**CNIB Lake Joe On The Go! Podcast**

**Episode 4: Friends at Lake Joe – Transcript**

**Narrator:** This is a CNIB podcast.

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**Taylor:** Hello everybody and welcome to CNIB Lake Joe On The Go!, the podcast where we keep things short and sweet, so you can listen if you're at home or if you're on the go. I am your host. Taylor G I'm also a CNIB Lake Joe staff, and I am super excited for today's episode because we are going to be talking about friendship at Lake Joe. Today on this episode, we have David, Jess and Roxanne. I'm super excited for them to share their experiences with you. Would you guys like to introduce yourselves?

**Roxanne:** Hi, my name is Roxanne. Really happy to be in this podcast.

**Taylor:** I'm happy to have you here!

**Jess:** Hey everybody I'm Jess. I've been coming to camp since I was little.

I used to be a camper with and I started volunteering and I'm from Ontario, Canada.

**David:** Hello my name is David. I am 12 and I'm from Alberta. And this year was my first year go coming to CNIB Lake Joe.

**Taylor:** Your first year. That's incredible.

**David:** Yeah

**Taylor:** That's great to hear. Well, welcome to the Lake Joe family.

**David:** Thank you.

**Taylor:** Lake Joe is super special because when you go you get to meet so many different kinds of people inform all these new kinds of relationships. So, I was hoping to get to hear from each of you about your experience, making friends at camp. I think each of you have a very unique set of experiences. David, you mentioned this is, this was your first summer so I'm really looking forward to hearing about what you got to do this summer. So, yeah. Would you like to share your experiences on making friends at Lake Joe and what that was like?

**Jess:** So, as I mentioned I've been going to Lake Joe for a while now. And I've had, I have friends from when I was really little that we still chat on Facebook and messenger and, you know text each other to having camp staff from when I was little become my, my boss when I was volunteering and all through that, my friend. So definitely unique. And I have friends from recent years that again we chat on Facebook and we text each other and send each other pictures.

**Taylor:** That’s super cool. How long I, I used to know this… How many years have you been going to Lake Joe now? Like collectively in your experience?

**Jess:** Oh, I'm gonna, I'm gonna sound old to you. Yeah. I've been going since the 1990s.

**Taylor:** Wow. That's incredible. So you really have had quite the experience with meeting new people and making lots of friends at camp.

**Jess:** Yes.

**Taylor:** Alright, David, I cannot wait to hear what you have to say about the friends that you've made at camp.

**David:** Yeah. I had so much fun this year. I met so many good people and such kind staff at CNIB Lake Joe, I couldn't even pick my favourites 'cause they're all so great people. And I met a couple friends, one actually lives nearby is and we were trying to stay in contact. But my summer's been… my summer has been pretty busy so I haven't had much time, but I've made plenty of friends at Lake Joe.

**Taylor:** That's so awesome. And what I have to say about that is what's really really cool about Lake Joe, is that even though you might not get to see your friends throughout the year, what's really awesome is that when you get to go back to camp you get to be with them again. And it is just so, so awesome and so cool to experience but it's cool that you have a friend that lives close by. Yeah, that's awesome. Roxanne, do you want to share some experiences with your friendships at camp?

**Roxanne:** Yeah. My experience at Lake Joe was amazing. I went up to camp this summer and I made a lot of friends and met new people and I just had a ball there and you know, I, I always like meeting new people and I think it's really important that we that we all try and, you know like bond with people 'cause that's how we build, you know different relationships and different friendships and you know, friendships so important, you know

**Taylor:** For sure. How long have you been going to lake Joe, Roxanne?

**Roxanne:** Me. Oh gosh. It's been so long now. I, I like miscount.

**Taylor:** So you've also had the chance to meet lots of people. Make awesome friends.

**Roxanne:** I have the like I have a bit of both. Like I have, I have it's mixed. So like I had this year I went up and then I still have the online thing that have to on Zoom with the CNIB, so I I always look forward to that cause I get to, you know like you and my friends that way and you know, it's fun. And I like, and I like I like certain special events and I; you know I like engaging with people and I like the feeling of being included and including others. Cause it's really important to include others. No one deserves to feel left out.

**Taylor:** You made some really awesome points there Roxanne. I think the having virtual camp like some of the programs that we run is really cool too because like I mentioned, a lot of times you make these really awesome friends at camp but maybe they live like far away from you and you only get to do them once a year.

**Roxanne:** They lived really far.

**Taylor:** Yeah.

**Roxanne:** They live really far. I made one friend at camp and she lives really far. What we've kept in touch over on Facebook.

**Taylor:** Yeah. Well that's yeah. That's the cool thing about the internet and having virtual camp as well as we all can be together throughout the year as well. I kind of wanna move into my next question. Cause I think that you all will have some valuable points. I'm curious to know, based on your experience how you think making friends at lake Joe is different than making friends in your everyday life outside of camp or what makes your friends at Lake Joe different than your everyday friends at home?

**Jess:** One of the things you have already actually mentioned was that even if you don't get to see your friend or talk to very much throughout the year, you get to go back to camp at the same time, you get to hang out with them and it's… depending on like your friendship and stuff that time has not passed at all. I really like that.

**Taylor:** You said it perfectly like when you get to see your friends again, it's like no time has passed. And I think that is so, so special. So that's a really, really fantastic point, Jess.

**Jess:** Thanks. And to answer your actual question. I think the difference between Lake Joe friends and like not Lake Joe friends, is that depending on like you go up it you might meet someone that's very similar to you versus everyday friends are, are awesome too but they could be very different from you.

**Taylor:** It’s true.

**David:** Going with Jess's idea, there in usual everyday lives. You don't you don't usually meet people that are very similar to you. Like I have a condition called albinism and it's so rare to see people in my area with albinism. I'm the only Al being in a very large area. And I, and then I'll go to Lake Joe and I find at least five other albinos who can relate to what, to my condition. And it that's another way that it's different from everyday lives to CNIB Lake Joe.

**Taylor:** David, I can actually relate to you on this one. I actually have a condition. I also have vision loss and my condition is called Stargardt's. And I didn't know anybody in my life. I didn't know any blind people in general, to be honest. But when I got to go to Lake Joe, I got to meet the very first person that I ever got to meet with the same condition as me. And that is just such a special experience to have. And like you said, that's a really cool part about Lake Joe. You get to meet people that are just like you and in different ways also and being able to connect on that level. I'm really happy that you, you shared that story. I think that is very relatable to a lot of people that get to go to Lake Joe. So thank you for sharing.

**David: Yes.**

**Roxanne:** The difference between my Lake Joe friends and my home friends is that I, I guess, because I'm not in the countryside and I don't get to do that very often, right? It's like a once in a lifetime opportunity for me. So when I go back to Lake Joe I'm seeing people that I haven't seen for a while and that's just like a really good experience. Like it's a great learning experience to, you know be out in the wilderness and kind of just be away from the city and get away from the drama. 'Cause I don't know, I just can't take drama.

(Taylor and Roxanne laughing)

**Roxanne:** I just like being where it's peaceful sometimes. It allows you to just be yourself and it allows you to be with your friends and it allows you to bond with people.

**Taylor:** Yeah. So would it be fair to say that Lake Joe really gave you the opportunity to make those bonds?

**Roxanne:** Yeah. Lake Joe really gave me the opportunity because you know like I got to do things that I probably can't do here that I can do there. Like I got to swim and then I also got to go tubing which I have never done before in my whole entire life. So I was so excited for that. And I did that twice, not once, but twice.

**Taylor:** I think to what you're saying, I think what's really cool about Lake Joe is that it provides all of these cool learning opportunities to learn how to do these camp activities as people who are blind or partially sighted among other challenges as well. And being able to, to learn those things and to be able to take part in those things with people that can understand your journey and relate to your journey is just really really cool and almost work to experience. Quite honestly. My next question is if you could tell the people that are listening to this podcast right now, anything about making friends at Lake Joe and what you've learned whether it's, you know, your first time at Lake Joe, or if you've been going for years, what do you want people to know about making friends at Lake Joe

**Jess:** Lake Joe is a very special place and your friendships there will are very special and they're very meaningful and they are very deep friendships. And part of that is because you're… you're learning new things as Roxanne says and you're learning with these activities and new skills with people that are very similar to you and differences, but there's connections. At Lake Joe, that will never be broken.

**David:** Eh, well the camp itself is just so friendly. So easy to make friends at Lake Joe cause everyone's so positive and friendly especially the counselors. And really everyone cause they stay positive through the entire day. Through every activity they stay, they stay super positive through everything. When the rest of us it's so hard and I really envy them that, that they can stay super positive. It is super easy to make friends at Lake Joe because everyone just who's there, they just wanna make friends. Cause it's so different. Cause you finally find people who are similar to you and then you just wanna make friends with them. And it's so easy. Cause everyone's so positive kept just so fun and so friendly.

**Roxanne:** I want them to know that, it's just a great place to go. And like I said, the night you get there you might not wanna go home and you might wanna stay longer. And it's just like, I don't know. It's a very special place. I honestly, when I had to go home I was a bit sad because I wanted to stay as long as I could.

**Taylor:** Well, it sounds like based on our conversation today that Lake Joe really, the magic of the place is a perfect opportunity to make friends. It's a perfect place to make friends because of the positivity like David said and the connections we're able to make and the bonds we're able to form with the activities that we're doing. It's just a wonderful place with wonderful opportunities to make some beautiful connections. Are there any final thoughts that anyone would like to share before I close out the episode? Anything that you, anything more you wanna say or anything you wished you added before?

**Jess:** Hey Roxanne, Jess' here. I just wanted to say that I've been going to camp for many years now and I still feel that way. I get excited when I get close, close to camp and I get slightly sad and I have to leave camp, but yeah I know I'll be back again.

**Roxanne:** Camp's just so friendly. I'm, I'm kind of sad 'cause I live all the way across Canada. I just wanna go back every single year. It's so friendly there. So awesome.

**Taylor:** Well I'm so happy that camp makes you so happy. Camp will definitely be happy to have you back, David. I want to thank all three of you for being here today. You guys shared some wonderful stories and some absolutely wonderful points that I think a lot of us can relate to. And thank you to our listeners for listening to this episode. I hope that you have been convinced to go to Lake Joe to make some friends because it is the place to go and make friends. Yeah. And until next time I am Taylor G and yeah let's say goodbye guys.

**Group:** Bye!

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**Narrator:** For more CNIB podcasts, visit cnib.ca/podcasts