

Speaker 1: Bulletproof Radio, a station of high performance.

Dave: You're listening to Bulletproof Radio with Dave Asprey. Today's cool fact of the day is that we've been studying human super powers for a very, very long time. Thousands of years, to be exact. One of the first documents to write about what people are capable of in highly unusual circumstances is called the Yoga Sutras of Pantanjali. This is a book that's been re-written and researched extensively. It's basically 196 rules or laws or descriptions of things people are capable of that have to do with basically the process of becoming enlightened. In this book, there are about 25 give or take different unusual states that were documented by this weird scientific thing we do called observation. These are things that people are capable of unusually with meaningful, reasonable amounts of science now showing that some of these are actually real.

So if you're wondering about this idea of becoming super human or getting the ability to be far more intuitive and in touch with the world around you and just to sort of know things somehow in a way that isn't necessarily deductive, cognitive, rational, this is a big part of how I make my decision making. This is a big part of how say venture capitalists, the very best ones, say I go with my gut and I go with data. Our job as human beings is to be able to go with our gut and to double check it with thinking. I think it's a cool fact of the day because well, we're not the first people to think of this. This has been going on for thousands of years. That book is called Yoga Sutras. It's not even one version of it. There are many of them. One of my favorite versions actually is written by Alberto Villoldo, who re-interpreted that from a Shamanic prospective. Alberto's been on the show before.

So definitely there's some science here and it's weird stuff but it's kind of cool. No, I've not levitated while meditating, but I'm open to the thought.

Today's episode is special episode of Bulletproof Radio and one that's going to be really fun because we're talking about something called self mastery. The guest on the show today is someone who you're familiar with if you're a long time listener. It's Dr. Mark Atkinson, who's medical director and the leader of the Bulletproof Training Institute. He's a good friend and I've worked with him for a very long time on putting together what we do for the Bulletproof coaches. There are a lot of these coaches now. I think, Mark, we're looking at about thousand or so in the program or graduated.

Dr Mark: Yeah. We've had about a thousand people come through the training in a pretty short period of time. But these are people who were just thinking of doing life coaching but want so much more than life coaching. That's what we've been offering them.

Dave: The reason this matters both to Mark and me is that the lowest hanging fruit for just becoming a higher performance human is get your biology working so you can actually make the energy, the electrons that are required for you to do things, but here's what you probably haven't heard yet on Bulletproof Radio. If you become a more powerful person and you're a jerk, you become a more powerful jerk. So it's not enough to hit the biology like I'm leaner. I'm stronger. I'm faster. I'm more focused. But also, how do you become a better human being along the way, and that's what Mark and I are working on hacking.

So we're going to talk about what we've learned in our path on this today. Mark is a leader in personal development and has 20 plus years of working in the field. I've certainly spent a lot of time in it myself. So you're going to hear from two experts on the topic. During the show, I will talk with you about a new thing we put together, a new program. But let me just tell you right now, this is not an infomercial. This episode is full of knowledge for you to take home and use right now. That's the intent of this. I am going to tell you at the end, "Here's a code. If you want to go through a more deep training program." But we're not here to sell you, we're here to give you knowledge. I'm going to make this an offer and an opportunity for you. So don't worry about being sold to. There is no selling in here, but I am going to tell you a code at the end if you want to save \$100 on this.

On that note, Mark, welcome yet again to Bulletproof Radio.

Dr Mark: Yeah. Thank you so much. I'm excited to be talking about something that is relevant to every human being on this planet, and if they listen to and apply and practice and experiment with, almost certainly will make them a better, more effective, kind of wiser human being. So it's relevant to everyone.

Dave: Let's just jump in. The assumption here is ... In fact, this is behind everything I do. I believe that we are fundamentally wired to be nice to each other but only in a certain order of operation. I want to kind of gut check this with you. Number one, we're wired to run away from kill or hide from scary things. There's so much weight of our biology on that because if a tiger eats you right now, it's game over. Then the second thing we're wired to do is eat everything because if you starve to death, it's game over. It just takes longer to do that. So it's not as heavily weighted as react to fearful things. The third thing is make sure you have a lot of sex because otherwise the species won't reproduce, and if that doesn't happen, it's game over.

So our bodies are wired before we can think about it to do game over. This evolves from ancient bacteria, mitochondria, and every life form on earth, planet, animal follows these rules. In that order. But the fourth thing that every life form also does is after those core needs are met, we're wired to form a community, to form friends, to work together. Bacteria do this when they form yogurt and kobichi and slime molds do it. Herds of deer do it and forests do it when trees cooperate. We are wired to do this as human beings, but not if we're stuck in the first three. That's like the context for what I do. What do you think about that order of operations for people who are looking for self mastery as a framework?

Dr Mark: The most famous order is Abraham Maslow's and there's similarities here. It's basically saying there's some core fundamental needs that when met will relax you to the degree to which the focus on things of even greater depth and importance than survival. So many of us, when we don't have these core needs met, we're stuck in the survival state. A lot of people, some people listening here, are stuck in survival, and you know you are because you're going to have a furiously busy mind. You're going to feel as though you have no space in your life, and you're going to notice your stress, tense, and hyper reactive. That means you're in survival. It's a pretty unpleasant place to be. It feels really uncomfortable and our most destructive behavior flows from that.

So one of the first things we have to do is we have to meet those basic needs. That means making sure we have the right fuel on board. It means knowing how to regulate our emotional nervous system so that we can actually calm down our neurology and be present in the present moment. It actually means about working with our biology, getting it in order so that we can free up energy and capacity to focus on what matters most. A lot of people spend a lot of time focusing things that do not matter. It's like the focus on TV. They're all focused on distraction. They're engaging in addictions and compulsions that ultimately do not matter. They're an escape mechanism for this frustration and stress and tension inside.

So you know where self help starts. It starts with kind self honesty. Getting real. You look at your life, you look at yourself, and with honesty and ideally kindness not fair behind it, you say, "You know what, the way I'm living my life is to working out as I hoped it would. I'm not in the place I want to be. I'm not in the depth of love and relationship with my partner that I want to be. I don't feel connected to myself or my children." So it really starts with honesty, and then building up the foundation. Starting with your biology because to feel sane and alive, you have to have a biology that serves you. That's where you and I, we always start with biology because once your biology is functioning well, you feel great and then you have a mind that is so much more clear and better able to figure out how you want to dedicate your time and energy.

Dave: Very well said. I think at this point I've interviewed ... I was just counting in my head. Off the top of my head, I can think of eight gurus, people who were monks from various practices or nuns or people who have really achieved levels of meditation mastery. Guys like Dr. Barry Morguelan. 25 years. The real life Dr. Strange kind of guy. Dawa Tarchin Phillips, who does personal development work and executive performance stuff from the perspective of a Buddhist monk. The list goes on. The reason I interview people like this on Bulletproof Radio is that I think all of us want to have that same sense of well being, clarity, and the inner freedom that meditation masters have. Some of the world's highest performance have. But honestly, a lot of people who are performing well, in other words they're making money and they have a jet or they're well known in fame and power and all this stuff. Some of them are miserable as all hell. Others of them have a sense of effortlessness. Guys like Devine Jane who does Viome, who's been on the show a couple times, and just how do I help. Just this incredible energy. I think everyone listening wants that where there's a sense of effortlessness and clarity internally. It can be taught. It's just hard to teach if the biology doesn't work right.

Dr Mark: Right. It really starts I've found over the years of having taught this, I've come to understand this starts with one commitment. The commitment, for anyone listening to this, you got to figure out whether what I'm going to share with you is true for you. I'm just offering up a perspective. Dave's offering a perspective. You've got to figure out whether it's true for you, but try this out. So what would happen if you woke up tomorrow morning and the first thing you go to in your mind is rather than what needs to be done today and to get into that energy, you take a moment, you breathe. You ask yourself, "What am I really committed to today?" Experiment with this, rather than being committed to being a success or to perfection or to become more wealthy, try committing to discovering what is true and what is real. Don't you even go up to your head to try to figure out what that means because what it does it orientates you to a

depth of living within which you discover an innocence of ease and flow that so many seek.

You know what you do? As you orientate those, just like you literally show up. You say, "I just want to know what's true and what's real." You get committed to truth and you follow that. What it does, it takes you deeper because most of us and some of you listening live right at the surface. You know it. If you're really honest, you just know something's wrong. You know in your bones that something is not right. You don't feel at peace. You don't feel fulfilled. You're always agitated. You're indulging a whole bunch of behaviors and activities you'd prefer people not to know about. If you're really honest about yourself, that's why I'm putting out here is starting out with a commitment. You wake up tomorrow morning, you smile on the inside, and you just try this out as an experiment. You just say, "Okay. Today I'm going to commit to what is true and what is real." Don't even figure out what that means and then see what unfolds.

Dave: You can take this at big level and I've learned to do this over the last 10, 20 years. But one of the things I started doing when I wanted to take more supplements because like, "Oh, my biology's isn't working well. My brain is foggy and I don't have the energy I want." So I started studying these. I started studying them cognitively and rationally in my head. So I said, "I know that this is supposed to do this. Therefore, I'm going to take this. In fact, I'll do it every single day." As I evolved, I do 150 supplements a day because I'm going to live to 180 years or longer, Mark. We've talked about this. This is my goal. I think it's achievable. If it's not, I'm going to die trying. No harm. I would've died anyway, right?

But what I've done over the years is I wake up in the morning, I go to take my morning handful of supplements, and I check in with that what do I know to be true. What I know consciously and cognitively is that if I take this supplement, it has these mechanisms in lab studies and it ought to work. But I also know that there's a thing that happens in my biology before I really think about it when I reach for the bottle, and there are times when my body's like, "Don't take that." I don't. I mix it up on a daily basis based on this inner knowing. My belief is that this inner knowing, a lot of the stuff comes from what we like to call the ego.

I believe that the ego is an emergent phenomena from a bacterial level of consciousness. You have a quadrillion bacteria inside the body making decisions on those basic three things, and those roll up. They roll up on you thinking really nasty things about someone who cuts you off in traffic or about that person at work who's doing something you don't like. They roll up to pretty much everything you've ever done that you're ashamed of. The things you talked about earlier, Mark. One of the things that happens when you commit to truth like this is that you're better able to sort of feel when your body doesn't just tell you negative things because it's also wired to tell you positive things. The problem is that the negative things are incredibly over weighted because you might die.

So I would offer for everyone listening that those, we'll just call them shameful things or things that inhibit your performance or things that you don't like that you do anyway but they kind of feel good at the time. All of those are not actually you. You're

responsible for them, but that is a separate consciousness that keeps your hardware alive. If your hardware is only half alive because you haven't fed yourself right or because you're not sleeping or you're drinking too much, whatever your thing is, those systems will be even more insinuated for negativity and stress. But if you can just be like, "All right. There's something happening inside of me and I am responsible for it. But it's not me." A huge amount of burden just drops right then because we're like, "Okay. Now I'm dealing with almost inverse inside of my, but it also can be my ally. As long as I train it." Think of it like an animal because it isn't a very smart system. It's just blindingly fast. It controls your reality because it's the thing that senses light before you translate the light into a visual image and then tell yourself a story about the image in your brain. It was in line ahead of you.

So as you're working on knowing what's true, your built in hardware sensors will know what's true. But then they'll take that calm level playing field and they will tell you that the scary things are way more true and interesting than the non-scary things and that you should put all of your energy into avoiding those scary things or those things that might make you starve or might mean the species doesn't reproduce. So you overweight your behavior unless you know this and unless you are tuned in to telling yourself what's true because the you that's in there, that is separate from these urges is actually wired to be nice and kind to other people.

This is that part of self mastery I've never heard it put that way. This came out of writing *Headstrong*. It also came out of studying artificial intelligence in all of my tech entrepreneurship to understand emergent phenomena, which is when you follow the basic small rules. Trillions, almost Googleplex numbers of times and so many complex behaviors emerge. The complex behaviors that you don't like in your life are very ancient. You feel responsible and you usually feel embarrassment or shame or just kind of revulsion like, "God. Why did I eat the cookie? I told myself I wasn't going to, but I did it." Well, there's a reason. The thing is it wasn't you. The idea that I want you to come with is number one, it might not be you, but you own it. In this podcast, just in this episode, to be able to understand part of self mastery is that knowledge and then understanding how do you go through that practice you just talked about. What's really true? Not what do you think is true, but what you feel is true and then double check it with thinking.

Mark, aside from this practice that you wake up in the morning, take a few deep breaths and just ask yourself what's really true about my life today, what are some other tools that you liked or that you teach in the training program that anyone listening can apply to their life?

Dr Mark: Well, you've been pointing to it. It's called ego observation. It's about watching your ego with amusement. I call it amused observation. So it's like this, your spot on about the ego. The ego is not who you are. So just to be really clear about this, you know your ever present mental chatter and voice in your head that has a mental running commentary that is the voice of the ego. Now, what you could try as an experiment for just one day is not pay attention to it and instead have your awareness in your body because your body is constantly communicating to you a deeper level of truth. It communicates that through feeling contracted and expanded. If your body wants you to do something

that's in alignment with your highest interest, you'll get a felt sense of rightness. It'll just feel right in your body. Regardless of what the head says.

So the first thing is voice in your head. Period. You just know it. It's a survival focused, mental construct that originates from primitive and acquired conditioning that creates the illusion of a separate sense of self.

Now, you can run a self diagnostic scan to work out whether you live from within your ego. If you feel separate from life and other people and you habitually judge what you see and yourself and you live with a sense of me and not me, that means you perceive life through the ego, which you are not. Now the really good news is there is a deeper, more expansive dimension available to you whenever you want. I'm going to teach you how to access it.

So I'm going to teach you a very simple practice right now called centering practice. This will give you a taste of what it's like to rest in the experience of what we call aware presence. Here's how you do it. Now, the Golden Rule with all of these things is there should be no effort, trying or striving because if you do that, that's the ego trying. You do it with a smile on the inside. You bring open curiosity to it. So if you can and it's safe for you to do that, close your eyes and you're going to count down from five while breathing into your lower belly. Soften your lower belly counting down from five. So it goes like this. Five, four, three, two, one. Arriving in your lower belly. If it helps, place your hand there. Now keep your focus in your lower belly. Without going back up to your head, open your eyes and notice what you notice. What's happened to your mind chatter? For some of you it's either gone or it's gone down significantly.

Now one of your experiences and even if you're back up in your head, just smile. Don't make a problem of it and just come back into your belly and notice how much more present moment of focused you are. How much more centered and grounded in the here and now you are. Maybe even get a sense of spacious, aware presence. This is who you are. Never designed to live in the head from ego. We were gifted in the ego to survive childhood but what served us in childhood to help us survive, now limits us in adulthood. So part of this human upgrade process that we teach is about realizing one, you're not your ego, and two, is spend more time in the experience of aware presence and conduct your life from there. Because when you are centered in the aware presence like this, the best response to the needs of the present moment arises effortlessly from you. Your best game naturally arises. You're so much more present.

So the deal is this you want to live from your belly and your heart, and go up to your head when you need to think but when you finish thinking, come back down again. So when you start your day, tune into your deepest commitment, whether it's to know the truth, the truth of reality. Whatever is most meaningful for you, find words that work for you. Then before you go up to your head, smile on the inside, count down from five. Breathe into your belly. Become centered and grounded. Then if you're surrounded by any loved ones or partners or children, look at them from there. Look in their eyes, connect with them, and start your day from here. The following day, don't do that and contrast the difference between the start of your days

Dave: That is amazing. I hope that if you try to do that, that you do that at home in a nice calm place. Obviously, as Mark said, do it if you're in a safe place because if you're doing that while driving, you did it wrong.

What's happening here is if you listened to Mark, he actually changed his voice a little bit. So he spoke to you in a focused way that was just low and resonate and calm, and get this, your body picks up on that stuff. If you look at any one of the leaders in personal development, whether we're talking Jack Canfield, Tony Robbins, Mark. It doesn't matter. When they're helping you access those things, it actually matters because you are consciously saying, "I processed these words in my mental filter." If you're like most human beings, like, "Oh, I hear the words. They go in consciously." But what's really happening is that the vibration of the words hits cells in your body that are sensitive to vibration. The lowest level cells in your body are actually sub cellular components. Your mitochondria. Then you actually they effect you on a physical level, not just through your ears. Then they're picked up by the little cilia in your ears. Little cilia in your ears are also powered by mitochondria, right? Then they're translated to electricity and they do go into your brain.

But when they go into your brain, the hearing processing part of the brain, it is wired specifically for pattern recognition and filtering. After that happens ... By the way, all that's outside your conscious knowledge and control, unless you've trained it. Then it hits your prefrontal cortex, which has six or seven levels. Each of them basically is pulling out. Is that a piece of a word? Is that not a piece of a word? They are ignoring or emphasizing things that they believe will keep you alive.

So when Mark delivers something like that right now, he delivered it for you in a way that is more likely for your brain to be able to hear the words instead of for you to basically hear the words and just think about them. But you want them to kind of go into your unconsciousness without a splash.

You ever seen an Olympic diver. They dive off the high dive and they enter the water and there's no splash. Well, when you're doing work with your nervous system, you want to be able to communicate with your nervous system in such a way. That's one of the challenges of working on personal development is it's not enough to listen to a Nine Inch Nails song that has those same words. It's just going to effect you very differently than if you're sitting in a calm, dark, focused, warm, safe place and really tuning in because your body listens to all that other stuff even if you don't. So the real story of what's going on here is that the words effect you energetically and emotionally before they effect you cognitively. Most of us, including me. I'm an engineer. I come from a family of hardcore skeptics. I'm sure that if my grandmother was 80 years younger, she'd be like a science troll online right now saying, "That didn't happen because it can't." Sort of reverse logic stuff.

So I was all about processing from the head down and the way you process everything in your environment, whether it's a sound, light, things you see, it doesn't really matter. It all comes up through this energy processing filtering system before it hits you cognitively. Guess who's in charge of that stuff? It's not you. It's the ego. That's why this ego awareness we're talking about is so critically important for you, not to become an

enlightened master unless that's what you want to do. I'm in tune with that. But what it comes down to is do you want to perform better at the things that matter to you.

It may be I want to get swoll. That's my big thing. This still works or I want to just be a really effective entrepreneur or I want to be an effective parent or I just want to have a ton of energy when I come home from work and I don't have cravings. I don't want to be fat. Whatever it is, all of it starts with what you sense, what you feel and then what you think. If you just get that order of operations down and that was the only thing you walked away from this episode with, you're going to walk away basically with a gift that can help you. Why did I feel that? Why did I tell myself a story about what I felt? The truth is if you tell yourself a story about your feelings, the story's always a lie. It just is.

Mark, talk with me more about how people make up stories about what they feel.

Dr Mark:

Yeah. Absolutely. So the head is a story creating device that is constantly creating narratives and stories about why it thinks something is going on. Those stories are rarely true, rarely helpful. So it's really important to know that that mind chatter, the story creator is the ego. It's constantly telling stories. That's what it does. If you experience life through the ego, you need to know something really important. That you're living behind a psychic firewall created to protect you during childhood, but now adulthood keeps you disconnected. You will know if you live behind this psychic firewall and just be honest with yourself now and just smile and just check in. If you feel separate from life, you feel disconnected and you feel like you're surrounded by these thoughts and these stories, you are sitting behind this psychic firewall, this mind made prison. You will notice, if you're really honest, that innate to that experience is a sense of something is wrong, something is lacking. There is a hole in the soul, a innate sense of insufficiency, a sense of either not being good enough or not having enough.

So what we're pointing to here is that the foundations of human development is to realize, one, you are not the ego. Two, you're probably existing most of the time experiencing life from behind this psychic firewall. Three, you are not supposed to ever believe the stories and that narratives the ego create. Occasionally they're helpful, majority of the time they are not. Four, you have a choice. You have choice because you are 100% responsible for your state of consciousness at any given moment. We're really giving you a tool for shifting state of consciousness. That's just a breath into your belly, called centering practice. Another one is if you look straight forward right now, soften your eyes. Even just the act of softening your eyes. We have a lot of tension in our eyes. Simply the act of softening your eyes will put you into alpha state. That is the space around you and what's starting to happen. Now if you do this without effort or trying, you're going to notice yourself starting to feel more calm and centers. So what do you do? You just change the way you were looking. The way you look affects what you see and the energy that flows to it.

So it's like these are just foundational things that every single human being on the planet should be taught, which is you can shift your state of consciousness. You're not supposed to live from your head but use your head. If you're not skillfully working with your head, it's using you according to condition primitive program that probably is

creating a lot of suffering for you. If it's creating suffering from you, you're probably creating suffering for others as well.

So for your sake, for the sake of the people around you, for the sake of the society and community you live within, not just for us. But as a part of our contribution to contributing to our high functioning society. Because as you learn to move beyond the fear based narratives of the ego and you start operating more from a way of presence innate to which is a lot of the qualities we seek, kindness, joy, ease, flow, connection. You see, what you seek is who you are. Who you are is discovered when you come out of the head and ego, into the present moment, in the body in a way which is open and allowing.

So what Dave's been pointing to is this idea that you want to be sensing into and feeling into the experience of your live body. Most of us live in the head. We're decapitated from it. As you sense into that, it's constantly giving you information and your job as the information comes up, notice throughout the day tension comes up all the time. Blockages come up all the time. How there's part of you who can impulsively resist the flow of experience through your body. The greatest gift you can give to yourself is the next time you notice your resisting what's going on in your body. Whether it's anxiety or fear, you smile and you say to it wherever it is in your body, "I see you. I accept you." In that moment of welcoming reality in your body, you're going to notice something profound. The body will relax and the story that was being fueled by the tension will shift or dissolve. So wow, you can actually intervene before the story by paying more attention to your body.

So the next time you're caught up in the unhelpful story, smile, center yourselves, notice where the tension is in your body, welcome the tension, allow it to flow out of you, and you're going to free yourself. Drop into aware presence innate to which is the experience of freedom, and in freedom you can choose your next response.

Dave: It's interesting because for a lot of people who hear that, that's going to absolutely trigger a BS detector, Mark.

Dr Mark: Right. Right.

Dave: I've become who and what I am today because I can solve problems because I can think about things because I'm smart. That's all true. That's a part of it. But I want to share some stories, things I've seen, things that have happened to me and I want some stories from you too that make this true. I'll go first and then I'll ask you for one.

Dr Mark: Sure.

Dave: One of the things that was most profoundly helpful for me was ... Keep in mind, I had the symptoms of Asperger's. I tested high on an Asperger's test. I wasn't formally diagnosed with this because I'd already done a lot bio-hacking by the time I figured this out. But it's something that runs in my family. A lot of my engineering relatives are Asperger's. So the odds are that I did have this. When you do have that, you're pretty

much hyper rational. You think about things all in your head. I went to a personal development thing. One of the first things that I'd ever gone to. A friend of mine said, "Dave, you have to go to this. I'm not telling you what's in there because then you won't go." I'm like, "All right. Fine." I was getting out of a relationship that wasn't working for me, and I had just lost \$6 million. The only \$6 million I had at the time. So I was not in a good place.

I went to this and there was some stuff that was just really uncomfortable for me in there. It was basically working with feelings and all this. The woman in charge said, "You know, Dave, I think you're feeling something." I said, "Yeah. I'm feeling something. I'm pretty pissed off. This is stupid. I don't like it. I don't want to be here." She said, "You're feeling something else." I said, "No. I'm not." It actually took two days of her really, really working with me with a couple other people. Finally, she just looked at me and she said, "Are you feeling anything in your body?" I said, "Yeah. My stomach feels a little bit weird." She said, "There's a name for that feeling." I'm like, "Oh, really? What is it?" She said, "It's called fear." I looked at her and I said, "Yeah, right." I said, "If it was fear, there's nothing here for me to be afraid of. Look around. I'm in a safe place so it can't be fear because there's no reason for it to be fear." She just laughed and she said, "Feelings are rational. There doesn't have to be a reason for you to feel any feeling. They can just happen."

This came down to my mental map we talked about earlier around how does your brain process things versus how does your body process things? I believe that we process things through the brain. That was the story that was not true because we actually feel it first and then we think it because feelings are faster than thoughts. For me, that was a huge eye opener. It really sent me down the path of simultaneous bio-hacking and part of bio-hacking is personal development. Where you can get your hardware working, you can turn out the energy in your body, but if the software in your mind, these stories we tell ourselves are completely wrong, you'll just be a more powerful jerk. That's not what I want to unleash on the world.

Dr Mark: Right.

Dave: It's something though that even if you just get your biology working better, you'll be less of a jerk because at least you'll be less stressed about starving to death and your energy will be better on one level. But on the other level, when you allow the conscious processing and the ego to be in charge, you will do things more powerfully that are jerk like but they'll be less times when you're just emotionally cranky irritable. So you'll still do big, nasty things if you don't address this side of bio-hacking. So for me it was just that story and literally feeling this in a really uncomfortable, personal growth environment. Uncomfortable for me, which was that feelings happen before thoughts and they happen without a reason. So if you're a computer science guy like me and you're saying, "Well, I got this," actually you don't.

The second story that ties in with this is my friend Craig Hanley, who runs a large company. He came and he did 40 Years of Zen. For people who've been listening for a long time, 40 Years of Zen is my neuro feedback facility in Seattle. We've got neuroscientists and custom hardware and software. I spent four months of my life with

electrodes on my head. Basically running a lie detector. Like showing me how to control my brain and how to sense these things that maybe weren't easy for me to sense. I bring executives and people through this program. It's giving me to the opportunity to kind of look inside the head of some powerful people. I can talk about Craig because he posted this stuff all over Facebook. What he said is like, "I'm a really successful entrepreneur." He's been in Entrepreneur Magazine and Inc and all this. He said, "I didn't realize that almost all of my success was driven by being bullied in seventh grade." He's like, "I didn't know it. Now I don't have to follow those rules anymore."

My success, I made \$6 million, was driven by an absolute terror of failing, right? So you can become successful running away from stuff that is scary. The problem is its success without joy and happiness. It's much easier to be successful and the measure of success is how much do I like my life. You can do that by not running away from something, but actually moving towards something that's meaningful and important to you. That's really the essence of all of this and for me, personal development, breathing exercises, meditation, yoga. I went to Tibet to learn meditation from the masters. In my case, gluing electrodes to my head to really get the nuances of it, but that isn't necessary for anyone listening to do. But what is important is you understand these things. You're like, "Oh, there's a feeling. Okay. The feeling is real. Is what I think is causing the feeling, is that real?" The answer is probably not.

An example there, I used to have huge muscles in my middle finger, Mark. That'd be because people would cut me off in traffic. I'd flip them off and I'd tailgate them. I was a total jerk about it. The story in my head that I totally believe was that they're cutting me off because they think they matter more than I do or I don't even really know the story, but basically I just get really mad. This is not an uncommon thing. But the story I'd replace that with after doing lots of these breathing exercises and neuro feedback and whatnot is that look, I don't know why they're cutting me off. I could believe it's because they're more important than me. I could also think they're cutting me off because they're on their way to the hospital to see their children who were in a bad accident who are about to die. I don't know whether either story is true. Probably neither one is true. Frankly, they probably aren't really paying attention when they cut you off or maybe they're just having a bad day. Whatever. I don't know.

The bottom line is all I truly know someone cut in front me when I don't think they should have. Then that enabled me to just literally over night just by replacing the story with one that made me behave better to completely just not care if someone cuts me off. That's the kind of freedom. All the energy I was wasting on that was completely not good. All the negative energy I was putting into the world from that wasn't good. All of a sudden I saved that negative energy and turned it into energy I can use to do something like write a book or do a podcast or something useful.

All right. Tell me some stories about how you came across this, Mark? Because you've had a long and twisted in a good way path of realization.

Dr Mark: Right. That definitely twists in a good way. So many people come to this because their previous way of being wasn't working right. So for me, I was maybe about 12 years ago on TV a lot, launching the first book, all that kind of stuff, doing book tours. Before I had

go to speak, I would be in my room crying, not knowing why. I would speak for an hour and a half, shake hands, sign books, go back to my room and cry.

Dave: Wow.

Dr Mark: Then I will go on national TV the following morning as a holistic doctor and just before I go on, I go into the toilets, the washrooms, and cry. Shift gears. Be a doctor on TV. Go home and cry. I had no idea why this was. My head couldn't compute it. It didn't make sense because on one level I was being successful, right? It was like making a difference. So there was two parallel universes, there was sadness in the body and then there was just confusion in my head as to what the hell is going on. So when I eventually, reluctantly saw a therapist, she said, "This body tells the truth." The body tells the truth. She said, "But the story you're making up is not the truth. It's a guess. It's a guess to what the hell is going on." Let go of the story and be with what is true. What is true is there's sadness there.

Now you got a choice around that. Either you continue to ignore it and see how that works out for you and you've been trying that for a long time. Or turn towards it, be with it, feel it, welcome it, and allow it to move through you. I did that and the freedom was like being completely deflated. I realized, "Wow. I have been tense for so long. Fearful for so long. I never was able to admit it to myself." That's why I started off talking about kind, self honesty, getting real. Just in the mirror I was fearful. I was trying to impress the world. I was trying to get applause. I was trying to get validation for who I was. It was unfillable need. I was trying my best and it wasn't working.

All along, this emotion was breaking through trying to communicate to me that what I was doing was not working. In that moment of simply surrendering to the actuality of the sadness and opening up to it, I felt I didn't have to pretend anymore. Maybe I could just be me and it was okay to be sad. I didn't have to be super human at the expense of my emotions and my relationships because I also came to realize, "Listen, unless I'm attuned into my emotions and my body," you cannot relate with another human being because you can't relate from behind the head because you're relating through stories. But when you're in your body and in your emotions, you relate from there. That is the bridge for intimacy and for connection.

So that was my turning point. What that then led to was realizing, "Wow. I have to go back to kindergarten." The reason people say things like, "This is all bullshit." That's called fear. That's okay. That's completely okay. You remember the psychic firewall I talked about? Right up front, skeptic, cynic, critic, judge. If you're listening to this and you're thinking, "Yeah. This doesn't make sense. What are you going on about?" Don't worry about it. That's just part of the psychic firewall kicking off. That's like a piece of toast popping up. Just smile and do it anyway and see what happens. You've got nothing to lose. All I'm saying is like go through your body and welcome what's there, or breath into your belly, count down from five, see what happens.

So for me it was like I literally felt I realized I have got to learn how to rebuild myself from the ground up and I've got to find people I trust who can help me do that, who are further along in the path. So I had to a therapist. I had a mentor. Did shed loads of

drama work. I just had to do a lot of anger work, a lot of rage work. I had to have very difficult conversations. I had to learn how to work with and manage my stress, my emotions. I learnt to meditate. I learnt to completely rebuild my biology. I sorted out my diet and realized, "Wow." When I came off sugar after two days, I was like a different human being. It's like the light bulb went on. I was like on fire. I started eating more healthy. I started working out.

Then I realized, "Wow." The kind of human being I am is profoundly influenced by what I do with my biology and psychology and life has gifted us this body, mind vehicle to take great care of and to use in service of our deeper purpose. That purpose can change over time. Sometimes it can be just to show up and take amazing care of our children. It can be to be of service to this person or this person. So the idea is you have to learn how to take care of and navigate this vehicle called the body, mind. You've been gifted it. Right? So when you befriend it, you learn how to use it in service of your heart's callings to your deeper purpose. That is when you feel like you're living from integrity and that's why you experience the ease and flow that we talked about at the beginning of this. It's like you'll literally feel as if life is living me and you discover it's like my job is to keep my ego out of the way. When you do that, then what comes online is natural confidence and ease and natural intuitive capacity, ability to be present and connect, to listen, to relate and a lot of fun, a lot of enthusiasm, a lot of joy, and profound gratitude.

Now, no one needs to believe that. What we're pointing to is just check it out, try it out, see what happens. If your life's working for you, don't worry about it. But if your life's not working for you or you're being called to something deeper, try it out. Find the path that works for you, but just realize it's like most people who are successful, I mean genuine success that means they're successful in life as well as love, genuine success, have done a lot of inner development work while surrounded by mentors and teachers. Do merely value self care and looking after their body and their mind. They realize that has to be foundational because everything else flows from that.

Dave: In fact, my next book I just finished writing the manuscript about 10 days before we're recording this episode is really about that part of things because it turns out the people who run hundred million plus companies, some of them are miserable but the vast majority of them actually have done this work. The people that I get the most joy out of spending time with have done this kind of work. So there's this whole network of people who are really successful, not because they run big companies, not because they have a lot of money. Sometimes they don't have a lot of money, but they've changed their field of work. They've invented new things. This is what makes them tick. It's not all cognitive. Usually there's some level of brilliance and cognitive thing, but there's also a level of intuition. So my ask for all people listening to this is that you got to step up and do this kind of work.

Here's how I got there. I did all the stuff that's supposed to work from a cognitive domain. I mean, I did the education. I have a good career. I went to western doctors. I did all the things. I got to the point where the more I do this stuff, I'm completely unhappy. I didn't even really admit that to myself until I kind of hit the point where you couldn't really deny it. You lose all your money. You're in bad relationships all the time and you're working 16 hours a day and it's still not enough. You get there. Then I said,

"All right. I'm going to do what's not supposed to work." So I started doing personal development. I started doing yoga. I did ayahuasca 20 years ago with a Shaman in Peru. I went to Tibet and studied meditation. I did all these things knowing full well that it was probably bullshit because it's not where I'm from. But I'm like, "But I'm going to try it because the stuff I'm trying simply doesn't work. It isn't getting me where I want to go. I know something isn't right. So I'm just going to suspend my disbelief. I'm going to assume it's all bullshit, and I'm going to do it anyway. I'm going to be scientific about it and test it." Because there's a large group of people who seem to say it works even though they can't tell you exactly why.

Since I took that step, I've benefited a lot. I can tell you right now, I wouldn't be doing this show. I wouldn't be running Bulletproof. We wouldn't have done a hundred million cups of Bulletproof Coffee last year. I wouldn't be writing books. I wouldn't be like the dad and husband that I am. I probably wouldn't even have the mission I have right now. It's because I stepped off and I said, "Look, it's probably not going to work, but I don't know. Maybe I'll feel something because right now I don't like what I'm feeling." The downside of that is I might have wasted some time. I might have gone to Tibet and seen some interesting mountains and had no effect. I might have just drunk ayahuasca and thrown up in the jungle and just been like, "That was terrible. I'm never doing that again." But the downside risk is relatively low from trying out what we're talking about on this episode for you. The upside is is the most precious part of being a human being. So it's worth the risk even if you're highly skeptical, which is where I come from.

Dr Mark:

You can just ask yourself, "Who do I want to become?" You have a really powerful ... I'll probably finish on this one. A really powerful question is this, we kind of go throughout life and we kind of say, "What do I want from life?" It's kind of very me egocentric. I'm going to put this out because this was really important for me and for other people I've told it to. Rather than asking what do you want for life, ask life what do you want from me? Who would you have me become, and keep orientated to that as you go about your day. Then what you will almost certainly find is that you will get a sense of being guided in a particular direction and you'll end up actually moving the direction maybe completely different to where your head thought you would go. But you'll be pulled deeper and as you go deeper into life, you tap into this under core and this well spring of well being and fulfillment and at peace.

All of this comes from courage to try, a willingness to face reality and be in reality, a commitment to know what is true, and then what you discover is that as the ego actually upgrades. It becomes from an image here, which is like a victim, blame kind of ego, it actually upgrades to being one that is much more focused on we as it goes from me to we. It's actually genuinely, naturally motivated to contribute, not at the expense of self but from the fullness of self. So it contributes to the well being of others. Then when you start creating a life where you feel connected to life, taking great care of the body, mind that's been gifted to you, and you're in service of others in some small or large meaningful way, then all that really comes in line is just gratitude. But you have to do the work and the work is challenging. The work is challenging and the ego will come up with a thousand and one reasons not to do it.

The ego's all about maintaining equilibrium. It wants to maintain homeostasis. It wants you to stay stuck. So watch out for that. The moment you see yourself distracting from doing the right thing, smile and do the right thing anyway.

Dave: Very well said, Mark.

Now, I promised at the beginning of the show that we weren't going to sell you anything and we haven't. What I am going to tell you now is that Mark and I have put together a training program that teaches you a deeper level of this stuff. So if what we said resonated or frankly, if we really triggered your strong BS detector, I'm just going to challenge you. Like, prove us wrong. Give it a try. You can go to [BeUnlimitedTraining.com](http://BeUnlimitedTraining.com), which is our new program for this. Because you're a Bulletproof Radio listener, you can save \$100 on the training, which knocks it from \$497 down to \$397. The code you would use for that is your future. So go to [BeUnlimitedTraining.com](http://BeUnlimitedTraining.com) and enter the code your future, which is going to save you something. What you get here is five weeks of training, five live calls with Mark and the training team, content that I've put together, and you get five different modules about what it takes to shift gears at this level.

I've got to tell you, just given what I'm doing now, the level of success not measured economically but level of success and just like I love what I'm doing. I like my life. This is the secret stuff that is there in people who change their industries or changed their field of academic study or change their ability to be good parents. This is the stuff that no one talks about because frankly, it's kind of embarrassing. Mark it talking about crying before he goes on stage. He's a physician. He's an author. Before I learned how to do this, I was in terror before I'd go on stage. Going way back in the late '90s. I'm like, "I'm going to do it anyway." I didn't even know what I said the first five times I was on stage. It was completely blanked out, but apparently it was good because people clapped at the end. Eventually I was like, "I'm not going to die on stage."

But all these things, these are areas of development that are uncomfortable to talk about because it's admitting weakness, it's being vulnerable. You don't have to admit weakness or be vulnerable. If you do the training, you have to admit though that something isn't working as well as I want it to work. We're doing this training as an act of service because Mark and I ... In fact, the entire team at Bulletproof, we believe fundamentally that we're wired to be kind to each other when we get all this bad programming out of the way, when we our biology working right now. The core mission statement for Bulletproof is we make things that radically change people's lives in order to help you tap into the unlimited power of being human. I believe fundamentally we not just wired to be kind, but we have way more power, an unlimited amount of power as humans. It's just hidden from us. This is my own life progress. This is Mark's progress. I want to make it teachable. Mark wants to make it teachable. That's why there's Be Unlimited Training right now because no one's talked about this in this way and made it actionable.

So [BeUnlimitedTraining.com](http://BeUnlimitedTraining.com), use the code your future, spend a little bit of time in your life for five weeks and see if it works because I really think it will.

On that note, I'm tempted to ask Mark his top three pieces of advice for someone who's going to perform better, but he's already answered that because Mark and I do Q and A all the time. So Mark, I'm not going to do that.

Dr Mark: Cool.

Dave: If you liked this episode of Bulletproof Radio, you could do a bunch of different things. One of them is do something to show gratitude or just to be grateful. You can re-listen to the part of the episode where Mark is walking you through some breathing exercises about seeing which of your stories are true. You can also sign up for the training. But you don't have to sign up for the training in order to get the benefits of this knowledge. Just understand feelings happen first and thoughts happen second. Just that one thing is like a huge thing to walk away from this with. If you decide to do the training, [BeUnlimitedTraining.com](http://BeUnlimitedTraining.com). Check it out. It'll be worth your time. I'm so pleased to bring it to you.

This episode is standalone. If you never do the training, that's okay. Thank you.