Transcript of “Arianna Huffington is Thriving”

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Dave: Hi everyone, it's Dave Asprey with Bulletproof Executive Radio. You might notice if you're watching this on video, not just listening to it in your car that I'm at Huffington Post's studios sitting next to you Arianna Huffington. Arianna, thank you for being a guest on Bulletproof Radio and for hosting us in your studio.

Arianna: I'm delighted to have you here and I have my Bulletproof cup.

Dave: Thank you. You wrote a book that had me so excited. I saw your interview with Joe Polish. He's a friend of mine and I'm a member of his mastermind. I said, "Joe, please introduce me to Arianna," which is a big ask because I know how hard it is to get a hold of you because you're pretty popular. 10 weeks straight near on New Times bestselling book called "Thrive." But your book was such a cool book that I kept at it because it seemed worth it to connect on that level with you.

Why did you write your 14th book about thriving and about things that are may be very different than your other books? Well, just jump in.

Arianna: So really I wrote it because of my own personal experience of collapsing from burn out, sleep deprivation, and exhaustion seven years ago, hitting my head on the way down, breaking my cheekbone, getting four stitches on my right eye. That started me on this journey of asking big questions that we often stop asking after we leave college like what is success, what is a good life. While by conventional definitions of success I was successful, if you come to in a pool of blood and nobody has shot to you, by the same definition of success you're not successful.

That was really how I came up with the third metric of success. The first two metrics of success are money and power. But this is like trying to seat on a two legged stool. Sooner or later you fall off. The third metric, the third leg of the stool is about our well-being and wisdom, wonder and giving.

Starting with well-being we now have incredible scientific findings that make it very clear that contrary to the collective delusional we're living under burning out is not the way to be most productive and ultimately most successful that we pay a very heavy price in terms of our health and well-being if we simply do not take the time to sleep, to renew ourselves, to connect with our own strength and wisdom, which is the second pillar of this third metric.

Dave: That's definitely a big vision in order to talk with people about connecting there. But you sold your company for $300 million, which makes it a little easier to focus on these things. I had a similar experience. When I was 26 I made $6 million, and then I lost it when I was 28 because …

Arianna: Maybe if you had slept well you wouldn't have lost it.

Dave: That is a totally reasonable argument. The reason I did is actually what you're talking about thriving. I told myself, "I have $6 million. At 10 I'll stop," which is ridiculous for being 26. I think $6 million is enough for the average 26-year-old to do fun stuff. But I didn't even travel much. I was just working.

That was when I read your book. That really resonated with me. You are also very focused on all that. But what do you say to someone who's 25 and looking at maybe some student loans, wanting to get a car that doesn't break down all the time, and just getting going in their career, and working 60 hours a week two jobs because they want to make ends meet, there's all these things they want to do but it takes money and all that. How do you connect the message in your book back to someone who's still working on making sure that they have quality food?

Arianna: Absolutely key question. That's why I have a whole section in the book where I address this question even going further than this, people in extreme circumstances who've lost a job, who are facing really adversity. I even have examples from people in concentration camps, because the point of my book is that wherever you are in your life, whether you are at the top of the world dealing with multiple demands on your time and attention, or whether you are struggling to make ends meet, we need to

remember what they tell us on the airplanes, put your own oxygen mask first.

When we put our own oxygen mask first we connect with that center that we all have, and where we are at our strongest, wisest, and where we can operate at our most productive and most creative. Because if you look at really how we spend our time, we waste an enormous amount of time by being distracted, by being tethered to our devices, and even the fictional person that you mentioned who was trying to get a car that doesn't break down etcetera etcetera has more discretionary time then he or she thinks. Somebody is watching House of Cards.

It's just that at the moment our culture hasn't really convinced people because it's driven by this delusion that the more we actually prioritize connecting with ourselves, the more effective, productive, and creative we are going to be.

Nothing in my book is about chilling out under a mango tree. If you look at my schedule I'm clearly doing as much and I think accomplishing more because I now get seven to eight hours sleep, because I do take time to meditate, and walk, and do yoga, and whatever it is that works for each one of us. This is not any kind of dogma. Each one of us needs to find out what's our own cocktail, what are the things that by putting them together we can operate from what has been known as the zone, or being in the flow.

We have multiple expressions for this state of being, and we all know they are there, but a lot of the time we don't know how far away from it we are. I sometimes joke when I look at my iPhone and I have these very exact reports on the state of my iPhone, like 20% battery remaining, 17% battery remaining. By about 13% I get anxious and look around for a recharging shrine lest anything happened to my iPhone. But the truth is that when I collapsed I must have been below 0% battery remaining and I wasn't even aware of it.

Dave: This something I haven't talked about, but I had something remarkably similar happen. I flew to China, gave a talk, flew to Florida, gave another

talk, slept two hours, hopped on a plane back to San Francisco because I wanted to see my kids and the security line was so long that I didn't get water and I didn't get coffee, so I was basically fasting all the time. So I sit up on the airplane, passed out on the isle, and I remember, at first I didn't hit my head on anything on the way down, but I remember when I woke up I was so mad because someone was rousing me from the most peaceful sleep I've ever had. I'm like, "I'm just sleeping here. Couldn't somebody just let me sleep?"

But that did scare me. This was a couple years ago. I knew it was because I was so dehydrated just because I didn't buy a bottle of water. But you can run to that limit. You learned how to find where that limit is for you by experiencing it the hard way. I've done something similar there.

How do you recommend that other people learn to know when they're approaching a 13% battery life? What are the signs or the metrics that someone who hasn't been there would look for?

Arianna: Well first of all I hope that people watching, or listening now, or reading Thrive, or reading what you are writing will realize that they don't have to have their own wake-up call before they can bring about changes in their lives. We can learn from each other's wake-up calls. We can learn from each other's mistakes. We don't have to make every mistake.

Also, we can learn from science. This is why this is such an exciting moment. We now have incontrovertible scientific findings about these things. That's why in Thrive I have 45 pages of scientific end notes deliberately, because I wanted to convince the most stubborn skeptic. This is not some kind of new-agey flaky Californian stuff. This is actually hardcore rooted in science and proof that if we want to be the most productive and creative we can be, if we follow these steps, I have 12 steps in the book, I chose 12 deliberately because we are addicted to the wrong way of living, but if we follow these steps and we can take them one at a time we can actually see transformational changes in our lives.

The steps are deliberately very small, very doable, really microscopic, and we can all pick whichever most resonates with us. I picked adding 30

minutes to my sleep every night and log up seven to eight hours. I've began to feel and act so differently that that was its own reward that has now made me be so committed to prioritizing that. That might mean that I didn't watch House of Cards last night, or I didn't watch Jon Stewart, or I gave up when I'm traveling on having dinner with friends. Sometimes it means giving up good things. But the fact that today I'm completely present here with you, that I feel recharged and enjoy what I'm doing and fully participating rather than … I so often used to happen to me in the past, kind of dragging myself through my to-do list and my meetings and then crashing at night. I just feel that there is no tradeoff.

Dave: Now here's an interesting question for you. If you can take an anti-aging vitamin that gave you that half hour back, you got the same amount of sleep in half hour less time and it didn't have harmful side effects, would you take it?

Arianna: I don't believe it. I think that-

Dave: I'm not trying to sell anything. I'm just saying it as a hypothetical idea, like is there ...

Arianna: No, no, no, I'm just saying that unfortunately I believe that anything we take, anything we put in our bodies, unless it's herbs and vitamins-

Dave: Yeah, so magic turmeric juice or something like that, I'm saying if there was a nutritional intervention or some other thing like that, a non harmful one that let you get that half hour back, would you take it or would you still have the sleep?

Arianna: Right now it's a lot more than half hour because I went from four to five hours to seven to eight hours.

Dave: That's a lot.

Arianna: So that's a lot, but I am infinitely more productive and creative.

The biggest growth at the Huffington Post happened after I was getting seven to eight hours, because I was completely clear for example about

where we needed to go. I was clear we needed to become a global media company. Three years ago we were only in the United States, now in 11 countries and we have over 90 million unique visitors and almost 50% of them are coming outside of the United States.

Dave: That is so impressive.

Arianna: I can give you many other examples which I'm only doing to show that as a leader the more connected you are to what's your vision for your company, where you want to go and being clear about that, and also seeing the red flags or the icebergs before they hit the Titanic, the more successful your company will be.

If you look at how many startups fail, three-quarters of startups fail, and startup culture is notoriously driven by sleep deprivation and burnout, maybe there is a connection here.

Dave: There certainly is. I remember as a young entrepreneur in Silicon Valley the pizza and beer fueled things for me. I finally had to reject that, although I'm definitely fan of getting more sleep in less time, just sleep efficiency is big thing for me. But I finally I was just like enough, because that's hurting my performance at least as much as not getting good sleep, where if you're not fueling your body right and you're not doing basic recovery protocols, whenever they are, it all ends up somewhere.

I just shudder when I see people who are making the same mistakes I did when I was in my early 20's because it doesn't … I mean your startup will succeed or it won't, and if you live on peanut butter for six months or something ridiculous, which I've seen, it doesn't mean you're a better person. But there's a certain badge of courage, especially among young men where it's like I beat the crap out of myself, and that's part of how I improved myself.

Arianna: Yes, there's definitely a big macho component here.

Dave: How do you counter out that? How do you teach young men in order … Like how do you teach them to not basically destroy themselves?

Arianna: I think we need two things. We need new role models. We need to show them the science.

Dave: You did a great job by the way on the science in your book. You qualify as a biography for sure, like you really got the data, which thank you for doing that, because this is the hardest message to get through, especially to younger type A people who have the most benefit from learning that.

Arianna: Right, and also I think when you also look at the cost or a pain, the cost in terms of our health, the cost in terms of good decision-making, I quote Bill Clinton in the book who said, "The most important mistakes I made I made when I was tired." He did not specify what mistakes, but we can all look at our lives and say something similar, I was tired, I would hire the wrong person, or the overacting to something that happened, all the things that happen when you are not operating from a centered recharged place.

Of course nobody's ever going to be operating from that place 100%, so I'm not asking for anything that is utopia. The question for me is, how quickly can we return to that place?

Dave: In the way I think of things I use the word resilience a lot, because it's fine if circumstances knock you over as long as you bounce back up. It's when you stay down because you can't get up that something was wrong.

Arianna: That's why to go back to your first question about people who are struggling that's when you need to be resilient more than ever, because we see that the same negative from fact can completely destroy someone, while someone else can thrive through it.

I mean I have a study in the book of [inaudible 16:26] company that fired 25,000 people at the same time. The University of Chicago tracked what happened to them. Three-quarters of them fell apart, and the rest thrived, they went on to start their own companies, to find better jobs. It was the same adversity but people reacted differently, depending on how resilient they were, on how connected they were to their own inner strength and wisdom.

Dave: Doesn't that resilience come from your mother, like from your very early childhood experiences. When you look at the work of Hans Selye, Selly, I don't know how to say his last name, I'll just read it, but the father of modern stress research and epigenetics and all. Some people seem to command with … they're bulletproof when they're born and they come into the world and they do whatever they want and they're always on top, and other people seem like they're fall down, get up, fall down, get up.

Arianna: I feel that anybody can transcend their circumstances and how their parents brought them up or all these things. I think we're all bigger than that. Of course we are very blessed if we have parents who brought us up a certain way. I feel very blessed to have a mother to whom the book is dedicated who brought me up not to be afraid of failure, to take risks. She used to say, "Failure is not the opposite of success. It's the stepping stone to success."

Dave: What a lesson.

Arianna: But you also see the world and numerous amounts of people who had terrible childhoods and have been able to transcend them.

Dave: Yeah, it's possible for everyone in my experience being aware of where you are in that spectrum is also helpful. It turns out that I'm probably weaker than average in that I used to weigh 300 pounds, I had arthritis on my knees when I was 14, and I had all sorts of chronic stuff, and I fixed all that, but it took $300,000 and 15 years of work to do it. But it is doable.

Arianna: Right, exactly.

Dave: But if you don't know, and I didn't as a young man, I didn't recognize I had any weaknesses. I'm smart, I'll go do, I'll be an entrepreneur, I'll do all things, but I didn't develop the self-awareness that was necessary to do that, which is why your book is really cool, because you're sort of saying, "Look, I'm a pretty successful person. Here's my path and how I did that." But if people get that message, like plot where you are on the spectrum of resilience and figure out where you can improve. You've got your 12 steps

in the book, like maybe sleep more. I would totally support that. I'd also say sleep better, like turn your thermostat down and make the room dark.

Arianna: Yes. Oh yeah, but I know, that's right and I have actually a list of-

Dave: Oh do tell.

Arianna: … other things, 12 things you can do to sleep better. I mean I have a little ritual myself and you can find your own ritual depending on what works for you, but I have a transition period. I think very often we have no transition period. We are on our laptops or iPad and then we turn off the light and expect to go to sleep. For me some of my rituals involve a hot bath. I have a hot bath where for me it's like soaking the day away and it's like that day is done with all the things that were good in it and other things that were bad in it, and now it's the period of transition. I totally agree with you. I make my room completely dark. If I can't I wear up an eye mask.

Dave: Do you pick hotel rooms based on how good the curtains are?

Arianna: Yes.

Dave: I do too.

Arianna: Actually, the other thing I do, I travel with a selection of scarves that I drape over the little blinking lights that are everywhere.

Dave: I try it with the electrical tape, I would just take a little square and stick it on there so.

Arianna: That's good.

Dave: It's a lot lighter.

Arianna: That's easier. Yeah, I should get some electrical tape. I was recently at a hotel in London, the Firehouse, they've just opened, and I absolutely loved it because it was very old-fashioned. I had no screens in the room.

Dave: Oh wow.

Arianna: They had an old-fashioned phone that even rang within an old-fashion ring.

Dave: That's cool.

Arianna: Then by the phone on a little … the hotel writing pad handwritten was a message, “For anything you want dial zero.”

Dave: How simple is that.

Arianna: But the point is it was great, so you could get into bed and there were no blinking lights anywhere because they didn’t have screens. So that piece is very important. Lowering the temperature as you mentioned is very important. Another thing for me is I have nightwear. I mean I used to sleep in my gym clothes and now I sleep in my sleep clothes.

Dave: So this part is signaling to your body that it’s time to sleep-

Arianna: So it’s like signaling to our body you're going to sleep, you're not going to the gym. A friend of mine actually who is Cindi Leive, the editor of Glamour, she and I did a asleep challenge and we wrote about it. One of the things she sent me pink silk pajamas. But whatever it is that signals to your body you're going to sleep, and a lot of other things like a good pillow, etcetera, whatever it takes to make your sleep more effective, I completely agree with you. That is key.

Then another thing that's equally important for me is when you wake up in the morning do not immediately got to your email. That is key. In so many ways, including saying I'm in charge of my agenda. The minute you go to your email is like saying, I'm in charge of the word’s agenda, and whatever is important to you and you and you and you I’m going to handle it before I even have my cup of coffee.

Dave: It’s true. It’s so distracting to just jump on email in the morning. You track your sleep, like the number of hours asleep. Do you use one of those alarms that wakes you at the top of the sleep cycle, or any of the other things like number of steps per day, like how much do you get-

Arianna: Oh yeah, I have a Jawbone that I use. But I mostly agree with professor [Rattenberg 23:01] from the University of Munich, I quote him in the book who's done a research that shows you know when you've slept enough because you wake up without an alarm. It's really very simple. I mean these days I wake up without an alarm.

Dave: That's got to be pretty crazy in your calendar, or do you just note yourself that you wake up in about eight hours, because if you have a 9 AM meeting and you wake up at 9:30-

Arianna: I know, I mean I do put an alarm as I said as a precaution.

Dave: As a backup.

Arianna: Yeah, as a backup, yeah, yeah. But I always wake up and turn it off before it goes. I really I prioritize going to bed based on what I might have to wake up. I don't have a specific time I go to bed. It depends on whether I have to get up at six or eight.

Dave: So you go to bed earlier, so you don't stick to the fixed bed time.

Arianna: Yeah.

Dave: This is fascinating. I've had the opportunity on the Bulletproof Radio to talk with all sorts of different high-performance people, like the people who are on tour in bands, and pro athletes, and all, and it's not something that you often hear executives talk about, like how do I go to sleep at night. But it's one of those things that for me has shifted dramatically over the last 10 years as I started getting more data, and you look at the research, the stuff that you're saying in your book. It turns out that there are a good number of very successful people who realized like I get more out of every day, like I'm nicer to other people if you do something as simple as improve your quality or length or both of your sleep.

What are the other big things that maybe kind of low hanging fruit from your book that people would want to learn about? The audience for Bulletproof Radio it runs roughly half men half women across all age groups

starting around 20 going up to about 60, so it's a broad spectrum. But what would they benefit from knowing about the most, other than just buying your book, which is Thrive, that's a good book.

Arianna: So another low hanging thing, one of the 12 steps is at the end of each day to find something, it could be resentment, a grudge, or a project that you're not really going to do and drop them.

Dave: Oh wow.

Arianna: It's like dropping something that no longer serves you. That grudge you've been carrying around, does it really serve you? I have a quote, not you personally, I have a quote from Carrie Fisher in the book. She said, "Resentment is the poison you drink thinking the other person is going to die." Or a negative fantasy about the future. So often we have these negative fantasies about what's going to happen. As Montaigne said, "There are many terrible things in my life, but most of them never happened." So letting go of something that we fantasize about, that we worry about, but it's a fantasy.

Dave: That is remarkable. You're going straight to your forgiveness essentially when you drop a grudge you're forgiving whatever that thing was. In my own I've worked on the steps to forgiveness. Gratitude for me is something that comes before forgiveness because I always find it hard to drop a grudge until I can find at least one good thing that came out of it. It's like, "Oh, I lost $6 million, but I learned an awful lot when I lost it so I can be grateful that I lost $6 million because it put me on this whole different path."

It's that grudge that lets me then progress to the forgiveness to happen, dropping the grudge, and refusing to carry someone else's burden, which is really what that grudge is.

Arianna: That's great and I think, I completely agree with you. I think gratitude is grace. Living in a state of gratitude for me is living in a state of grace. It's a constant process. It's definitely one of the steps in Thrive. My daughter that I write about in the book who got involved in drugs in her last year at Yale,

we took her out and she's been sober for two and a half years. She decided to write about it to help other young people. But one of the things that helped her in her recovery was doing a gratitude list every night that she shared with three other friends, and they shared their list with her.

Dave: Oh that's power.

Arianna: That is very powerful. She continues to do that. In our family, around meal times, remembering and stating what we are grateful about is just very key. So I completely agree with you.

Dave: I started doing that with my four-and-a-half year old and my seven-year-old before bed. We picked three things in the day that we were grateful for.

Arianna: That's fantastic.

Dave: I'm really working to build that practice. If course I have to tell them my three and they tell me theirs. It's amazing some of the things that they'll say they're grateful for, because you get little nuggets of wisdom from the kids. I have no idea what that'll mean when they're 20 or 30 but I'm-

Arianna: It will definitely be ingrained in them, because our minds so often go to the negative, and that definitely had an evolutionary purpose, like if you were being pursued by a lion you'd better focus on the lion rather than the rainbow in the sky. But it's now far exceeded, its usefulness, because we remain in a perpetual fight or flight mode even when in fact there is no real danger around.

I also mentioned in the step dropping projects that we're not going to invest ourselves in, because that's also another energy drain.

Dave: It's a huge energy drain. How do you manage that? I'm running a very small company and I would get 10 phone calls a day if people could find my number, from people who want to do a deal or whatever else. So I've put some filters in place. Not that I don't want to talk to those people, I just don't have the hours in the day.

I imagine the pressure on you must be about a thousand times greater than that, because of your status, status as a media figure. How do you filter all those inbound opportunities? They're almost countless. My mind I think would probably start to explode and creek a little bit if I was subjected to the same inbound … Well, it's positive pressure but it's still pressure. What's your practice for filtering that?

Arianna: Well, here's what is so interesting, that when I am in the centered place that we described earlier, and we all agreed nobody is going to be there all the time, then I have a lot of clarity about what I'm going to be involved in and what I'm not, including things in my personal life that I might want to be involved in. That's what I mean about dropping projects.

Just to give you a personal silly example. I always wanted to become a good skier and I'm a lousy skier. One day when I was doing this regularly mini life audit I said to myself, "You know what, I'm never going to invest enough time and energy into becoming a good skier, so this is a project that I'm going to drop." It was very liberating. It was like saying to myself, "You can complete a project by dropping it, by telling yourself this skiing is done."

Now when my daughters want to go skiing I go with them and I sit by the fire when they're skiing, and I drink hot chocolate, and I read a good book. I have no residual, "Oh, one day I must become a good skier."

Dave: So you're not dealing with any guilt or should have-

Arianna: Or even just the residual I'm going to put some energy and do this one day feeling. The same applies to projects at work, and the same applies to unfinished books or anything. It's like we don't have to finish something if this is no longer serving us. We can complete it by dropping it.

Dave: When you drop it, do you make a conscious decision to drop something versus delegate it and say make it someone else's problem?

Arianna: Oh yeah, I mean I wish I could delegate becoming a good skier but I can't-

Dave: If you figure that one out let me know.

Arianna: Oh yeah, I think delegating is key. I think having a good leadership team. For example, around Christmas I was in Hawaii with my daughters and my ex-husband. I'm also very big in co-parenting beyond divorce. We have a divorce section here that focuses on that because with so many marriages ending in divorce it's important to learn that, because otherwise your children pay the price. So there we were on vacation, and I was doing a digital detox for a week. I was only checking email twice a day with the office. That meant having a team in place that I would delegate things to and trust that they would deliver, and if needed, they would get in touch with me.

Dave: You said the T word, trust.

Arianna: Yes.

Dave: So how much of that week did you spend with fear that the people you were trusting would not follow through-

Arianna: None at all because I already had that team in place. I wouldn't have done it if didn't, and there were many times when I didn't.

Dave: Got you. So you were building confidence first.

Arianna: But, I think yes, you build the confidence, you built the team. But that's part of … I mean any leader who thinks they can micromanage everything, they basically are saying we cannot grow.

Dave: Yeah, they're not a leader at that point.

Arianna: Yeah, because also, and growth is dependent on the ability to delegate and have a team in place.

Dave: That is true. You wrote a lot in your book about the different effects of stress on women and women in the workforce, which is I'd say is underserved when I read about human performance and even things like the Paleo dieting and all that, it's very kind of thump your chest sort of sometimes.

When I look at what it takes to be a good entrepreneur the energy that at least I feel or envision it's a nurturing energy to our company. I honestly being a father and a CEO, it's a lot of the same, so like your company is your baby. Not like your actual baby but it's something that you've put so much energy into.

Do you feel as a mother and a CEO that the energy is similar, and is that why it's so much harder for women sometimes to do this power money, the different things you write about in your book, in order to do this so many of them step back? Is it because there's only so much nurturing energy they have or they don't take care of themselves? Like-

Arianna: I think what the recent scientific findings are telling us is that women internalize stress differently. So women in stressful jobs have a 40% greater risk of heart disease and a 60% greater risk of diabetes. I was so struck by this scientific finding that I used it twice in the book, in two different contexts because I feel we really need to pay attention to that, because as women it means we have less than a margin to live life from a stressful burned out place.

One of the reasons is that we all have that voice of judgment and self-doubt in our heads, but in women is particularly loud and harder to basically shut off. I call this noise the obnoxious roommate living in my head. I've dealt with it to the point where it now only makes guest appearances. But I think it's really important to recognize that because that voice drains a lot of energy and increases stress, we have less margin.

Dave: That voice is something that I hear with my coaching clients. All of them have some degree of it or another, and there's so many different techniques, most of which revolve around meditation or doing some sort of therapy around turning it off, or turning it down, or gaining control of it.

Certainly a good amount of it comes from the body itself, like you're starting, the tigers is going to get you, or again with those old primordial messages that we have. Then some of it comes from a more conscious place. I was entirely unaware of that when I was younger because the voice

has always been there, like the voice is you, and then recognizing that, "Well, wait, that's kind of not me." That's really separate and annoying.

Arianna: And it doesn't speak the truth.

Dave: Yeah. What's your advice for people who want to learn when their voices are telling the truth or not? Is there a trick you found?

Arianna: Well yes, again, it goes back to learning to still our minds. We are never going to stop our thoughts. It's just that when we also have a reference point of stillness we don't have to follow every thought and become its slave. We're talking about becoming slaves. Becoming the slaves of technology is also something which is one of the big problems of our time. You and I both come from a technological background in one form or another.

Here we are in a 24/7 media company, which is also a technology company. So we are both very aware of the glories of technology and everything that has been made possible. But also I'm acutely aware of the dangers of being perpetually tethered to our devices, and what that does in terms of our inability to connect with ourselves and our loved ones.

That's why one of the steps in the book is at the end of each day, pick a time when you turn off all your devices and gently escort them out of your bedroom. There has to be like a sacred space at night when you just sleep. I've gone further than that and I only have real books by my bed. I love to read books that don't have to do with work before I go to sleep, which often may just be for 10-15 minutes, but I love to read poetry and philosophy and novels, and just basically reminders that however great our jobs and however lucky we may be that we love our jobs, we are more than our jobs. Like if you didn't have your job or if I didn't have my job, that doesn't mean we wouldn't still be in our essence who we really are.

Dave: Yeah, being exactly the same person just doing something different. That is pretty profound given how much we identify, especially as we get more successful in our way. I got my MBA at Wharton. This was, it was vision and a couple of big layoffs since then. It's amazing when you get the big degree

and your whatever, a management consultant, or a banker, or an entrepreneur, or a VC whatever it is, and then all the sudden it all stops.

Looking at the impact on friends when that's happened and even on me when things have gone, the waiting plan and my career it almost feels like you died or like it is an enormous stress. Have you seen the WHO list of stressors? Losing your job is almost like losing a loved one in terms of the way we take it biologically. But it's all fake. We take it that way biologically because that little voice in our head took over.

I found as I learned how to master my brain often using technology to train myself to do that, I went through a layoff once where I was working for publicly traded company, I helped plan the layoff, I knew I wasn't on list and at the last minute they added me to the to list for a good reason because I had a team that was awesome so they could do my job like and I expected that. But I was annoyed. I would've taken that personally, devastated and held a grudge for years, but I just thought enough. I sat there for a little while and I went home and I told my wife, I said, "I've got great news." She asked, "What is it?" I said, "I can take some time off." And it totally didn't stick.

That was like the first time in my career that something like that happened, and it was because I had gained some of that inner awareness, that control over that instead of just being reactionary, just being like, I'm not this job even though it's a fun job.

Arianna: Also, even people who are like you were at that time were able to support themselves for a period without the job, even they are feeling an incredible pressure to immediately get another job. I have friends of mine who have made a lot of money and then something happened, they were led go, or there was a change in their careers and they'd suddenly find themselves with time on their hands and the opportunity maybe to take that time to decide what they wanted to do next, but they were very nervous about taking that time and not being in a job.

I was recently doing Super Soul Sunday with Oprah, and she asks everybody the same question which is, "What do you know for sure?" What I said to

her is a version of what we are discussing here, which is I said, “What I know for sure is that no matter how magnificent your job is Oprah, or how good my job is, who we are in our essence is more magnificent.”

Dave: Wow, that is profound. There's a question that I’ve asked everyone who’s been on the show. So that's more than 120 people now and I’m dying to know your answer to this. The question is, given everything you’ve learned, not just in Thrive, this book, or your career, just your life's lessons, the three most important pieces of advice you would offer to people who want to perform better? I don’t mean perform better at work. I mean perform better as human beings do whatever it is they're here to do. Only three, what would they be?

Arianna: So the first thing is that we are more than our jobs. That is the first thing. To really be fully aware of that, and to give ourselves some time to actually connect with that reality and that truth, because so often we give ourselves no time at all to connect with that essence that Archimedes, the great mathematician said, “Give me a place to stand and I can move the world.” We all have that incredible place of strength and wisdom and peace, but we need to honor it and give ourselves some time to be in it, and live our lives from that place.

The second is what I already mentioned, which has to do with failure and my mother's advice that failure is not the opposite of success. It's a stepping stone to success.

The third one is something my mother taught me, which is don’t miss the moment, because that's the one thing we know we have for sure. Life is much more fragile than we think, and we don’t know when things will change for us.

Unfortunately we all think that by multitasking we’re going to be more efficient, but it’s a complete lie we tell ourselves. Multitasking doesn’t make us more efficient. It just makes us miss the moment, and it doesn't really exist. Scientists have told us that multitasking is really task switching. It’s the most stressful thing we can do and yet, we all think that that's a

badge of honor, it makes it clear how busy and important we are, that we can't just be doing one thing at a time.

Dave: So it all comes back to you go at the end of the day because if that's what you have to do to be a good person. It's a tricky path to navigate. When people want to buy your book is there anywhere that they should go in particular because I want to make sure that people who are listening to this do get a chance to read it, because I interview a good number of authors but I think you really nailed it with this book, you put the science in to back it up and you've just got a unique perspective that I haven't seen a book like this. So I really appreciate it. So if you're listening you should buy Thrive. But is there a thrivebook.com or some url I should know for this book?

Arianna: Thank you so much. Now you can buy it from a bookstore, you can buy it from Amazon, you can buy it from barnesandnoble.com. The only thing that we have is a site huffingtonpost.com/thrive that shows where I'm going to be speaking next. So if anybody wanted to come then they would find out by going to huffingtonpost.com/thrive where I'm going to be next.

Also, I wanted to invite anyone who's listening or watching who may want to write about these things and tell us their stories, whether it's stories of burnout and wakeup calls, or stories of how they thrive to do so. You can email me at Arianna one R and two Ns at huffingtonpost.com because I believe that by having this conversation, by sharing stories we'll able to accelerate a shift that's already happening.

Dave: This shift is happening and your book is helping. Arianna, thank you for writing the book, thank you for being on the Bulletproof Executive Radio today, really appreciate your time.

Arianna: Thank you so much.

Dave: If you haven't had a chance to learn about our new Sleep Induction Mat check it out on the website at upgradedself.com. It helps me get to sleep faster and very specifically to get more deep sleep.

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