

"Masculine Intelligence is more than just a book; it's a roadmap to becoming a stronger, more effective entrepreneur and whole man."



NEW!

MASCULINE INTELLIGENCE

**8 CORE PRINCIPLES OF THE
WORLD'S MOST SUCCESSFUL MEN**

Ken Rutkowski | Will Henshall

MASCULINE INTELLIGENCE

By Ken Rutkowski and Will Henshall

Deepen Your Entrepreneurial and Personal Power with Masculine Intelligence: Curiosity, Creativity, Resilience, Integrity, Brotherhood, Financial Literacy, Career Development, and Work-Life Balance.

INTRODUCTION

Are you an entrepreneur committed to mastering the complexities of business, leadership, family and legacy?

This groundbreaking book offers an unprecedented look into the qualities that define successful male entrepreneurs in this time of rapid change. Through a series of, intimate, in-depth interviews with eight industry leaders; Chris Voss, Nolan Bushnell, James Altucher, Jim Kwik, Kenny Aronoff, Marcus Bell and Dr Michael Breus, Masculine Intelligence details the durable power of integrity, brotherhood, curiosity, and other core principles that shape a leader.

Each chapter is based on one of the eight common principles that were derived from our quantitative and qualitative research with 450 successful men participants from many different backgrounds and many different industries.

The eight men we interviewed for this book are leaders in their respective fields, are well known for their achievements, and have shared personal and vulnerable aspects of their life paths publicly in this book for the first time. We thank each of them for sharing their wisdom.

This has been the most fascinating process, and Ken and Will are very excited to share the results with you.

Masculine Intelligence is more than just a book; it's a roadmap to becoming a stronger, more effective entrepreneur and whole man.

Ken and Will
March 2024

Featured interviewees in this book:

[Chris Voss](#), former FBI hostage negotiator, and best selling author of the book ‘Never Split The Difference’

[Nolan Bushnell](#), the father of the video game, founded Atari and Chuck e Cheese ‘entertainment restaurants’

[James Altucher](#), 20 best selling books, entrepreneur, investor, podcast host

[Jim Kwik](#), brain coach, podcaster, writer, and entrepreneur

[Kenny Aronoff](#), one of the most influential drummers in the world, he’s played with Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen, Neil Diamond, Eric Clapton, John Fogerty, Sting

[Marcus Bell](#), music producer, singer, social media influencer, activist and entrepreneur

[Fernando Garibay](#), polymath; record producer, entrepreneur, author, and academic

[Dr Michael Breus](#), clinical psychologist, the renown ‘TV Sleep Doctor’ with hundreds of media appearances, best selling author

CHAPTER 1

CURIOSITY

Chris Voss

Curiosity is a superpower.

I believe that you can't be curious and angry simultaneously. It's a great inoculator from anger. And it shows up in other interesting places. I remember hearing a number of years ago that Elon Musk's brother said that he would read two very different books simultaneously looking for universal principles that showed up in different places.

In Nassim Nicholas Taleb's book, 'Anti Fragile' he said curiosity is an anti fragile characteristic. 'Post traumatic stress growth', as opposed to 'post traumatic stress disorder'. And his contention, which I happen to believe in, paraphrases, 'You can't reach the heights of what you could possibly be without getting crushed.'

I mean, the greater the stress, the higher the potential. Now, simultaneously, getting crushed, some people never get up. And that's why crushing people is, you know, not an effective teaching methodology. I mean, it's what a lot of the special forces are and the militaries around the world, they want to see if they can crush you, they want to see if you can get up.

In last century fraternities, hazing was about breaking you down so you built back up stronger. And all that's true. But not everybody gets up. I think that from stress, traumatic stress, the success rate is higher than any other methodology, but simultaneously the total failure rate is higher also.

So Talib talks about curiosity in his book, and then I'm reading 'Man's Search for Meaning', which I think, if you're a reader, it's hard to not pick it up and read it at some point in time. And sure enough, he talks about curiosity being a psychological survival mechanism in the Nazi death camps.

As soon as people just let go of whether or not they were going to live or die, and just be curious about what next horrific thing is going to happen today, they'd survive psychologically better off.

So, curiosity is a superpower. It's one of the ultimate guarantees of success as a human being. If you can harness it, if you can believe in it, if you can buy into it, you're capable of so much more with curiosity.

The Jeff Schilling hostage case, where ultimately he just walked away. The terrorists got worn out and they stopped paying close attention to him. They became disheartened without becoming angry, and then they just got so lax in paying attention to him in the situation. And ultimately they put him out in this mangrove swamp, far away from where they were, and just checked on him every few days because they just sort of lost their enthusiasm for the overall operation.

And he's sitting out there in a mangrove swamp, these guys aren't going to be back for a few days. I might as well leave.

And how we got them to that point was, I didn't know what was going to happen. I just started using our process of empathy, feedback to them, what they were telling us, and just not being oppositional to them at all.

And I kept getting asked, how's this going to work? And my answer to him was like, I don't know. We're going to find out, we just, going to create a great environment here. And we're going to create the opportunity for something good to happen. What's that going to be? You know, I don't know, maybe we'll rescue him.

I imagined ultimately that we were going to get a rescue before he actually just walked away. But I didn't know what was going to happen. I was just like, look, let's just engage with the process and see what the hell is going to happen.

And there were several cases not long after that, people asked me what the point of the strategy was. And I was like, you know, I don't know. Let's find out.

And so the Schilling was a walk away. The Pepe Escobar case in Ecuador was an escape. And the Alistair Onling-Swan case in the Philippines was a rescue. We just engaged in a process, and I thought, let's just see what happens.

Nolan Bushnell

I would say that curiosity for me has been the driving element. Curiosity is the forcing function of learning. There's active people and passive people, curious people who don't do anything, that's kind of a waste of curiosity, and for me, my curiosity leads me to all kinds of interesting pathways.

A lot of times, then I have to act on them and turn them into reality. But, at the same time, I've kind of viewed my success as a series of happy accidents, and it's kind of around doing a lot of things.

For example, I had a little advertising company in college. I did the campus blotter. Basically I took a big sheet of paper, put a calendar of events in the middle and I sold advertising around the edge. And I could sell \$4,000 worth of advertising when \$4,000 was a lot of money. I'd print them for \$500 and give them away free at the quarter.

That was my business. And I was driving a 190 SL, I mean I was a big dick! But, something that I found after I'd done it a few times, was that 90 percent of the advertisers would re up. And so, I didn't know what to do, and I thought, I want to get a night job so I don't spend it on wine, women and song in summers in Utah. And I so happy accident number one, I got a job at the amusement park.

I was the only electrical engineer, I think, in the world, that put himself through college working in the games department at an amusement park, and that's where I learned the economics of the coin operated game business.

Happy accident number two. I went to the University of Utah, where Dr. David C. Evans ran the computer science department; his research was to connect video screens up to big computers.

If you saw a video screen run by a computer in 1966, there were exactly three places in the world. One was MIT, one was Stanford AI Lab, and the other one was the University of Utah.

Then, happy accident three, when I graduated, I went to work for Ampex and Videofile. Why? Because they offered me the highest starting salary. But, it turned out that we were dealing with video streams, and I really fine-tuned my understanding of video display technology and how to create stuff.

And so three happy accidents led to the video game.

I think I was always very interested in just new kinds of technology, you know, pushing the envelope. I've always liked science fiction, and I've said that reading science fiction lubricates your brain about a world that could be, rather than the world that is.

I've always thought that what I was trying to do in my life was make the future happen just a little bit faster.

There's this old story where Siddhartha is going to the mountain and one guy jumps in the river to swim across, and he fights with the current. He gets the other side exhausted and he can't pursue. Siddhartha gets in the water and goes down the stream directing his body and gets the other side. You know, a couple hundred feet downstream, but rested and ready to continue.

And sometimes it's better to not fight the current, just kind of let the current sweep you along.

Jim Kwik

So as a brain performance coach, curiosity, it's one of the most powerful forces for learning and personal growth. I mean, that's the genesis of, of learning, genesis of personal growth, which is, you know, what I do.

It's a strong desire to learn, to know more about something. It's not like passive wondering. It's active engagement with the world. It's a quest for discovery. It's a quest for exploration. Especially of what's unknown. Which is most things, right?

We do an annual Brain Power Conference, and in 2012 we had Rod Roddenberry in the audience, the son of Gene Roddenberry. And I grew up like a lot of people on the original Star Trek. The mission of Starfleet is, to explore new worlds, right? Strange new worlds. Seek out new life and new civilizations. Boldly go where no one has gone before.

My conversation with him testament to the value placed on curiosity, because in Star Trek everything was taken care of through, now it's like 3D printing. You could make anything you needed to. There was no scarcity. People accepted, for the most part, each other, races, at least human races. And so they could put their energy into exploration. Into the vastness of space, into the unknown mysteries. And it presents an infinite, tapestry or canvas for curiosity.

As a kid I used to watch Star Trek. So that was a big deal, talking to his son. Because I got very curious about my own potential.

Star Trek, is all about outer space. And I've dedicated my life exploring and getting curious about inner space, where technology is a big part of the Star Trek mythos. I got very curious about the ultimate technology, which was the human mind. I was curious about one question, and my question was, how does my brain work? So I could work my brain. How does my memory work? So I could work my memory better.

With my career, I was driven by curiosity, and I embarked on a quest or a journey of self-education. I delved into things that would lead me to do what I'm doing now. Things like, I got very curious about the brain, so I started studying neuroscience to get those answers. Psychology, adult learning theory, education, to understand why I struggled with learning, and how to overcome the challenges that I was facing.

Because of my head injury, I had migraines every single day as a kid. When I was five, six, seven, I thought it was normal. I had memory challenges, so I started to explore, areas around topics that I now teach. Memory enhancement techniques and, speed reading. I started experimenting different forms of learning and, different, cognitive strategies.

When I was five, I was sitting in kindergarten class, teacher was teaching and I heard this, commotion outside. These sirens, these crowds that were gathering. And it was curiosity that made me want to see what was going on. I couldn't see outside of the window because I was five years old and I was not tall enough, so my curiosity led me to grab a classroom chair and I stood on it over this window sill and I saw these, fire trucks and these firefighters.

And for me they were, modern day Superheroes. There was a fire station near my home where I grew up and, they had their uniforms like superheroes do. They had their tools like superheroes do. They, they went into danger like superheroes do. So my curiosity got me to want to go see.

But I lost my balance on that chair. I took a really bad fall headfirst into a radiator. And then I was rushed to the hospital. I was very curious as a kid, and I was very energized. I was very playful. My parents said that after my accident, I was shut down. I had processing issues. Teachers would explain things I didn't understand. I would pretend to understand, but I didn't really understand. They would repeat themselves over and over again. It took me three years longer to learn how to read.

When I was nine, I got this kind of moniker where people called me the boy with the broken brain. But because of that, my superpower growing up was being invisible, and I would always shrink down, sit behind the tall kids, because I never knew answers.

But I would remain curious, because I always wanted to know, like, why am I different than all the other kids? I remember in elementary school, I would hang out with the smart kids in class, because we had things in common like Dungeons and Dragons, and comic books.

I remember one day a teacher came into the class during a free period and said, I have great news, you guys are exceptional and we're creating this group of special, exceptional kids. They called them exceptional. That's why in my book, the subtitle is Unlock Your Exceptional Life.

It's called MASP, M A S P. And it stands for More Able Student Program. And, they took everybody, all the kids out. And when I started to walk out with them, they were like, no, Jim, you're not on the list. And it was me and this other kid named Joey, who was a troublesome student.

And we weren't part of that MASP, so we created our own organization called LASP. Literally, LASP, Less Able Student Program. That was kind of our, our, our group. But whatever talent I had, you know, my superpower ends up being simplifying this because I wanted to, I think we're best suited to help the person we once were.

So my talent is simplify and demystifying these subjects, making them engaging, easy to understand, sometimes entertaining. And it didn't just require, deep knowledge, but also this, this deep curiosity, that drove me to read all these books and, to train with all these people.

Curiosity was the genesis. I mean, my inspiration was my desperation, but because I was in so much pain, I just wanted to know how to figure things out. Could I get out of pain? So I was driven to, to research, to learn.

James Altucher

I think any kind of curiosity at any point in life always gives you an edge. So for instance, I could go back to childhood, but let's take my twenties. Right then nobody even knew what the internet was. The web was just starting to blossom, but no corporation was using it.

And I had no money in the bank. I had no support system like many do. But I knew how to make a website. I was like one of five people in New York city who knew how to make a website.

And so when americanexpress.com needed to make a website, they asked Arthur Anderson, which was an accounting firm back then, which disappeared after Enron, Arthur Anderson asked a consulting firm, a consulting firm to ask some digital agency, the digital agency asked me again, no money. I was a full-time employee at HBO at the time. And I said, yes, I could do it.

Now, I didn't know if I could make American Express's website, and I hadn't made a corporate website before, but I was curious. I felt I could do it. And so, I always say yes, then I think about whether I can do it.

So I didn't know anything about design. I found a designer and then I made their website. And I wrote all these software tools to let them manage their website. It was almost like WordPress five years before WordPress.

I didn't understand the difference between products and service and how those types of companies are valued differently, so I didn't want to tell anybody I wrote software that helped me make this website really fast, because I wanted them to think I worked lots of hours so I could charge for the hours. That website cost somebody \$250,000. So that was the start of my business thinking.

Everyone said you can't have a full-time job and run a business at the same time. And whenever someone says can't to me, I always think like, why not? And so I figured I would try it. I was curious if it could be done. I wasn't that beholden to the results. I just wanted to try this.

And I think that's very important about curiosity, like it wouldn't ruin my life. I actually at the time loved my full-time job, but I did it. I started doing websites for big companies.

And then I said to HBO, you should do a website. And they said, sure. How do we do it? And I'm like, well, I'll outsource it to my friend's company. So my friend was the designer who I had brought on for my company. There was no other competitor, so I essentially outsourced it to myself just to get it done. But then I was curious, I said to the people at HBO, why are you just putting a marketing

pamphlet on the web? This is what people did back in 1996 is they put marketing pamphlets on the web.

I said, HBO is known for their cutting edge, gritty. often sexual shows, and I said, why don't you do web, original web shows, just like you change the TV industry, doing original TV content.

So, I went to the CEO's office, just walked right in. I had to go past all the six layers of secretaries. And I walk in and. His name was Jeff Bukas. He said, who are you? And I said, listen, I work in the IT department. My title was junior programmer analyst. And I said, the same thing I just said to you is why does an HBO do original web shows? And he's like, I don't care. Do what you want.

And so then I go all the way back to my boss, who was very upset that I went six levels over his head. And I said, look, Jeff Bukas said, I have to do this now. So that became my job. I did a web show, which I think was the very first podcast.

I did a show called '3am' for three years. I went out at three in the morning on a Wednesday night in particular, every Wednesday night for three years.

I would just interview people who are out in the street. Why are you out at three in the morning? Don't you have work, school, kids, family? Like, what are you doing in the meatpacking district at three in the morning? Well, everybody was up to no good. But I really became curious, like How did you become a prostitute? How did you become a drug dealer? Why are you going to jail?

I went out to Rikers Island once at three in the morning. It's interesting there was one bus that takes people back and forth, to this one bus stop in Queens to go to Rikers Island. I then said, well, why can't this be a TV show?

So, I shot it as a documentary, HBO gave me money to shoot it. And this also led to other companies approaching me, other entertainment companies. Hey, what you did for HBO, could you do for us?

So why not? And for a long time, I was doing my full-time job and then some, making websites for every gangster rap record label, and all the different movie studios, like Warner Brothers, Miramax, New Line Cinema, October Films, some of these don't exist anymore.

I saw that website development was going to be a commodity, sold the company, that entire industry disappeared, and then, this is related to curiosity, but more related to resilience.

I had made \$15 million selling that first company and I lost it all within a year. I lost every dime. I remember one point refreshing during the workday my Prudential account and there was like a little over \$15 million in there and I was like man I'm poor. Everybody else is making a hundred million. I need to make more.

And so I was like, well let's do this investing thing. Clearly that works for a lot of people. This is like 1999, 2000. I didn't know anything at all about investing. And within a year and a half, I refreshed that account again, and it had \$143 in it. And that was all my money. And I was so upset and depressed.

I was interviewing someone the other day on my podcast, very successful executive entrepreneur, but when she was 13 years old, she was homeless and then she skipped right to going to college. And I'm like, wait, wait, wait, wait. How did you live at the age of 13 on this? Like you just get an incredible urge. You can't let people skip.

I was interviewing Coolio once, the rapper who's RIP. And he said, then I had a, you know, after, you know, winning the Grammys, I had a little drug problem. And then he goes on to his next album.

And I'm like, wait, wait, what do you mean a drug problem? What was going on? How did you get this problem? How did you get over it? Why are you a chef now? Like all, you know, you get an incredible urge to find out something you didn't know.

I'll give you a one more example that was a very interesting example for me. Which was, when Trump was president, he tweeted out, I want to buy Greenland. And there was a response tweet from the prime minister of Denmark. It's not for sale.

And I'm like, what, uh, what did I just witness? Did, the US president just try to buy a country on Twitter? And then what does Denmark, why did Denmark respond? That's a little country. Greenland's like a huge landmass. What do they have to do with Greenland? Turns out Denmark owns Greenland. And, so then, I was really curious. Well, why would somebody want to buy Greenland?

It turns out there's a real serious answer. Greenland's number two to China on rare earth minerals. And China is the one who has all the rights in Greenland.

So I said, you know what, maybe nobody should own Greenland. I have never done a crowdfunding campaign and I wanted to learn Kickstarter and Indiegogo and GoFundMe. So, I set up a crowdfunding campaign to raise a hundred million dollars to buy Greenland.

That would be the down payment, you know, and you have to like offer things. So you can be an Earl. If you donate \$10 a Duke, if you donate \$100 a holiday named after you, if you donate a thousand, maybe you get 10, 000 acres of land after that.

I started raising like thousands of dollars and I think, I think it was Indiegogo, one of them. They shut me down though, because they knew I was largely kidding. I wasn't, but they didn't want to deal with all the American Express fees on the returns.

But that all happened because I was curious and just being curious forced me to learn about Greenland, crowdfunding, gave me ideas for articles and on and on.

So that's the edge I had. If I wasn't curious, I wouldn't have had those edges.

Kenny Aronoff

I saw the Beatles on TV when I was 10 years old, and I was lit up, it was like I realized, I want to do that, you know, I saw they were in their cool suits, they weren't like our dad's suits, they were cool suits and they had the long hair and and then they had electric guitars, electric bass and, you know, Ringo's up on the drum riser thing and so the first thing I noticed, I was driven by was curiosity.

Which then made me immediately, without me even knowing it, I want to do that, that's what I want to do. I want to be with a bunch of guys, dressed like that, doing that.

How am I going to do that? You know, I'm curious, like, how do you get there? So, I asked my mom, I said, who are they? She said, they're the Beatles. I went, well, call them up, I want to play with them. Well, you know, she didn't call the Beatles up. She wanted me to learn piano.

Anyway, the next thing was, I want to play drums. Fuck the piano. I want to do that. And so, there's curiosity, how do you do that? Okay, mom, get me a drum set. Which she didn't get me.

And then my curiosity was, how am I going to do this? And obviously, eventually I did. So, curiosity is driven by purpose and passion. I'd say everything is.

Marcus Bell

Curiosity is everything to me. It is the thing that frees me and others. Connected with curiosity is the question. And I like to say, the questions free you and the answers constrain you.

When you're looking at a question, and you seek out the answer to that question, then that informs the activity of life, that informs the decisions that are being made, and that informs the way your resources are allocated.

So, curiosity to me is essential for creating a life that is meaningful, to create businesses, to create relationships, to create community. It's the foundation, I would say, like in a garden, it's the soil in which many other things come from.

Let's take last year. I was doing 100 songs in 100 days, but in the midst of it, I lost my voice. I got sick! I was singing, and because I play a lot of instruments, I could have said, okay, well, I'm just going to do a bunch of instrumentals and still do a hundred songs, but the question that I had was, wait a minute, there must be a way that I can clone my voice, my singing voice. And if I do that, then I can continue to do the 100 songs as the AI model of me. That's curiosity.

So that took me down the audio AI rabbit hole. Now I've been using AI for a few years now. And that's what happened. I cloned my voice and ended up doing a meditation, enough songs to make up a meditation album using my A.I. speaking voice.

Now at that time. I was asking around trying to figure out how to use AI to do my singing voice and I couldn't find anything that could accomplish that. But this is the curiosity. Alright, so I held that question until I got the answer.

And when I got the answer, I created my AI singing voice and now I have an album that I'm working on in Spanish, and I don't speak Spanish. That's curiosity.

So out of out of the desire to see what was possible, last year became an incredible year for me, and becoming an AI expert in using these generative models.

So, that question led to the next level of activity. Okay, well, can I write books with it? Yep, I ended up writing a hundred books with the help of AI last year. Alright, can I create a version of Marcus that will live forever? Can I have immortality? So that my daughter would be able to type in and speak to me when I leave this 3D.

And I found a way to do that. All from curiosity. So curiosity to me is essential.

Fernando Garibay

Curiosity has brought me incredible wealth in life, and I mean wealth is happiness, joy, love, compassion.; the true measures of; wealth, by understanding, uh, people and understanding the needs.

And, I was very awful at this because throughout life, I was always more of an introvert, and so I would see life from a self-centered way of trying to understand the outer world as opposed to meeting people where they are to better understand them.

So, I went aggressively to try to understand human behavior. To better serve humans throughout my life and throughout my work because everything I did was a service of, of humanity, to finding ways to connect through music, to finding ways to connect through, the written word, to finding ways to connect through, oratory, so lectures, et cetera.

So I studied a lot, specifically human behavior, from all the humanities, from philosophy down to behavior economics, neuroeconomics.

Michael Breus

Curiosity definitely was something that ruled my life when I was younger and it took me a while to figure out how to tame it, in order to funnel it towards projects that could become projects that I had real interest in or things that I could really, because at first I was just curious about everything, um, you know, I'd learn about something new and look at that and think I could do that business or do this or do that or, you know, something else.

And then, after a while, what I realized is that curiosity for me can also almost make me ADD, and make me almost to all over the place. And so, I had to kind of tame my curiosity or I had to guide my curiosity, throughout my life as especially as I got older because there's just so many cool things out there that I would want to learn.

But at the end of the day, am I learning them just to learn them? Am I learning them to produce something? Am I learning them to have better relations? Like, what's the reason behind why I'm learning them?

And by the way, it's perfectly fine that I can learn something for no reason, I do that all the time, but, if the majority of what I'm doing is learning shit for no

reason, then I'm not gonna be able to meet a lot of the goals that I've set for myself, and I have a very kind of structured way in which I try to meet goals.

But curiosity, when pointed in the right direction, I would argue is probably one of my most valuable tools other than creativity. Originally, I was going down the path to be a sports psychologist. My goal was to work with teams to, help them, you know, throw faster, the mental game of sports and all that cool shit, because I have almost no athletic ability whatsoever and I was going to gleam any fame and fortune through these guys, because you know, all the good looking girls are always hanging out with the athletes, right?

So I'm like, I can't be an athlete, but if I can make the athletes do better, I, maybe I can hang out with them, you know, who knows? And so that was the whole deal. And when I got to, um, the University of Mississippi Medical Center, which is where I wanted to do my residency, I couldn't get into the right residency program. It was only the Harvards and the Yales and the Princetons of the worlds got in.

I went to the University of Georgia. It was a top 20 program, but it wasn't Harvard, right? And so they said there's a sleep track available. And we're trying to fill that that track and I was like how fucking tough could this be right? It's sleep.

And I had worked my way through graduate school in the electrophysiology department. I like to take shit apart and put it back together and make it work better and I knew how to use all of their machines that they use for recording sleep and sleep medicine.

So I was like here's what I'm going to do. I'm going to, I'm going to tell them that I want to do sleep medicine to get, and then I'm going to transfer, right, as soon as I get there.

I get there day one, raise my hand, they're like, yes, Dr. Bruce. I said, I want to find out about transferring into the sports scene psych program. They said we had a feeling that you were going to do this and so what we're going to do is you got to stay in sleep for six months and then you can go to any other part of the program that you wanted.

And so I was very curious about sleep and sleep medicine. And within three days I absolutely fell in love with it and I knew I would never change my path, but sports psychology was out the window. I think there was an inherent curiosity in me once I was presented with the situation. So with sleep medicine, it was like, if you want to go do your other thing, you got to do this.

CHAPTER 2

CREATIVITY

James Altucher

Creativity is making something that you would be afraid to put out into the world. You're proud of what you made. It's amazing what you made, but you're afraid because it's completely new.

When something's completely new, maybe the world decided they don't want whatever it is you're creating. Maybe you write a story that's uncomfortable for people to read, or you paint a painting where, say everybody's defined by cubes, so you have cubism now and everyone's a little uncomfortable about what Picasso's doing.

Andy Warhol just took a Campbell's Soup can and made it art. And everyone's a little uncomfortable. What's going on here? That's not art, it's a Campbell's Soup can. But it was amazingly creative.

Here's the thing. It's not that some people are creative, and others aren't. Everybody is a creative, but the thing is, it's a muscle. It's like a muscle in the brain. Let's say you're in the hospital for surgery and you don't walk for two weeks, you'll need physical therapy. To walk because the muscles atrophy so fast. So I think what's happened is a large part of society because they feel they don't need creativity or they've already made an excuse that they're not creative, they let their creativity muscle atrophy.

And the way I exercise it is this. Every day without fail, I write down 10 ideas, 10 bad ideas, by the way, because if you write 3,650 ideas a year, most of them or all of them are going to be bad, but it exercises that creativity muscle so that when you need to summon it up, you know how to do it. That muscle is exercised.

What I do is I collect waiter's pads. And what I like about waiter's pads is first off, they're cheap. So I get like a hundred waiter's pads for \$10 if you go to some restaurant supply store. And then the form factor is great, you can just fit it in your

pocket. Third, when you're in a meeting, everyone's pulling out their, what's that Italian notebook that everyone's got?

And then I pull out the waiter's pad. Somebody always makes a joke. I'll take fries with that hamburger. A hundred percent of the time, someone makes that joke in every meeting. And then they see I'm a frugal person. And it's also very, very short. You can't have big ideas. It's very short. Like boom, like potatoes, hamburgers, fries, like it's an order form basically. And so, it's very easy to make a bullet pointed list.

I'll do 10, I'll only use one page. I'll do 10 on each day. If you try it like the first six or seven are like a breeze, you'll think this is easy, but then like 8, 9, 10, you're really sweating it out. It's like when you do push ups and you hit that point where you feel like you have to stop, but that's really when the exercise is beginning.

And I'll tell you my first idea list in 2002, my very first idea list was how to beat your friends and family at every game in the universe.

So, because it was right before Thanksgiving. I figured people would go home and play their friends Scrabble or checkers or backgammon. So Scrabble, if you just know the two letter words, you're going to beat all your friends.

Marcus Bell

Oftentimes people say that they may be struggling with money or time. And I like to say there are no such things as money problems. You may have a creativity problem, because if you are creative, you can get the thing that you want. And it may not be money that has that happen.

You may be able to find creative ways to build partnerships, to build businesses, to whatever it is. Creative ways to finance the house, your dream house, without money. Buy a business without money. So, creativity as it relates to business, and all all domains of life. Not just aimless creativity, but aimful creativity.

When you have an aim that you are in pursuit of, a question that you're looking to answer, then all of a sudden, what opens up is the possibility of using creativity, to reach that aim, to have those questions answered.

Creativity in collaboration. There's me being creative, Marcus being creative, but then there's me tapping into the collective creativity of others, and that creates a force multiplier of possibility.

If I'm just playing the piano, sure, I can do percussive things, but when I add a drummer, it creates a whole other level of opportunity. When I bring in a bass player and I bring in some singers and so forth, Then all of a sudden you have this collective creativity that begins to emerge and the same thing happens in business.

You have a creative director, you have a CEO, a CTO, and then you start bringing in these creatives that are domain experts, and now all kinds of things are possible.

I was looking at how many ways can you creatively create genres in music, or create something new, a new sound, and I arrived at, oh, it's the fusion of different genres that create new things.

And I started working with people that were in the Indian music domain. Bhangra music and chromatic music. An artist I was working with at the time, her name was Shakti. And she introduced me to ragas and a bunch of other Indian music.

And I saw how me coming from jazz as a foundation, which gives me access to all kinds of creativity, right? Then as a producer, I said, okay, well, how can I take these ethnic genres and combine them with hip hop? Combine them with, with pop. And so we created some Bhangra music that became a hit in India.

One day I got a call from that artist and she said, Marcus, Beyoncé is using our song. And so they had used a sample from that creative venture. They sent me this video of Beyoncé dancing to the bhangra part of, of that song.

Chris Voss

I decided to become a police officer when I saw this movie called 'The Super Cops' when I was about 16 years old. And it was about these two maverick cops in Brooklyn at Bed Stuy. And they just thought up these wild ideas to catch the bad guys.

And that was the thing that I noticed. Like these guys are having a ball, but they're just immensely creative and the shit that they are thinking up. And it just really appealed to me, how creative they were in their approach. And when I got into the FBI, the guy who was in charge of the academy, he used to come by and say hello to every class and say in one word, tell us what you think you bring to the FBI?

And I can remember different people that were kind of shot in the ass with themselves. They'd be like, 'experience,' you know, 'judgment'. And what came to me, I said, 'creativity'. I always liked unusual, different, creative stuff. Approaches to the job that other people didn't think of.

My first year as a cop in Kansas City, they're tagging the rookie cops to go out and work device details to solicit the prostitutes. And they're tagging the rookies because chances are none of the hookers had seen any of them.

So, I come rolling in, and I still got this big velvet cowboy hat from my younger days, when I was, you know, as a kid, I was showing horses. And I had on a nice pair of suit pants, and I had a nice shirt, and I had a vest.

I used to have a nice three-piece suit. I had the vest from it. And I had my shirt unbuttoned, down about halfway, and I had this cowboy hat on. And they looked at me like I was in a Ronald McDonald outfit. They were just like, Jesus Christ, look at this fucking guy. You know, everybody else just came in in normal plain clothes. And I, you know, I got this cowboy get up.

And, I wanted to be creative to my approach. I mean, I like new, creative shit. And I did that when I was a cop. And, uh, and when I worked at Vice Detail.

And then, in my first office in Pittsburgh, we were working surveillance. And they showed us this device, a single lens reflex camera, you know, the old style where

we just took pictures and developed them. But they figured out a way to attach a video camera into the viewfinder so that you could video and take still photos with the same get up.

And that looked cool to me. And so then we had this mob joint outside Pittsburgh where these guys always went to have breakfast. And they rented an office space in a commercial building across the way for me to set up with my camera and take pictures.

Nobody else wanted to do that shit, but I wanted to do something different. I wanted to do something a little more creative than anybody else was doing. So they came up with this whole undercover story for me, in case somebody asked me what I was doing in his office, but I'm just up there, you know, taking what I saw to be a very creative way of taking photos.

And it turned out I took a couple of photos of a guy that the bad guys ended up whacking some months later. I took the last known photos of this guy alive just because I wanted to do something different, something creative in the approach to just sitting around watching people following him around.

I wanted to do creative and unusual things, and I always wanted to do it in everything that I brought to everything I did in law enforcement still to this day, and I like creative and unusual stuff.

It was always really important when we were teaching cops hostage negotiation because they're just a very demanding group. If your stuff isn't plain English and doesn't make sense and isn't usable, I mean, they're going to revolt on you. I mean, they're a tough audience. I would say it's like playing the Apollo. Like, if you ain't doing a good job in the Apollo, you're going to get booed off the stage.

There was another hostage negotiator, NYPD, one of their main guys, he got out and he wanted to teach hostage negotiation for business, but he didn't have any practical application at all. It was all just NYPD stories, here's what I did and you figure out how to apply it in business. And that book went nowhere.

So, when I started teaching business negotiation in business schools. I specifically came up with a system where we had the students write papers in a very structured way that showed how they use the skills in real negotiations.

And that was very intentional when we finally pulled together the book because I wanted hostage negotiation and then actual regular guy business and personal examples to back up the hostage negotiation principles.

Fernando Garibay

It's a skill you can learn. It's much like reading. It's like understanding a new language. It's something you can practice doing. It's a framework as well, right?

And the only way you do this is by practicing this skill of putting pen to paper, looking at people in your life, looking at people in your past. Reconciling that with your current life and your knowledge set at this very moment. Maybe paralleling that experience with what's going on in society. You see, this is all a skill.

There's this, this songwriter, a pop star from the 80s. His name is Robert Smith. His band was The Cure. And so, if you know The Cure, he's the father of gothic, dark, new wave music from the 80s.

And, lo and behold, he married and had a beautiful family and actually became very happy with his life. So the fear he had was that I am too happy. I'm no longer going to be able to write this depressing music that connects you to the death of your soul, but then he realized that luckily life was abundant of pain for him.

He knew he had plenty to pull from, so he quickly got over that, that perception. Life is abundant. with trauma, and there's plenty to pull from, so there's never a shortage.

So what you have to do, very much like a method actor, what I've seen, and it's not just myself, it's all the great artists I've worked with, and read about, is knowing how to, very much like when the light goes on, when the microphone goes on,

when you're on stage, it's game time, you prime yourself through practice, back to the skill of creativity.

You learn to associate the microphone with game time of singing, right? It's performance time. And sometimes, most people have it subconsciously. I would say to the enlightened artists and individuals, it comes intentionally. It comes with practice.

It is a practice, and it's a skill. Not to say that it's not spiritual. That's, that's up to the individual. What I'm saying is that it's something that can be channeled through discipline, and it can be channeled through, priming the brain to perform given the circumstances and the context.

Jim Kwik

I believe the future belongs to the creatives. Everything's happening in the mind, right? It's a cognitive process that involves generating new ideas, new solutions, new approaches to things. So, creativity for me was taking all this information that I was learning and making connections where maybe other people might not have seen those connections.

People say creativity is thinking outside the box, but really it was my approach to solving my own problem. Because what, the opposite of creativity is what's in front of you, which was school. And that obviously wasn't working well for me.

I was very disenchanted. I thought it was interesting that school, which was the path everyone was on, they teach you what to learn, but they didn't show you how to learn. It wasn't working, so I had to create innovative approaches to learning, to studying, to reading, memorizing things.

In 2016, I interviewed Quincy Jones who embodies creativity. And that was interesting, because he spoke about creativity, being a top music producer and television, movies, all of that.

And I remember the key to his creativity was changing your perspective. He speaks 23 languages, right? And I think music is a part of that, it enhances language learning, topical to creativity. He traveled the world and he said that when he went to a new place, experienced their food, their culture, their language, their music, it informed and broadened his mind.

And I teased out of him this phrase, that 'you have to go to know'. And by traveling to these unique places, it gave him a different kind of perspective which fueled his own creativity.

And I asked him also about the problems he has faced in his careers. And he was like, I don't have any problems. And I'm like, what, you're like 80 something years old, you must have problems. He said I don't have any problems. I have puzzles. And it's interesting how just changing the word from problems to puzzles makes me more creative because I know puzzles are fun.

I think a lot of my genesis started with pain. Pain of feeling stuck, feeling limited. And the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, expecting a different result. Clearly what I was doing for 15 years wasn't working. And so I was open to new ideas. And that was my curiosity.

There's a great book called 'The Structure of Scientific Revolution' that says all innovation is the expression of creativity. That all innovation comes from somebody outside, usually, of an industry. You take fashion, automotive, whatever.

It takes an Elon Musk to look outside the industry thinking creatively, like with today's technology. Why aren't we doing it this way? Because if you're inside the industry, you're also taught, the same education, the same bias, cognitive biases.

And so, you don't ask these questions, but if you're outside, you ask these kind of the 'elusive obvious'. It's kind of like, well, meat's been around a long time, bread's been around for thousands of years, but the sandwich has only been around for a limited time, right?

Like toilets have been around since, I don't know, the early 1800s. Toilet paper was created decades later, what do people do? I don't even want to know what people did back then. of like use of obvious because takes a creator to ask a new question.

And I think just like curiosity is driven by new questions. And, you know, as because I what I was in what I was doing in a traditional education wasn't working for me. I had to look elsewhere and create from there. And now I create. You know, I write, and I make podcasts and videos.

Kenny Aronoff

Innovation and creativity are the ways I solve most all my problems. And being in a band, which is a team of guys, we inevitably all have to solve problems with creative ideas.

In our business, if you're in that game of getting songs on the radio to be hits then we have to come up with parts that will be creative, that will be applicable to getting the song on the radio, to then hopefully be a number one hit single.

I'll give you an example. ' Jack and Diane' was a song that went to number one, and it still plays on the radio 40 years later.

Well, I walk into a studio one day, and this is the most difficult record I've ever made in my life, and somebody's got this metal box it's this thing called the Linn 1 Drum Machine.

Drum machines replace drummers. That's not good. But this was new technology. So, I call this, 'Adapt or Die!'. Literally, adapt or die. You have to adapt and adjust to technology or anything in your business. Hell, when you're playing football and you're on a field or a soccer or any sports, you have to adapt and adjust immediately to stay relevant and win the game.

So, I grab the machine, I program it, I give it back to them. I'm thinking, Man, am I in the horse and buggy business and the car just showed up? And then I'm asked to

come in and put a drum thing on it after the drum machine, after the second chorus. Long and short of it, it did make it on the record. Fine! I'm like, touchdown!

The song tests very well and the record label decides they're gonna release this as the second single. It went to number one.

I created my drum parts on the spot with the fear that I was gonna be fired. I had to come up with that scared shitless. I had nine people in the control room just burning down on me. And John Mellencamp was not an easy guy to work with. Basically, I knew that if I didn't solve the problem with this creative idea, that they would bring somebody else in.

And so my initial thing, the drum machine's going, you know, doo, doo, doo, ba, ga, in the chorus. Oh yeah, life goes on. Na, na, na, na, na, na, na. And then my entrance was boom, blam. And I stopped. I just did boom blam, like, big entrance, and I looked in the control room to get validation.

So I had nine guys, that's 18 thumbs up. You know what the thought that went into my head at that moment was? I still got my job!

And, I started going up the drums, cause everybody goes down the toms, and I hit a dead end, and I was summoned into the control room and my adrenaline, my cortisol levels, dopamine were flying, I thought I was going to get fired. I got half the people telling me what to play, the other half telling me what not to play.

And suddenly at that moment I realized, you're on your own dude. So, I walked to the drum set. I'm 40 feet from the drum set. I'm going, what are you going to play, Kenny? 30 feet? I don't know. I'm like 20 feet. Dude, this is your career. What are you going to play at 10 feet? I don't know. I get to the drum set. I look at them. I look at the drums. I look at them and then went, a light went off in my head.

I don't know where it came from, but I went, instead of coming up with something different, you've got to be creative with something you already used. So, what I basically did was displace the beat. It's like if you had a room full of furniture, you

don't like the way it looks. You got two choices. Get rid of it, get new furniture, or rearrange it and make it look cool.

That's what I did. The machine's going Do do do do do Da do do do do I go BOOM BLAM Do do do Bada do do Bada do do do do do Bada do do boom Bada boom Sssssssh Gaa Do Baga doom Ssssssha Ga Do Baga doom Sssssh So, so let it rock Boom. So let it roll. Boom. Let the Bible bell come. Save my soul. And then, just drums.

And everybody's up dancing. And when I used to play that in a, you know, 20, 000 people in an arena, everybody air drums to my beat.

And then I saved the day, and the rest is history.

Michael Breus

I'm an inherently creative person. A lot of people don't know this, but I went to college for creative writing, not psychology. I was in the English department and I wrote poetry in high school, and I was in a literary magazine, and so I used that to get into, a liberal arts education.

What was really interesting was when I was able to channel my creativity within the business universe, that's when things really started to click well for me, because that's when I started to see things that other people didn't see.

A great example of this; I was on the phone call today with the group who had called me up and said, Hey, Michael, we want you to come and give a lecture for us. Okay, great. You know, I'm happy to do it. What's your price? Blah, blah, blah.

And it turns out that the company that's bringing me in, they do all of the back end work for gyms, they do the credit card processing and point of sale. They have all this kind of stuff. They have 1,200 gyms that are in this network.

And so I'm going to give a lecture in front of all these gym owners. Some people own one, some people own 50. And so we're sitting there talking and I said in the

lecture, do you want me to talk more about how exercise affects sleep and sleep affects exercise? Or do you want more general sleep?

And by the end of the conversation, what I turned to them and said was you're in a unique position because you've got 1200 gyms in front of you and you can distribute content in many different ways. I said, how long does it take somebody to stop paying for your gym membership?

And they said about three months is how far we usually get. And I said, well, if you could teach them something other than fitness that was valuable to them, do you think that they would come back? And they were like, absolutely.

And so I was like, what we should do is combine forces and we should make a sleep manual that you could then distribute out to all of your groups so that they can then educate people, and it becomes a customer retention tool for you guys because you're the only group that's ever done something like that in developing it for them.

So like that's how I use my creativity within a business setting and it's been very valuable to find new, find new avenues of products of services or even ideas because I think creativity doesn't just have to be, you know, a song or a poem or a product.

When I trained to become a sleep doctor, I did it in a very different way than almost any other sleep doctor. Because as you know, I'm not an MD, I'm a PhD and it's a medical board. There was a list of 14 textbooks that you had to read in order to take this board.

And there was only one year left where non MDs were allowed to take a medical board without having gone to medical school. And I had qualified. And so, I went to do this and, and the reading list was 14 textbooks. What I did was I rented a carrel desk in the library and I bought all the 14 books, right? And I made flashcards. And I would read a paragraph, and I would say, What would be a board question from this? And I would have the answer on the back. By the time I was done I had 6,000 flashcards.

It would take me almost seven hours to go through them but like, I'm studying for a medical board without going to medical school. Right? So I'm trying to get a lot of information in my head in way, shapes and forms where I can regurgitate. Remember, be able to take the exam, test well, all of those things.

Most people don't study for the board exam like that. Right? They're doctors, number one. So, easily, 50 percent of the information, they already fucking know. And then number two, they have all the vernacular, they have all the vocabulary. So, I was kind of forced to basically create an encyclopedia of sleep knowledge in my head.

I'm like house for sleep for people sometimes. You know what I mean? Because I've just seen so much and I've studied so much and when you're taking a board exam, you always think they're going to ask the weirdest fucking questions, you know, like what insomnia can you die from? Like I happen to know what fatal familial insomnia is and I happen to know what part of the brain, it's that shit that's like stuck in here.

Nolan Bushnell

I think the definition of creativity is 'synthesize', you push things together that were previously disconnected. And I think there's actually another kind of happy accident there. I was in a fraternity and getting an engineering degree took a lot of homework, and I wanted to drink beer with the guys, so I transferred into business. Because all the business guys were the guys that I was drinking beer with and having a good time. And I learned accounting. I really learned the essence of how businesses were put together. Totally accidental. Because I wanted to drink beer with my buddies.

If you really look today at the video game business, it's more driven by good economic models than it is by good games. Which is kind of strange. And so, I think that creativity is about solving problems in new ways.

Atari actually started with \$500 of paid in capital. This was before venture capital, and what have you. So usually you need an investor. And what I figured out is that

I could operate the company in positive cashflow by figuring out a way to build these games; they were coin op games at the time, and we could build them in a week, a week and a half, and I'd get the parts on 30 to 90 day credit.

And so, as long as we were selling them for cash, and then later on I was able to get receivable financing. I was able to grow the company without venture capital.

CHAPTER 3

RESILIENCE

Nolan Bushnell

I designed in a part that failed. And so, we had a factory full of machines that we couldn't sell. I call it our summer of discontent. And, literally we didn't have enough cash for payroll. Let alone parts to get the factory going again.

We actually had sheriffs coming on the door, because we got sued for nonpayment. We didn't defend because we owed the money. And the sheriffs had come to attach the assets. Well, all they really wanted was the bank account.

So what we did is we opened up seven bank accounts. So we would send out the checks. And then move bank accounts so that whatever bank account was attached, there was no money in it.

And then I did a reorganization, and I went to several of our vendors and I said, if you give us a little bit of extra credit, we'll make you our preferred vendor.

And with AMD, I did a deal with Jerry Sanders and they became our prime supplier, because after we came out we were one of the biggest users of semiconductors. It was really good for him. It was good for us. And I was able to save the company when most people thought that we were out of business.

I think that kids who have never faced adversity and difficulties are less resilient. You know, I think steel sharpens steel and that when you have some hard knocks and get through it, it gives you the armament that you need to go through the next one because life is always going to throw you some curveballs and deal you some shit sometimes. You just kind of have to wade through it.

I would give my kids a lot of tasks. You know, things that they didn't know how to do or didn't want to do. And I can remember when they were sometime around eight or nine, the kids would come and say, I want to go to the movie, can I have some money? And I said, yeah, but you, you know, what are you going to do for it?

And they would say, well, what about allowance? I said, I don't believe in allowance, but I'll pay you for a job.

And so I'd always have something around the house that needed to be done. And they'd go and do it, and so it was always a quid pro quo. There is a really good self worth thing that happens with kids that earn, rather than be given.

I think welfare is demoralizing, and allowance is demoralizing. I mean, little kids, six, seven, eight, you know, no, no harm, no foul, but, in the older years, teach them how to work. They'd say, well, you've got a lot of money. I said, yeah, but what's that got to do with you?

My management style is all about focusing on outcomes, not process. And so many companies are process driven when in fact it should be outcome driven. It's easier for them to focus on process because when you focus on outcomes, the outcome has to be achievable and realistic.

And that's something you're kind of predicting the future a little bit, because if the goal is too hard, , the employees feel screwed, and if it's too easy, it's not challenging.

One of the things that I did for Silicon Valley was this focus on outcomes. I told employees, they'd ask, What's the vacation schedule? I would say, you can take as much vacation as you want. What hours do I work? I would say, you can work as many hours as you want. What's your dress code? We don't have a dress code. You can come in your bathing suit if you want to.

And what led to that is when I graduated from college, an associate engineer, we wore a white shirt and tie to work every day. And I changed that at Atari. And Jobs took it to Apple and pretty soon everybody used it.

And it was also this idea of work hard, play hard. We found that having a beer bust on the back dock with a stack of pizzas and a couple of kegs was a better reward for hitting quota than, than bonuses. Cheaper.

Michael Breus

The person who taught me resilience was my father. My father has had three wives. He's been bankrupt, , multiple times. He's lost tens of millions of dollars. He's had real Picassos hanging in his house. And then we've had repo guys show up and take the cars. I've literally seen it all.

At a fairly young age, my mom was like, I'm done with this. And so she took off and unfortunately she wasn't particularly interested in me. So, it was just me and my dad and I'm an only child. He went bankrupt and my mom said, you can't pay the bills anymore. I'm out. And then it was just me and him.

There were times in my life when my dad didn't eat. I ate the meal that we could afford, and then he didn't have any food that night. He was such a ladies man that he would have seven or eight girls that he was dating, and we would conveniently drop off right at dinner time, and the women would all feed me, so it was perfect .

One of the things I've noticed with a lot of very successful people, everybody tells them that their idea is not going to work. Every single fucking person tells them this and they have the fortitude and the resilience when they need to make decisions and back off they can, but they really do seem to go the distance and be able to figure that out. I think that's a little bit of a different kind of resilience, but I think that's an important resilience as well.

I'll tell you a real personal story. It was well before COVID. It was early in my career. And I was broke. I mean, broke, broke, like, I wasn't doing well, I had to borrow money from family members, like, things weren't going well. And I was trying to be the sleep doctor.

I called Mehmet Oz. I have his personal number, and I called him on the phone. And I said, I really need to talk to you, I am not doing well. And he said, give me 30 minutes, call me back. We were out to dinner with some friends, so I just left and went into the car.

I talked to him for two hours. I was crying. I was, I was in a terrible spot because I just was like, I don't know if I'm the right guy to do this. Like, you've done this, dude. Like, you're, you're on TV every day. Like, you figured this out. You've created this brand. You've done really well. You know, I don't know if I'm, if I'm that guy. And for two hours, he, he explained to me why I was that guy.

And he told me about resilience and he told me about all the people that told him no, and all the things that he had done. And it was really powerful. Because it was exactly in the arena that I was trying to get to and he was kind of giving me the checkbox of, You're okay, dude, you just need to keep going.

And that was really one of his big things was, just keep going. He's like, you're good. You got good information. You never say anything that's not true. You always back it up with science. you're gonna be okay, but you've gotta keep going.

His advice was don't get off the horse. You got to stay the course. You got to keep doing this. It's the right move.

When you have people in your life that you look up to or have given you great advice, you know, you think of them as like a mentor. But I don't really think of him as a mentor. I think of him as a benefactor, right? He put his name on the line, called somebody up, and said, You're gonna hire my friend, you're gonna hire him for a six figure salary, and he's gonna be great, and you're gonna love him.

A lot of people have mentors, but I don't think a lot of people have what I call a benefactor. I think people have them, maybe they don't always realize them, sometimes it's their parents, I guess, but I think there's people in our lives who for no other reason for their own, but they just want to see you succeed and they care about you. That's cool. That's, that's what he showed me.

Jim Kwik

My two biggest challenges are learning and public speaking, and what do I do for a living? I probably speak every single day on this thing called learning. But I

believe resilience is when your struggles become your strengths. And that's something I got from my parents.

My parents immigrated to the States, my dad was 13, didn't speak the language. He lost both his parents. I lived in the back of a laundromat that my mom worked at.

My parents aren't the wealthiest or the smartest or the healthiest. They've never had a green juice or done yoga or meditation, but they're just really good, resilient people because of what they had to go through. And I think they passed that on to their children.

I'm the oldest of three siblings, and it's very disheartening when you work harder than everyone else in school. Two, three times harder as anyone, and still in the bottom of your class. And, I think a big part of what makes someone resilient is having a clear purpose. My, purpose is very clear, was to make my parents proud, was to help them to be able to do things that they couldn't afford to do, or even if they could afford to do, they would never do for themselves.

I was mowing lawns at nine years old and had a paper route, fudged, the paperwork to do it four years before I was legally able to be able to do it just because, I'm not afraid of hard work, you know, because that was, A value that my, my family held really dear, because nothing was really given to us.

Resilience is the ability to persevere through challenges through adversity and come out better for it. We hear a lot about post-traumatic stress from people going through difficult times, but we don't hear about the resilient ones that can't come through it. And they experience something called post-traumatic growth.

This is where you come out on the other side, and maybe you had an experience you wouldn't wish upon anybody else. An adversity you wouldn't wish on your biggest enemy. But they honestly say they wouldn't change what they went through. Because going through that, having resilience and going through that challenge they found something, they found a mission, they found a purpose, they found a trait, uh, they got clarity on who they are.

I'm proud to say that the things I was most embarrassed about growing up, without a lot of means or education or immigrant parents or, you know, those are the things I'm definitely most proud of today.

Going back to the superhero mythos, my origin story, anybody who's achieved anything of significance had to be resilient and do the hard things. And I think I have a firm belief even today when life is a whole lot easier than it was growing up, that you still need to challenge yourself, you know, like resilience is a muscle that grows when tested and if you do the easy things in life and you procrastinate, put things off binge watch and things get hard.

But if you do the hard things in life, life gets a whole lot easier.

Chris Voss

The Schilling case was a huge success in so many ways. And then a competing faction of the bad guys turned around and grabbed a whole bunch of hostages. They raided a dive resort, and they got three Americans. Guillermo Sombrero, Gloria Burnham and her husband, Marin Burnham. And, it was a train wreck from beginning to end. The Philippine government was fucking around with us. Like every bad fucking thing that you can imagine of governments not cooperating.

The previous negotiator that I coached in the Schilling case, they didn't make him available. They gave us another Philippine National Police Colonel who had a drinking problem, number one. Number two, he was told, to record every call he ever took from the bad guys. He didn't record them all. He was always taking calls away from us. The previous negotiator would never take a call unless we were around. We would supervise him. We would coach him. He didn't have a drinking problem. He was a superstar.

So they turn around and they give us this guy who's got a drinking problem and we can't get a hold of him sometimes. And when we get a hold of him, he says, yeah, I just spoke to the bad guys. And we knew from the sequence that he had spoken to the bad guys. He didn't remember everything that was said because he had a

drinking problem. He called all his Philippine commanders and briefed them fully on what was going on before he told us.

And then Guillermo Cerbero was murdered by the bad guys about three weeks in. We're on our way to Philippine National Police Headquarters one morning. We're getting ready to get set up. And the gates are locked. There's nobody at the gate. Philippine National Police Headquarters is closed.

We're like The fuck? And we start banging on the gate, and somebody finally comes and they go, yeah, it's a national holiday, we're closed. It's a national fucking holiday! Why didn't anybody tell us? Like, you guys knew this was a national holiday, nobody said anything .

Then, as we're trying to get into this fucking place, the terrorists' level of threat is very specific. And they say, we're going to release one of the Americans as a gift to the Philippine government on the national holiday. And we're going to release him without his head.

And then, and as soon as they make the threat, we find out that the bad guys got a habit of killing hostages on national holidays. Nobody's told us any of this shit. And we're going back and forth and we're trying to get the game and we think we finally get it diffused at the end of the day, and then they go ahead and kill Guillermo the very next day. For whatever reason, they're pissed off.

If they're holding the lottery to decide who to kill, they're going to kill the most annoying hostage. And Guillermo had been complaining and doing all kinds of stuff. It's, phenomenal how many hostages have gotten themselves killed by bringing it on themselves.

And then about 10 months, 11 months after that, a ransom payment is made on behalf of the family. And the bad guys steal it. And then it gets even worse and there's a botch rescue attempt 13 months into the case and a group of Philippine scout rangers stumble over the camp that the remaining three Americans are in.

In the meantime, 10 or 12 Filipinos have been beheaded and killed through the course of 13 months. And they recognize that an Abu Sayyaf encampment, they don't realize hostages are there, so they open fire.

And the three remaining hostages, Mark Burnham was killed by friendly fire, Debra Yap is killed by friendly fire, and Gracia Burnham is wounded and she survives. And that is the end of that train wreck. And dead bodies all along the way.

And I had been back in the U S for about a month since the ransom had been stolen by the bad guys. And I watched it slowly deteriorate and knew the light coming down at the end of the tunnel was probably a train. And I can remember the moment when I got called. It was 5 in the morning. Hostage negotiator in the Philippines said I got bad news. Martin Burnham is dead.

I am the first person in the United States to be alerted to this. And now I got to make repeat calls to the rest of the day, FBI headquarters, Strategic Information Operations Command. I got to alert the federal government as to what's going on.

It was the worst professional moment of my career. Nobody got killed on my watch. Least of which, somebody that I told the FBI director personally, three months earlier, there was a 70 percent chance he was coming out that weekend. And when they didn't come out that weekend, that was when it started to go bad.

And that's when I said to myself, this ain't never happening again. We did everything we could do within the FBI and it wasn't enough. And so I either quit, or I get better. And that was when I approached Harvard to go through their negotiation training.

And my rule from that point forward, from everybody that I recruited into the overseas programs, was that I wanted people who'd been in sieges where somebody'd gotten killed.

And every negotiator that is in a siege where somebody gets killed, they do one of two things. Most of them say, fuck this. I didn't work this shit for people to get

killed. I want to help people. I don't like it when somebody dies. A smaller percentage, about a third of them, would say, I'm never gonna let this fucking happen again. I'm never gonna back down from an ambassador. I'm never gonna back down from an SAC. When I go to the National Security Council, I'm not backing down. I don't give a shit what anybody says. I'm not backing down.

And I look for the people that can pick themselves up after having getting crushed, saying, I ain't never letting this happen again. I gotta figure out how this is making me better. For me, not to me.

Kenny Aronoff

Without resilience, you won't survive. I have a thing called R.P.S. The repetition, R, is the preparation, P. The repetition of any skill, grit, resilience, is the preparation P for success, S.

So, if you're not happy the way you're doing things, then just work twice as hard. If you're only practicing, let's say, on your instrument two hours a day, practice four hours a day. And I mean every day. And if that's not enough, figure it out. But the resilience is, you have to take action. You have to. There's no shortcuts. Nobody's born successful. Success doesn't land in your lap.

And it's like a math equation. Zero equals zero. You do nothing, you get nothing. Zero equals zero. Because when you love what you do, And you have nothing on the table. Nothing on the plate. You will continue to persevere and be resilient.

If something happens on stage during a live performance that I don't like, we'll just call it that, you have to fucking push that aside. You have to be resilient.

What about a running back? One of the greatest, most powerful athletes out there. Do they get touchdowns every time they get the ball? No. Sometimes they get a touchdown, sometimes five yards, two yards, minus two, fumble. Sometimes they break their leg before the season.

Their resilience, driven by purpose and passion, keeps them looking forward to the next season. And then, in many cases, they become one of the greatest. They have the greatest season ever. What is your North Star? I love football. I do get touchdowns. So, I have to sit out for a year and repair my leg. I'm gonna make that leg and my knee bigger and stronger than it's ever been so that I can do what I love doing.

Resilience. No shortcuts.

I didn't know what my trajectory was going to be. My parents didn't. My friends didn't know when I hit a drum at age 10. Who would have thought? Nobody could say, Oh, obviously that guy's going to be successful.

I turned down the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra. I worked with Leonard Bernstein, the guy that's in that movie, Maestro. I worked with him at Tanglewood, where he taught, which is in the movie. Talk about resilience. I auditioned for that student orchestra one year, failed. Came back a second year, failed. Came back a third year, failed. Came back a fourth year and got in.

That's resilience. Driven by passion. I gotta have it. Gotta have it. I gotta have it. And so, I eventually get into the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra, and then turned it down because I'm following my purpose, which is, I want to rock, I still want to play in the Beatles.

I had no money, I had certainty, a paycheck, a job, turned that down for uncertainty. No, nothing. I moved back to my parents' house, and I'm practicing eight hours a day, living in the bedroom I grew up in. With no band, nothing on the horizon, but that was driven by purpose, and that's resilience. Four years it took me to get into the Mellencamp band, and then I got fired after two days.

And when he told me to go home, I said, no, I'm not going anywhere. He said, what don't you understand about the words, you're fucking fired. And I said, no I'm not. I'm not going anywhere. And that's what I did. And I learned. That's resilience.

Fernando Garibay

I met with one of the most prolific civil rights activists for the black, brown community. And I was inspired by his words. We were having this philosophical conversation about the importance of understanding your value to society and what you represent through the soft power aspect of your work. And he was like, 'Soft power? Like, I'm trying to save lives.'

It's like, I understand, I understand what you're doing, but there comes a threshold of scale. You see, if the world understands your work, the more you broadcast that work, the more power you have to change and save lives. It's a weird dichotomy, that the more you share your work, the more, the more you do.

Now, that seems to be painful for some people, because for this gentleman, it's humility. So it goes back to this key word, pain. Seems to be the theme of today for me. So, that being said, it is resilience to being very comfortable. If not, some, I would, I would actually go as far as extending this idea to say, expect pain where you see growth.

Learn to associate pain with growth of all sorts. Cognitive, physical, right? That's, that's my practice. I look at pain also as a beacon to know that I'm going in the right direction, because if it's not painful of any shape, way, or form, then I'm not growing.

So, to me, resilience is the framing of the amount of pain you're willing to look forward to in order to grow.

Marcus Bell

There's likely going to be some obstacles, whether it's people obstacles, whether it's marketplace obstacles, whether it's timing, there are many different factors. And so to be able to traverse whatever obstacles come, and you're just coming from, I'm resilient, you're coming from, I'm unstoppable, then it doesn't matter what pops up. Doesn't matter what comes at you.

First, acceptance. Not being in denial that there is a breakdown. That's the first thing. So, it's kind of like the stages of grief, if you will. It's getting to acceptance as quickly as possible, that, something's not working.

Then, it's taking complete responsibility for the thing not working. Which is oftentimes hard to do when we are in a blaming world and I had to learn to take the finger from there and put it here and then go deep in and see where I can take responsibility.

If I'm working with people that also are doing the same thing, then we're able to work together to move through whatever breakdown there may be.

So first is, is that acceptance, then it's doing some deep inner work. Okay, where am I responsible for this? Is first, is there something I can do? Right? Then, after getting on the other side of it, was there something I could have done? So that I can actually grow from whatever the breakdown was.

And then, create an algorithm. So, if I do this, then that. If there's a breakdown with a person in the business or something like that. So here are the options, either you get it together or this is not going to work out. If you get it together, then this, so it's, it's, so for me, it's, it's about creating the algorithms.

It's been hugely helpful because then it also creates a map of possibilities. And then when you start bringing in those other elements that we talked about before, curiosity, questions, and creativity, then I like to create the algorithm outside of me and say, okay, what is it that I'm looking at? And so then it comes out of my mind and and it becomes an entity outside of me that I can step away from and come back to.

Another thing. I want to add to that is I seek specialized knowledge, so if there's a breakdown that can't find a solution for, or even if I think I have a solution for, then I seek specialized knowledge. I ask people that are experts that have experienced the same type of thing. So this is where a community of people with specialized knowledge is crucial.

James Altucher

I was so depressed. I mean, when I saw I had \$143 in the bank. And by the way, my expenses were through the roof because I was spending all this money from before. I had bought a big penthouse in New York City. I, was living large. And so I was really depressed. I had a life insurance policy. I tried to AltaVista, 'How to kill yourself without hurting yourself' cause I didn't want to have pain and, turns out there's really no way and particularly for life insurance purposes. There's no way to do it without people knowing that you did it. So, I gave up on that.

But I was really depressed. I didn't know what to do. And it wasn't until later because this happened to me again. I started a company in 2006 sold it for millions. It happened to me like three times at least going from millions to broke, you know I always say there's three skills to money.

There's there's making it, keeping it and growing it And I was good at making it, but at that time I was not good at keeping it. And I certainly had no clue about growing it.

Only later I realized I looked back and was at the bottom. Again, I was thinking, why is this always happening to me? What happens when I'm going up and what happens when I'm going down?

And I realized when I'm going up, four things are happening every day. It's going to sound cliché, but every day I work on my physical health. I work on my emotional health because if you're sick, you can't start a business. It's harder to be creative. If you're arguing with your spouse, you're not going to go start a business. And then I focus on my creative health with the 10 ideas a day, because you have to be creative.

By the way, people say ideas are a dime a dozen, but execution is everything. They are totally wrong, because there are some entrepreneurs who have bad execution and some who have good execution. Execution and ideas are a subset of ideas. You have to have ideas on how to execute. So it still needs that muscle.

And then, finally I focus on my spiritual health, which again, it's not a religious thing. It's more like surrendering to what you can't change. So this allows you to not take up real estate in your brain. Like if someone insults me on Twitter, you know, the worst thing you could do is respond to that person. Why give that person any real estate in your brain?

So things you can't change, or, or if you're broke, you can't wish your money back. I can't change it. I'm broke. So I have to do new things and move forward instead of time traveling to the past and just thinking about those great times I had.

So those four things, physical, emotional, creative, spiritual. I have to make sure all of those are working. Like, it's like there are four different bodies that are connected to your heart, or your brain, or whatever, and it has to all be flowing, or you have essentially a kind of mental heart attack and other, but if it's all working success, just opportunity just opens up.

It's like the Honda effect. Once you get a Honda, you only see Hondas on the road. Once you open up and everything's flowing. You only see success and opportunity everywhere.

Resilience is hard because I understand why people wouldn't be resilient. If you're like really depressed and scared, it's just hard. I think people romanticize failure, like, oh, I failed, now I can really succeed. I'm going through my failure. So this, now I can succeed. But it's really hard.

And I think resilience is knowing you have to do something. It's not that you're motivated to do something. It's that you're not motivated. You're sick. You're tired. You're scared. You're upset. You're crying. You're suicidal. You're not motivated to get out of bed, but you get up and you still do it because you have to.

Like, I had two babies that first time. I had to work. I had to make money again. And I couldn't make the money in a full time job anymore. It was like a recession was going on. And I was broke, so I had to just figure it out. Like I had to do 10 ideas a day until I started coming up with some good ideas.

CHAPTER 4

INTEGRITY

Marcus Bell

What does it mean to have something out of integrity? Is the business operating in integrity? Am I operating in integrity? Am I doing what I said I was going to do? Am I showing up? Am I meeting the expectations based on the communication of agreements in place? Am I out of integrity with that? When all those things start to stack up, what begins to shape is a character.

There's the 'who I know myself to be', and then there's 'who others know me to be'. And those pieces of integrity start to shape how people know me to be, and one of the things I learned is the more busy that I become, then the easier it is to start to fall out of integrity with things that I commit myself to.

As a result, if I see that I'm headed that way, I start to say no a lot more frequently. I start to pull back, what can I pull back on so that I can maintain my integrity, which also helps maintain my identity with people.

And if you look at character as an identity, then, are you being identified as someone who does what they say they're going to do? Who's reliable, who you can count on, that can show up?

Is there a history of that? And so the character, in my view, gets built over time with small integrity, activity actions. And at any moment, you could lose integrity. At any moment, that can affect how people view you from the lens of character. Is this somebody that's reliable or not?

Integrity leads to the building of character in the minds of others. When things are out of integrity and you, come into awareness, you can put things back into integrity. You can make a new commitment and honor that commitment and start to rebuild your integrity actions and then that starts to shape your character which starts to shape how you're perceived by others.

Jim Kwik

For me, when I think about integrity, I think about words of honesty, having strong morals, about doing the right things for the right reasons, even when it's not easy or even when no one's, no one's watching. For me it's adhering to some kind of code.

The superheroes that I admire - Batman and Superman, have a have a code Spiderman has a code, a moral code some kind of compass that points north, that they try to do the right things for the right reasons even when it's hard, and I think in deep down we respect it when we see it in other people.

Years ago, I got to introduce Stan Lee to Richard Branson. They both mentioned each other in the same week and I arranged a dinner when they were in town. I pick up Stan and we're in the car and I was so nervous because I wanted to ask him this question, it's hard to get the nerve but I was like, Stan, you created all my favorite superheroes, I read because I taught myself how to read by reading your comic books. I was like, who's your favorite superhero?

And Stan says Jim, it's Iron Man. And he says, Jim, who's your favorite superhero? And I didn't know, because he, there's so many of my favorite superheroes, but he had a Spider Man tie on, and I said Spider Man. And without a pause in his iconic voice, he goes, With great power comes great responsibility!

And maybe because I had a series of brain injuries as a kid, I often, I don't tell people this a lot, but I flip things when I read them, or sometimes when I hear them, so that's why sometimes I pause because I have to kind of switch them back. But I heard something different. I was like, Sam, you're right. With great power comes great responsibility.

And the opposite is also true. With great responsibility comes great power. When we take responsibility for something, and we're in an integrity and we're coming from a place of character, then I think we have great power to make things better.

And so, I feel like the superheroes, they, they embody the person we could be, but they also have their flaws. You know, Iron Man had his drinking issues, and a lot of superheroes were orphans, and they had their challenges.

Spider Man was an orphan and Wonder Woman's an orphan. Batman was an orphan. Superman was an orphan. Iron Man was orphaned. You know, they had great challenges. So they weren't perfect. But they showed up for themselves. And they showed up most important for other people.

Kenny Aronoff

I've always had a sense of integrity. And that is to be honorable. To be cool, to do the right thing, to be dependable, show up on time, work harder than anybody, be the first guy there, the last guy there.

How do you want people to perceive you around the world? And I believe that that's a very important thing because, that's your brand. Your brand is not just the notes you play.

I get called to do a CBS special called 'The Beatles, The Night That Changed America'. And I'm playing with Paul McCartney, and Ringo Starr, the two remaining Beatles, plus Stevie Wonder, Joe Walsh, Dave Grohl from Foo Fighters, Jeff Lynne from ELO Alicia Keys, John Legend, , Keith Urban John Mayer, Stevie Wonder, Brad Paisley.

And I walk on stage for the first day of the, the night of the event, and I hear somebody go, God, thank God he's here. And I'm like, who, who, who? The guy says you. That was the producer of the show. So, part of that is he knows I'm gonna take care of business. I have to count everything off. , I have to solve problems, they're doing a 14 camera shoot, if something goes wrong, they know, okay, Kenny, and shit did go wrong, the teleprompter didn't work, I look at Joe Walsh, I'm waiting for his cue, I've got the click, the metronome going, I've got my sticks up, I know who has to tune the guitars, somebody's supposed to flash me on the side of the stage, the lady forgot to do it, I know that I have to count the song up, those sort of things.

But some of it is integrity, because people are like, we want that guy in the room. We want that guy on the stage. He's not an idiot. He gets along. He's a team player,

and he has value. So that, with your talent coupled together and hard work, self-discipline and perseverance is how they're all bundled together.

Integrity is how you handle your business. How you handle your relationships. How you get along. It gets into team player and leadership.

Do you want that guy? He plays great. And he's a nice guy. And he's fun. And he motivates everybody. Let's get that guy.

Fernando Garibay

My integrity is built on my definition of good and evil. Good and evil. I see as the propagating of our species as good and the destruction of our species as evil.

So, everything I do in life is to make sure that the individual human being on the planet has inspiration to keep propagating. The good version, the better angels of our species.

Chris Voss

You gotta tell the fucking truth. Even if you can't tell it well. They really drilled it into us when I was getting taught hostage negotiation. I think it was already there to begin with.

If you're in a surveillance team, it's what they call light cover. You got an undercover name, you got some undercover ID, but you're not operating day to day under a false name. If you gotta jump on a plane and you don't want the bad guys to know, you got fake ID to jump on a plane. Or check into a hotel, do whatever you gotta do.

But in most cases, if you're working light cover, especially if you're in a smaller office, you get borrowed by the drug squad, go do some drug buys, go do something like that. Going undercover sounds sexy, but what it is, it's lying.

I don't care if I was lying to drug dealers about who I was or what I was doing, like, I got a chance to try it, and it just, you know, it wasn't for me. Some people could do it, but, it wasn't for me, and a point of fact, going undercover typically destroys law enforcement officers. Going undercover is just like you kind of fucked up for the rest of your career for a variety of reasons.

And the one thing that I was always attracted to in hostage negotiation was, you know, they taught us early on not to lie. You got to figure out a way to tell the truth.

There was this case involving a guy named James Rinker, I think, in Portland, Oregon, where he took a bunch of people hostage in his Charles Schwab office. And he had this bizarre notion of suicide by cop. Instead of getting killed at the scene by the police, he wanted to commit a capital murder at the Schwab office, get arrested for capital murder, and be executed.

So, he goes into the Charles Schwab office. And shoots two people right off the bat with the intention of killing them and taking hostages. The siege is on. They bring the bodies out. Negotiators begin talking to him, and they, they find this whole thing out. Like as soon as he's sure he is gonna face the death penalty, he's prepared to come out. And they find out while they are still talking to him, that the people he shot are not gonna die. They're at the hospital and they're gonna save their lives.

So they still got this dude inside the Charles Schwab office. And they got a problem. Do we wait for it to come out in the media, and he hears it on the radio, on TV? We can't shut down the electricity, we can't cut them off from the media.

Do we pretend like we don't know? Do we try to talk them out? What the fuck do we do with this? Because if we don't get them out before he finds out these people are going to live, who knows what the fuck is going to happen. And they sit down, and they talk it through. And they decide to call him and tell him that they're not going to die.

They're going to beat him to the punch. They decide that their integrity is more important than to get caught with deception by commission or omission. Just pretend like they didn't know. And this guy ends up bonding so much with the

hostage negotiator for telling him the truth. That he surrenders with no further violence.

We get this drilled into us when I'm in negotiation training. And, you know, this, is leaning in my direction. I don't want to lie. I'm not a good liar. They're going to catch me in a lie. It's going to be all kinds of problems.

And the only time I ever really got tested, I was working a kidnapping in Saudi Arabia. A guy named Paul Johnson has been grabbed by Al Qaeda. It's 2004. And Al Qaeda in Saudi is the Almucren Brigade. They go out on the same day they kill an American at one location and grab Paul Johnson.

And we have not had the opportunity to go up against al Qaeda yet. And when we would go up against anybody in a kidnapping, we're coaching family, we're doing strategy behind the scenes, we're making statements in the media.

Nobody knows we're there, but we're very actively engaging in our methodology. And I don't know it, but as soon as they grab them, the CIA's got very good intel that they're going to kill them on a very certain day in a certain time. We go back and forth with the National Security Council Headquarters, and I kind of bowl my way into this thing.

And the ambassador in country, is Bush 43 appointee, guy named Oberweider, great guy, businessman. And his initial reaction is, I don't see how you guys can help, this is Al Qaeda, they're killing people. Do you want to fly out here and knock yourself out?

So I jump on a plane, and my team works on what we call a negotiation position paper that they've got ready for me to hand to the ambassador when I show up in Riyadh.

I walk into the embassy and I hand this guy this position paper. And he says, I wish you'd have gotten here a day sooner. And he went from why are you coming to thank God you're here. By that time they got a clear 72 hour deadline on Paul Johnson, and a time frame with that much specificity. Specificity is always an

indicator of an increased chance of for lack of a better term, execution implementation.

And we're pretty sure we're looking down the barrel of an execution right on deadline. And I want Paul Johnson's then wife, widow to be, to be interviewed in the Arab media, and we're gonna coach her up, and she's gonna talk about what's going on. And Paul Johnson's boss is watching out for this girl like nobody's business. He's doing everything he could possibly do to protect this young lady. And because it's out of his control and he really cares.

And we're pitching, putting her in the media and he looks at me and he says, If she does this interview, is this going to save his life? And I thought for a second and I looked at him and I said, that is probably not within reach. And he said, I didn't think so, I just want to see if you're going to lie to me. She'll do the interview.

I've missed out on a lot of life by not being nicer or not being more likeable. I don't know that I would do anything differently. I'd probably be nicer about a lot of stuff. But to me, character and integrity are almost just completely synonymous.

When I left the Bureau, I left because my then supervisor had a vastly different approach to how I should be doing my job than I did, and how everything that was being done should be done. And that's why I left New York, because I worked for a guy that didn't like me, and I went on to bigger and better things.

Nolan Bushnell

Integrity is kind of trustworthiness. When you say something, you can be counted on that that is the truth as you see it. You can be mistaken, but as long as your heart's in the right place, no harm, no foul. We used to enforce that a little bit, because on our managers meetings, we would give the Turkey Award.

The Turkey Award was awarded to somebody who had done the biggest screw up the previous quarter. What we wanted to do, is to have a culture that as long as you were making a decision based on the right data, but it was wrong, that's okay, because we wanted you to take those risks.

And so in some way we were not really celebrating failure, but we're saying it was okay. We're going to have a laugh about it.

I have been known to tell tall tales on occasion. But generally, it's with a goal to motivate people to do things that they perhaps would not do if the chips were totally laid out. You know, like, you don't really want to tell your company that we don't have enough money in the bank to make payroll this Friday. You know?

And so, is it okay to send them the checks knowing that the last ones to cash their check, it's going to bounce? I don't, you know, it's kind of the edge...

James Altucher

When I first started professionally writing, I was writing about stocks and the economy and finance. And then I started writing just my own personal stories and what happened to me and, and how I was depressed and how I got out of it.

And people at first said to me, whoa, whoa, whoa, how no one's ever going to trust you again to start a business because you're talking about all the times you failed. But then they would tell me like, don't tell anybody, but I had this problem and that problem and I went broke and then I had a drug problem, blah, blah, blah. They would tell me all these things. So, nobody was being honest.

And for a while I was in the hedge fund business. I realized suddenly almost every hedge fund manager I knew was doing something illegal. Like we were honest to a fault for many reasons. Sometimes it's a selfish reason. You don't, you want to sleep at night and you want to be happy with yourself. You know, so success is not just about money.

There are many people who have a lot of money, who can't sleep at night because they're worried about him being investigated or they did something wrong, or they screwed somebody and so integrity is more important than success even because that's how you live with yourself and ultimately die with your family and loved ones surrounding you and thinking about you. They don't, they don't surround you

because you have money. Well, maybe if they want a piece of the will, but you're already dying. So...

I have five kids, two biological kids, three step kids. And there's always a tendency to tell them what to do, do this, do that. That is useless, at least for me. My kids do not listen to me when I tell them what to do. But if I do by example, then they see, and then I see them, maybe even years later, those seeds that I planted, they start doing them.

Because they see that I'm sort of famous for being too honest in my writing. And they see that, and they see what the benefits of that are. I'm not saying they would be dishonest otherwise. Kids learn from example, and they're scared. Also, they don't know how to succeed in a constantly changing world.

And they want to see examples of who do they want to be when they grow up. So, I try to be not only be their dad, but be an example of who they should be when they grow up. And the best way to do that is with integrity.

I've sold companies where the employees feel betrayed a little bit. Some employees might feel betrayed afterwards because the new company comes along and fires their friends and there's nothing I can do about it, but I'm always up front with my goals in the company and I'm always up front with they should be able to benefit as well, if I'm not as much as me because I'm the founder of the company, but you know, one way is giving shares or options.

The other way is encouraging people to leave the company. I always tell people who work for me, eventually you're going to start your own thing and leave, and you should do that. When you need to learn something, let me know. If you have questions, let me know. If you're concerned with the direction things are going, let me know. And I will let you know, hopefully as constructively as possible when you're not doing performing up to my expectations.

And again, if you're constructive with the criticism. And they trust you, they're not going to get upset. Like if, if you tell them, listen, you shouldn't have slept late today. This was an important meeting, and you knew this was an important

meeting. Just tell me why, and we move on. We can fix it. If you can't fix it, then it's okay if you leave, like this might be a good time for you to leave and find, you know, someplace else, another culture.

Michael Breus

There's a very famous sleep doctor out there. His name is Matthew Walker. And people ask me all the time. Are you Matthew Walker?

And my favorite thing to turn to them and say is, can you pull out Google and can you type in Matthew Walker in the word fraud and hit enter? That's all I want you to do. And when they do that, their jaws drop and then I say now I want you to take Michael Bruce and I want you to put it in fraud and I want you to enter and I want to see what you see.

And I do that to people all the time. Integrity, in my business in particular, is important because your integrity is linked to the health information that you're giving somebody that can have an effect on their health. Right?

It's very, very different than let's say if you're in the music business, nothing against the music business, but it's just different, where you, for example, stole a song from somebody, and you had no integrity. Well, that's going to hurt them financially, but you're not preventing them from getting some life saving information.

So integrity for me, especially in medicine in psychology I feel like that is the ultimate because you're gonna hurt somebody. At the end of the day, we're not here to hurt people. We're here to help people.

I'm just not interested in cheating. I'm just not interested in lying. I'm not interested, you know, in those types of activities that lower your levels of integrity. But I don't think it even has to be that severe. I just think, you know, like, keep your word.

When somebody asks me for something, I keep my word. You don't have to sign a contract with Michael Bruce. But I sign contracts all the time because my lawyers tell me that I have to. But I feel that if you can shake somebody's hand. and have an understanding with them, then you both have the level of integrity that, that I'm looking for sure.

I think integrity is critical and I think men have got to find men with integrity. That is so, so important because so many men have friends who are disingenuous or cheat on their, whatever it is that they do, cheat on their taxes, wives, whatever.

I'm learning as I get older and older and older and my circle gets smaller that one of the characteristics that I really want for the people that are closest to me is people of high integrity,

CHAPTER 5

BROTHERHOOD

Kenny Aronoff

If I'm making a record with, let's say, Elton John, and I've never met him before, I come in the studio, I go up to him because I know in about 45 minutes I'm gonna make a record with one of the greatest rock stars ever.

So I go right up to him and I try to establish some sort of connection with this guy. Once you connect, and you can start communicating, you're communicating with this guy on a personal level, and he wants me to like him, I want him to like me.

Connecting, communicating. Now we can collaborate, because now we're friends. And this is brotherhood. Very quickly you have to get to that brotherhood.

If I create this connection, communication, and now we're collaborating, they turn around and smile at me. Because we know each other. That's brotherhood. Instant.

Michael Breus

I was maybe 14, 15 years old. I was like a freshman in high school, and there was a big group of kids that I really wanted to be involved with. And I really made a point of getting involved, doing things whatever they liked, I liked, type of thing.

And what I discovered when I went to college was most people don't have friends like that in their lives. And if they do, they only have one. I was very fortunate. We had a group of about nine guys. We could take over a country if we wanted to, right?

We had fun. , and we were in Sandy Springs, Georgia where there's not a lot to do. So we were smoking weed and drinking alcohol and, doing all the crazy stupid shit that boys do, but it was bonding and it was fun times together.

Once I got to college, I met a group of guys that I liked, but we, we didn't necessarily like click, click, click. And what I've discovered was that most people didn't have big groups from high school and that I was very fortunate to do so.

When I was at the university of Georgia, most of my friends had come back to Atlanta. So I maintained a lot of that friendship. But then when I left to go to Scottsdale for 11 years and then now been in Los Angeles for eight years there was a total dearth. I had almost no guy friends. No brotherhood, no camaraderie. And Arizona was strange to me.

Usually that happens for us through a religious affiliation. So usually what happens is, is you go to synagogue and there's a couple's group and there's a kid's group and everybody goes and that's how you meet people.

And what was really interesting for us when we were in Arizona was it wasn't the most friendly place. We lived there for 11 years and not one time did somebody invite us over to their house for dinner for a Friday night dinner, which was just like in Atlanta. Like, that's what you did. You met somebody you went to your home for Friday night dinner. They met your family and you started a relationship.

And so when I got to Los Angeles, my friend Jim Kwik said, you have to join the METAL men's group. And I was like, what the hell is METAL?

And then I fell in love with these guys. And it turned out to be a greater appreciation for male bonding than I had earlier in my life. Because it was one of those like I had it and I lost it and now I got it back. So I have an even greater appreciation for it.

In high school you pretty much had to accept every guy in the group, like that was it because we were the only guys in the group. Whereas in METAL I can pick and choose who I want to hang out with and learn from and talk to.

And I like that aspect of it because as I get older, there's just things that I'm just not as interested in that some of the younger guys might be. But I think that

brotherhood is one of the things that that men are missing in the world especially today because brotherhood is the opposite of competition.

Brotherhood is teamwork, because when you're in business, you're competing. I'm always going head to head with somebody. But when I'm with you guys I'm having fun and we're doing something cool.

So, for me, brotherhood is, is where the competition is out and like the love and the respect and the I want to see you do great things is in. That's what I think a lot of men don't have right now because it's such a competitive environment out there.

Jim Kwik

Brotherhood for me would be like a bond of some kind of solidarity, where you're not related by blood, but it's a connection that's built upon mutual respect, or admiration, or empathy, or shared values, or shared experiences.

In the context of what I do, personal growth and learning, it plays a vital role in providing support, first of all, safety, encouragement. I think we all have a sense that we need to belong.

You could tell a lot about your friends because they're the ones that pick up the phone. I always judge a lot of my relationships on, who do I pick up the phone for and who picks up the phone for me.

I think we all need people in our lives that encourage us, that challenge us, that call us on our shit, that are kind to us. There's a difference between nice and kind, and they're just not the same. The kid at the fast-food restaurant, can be nice to you, but that doesn't mean they care about you.

Kind requires effort, compassion, work. I feel like nice people don't change the world, but kind people are the ones that always do.

Chris Voss

Working for the Bureau was a little bit of a nomadic existence. Wherever I was, there was always a core group of guys, it was just like working really hard. Doing the right thing and just having a lot of fun.

In New York, there were basically three of us. And we hung together for a really long time, people that shared my values, in terms of hard work, integrity, and just being goofy sometimes, having fun, doing stupid shit. Those people didn't go with me wherever I went. But there was always a small core group that I was reliant upon wherever I was.

Marcus Bell

We are all connected in my view. And so having a group of men, I think is really important because there are differences between men and women.

And having a support structure around that part of how do you be a good man? How do you be a heart centered man? How do you be a compassionate man? How do you break the cultural norms around what that's supposed to look like? Can you say I love you to another without the bro?

Can you just say I love you? Can you operate from that lens? There's some brothers that stab each other in the back? That's some kind of brotherhood, but that's not the type of brotherhood that is what we have here.

So defining brotherhood for me is being with a group of men who have enough self-awareness to be able to allow themselves to be vulnerable, to allow themselves to be able to be open, to allow themselves to connect on deeper levels.

That's a rare and special thing in a world where that's not the norm.

Nolan Bushnell

The barbershop I went to when I was a kid had all kinds of pithy sayings on the wall. And I can remember one that I'll recite to you right now. It said, ' A friend is

not a feller who thinks everything is grand. A feller is one who knows all your faults and doesn't give a damn'.

I think that there are people who think they can elevate themselves by pushing people down around them. And others, which I believe are the brothers I want, are the ones who want to elevate everybody that's around them.

I am so rewarded by seeing how my kids want to elevate me and elevate each other. They work together on all kinds of things. And, they lend each other money and resources and things like that. And it's like a little Bushnell cabal!

James Altucher

I have a partner in my investing, we've been Associates first, then partners ever since 2000. So even through the periods when I was going broke. Over the past 24, 25 years now, he's made millions of dollars with me, but he's been my partner since basically since late 1999, early 2000 and we have completely opposite, like a hundred percent opposite political views, often we disagree on business stuff, but we've never once argued we talk it out.

Somehow I got lucky, because we have an amazing ability to find that place in the middle where we both agree. There's always that place in the middle unless you're an unreasonable person. And this is my brother.

Like I could call him anytime I want, call him at three in the morning. I have called him at three in the morning at different times. We used to day trade together for many years and sometimes things are happening at three in the morning and I've talked to him about every problem I have. He's talked to me about every problem he's had.

We trust each other with millions of dollars of each other's money. We trust each other with important life decisions like, Hey, can you do this and help me do this?

Friends will do that for you too. But a brother will always do that for you. They will never let you down on that.

Fernando Garibay

You know, most of the artists that I work with that I'm known for, at least in my artist career have been women, I mean, some of the most powerful women in business and entertainment. True divas in the, in a very powerful sense.

For these divas, to be a conduit to their success or a collaborator, very deep collaborator, you have to be very masculine. You see real masculinity is knowing when to bow or when to lend a hand, to be beyond yourself to help others. That's strength.

CHAPTER 6

FINANCIAL LITERACY

Michael Breus

It was really fucking hard to make the first million. I mean, really hard. Like, I thought it was an imposs-fucking-bility to make a million dollars at what I was trying to do.

And, what was interesting is the fiscal requirements for that were very different once you hit the five million mark then once you hit the ten million mark. Because, once you start to get into the ten million mark, making money literally, it makes itself. I mean, all you have to do is put it in a fucking bank at 5%! And it kind of does that for you.

But I think that the fight, the fiscal responsibility that people need the most guidance on is trying to get to that first million. Because there's just so many things that you think you're gonna spend it on that's gonna get me there versus the tried and true. Like people blow their marketing budget and those kind of things because they're not thinking fiscally in an appropriate way.

Also, one of the things that I know happens to a lot of people, especially if you're a CEO, you got a budget for your business, but then. They have no budget at home, right?

Or they have no fiscal responsibility at home, right? I think you've got to have those responsibilities kind of tied up, or you've got somebody that's doing those responsibilities for you that you highly trust.

Now, it also gets weird once you make money. Okay? So all of a sudden you make money. And so let's say that you sell your company and plop, you've got 10 million sitting in front of you. Then you get really, really scared because all of a sudden you're like, oh shit, I don't know how to invest this. I don't know what to do with this. I don't want anybody to take it and I certainly don't want it to disappear. So now that's a whole new level of fiscal responsibility that you kind of have to have.

And I feel like a lot of people are just like, oh, I've made so much money. Who gives a shit? Like that's why Dennis Rodman is fucking broke. That's what happens with all of these guys is they just don't have any level of understanding. So when I had my big transaction somebody gave me three rules. And I followed them and they worked.

They said number one don't buy anything super expensive, like over a hundred grand. Number two, do not talk to any family members that you do not talk to on a regular basis. And number three, don't make any new friends for a year. If you do those three things, you'll keep your dough.

There are just levels of fiscal responsibility I also think that a lot of times for people like me who are driven and creative and, and doing things, even though people say no, you've got to have some person in your life who can wave the flag in front of your face and be like, bro, we need rent.

Because I can go very, very far, very, very long on very, very little. But yet I've got responsibilities and kids and all of those kinds of things. So I think there's a level, is it important? It's very, very important.

But I think if you're looking across the spectrum of the words. It's important to have it, but it's not critical at the beginning because I think at the beginning that's where your creativity, your integrity, your character, all of those principles are really forming themselves. It would be great if you could be financially literate when you're young. Boy, it would have saved me a ton of fucking dough, I'll tell you that.

Nolan Bushnell

The three steps are curiosity, idea, action. What does the action take? To me, it starts either with the PowerPoint or a spreadsheet. And the financial literacy is necessary because you don't want to work on an idea that doesn't make mathematics sense or business sense. And a lot of times, the devil is in the details.

And the process of spreadsheeting an idea forces you to look at the details. What's your customer acquisition cost? What's your primary? How much marketing do you have to do? What's the liability? How much real estate do you need to rent? I'm going through that with a project I'm working on right now.

One of the things I've been doing lately that has really been good, is if you have one idea, there's one time, now. And looking at my successes and failures, my successes have all been right time, right place. My failures have been wrong time, wrong place, wrong people.

It turns out that your foremind can process maybe 7 or 8 variables. Your hind mind can process 20 or 30. That's why sleeping on something is really good when you're trying to make a decision about weighty things.

So what I do now is, I take every idea, I do a mini business plan, spreadsheet, PowerPoint, and I put it on the shelf. And I wait for the world to tell me it's the right time, right place, the right person.

I think I know more about a business before I start it than a lot of people. To me, intuition would say, you get an idea, and you go for it, without really wrestling the nuances out of it. And I wrestle the nuances out.

And it can be as simple as meeting the right person at a cocktail party and say, this would be a great CEO for that project.

I wish I'd have learned that a little bit sooner. I've been doing this probably for the last 10 years. And it's really been a good one.

James Altucher

On the one hand, not having financial literacy will not keep you from some degree of success. My very first company, I sold it for millions and millions of dollars, but I had zero financial literacy. I didn't understand this basic concept in entrepreneurship that product companies are valued many, many multiples higher than service companies.

But then I didn't understand when I was negotiating the deal to sell the company. I didn't understand, options and collaring and other little more sophisticated financial ideas. And then there's a key concept of financial literacy, which is not even talked about that much in textbooks about finance, which is risk management. Mitigating risk is 90 percent of your job as an entrepreneur.

Here's a great idea. I'm going to make a spaceship cheaper than Elon Musk and go to Mars. Okay. But now how do you start managing risk? Well, you get buy in from some rocket scientists. You find a place that will lend you maybe used Apollo rockets. And so you can start designing and experimenting .

Richard Branson, when he was starting Virgin Airlines was a 27 year old magazine publisher. He literally called up Heathrow and said, give me a runway because otherwise British Airways is just going to keep screwing you on pricing. And they gave him a runway at Gatwick and then he went to Boeing he asked them for a plane and he didn't want to pay any money from it for it.

He finally convinced them, I don't know how, to lend him a plane for a year. Now he had a runway. and a runway in New York, runway in London, runway in New York and a plane and he had an airline. And then he was able to raise money because he had a guaranteed back and forth transportation between New York and London.

He almost took zero risk in the first year of starting. Now he wanted it to succeed. And whenever you hire people, you're taking on their risks as well. You know, you can't avoid risk completely...

When I'm looking at a stock. I only want to know what the risks are because most stocks go up in the long run. If you reduce all the risks, you're more likely to go up.

In anything I do, in a sport or a game. What's my risk?. If I make this shot in tennis, are they going to, am I going to leave my left side wide open and they'll just slam it right back? You have to always manage risk in everything you do.

Financial literacy is largely mitigating risk, but then there are technical things like you have to know how companies are valued, so then you know you can build into the right sort of company for what your needs are. You have to know how stocks work, how options work, how crypto works.

It's very helpful to know the history of investing. I'm constantly surprised how many professional investors don't know the history of investing because history doesn't repeat, but it rhymes. Same thing with financial history. I've probably read hundreds of books about financial literacy.

Once I went broke because I realized I was financially illiterate, I had to learn. So this was something that was making me miserable, but I had to learn it. There was no, not learning it. It was unacceptable for me to not learn something about financial literacy. And that's when I realized, you know what, I took too many risks. I constantly take too many risks. And so for me to succeed, I have to be financially literate.

I have to be like a Warren Buffett of my life. Warren Buffett, what does he do best? He manages risk.

Jim Kwik

Financial literacy is another thing that's not taught in school, just like learning how to learn. At least I wasn't taught these classes in school, I was taught a lot of sine cosine tangent and there's no Pythagorean theorem season, but there's definitely a tax season. I didn't know the first thing about that kind of stuff when I graduated.

Financial literacy is the ability to understand and effectively use financial skills including financial management budgeting, investing, savings, all that stuff. It's obviously a skill set that's crucial today in making informed and effective decisions with your financial resources.

Most people just don't know how money works or the art of making money or managing money, investing it or protecting it..

Kenny Aronoff

I got scammed and put a couple guys in prison, I got snookered like a Bernie Madoff type scam. It was like four years of litigation and lawyers and eventually they got put in prison and all that stuff. And learned a lot from that. I don't lose any sleep over it. It was a lot of money.

So, I'm bringing that up right away because that was a big lesson.

The whole purpose of money, for me, is to be able to be able to live comfortably, eat any food I want, see any doctor I need, be able to fly first class. I only need one car. I only need one house.

There's certain things I like, wear the clothes I like, have freedom. And then at some point, when I don't feel like working, which might be a hundred years old, I will have enough money saved so that I can continue to live the lifestyle I want to live.

And that's what it is. It's freedom. It helps me with my insane schedule. Seven days a week, twelve, sixteen hours a day. Money gives me freedom to be more comfortable. Or I can afford to hire people to work for me. To do different things. So, that's what money is.

You have to be smart. So, I save money. I have investments. And I've done things that I would, that some people, might call mistakes. But I call them ways of learning.

All in all, it's very important to understand finances. And, obviously, money ties into finances. Because that's the way the world works.

Marcus Bell

I started my first business when I was 12. My first company was a record label. The first check that I got was when I was six years old for doing some commercial and I remember going into the bank with my mom and I had the check, and this

was me opening up the first bank account and I really didn't get it. So, wait a minute, I'm giving this check that I could buy a whole bunch of toys and instruments and stuff with to this bank. Like, what?

That was the beginning of my financial literacy. And what I discovered was that I have the ability to make money, that making money is easy. Now, keeping and growing money is where I needed to really discover and learn and get specialized knowledge and all of that. Some people have it at making money is, is hard and all that.

I would walk into a performance date, I'm nine, twelve, fourteen years old. I'm walking in with my music, with a bag of tapes and CDs and I would leave with everything sold with a bag full of cash. Right. But what do you do with that? And so financial literacy for me was, okay, making a lot of mistakes in terms of not understanding how to necessarily manage resources.

And then this day occurred where my father called me and he was having some financial problems and he's about to lose his restaurant and he asked me for money and I didn't have it and I hung up the phone and I said, that's it. It's not just about me and my survival. I have to have enough to be able to also support others and family and so forth. And that, that, that became a line in the sand.

And so I started learning about finance and started reading as many books as possible. I started reaching out to people that were good with money and got myself out of \$75, 000 in debt. The debt wasn't, you know, balling out in the club or anything like that. I was buying musical equipment.

I now recognize that I was actually investing in my business, right? I just didn't know it. I didn't have that awareness so my father was able to save his restaurant because he reached out to my aunt who is really financially literate and great with money. When I realized I had access to that in my family, then that aunt actually became one of my mentors,

I started talking to everyone that I knew that I had the perception of that, they were good with money or had had resources. I remember I got my first kind of big music

check and I remember calling everyone that I knew that I thought was good with money and I said, so let's say you have \$40, 000 What do you do with that?

And I noticed the difference between people that were good with money and the responses from people that were not good with money And then I started to see, wow, there's a huge gap.

Fernando Garibay

If you are allowing society to tell you what your worth is financially, and therefore, you knew that say you grew up in, and I'm projecting here, but if you grew up in the hood and the success marker is selling a certain amount of quota of drugs a day to make sure that you have money in your pocket, then that is a behavior determinism telling me that that's a marker of success and that I should learn how to count my capital the way the corner drug dealer counts his capital.

So, financial literacy is the necessary foundation when you're looking to achieve a certain level of wellness with your financial world. It's up there with mental and cognitive wellness to health wellness. This is a systemic type of thinking. This is a systems level type of thinking. It's, all this is the same. It's one. If you are not prospering financially, figuring out how to make sure that there's capital enough so you feed the ones that you love, and then you better figure it out. And it starts with financial literacy!

Chris Voss

I could probably be better at it, but being careful with your money, having some idea where your money's going, not being stupid, not being careless with it. Whether it's a natural thing or not, there's some health habits you just gotta have. There ain't no way around it, it's gonna kill you if you don't, you, you got a problem.

There are just certain things that are necessary for your survival. Like, you ain't gotta be a genius. You just don't gotta be stupid with your money. Pay attention to

your cash flow, live within your means, stay away from debt. It's not complicated and it's not sexy.

There's always been a lack of friction in my life over worrying about or having to deal with money problems. I'm not losing a lot of money to ridiculous credit card interest. I completely understand why organized crime laughs at what's legal, especially when it comes to legal lending of money. Even carrying credit card debt, the overall drag and friction on what you can do with your life, I've always paid off all my credit cards.

It's just there's been a massive lack of drag on my overall life because I haven't been stupid with little things like credit card debt. Borrowing to go on vacation, all that nonsense. I just won't do it. And I think my life on a whole is, it's like living longer.

CHAPTER 7

PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Jim Kwik

I think if you want your bank account to grow, then you have to grow. Or if you want your brand to grow or your business to grow, you need to grow. Mine is always a brain-based approach to this stuff. I just always think just like with learning, we don't consider how the brain works to be able to work it.

But same thing with self-help and personal growth and personal development. I feel like If you don't understand how your brain, your brain controls everything, it's your number one wealth building asset that you have. But we're not taught how to use it. Your brain doesn't come with an owner's manual, and it's not user friendly. So my approach towards personal and professional development has always been brain-centric.

Another pet peeve I have besides like how people use words like nice and kindness is I hate scrolling through Instagram and I see every single day, somebody say that their self-made millionaire or self-made this or that. I've literally never met one, because everybody has help along the way.

They have clients, they have a team, they have I've had so many mentors and so many coaches, I still do. I think it's the fastest way if you want to get from A to Z, the fastest way to get there is to have somebody who's done it and having a mentor or some kind of fellowship with people who've already paved the way and can give you guidance and wisdom and you can learn from that.

In the beginning for me, I didn't have those mentors. I didn't have access to the people that I do now. My mentors were books. I learned really early on if somebody has decades of experience and we're blessed enough to have them put that wisdom into a book and I could sit down in a few days and read that book and I could download decades into days.

Books were my mentors, and they were key for my own personal and professional development. That I realized that any problem that I have is not unique. That

somebody has already survived that problem or even thrived because of it. And I don't have to reinvent the wheel. And that's why I'm just always, always learning.

And I think reading is, is the most important thing there. Reading and finding mentors. Fastest way to personal and professional development.

I'm paying coaches. Roger Love was, was my voice coach and I have financial coaches now. And personal trainers and people that advise that are way smarter, but there's a lot of humility there also as well, meaning it takes a level of humility or humbleness and I think I come from that because I was instilled in that by parents at an early age. So I benefit from that. I think that my parents and their parents, their sacrifice became my blessings.

But because I never thought I was better than anybody, I feel like I can learn from everybody. It keeps me really well balanced. It's easy for me to be curious and be open and not have an ego so much because I always think, while I'm better at some things than other people, I always know the life you live are lessons you teach, and I can always learn from somebody else because they had a different life than I did.

And that's a big part of having a role model in personal and professional development.

Chris Voss

I don't think I'm smarter than anybody else. I just like learning. I like gaining an edge. Learning and reading interesting stuff.

Most of it has been business related over the years. Herb Cohen's book, 'You Can Negotiate Anything'. I think it was printed in 1980. That interested me. The only investment guide you'll ever need. You know, 'Buy in bulk and you get big discounts'.

I've always liked to read. Always, always, always. Most fiction I don't like, it's imagining what somebody would say as opposed to what they actually said.

Walter Isaacson's books. His book about Elon Musk is the one that I've liked the most. Mostly because he was closest to it while it was happening. And so his reporting was a lot more accurate. I don't want to read what people said about Ray Kroc. I want to read what Ray Kroc said. I love the biographies that the people that they're about were integrally involved in writing them.

And so I'm just constantly, constantly reading. I can't get enough of it. Reading, listening to podcasts. If I find a podcast that I like, I'll sit in a sauna and listen to it.

I went to a marriage counselor once, was trying to fix my marriage, way back when. And the principal problem that was going on there was a lack of core values. Like that, my ex-wife could run up debt like you wouldn't believe. And so we're in the midst of these therapy sessions and by the time we get done and the therapist says, you guys are much better. It turns out my ex-wife had more debt at that time when she came out.

And then in hindsight, you're in there for an hour. And so maybe at 45 minutes you'd be at a great place and you'd feel really good about the session and you'd be on a high. Which is when you should have walked out the door.

But you go, well you got 15 more minutes, let's get into something else. And 15 minutes later you feel like absolute dog shit. And the therapist goes, okay, time's up, you gotta go. What the fuck?

I never imagined that I would end up being a keynote speaker. There are two speaking agencies speaker groups. One is NSA, National Speakers Association. What's the other one everybody goes to? I did that when I was first office in, in FBI in Pittsburgh. I don't know why. I wanted to learn. I remember going to those classes for a while. I didn't remember. I didn't imagine me to be a professional speaker, but there was something about it that I found interesting.

When I was a cop I went back and forth. I thought a lot about getting my MBA. When I was still a police officer, I took the GMAT and I was thinking seriously about applying for the MBA program at University of Missouri in Kansas City. There were several graduate degree tests that I took.

I think I was always looking to learn and then I started volunteering on a suicide hotline to become a hostage negotiator, but that's learning. That was extracurricular learning. You know, it was arguable whether or not I was doing it on my time or Bureau time.

I always went to the classes at night. I thought about trying to get an overseas assignment. So for a while I tried to learn French. I just don't get a head for languages, but you know, personal professional development. For whatever reason, I've always found something that fascinated me that I wanted to get smarter about.

Marcus Bell

I work on myself every single day, every single day. I spent probably over a million dollars in personal development courses, trainings, coaches, mentorships, mastermind groups. I would not be the human being here with you speaking now had I not really taken that seriously. Yeah, it's, I think it's, I think it's essential.

It's essential because there's so much I could say about it. I remember I was taking this course, it was the landmark forum and they redefine integrity. One of the things that I did they give you these assignments where you have to call people and clean things up where you are out of integrity.

On one of the breaks, I ended up calling all my ex-girlfriends. Yeah, so my first call was, was with a, a woman I was with for five years. And we were still friends. I was still, still friends with all my exes. So I called her out of the forum. And I said, you know, that time where, you know, we were together and so forth and all that. And I cheated on you, you were right because she thought I was. And she started crying and saying thank you, thank you so much, thank you so much for, for that. I thought something, I thought I was going crazy, da, da, da, da, da. And we became even closer!

After that call, I hung up the phone and I was like what just happened Oh, I'm calling everybody - who else can I call? Right? And all of a sudden, this tremendous weight was lifted and I have freedom.

Every time that that has occurred, there's nothing but freedom has happened out of result of that and that's all personal development work. Before that, forget about it. Forget about it. I would have taken it to my grave. Like what? I don't talk!

I study every day, literally every day. I've been doing this for decades. I've been studying every day. Some aspect of business and going as deep as I can, reading as much as I can. Whether it's marketing, whether it's finance, whether it's sales, whether it's doing ads.

I'm about to start creating more visibility this year. And part of my process is I've been taking a bunch of courses on the best way to engage audiences through ads, and, you know, some of the trends that are happening in that way and talking to people that are good at that. And so for me, again, it comes back to an aim.

I had some breakdowns with employees and I said, Oh my goodness, I need to learn about creating systems where when there's infighting inside of an organization, what do you do with that? So I started reading about that and reaching out to people that had specialized knowledge around, you know, how do you create repair in an organization and keep people from having work traumas and those types of things.

I've built enough social capital to be able to just reach out to someone and say, Hey, I'm having this problem, how did you deal with it? I look at METAL, for example, it's one of those groups that I care deeply about, the brotherhood, the community.

I also recognize that there's so much specialized knowledge in, in our community. And because we're all connected, there's my brain, but there's, this is a brain. Right? This is a collective brain. So, if I want to access some part of my collective brain, what better place to have that live than in an organization like METAL, right.

James Altucher

Many of my books are in the personal development category in the bookstore, books like 'Choose Yourself' or 'The Power of No', or 'Skip The Line'. So I'm

familiar with this space, but I don't really like the space. You can't really tell people what to do because they're not going to listen.

If you say, oh man, the key to health is do a hundred pushups a day and eat kale. They'll do it for a week and then stop. We're in January right now. So everybody just made new year's resolutions. My one resolution was to not start something in January that I was going to never do again after February. So this is an important concept.

Personal development is having a sense that you're not doing things right, but you don't know how, why aren't you doing things right? Why do you smoke? When you know it kills people. Why do you eat too much or eat junk food, you know, it leads to various illnesses and heart attacks and so on.

Because something has to change inside you, but you're not sure what. And so, personal development is going on a quest to find out what can change. You have a blind spot somewhere. And personal development is fixing that blind spot and being curious about yourself.

What was I doing at the times in my life when I felt successful? Not rich or poor, but just when I felt like I was moving forward. What was I doing? And what was I also doing at the times When things were going down, and it happened to be enough the ups and downs that it was pretty much statistically significant like I could see a clear pattern once I really studied this question.

Oh, I was writing down ideas every day. Oh, I was taking care of my health. Oh, I was I had a spouse I wasn't arguing with every day. Oh, I paid some attention to things a little more esoteric, like how to surrender to what was happening to me, as opposed to trying to control everything that's happening to me, because then you'll only be disappointed.

A little bit was therapy, but it's like any profession, it's hard to find a good therapist. I think, one out of 20 are really good and the rest are mediocre or bad. So a lot of it was self reflection because it was unacceptable to not do this. It was a double negative.

It was, it's not that I wanted to do personal development. I'd rather just sit in a hammock and eat junk food all day. But it was unacceptable. I couldn't not, not do it. If I wanted to feed my family, or if I wanted to enjoy life a little bit more than I was, I was very unhappy at these periods. And I had children to raise, or, you know, a family to feed, other things I wanted to do.

And so, for me, that's personal development, when you reach a point where it's unacceptable to not try to improve and then really querying the people around you and yourself really querying yourself what it is that you could do to improve.

What do you need to start a business? You need creativity, you need health, you need an ability to move past difficult situations, you need some financial literacy.

When you're really curious about your personal development, about where your blind spots are personally, business development will take care of itself because, let's say you're going to hold an event and I think, oh, I could help you put together an event. That's creativity. We'll come up with a crazy ideas. We'll have an event on a submarine or whatever, and hopefully it won't implode.

But then it's about, you know, things are going to go wrong along the way, so you need to basically surrender to the things that are going wrong and move past them again. You can't be wasting time on arguing with anybody.

You can't have any conflict, really. You have to be able to resolve conflicts. So that's part of emotional health and you have to be healthy because when you're doing business, you're working 18 hours a day. To really be in the depths of a business, to some extent, you're not taking it, taking care of yourself because it's so difficult and it's very trying that you're going to get rejected all the time and lots of things will go wrong in the course of doing a business. Things go wrong every single day.

Kenny Aronoff

Personal development is how you become the best man that you can possibly be in this short time we're here. My personal feeling about that is I want to get the most

value out of the life I'm living, regardless, until I die. It could be thoughts and it could be passions and it could be actions.

So self-development. I've had life coaches, and that's why I joined METAL, to meet interesting people and there's all kinds of ways to continue to grow. The main thing is to continue to grow. The big takeaway here is to understand it's up to you to continue to grow. It's up to you to self-develop. Whether it's reading, or meditating, or exercising, or communicating with people, you figure out your self care.

How you can be the best person that you can be, and here's an important thing, it doesn't just go this way. The ripple effect of your self development to becoming a better person, that ripple effect affects everybody around you.

Now this gets into integrity, and people, a team player, and leadership. I want Kenny because he lights up the room, he's always happy. That could come from a lot of self-development.

I have eight steps to a healthy life. It's a wealthy life, you know, I don't have to list them all, but it's part of being the most fit person mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually. So self-development, this way,

When Jack and Diane went to number one, holy shit, I'm number one! Of course! America, and then Canada, and then the UK, and then Australia. I'm number one, and I celebrated for two seconds.

Because then I went I gotta do it again. When am I gonna do it again? John has to write a song, or I have to play on somebody's record, and somehow help that song be number one. In other words, I'm number one right this second. But tomorrow I might not be, and I wanna be.

I learned very early, whatever got you to be successful, continue to do to stay successful. RPS, Repetition is the Preparation for Success. And, constantly adapt and adjust to stay relevant. Keep your eyes open. Shit's changing as you're in it. So

you're successful, you better keep your eyes open because shit's changing so that you can stay successful.

That is continuing your self-development in your career. I know what to practice, exactly what to practice every day. I have a 75 minute workout, everything I'm practicing I call a functional practice routine.

Every note I'm playing has a purpose. To make me sound amazing today. And then, I'm rehearsing right now to get ready to go on a tour with Joe Satriani. All the songs are charted, I drill them, and if there's any technical problems, I go over those every day, right in those spots. So that I will sound amazing, and I have to practice every day while I'm on tour. That is how you keep yourself very, very good and present in the business you're in to stay successful. ?

Fernando Garibay

Without the self-performing and having a discipline of control as to perspectives and how you see the world, and be able to separate your limbic system, your affective reaction, your affective response to the world, equally balancing out with a very logical prefrontal cortex cognitive perception of the world, that balance of logic and, and, and emotion, right? If you don't have that discipline, if you don't work on that discipline, you will be in a, very quickly in a hot mess of, of choices that, that might not go in your best favor.

So, the balance is starting with the self within, fortify very Aristotelian's first principle, have a strong foundation of knowledge. And yourself understand what your limitations are, understand what your thresholds are, understand what your tripwires are, right?

Because we all have tripwires, the more you become aware of them, that someone might say something that triggers something from your past that was buried unconsciously and it just so happens that tripwire triggered and you have no idea why that bothers you, right?

That's self.

I read about 300 books a year through audio. Minimum is 300 books a year and I have done that for many years. And I learned English by listening to Henry Kissinger, Noam Chomsky, Stephen Pinker, Nassim Taleb, Alan Watts Hume, Kant, you name it.

A stereo that I had as a kid was broken and just played college radio.. So very young I was exposed to language. So that's how I know the stuff. Reading and practice. Reading and understanding. Reading and constantly testing the environment.

If you look at Plato, Aristotle, and all these great thinkers, they've always had mentors as part of the model, right? Apprenticeship, right? Subconsciously, before I really understood mentorship, I just sought people that would inspire me and I was kind of like a stray cat at times and people would just want to feed me and just extraordinary people like, you know, Georgio Marauder, like Jimmy Iovine. Just mentors, people that just cared. That was it.

Michael Breus

Historically when you're a doctor, your professional development is very track path driven. So you go to conferences, you take continuing medical education credits. And that's really kind of it's all about the medicine.

Maybe you take a finances course if you're running your own practice, but it's very kind of along a path to be very honest with you. Most of the people in my field don't get along very well with me. Because they're scientists and doctors and they're not promoters. They're not people who are edgy. I like to take really cool information, distill it down into actionable bite sized pieces and put it out on Dr Oz so that people feel better.

That's not what people at these conferences really do. What they like to do is they're kind of in their ivory towers. And so from a professional setting, I've had to go outside of the traditional pathways that I've gone down in order to learn different things. As an example, I go to biohacking conferences on occasion just to see what's up.

And by the way, I used to do this in college as well is every year I would take one class that was completely off the radar for me, something that I had no experience in whatsoever because I had read that if you can take concepts and apply them into areas that are not your area, you may come up with something new, different and interesting, and I think that applies in this situation as well.

From a personal development standpoint, what I would say is when you're nine years old in the mid-seventies and your parents are getting divorced, everybody throws you in therapy.

One thing I will say that I think that that was good for me, was that I'm not afraid of talking about my feelings. I'm not afraid of those types of things. And I don't feel a lot of judgment from people because I was involved in therapy very early on.

I just joined something called Strategic Coach, which is run by a really cool guy named Dan Sullivan who developed it and it's kind of an entrepreneur what do you want to do next kind of thing? I'm looking forward to that. So I definitely look outside.

I read a lot of books or listen to them. Also, on the personal development side right after I had my transaction, I've spent the last year looking at myself physically and, and taking care of myself. So from that standpoint, I've done a lot. You know, I've dropped weight, I've increased my lean muscle mass.

All my blood work looks amazing. So like, I think that's also an area of personal development that I think is important for people to think about not just on the emotional side, but maybe on the physical side. Also, I've changed my diet pretty dramatically. I think that's another form of personal development.

Relationships? Absolutely. There's lots of personal development that's gone on there. I've been fortunate. My wife and I are very communicative. So we do have a tendency to just kind of let each other know. We both come from terribly abusive backgrounds, and so we know and understand our communication styles more so than maybe other people might.

I feel like I try to expose myself to different events, different people, things like that throughout the year in order to just get new idea generation. Because sometimes it feels like I'm in a vacuum. And so, it's great to have community. And the data is really solid on that, like all the blue zone data is really actually around community more so than vegetarian and that other stuff.

Like if you, if you actually read the stuff, which is actually out here in Loma Linda, California is one of the places it's really about community. And so, I think that's really, really important.

Nolan Bushnell

The personal growth side I'm kind of a little cynical about. I kind of like who I am and I feel, I feel like I'm there. And I've gone to marriage counsellors, that's as close as I'll get. And I'm still married!

Bob Noyce and I were friends, and we used to play chess. And he was a true mentor. Don Valentine from Sequoia Capital was a mentor. And I had a lot of tutelage from them that was very beneficial. And I've kind of gone through a series of them. You know, for various times, where if I was in an area that I didn't quite understand, I always wanted to get somebody who'd sort of been down a similar path.

At the amusement park, I felt like I got an MBA from my manager there, who would just read me the riot act and every time he read me out, he was right. I had totally screwed up.

I'd like to say that I have five-year attention deficit disorder. Once I get things running like a Swiss watch, I get bored by it. And I'm attracted to a new squirrel. Squirrel? Woo! You know. And so, I always like to be in areas where I don't know what the fuck I'm doing. And so there I need tutelage.

And I think of somebody in my network. You know, I've had two or three business associates that I met first at METAL that became my partners.

CHAPTER 8

LIFE BALANCE

Fernando Garibay

I have systems in place that catch me if I go beyond. I am, you know, ADHD, OCD, all that. I'm lucky I have those. But equally, they require management. And I can go too far. I can deep dive into a subject and I won't come out until I understand, until my pain threshold is relieved of curiosity.

I have insomnia, so I will make sure I work out for an hour before I go to bed, and I do four hours of reading before I go to bed. That has to happen, or else I'll be up all night. My second system in the morning is, if I jump out of bed too quickly, I will be very irritable. I'm not a morning person.

I do another two to four hours of books before and a good day and try to eat as best as possible. Anything that's grown on the ground without Monsanto products in it, I'm happy.

You know, I travel a lot, as we all do, but my family is not going to grow up without a father. A loving father, a present father. So for every week that I'm gone, it's two weeks of equity that I owe. Think of it as a credit system. If I'm gone a month, and there's been times when I've been gone a month as a father they get two months. You see, it's two to one.

These systems are important for people like myself who could get lost. That's wellness to me. And my kids are very happy. I meditate with them, like I just meditated before this. That's why I'm wired right now because I was meditating with my son who's seven years old. And we're listening to 'The Hierarchy of Thought' and, and topological arguments, they're like post doctorate courses that you can take. And we do audio and he does this with me, he's a savant, my son.

James Altucher

I don't know if I really manage it all that great, but there's 24 hours in a day, eight of which you sleep, which gives you 16 hours. That's a lot of time. You could read

a book in 16 hours or maybe two, you know, 30 hours, 40 hours. You could or, you know, or three hours a day for 10 to 20 days.

You could exercise for an hour. You could write for an hour; we could do a podcast for an hour. There's lots of things you can do in a day.

When I was in my thirties or forties, I had dinner with some friends the whole time in dinner, they're talking about the novels they're going to write. Meanwhile, I'm thinking I got to get home because I write every morning at 7am.

It is unacceptable for me for me to not write at 7am.. So eventually I left, and they're there till one in the morning till the restaurant closes. Of course they're not managing it properly, they're wasting time. You don't need to have dinner for seven hours with people.

And a lot of people do that, or people say to me, Oh, you know, I like my downtime at night and I just watch TV. All right, if that's causing a problem for your work, then maybe you don't want to work too hard. And that's fine too.

If you want to start a business, if you want to work, if you want to succeed in different ways, it takes a lot of work. My current quest is getting back to the level in competitive tournament chess that I was. I was at this master level in the nineties.

I stopped for 25 years. I'm trying to get back to it again. I study chess five hours every morning. I have no choice in it, but then it's 10 a. m. By the time I'm done. So that's plenty of time to spend time with family, do a couple of podcasts, make some business calls, and then by four or 5 PM, I'm done. And I go back to playing a little chess before dinner.

Chris Voss

I once had a friend say that it wasn't really work life balance, but it's work life integration. Like what percentage is there, what percentage is here, that work life

integration was probably a better idea. And I have always been so focused on what I did for a living because what I did for a living, was who I was.

We were talking about something in the bureau with some people one time and, and this agent said, yeah, well, I'm worried about my career. And I remember thinking like your career, I'm worried about my life. What I did has always been integrated so much in who I was. that I would often get very consumed in it and it would crowd out my personal life.

And even though there were real core value issues with my ex-wife, I let that crowd out the quality time that I could have spent at home. Even intermittently, I could have been a better partner.

People have said to my son, you know, what was it like? Having a top hostage negotiator as a dad who's out saving lives? And he said it sucked, he was never home. You know, he's this guy out running around the fucking world, he wasn't home.

And so as I've gotten further into my life, the integration of important personal relationships has gotten more important to me. And, you know, I think it leads to ultimately a much more satisfying life.

Nolan Bushnell

I'm loving my life right now. I'm not CEO of anything anymore. I'm chairman. That means that I can have multiple projects. And not have to do all the hard, boring lifting. I can be the chief visionary, which is where I like to be.

I read the Walter Isaacson book on Elon Musk. And he has a lot of the characteristics that I saw in both Steve and Bill Gates. When I visited Bill in Seattle, he had a futon under his desk in the early days, these were really early days, as did Steve. I pulled some all-nighters, but I never did really have the futon under the desk that they did. But in terms of work hard, play hard, I always played hard and I do that now.

Lately I've been deep diving on chatGPT, I'm having a ball with that. I'm working on a project right now called Education Supercharger, which is an after-school program like MathMasium or Kumon to help kids, using gamified learning and just having a ball with it.

What kind of school would I want to go to when I was a kid? Because I thought a lot of school was really horseshit. And whenever I think something's horseshit, my first instinct is, well, fix it then. And so that's what we're doing. I'm having some fun with that one.

I'm on the board of a self-driving car company. And I'm working on a project of a Magic Forest, which is a campground with games. So, that, that works for me.

I think one of the things that some people make a mistake on is they don't really have downtime. And with social media and cell phones and that, I think it's important that you get distance from your work for a week or two a year, and maybe a week every six months. Because I think sometimes you can get wound up into the minutiae and miss the big picture.

I actually believe that foreign vacations are very, very helpful. Because you're struggling with a different culture and a different language, and I think it kind of lubricates your brain a little bit. And if you stay away from being a slave to email and that sort of thing, you can get perspective.

Perspective is very, very valuable when you're the head honcho, because all your people are going to lie to you. You know, you're going to hear what they think you want to hear, not what necessarily is the reality.

And I always managed by walking around. Like I knew all the girls on the line. By first names, all the guys on the line by first names. And I'd go back, and I'd talk to them and they knew that they could tell me what was on their mind.

And then in a staff meeting, the managers would come and tell me something and I'd say, no, that's not true. And they knew that they couldn't bullshit me. And so I

think that Musk, you know, staying, living in the factory, he was managing by walking around. And Jobs did that too.

Jim Kwik

I'm a stickler for words, and it's not just the formal definition you'll find in Webster's. It's how people react in their nervous system to certain words. I don't resonate with the word balance as much, because I had these sensory motor issues with my head injury, so I had very bad balance. So maybe that's part of what's skewing my perception of the word.

But balance for me, if you look it up in the dictionary, it means an equal weight of equal amounts. And I don't want to spend the equal amount of time at work as I do in the gym, or as I do with doing other endeavors.

For me, the word that I use for decades is the word harmony, like an orchestra. Not every musician or instrument plays an equal amount of time, so it's not balanced. But they all participate to create this harmony, this symphony. And I feel like there's an art and science to our happiness and to our success and to our fulfillment. And the science is pretty clear in terms of what to eat and, how to exercise and how to be productive and time management. But I think there's an art in how it expresses itself.

I think we're always making choices. There's a quote in my book, that I say, life is letter C between B and D, where B is birth, D is death, life C is choice. And we always have a choice. And I feel like what's important to us is reflected in how we spend our day.

I can tell a lot about a person by either looking at their bookshelf or by looking at their calendar. I can see what they're feeding their mind, and I can see where their attention goes. People could say health and wellness is important to them, but if they're not putting any energy or effort or attention or time into it, I don't feel like it really is even if they say it is.

My goal is harmony for health and wellness. I think self-care is not selfish. That health has become my number one priority because I've lost it several times in hospitalizing, the emergency room for various reasons, lack of sleep and other things.

And if you don't have that, then I have no fuel or energy, or attention put towards my relationship or my family or my career or the impact.

Having fun is work, right? it takes effort, but I also am very blessed because for the past three decades, I've been doing work that I love, and I really, truly believe if you could do what you love, then you add five days to every week, because most people look forward to like, two days a week, or, if you don't have that luxury to do what you love, to find the love in what you do, when we're talking about work life harmony.

Work feels like there's no express reward. Like climbing a mountain is a lot of work, but people who enjoy the climb will go further than the person who enjoys the view.

And I feel like doing work without some kind of fulfillment, that's what I want to avoid. I'm lucky to be able to choose work that lights me up. I feel like passion is what lights you up. And purpose is how you use that passion to light other people up.

My passion is learning. It wasn't always learning but when I got good at it, I, I became passionate about it. It lights me up. Teaching people how to learn is my purpose because that's how I could light, use my passion to light other people up.

Marcus Bell

I don't believe that there's such thing as work life balance. I think that's a cultural narrative that has people suffer. I believe in intentional imbalances.

I track maybe 24 different areas of life. You have spirituality, you have health, you have money, you have politics, you have knowledge, there's a bunch of different areas, and it's impossible to have them all at a hundred percent.

That's not realistic if you are aiming to achieve something great in the world. And so I pick three domains to focus on at a time. So that that's how I go about it.

I go about intentional imbalances and being very diligent. Okay, I'm not doing that. I'm not working on that domain of life now. And then mapping out what the domains of life that it is that I'm going to work on.

So for example, I decided I wasn't going to be dating after the separation and divorce from my ex-wife. I said, okay, I'm going to stop that. And then in the next year, start doing that. Right now. You know, I didn't stick to that point, but...

Michael Breus

For me, it's called work life integration. It's just how it is. I work every single day. I always have. Look, when your dad goes bankrupt twice, and they take the cars out of the fucking garage, you work every day of your life.

That's how it is. That's how I'm gonna be. There's nothing I can do about it. What I have done, which has been amazing, is I have worked on my calendar. And so this was a tool that I used that really lowered my stress and allowed me to function significantly better and not work as much.

What I do now, as an example, I wake up and I have a very set morning routine where I have hydrate, I, my dogs require medication so I give them their meds. I feed them. I take them for a walk. Then I sit on the floor, and I play with my dogs for two or three minutes because everybody likes unconditional love every morning. And I've hydrated and I've gotten sunshine and I've, I've done a little bit of exercise.

So now I'm in my gym clothes. And I head to the gym. I'm there for 45 minutes to an hour. Then I hit the sauna for 20 minutes, cold shower, and then I'm at my desk by 10. 30.

I don't take a meeting before 10. 30 ever. That's just it. I just told my assistant. I said, Oprah can call and I don't give a shit. I'm not interested. Okay? And, and she has called. So that's kind of funny.

Then another thing that I did was I no longer do half an hour meetings. I do 25 minute meetings. I have five minutes. It's a hard stop. So afterwards I can take notes because when you do six, seven, eight meetings in a day, you have no idea what's going on. If somebody needs an hour, then it's a 45 minute slot and I have 15 minutes. I and I have breaks so that I never have more than two meetings in a row without a 15 minute break every single day.

And then I don't work on Fridays. Like I just don't. And so when you do that to your schedule and make everybody kind of force them into your schedule, all of a sudden you don't have to work as much.

You can see what I did is, I worked in my morning time with my dogs and my workout and then on one of my breaks I'm usually meditating. On another break, I'm usually walking outside in the sunshine. I integrate. Like, this isn't balanced, there's no universe where I do anything that's balanced, okay?

It's just not how I was created. I'm sorry, it's just not me. I integrate and I make things work. But, as an example, every single vacation that my family and I have ever taken, I still read sleep studies when I'm on vacation. Like, I just tell them hey, you guys go down to the pool, I'm gonna be in the room for an hour, I'm gonna read some sleep studies, and that's that.

Kenny Aronoff

There is no balance in my life. It's totally lopsided. I'm a workaholic. It's my drug of choice. I get stimulated. You know, I was thinking about that a couple years ago. I picked drums particularly, and sports, cause if you think about it, it made my

adrenaline go up, made my serotonin levels go up, made my dopamine go up, my oxytocin go up.

I was feeling high. Hey, this is fun, sports, yeah, yeah. Hanging out with friends and laughing and slapping them. And then when I'd lie in bed at night, and I'd start slowing down, I'd get kind of like, this is not as much fun.

So there's my twin brother in that bed over there, so I'd hit him. And next thing you know, we're fighting, which got me stimulated. So that was fun. Then my dad would come up and say, Boys, go to bed. Now after eight times, I got my ass whooped. I deserved it. But my point is, I was, I'm addicted to the stimulation.

So I love playing the drums. I love performing. I love music. So, I tend to put that ahead of relationships. I love relationships. I love my friends, second, I'm not good until I do what I gotta do.

Hence, I'm on my third marriage. It's just the way I'm wired. I tell people this is the way I am. You know, the house could be burning down. I will hang in that house for the last second if I'm in the process of getting something. And don't get in my way. It's just the way I'm wired. I've done stuff where I've talked to people about you should be more balanced.

I'm balanced in this regard. I take a shitload of vitamins every day. I eat real well. If I had a bunch of wine the night before and I don't feel great the next day and I've got a show, no more wine that next night. I'm not drinking anymore. Until I feel like that Superman I am. I'm aware, I take care of myself physically. I lift weights, I do cardio. There's a balance in that regard.

I have the eight steps to health. It's this way. One, lifting weights. It makes you strong, obviously, but it also builds your immune system up, keeps your testosterone levels up, and it keeps your immune system up. So that's very important.

Number two, the only way you can exercise your heart, which is obviously an important organ in your body, is cardio. That also keeps your testosterone levels up, keeps your immune system up.

And then the third thing is stretching. Some form of stretching. Could be yoga, could be anything. Now you've got strength, flexibility, and endurance. That's your core. Listen, I've taken a shower. You know, I'll do my ice plunge in the shower. In the hot shower. I do squats while I'm in the shower to multitask. I'm doing squats when the hot water's on me.

So then, the fourth thing is diet. That's a whole chapter, what you eat or what you don't eat.

Fifth thing is supplements. I burn myself hard, so I have a massive amount of supplements that I take, because I don't work an eight to five job. I'm a nine to whatever time it is. It serves me very well.

I do blood work every year to know exactly what I need to do it to adjust every year and I'm gonna double my blood workup now that I'm getting up there.

So then number six is water every cell in your body needs water I'm a little bit low on this, but you're supposed to drink half your body weight in ounces. So if you're 200 pounds, you need to drink 100 ounces of water. I think is there water and wine and whiskey and beer? I can't remember anyway I think there's a lot, yeah. You might have to drink 18 bottles of wine to get there, but, so anyway!

Okay, the last two are the more difficult ones to me. Seven is some form of meditation. The whole thing about meditation, it could be just walking with your eyes closed. The purpose of meditation is this. To de stress yourself, get rid of stress, because everything I just mentioned is useless if you're stressful. Whatever it takes to get rid of stress. If it's meditating, if it's standing on your head, whatever it is, to de stress. Whether it's Wim Hof breathing, the ice plunge, I don't know, whatever it is. So some form of relaxing.

The last one, number eight, is sleep. It's the only way you can repair your mind, your brain, and your physical body. I suck at sleeping, but I try to make sure, even though I wake up five times, I get at least seven hours of some form of sleep, because it's the way you repair your body.

So those eight things are kind of like my commandments of physical and mental, spiritual, and emotional health.

THANKS FOR READING!

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