



Transcript of “Stew Friedman: Success, Leadership, & Less Work - #196”

Bulletproof Radio podcast #196



Warning and Disclaimer

The statements in this report have not been evaluated by the FDA (U.S. Food & Drug Administration).

Information provided here and products sold on bulletproofexec.com and/or upgradedself.com and/or betterbabybook.com are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease.

The information provided by these sites and/or by this report is not a substitute for a face-to-face consultation with your physician, and should not be construed as medical advice of any sort. It is a list of resources for further self-research and work with your physician.

We certify that at least one statement on the above-mentioned web sites and/or in this report is wrong. By using any of this information, or reading it, you are accepting responsibility for your own health and health decisions and expressly release The Bulletproof Executive and its employees, partners, and vendors from from any and all liability whatsoever, including that arising from negligence.

Do not run with scissors. Hot drinks may be hot and burn you.

**If you do not agree to the above conditions, please
do not read further and delete this document.**

Dave: Hey, everyone. It's Dave Asprey with Bulletproof Radio. Today's cool fact of the day is that if you want a favor from someone, you can ask them in their right ear. Studies show that people prefer hearing things in their right ear, and they're more likely to give you what you ask for. If you ask them in their left ear, they're just less likely to do it. We think it's due to the brain's left hemisphere being the predominant area for processing verbal information.

The spot you use actually for verbal processing and language processing is a couple inches up from your left ear, and you can actually stimulate that with a transcranial direct current, and I've done that. I've also put a laser there which don't necessarily recommend you do. It's very interesting that, that little difference could matter. If you have a friend who doesn't hear well in one ear, and you remember that, and you always ask them in the ear they can hear from, they'll totally notice and just be happy that you did it because it's annoying to only hear out of one hear, and you can actually reduce their stress greatly. Be a good friend. Know which ear people can't hear out of and remember it.

Today's guest is an awesome guy, a guy who's been on the show before, and a guy I have a great deal of respect for. It's Stew Friedman who is a professor at the Wharton School of Business. He's the founding director of the Wharton Leadership Program, and he's part of their Work/Life Integration Project. He's been a professor there since 1984. He was my professor about a dozen years ago there where he actually taught me some of the things about leadership.

He's, in fact, the first guy I've ever worked with who quantified as in running self-experiments this idea of how ... I'm putting into something and what are the results I'm getting, and it's that what results am I getting from X amount of effort that really matters. Stew is back on because his new book called "Leading the Life You Want: Skills for Integrating Work and Life" is just out, and it's a remarkable book.

What he's done is he's looked at critical skills for just bringing together work and life, but he didn't just talk about what you'd talk about in a course. He went out and looked at a few famous people, guys like the CEO of Beynon and Company, and Sheryl Sandberg, and US Navy Seals, and Michelle Obama, and use those interviews in that research in order to understand what makes these people tick and how they, at those very high levels of performance, are making what they do at home and what they do in their work lives match. Of course, that builds on the total leadership work that you can hear about on an earlier podcast. Stew, welcome to the show and just ... Let's dive in. Tell me about this new book, "Leading the Life You Want".

Stew: You don't have to do the whole course over the four-month period. You can click in to the skills that are most important to you. That's one reason why I wrote this book. The other was to offer skills education basically and exercises that anybody can do to develop these skills, to practice them. The other critic that I got from people was, "Well, this is all well and good, Stew, this academic four-way. That sounds good in principle, but come on. In the real word, don't you have to just give everything up in order to be successful in your professional life?"

The answer is no, even though everybody listening here is probably thinking, "Uh, come on. The people who I see who are really super successful, they have made all kinds of sacrifices in their family lives, and in their community lives, and in their spiritual lives, their personal lives, their physical health, and their emotional health, and wellbeing." That is the common mythology, particularly here in America, that you've got to give everything up and that the people we see, many of them who are running companies, have made radical sacrifices for the sake of their career aspirations.

However, when you look carefully at their stories and when you look at the stories of the many, many people who demonstrate the opposite which is that you become really successful in a meaningful way in your public and professional life not by forsaking the other parts of your life, your family, your community, your personal life, and you're a great example of this yourself, but rather by embracing those other parts of your life. Investing in them those devotions, those commitments to your

family, your community, yourself, that's what makes you successful in your professional life.

For the last 10 years or so, my fulltime MBA students, I've had them write biographies of great leaders that they admire. I've also did a lot of study myself, and then, there's people I know who all give lie to this myth that you have to trade one part to get success in the other and demonstrate the opposite. I wanted to put down on paper and on anywhere you can read on a screen stories of obviously successful people who demonstrate how they become successful by integrating the different parts of their life over the course of their lives. None of them have perfect balance at any one point in their lives because that's impossible, but they are continuously seeking ways of creating harmony among the different parts of life.

In the first part of the book, I tell their stories, these six people, three men, three women, two from business, two from public policy, public service, and two from sports and entertainment, to show how they illustrate these skills that I was talking about earlier, so I ... These New-Yorker-style profiles tell their story, and then I analyze their stories according to the principles and the skills that they illustrate. I think I've been successful in helping to persuade at least some people that, yeah, you don't have to give everything up to be successful. In fact, it's the opposite.

Dave: There's a sense of struggle that ... Or striving that's almost honorable to have that people associate with success. That isn't actually like it's not necessary for success, but there's ... When I look at those modern business leaders talking about the perspective of a particular woman. You've got on one side like the Lean In Sheryl Sandberg perspective. On the other hand, you have like the Arianna Huffington Thrive perspective.

There doesn't seem to be that much overlap in the middle between the "kickass, and you just push harder" versus "kickass, but make sure you meditate, and sleep, and take care of your body". Are you finding that those two edge perspectives are coming together in your research or in the people you talk to?

Stew: The Sandberg case is an interesting one. If you read the chapter about her, you'll see that she really does very consciously and deliberately wrestle with that dilemma, and I think she was a good example. Now, it's easy. She's got billions of dollars. She can do anything she wants, but just coming up, you can ... I start the story at the beginning. Indeed, all six of these people, none of them went to private school. They all made mistakes. Three of them are on second marriages. They've learned continually through the course of their lives and careers to figure out a distinctive way of bringing what's unique to their worldview, their talents, their skills to create value for the rest of the world somehow. That's really the key.

In her 50-50 marriage with the CEO of SurveyMonkey, they're negotiating all the time about who's going to be available how for their kids, so I don't interpret Sandberg's story as one of "Lean In" means all in. It means getting home to dinner and being available as a mother. It doesn't mean that it's easy or that she doesn't experience a lot of guilt sometimes, but she's very conscious about working with her partner to be available to family and has engaged in all kinds of community initiatives. I don't see the stark distinction as some people do between her as a Huffington or others.

Dave: It's really cool to hear that because you had enough time to interview her and all. Whenever you write a book, and I say that now that my book finally came out, you're always looking at being truthful and also like providing a service where people read it and they learn something, so everyone thought that as the way they want themselves to be seen whether they're doing it intentionally or not, so it's cool. In the form of an interview, you get around some of that.

In your perspective on that is that there's more common ground than what maybe what I would pick up as someone who doesn't know or doesn't share at all and someone who ... I wouldn't say I'm great friends with Arianna, but I've certainly like met her several times. I like her work, and I think she's an amazing woman. It's very interesting just to hear not just the way we self-report, but the way someone else who's observing us, the way you do as an academic researcher is really cool, so thanks for that.

Stew: Yeah, no. I think it's ... I'd love to hear from your readers when they check out this chapter to see if they agree with me. I put those stories out there as a way to try to provide a counter weight to the standard model that most people have of super successful people that they had to sacrifice everything; but when you dig into their stories, you see that they have developed these skills. In Sandberg's case, the skills that I focus on are conveying values with stories, building supportive networks, and resolving conflicts creatively. She's really good at demonstrating those skills, but she's created them in herself by practicing and developing over time.

When she first wrote the first drafts of Lean In, as she told me, were, according to her husband, dry and boring because they didn't have that ... The stories of what actually happened to her and how her consciousness was raised about the story that she really wanted to tell about, women's advancement, the barriers that they face, and what they have to do to overcome them, and what we as a society have to do to help women to lead the lives they truly want.

The initial drafts of it were devoid of those stories, and she had to master the courage to come out as or with the kinds of episodes that she was actually rather shy about conveying. That's just one, one of the skills that she illustrates well, this notion of being able to convey your values to the real stories of your past history, and to bring other people closer to you, and to make yourself more credible. These stories, I think, do make the case. At least that was my goal and that's what most people who read them say.

Yeah. I could see how these people haven't ... Of course, you have to make some sacrifices in life. I'm not saying that you can get to where you want to go without having ... To make some choices. Of course, of course, and that there's not disappointment and even tragedy along the way. What I've seen is that most people can get closer to leading the lives that they truly want if you focus on how to do that. What I'm offering here in this book is some evidence-based means for how to develop the skills to get you there.

Dave: The name of the book is “Leading the Life You Want: Skills for Integrating Work and Life”. You can pick it up at your favorite bookstore, pick it up online. Stew, you have spent a huge number of years setting this up, so I think you did a great job on the book. I would encourage you if you’re interested in this whole “How do I deal with the work stress thing?” and a lot of people listening right now, you are interested in that. That’s one of the reasons that you listen to Bulletproof Radio is to learn about these things.

Out of those six stories where you dug in really, really deep, what are maybe like the two most important things that stood out? You do the mini statistical analysis of this, and you just think about like, “All right. What do I take away from that research?”

Stew: I think the most important thing is something that’s going to be obvious to probably most of your listeners and easy to grasp, but not so hard to ... Not so easy to execute on, and that is to be honest about what it is that you really care about in your life. What these people demonstrate, each have very, very different ways, is they ... Courage to explore who they are in terms of what their purpose is in their lives. Again, it sounds very easy and simplistic, but I am always amazed when I encounter as I do almost everyday people who ... They take up these exercises, and they realize, “Wow, so that’s what I stand for.”

Most people don’t address these kinds of questions in the hurly-burly of everyday life in 2015. Here we are. Most people don’t take the time, even just a few minutes to explore through meaningful introspection and dialogue with trusted advisors and friends, “What do I stand for? Where am I going?” They have an idea about what is important to them, and that is the touchdown. That’s the anchor. It evolves over time. If you could ask me when I was even your age or earlier like in my 20’s or 30’s what was important, I would’ve told you something very different than what’s important to me today.

Having a sense for what matters, that gives you the clarity of decision-making that enables you to do the really important work of saying no to many things and to focus your attention and energy on the things that matter most to you. Then, the second piece is to know who matters

most, and that too is a very challenging thing. As you may recall, Dave, when you did this stakeholder analysis in my class, you had to think about, “Well, who really matters to me in my home environment? Who really matters to me in my work and career? Who the people who I and/or groups that I care most about in the community, in the world, in my friendships?”

Just going through that process of thinking through who matters to me now is ... It’s not a natural thing, so you got to invest some effort in doing that; but these exemplars and the hundreds of others out there like them, they’re clear, and they continue to explore, “Well, who matters to me, and what do those people need from me? What do I need from them?” If you boil it down to those two, it would be knowing what matters and knowing who matters.

Dave: I like to say that I am a master of self-deception because I’m human, but ...

Stew: You’re fluently too then, Dave.

Dave: The problem that I ran into, in fact, when I was taking your course, you asked these questions in the form of surveys, in the form of these group exercises, but you have this, this idea of what and who should matter, so those ones that do matter except ... Well, they actually don’t matter to you, but it creates a disconnect.

Stew: Yeah.

Dave: I found it pretty ... Honestly, pretty damn uncomfortable to sit there and go, “Whoa,” like these results actually aren’t right because you have to basically admit that you’ve been lying to yourself about what matters in order to figure out what really matters. How do people who are driving in their car right now, how can they go about finding their mission or their purpose because that’s not a small nut to crack?

Stew: No, no, and you got to take it in small steps. That’s why these exercises that I offer in the book are pretty simple things to do. I designed them to be digestible chunks that enable you to dig in to what matters, so this ...

Some very simple things. In terms of being real, knowing what matters as it does in exercises there, and you can choose the ones that seem to fit you well. One of them is to tell the story of three or four episodes in your life history that have shaped who you are.

It doesn't take a lot of effort to think about, "Well, what has happened to me in the past that have been ... That's been really influential in help ... In shaping like my worldview, and what I care about, and what I invest my attention and resources in trying to make a difference in?" That's a really important thing to do because it's a grounding in your actual history and as a leader in your life. I define "leadership" really simply as mobilizing people to get important things done, and you can do that at any level, at any life stage, and I see everybody is having the capacity to grow their leadership continually throughout at life.

Indeed, these six exemplars do that, but just by doing that simple work of thinking through, "Well, what are the critical episodes of my history?" you reveal to yourself most importantly an aspect of what matters to you, and you have the other benefit of then being able to try out perhaps telling one of those stories to people who don't know them. That enables you to do the leadership work of connecting with other people building trust by revealing aspects of who you are to them, so that they know you better, and they could see you as a person who just like them has struggles and who has faced adversity, and has emerged as the person they are now and are becoming. That's one thing to do.

Another simple exercise is to take a few minutes to think about 2030, right? We're in 2015 right now, so now it's now 2030 in your imagination. Describe a day in the life of you in 2030. You wake up, who are you with? What do you do? What impact are you having? Just try writing that down, and I think you'll be surprised at how much that reveals to you about what you care about today. This is isn't a contract or an action plan that you're writing, it's a vision.

It's a compelling image of an achievable future. That too is a window into what matters most to you. Those are couple of the exercises that help people to understand what matters most. There's a bunch of other there too, but you could see, it's not that complicated. You just have to

realize that this is something that is useful to invest in and to take some time to develop your greater capacity as a leader which again starts with knowing what matters.

Dave: In my leadership class at Wharton, we had to do integrals ... Calculus. I remember I was laughing about that. I don't think it was actually your class, but there's an increasing movement to make even something that is as psychological, emotional, spiritual as leadership and try to turn it into a hard science. We've got brain mappings and spec scans, and EEG, and psycho neurobiology, and Wellbutrin, and all these things.

How does all of that integrate with the approach you have here which is a little bit more ... Finding your mission can't really be quantified in a meaningful way. At least, I don't know how to do it now. How do you reconcile the model, one I support, by the way, that you're working with, with this rigorous, harder science approach to solving the same problems?

Stew: Yeah. I'm not a biologist. I'm a psychologist by training. I wouldn't call them the old school, but I approach this more from a social-psychological point of view. My training is in organization psychology, and so it's well-established, and this is not just a modern idea. It's actually an ancient idea that the ... If you read the leger of philosophy through the dawn of time really, people were saying the same things. You got to know who you are, what matters to you, and you got to know who matters to you.

Then, in the modern context, using the technology available to us now and the cultural values that pervade in our society, figure out ways of meaningfully connecting with those people. A lot of that comes down to conversation and figuring out ways of being able to listen and take in the perspective of the people around you, and these are skills that you can develop through practice. We know this. We have evidence of that, and there are ways of measuring skill development and growth, but a lot of those indicators of the kinds of skills we're talking about here are subjectively based. They're social. They're perceptions of other people.

The quantified piece of the work that I do as you were mentioning a few minutes ago is in the experiments that people do. I like to have people think of themselves as perhaps you often do, Dave, and that is as a scientist in the laboratory of your life. What you do in the context of my courses, and programs, and books is you design experiments.

You have a hypothesis that is basically, “If I take this action, if I delegate this piece to that person, what do I expect to be the intended benefits for me and my work in terms of my productivity, my ability to get results on that matter? In my family life, how is going affect my family life? How is going to affect my community life, and how is it going to affect myself, my mind, body, and spirit? What are my goals for taking this action in this crucible, this small ... This laboratory?”

You boil it down to something you’re paying really close attention to, and then you come up with metrics for assessing whether or not you’re actually making progress toward that goal over say a six-month ... A six-week period. You’re creating a small time bound set of experiments and put the rigor in this model such as it is, is in figuring out creative ways of tracking.

You’re generating data, and it could be highly subjective, but it could also be things like how much you weigh, how much fat you take in, how fast you can walk, how much money you can save in reducing waste in your business, or how much new revenue you can generate through new products, or through expanding markets, or through being able to make more sales calls, or whatever it is; but it can also be something highly subjective like how your wife feels about you.

Part of the thing that I think most people find surprising and helpful in this process is that you can design experiments about anything, any action that you take that you care about. If you take this four-way view, if you think about, “What’s the impact of my action in one part of my life on the other parts either directly or indirectly?” If you drink the Bulletproof magic, what’s the impact not only on your weight, your health, your sense of energy, but also, how does that affect your relationship with your kids? How does that affect your ability to connect

with your clients? How does that affect your relationships with your friends?

If you then figure out, “Well, how would I measure that?” I’m always amazed at how creative people are in coming up with metrics that are relevant for them, so it’s metrics-driven. It’s about results because it helps you to see, “Well, after a period of four to six weeks, what worked? What didn’t? What did I learn?” You use that practical knowledge as a scientist, and then evolve in your practice over time. “Well, what I learned was that when I delegate, I have a difficult time trusting. That is going to get there, so ... And that’s what blew that experiment and made it a failure, so what do I do differently next time?”

You become more skilled at designing the important initiatives that you can take from the perspective of all the different domains and gathering data in that process. Whether it’s objective or subjective, it’s an important part of the learning enterprise of the scientist. I’m not sure if I answered your question though.

Dave: No, I think you did. The idea is self-experiments matter more. It is maybe the way I would attempt to boil that down because, well, if you do something and it ... I would like to say objectively makes you feel better, but there is no objective measure of whether you feel better. It’s a subject of measure because it’s what’s going on like in your head and in your heart, and you know when you’re feeling better. One of the things I did for about a year is I just came up with a numerical score every day. It was like, “Okay. How satisfied am I?”

In fact, I looked at your four domains from ... Back in the Total Leadership book in the course that I took. I’ll boil those down to one number because I’m too lazy to write down all of them, but every day, I’m just going to put down this one number. In a scale of one to ten, how satisfied am I with my life, with my job, with my relationships, and with my health? I think were the four things I did just from memory. Every day, I’d write a number down, and I was tracking that in relation to ... Actually, it was a talk I gave at the Quantified Self-Talk in relation to like frequency ... I’ll just put it out there. Frequency of sexual activity. In other words ...

Stew: Nice.

Dave: What I found was surprising because the idea, at least for men, of having an orgasm hangover where you're cranky the next day like I actually don't like life the day after and ...

Stew: Really?

Dave: Yeah, and I was trying to just prove an old Taoist or Daoist kind of teaching that turns out to be at least accurate in my case. It was a fascinating experiment, but the idea of ... It was just a number, but anyone who come along and be like, "Hey, Dave. You're full of crap because that number can't be verified by a third party." I'm like, "Yup;" but still like I learned something about myself that was helpful.

Stew: What did you do with that useful knowledge? I wonder.

Dave: All sorts of stuff; but mostly, we can talk about ... This is a family stuff. I'm kidding.

Stew: You're absolutely right that it's a data that matters to you, right? Some of it is entirely subjective. In fact, I have a piece in today's HarvardBusinessReview.org. I blog there occasionally. It's called, "Get More Done by Focusing Less on Work".

Dave: I love it.

Stew: It's in the productivity topic area just published this morning, and I report results there of the study I did of my executive MBA students a number of years ago. There's an assessment tool there that asks you to look at what's important to you in the different parts of your life. You take that a hundred points, divide it up according to work, home, community, and self. You can do this little assessment. Real simple.

Where do you focus your attention in a typical week? Work, home, community, self. How satisfied are you? Just a one-to-ten scale on subjective wellbeing in each domain. Then, how well are you performing in meeting the expectations of the key people in the different parts of

your life, in work, in home, in the community, and then in your ability to meet your own goals and expectations?

You did this. In fact, I think you might part of the study where ... Before, just when we started the course, and then four months later. What we found and what's reported in this article today at HBR.org is that what happens when people undertake these smart experiments to better align what they do with what they care about and with what the people around them care about, what happens is what they care about doesn't change very much over a four-month period, but they shift some of their attention.

On average in these 300 people that we studied, about 12% shift downward from work to the other parts of their life. They end up with a better alignment because they wanted to attend more to their families, their communities, their private selves. Their satisfaction or subjective sense of wellbeing goes up in all four domains as does their ability to meet the expectations of key stakeholders in all domains including work. Less attention to work, better performance at work.

Right, because you're focusing on with things that matter, you've clarified what matters most to them into you, you're less distracted when you're at work because you're paying attention to the people who matter to you in the other parts of your life more, so you're less distracted. Generally, you bring better energy, and attention, and focus to your work because again you're spilling over these positive benefits in the other parts of your life into your work.

Dave: That's remarkable, and it's pretty cool that you can do that, and I found the same thing. There's also this idea. No matter how much time you have to a project, you can fill the time with stuff; but if you decided, "All right. I'm going to consciously take time to go to the park with the kids or to go to a ... Go workout," or whatever it is that it's going to be renewing for you, now you have less time to get the project done. You could say, "If I spend less time on it, I'm going to do a lower quality job."

Sometimes, that's true; but there are other times when ... Look, just go with your gut like you already knew how to do it; so you didn't have

time to basically spin yourself up on a spreadsheet model and get all tweaked out. When you already knew how to do it, you know what you needed to do, and you just did it because you have 20 minutes. There may be like a little performance impact because you're not overthinking it. Do you think that's part of it?

Stew: Good point.

Dave: Is that part of the effect there, or just?

Stew: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Continue. You're explaining it in a very, very useful way. You're right. People tend to fill the time that they think they have available. If you consciously bound that time, you tend to eliminate waste.

Dave: You also may rely on your intuition more which is an area where I looked at ways of stimulating intuition, and you're training your brain to pay more attention to what it's doing in its subconscious realms because intuition is often times bubbling around it. It happens when you wake up from a dream. It's in there, but the bridge to it is not very easy to get to.

One of the things that can do that is you have less time, so like you had to do something. The something you just happen to do is the one that your intuition liked even though you might not have got there if you have a six-hour project, and you had your cup of coffee, and you sat down to bang it out. Right? It's hard to put any quantification around that. It's just more like a feeling or hypothesis I have, but I think there's something to it.

Stew: Absolutely. No. We know a lot about how we feel if we pay attention.

Dave: Yeah.

Stew: There's a lot of wisdom in that, but I think what we're both saying here, what we both founding in our respective fields of work in this area of improving life through intelligent innovation is it requires paying attention. That's a hard thing to do which is why the peer-to-peer coaching piece of this is often really useful for students, for clients, for

readers, listeners to build in some way of working with someone else who you're helping and they're helping you because it's very easy to not pay attention to these things.

If you've got somebody else who's paying attention to you and asking you compassionate, caring, loving questions, but being concerned about you and asking, "Hey, tell me more about that story or that experiment that you're trying that's not working. What's wrong? What are you running into? How can I help you?" That makes a huge difference in anyone's capacity to be able to sustain the difficult effort of trying to create meaningful change.

Dave: Well said.

Stew: It's hard to do this on your own as I'm sure you know.

Dave: Yeah. The idea of having a mastermind group has really caught on the past four or five years. There's a bunch of friends who run high-level masterminds where you spend a not inconsequential amount of money to go spend several weekends a year or even a full week with a group of high-performance people. This is all taken from like Napoleon Hill's idea of a mastermind, but these are in person. I honestly consider that sort of thing to be a waste of money for a lot of my career like why would you spend \$5,000 to do that?

I've actually changed my perspective on that because it's easier to do things when you have other people who are operating at your level, and you've got to find your own tribe like that; but if it costs some money in order to incent everyone to fly together to spend that quality time, rather than trying to just eke it out one on one, getting a group of a dozen or a hundred people who are high-performers who are thinking about things similarly together, it does something. Again, I don't have the objective data there, but it's obvious when you go. It's like, "I don't have objective data that this guy is blue, but I can just tell by looking."

Stew: We see this on ... Even on Coursera where people are signed out for free to take a course, and these are students, again, accessing this content, videos, and assignments, and then discussion forums and ways of

sharing their exercises with other people. When you make some kind of investment in this learning and you become part of a community where you've got leaders in the community who are skilled at ... Where we started, the very start of this conversation, creating cultures of compassion, and learning, and growth, and where that's in everybody's interest.

What I found my primary task as the instructor of this Coursera course, "Better Leader, Richer Life", my main job is to turn out after I did all the videos, and scripted them, and designed all the assignments, refined them from the book, so that they were going to work on this platform. My main job, Dave, was to be conveying a set of cultural values and expectations that, okay, you're a part of a community here. I don't care where you are on earth, but you're part of the community now, and your task when you joined this community is to be helping other people to become the leaders they want to become.

If you're not up for that, then this isn't the right place for you to be. Here's how you can do that, and here are the steps you can take. Anybody can do this. You just have to want to do it and realize the benefits from it. When you're in that kind of environment, it's remarkable what kind of magic can happen in terms of people feeling capable of taking steps towards performing better in the different parts of their lives.

Dave: I've worked to ...

Stew: It doesn't happen by magic. It has to be made real by people who are concerned about ... Caring about trying to make it happen.

Dave: I've worked to build that same idea and that same feeling into Bulletproof, into my company with my team as ... At least some of them, different groups have irregular bio-hacking calls where they all get together. Even though most people work remotely, they get together and talk not about like what we're going to do for the next thing on the blog or something.

They're actually talking about like what are the experiments they're running against themselves and sharing with other people the sense of community and shared accountability on how do I improve myself and how do I share knowledge with other people who are on my team, so we can all improve ourselves and then use that to improve other people through our daily work, but Bulletproof is a weird company. Are there companies you know that embody what you just talked about into their company culture, or is this more like you have to leave your company to go have a group of people like this?

Stew: No, no, no. There are number of companies, and I'm involved in quite a few of them in various different ways. I was just down at Motley Fool a while ago. You know the investment advisors?

Dave: Yeah.

Stew: They're based outside of Washington, D.C. They're living that in a very serious way. One of the things that's really striking when you walk into their office is there's books everywhere. People are reading like real books. Not just investment advisory books, but they're reading novels. They're reading history. They're reading philosophy. That's just one little indicator that was really quite striking to me about their culture that this is a place where education is highly valued, and that means learning at all different kinds of levels and different ways.

Dave: That's one example. Warby Parker, another Wharton alum, Neil Blumenthal is a friend and colleague. I'm going to be going up to speak there in a couple of weeks. What Neil and his colleagues have done is something very similar. He's trying to role model the idea of living a full life and encouraging through all kinds of policies and practices a way of making that happen for his people.

Certainly, what we see amongst students is that this is what they want. This is what they expect. This is why many students today in contrast to decades in the past, they're coming to work, so that they can figure out how to create their own companies. You're a hero to many of today's students because what you're doing is building out an idea that has market value that's based on what you're passionate about, and you're

creating a culture that is consistent with the world that you'd like to see your kids grow up in.

Stew: That's true.

Dave: That's just something that is just a lot more common today.

Stew: There's something changing, that's for sure compared to the early '90s. They come into work for big investment bank, and that's the end-all-be-all. There's a lot of people who would say, "I still want to do that," and there's a lot of people who say, "I know I'd make more money that way, but it's not what I want to do." That whole "what matters most" question, maybe they're just answering it differently because of whatever they have seen.

I've got the market data for you, Dave. I teach an undergraduate class to the sophomores at Wharton who are responsible for leading the freshmen through their required leadership and teamwork class, right? When you become a teaching assistant for that freshman class, you have to take my course on leadership and teamwork, so you learn how to work with teams. One of the first things we do is we sit in a circle.

These 25 superstar Wharton sophomores, best students in business at that age in the world, and I sit them in a circle and say, "Okay. Describe your dream job." Just this past year, the 25 people, one of them, just one talked about going into financier banking.

Dave: Wow, that's so different.

Stew: Right, right. When I did this last year, the third person I came to, Nathan, said, "My dream job is to be a stay-at-home dad."

Dave: Wow.

Stew: I fell off my chair. Are you kidding me? Can you imagine that, a Wharton sophomore saying that his dream job is to be a stay-at-home dad? Things are changing.

- Dave: Yeah. He might be one of the first guys to go to college to get an MS degree instead of ... I guess MS is Master of Science, but the old got an MRS degree, a derogatory say ... Way of saying a woman went to college whatever 50 years ago, so she could find a man, not because she wanted to be educated; but maybe the reverse is true which is funny.
- Stew: It is funny, Dave. I'm going to use that. I hope you don't mind.
- Dave: Of course, of course.
- Stew: I'll attribute it to you though, of course.
- Dave: That's even cooler. Now, in your book, I want to ask you a few questions about like some specific chapters in your book that stood out just to share some quick knowledge tidbits with people who are listening.
- Stew: Okay. Yeah.
- Dave: One of them is in chapter 7. You talked about failing to grow, and you talked about what's the worst thing you can do. What is the worst thing you can do?
- Stew: Yeah. I wanted to capture people's attention after reading these stories which hopefully are in themselves interesting to hear how these six remarkable people have developed through trial and error these skills that have enabled them to integrate the different parts of their lives. The two things that really stood out for me when I finished writing them and analyzing their lives according to the skills that they best illustrated was first, they have taken what is distinctive about them and somehow made it useful for other people whatever that skill or passion is. They figured out how to take what they care about and make it useful to others just as you're doing in a remarkable way.

The other thing is that which you just pointed to, they don't stop learning. I know this is a simple thing to say and again not so easy to execute on, but you read the stories of these great people and others who you admire. As your listeners might be thinking about, "Well, who do I admire in life?" You're likely to come up with somebody who is changing a lot throughout their lives. They've got some constants that

they hold true to; but in terms of what their interests are, they evolve. They become smarter because that's the human drive, I think, is to continue to learn.

The people who are good at that, they were able to just live in ways that are more meaningful, more true. The "don't fail to learn, don't fail to grow" is like the big idea that emerged for me as I looked at these stories and the lessons that they taught me.

Dave: Let's talk about being programmed to please because you wrote a lot about that. How does that play in to this whole delve in the life you want?

Stew: That's a great question. Being programmed to please ... This is more true in certain cultures than others, and it's different for men and for women in different parts of the world where you're taught to be selfless in giving up your life really for the benefit of other people, and that's ... When I talk about taking what's unique about you and making it useful for others, I'm not talking about giving up yourself. I'm talking about really embracing who you are and investing in that in a way that's going to be useful to other people.

A big part of the challenge for many people, this is not just young people, although it's especially hard for people in their 20's, is to break through the constraints, the nets that surround you in your youth when you don't have freedom in the way that you can have it as an adult which is to choose what matters to you. My students right now, my fulltime MBA students who were going through the course as we speak, we just met this week to talk about this very topic.

We're looking at the stakeholder analysis, and the topic of conversation was, how do I find the courage to choose the people who mattered to me and to negotiate with the people who surround me the terms of our relationship in a way that are going to be mutually beneficial, so that I'm not just a slave to other people's desires. That takes effort. The good news, of course, is that their skill involves here that you can learn and you can practice, but you don't get better at it by thinking about it. You

have to do it, and then see what works and what doesn't, and that requires an investment in your education and development.

Again, there's really good news here, and that is if you want to, you can change that. One of the big takeaways for many people who read my books and take my course is they come to see that they have a lot more freedom than they thought they had. Indeed, the original impetus for this whole approach when I first came up with it at Ford Motor Company in 1999 was to try to change the culture of Ford Motor Company. That was my job description.

I was creating change in the culture of a hundred-year-old iconic manufacturing company, and this was one of the ways that we tried to do that was to say to people. "Look, you know what you care about. You know who the people around you are that mattered to you, and you can discover what they care about. Talk to them. Discover what they really think which is probably a little bit different than what you thought they think about you, and then come up with some ways of making changes that are good for them and good for you."

That concept of pursuing the four-way win, that really helps deliberate people from the power of programmed expectations because you're taking systematic action, conscious deliberate action that's designed to not just advance your own goals or not just advance other people's goals at the ... And to forsake your own, but to take leadership action which is to move in a direction that's good for you and for them. That frees you from feeling selfish or guilty because what you're doing in taking care of yourself is actually becoming a better father, or a better employee, or a better friend.

When you think of it in those terms, it's not like you're just doing it for you, and it's not like you're just doing it for your parents. You're thinking about, "Well, what do I care about, and now how can I move forward in my life in a way that's going to be good for them and for me?"

Dave: That's really well said, the idea of hacking selfishness or guilt, so that they aren't what you thought they were, and that's one of the reasons I recommend people read "Leading the Life You Want" and one of the

reasons I want you back on the show because writing about that sort of thing is hard to do, especially in authentic helpful way. I think you've earned your chops to do that. It shows. We're coming up on the end of the show, and there's a question I ask every guest.

I haven't figured out what to do when I have the same guy on twice because you've written two really good books, but the question is, what are your top three recommendations for people who want to perform better in life, not necessarily in work? You probably don't remember your answer last time, so I'm going to ask you to run through ... All right. Given everything you know from Wharton and not, the three things that I should know and that everyone listening should know, and we'll see if they match your last ones. No pressure.

Stew: No, it's ... This is a tough test, but fair enough, Dave. It boils down for me to looking inside and knowing what's in your heart now, not what was when you were a kid, and that simple, straightforward, everybody knows is to be true, and it is follow your heart. Have the courage to look in to see what is actually there. Don't be afraid to identify the people who really matter to your future because they're probably a little bit different than those who matter to you in the past.

Dave: Wow, very well said.

Stew: You think carefully about who you're ... That's why I like the term "stakeholder" because it's who has a stake in your future. Not who owned you in the past or who mattered to you in the past, but it's all about forward-looking in light of your history. The third piece is strive to be kind and good in the world by learning how ... What is distinctive about you can be of us to other people, so it's continual learning in the service of people around you.

Dave: That's a pretty amazing list, and thanks for sharing it. I don't think it's the same as last time. Not that I remember exactly, but if it's the same general ideas, you put two of those about as distinctly as I've ever heard those things put, so kudos. I will be sharing those on Facebook and all because it's perfectly elucidated concepts and ones I would agree with. Those are really valuable.

Stew: I'm glad you asked me.

Dave: Your book, "Leading the Life You Want: Skills for Integrating Work and Life", is on Amazon, Barnes and Noble, at your local indie bookstore, all those places. It's a well-received, well-respected book. If you listen to the show regularly, I have a good number of authors on here I recommend. In fact, I wouldn't have them on if their books weren't worth reading, but Stew's is there. If you're dealing with work stress at all or some life stress, things aren't lined up, it is a good read. It really is. Stew, where can people find more about you, more about the Coursera course, or whatever else? Just give me the URLs, we'll put them in the show notes, so people can come to the website and download it.

Stew: Yeah, TotalLeadership.org is the place where you'd get a lot of information about what we've been talking about here. The other website that is fun to visit is if you just google on "Wharton Work/Life", you'll find our Wharton site there, and the research, practice, teaching, and impact work that we're doing at Wharton might be of your interest.

Dave: Awesome. Thanks again for being on Bulletproof Radio today, Stew. I've got great respect for you and for your work, and I really appreciate your time.

Stew: Take care.

Technology

[Stew Friedman](#)

[Leading the Life You Want: Skills for Integrating Work and Life](#)

[Total Leadership: Be a Better Leader, Have a Richer Life](#)



[Wharton Total Leadership Program](#)

[Total Leadership on Facebook](#)

[Twitter - @StewFriedman](#)

[Total Leadership TV on YouTube](#)

[Total Leadership Group on LinkedIn](#)

[Work and Life on Business Radio, powered by the Wharton School](#)

Featured

[Wharton Work/Life Integration Project](#)

[Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead by Sheryl Sandberg](#)

[Sheryl Sandberg](#)

[Thrive: The Third Metric to Redefining Success and Creating a Life of Well-Being, Wisdom, and Wonder by Arianna Huffington](#)

[Arianna Huffington](#)

[SurveyMonkey](#)

[Integrals \(calculus\)](#)

[Brain Mapping](#)

[Single-Photon Emission Copmuterized Tomography \(SPECT\) Scan](#)

[Electroencephalogram \(EEG\)](#)

[Applied Psycho-Neurobiology](#)

[Wellbutrin \(Bupropion\)](#)



[Get More Done by Focusing Less on Work \(Harvard Business Review\)](#)

[Mastermind Group](#)

[Napoleon Hill and Mastermind Groups](#)

[Coursera - Better Leader Richer Life](#)

[Motley Fool](#)

[Warby Parker](#)

[Neil Blumenthal](#)

Resources

[Bulletproof Diet Book](#)

[Bulletproof Coffee](#)