the villa, we did another one with her. When we got back, someone from ITV came and had a chat with us as well.

Q425 **Brendan O'Hara:** Was there ever any discussion as to who the person was who was providing that and how qualified they were and their background? Did that ever come up, or did you ever ask?

Marcel Somerville: No, I never really asked. I kind of thought it was just like a psychiatrist.

Yewande Biala: At the start of the session, when I first met Lou and Dr Scott, one of the first things psychologists say is to tell you about their qualifications.



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Q426 **Brendan O'Hara:** Did they tell you what their qualifications were, by the way? Clinical psychologist or whatever.

Yewande Biala: Yes, they did; exactly. They would say, "My name is... This is what I do and this is how long I have been doing it." That is how they would start a conversation.

Q427 **Brendan O'Hara:** Could you talk us briefly through the pre-checks that you went through before appearing on this show? Once you had applied, what was that psychological evaluation like? What format did it take?

Marcel Somerville: I find it hard to remember exactly what happened. In 2016, when I was going to go on as the bombshell, the first evaluation was done via Facetime, because I think she was already out in Majorca filming—while they were filming they had the psych out there. The following year, because I was going on earlier, I did it face to face with her. It was pretty much that they just asked me if I had ever had any psychotic thoughts or suicidal thoughts, or anything like that, and basically going into your background, your family, your family home, how you grew up, where you grew up and work—those things—and trying to get a basic picture of who you are as a person.

Q428 **Brendan O'Hara:** Was that the same for you, Yewande?

Yewande Biala: Yes, that was exactly what it was like. They just wanted to get a better picture of where you were mentally and to get to know you better as a person as well.

Q429 **Brendan O'Hara:** So before you went on the show it was purely a conversation that you had?

Yewande Biala: Yes.

Marcel Somerville: Yes.

Brendan O'Hara: There was nothing more. How long were those conversations? How often were they? How in depth do you think they were?

Yewande Biala: They were very in depth. The first one, before I knew I was going on—it was just like a pre-chat—was about half an hour to an hour. Then I did my medical. When I was contacted to say that they would like me on as a cast member for this year, then I had another psych evaluation. When I was then flown to Majorca, we were in lockdown for a week before we went to the actual villa. Then I had a conversation with the psych and all the execs. Once we were in the villa we had a psych on site 24/7 who was available to us.

Q430 **Brendan O'Hara:** In the conversations you had, do you think they were then testing out how you would perform on the show, or were they seeing how you would handle the aftermath and what was inevitably going to follow from such a high-profile programme?

Yewande Biala: It was about seeing whether you were ready. I think it was to see where you were mentally and whether you were mentally able



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to cope. It was then about seeing how you would deal with it. Most of the questions would be like, "How do you feel today?" Before I went on, one of the questions was, "How would you handle not being picked?" Because the way the coupling would work would be that there would be five girls and five guys, and one person would walk out and then they would make their pick. You could be chosen last or you could not be chosen at all. They would say, "How would you cope with that? How would you feel about that?" That is the kind of conversations we would have.

Marcel Somerville: I didn't have that conversation, and then it happened and I was like, "Oh my God, what do I do?" But, no—

Q431 **Brendan O'Hara:** So you didn't have a conversation like that?

Marcel Somerville: No. Maybe they asked that question because of potentially what had happened to me the previous year. On each season there has always been someone who has not been picked. I feel like it is only because it adds a reaction and a cliff hanger to that first part of the show. It is like, "Oh my God, no one has picked them. What's going to happen next?" I definitely didn't get asked that question, because I don't even know what I would have said. What did you say to that question?

Yewande Biala: You probably thought you were going to be picked.

Marcel Somerville: I thought I was going to get picked, but I didn't, so yeah.

Q432 **Brendan O'Hara:** How did that feel? *[Laughter.]* Do you think the conversations that you had prepared you for what you encountered on this show, and how did they help post the show?

Yewande Biala: It did help before I went on because then I had a chance to think about every possible scenario—what the outcome could have been and what it was like. I was able to mentally and maybe emotionally prepare myself for what could have happened. After the show, because I was in psych a lot of the times, it wasn't even just about the show; it was about you. With my psych, Lou, she was able to pick out some points about why I handled certain situations like this, and it was more about helping me grow better as a person, and even, when we have our sessions outside, now that I am out of the villa, it is working on you as a person.

Q433 **Brendan O'Hara:** During the show, were you happy with the psychological support that was available; that you knew how to access it and where to go? Was there peer pressure not to, or if you needed it was it always readily available?

Marcel Somerville: I don't really feel that there was peer pressure not to ask for help. Obviously, if anyone was feeling a certain way they could always go and have a conversation, but the majority of the time on my season, everyone would just come and have a conversation with me, because I was literally an in-villa doctor, because everyone would come to me with their problems. You knew the process, so you'd go to the beach hut and basically tell them, "I'm not really feeling up to this," or "I'm feeling a little bit low," or whatever it was, and that would be the process.



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You would have the conversation in there, and then if they felt that you needed to have a little bit of time off, they would take you and you could have a little bit of time out of the villa and go and speak to Marcie. But I don't feel there was peer pressure not to ask for it. It wasn't anything where you would feel ashamed, like, "No, I'm not going to go and ask." It wasn't anything like that.

Yewande Biala: I think this year they did a really good job, just because during lunchtime and dinner we had welfare. They would kind of come in and what they did really well was that they really became our friends, even though they were welfare, and we felt comfortable speaking to them because we would see them every day. Once they came in, we were just really happy, because it was like seeing someone from the outside world but who you were friends with, and you knew they were there to help you out. As time went on, before you even asked for a psych, you would just sit down with Ron and say, "Do you know what, I just feel really shit today," or, "I don't know what's going on with this situation." I feel that that's what they did really well this year: having welfare, and we were seeing them twice a day for an hour.

Marcel Somerville: We didn't have that in our year. We would have the villa producers, so if something was happening, they would be the person to come in and talk to you, but they would be the people that would be sitting with you, making sure you're not talking about anything while you're doing your lunch. They didn't film during lunch, so nothing from lunch or dinner was filmed, but we didn't have welfare in our year.

Q434 **Brendan O'Hara:** It would be fair to say that there seems to be a marked difference between what you experienced in '17 and what you, Yewande, experienced in '19, in terms of psychological support and the availability of someone to talk to. Is that a fair assessment?

Marcel Somerville: Yes, just based on what I've heard.

Q435 **Brendan O'Hara:** Were you prepared in any way to handle the aftermath of coming out of the show? How long did the producers keep in contact with you once you had left?

Marcel Somerville: For me, after the show, once all the filming in Majorca was done, you would come back to England and if you were in the final, you would do a day where they would come and film you afterwards, and get the "What are they up to now?" stuff for the reunion show. But I think once you'd finally done the show, I've heard people from my year that would have probably had a bit more conversations with the producers from the show, because they went on and did other shows with that company. But if you weren't doing that, you were kind of left to your own devices in a way, because obviously everyone would have come out and got management and would have gone into doing different routes and different shows and stuff like that. But I wouldn't say there was a big thing of them contacting me being, "Marcel, how're things going?" It was more like if there was something coming up, like an awards show or whatever it was, we would probably be contacted: "Are you coming to the show?" and



this, that and the other. But it wasn't much of a, "How's things going now?" It wasn't really that kind of situation.

Yewande Biala: For me it is totally different. They keep in contact all the time, just because I feel like we built such a good relationship with production and welfare. I think they also follow your social media, and they'll say, "Oh, how was that event yesterday?" or, "How are you keeping? Are you doing well? Do you need anything?" I think the support is really good.

Q436 **Brendan O'Hara:** One final question. Are there any particular format points in the show that you look at and think, "That should be toned down" or, "That should be scrapped" because they put contestants under far too much psychological pressure?

Marcel Somerville: There's the lie detector, which I think they have actually scrapped now. You could see the amount of stress that people doing the lie detector were going through. In our year, it was the girls, and they left the girl I was with until last, so she was obviously seeing people going in and coming out and going in and coming out. The anxiety is just building in you. It's good that they scrapped that. Plus, you don't really know how accurate it is. I'm pretty sure I've seen the same lie detector on eBay for £99 or something, so I'm not too sure.

Obviously, I'm going to say this, because I experienced it, but you walk down and they say, "Does anyone fancy you?" and they wait for them to step forward, and if no one steps forward you still have to pick a girl anyway. It's like they make you do that to get that reaction, and then you have to couple up with someone anyway, so you have to pick someone anyway. They could cut that bit out and just say, "Marcel, who do you want to pick?" and you could pick that person and, if they don't want to stay with you, you could then step forward and pick someone else. Being the first person down there and having to deal with that, it's mad. It's nuts.

Q437 **Brendan O'Hara:** Yewande, is there anything from this series that you think is a bit—

Yewande Biala: No. As Marcel said, they cut out the lie detector test, so we didn't get to experience that. Nothing for me personally.

Q438 **Chair:** Marcel, you slightly answered this, but just so I am clear, with the lie detector test, you weren't given any indication as to how accurate it was? It was just a feature of the programme?

Marcel Somerville: No. They might have tried to imply that it was definitely 99 point something per cent. accurate, but it's one of those things where you can't see the person who's dealing with the data. You basically go in there and there's someone else from the show—another cast member—strapping you into what's going on. It's not like there's a professional sitting next to you and reading your things. You don't know who's saying, "Yeah, he's answered that true" or "Yeah, they've answered that false." It's literally just looking at a green light and saying, "He's



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lying” or “He’s not lying.” If anything, that’s going to make you more anxious, because you’re thinking they could literally just be saying, “Oh, we’re going to make that one a lie.” You don’t know. That’s one of the things that made it more stressful, because you were like, “Oh my God, what’s going on here?”

Q439 **Chair:** Yes, it’s not like it’s being done under controlled medical conditions.

Marcel Somerville: Exactly.

Q440 **Clive Efford:** Going back to the questions from Mr O’Hara, you clearly are two very confident people and you look like you coped with it very well, but did you get the impression at all when you were there that the people who were doing the psychological profiling had not done a good job with other people on “Love Island”? Did you think, “Maybe they’re not able to cope”?

Marcel Somerville: I don’t know. Everyone on my show seemed like they had good personalities. They were very confident. Everyone enjoyed themselves. There wasn’t anyone there that I was like, “Oh my God, they look like they’re really having a bad time.” There weren’t any points like that. Based on the evaluations, I feel like they definitely chose people who were comfortable—

Q441 **Clive Efford:** Who were up to it.

Marcel Somerville: Yes, they were up to it.

Q442 **Clive Efford:** Is that your view, Yewande?

Yewande Biala: Yes.

Q443 **Clive Efford:** Can I move on to social media? Were you ready for the impact of social media when you left? Do you feel you were prepared for that? Did you get any training?

Marcel Somerville: No, I didn’t get any training on it. Obviously, prior to doing the show, you have a certain number of followers and you’re like, “Yeah, I’ve got a decent number of followers.” I had 2,000 followers, and then I came off the show and I think I had something like 600,000 followers. You’re like, “Wow, this is crazy,” but at the same time, a lot of people who follow you aren’t necessarily people who like you and are not necessarily people who are there to be like, “Yeah, we love you.” Some of them are there to be horrible to you or comment horrible things, because that is what people do on social media. There are a lot of trolls in there. Training-wise, I didn’t get taught how to tweet or how to post or anything like that, or what to expect from it. You just dealt with what came your way.

With regard to trolls and that kind of stuff, the best thing to do is ignore them—that is what everyone always says—but I suppose when you are going through certain situations in life and people are raining in on those situations: you can be feeling like, “Oh my God, I can’t believe this is happening to me” and then there are more people adding fuel to the fire,



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and that in turn makes you feel even worse. Social media is a bit—I am not a fan of it.

Yewande Biala: We had training before we went in on how we would handle certain situations and then when we came out we had thorough training on social media—how to block certain words from comments, how to block people, how to handle situations, how to tweet and what we should be careful of before posting images on Twitter and other social platforms.

Q444 **Clive Efford:** To sum up, you didn't get any training, Marcel, and you did, both prior to and when you left.

Yewande Biala: Yes.

Q445 **Clive Efford:** Thanks for that. What type of comments do you get? Were they on the whole good or bad? Was there abuse? How would you apportion it?

Marcel Somerville: There are loads of people who support you. The show was so big that you've got a lot of people who watched the show and wanted to follow what you were doing afterwards. At the same time, you are naturally going to get people who pretty much have zero pictures and zero followers, but they are just on there to comment negative stuff, so there will be racist stuff and they will just be horrible people saying horrible things.

After all the drama of the last year happened, that is when I took hold of myself to go through the privacy settings to see how I can block certain words, but I kind of did that off my own back, as opposed to being taught, "This is what you can do to avoid those things coming through to you."

Q446 **Clive Efford:** And you were never advised to report any of the abuse of any sort, or felt the need to?

Marcel Somerville: There were a few occasions. Obviously, whenever you see anything, you can do that thing where you can delete or report or whatever it is. You will do that if it is something that is really—

Q447 **Clive Efford:** You did that off your own back.

Marcel Somerville: Yeah. You do that off your own back; I wasn't trained how to do that.

Q448 **Clive Efford:** With your training, did you have any of those sorts of experiences, and how did you deal with them?

Yewande Biala: Yes, they gave advice. If you had any negative comments, they showed you how to block or delete or report or whatever you felt was sufficient in that case.

Q449 **Clive Efford:** Were there any threats? Was it sexist or racist or xenophobic in any way?

Yewande Biala: With trolling, personally for me on my profile, most of it is in my direct messages, so they actually don't come into my inbox



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straightaway—they are in requests. What I have learned to do is just not read my requests.

Q450 **Clive Efford:** Marcel, was it the same type of thing?

Marcel Somerville: Yes, it was pretty much the same. There were a few things that were coming through on the comments, but obviously you can do that thing where you can block certain words, so there were obviously certain words that I would block, which are probably not words to say here.

Q451 **Clive Efford:** Did you feel the need to contact the producers in any way after you had left because of things that had happened on social media?

Marcel Somerville: Because all the negative stuff was predominantly a little while after, by that time I had kind of got into a situation where I felt like, “I can deal with this.” I’d got my friends and I could talk to them about certain situations, rather than going back to the producers, because there had been a separation from the show in a sense.

Q452 **Clive Efford:** Let me put it another way, then. Did you feel that you could have gone back to the producers if there was something you felt concerned about that had happened on social media?

Marcel Somerville: I don’t know. Obviously, there is always that thing where they say, “If you need anything, you can always contact us,” but with how life progresses you naturally just deal with things. For me, I am always one to deal with things myself and I just use the people I have in my circle to be my support system, as opposed to going and speaking to someone else who I haven’t really spoken to for a certain amount of time.

Q453 **Clive Efford:** Yewande, was there ever an occasion when you felt that you had to go back and contact the producers?

Yewande Biala: Personally for me, I didn’t feel that I needed to, because I was equipped with the level of training I needed to deal with certain situations. But if I felt like it was out of hand or I couldn’t get on top of it, I don’t think I would struggle to reach out because I have such a great relationship with them.

Q454 **Clive Efford:** Following the earlier questions about editing, we have had evidence that two separate sentences could be spliced together, which could alter the emphasis of something or its meaning. Were there ever times where you were dealing with stuff on social media and you thought, “That wouldn’t have happened if they hadn’t slightly tweaked what I said”?

Marcel Somerville: I don’t think there were any actual points where they edited any conversations I had. I am not too sure.

Yewande Biala: I haven’t seen where splicing was occurring.

Clive Efford: Thank you very much.

Q455 **Chair:** I have a quick follow-up question. Marcel, you mentioned that you



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block certain words and things on social media. There has recently been quite a lot of focus on the racially motivated abuse that footballers like Paul Pogba have received. Is that a sad reflection of society? Is that something that you price in: there are idiots out there who will post comments like that, and you just have to manage it? It is a tragic thing to say. Can you relate to the experience that other people go through?

Marcel Somerville: I can definitely relate 100% to those incidents. It is like Yewande said. There will be a lot of times where in your direct messages you will get sent the most random things. The girl I came off the show with was getting sent some absolutely vulgar stuff, because she came off the show with me and she was Caucasian. So there are definitely elements of society where there are people who feel like they can say that kind of stuff, but they obviously do it behind the shield of their phone. They probably wouldn't say it to your face if they came up close to you. I don't know why it is—mentally or whatever—but they feel they need to say horrible things to people.

Chair: In a slight change of tone, we are going to play a short clip from "Love Island", which will be up on the screens in a moment. We want to discuss a couple of issues that have been raised about the show: certainly body image issues, diversity and the way people are presented. Once we have played the clip, Julie Elliott will have some questions. This will be screened for those watching on the Parliament channel—so if you don't want to watch it, look away now. *[Laughter.]*

[An excerpt was shown from "Love Island".]

Q456 **Julie Elliott:** Thank you for coming in. It has been fascinating listening to you. Earlier, you said that you thought it was about a 60:40 split of people who had been got through agencies or just applied. Actually, of the 36 contributors, only six came from general applications.

Yewande Biala: Really?

Q457 **Julie Elliott:** Yes, in this series. Especially after watching that, do you think that Love Island producers have an ideal contestant in mind?

Yewande Biala: An ideal contestant? This year I'd say no, because everyone—talking about the originals speaking—is so different. We were from different places and studied different things. We all looked different, so I don't think there is an ideal contestant.

Q458 **Julie Elliott:** What about in the previous series that you were involved in, Marcel?

Marcel Somerville: The year that I done it, I think I was the first fully black contestant to appear on the show. As the years have gone on, you can see that they have tried to add more diversity into the show 100%, but maybe they put me on the show because of my background in doing those kind of things, so maybe my personality and the way that I carry



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myself would be very much suitable for television, and being a black male added a bit of diversity to their show.

Q459 **Julie Elliott:** But you were in the third series, so there had never been a person—

Marcel Somerville: Prior to that, two years before, they had Rykard, who was mixed race, and Malin, who was mixed race, and I think a guy called Troy, who was also mixed race. In my year, they had me as the first black male, but then they had Theo, Montana and—I've forgotten his name—Simon.

Q460 **Julie Elliott:** We are in single figures for people who are non-white out of the more than 100 people who have taken part, which is not very good, is it?

Yewande Biala: Only 40 people took part. You said "out of 100 people".

Q461 **Julie Elliott:** Well, the three series up till Marcel's third series. It's about 30 to 40 per series. Marcel, do you feel that the producers had an ideal type of person that they wanted on the show?

Marcel Somerville: I definitely feel, like I said earlier, I didn't want to go on to the second season as a bombshell because I had a feeling from watching it that I was going to be alienated on the show. I felt like I didn't want to be a character going on there and trying to steal someone's girlfriend because that would just make me into a negative character on the show, so I was like, no, I don't really want to do that. The following year they definitely wanted to add a bit of ethnicity to the casting, and as the years have gone by, even the year after mine, they had Samira on from the start, and she was the first black woman to be on the show. So I think they definitely made a conscious effort to add diversity to the show. Even on your year, you had Sherif and you at the start of the show.

Q462 **Julie Elliott:** Love Island has been criticised quite extensively for its lack of body diversity: people's shapes, sizes, whatever. Do you think the producers should select contestants from a greater range of body types?

Yewande Biala: Personally, it is a little bit unfair to say it's a reality TV show issue. I think body diversity is a social issue. Society has ingrained what an ideal body type is. Because of that, only a certain type of person would apply for the show, so they can only cast people who apply.

Q463 **Julie Elliott:** Except that we have already seen that most of the people who appear on the show are actually people they go out and seek, as opposed to people who just apply. I think you are very unusual to have just applied on spec. Personally, I think we should have far more people who just apply like you do. So the producers of the show actually go for specific people. Clearly, when they went to your agent, Marcel, they knew who you were, what you looked like, what your shape was. I presume that is the same for all the other people who they go out and seek? I accept body image is a much bigger thing, but programmes such as Love Island do have a huge influence, not just on young people but a lot of people in society. They should probably be even more responsible in who



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they choose to come on. That is why I am asking whether you think they should broaden the range of body images, types and builds of people that they have on the show.

Marcel Somerville: It would definitely add more to the show because it is not just athletic-built people who fall in love. All kinds of different people fall in love on the show and in real life. It would be good.

Julie Elliott: I hope so, or life would be very boring.

Marcel Somerville: I am saying that. So potentially, it would be good for them to have a bit more variance in the figures and shapes of the people they put on the show.

Q464 **Julie Elliott:** What about you, Yewande. What do you think?

Yewande Biala: It would definitely be greater, and it would be nice if people of different body sizes and shapes applied for the show as well. That would make a huge shift in the casting.

Q465 **Julie Elliott:** In terms of your personal experiences, did either of you feel any pressure to change the way you look to appear on the show or after the show? Was there any pressure in that direction?

Marcel Somerville: I don't feel there was pressure, but I was very conscious because I went on to the show when I was 31, which for the show is reasonably old. I was like, there are going to be all these young whippersnappers on there and they are all going to have six-packs. I was like, I'm going to be in the gym, going to get my six-pack on, looking good.

It just adds to confidence on the show and life. If you go on to the show and feel confident in yourself, you will be confident in putting yourself across. As opposed to, like, if you were feeling anxious or insecure about how you looked, you would 100% go on to the show feeling nervous and worried about what people were going to think of you and all that kind of stuff. Even saying that, it doesn't matter how prepared you are physically or whatever; you never know what the other people are going to think of you, from the start of the show anyway.

Q466 **Julie Elliott:** At no point, nothing was said to you to change the way you looked? It was your personal choice?

Marcel Somerville: I don't know whether or not they can see that I obviously go to the gym and look after myself, but there was never any real pressure, such as, "Marce, you need to make sure you have a six-pack and biceps by the time you get on to the show." It was nothing like that. It was more like, "Hi, Marce, I'll see you when the show starts." Because they knew that I had done that already, do you know what I mean?

Yewande Biala: I would not say there was huge pressure, but, for any holiday, you want to look your best. If you know you are going to be in a bikini for eight weeks, you'd want to look your best. That is only for a TV



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show. If you were going on holiday for two weeks and you knew you were going to be in a bikini, you would want to look your best. I don't think there is any huge pressure; it is just the way it is, like—

Q467 **Julie Elliott:** You feel?

Yewande Biala: Yes, the way you feel. You don't have to go to the gym if you don't want to. It is a personal choice.

Q468 **Julie Elliott:** Do most people you talk to who have appeared on the show with you feel the same about this, or was it never discussed?

Yewande Biala: It actually was discussed. If we talk about the original line-up, I think of all the girls only me and Lucy went to the gym. I queue regularly to go to the gym. I've been going to the gym for three years. No one else did.

Q469 **Julie Elliott:** When you were on, was it discussed?

Marcel Somerville: It was a natural thing. The boys would literally get up and go over, because there is a little gym area in the garden. Boys who wanted to train would get up in the morning, have breakfast and go down. Whoever was going to come out was going to come out the majority of the time. All the boys would come out and do a little something in the morning, just to beef up a little bit.

Q470 **Clive Efford:** Going back to social media, how much of the social media commented on body image and focused on that? Was there a lot of negativity around it? Are you able to comment?

Marcel Somerville: A lot of the campaigns you get when you come off the show will be fashion. You will be in swimming shorts or whatever it is. You naturally feel like you need to maintain your image.

Q471 **Clive Efford:** But was it commented on a lot?

Marcel Somerville: No. Well, there was one post when it was—I think I finished the show in October and, obviously, you have finished the show, and you are relaxing a little bit—and I was doing a show. There was a shot in part of the show; I had my top off, and someone mentioned it and was like, "Marce, where's your abs gone?" I was like, "Bloody hell, mate, it's only been a month." But I think I'd just eaten before I'd done the show as well, so it weren't really flattering me. So there's a lot of things like that, but obviously you kind of take them as a joke, in a way, because obviously you've not lost your way, do you know what I mean? You are still in some sort of shape.

Q472 **Clive Efford:** We've all just eaten, as well.

Was there any experience for you in terms of comments about body image and negativity around that, in the social media reaction afterwards?

Yewande Biala: I think everyone gets one or two, but I don't think it's anything huge that would make me upset in any type of way. There's always the delete button, as well.



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Q473 **Chair:** Can I ask, following the film clip—there was obviously the gym bunnies routine. Some people might say it portrayed a certain sort of stereotype of female beauty, of women—having the girls dressed in bunny costumes perform that. Do you feel sometimes that the show crosses the line, in the way it depicts women in particular?

Yewande Biala: No, I don't think I've ever thought about it. Most of the challenges that we do are just really fun. I think we just appreciate, actually, getting out of the house. I've never really sat down and thought about how it reflected women in any type of way or form.

Marcel Somerville: I don't know, because obviously when you are doing challenges everyone is, the majority of the time, really comfortable in what they are doing. You have got to think, we have been wearing bikinis and swimsuits for the majority of the time we are out there, so when the girls put on something like that, they just feel like they are putting on another swimsuit. Also, I think you know, when you actually go on to the show, that some of the costumes that you wear—they are very sexed-up costumes. Even the boys—we have to wear Speedos and stuff like that. I wouldn't usually wear Speedos, but you are wearing Speedos, but you know you don't really look that bad in Speedos, so you are kind of, "I'm going to just own it." It comes down to confidence again, innit, so I think they obviously put people on there who they know are up for having a laugh and up for having fun. I think that kind of goes into why they ask you the kind of questions they ask you prior to the show, like, "Are you outgoing?", "Do you mind this?" or whatever it is. I can't really speak for the girls, because obviously I'm a guy, but if you felt comfortable with wearing the stuff, it's like, you feel comfortable with it, innit?

Q474 **Chair:** But from both your experience, is it something you feel that maybe after the show people have reflected on or people have questioned at the time—or have people just gone along with it, because that's the show?

Yewande Biala: I think, speaking for myself and speaking for the girls who were on at the time that I was on, we actually enjoyed it. We enjoyed the bunny costumes. We were super-excited when we seen them, and when we did the Bridezilla challenge and we got to pick our dresses. I think it's just because from being in the villa and doing nothing the whole day, and you get that little piece of something, you are just super-excited. I feel like if they ever crossed the line and something wasn't comfortable enough—because we were just really good friends with production and we felt safe, and we felt comfortable—we would be like, "Oh no, I don't want to wear this," or, "I don't feel comfortable wearing this."

Q475 **Chair:** So you felt you could?

Yewande Biala: Yes, 100%

Q476 **Chair:** And did people do that from time to time?

Yewande Biala: It didn't happen, because, as I said, everyone was super-excited when it came to challenges, but I do feel, like, if they needed to, they would have.



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Q477 **Giles Watling:** Just quickly, a couple of things I'd like to clear up: you mentioned this thing, lockdown. What happens with that, this lockdown? You are completely isolated?

Yewande Biala: For my lockdown, you were chaperoned by one person for the whole week. You weren't completely locked down. Like, you could go out and do whatever. You had a schedule; my chaperone was very much for going out—just like dinner, drinks or doing whatever. In that time, as well, you'd also speak to the execs, and you speak to psych and finance. You speak to everyone and you'd get that sorted in the one-week lockdown.

Q478 **Giles Watling:** Are you isolated on social media and everything during that period? You are not chatting to anybody?

Yewande Biala: Yes, you don't have your phones at all.

Q479 **Giles Watling:** Right, okay. And that didn't worry you at all? That was fine?

Yewande Biala: I didn't even want my phone because at that time I knew I was a public figure, so I didn't even want it.

Q480 **Giles Watling:** And it didn't bother you either, Marcel?

Marcel Somerville: Obviously, when you go through the chaperoning and all that kind of stuff, they take all your valuables—your phone, like any watches—because they don't want you to know the time or all that kind of stuff, because they want you to be totally out there.

Having the phone situation didn't really bother me. You kind of like accept it. That's why they do the whole lot, because you are out and you are totally cut off from the public, in a way. Obviously, you are interacting with the people who are in the same areas as you, but they do it as a kind of preparation so that when you actually go into the villa, you don't worry about your phone and you are not even caring about any of that.

Even the day when I came out of the villa and I turned my phone on, I looked at it and all the numbers were ringing and everything and I was like, "I don't even want to look at that." I wanted to leave it for a couple of days. Then you come back home and for your management, your social media and all the campaigns that come your way, you have got to start getting used to it again and re-engaging.

Q481 **Giles Watling:** We have some evidence in the brief from one of the contestants. Because you are denied access to television, radio, phone and so on, do you ever get bored? Somebody did.

Marcel Somerville: On my year, we did a lot to entertain ourselves. We had quite a few characters on our show who would be very much entertaining. We'd make up songs and we'd make up games and just keep ourselves going, but I've spoken to a couple of people from the years after, who have said, "Yeah, it's just a bit boring in there, and you do nothing."



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Yewande Biala: No, as Marcel said, everyone just has fun with each other and just, like, has absolute LOLs, and we make up songs. We are always gossiping for the whole day, so I don't think you get bored. Sometimes you just want to relax and do nothing, and just lie on the daybeds and catch up, really.

Q482 **Giles Watling:** Is alcohol part of it? Are you given drinks?

Marcel Somerville: Because they don't want you to be drunk, you would get two drinks a night. You can get two glasses of wine a night, and that would be the limit. You wouldn't get any more than that, because they didn't want anyone to be—

Q483 **Giles Watling:** So it wasn't used as a tool.

Marcel Somerville: No, not on "Love Island". They made a big thing about saying that they didn't want to be a thing where they plied people with alcohol, and then people would do things, because you never know—people might regret doing things if they were under the influence.

Giles Watling: Of course.

Marcel Somerville: So they made a big deal of being like, "You are going to get two drinks, just so you can relax, but no one is going to be drunk."

Q484 **Giles Watling:** These trips to the beach hut are fascinating. Are they in total confidence?

Marcel Somerville: Yes, anything that is said in there. No one in the villa will get told what you said in the beach hut. Obviously, what you said in the beach hut is getting broadcast to the whole entire world. Well, not everything that is being said in there.

Q485 **Giles Watling:** So they broadcast what is said in the beach hut.

Marcel Somerville: Yes. There will be elements. The majority of the time, the things that are broadcast are the things where, if you have done a challenge, they bring you in after and ask how you found the challenge. But if you go to them personally and say, "I'm feeling a bit ill, can I do this?" or whatever it is, that won't be broadcast to the public. It is only the things that tie into the storylines.

Q486 **Giles Watling:** I just wanted to get that clear.

Moving on, looking at life after "Love Island", did you have any expectations of what that would be and how it was going to go? Did it live up to your expectations?

Marcel Somerville: From seeing the people that had done the year before my show, obviously I knew that you become a social media face; for the guys, you do a lot of PAs. If you are a popular contestant, you will do a load of PAs. That is something that I was expecting, but not the vastness of the things that you get asked to do. I wrote a book, I've done all these different things, and you don't naturally expect to be doing those



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things. You do get a lot of benefits from doing the show—more, because I think my year was the year that propelled it into the nationwide—

Q487 **Giles Watling:** When you say PAs, you are talking about things like opening nightclubs and stuff like that?

Marcel Somerville: Yes, exactly, stuff like that.

Q488 **Giles Watling:** Yewande, what were your expectations after the show? It is early days yet, isn't it, for you?

Yewande Biala: It is. I didn't want to have expectations or think that certain things would come from it. I just went in there for the experience, so coming out now, I'm dealing with everything that comes with it.

Q489 **Giles Watling:** Are you getting help and guidance on that?

Yewande Biala: Yes, definitely.

Q490 **Giles Watling:** That is good to hear. This question is really more for Marcel, because there has been more time: you are now a reality TV star. Has that placed any restrictions on what you can do?

Marcel Somerville: When you do a show like "Love Island", what I have found is that all the shows you get offered to do after you have done it are basically based on your love life. So you'd do more dating shows. Actually, there are other things that I do, so you would be on panels. I have done other ITV stuff. But I don't think being a reality TV star really restricts you now, because obviously, with "Love Island", my agency will always say that if anything is happening, people will always ask, "Have you got anyone from 'Love Island' on your books?" That is one of the big things they have found that a lot of companies and brands will go for now, because they know how big the show actually is. So it doesn't really restrict you from doing things.

Obviously I still make and produce music, and I DJ and stuff like that, so if anything it works in my favour. But at the same time, as a DJ, because you've been on "Love Island", if clubs are looking to book people, they will not necessarily book you if you have been on "Love Island". Because I was on "Love Island" in 2017, if you are trying to get booked as a DJ now, they will still look at you as being from "Love Island", as opposed to as a DJ.

Q491 **Giles Watling:** So there are no restrictions? It is all good news as far as you are concerned?

Marcel Somerville: Yes.

Q492 **Giles Watling:** Yewande, I understand that you are a scientist. Now you have come out of "Love Island", do you want to carry on being in the world of science?

Yewande Biala: Yes, definitely. Eventually I will go back. I get calls at least once or twice a week from different agencies to be a consultant, so I know it is not an issue to go back.

Q493 **Giles Watling:** And it is not going to be an issue?



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Yewande Biala: It is not going to be an issue at all.

Giles Watling: That is good to hear. Thank you very much.

Chair: That concludes our questions for this session. I would like to thank you both for giving up the time to come in, and for being so candid and open in the answers that you have given. We really appreciate it. Thank you.

Examination of witnesses

Witnesses: Dwayne Davison, former "Jeremy Kyle Show" participant, and Robert Gregory, former "Jeremy Kyle Show" participant.

Q494 **Chair:** I welcome Robert Gregory and Dwayne Davison to the Committee. We are very grateful to you for coming and giving evidence today.

This is part of our inquiry into reality TV. As you may know, we have taken evidence from ITV, from the producers of "The Jeremy Kyle Show", about the show and the way that it is made. Today, we wanted to ask you to tell us your story about how you came to be on "The Jeremy Kyle Show", and the experience of being on the show. We want to hear from people who have been through it, as well as speaking to the people who make the show.

I want to say to Dwayne Davison that we are very grateful to you for sharing with the Committee some of your email correspondence with ITV, particularly after the show was broadcast.

Dwayne Davison: Do you mean the emails?

Chair: Yes. The Committee has published those emails today in redacted form, but those emails will be on public record as well. We will be referring to them later on, but we are grateful to you for sharing those.

Dwayne Davison: Was it the emails with Mia Jenkins? I think I sent a few emails through.

Chair: That's right, mainly talking about the show.

Dwayne Davison: I was asking to get it taken down.

Q495 **Chair:** That's right; exactly. We will talk about that in particular later on, but I wonder if we could start by asking how you came to be on the show. Were you approached to be on the show, or did you apply?

Dwayne Davison: I was quite young at the time. I was 21 years old and didn't really have a brain in my head at the time. I was having a bit of an argument with my girlfriend. I accused her of cheating, which was a bit of a stupid thing for me to do; like I said, I was young at the time. She says to me, "Right, let's phone 'The Jeremy Kyle Show'. We've got no money to go to a lie detector person or anything, so we'll go on the show."

We text the show and then forget all about it. The argument is completely over. Then three days later, they phoned us back and said, "Do you want to come on the show?"

Q496 **Chair:** What sort of questions did they ask you when they phoned you up?

Dwayne Davison: I was speaking on the phone to the person for about half an hour. He asked me what the situation was, and what had



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happened. I told him again, but I said to him, "The argument is over now. I don't want to go on the show. It's not something I want to do. It was like a spur of the moment thing. This was three days ago—I don't want to go on the show now." But, I don't know, you meet these people in life who are really charismatic, and he was one of them. They picked out the people so well. You are saying no on the phone, but he's acting like he's my best mate and like we've known each other for years. He's saying, "We'll go out for a drink." He's saying, "How do you know your girlfriend hasn't cheated?", even though I've got it out my mind now. He's trying to put a seed back in my mind to try to get me to go on the show.

Q497 **Chair:** Who was the person you were speaking to?

Dwayne Davison: He was a producer or runner for ITV. He is the person who tries to get people to come on the show. He was the best talking guy you've ever spoken to. He was making joke after joke, and really trying to act like he was good friends with me. He was saying, "Listen—you need to come on this show. You need to get this out your head." Even though it was out my head, he was planting the seed again.

I wish I'd recorded that conversation, because he would not take no for an answer. He kept saying over and over again, "Come on! Come on the show." Even right at the start of the conversation, I was trying to put the phone down, and he just would not let me. I know I could have if I'd wanted to, but he was continuing to talk. Basically, they've got a team of people who are very persuasive and have done this multiple times, so they know how to get people on to the show.

Q498 **Chair:** So you had the phone call, which lasted about half an hour. What happened after that? Were you asked to go to a meeting?

Dwayne Davison: By the end of that half-an-hour phone call, I'd said, "Yeah, I'll go to Manchester." Within an hour of that phone call, a taxi was at my door waiting to go to Salford. Bear in mind that it's like 106 miles away from where I live, so it's very far for me. I ain't got a car or anything. One hour and there was a taxi to Salford.

Q499 **Chair:** What happened when you got to Salford?

Dwayne Davison: I had to stay in the hotel overnight. I met quite a few other guests who were in the hotel. I think everyone was in the same situation of not quite believing what was happening: we are going on "The Jeremy Kyle Show" tomorrow. This is a big thing. Everyone from my economic background knows "The Jeremy Kyle Show". Everyone knows it. We were all sat in the hotel just thinking that it was a crazy experience to go through: "We are going to go on 'Jeremy Kyle' tomorrow."

It felt like there was no choice for me. At that point, like I said, I had no car. I was quite poor at the time. I still am, but I'm not as poor as I was. I had no option to go back home. Multiple times that night, me and my partner said to each other, "Should we go? Should we really do this?" I am saying to her, "I don't even think you cheated." We've been hauled into this now. We can't get out of it.



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Q500 **Chair:** So literally you sent a text in, you got a call back from the show, the call lasted half an hour, and then that evening you were staying at the Holiday Inn by the studios.

Dwayne Davison: Yeah, I think it was the Holiday Inn. Something like that.

Q501 **Chair:** Was it the hotel right next to where the studios are?

Dwayne Davison: Yeah.

Q502 **Chair:** Did anyone sit down with you and explain that if you wanted to back out of it, you could? They would pay your fare home and make sure that you were okay.

Dwayne Davison: No. They don't want you to go back home. No one says to you in strict words, "You can't go back home," but they sort of make you feel like you're in debt to them. Like: "We've given you a hotel now." Bear in mind that I am 21 years old. I've had no money all my life. I've never stayed in a hotel room. I know that sounds really bad, but I've never stayed in a hotel. They've given me this hotel, and it seems really petty, but they know that you owe them in a way.

Q503 **Chair:** Did you feel that if you did not do the show they might have asked you to pay for the hotel and for the taxi?

Dwayne Davison: Yeah. Even the taxi back home would have been a crippler for me.

Q504 **Chair:** So you went on the show the following day.

Dwayne Davison: Yeah.

Q505 **Chair:** Did anyone sit down to talk to you about what the experience would be like, to help prepare you for going on the show?

Dwayne Davison: We got a phone call, sorry, that night. They gave us more details about what we wanted to go on for. But no one really ever sat me down and said, "Dwayne, you're going to go on television. Millions of people are going to see you. You're going to be labelled the most hated. People are going to hate you in your town centre and in your workplace." No one really said to me, "Dwayne, this is what's going to happen to your life." I didn't know what was going to happen. I had no idea.

All I knew was that I was going on "Jeremy Kyle" tomorrow, and I thought it would just fade away. Bear in mind that 27,000 people have been on "The Jeremy Kyle Show". No one has ever been called the most hated. I thought I would go on, get my lie detector and disappear. No one would ever know me again. Now I'm like this guy who—yeah. No one ever sat me down and said to me, "This is what's going to happen."

Q506 **Chair:** When did you first meet Jeremy Kyle?

Dwayne Davison: When I came on to the stage.

Q507 **Chair:** So you had not met him beforehand.



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Dwayne Davison: No, I'd not even seen him.

Q508 **Chair:** Had anyone spoken to you about what he was going to ask you about, or what he would say when you met?

Dwayne Davison: A runner would come in the room every now and again and say, "Are you all right?" but that is the most it was. When I say every now and again, I was in there for 10 hours and two times in the whole day someone came in the room and said, "Are you all right, Dwayne?" Bear in mind that I am about to go on to national television and in a sense ruin my own life.

Q509 **Chair:** Was the only time you spoke to Jeremy Kyle when you were in the studio on the set?

Dwayne Davison: Yeah.

Q510 **Chair:** So you didn't speak to him beforehand.

Dwayne Davison: No. I didn't see him and I didn't speak to him beforehand.

Q511 **Chair:** And nothing after the show.

Dwayne Davison: No.

Q512 **Chair:** Thank you. Robert Gregory, the interest in your story is really how you came to be on "The Jeremy Kyle Show".

Robert Gregory: It was a very different sort of situation to this gentleman. I was 70 years old, living down in Devon, and all of a sudden I was contacted by "The Jeremy Kyle Show". I was told that someone was looking for me who thinks I may be their father. This set me back, but I said, "Well, if that's what I think it's about, it's 50 years ago." I don't know.

A very persuasive person said this, that and the other, but he told me things about my past life that he could not have known unless he had been told them. It piqued my interest, so I said, "Okay, let's see what this is about." He started organising this business about getting there. He got me a taxi from Devon, which had to be cancelled because it was then put off to the following week. That following week, I went up in a taxi, and for the last hour of the taxi journey "The Jeremy Kyle Show" were ringing me every 5, 10 minutes saying, "Where are you? Have you got here yet?" In the end I told them to shut up and let us get on. Eventually we pulled up at Salford, where I was taken into a hotel room and given the DNA wipe. I was then taken to the hotel to stay—Jury's hotel or something—in Salford.

On the next day, you are taken to the studio, where they do the recording, stuffed in this little room where again this runner kept coming in, asking the same questions all the time and writing things down. Eventually we went for what they call a sound test in the actual studio. The next thing was the actual show itself—they record the show and it is on a couple of weeks later. That is how I got to be there. But then it all went wrong, from that minute on, which I didn't understand. Before I was contacted by "The



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Jeremy Kyle Show", I had never heard of it—I must be one of the few people. So I tuned in and watched a couple of them. A couple of them were pretty brutal, but then I thought, "Well, that's got nothing to do with what I'm here for. I am here for a reunion one." Again, I still didn't know whether I had got a son there or not. I saw a couple of these reunion programmes which, bluntly, were nice, gentle. People had found family from years and years ago, and I thought, "Okay, the worst that can happen to me is that that's it. That's the finish of them."

The person who contacts "The Jeremy Kyle Show" is put on first. Not with me—I went on first. There's a banner introducing the section that they put at the bottom of the screen, and I didn't know what was on that until it was shown two weeks later, and it was, "I rejected you 47 years ago because you are not my son." That is not what I told them at all. I told them the story of what had happened, and they ignored it and completely turned it around.

Q513 **Chair:** And you had no idea that that is how they were going to present you and your story.

Robert Gregory: No. This gentleman here was brought on to stage and the DNA test showed that he is my son. Fine. But they crucified me—they absolutely ripped me apart. I thought, "What's going on?" I said to him at one stage, "You've obviously decided that I'm a bad person." He said, "Well, you ran out on your son." I didn't even know they existed.

Q514 **Chair:** When you explained the situation as you remembered it to the programme, what did you tell them?

Robert Gregory: What I told them was this. Yes, I had had an affair with this lass when I was in my early twenties—it may have been my late teens; I can't remember. And she turned round and told me that she was pregnant. Well, okay. At that time, you could have a blood test to say, "You're not the father," or the blood test could say, "You could be the father." There was nothing definite. But in those days, you did the right thing: you married the person—at least, most people did. And I started preparing for that, until I started getting rumours back that she was seeing someone else. So I questioned it and I fetched up in a meeting with the lass and her parents, which did not go well. I was accused: how dare I not believe their daughter? By the way, she had not been confirmed pregnant at that time by a doctor. And I was told to leave their house and never darken their doors again—literally thrown out. So I did, and I never heard another word; I never even knew this lad had been born, until seven years later, when social services contacted me and said that someone wanted to adopt him. I said, "Yes, fine." "Well, he's your son." I said, "Not as far as I know, he isn't." And that's exactly what I told them.

Q515 **Chair:** Thank you very much for telling us that. I appreciate that it can't be easy.

Robert Gregory: There's a lot more to it than that, but anyway, the programme itself was basically a character assassination of me.



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Q516 **Chair:** Dwayne, when you finished the recording of the show and came off stage—out of the studio, off the set—did anyone speak to you about what had happened?

Dwayne Davison: No. They gave me my taxi fare home and that was it.

Q517 **Chair:** How long did it take from you coming off set to being in the taxi on the way home, do you think?

Dwayne Davison: About 20 minutes. Bear in mind that I have stayed there for 10 hours; I have been in the studio for 10 hours. As soon as the show was over, 20 minutes later, we were back home—well, we were in the taxi home.

Q518 **Chair:** During the 10 hours, what was going on for you?

Dwayne Davison: I'm sat in a room all day. It was the smallest, tiniest room you have ever seen. There was one toilet. You get your phone—all your property—taken off you to start with, so you have nothing on you. And you sit in a room with no television. There's a television in there, but it doesn't work; there's no aerial connected to it. So I'm sat in this room for 10 hours. The door is locked; I had to knock on the door. There's a runner sat outside three doors, so I knock on my door and then the runner will open the door; they're literally sat outside. Yes, I'm sat in there for 10 hours, with nothing to do. My partner has also been taken away from me for 10 hours, which is quite an anxious thing, because I don't know where she is; I'm in a different city.

Q519 **Chair:** You said that you had to knock on the door for the runner to come.

Dwayne Davison: I would knock on the door; I would knock on the inside of the door. And there was a runner sat outside three doors, and he or she would open the door and then say, "What do you want?" I'm locked into a room.

Q520 **Chair:** You were locked in?

Dwayne Davison: I'm locked into a room. There's a runner sat outside, in the corridor, on a seat, waiting for me to knock, or waiting for three of these doors to knock, because there's a few doors next to each other; and when I knock on the door, they—female or male, whoever it is—will open the door.

Q521 **Chair:** Are you basically told that you have to stay in that room until—

Dwayne Davison: I have to stay in that room, yes.

Q522 **Chair:** And when you leave that room, are you just taken straight on to the set?

Dwayne Davison: No, we would go for a sound check. That's the only thing we do. We get a mike put on us, sit on a stage and then go through a sound check. Other than that, I'm sat in a room for 10 hours; I have nothing to do.



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Q523 **Chair:** And the sound check might take—a few minutes?

Dwayne Davison: Yes, a few minutes—10 minutes.

Q524 **Chair:** And then do you go back into the room until you are called?

Dwayne Davison: Back into the room, yes.

Q525 **Chair:** And then when you are called to go on to the set for filming, you just go straight from that room on to the set?

Dwayne Davison: Yes.

Q526 **Chair:** And you don't meet Jeremy Kyle until you are on the set.

Dwayne Davison: No, you don't see Jeremy Kyle at all. You don't see him before, you don't see him after. You only see him on the stage, when he's ripping into you. That's it. When he's making money from you—that's the only time you see him, and then you can't—

Q527 **Chair:** Did they at all discuss with you what the programme would be like when it went on air? Robert said that he had no idea of how he was going to be presented.

Dwayne Davison: No, I didn't know anything. All I knew was that a producer called Teri—it's a woman—phoned me. She said, "Your show is going to be on about October time." I think we had gone on in May. I'm not 100% sure, but she said it would be later on, towards the end of the year. She gave me a date: "This is when it's going to be on." And that's all I heard; that was the only thing I heard from them.

Robert Gregory: It's fairly similar with me.

Dwayne Davison: Can I just say that that's also my aftercare as well? It was all wrapped up into one: them phoning me up and telling me, "Dwayne, your show is going to be on television on 27 October. Do you want to come back on the show?" That was one of the questions. This was my aftercare all wrapped up into one: a one-minute phone call telling me when the showing is going to be on and asking me if I was okay.

Robert Gregory: There is no aftercare. It doesn't exist.

Q528 **Chair:** Did you have the same experience of waiting in a room on your own before going in?

Robert Gregory: Whether mine was locked or not, I don't know. I didn't bother to try it, but you're stuck in a little room. In fact, Stuart was in an even smaller one. You just sit there and wait. But the point is, this runner comes in every 10 minutes asking the same questions all the time—digging, digging, digging—trying to get you to say something different, I suppose. I don't know. But I never did say anything different. Why? The truth is the truth. You can't alter that.

When you finally go on stage, my stick's taken away from me. That's my only way of getting off that stage, but it was taken away from me. Everything was taken off me, including my wallet and everything. You was



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told you'll get aftercare and everything else. You've got this guy, Graham, and a woman with a clipboard running around. The aftercare that Stuart and I got was, we were taken to a room—again, after the show—and given £20 to go and have a drink. That was it.

Q529 **Chair:** I find it astonishing. What you describe sounds horrific. I am not a lawyer—some members of the Committee are—but I think someone in police custody would have more rights and better treatment than you were given before the show.

Robert Gregory: It wasn't so much that, as Stuart will tell you. He was told, "We're changing the format." They were putting me on first. No explanation as to why. But they completely changed the script. From exactly what we were told, they reversed it completely.

Chair: Other members of the Committee have questions for you, so I will call the members of the Committee by name to introduce them and then they will ask you their questions. Ian has a quick question and then it will be Jo Stevens.

Q530 **Ian C. Lucas:** Thanks very much for coming. I am stunned by both of your accounts of what's happened. I am a lawyer and I have represented people in police custody. The Chairman is absolutely right. In your particular account, when you went on the show, did you know before you went on stage whether you were going to be introduced to your son?

Robert Gregory: No. I still thought I didn't have a son there, because I had no idea of this. When it was announced that he was my son, there was a look of astonishment on my face. That shows on the programme. I got crucified for that.

Q531 **Ian C. Lucas:** Before you went on the show, had you had any conversation with any welfare person about how you might react to this or how it might affect you?

Robert Gregory: No. They asked me before I went on the programme whether I had any medical problems and I said, "Yeah, I've had a stroke. I've got heart problems. I've had stents put in since." And various other things: diabetes and everything else. So they knew all that, and they whack me with that lot. "Yeah. Thank you very much."

Q532 **Jo Stevens:** I want to ask about something a bit different now. I want to ask you, Dwayne, about the lie detector test. You said that you texted the show. Were you asking them for the opportunity to do the lie detector test or were you just asking to go on the show?

Dwayne Davison: My partner texted the show to go and get a lie detector test.

Q533 **Jo Stevens:** When we had the producers from the programme here—I don't know if you've seen it and watched the evidence—I asked about the lie detector tests and the reliability of them and what the show told you as a contestant about how accurate they were. Can you remember any conversation? What did they tell you?



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Dwayne Davison: At the time I was quite a paranoid person. I don't know why. I just didn't ever believe the first answer. So, whatever, yeah. I said to the producer in the back of the taxi, in front of everyone, "Listen, how do I know that she might not have cheated, and then it's going to come up that she has cheated?" I was quite worried about that, because it could break our relationship up. It would be completely over if she's cheated on me.

The producer said to me, "100%, this always tells the truth. They use them all around America." Say, for example, if you're a criminal in America, you could take a lie detector. I'm not too sure how it all works, but she told me in straight words, "It's basically 100%"—that since she's worked there, it's never got it wrong, and it doesn't really get it wrong. Like I said, again, she brought back that example of it being used in America for police and stuff like that.

They basically let me think it was a 100% guarantee, and there was no other talk about it possibly not—I've watched the little thing underneath. You know when you're watching Jeremy Kyle and you can see the little box underneath, and it says "99% accurate"? I knew it wasn't 100%, but she told me it's 100%. Basically, it doesn't fail.

Q534 **Jo Stevens:** Did your partner also have the same discussion with—

Dwayne Davison: Well, she wasn't there. I was in a taxi going to the studio and she was in a hotel getting the lie detector done at that moment, so I don't know what she had been told. Like I said, I wasn't with her the whole day. We were split up the whole day.

Q535 **Jo Stevens:** So you go from the taxi, and as far as you are concerned, this test is going to be completely flawless. There will be nothing wrong with it; it will either say "telling the truth" or "not telling the truth".

Dwayne Davison: Definitely. From what the producer or runner told me, yeah.

Q536 **Jo Stevens:** Afterwards, were you given any opportunity for the test to happen again?

Dwayne Davison: No.

Jo Stevens: That was it.

Dwayne Davison: Yes.

Jo Stevens: Okay, thank you.

Q537 **Giles Watling:** Going back to this period of time in the small cell, and then going on to the stage and then meeting with Jeremy Kyle for the first ever time, there was no, "This is Jeremy; this is Dwayne." There was nothing like that.

Dwayne Davison: No. I came out—the runners in the backstage will write stuff down. Say, when things are being said between me and the runner, they will write things down. I don't know what sort of runner I got,



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because they kept writing more aggressive versions of what I was saying, and completely fabricating things that I was saying as well. For example, he wrote on a piece of paper that I called a wardrobe lady a "fat woman", or something like that. I didn't say any of that. As I came out on the stage, Jeremy has introduced me to the 200 people who are sat there: "You called a woman fat." I'd never say one bad word about a woman, but he has tried to make out that I've said all these things.

Q538 Giles Watling: And that was the first thing he said.

Dwayne Davison: That was the first thing; that's how he brought me out in front of 200 people. He says, "Oh, this guy here has been calling wardrobe ladies fat. He said he could get every girl in the building." I'm not even that sort of person, one bit. He has fabricated 100 things I've said, so I came out to booing. I came out to 200 people booing as loud as they can at me.

Giles Watling: That must have been a shock.

Dwayne Davison: I've never had that before.

Q539 Giles Watling: Just another thing on what's been said earlier. Clearly, it is a free country. It is only a television programme; you are not under arrest. You can leave any time, but at no point did anybody say to either of you, "You can go at any time." They didn't say that.

Dwayne Davison: No. There was no option of going, definitely not. I think if some producer had come to me and said right at the end, or even a few times throughout the day, "Do you want to go home, Dwayne?" I'd have said, "Yes, definitely." I spoke to my partner multiple times at the hotel in the night and said, "I don't want to do this," but we felt like we were backed into it. We were in Manchester; I've never even been to Manchester in my life. I've got no car, I've got no money, I've got no way of getting back home. I'm stuck.

Q540 Giles Watling: Did you get the impression that you might be letting people down?

Dwayne Davison: Oh, 100%, like I'm owing people and letting people down.

Q541 Giles Watling: Was that the same for you, Robert? You wanted to go through with it at the time, didn't you?

Robert Gregory: Yes, but I was invited on to the programme. It sort of tripped a memory that, possibly, there could be something in this; I'd better find out. Apart from that, I had no idea.

The difference was that I came from an awful long way away, from Torquay in Devon, up to Manchester—it's a bit of a trip, that one. What I couldn't understand was these incessant phone calls to me, every 10 minutes, on the route up there: "Where are you? Are you here yet?" and everything else. I said, "I don't know. I've never been to Manchester." He



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said, "Well, can I talk to the taxi driver?" I said, "Well, no, not really. He's driving." It was going on like this. It was crazy.

Q542 **Giles Watling:** So you felt that pressure.

Robert Gregory: An awful lot of pressure, yeah.

Q543 **Giles Watling:** Since appearing on the show, which was obviously a shocking experience, how has your life changed, Dwayne?

Dwayne Davison: Drastically. Before, I would just do my own thing and no one would know who I was. Now, it is not like I am famous—I am not trying to say that—but it happens when I go to a workplace. A few years ago, I was working in McDonalds. One person recognised me and by the end of that day everyone, including all the managers, knew that I had been on "The Jeremy Kyle Show" and was the most hated guest. I get constant abuse on Facebook. I have lost two jobs now because of it. There aren't many jobs around my area as it is, and I have bent over backwards to try to get these jobs, and then the managers find out about "The Jeremy Kyle Show" and bam, you're gone. It will always be another reason given for why I get sacked.

Q544 **Giles Watling:** I was going to ask about that.

Dwayne Davison: For example, I was working for a coach company. They are a public company, so the old people come in and go for coach trips. To cut a long story short, basically I have been sacked from multiple jobs, and they always give a different reason, but it will be the same day or a very short time after they find out about "The Jeremy Kyle Show".

I was walking through the town centre a few months ago and a gang of lads and a few girls came up to me. I was with my partner at the time. They were being very aggressive towards me, saying stuff in the background, like, "We're going to punch him," and so on. I said, "Let's get out of here," and tried to walk away. I put up with this stuff all the time.

I work as a security guard and I work for a supermarket—I work for an agency that can send me all around the east midlands. I can work in Leicestershire or Derbyshire. I worked in Derbyshire the other day. I'm not going to say what supermarket it is, but basically I had to get my forms all signed. I spoke to a store worker. She said straight away, "You were on 'The Jeremy Kyle Show'." Bear in mind, I was on the show five years ago and that happened only a few months ago. It is non-stop. Everyone finds out and they go from being all right with me to treating me like I'm some piece of nothing good, and that is not who I am.

Q545 **Giles Watling:** Nobody warned you that this would be uploaded to YouTube and viewed by millions of people.

Dwayne Davison: No. YouTube is the worst thing. It is even worse than television, because it is clocking up views over five years. If you count up all the clips together, it is something like 8 million views saying to the public that I am the most hated guy ever. Imagine what that feels like.



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Q546 **Giles Watling:** No one gave you any warning.

Dwayne Davison: No, absolutely not. In the Committee hearing in July, Julian Bellamy kept saying that they really take duty of care seriously. He kept saying that I cannot sign a contract unless I know what the contract is and that it is about consent. He kept saying that ITV take that seriously. I did not know one bit what I was signing. I got a massive mountain of paperwork just before we went to the studio—it was this thick—and I had a minute to sign it all. While I was signing it, the person was talking to me about something completely unrelated.

Q547 **Giles Watling:** So they were not helping you through the process.

Dwayne Davison: No, it was something completely unrelated that they were talking to me about. They are always trying to act like they are your friends.

Q548 **Giles Watling:** There was no one explaining to you what it meant.

Dwayne Davison: In clear words, I did not know what I was signing. I did not read one word on that mountain of paperwork. I didn't know that for the next five years I would be called the most hated guy on the internet. I did not understand what I was signing.

Q549 **Giles Watling:** And nobody gave you any training or guidance about potential media backlash or social media backlash.

Dwayne Davison: No.

Q550 **Giles Watling:** No one said that there will be tweets.

Robert Gregory: Can I come in on this? You might have signed paperwork, but I never saw any of that. There was no paperwork. There was nothing.

Q551 **Giles Watling:** You didn't sign anything.

Robert Gregory: No, I didn't sign anything.

Q552 **Giles Watling:** You didn't sign a form of consent.

Robert Gregory: No.

Q553 **Giles Watling:** I find that amazing.

Robert Gregory: I didn't even know there was a form of consent or anything.

Dwayne Davison: Before you go to the studio in the morning, they call a meeting.

Robert Gregory: No, I had nothing like that.

Q554 **Giles Watling:** Robert, can I ask you then, how has your life changed since the programme?

Dwayne Davison: You missed out the social media side of it. You were just about to ask me about that. Please can we remember to come back to



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it, because I have had so much trouble with social media, and I can send you proof, as well.

Q555 Giles Watling: I will come back to that, Dwayne, but I just want to put that question to Robert.

Robert Gregory: Being 70 years old, social media does not come into it for me. I don't use it, end of story, but people have contacted me. They will hear about it, and say, "I didn't know you did that." I have had some pretty unpleasant conversations with people.

Q556 Giles Watling: Locally, in your area?

Robert Gregory: Locally in my area, and from my past as well, which wasn't very nice. On the positive side of the point, I got a family out of it. I've got a son, I've got granddaughters and I've got a great-grandson, which is superb, but the whole thing is tainted by the way it came about and the way it was treated. Stuart here, I can tell you now—I've only just found this out today—a few weeks after the programme was broadcast, he had to leave work because his health went down the pan, and he hasn't worked since. I can't say for certain that that is the programme's fault, but is that a coincidence, or what? I don't know.

Q557 Giles Watling: Going back to you, Dwayne, you wanted to tell me about social media.

Dwayne Davison: Yes. After the show, I had multiple people contacting me—and these are groups of people; they're getting group chats on Facebook and they contact me. I don't know how much stuff I can say here, but they're very threatening. They went on one of my old Facebooks and found out my postcode, so they went on to Google Earth and took a picture on Google Earth outside my house, or one house up from mine. So I'm sitting here thinking, "Are these guys outside my house? Four guys are apparently going to come and get me." Basically, I've got so many people in my inbox telling me they're going to kill me, telling me they're going to rape my girlfriend, contacting my mum—am I allowed to say that?—telling me they're going to do even worse than that. It's some real sick stuff that they're saying to me. This is groups of people. They get group chats—do you know what that means? They get in big group chats and they're all entertaining each other. I'm not even putting any messages into the group.

Q558 Giles Watling: But nobody gave you any guidance on how to deal with it?

Dwayne Davison: I didn't know anything. If I knew what my life would have turned into, I would never have gone on that show. Even just the social media side of it. Like I said, I've got people contacting my mum. People from Manchester, people from all around the country are contacting me, telling me all these things, and counting down, as well. One of them was like, "Thirty minutes. We're on the motorway now, Dwayne. Thirty minutes. Twenty-five minutes." He's counting from a satnav, apparently.



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Q559 **Giles Watling:** Terrifying stuff.

Dwayne Davison: Yes. It is scary stuff. He's saying he has four guys in the car with him and they're going to smash my arse up and kill me.

Q560 **Giles Watling:** Have you contacted the producers of the show, asking them for help?

Dwayne Davison: I've phoned them 100 times. They do not care one bit, because every single time I would talk with them they would always try to coax me on to the phone. Every email you would ever see, they will always say, "Phone us. Phone us instead." So I phoned them 100 times, and I thought, "They're not doing anything." So I thought I would start emailing instead, to try to leave a paper trail. They just don't care. They just simply don't care. I was crying on the phone—it maybe sounds a bit dramatic, but I was crying on the phone, saying, "Listen, I've lost this job, my own family hate me because of the way you've edited this show. Can you please at least take it down from YouTube?"

They didn't care. They don't care. They basically say, "We can't do anything." And then, if you really dig into it, they'll say, "You know, you can get in touch with solicitors," and stuff like that. Just to go through the first phase of talking to a solicitor is £5,000. That's to get the letters and the raw footage of what happened that day. Then they're saying, after that £5,000, the first fees, it will cost over £100,000, and you're probably still not going to win.

Q561 **Giles Watling:** I understand where you are coming from.

Robert Gregory: On this business about that, my programme was done about a year ago, almost to the day. I complained multiple times. Now, you either can't get through, you are fobbed off or, eventually, you talk to someone. I finally got to talk to supposedly one of the producers, and I said, about the banner at the bottom that comes on, "Look, that is totally wrong. At least take that off." "Oh, we can't do that," she said. "That would be admitting we're wrong." I said, "Yes. It is wrong." But no, they won't.

Q562 **Giles Watling:** Can I just move on to one more question, if I may? I understand that ITV is considering commissioning another show with Jeremy Kyle. What are your views on that?

Dwayne Davison: I don't personally hold it against Jeremy Kyle. I know he did what he did, but I blame it on ITV. They were the people who were letting that happen. Jeremy Kyle is his own person, he's got his own style. I don't agree with it myself, but it's ITV that is really responsible for what happened, not Jeremy Kyle. If Jeremy Kyle gets another TV programme, as long as it hasn't got lie detector tests in and it's not really extremely rude to poor people again, I don't mind. Personally, I don't mind.

Robert Gregory: I would say no. Any programme that absolutely crucifies people and makes their lives miserable should not be allowed. It should not be allowed—end of.



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Q563 **Giles Watling:** Were you surprised when the Kyle show was axed?

Robert Gregory: Yes, I was. I thought it would go on forever, quite probably.

Dwayne Davison: Bear in mind that I tried multiple times, in loads of different ways, to try and get the show taken down. I wrote to the newspapers in 2014 to try to tell them my story and no one really seemed to care that much about the mental health side of things then. Sorry; I have forgotten what the question was. Could you repeat it?

Giles Watling: Were you surprised when "The Jeremy Kyle Show" was axed?

Dwayne Davison: Oh yes. Like I said, I fought for years to try and get my personal show taken down and nothing had ever happened, so I didn't think it would ever be taken down. I thought none of the powers, really—it was not on their radar.

Giles Watling: Thank you.

Q564 **Clive Efford:** I have a couple of questions. You were talking about losing jobs, and people were realising that you had been on the show. Was it that people had seen the show and just happened to recognise you because of the notoriety that had been created around you, or was it that employers were doing a search to do a sort of vetting process and they were discovering—

Dwayne Davison: I think one of the store members would find out—this is how it would always happen. One person in the store or the shop, or whatever it was, would find out and by the end of that day, every single person who worked in the shop would find out. By the end of the week—with one company it was literally the same day—gone. It wasn't the next day, even.

Q565 **Clive Efford:** So it was not that an employer was using social media to check?

Dwayne Davison: No, they had been told.

Q566 **Clive Efford:** Robert, when you went on the show, presumably it was your son that had approached the show.

Robert Gregory: Yes.

Q567 **Clive Efford:** What was his story to "The Jeremy Kyle Show"?

Robert Gregory: He knew that his mother was his real mother. He had a stepfather. He knew that I was out there somewhere and he wanted to find me. That was the basis of how it started. It was just an incredible thing. The trouble is, it fitted with something that happened years and years ago, so it piqued my interest—"Maybe it could be?" But I had never even thought about it for 50 years.

Q568 **Clive Efford:** Just so that we get the full story, he had not said anything of the kind that was on the banner that had been put across the bottom



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of the screen?

Robert Gregory: No.

Q569 **Clive Efford:** So it was entirely a fabrication of the show.

Robert Gregory: Yes, entirely. He was just innocently trying to find out who his father was. Totally innocently.

Clive Efford: Thanks for clarifying; that is very helpful.

Q570 **Philip Davies:** Dwayne, I am a bit confused. How many times have you appeared on the show?

Dwayne Davison: Well, I mean—I thought that we had a limited time here, so I did not want to put everything across. I have been on twice, but there is a very complicated story. I have told you first, the charismatic person on the phone—that was the first time that I went on the show.

The second time that I went on the show, I was basically phoned up by them, and they says to me, "Dwayne, come on the show," and I was like, "I'm never going on your show ever again after what you did to me last time." But then, like I said, these charismatic people that they employ are saying to me on the phone, "Dwayne, you can come on the show this time and you can redeem yourself. Yeah, you was the most hated person last time. Come on this time, Dwayne; we'll tell Jeremy and we'll sort summat out and you'll be the most liked person. There will never be a person who has ever been on that show and who has been more liked than you this time, if you come on." They are so manipulative. Bear in mind, I am only 22 at the time, so I am definitely a man, but I am still not fully developed in thinking about my future and stuff like that.

So yes, I went on twice, but the second time I planned it out. I thought to myself, "I'm not going to say one bad word" because they edit things. They are crazy at editing—it is magical, what they do. The second time that I went on, I thought to myself, "I am not going to say one bad word. I am literally going to answer the questions, but I am not going to rise to him when he is calling me names. I am going to come on and I am going to redeem myself." Bear in mind, by this time, I have tried to go to solicitors, I have tried to go to the newspapers, I have tried to phone them directly. I have tried everything I can to try and make the public not think I am such a horrible person. So then I thought, "Well, maybe this is the only option I've got: go back on the show, show people that I'm not a bad guy. Maybe people will see." I don't know. I was desperate at the time, so yes, I went on.

Q571 **Philip Davies:** I know that the first time you went on was about you and your girlfriend. What was the second time about?

Dwayne Davison: Same thing again, but the ridiculous thing is we didn't even need to know—I didn't even need to know whether she was cheating. It is the way that they organise things on the phone. They are very smart. They know how to work things. So they will say, "Do you want to come back on the show? Do you know anyone else who wants to come on the



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show?", and I will say, "No, I don't want to go back on the show, and I don't know anyone else." "How have things between you and your partner been? Has she been doing this?"—and then he gets all his old notes out and starts bringing things back up. Basically, I got tricked to go on the show the second time. I got told that it would be a very friendly environment, that I wasn't up for that sort of thing, you know, but I came out on to the stage and it was a war zone. He was attacking me non-stop. He was referring to my partner as an "it"—you know, calling a female an "it", in front of 200 people, that are laughing. If I called one person one name in front of one person and they are laughing, that is bad—but 200 people, you know, crying with laughter! He was calling my girlfriend an "it" and—what else did he say? He was swearing at me, calling me an F-ing D-head and stuff like that. This is in front of 200 people. I've not said really anything to him and, like I said, the second time I came on I wanted to say not one word bad, so that they couldn't edit what had happened and make me into this evil guy, who everyone thinks that I am.

But there was no change in it, like I said. I think what really needs to be looked into—I know I don't get to say—is that he was calling me an F-ing dickhead—F-ing D-head—and he was calling my girlfriend an "it", but they completely edit all that out and they only show my negative response to what he had said. Imagine that! How unfair is that? It's so unfair it's unbelievable. But just—[sighs]—you need to see what really happened.

Q572 **Philip Davies:** Was your girlfriend on as well, or was it just you the second time around?

Dwayne Davison: Yes, both of us on at the same time.

Q573 **Chair:** You think that in the edited show, they are showing your reaction to a question that does not appear in the show that is broadcast, but to something else that he said, and that he is being deliberately provocative, using language that he knows won't be in the edited show, to try and get a rise out of people.

Dwayne Davison: Yes. He is basically being really offensive, but they won't show him ever being offensive; they will only show the person who is on the stage replying back to him in an offensive way. When the public see that, you are going to be deceived by that, aren't you? You are going to think, "What's that guy shouting for? Why is he getting angry?"

Q574 **Chair:** I want to go back to a couple of things you mentioned earlier. When you complained about the first show, you mentioned the cost—I think you said £5,000 to get—

Dwayne Davison: That's for the first stage.

Q575 **Chair:** Is that what they told you the cost was?

Dwayne Davison: No, that's what the solicitors told me.

Q576 **Chair:** When you complained to "The Jeremy Kyle Show", did they say, "You will have to get a solicitor involved if you want to take it any further"?



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Dwayne Davison: Yes, I spoke to some guy and I told him that's what I was planning on doing, and he said, "You're a grown-up lad, you can do what you want," basically.

Q577 **Chair:** I also want to talk a bit about the emails that you gave us, because they included your appearance in a Jeremy Kyle highlights show. They got in touch to tell you that they were going to do that, and you told them that you didn't want it to appear.

Dwayne Davison: I have told them multiple times by this point that I don't want the show shown any more, so when I got some correspondence between me and ITV, the only thing I am ever going to say is, "I don't want this show being shown." That's what I've said from the start. It is ruining my life, mentally, physically and monetary-wise. I don't think people can understand how stressful it is. I have got a job, I am paying rent—I have got to pay that amount, I have got to pay all these bills—and now I am going to lose my job, not because I did anything wrong. Because of an edited version of Jeremy Kyle, I am going to lose my job and possibly not be able to get a job quick enough to pay my rent. Do you know how scary that is? That is like a—I am not personally talking to you, I am just saying. They put me in a situation where it's like, "My life's a nightmare. My life's a nightmare."

Q578 **Chair:** They have refused your requests. They refused your requests not to show it in the highlights programme.

Robert Gregory: They ignore you.

Dwayne Davison: But did you see how flippantly she didn't even answer? Her name is Mia Jenkins—she is a producer or something. She literally so flippantly said—I says to her, "Please! You're ruining my life. I don't want this being shown any more. You are ruining my life, mentally," and she basically didn't even reply to anything I had said. She wasn't bothered. She says, "Oh well, I'm sorry, Dwayne. The show is still going to be shown, end of." They don't care. They have got no heart.

Q579 **Chair:** Do you feel you were exploited by the show?

Dwayne Davison: A hundred per cent.

Robert Gregory: From my point of view, a programme should not be allowed that humiliates people, not because of that person's actions but because they decide they are going to humiliate that person. That is what they did with me. I can't say that is the same for everybody, but certainly with me—totally humiliated, even to the extent that when I did speak to that producer that time and asked her to take that banner off, they phoned me up two days later and said, "We're putting a repeat on, on such-and-such day." Thanks—you know!

Dwayne Davison: You asked me about the emails. Last night I was watching the 22 July Committee session with the ITV producers. Bellamy, or it might have been McLennan, says that if someone wants the show to be taken down, all they have to do is contact ITV and tell them, "Look, I've moved on in my life. I'm a different person now," and they will take it



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down. He said that in straight words, yet I have asked them multiple times. I've cried, I've begged on the phone for them to take that show down, but they weren't interested one bit.

I work in security, so I see about 3,000 a day in a supermarket in an eight or nine-hour shift. I am seeing people come up to me. I also work as a security supervisor in a restaurant. I am getting groups of drunk lads at night-time shout things that were said on that show. There was a well-known saying on the internet—my name is Dwayne, and he called me "D with a Wayne." I am hearing that in town—people drinking alcohol, getting quite aggressive, saying "D with a Wayne!" I cannot escape what he has done to me. I've forgotten the original question.

Q580 **Chair:** It seems from what you have said that you were given no real preparation for appearing on the show—

Dwayne Davison: Absolutely not.

Chair: —that you were given no real support on the day of filming and no aftercare,

Dwayne Davison: No.

Chair: —and that you have got no rights to ask them to try and correct things that are wrong or even to stop them repeating the show because of the difficulty, the pain it has caused you.

Dwayne Davison: We are put in a position where we are completely vulnerable. We can't do anything—we've got no power at all. I have seen it from my own life—we have got no power to stop this.

Robert Gregory: There is no aftercare. It does not exist.

Dwayne Davison: My aftercare phoned me up and asked me whether I wanted to go back on the show, and that was it.

Q581 **Chair:** Did you ever meet the people you spoke to on the phone?

Dwayne Davison: No. Yes—I spoke to Teri before—she was a producer. I feel like I have got loads more stuff to say.

Q582 **Chair:** That concludes our formal questions, but if there is anything else you would like to tell us, we are here to listen.

Dwayne Davison: It's all on my laptop. I thought you'd ask a lot more detailed questions.

The producers were persuading us to say things. I was the "most hated person" the first time, but I didn't know I was going to be, so I came on the second time to try to redeem myself. No runners came to my room to speak to me the first time, but because they knew the second time I was labelled "the most hated", the runners wouldn't leave my room—they stayed in the whole time, talking with me non-stop. I got both the two runners talking with me—"You're famous; you'll get your own show,



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Dwayne.” Obviously, they were trying to build me up to try and send me out on to the stage to try and have some sort of war.

I am saying to them over and over again, “I’ve come on this show this time to redeem myself.” They weren’t bothered about that; they kept trying to make me go out there and say bad things. One was telling me about his wife and little things that had happened with her. There’s so many things. I’m going to go back home on the train now and think of 100 things.

Q583 **Chair:** If there is anything you want to send us afterwards, you are more than welcome to. We would be really grateful to see that and we can publish it if you want us to.

ITV mentioned that there was mental health support at the studios during the session. In one of the film clips we showed, they said that one of the people sitting in the room was a mental health nurse. Did you see any evidence of that?

Dwayne Davison: No.

Chair: Were you ever told that if you had a problem, there was a person there to talk to?

Dwayne Davison: No.

Robert Gregory: I know for a fact that at the moment, you can’t see any repeats on YouTube or anywhere of “The Jeremy Kyle Show.” It is gone. Whether you can physically get hold of a copy, I don’t know. My son has a copy of my programme. If anybody has a device that can take it off a camcorder, we will leave that film with you.

Q584 **Giles Watling:** Dwayne, you said in a *Guardian* article that you thought it was a form of human bear-baiting.

Dwayne Davison: Definitely. I think a judge said that in 2007 after something happened, and when I read it, I thought, “That is exactly what’s happening.” It is like getting a dog and winding it up, and getting another dog and winding it up, and setting them on each other. That is exactly what he does. Not in my show per se, because normally the son and the dad would be set against each other. In my show, it was Jeremy who was against me.

Q585 **Giles Watling:** I was going to ask, though, whether going to *The Guardian* was a way of being able to tell your side of the story.

Dwayne Davison: A hundred per cent., yes. I do not trust most of the newspapers, because they completely spin—completely spin—what I have said, but *The Guardian* has been the only newspaper that I trust now, to be fair. I went to *The Guardian*.

Q586 **Giles Watling:** So the other media jumped on the bandwagon.

Dwayne Davison: Yes, they all syndicated that story, or something like that.



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Q587 **Chair:** Thank you both very much—

Dwayne Davison: Can I say a bit more? I have had a lot of trolls. I have these particular trolls who are from Scotland. They are telling me that they are going to do all these things, taking pictures of my mum's Facebook and going absolutely—I can send all the proof of this as well, because I have copied it all; I don't know if I have sent you some.

In 2018, I had these trolls and they came back with a vengeance. They were taking pictures of me and saying horrible things about me. There were just so many things. Plus, I got another job a few months before that, then I lost that job. So I had lost a job and I had a lot of trolls, and basically, I could never get rid of this weight of "The Jeremy Kyle Show" around my shoulders. Everyone on my street knows—everyone I know knows.

I just felt like I was in a nightmare of a movie. I just thought—I still feel like this now—I just think, "You know what? I wish I could die." I know that sounds really brutal, but I thought, "You know what? I've lost that job, I've got to get into another job and they'll kick me out again, because of this same thing that I can't control—this Jeremy Kyle show thing."

All these things had happened at once. In 2018—I had never done this before; you can check my medical records—I took 30 codeine tablets and I went upstairs and I just swallowed them all. I don't remember any of it, but basically, my partner told me that they gave me an injection and it kicked —made my lungs start working again. I just think, "The Jeremy Kyle Show", although it might not be so direct—they don't own my employer—but indirectly the show has ruined my life, and I can't stop it still ruining my life, even today. I promise you. Even the other day, I went to the chip shop, and two people recognised me—the woman behind the counter recognised me, and some tall guy came in later on and was like, "You was on Jeremy Kyle".

I feel like I can't escape it, basically, even today. I still feel like I have got the weight around my shoulders. Can any of you, with all your power you've got, can you take that weight from around my shoulders? None of you can, can you? It is like the lowest—I am not being sad, but the poorest of people are the people that watch Jeremy Kyle, and maybe the worst of people as well in a way. I don't want to generalise, but I have got the poorest of people, basically, hating me. It has all been caused by them.

Q588 **Chair:** Some people who defend the show say that the show is there to give—

Dwayne Davison: Even my own grandma says you have had the show shut down—

Q589 **Chair:** The way the show is defended is often to say that it gives people from poorer backgrounds a voice, but in your case, it did not give you a voice, did it?



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Dwayne Davison: No, it has taken away my voice completely. I have got no voice. I am just that most hated guy.

Robert Gregory: One thing that I think is relevant, which Stuart told me, is that he had the same experience as me with a runner coming in at him all the time and asking the same questions all the time. He had the opinion that they were turning his words round and trying to wind him up—trying to get a confrontation to go out on that stage with. Unfortunately, that is not what they got, but that is what they were trying for.

Q590 **Chair:** We are all really grateful for your evidence. You have been incredibly brave in being prepared to come here and speak about it. I hope that what you have done today might also show other people that if they have a story that they want to share with the Committee about their experience, we are very interested in hearing that. It is important that we hear the voices of people who have experienced the show, because you are uniquely placed to talk about it. We are very grateful for that.

Dwayne Davison: Thank you.

Robert Gregory: Thanks for listening to me.