



---

## **LEAD WITH WE**

### **EPISODE 7: MAGGIE HUREAU**

Maggie Hureau:

This was an instance where it was like, oh, our products actually can make a difference and really be helpful for healthcare workers. That's where we made the commitment to donate \$1 million worth of product to healthcare workers around the US. 50% just in New York city, because New York city was at that time at the epicenter of the pandemic.

Simon Mainwaring:

From we first, welcome to Lead With We, the podcast with top business leaders and founders reveal how they build high growth and high impact companies by putting we first. Welcome to this episode of Lead With We, where on talking to Maggie Hureau. The head of social impact at Harry's, the razor company that is committed to addressing mental health and especially mental health in young men at a time when it's needed most. Maggie, how are you doing?

Maggie Hureau:

I'm good. I'm good. How are you doing?

Simon Mainwaring:

Very well? Very well. Thank you. You've got to tell us, Harry's who's Harry? How did the company start? Give us a little bit background there.

Maggie Hureau:

Harry started about seven years ago. Harry's is a men's grooming brand. It was started by Andy Katz-Mayfield and Jeff Raider. You might know Jeff just started Warby Parker. The two of them just wanted to start a men's grooming brands that spoke to men a little bit differently, provided products at a fair price point. If you look at all the other brands out there and what they saw, they didn't really see themselves in these other brands. They didn't really think that those brands were speaking to the men and the guy that they wanted to speak to, so they created Harry's.

Simon Mainwaring:

Why Harry, they just liked the name, Harry? Where did they come from?

Maggie Hureau:

They did like the name Harry. I'm not quite sure exactly the origins of where Harry came from, but I think it's an approachable men's name that really did well and we tested it and I think has grown for sure.

Simon Mainwaring:

I've got this vision of the two founders sitting there with boys' baby names, thumbing through the book saying, "What are we going to call the company?" it's interesting. As a man, you walk into a pharmacy and you see that there's two things that have locks on them. One is the alcohol and one is the high end razor. It's almost like the Holy Grail, when you get to that

---

cabinet full of these very, very expensive razors. Did they start the company, because they were so expensive and they saw a marketplace need there, or did they actually want to start something purposeful?

Maggie Hureau:

I think both. I think what they wanted to do is bring a more fair price product to the market and then saw the opportunity to do so and saw the opportunity that there aren't that many brands in this space, so that we could be a great alternative. Then along the way, in three or four months of launching Harry's, we started what we call the 1% program, which is 1% of all of our sales go back to nonprofit organizations.

Simon Mainwaring:

Why did they do that? What inspired them to do that, because it's hard enough to start a company without them giving away a percentage point of your profits?

Maggie Hureau:

I think if you talk to Jeff and Andy directly, it's almost too simple of an answer, that they think that you can do well as a business and do good in the world. Those things don't need to be mutually exclusive, that you can do both at the same time. I also say young people today, our team skews younger and this is what they're demanding of their employers. Not only that their brand meets a need and the world that they give back. Then also that they are given time to give back. There are two big components of our social impact program. First and foremost, it's the 1%. 1% of sales has always given back to nonprofit organizations. Then we give all us employees five paid days to give back to organizations of their choice. I say, whatever moves you, whatever keeps you up at night, we're going to allow you to do that. We're going to give you the paid time to do so, because giving back your time is important as money.

Simon Mainwaring:

There's a lot of companies talking about their purpose out there today. It's almost competitive. How do you make sure that people believe you, that you're doing it legitimately? That it's not just window dressing? It's not just optics. It's not just, oh, that's just something we have to do today, because everyone's doing it.

Maggie Hureau:

There's a few different ways I think that we try to do that. One is that all of our donations that we donate that are part of this 1% are done on a project by project basis. We don't just make blanket donations to organizations that we've never talked to before that are going to general operating funds. We're really interested in the actual project at hand. In terms with Harry's and our focus on mental health, we're digging in. What mental health program are you doing that is aligned with your longterm impact that we could also support and helps us prove that we're ladder up into this larger goal of reaching 500,000 men? There's a beginning, middle, and end to our projects. There's an actual impact report written to make sure that we're doing the work together, that it's not just talking about it out in the world. That's how we try to sign our partners and make sure that there is an actual impact being made into the world.

Simon Mainwaring:

You actually curate your partners and you really hold them accountable to make sure that you're getting the result. Let me ask you why mental health? It's such a problematic, complex,

---

difficult issue. I got to say as a man, there's few minutes you get each morning, when you shave is something that you take for granted, but it's when you gather your thoughts, you check in emotionally, you plan out your day. I get that, but what was the insight? Why commit to something that is such a deep rooted problem? Something that's so silent, why that issue?

Maggie Hureau:

I think it's because we felt like we could have a voice here more than anything. When I got here, we were focused on supporting organizations that were promoting positive masculinity. Hopefully you see this all through our branding and that's how we try to talk to men. We try to meet them where they're at. We want to embrace the ands, that men can be gentle and strong when I got here and we took a step back and we wanted to actually think a little bit deeper around promoting positive masculinity.

Maggie Hureau:

What is positive masculinity? We had to say, "What's an issue that men have in the world today?" and when you look at the stats and dig a little bit deeper, and we went to our partners, and had these really hard conversations, those who overwhelmingly served men, or what they kept on saying was men's mental health. Mental health, the outdated stereotypes that are put on men today don't allow them to get the access and care that they need. We kept on digging, who could benefit from our programming? It turns out veterans, veterans can. LGBTQ folks. All of a sudden in your learning, not only is it men, but there are different populations of men that suffer from mental health challenges more than another.

Simon Mainwaring:

How do you go from that insight to actually having either a stated purpose or a program? I know that you've got your commitment, your mission to create things people like more, but then how do you get to a purpose? Then how do you go from that purpose to a program?

Maggie Hureau:

For us the first step was identifying men's mental health. For all of the stats out in the world, men die by suicide 3.5 times more than women. Then it's identifying that particular populations that we feel like we could really make a difference for. That's LGBTQ folks, veterans, we lose 22 veterans in the US a day by suicide. The LGBTQ, they suffer from depression and anxiety four times more than their straight peers. Young men in particular, suicide is the second biggest killer in the US for men under 35. Then in the UK, in particular, in that partnership, we were doing something really interesting with men who are experiencing homelessness. Over 80% of them report being in mental health health crisis while they are experiencing homelessness. Those were the populations that we served. Then we said, "Okay, but what are we going to do here? How many men could we really reach in a few years?" or a couple of years, actually, when you get down to it. We went back to our partners. We started to scope out projects by January, 2021. We're going to reach half a million guys.

Simon Mainwaring:

Why half a million? Was that number significant in some way?

Maggie Hureau:

I think it's impressive, if you think about it. A lot of our partners wouldn't be able to make that impact on their own. We were excited to rally around and build this team of real, true experts in this space. That's what we did. We have nine legitimate experts and folks who've been doing this for years. It was lofty. I'm not going to lie. There are days where I thought we

---

would never be able to make this amount of impact, but we're almost there and we're going to do it.

Simon Mainwaring:

It's one thing to have that intent and to have the partners and the experts with you, but you've got to make it true of the company inside. It's got to be legit, otherwise people will call you out in a heartbeat, as they should these days. How did you go about getting whether it's investors, or the board, or employees on board, how did you make it true of the organization? What did you do?

Maggie Hureau:

Luckily, Jeff and Andy have had such a conviction from this from day one. I think the board is in on it, they get it and they understand. I think our customers are in on this and get it and understands, and we'll bring them along the way as we begin to develop this program and begin to have this be a consistent voice from us. The team, I think is the biggest question. That was really difficult. When we brought this new focus area to our senior leadership team. Obviously the first question was, "Are we taking care of our team's own mental health?" and that led to a lot of checks and balances. We had to do some deep dive into our perks and policies, all aligned with what we're saying out in the world.

Maggie Hureau:

I think actually that, I'm going to go out on a limb and say, that's one of the reasons why this has been really tricky for brands to take on. It's a hard thing to communicate to the world, but also are you doing it well internally, as a team? Do you provide free mental health care to your employees? Do you folks feel like this is a place that is accepting of mental health challenges? I think we had to do the hard work there. We felt good enough to start to launch the program, which is great. I think it actually pushed us to become much better at this.

Simon Mainwaring:

How long did that take, that process of making it true inside the company, because you're anxious to get out to market, you want to talk to people about what you're doing, you want us solve for the issue, but it's got to be true, how long did it take?

Maggie Hureau:

I think it probably took about six months or so to make the decision internally that this is something that we want to do, do checks and balances internally. Do we actually have the right policies in place? From there we've just taken it and run with it. During COVID and just transitioned from work from home, this is a challenging time for everyone, parents in particular. We needed to make sure that our team felt like they could take time, that they could take mental health days, so we implemented in the remote environment two days off per month that were mental health days that people could take on as they wanted to. Then we found actually that people aren't taking those days, even though we were offering it, so we've mandated some of those mental health days for the rest of the summer.

Simon Mainwaring:

The obstacles you found internally? You might have the CFO who says, "We're just trying to survive. We are hemorrhaging here. We don't have time for the luxury of doing good," or you've got someone internally and employee who says, "This is none of our business. We're not experts in mental health. We make affordable razors. What are we doing?" how did you deal with issues like that?

---

Maggie Hureau:

The beginning there was a tiny bit of pushback and struggle. Not necessarily. I think it's just all of the competing priorities. We have so many things going on. How are we going to take the time to take mental health days? How are we going to allocate more budget to absolutely free therapy for our staff, for up to six sessions? How could we possibly do that? Then COVID hit. I think that truly was a click for our team, that we need to value mental health now more than ever. I'd like to think that we put in the groundwork beforehand, so that we could springboard from there and really focus in on, okay, our team needs more time. They need more support. They need to be able to quickly access a therapist without dealing with their insurance company right now. That's what we did. We also have a ton of our team volunteers and gives back to these organizations. We have crisis counselors on staff that have gone through an intensive 40 hour training who actually sign up for these shifts during the day. That's helpful for their mental health.

Simon Mainwaring:

What results did it have with your employees, on two fronts? One, the fact that the company is showing up and doing something really meaningful like this, but two, this is a really stigmatized issue. Even if you give free mental health support to your employees, are people are going to show up and say, "Yeah, I need that support." So how did you deal with that? What results did you see?

Maggie Hureau:

I think we're still tracking the results honestly, because COVID is so new and all of this is so new. What I can say is that, when we do ask our employees, "Does our social impact make you proud to work here?" overwhelmingly what we hear is yes. When we post on social media, our employees reposts and feel like, oh, this is exactly why I work at a place like Harry's. After COVID, instead of hitting our customers with missed messages or things that folks don't want to hear, we talked about mental health. Are you okay right now?

Simon Mainwaring:

How did you balance talking about COVID specifically, in the health challenge that represented, with mental health, which is almost a subset of that in some ways, how do you balance those two?

Maggie Hureau:

When COVID hit, our immediate response was we have to talk to our customers differently. We have to talk to our team differently. We can't go on as business as usual, nothing is normal right now. One, admitting that and giving people access to crisis lines that they might need and giving them the resources that they need immediately was on top of our list. That was our first immediate response. Then a shorter term response actually was a little bit more focused on COVID about the health care crisis. What we were doing was donating our products one off to hospitals around the country.

Maggie Hureau:

Then we started to hear, "Oh, actually the folks need this to get what they call a good seal." to get a good seal in an N95 mask, you need to be clean shaven. This was an instance where it was like, oh, our products actually can make a difference and really be helpful for health care workers. That's where we made the commitment to donate \$1 million worth of product to healthcare workers around the US, 50% just in New York City, because New York City was at that time at the epicenter of the pandemic.

---

Simon Mainwaring:

That's such a meaningful, in direct connection to the product. It's really, really powerful. What about when the Black Lives Matter, protest came along, which are little tangential, shall we say, how do you then pivot at the same time as a purposeful brand, when your core focus is mental health, how did you cope with that?

Maggie Hureau:

You should have been hopefully thinking about that. We were thinking about that, which was good. I think what we didn't know is that the Black Lives Matter movement would bubble to the surface so quickly. I think, for us, it was a matter of we couldn't just donate to organizations that we had no relationship with, that we had never talked to before that we're doing the work right now. We needed to actually go back to what do we know really well? That's mental health. If you look at the state of the world right now, I feel strongly saying now, too, and talking to all of these partners and folks working in this space, that what the black community is experiencing right now could be considered trauma. We made the commitment to donate \$500,000 in the US and 50,000 pounds in the UK to organizations that were supporting the black community in particular and their mental health and giving them access to mental health.

Maggie Hureau:

What we didn't feel like we could do is make a donation to some organization that was no paying for legal fees, not that we don't believe in that. It's just that if we want to make a longterm commitment here and we want to actually bring in the black community and in a more distinct way, we actually needed to call out this is a challenge right now. I'm not going to pick a partner that we can never partner with in the future. Now we're going to announce them within the next couple of weeks, six partners in the US and four in the UK that we could potentially have as longterm partners.

Simon Mainwaring:

That's super exciting and the point you're making is so important, which is sometimes purposeful brands feel like they've got to break right and pivot to a whole issue that's unrelated to their core purpose, but in fact, there are always ways to bring your core purpose to life in ways that are relevant to that issue, because all of these larger social issues manifest themselves in many ways. You can find that intersection as you did. What do you do now? We're all facing resurgence of the first wave or what some might be calling the second wave. That's putting more downward pressure on the economy and companies, what happens at those break points where, like any company, you sit there and say, "Wow, our sales are really hurting, but we're really committed to our purpose." What wins the day? How do you make that decision?

Maggie Hureau:

I do think it's this authentic drum be of your social mission, that I think customers can see through, if it has spikes that you've never seen before. The more we do the hard work in the downtimes and then continue to support when there are these upsurge of these crises that happen and we can be responsive and tie it back into our core and who we are and what we do. I tend to think that that's the right direction and it just works for us. I also think the 1% really lends itself to that. 1% of sales as we grow as a company, as we do better as a company, we're able to give more.

Simon Mainwaring:

---

That's a significant amount of money. Are there any points at which you go, wow, we really can't afford to do that right now. There are moments, especially in this unprecedented economic time where you're like, "We simply can't afford to do this, because our company has to survive. We're not doing anything for anyone by going out of business." so how do you navigate these sort of these crisis points?

Maggie Hureau:

It's a great question. I'd say that, have it built so deeply into your DNA that there's no going back on it.

Simon Mainwaring:

There's probably no more sensitive issue to talk about on digital and social media than mental health. People don't even want to admit to themselves often that they're suffering from an issue like this. With COVID, there's been a huge flight to e-comm and digital storytelling, which means you're talking about a very sensitive issue at arms length, even more so than ever. How do you approach that sensitive topic and how do you make sure you don't get push back that's really going to be harmful to the company?

Maggie Hureau:

It's a few different things that you can do. One is it's making sure that you're focusing in on your partners. I think we've earned some credibility that we can talk about men's mental health as a brand, but more often than not, we're actually telling our nonprofit stories more than ours, like A CALL TO MEN, for example, who's been one of our longest standing partners. How did they weave in the way they talk about positive masculinity and positive manhood and mental health? What are their correlations? Featuring our nonprofit partners and making sure that they're centered as the experts in the space and going back to them, "What do you think? How can we elevate your voice? How can we elevate your brand and what you are talking about right now?"

Simon Mainwaring:

I think that's such an important point you're making. It's not like every brand suddenly needs to spin up a discipline or expertise that they're just not qualified to have, but rather find those partners on the ground. Then as you said, you've got to be the celebrant, not celebrity of your community. It's not about talking about what you've done, but really elevate the nonprofit and celebrate what they're doing. How important are partnerships to scaling your impact? As you plan the next three to five years, especially in the time of COVID, what role does partnership play and how are you seeing that?

Maggie Hureau:

It means everything to us. What's exciting to us is that the first year you partner with us, we have a pretty cool project. Then the next year it's like, how do we take this to the next stage? Could this be stage one of three different stages of how you're going to flip this whole topic on its head? We're having some really cool conversations with partners right now around diversifying their price's counselor pool. How do you bring in more voices into the mental health space? What we know about representation, what we know about therapists out in the world is that they're overwhelmingly white and that's not helpful for people of color. They're always looking at a white person in these pretty intimate moments and direct therapy. I think it's about taking it to the next stage, is taking it to this more innovative place. After you've already partnered with us, what can we do together that would be so cool and interesting and innovative?

---

Simon Mainwaring:

I love how the impact work you're doing is animating the company itself. It's incredible. You see brands out there like Patagonia, leading conversations about responsible consumption, or economy, or Everlane about radical transparency. Here, you're talking about positive masculinity. It's a double edged sword though, because all of these issues are so complicated. How do you approach them many layers to a complex issue like mental health, so you can wade in there confidently? For example, don't you have to destigmatize it in the first place? You can't just step in and tell people, "Here's a solution." how do you approach that?

Maggie Hureau:

I do think it's again, bringing it back to the partners and have them help us talk about this. Also, I think with mental health where the more you talk about it, the better it becomes. We as a brand needed to do some thinking on that. Are we okay with saying the term suicide for our customers? Can we do that? Overwhelmingly, we decided yes. If men are dying 3.5 times more than women by suicide, we have to say the word. Now, it needs to be in the right context. It needs to be the right framing. Of course our marketing teams will help us do that. We'll partner with them to tell the right story, but I think more and more as we're getting into this space, just saying the term mental health, driving people to resources, doing some campaigns and highlighting via email, or on our social media, or having a product, like a pride product that just sold out, that a hundred percent of the proceeds go back to the Trevor Project, which is not just an LGBTQ organization, but one that helps with mental health specifically.

Maggie Hureau:

Those are the types of things that we want to tell the work that our partners are doing and highlighting those consistently helps. It helps to the front of our leadership team too, from that perspective. Jeff and Andy, all of our senior leaders, come to team meeting and talk about mental health. They talk about how they're doing. It's okay now to say during COVID, "This is a devastating time and I don't know how to sugar coat this." and that realness, I like to think as part of us consistently talking about mental health in the workplace, and also out there externally in the world.

Simon Mainwaring:

As a brand, you're sitting there going, "We're talking about this on our social channels and our digital channels," and you're really opening yourself up for an infinite number of responses, positive or negative. That makes some brands gun shy. What do you do? How do you manage that dialogue that comes back at you?

Maggie Hureau:

I think it's coming back with conviction that this is our cause and that we care so deeply about. We actually need to focus in on one area, so you feel so confident in saying, "This is our cause area. This is what we care about. What we truly care about is access to mental health care." I'll say it, we put our money where our mouth is. We're not just talking about this issue. It helps that we give significantly against it.

Simon Mainwaring:

This focus you talk about is so important, as are the partners. At the same time, one of the odd results of this increasingly purposeful marketplaces, is there's a lot of competition around the same issues. For example, Crisis Text Line partners with a number of different brands. Apart from really walking your talk and putting your money where your mouth is, how do you



---

differentiate yourself from other brands addressing this issue? How do you make sure that you cut through the noise? How do you make sure that it does resonate deeply and authentically with your audience, when others are speaking to the same crisis?

Maggie Hureau:

When you look at the mental healthcare space right now, and particularly when you look at men's mental health, I would say mental health as a cause area, I feel very comfortable with saying is underfunded and the US in particular, that there aren't enough brands that are coming to the table, that there aren't enough brands who are actually giving money significantly to nonprofit organizations. There are some, there are pockets that are doing really great work. Overall, in this field. We need more. We have taken on the water is warm, come on in and we talked to other brands and I'm like, "Please join us. Let's talk, I'd love to share our resources and what we've learned." over all we do this, because we want to make an impact in the world. Therefore I think we need to have the philosophy that we need to best practice share with other orgs and other brands too.

Simon Mainwaring:

How does it all fit together? You've got partners, you've got your role and Social Impact, you've got the purpose of the company, you've got your supply chain and razors to get out to people. Are they separate? Are they siloed or are they integrated in and around your mission? How does it all fit together?

Maggie Hureau:

It gets a little bit siloed right now, but we're moving more and more as we grow and to figuring out how does Social Impact come through every department? What are they thinking about? How is purpose really driving your decisions? In the same way that I hope that diversity and inclusion will integrate itself into those departments, and we're seeing that change, that's actually happening right now for many brands out in the world, which is super exciting. Jeff and Andy are incredibly passionate about this cause area. They're passionate about giving back and our team getting involved and giving back. I think that also is critical, that you need to have leadership that's standing behind us, that's consistently talking about it. For us, it happens generally at team meetings, how are we introducing new partners at team meeting? How does our team actually know and feel these partners? We bring a lot of our nonprofit leadership into what we call fireside chats, that our team can attend. These aren't just logos to us. They're people, they're organizations that our team actually gets to know their work pretty intimately.

Simon Mainwaring:

Paint a picture of that. What happens? Do Jeff and Andy sit down and say, "This is what I'm struggling with." it's such a sensitive issue, but to build a culture and inspire people around that is really powerful. What does it look like?

Maggie Hureau:

I think for me, it looks like, what I referenced before in that starting a team meeting and being honest, that things are really crappy right now. Things are really hard right now. I think it's those small things, where you're getting these really raw moments from leadership that are willing to talk about mental health. I think it happens when you're talking about a project out in the world that you're doing with a nonprofit partner and you're talking about veterans and that 33% of the suicides that have happened in this country from veterans come from 4% of the US counties. There's a fluency, we're building this rhetoric around mental health, and

---

you're slowly ticking away at it. It's consistently coming out in your team, so much so that you feel open and honest talking about your own mental health. Referencing crisis text lines all of the time, "If a team needs it, this is where you would find it. If you need therapy right now, this is where you find it."

Simon Mainwaring:

How do you commit to this over the longterm? How do you keep it alive? How do you keep that balloon up in the air?

Maggie Hureau:

I think it's through this 1% bottle that really is helpful. 1% of all sales go back to nonprofit organizations. As we launch new brands under the Harry's umbrella, right now we have Flamingo, which is our women's care brand, and we'll continue to launch new brands. All of those will actually have a 1% model too. I do think that as we move forward, it's going to get easier and easier. We could to the point where hopefully like a Ben and Jerry's, hopefully like a Patagonia where you could never go back on something like this.

Simon Mainwaring:

Share with us one lesson on the way, it doesn't always work out perfectly, despite your best intentions. What's one lesson you've learned on the way that has really helped you moving forward?

Maggie Hureau:

I think the biggest lesson for us was to really do the digging and making sure that we slowed down in the beginning, to make sure that mental health was the right cause area for us in particular, did this work for our team? We did not feel okay shouting from the rooftops that you need to get access to mental health care and internally feeling like our team didn't feel like we were living up to those values.

Maggie Hureau:

Along the way, I think a lot of folks pumped the brakes for us to do a little bit of a census internally. Okay, what are our perks and policies? What is our management philosophy that actually supports mental health? How do we rewrite our entire benefits one pagers so that it has a lens of mental health? We really did take the time to do those things and check in with our team internally to make sure that it tracks and it feels right. I think for us, that was a huge win. That was a lesson that we definitely learned along the way, slow it down to make sure that it tracks you would never want to talk about an issue that didn't feel right with our team.

Simon Mainwaring:

Maggie, thank you so much for your insights and for the work that Harry's is doing around an important issue, which is even more important now, during the time of COVID-19. I've been talking to Maggie Hureau, who's the head of social impact at Harry's. Maggie, thank you so much for joining us.

Maggie Hureau:

Thanks so much for having me.

Simon Mainwaring:

---

Thanks for joining us for this episode of Lead With We, where I was talking with Maggie Hureau, the head of social impact at Harry's, who shared with us, how you decide what issue your company should commit to, how you make sure that you're doing it for real, and how you leverage partnerships most effectively to scale your awareness and impact. You can subscribe to Lead With We on Apple, Google, or Spotify, and recommend it to your friends and colleagues, so they too can become a purposeful and profitable business. If you'd like to learn more about how you can build a purposeful brand, check out [wefirstbranding.com](http://wefirstbranding.com), where we have lots of free resources and case studies. We look forward to having you join us on the next episode of Lead With We.

###