

Kate: We might be doing things just because we're upholding some standards that if we really were to check in with our hearts and souls, they're not actually bringing us joy. So I believe things need to either bring us results or bring us joy. If they don't bring us results or joy, they have no business in our lives. So does this actually need to be done, is the first question.

Announcer: Bulletproof Radio- A State of High Performance.

Dave: You're listening to Bulletproof Radio with Dave Asprey. Today's cool fact of the day, I hate to say it, but there's a new study from public health researchers at Victoria University. This is the Victoria University in Melbourne. They Melbourne, but [inaudible 00:00:53] Melbourne. This is because I like all my Australian friends and followers. Anyway. People that run as little as once a week have lower risk of early death compared to people who don't run at all. In fact, any amount of running was associated with a 27% lower risk of premature death.

Now, why do I not like to talk about this study? Actually, I'm happy to talk about any study. But generally, running a lot and running regularly has an 80% chance of causing an injury the first year you start, and generally can result in, over the course of decades, which is the timeframe that we're talking about here, in new knees, new hips, and all sorts of bad things happening. So I'm going to tell you a cardio instead of running might be better. But what they did find in this study, which was interesting, was there was no significant difference between frequency, duration or pace. They went from running no more than once a week for less than 50 minutes to running every day for a weekly total of 250 minutes. This was based on a meta-analysis, which means they looked at 14 other studies of 230,000 people and published it in the British Journal of Sports Medicine.

So what I'm going to do is just generalize this and say, based on headstrong and the very strong data in Superhuman, my new anti-aging book, seriously, you got to move, whether you have to actually run versus ride a bike or swim probably doesn't matter. So there you go, more data that says that you ought to do something. If you wanted to make that running even more tolerable, put on an episode of Bulletproof Radio, like today's maybe and then just close your eyes, do that unpleasant exercise, get it over with, check the box, maybe you'll live longer. If not, you'll just be smarter and better looking. Okay. [inaudible 00:02:35] one of the three. If you're not following my brand of Weird Biohacker Humor, you really should be, and you should follow my Instagram page, Dave.Asprey, a few hundred thousand followers like my weird humor. I promise you, there will be pictures of my turkeys, my pigs, and my sheep, or at least little videos on my stories.

It's actually kind of cool to see that I really do what I say I do. Now, today's guest is someone else who does what she says she's going to do. We are talking about Kate Northrup. She's an entrepreneur, bestselling author, speaker and mom. She focuses on doing something near and dear to my heart, doing less and working fewer hours while raising two small kids, and just wrote a book about it that is worth your time listening to this even if you're not a mom, even if you don't have two kids or one kid or any kids,

because her mindset and her thinking is relevant to all of us around just not wasting time on stuff that doesn't matter. Kate, welcome to the show.

Kate: Hi, thanks so much for having me.

Dave: Why did you decide you were going to build a company as a mother of two young kids? Isn't that the worst time to build a company?

Kate: Well, actually, here's the good news, I started my company before I had kids. So we were well underway by the time we started having kids. Though, I work with a lot of women who do decide... Here's what's really crazy. There is something that happens, it's very common, this is purely anecdotal, that I know so many women who get this crazy burst of creativity at the same time as having kids. It's not optimal timing, but at the same time, I really believe that creating a human stimulates your creativity on a lot of other levels as well.

Dave: I didn't think we'd go there in this interview, but I truly think that starting a company or a movement is energetically the same as having a baby.

Kate: Oh, absolutely.

Dave: That's not to say that the physical parts of having a baby aren't different and difficult, but there's something that both parents energy does, but in particular the moms' that is... it's around expanding and growing and being a container and all that. It's what they don't talk about for entrepreneurs, that you're going to have to do that, and that energy comes from somewhere, usually your coffee.

Kate: Yes.

Dave: So, your book, Do Less, is... it just has the right title, it has everything. But I have a sense of skepticism here, because so many moms, including some of my... My wife. My wife's a medical doctor and a fertility coach for highly successful people. She sees people who are... women who are CEOs of startups, and then they have babies and they get what Lana is calling a mommy brain. For some amount of time, particularly like really smart, driven, focused women. It's almost like mother nature is like, "Hey, it's time to slow down, focus on nursing, focus on the nest." Which to some women can almost be like a loss of identity. Like, "My memory doesn't work the way I supposed to. I'm so emotional, I'm sensitive to sounds." Did any of that stuff affect you right in the middle of this?

Kate: I love that question. Yeah. It's actually why I wrote the book. Because motherhood... I've always been a super high achiever, straight A student, all the check boxes. Becoming pregnant actually completely knocked me out, and I got the pregnancy brain big time and it was... and then giving birth was a whole thing. Then having the baby, I just didn't know who I was anymore, because I had completely identified with doing and with being capable and with being smart and with achieving things that you could see. Now, I

didn't know who I was anymore because I could not do those things at the same pace that I had done before, right at the beginning.

Now, over time, I have learned how to actually achieve the same or more with less doing. But in all honesty, right in those early days of having a newborn, I wasn't... I don't know. Women can do whatever they want. For me, it was not the right time to be out like kicking butts and taking [inaudible 00:07:17].

Dave: So you did it anyway though, and decided to write a book about what you did. What was the first thing, the first moment of realization that, "All right, I'm going to have to change my priorities or change my practices." Tell me the time that it hit you.

Kate: It wasn't a conscious thing, it was like a body thing. So my body just took me out. During pregnancy, I was so tired, and I kept waiting for the second trimester where all my friends were like, "Oh, it's so great. You'll get this huge burst of energy, you'll want to have sex all the time." One of my girlfriends was like, "I wrote five book proposals during my second trimester." I was like, "Okay, cool. I can't wait." That never happened. I just got more tired and more swollen and more huge, and my body just... I could not work the same hours I used to.

And then during that first year of parenthood, I struggled with postpartum anxiety, postpartum insomnia, so I wasn't sleeping. As we know, sleep is so critical to our wellbeing on so many levels. So that knocked me out. We had very little childcare because I thought I was supposed to be a super woman and be able to run a business and take care of a baby at the same time and blah, blah, blah. It was a very hard year. Basically, at year one, we sat with our accountant, and were looking at our numbers for our company and realized we had made the same amount of revenue working, both of us, less than half the amount we had ever worked prior in our adult lives.

So even though I would never want to go back and repeat that first year of parenthood, because it was fairly hellish for us, I looked at that and I thought, "Well, if we could make the same amount of revenue in less than half the amount of time because we were forced to, what if we took some of what we were doing by accident and did it on purpose in a far less stressful situation? And also, PS, we're not that special, so there's got to be something here that other people could apply to their lives."

Dave: So, what's the first step you recommend for someone? I'm going to generalize this a little bit. So someone who's just overwhelmed... [inaudible 00:09:30] say for a woman who's feeling overwhelmed right now.... Because certainly, pregnancy, having two young kids, that's a recipe for overwhelm.

Kate: Yes, it is. It is. Oh my gosh, it's-

Dave: It's just because of the constant interruptions [inaudible 00:09:42]. Circadian disruption, plus, "Mommy, look, mommy look." Like, I just wanted to send this one email, and it's going to help put bread on the table, gluten-free, organic, hippy bread and all that. But

that is incredibly stressful. So let's say someone's just dealing with that, I have this overwhelm, what's the first thing that you tell them to do?

Kate: So I really recommend... I think overwhelm is often a recipe... it comes from... Yes, it's like feeling like we have too much to do, but really, what overwhelm comes from is not having clear priorities. So I used to struggle a lot with priorities. I understand everything feels important, especially when you have a two year old calling your name every two seconds. In my case, I have a 19 month old and a four year old calling my name every two seconds. But I do recommend literally doing a brain dump and making a list, because when things swirl in our minds, they... it's like you add fertilizer to them. They explode, they become bigger than they actually are.

But when you do a brain dump and you write down a list of the things that you think you have to do or the things that you have on your plate... and then I recommend asking the following three questions about the items on that list. One of them, the first one is... I do this every single week at the beginning of the week because most of us think that in order to be more successful, we need to add more to our plate. But the vast majority of us, in order to be more successful in whatever way that means for you, we need to take things off of our plate, we need to do less.

So first question is, does this need to be done? Does this actually need to be done? So, so often, we get caught up in these idealized projections of what our lives are supposed to be or what motherhood is supposed to be or marriage is supposed to be, and a lot of them are based on unconscious inherited beliefs from our culture, from our families, from our religious upbringing. We might be doing things just because we're upholding some standard that if we really were to check in with our hearts and souls, they're not actually bringing us joy.

So I believe things need to either bring us results or bring us joy. If they don't bring this results or joy, then they have no business in our lives. So does this actually need to be done, is the first question. So an example of something that you might write down on your list that doesn't actually need to be done is like, let's say you decided you needed to be in charge of the entire bake sale for your kid's school and bake all gluten-free, amazing, organic baked grits. Well, does that second part actually need to be done? Like, the handmade, every single thing? I think that a bake sale is a bad example for your particular podcast, but that's an example. We really have to get rigorous with ourselves.

And then the second question is, does it need to be done by me? So here's where we get into the aspect of the fact that we are programmed to believe that the more we do, and ideally the more we do alone, the more valuable we are as a human being. That's really a core belief that's running the show, even if we're not conscious of it, and having us be over doers. The truth is, largely, if something needs to be done, a lot of the times it doesn't need to be done by you. I've even begun to delegate things to my 19 month old for simple stuff.

But the other day, there was a piece of trash on the floor and I said, "Ruby, can you pick that up and take it to the garbage?" She totally did, and I didn't have to get up from

reading. It was great. So start them early. And then the third question is, does it need to be done right now? This one's incredibly helpful, because if something doesn't need to be done today or this week, it really doesn't belong in your consciousness, it belongs either in your project management software or on your calendar at a future time, so you can take it out of the swirl.

Dave: It sounds really, really good, but I agree with you, especially for entrepreneurs, like if someone else can do it, why the heck are you doing it?

Kate: Yeah.

Dave: For moms, that means laundry.

Kate: Oh, for sure. Delegate the laundry as soon as humanly possible.

Dave: Actually, I'm going to be a little bit outrageous here. I'm going to say that sentence is for moms. That's for women entrepreneurs in general. Because I've spent a lot of time talking to entrepreneurs both before I got known for Bulletproof and after. If I'm in a room full of primarily women entrepreneurs, they're carrying so many household tasks that they learned when they were seven, is what you do to be a good girl, and they're still doing it and trying to run a company and a family. Like, stop, like, that's the lowest hanging fruit. What was your lowest hanging fruit, like the thing that you were doing that was the least value added of anything out there?

Kate: Do you want a business answer or a personal answer?

Dave: Personal.

Kate: A personal answer. The whole food thing. The three meals a day and the snacks, and then they want to eat again. That, I have really... We continue to go in and out, but I did delegate and I had somebody come in and make our food. It was the greatest decision I've ever made in my life, because my value to my children is not in me needing to make all the food, it's in making sure they are fit. So that was a big one, because I was noticing it was taking up a lot of mental space for me. I need that mental space for other things other than figuring out what's for dinner.

Dave: No, that sounds really wonderful. Look at you, look at me, we're both in a position where, "Oh, did you have a cook come in? Did they drive the Bentley? You're a successful author." Okay. People say this crap all the time. I'm like, "My car is seven years old guys. I live in the middle of nowhere, and there's actually no one to hire to do that. We cook our own food. In fact, we grow it ourselves." But the perception that, "Oh, you've had some level of success, you're Kate Northrup, that you can do it." But how is someone who hasn't had a level of economic success, someone who's working eight or 10 hours a day and commuting home, they have to put food on the table and they're the one who cooks it-

Kate: Yes, absolutely.

Dave: ... or no one eats.

Kate: Absolutely.

Dave: What's your advice for that? Because that's how most of us are living.

Kate: So I'm going to quote my friend, Sarah Jenks, and she said to me the other day, "In our companies, in our companies, it's 2019 and women are there, earning money, still at a lower rate than men, but they're there. In our homes, it's 1950." So you pointed at it already, even when you're in a room full of female entrepreneurs, they're still thinking that they need to be doing the laundry in order to be the good girl. We are not keeping up at home with feminism. Now, listen, I understand not everybody is married, not everybody is a heterosexual couple. However, if you are in a situation where you are married to a heterosexual, cisgender man, you need to divide up the tasks and stop expecting yourself to hold the whole thing because somehow that's going to make you a better woman.

Doing more laundry and cooking more meals is not going to make you a better woman. So I really recommend... and Mike and I did this, we wrote down on pieces of paper, every area our lives and every single thing that needed to happen in every area of our lives, and we went through, and he chose the thing that he loves to do, I chose the things that I love to do, and then we both marked off the things that we absolutely hate to do. So we looked at, "Okay, what actually has to happen on those lists, what doesn't need to happen? Who's going to do what? Dah, dah, dah, dah."

For many of you, meals don't need to be yours every single day. Especially as your children get older, you can pull them in as well, because... especially when they're in that like seven, eight, nine, 10, they're actually still really excited about helping and contributing, and the earlier we get them as contributing factors in our families, the better for their wellbeing for the rest of their lives.

Dave: Amen. 100% agreement. I'm going to offer a parenting hack, and then I want you to judge me for whether I'm doing this right or not.

Kate: Well, I'm not a parenting expert, I'm just a parent.

Dave: I know. But you're also talking about doing less, so I share that with you. Look, the reason that we've had kids throughout all of history, aside from the fact that our mitochondria tell us that if we don't have sex frequently, that we'll die, because they really want us to reproduce the Petri dish that the way our mitochondria reproduce themselves. But aside from that, is that we had kids because we needed free labor.

Kate: Yes.

Dave: Child labor is the sweetest, because it's done by children who don't have any choice about it, because you can tell them you don't feed them. Okay. That was dark. But that's kind of how it works. If you go back to the 1950s, the kids went out into the fields and

they did the work. So I told my kids, "All right, as soon as you're old enough, your job is you just set the table, and you clear the table, because I'm not doing it." Especially if I'm the one cooking dinner, or Lana is. I said, "You're going to get an allowance, it's going to be a dollar a day." Man, the amount of complaining.

So then I looked at them, I said, "All right, here's the deal. You get a dollar for doing it without whining and you get a dollar for doing it. If you do a crappy job, you don't get either one." That day, the kid stopped whining. Because I was like, "Look, if you whine, you make less allowance." That's worked for five years. They don't whine about their stuff, they just say, "Okay, I'm going to do it."

Kate: I love it.

Dave: They whine about other stuff, but... What do you think? Good idea? Bad idea?

Kate: So, I think that if it... Hey, does it create results or joy or both?

Dave: Less whining equals joy for any parent. That's just-

Kate: Yeah, and your table is set and cleared. Listen, I don't know, my kids aren't old enough to do those things, but I'm getting them onboard as soon as possible, and we will absolutely be incentivizing. Because I will say, like, growing up, my parents are wonderful, and there were certain things that we had to do, and we were just part of the... like, we were just part of the deal. We were loading firewood, we were doing all of that stuff. I think I could have even been taught to contribute more. In certain ways, I'd like my kids to be contributing even more than I was brought up to. So I'm actually excited about that, and I love [inaudible 00:21:13]. It is so true. Until very recently, we had children for free labor.

Dave: All right.

Kate: So there you have it, that's the do less way.

Dave: Here's the question though, from a do less perspective. If a three or four year old is going to help you do something in the kitchen, it takes you three times longer, and it's twice the mess.

Kate: Yes. I love this question. Okay. This is such a good... Yes, yes. Okay, but this is the same thing as hiring in your company. Yes, is it easier for you to do it the first time? Of course, it is. Is it annoying to train somebody? Yes. However, if you... It is the best time you could possibly invest in the longterm because the hours it will free you up with for years to come are essentially infinite if you invest the time upfront. That's why I really like to think about spending time versus investing time. Spent time, you don't get it back, invested time, you get a reward in some way.

Now, with our kids, I understand. If they are three and four, you do just get a bigger mess. When my four year old helps me fold laundry, it's not done the way I like it, and

it's really... I allow it to be my experiment in surrendering, healing my inner control freak, letting go and being present with her. Because when she's 16, I want her to still be folding laundry and for me not to be doing it then. So I really, really, really recommend that A, when we decide we're going to have our kids help, that we decide that's like our activity. So that's our time with our kids. So am I cooking with my kids to have a perfectly clean kitchen and for it to be the most efficient meal ever? No, no, I'm cooking with my kids to have fun and to be with them. Yes, down the line, then they'll know how to cook, like in several years. So that's an investment.

Dave: All right. I'm with you there. In your book, you write about this addiction to busyness.

Kate: Oh yes.

Dave: Now, this is not a mom thing, this is a human thing. Studies show that something like 40, 50% of millennials and gen Z people in the population are experiencing regular chronic anxiety. Certainly, as a younger person... I like to think I'm still younger. I just had my 26th birthday after all, but I'm going to live to 180. But I know when I was in my 20s, I was always at... there's always more I could do for my career, and it was just one thing after another. If I stopped doing it, I would get anxious and unhappy and all that stuff. Certainly, parenthood, for moms or dads, can change your perspective on what matters, but the amount of busyness goes up. How do you recommend people break the addiction to busyness?

Kate: Hmm. I love this question. I think it's a lifelong kind of thing, and it really has to do with getting in right relationship with our central nervous system. So you spoke about anxiety and how prevalent it is. I used to be... I used to really struggle with this, with panic attacks, I was on medication. I tend to be an anxious person, as do many people. What I've realized is, the way we are set up in terms of technology and in terms of expectation to be on and our culture's celebration of busyness and doing more sets us up to be in our sympathetic nervous system, always fight or flight.

What that does is, I'm sure you know this, it actually limits our blood flow to our brain and puts our blinders on, so we see fewer possibilities and our creativity diminishes and our ability to be problem solvers diminishes as we make bad decisions that aren't good for our businesses, aren't good for our families. So I have had to dupe myself into practices around being more calm, like meditation, like breath work, like tapping the emotional freedom technique, like chewing slower, whatever. There's a whole smorgasbord of things you can do.

I have tricked myself into doing those things because I always was such a hyperactive, do-more person that I had to tell myself, "Okay, if I calm my central nervous system, which I need to do just for thriving, and I know that..." But that wasn't enough information for me, that wasn't enough of a reason. So I had to get into the data of, "Okay, if I call my central nervous system and I can be operating from parasympathetic instead of sympathetic, then, I'll get more blood flow to the appropriate areas of my brain, and it'll make me more productive. "

So I have... The great news is, on the other side of that, now I care far less about how much I get done and I'm more calm. So I really do recommend any amount of meditation. So PS, my amount of meditation is like five minutes, four times a week. Sometimes it's with a child on my lap. So I'm not setting the bar particularly high, but that amount has really worked for me. Or going to dance class. Going to dance class, for me, is the way that I get into right relationship with my central nervous system. So I really... There's no one-size-fits-all, something different is going to work for each person, but those are some of the things that I do. And then just breathing in and out through my nose instead of through my mouth helps me quite a lot.

Dave: You said something in there that's kind of dangerous. You said that you care less about getting stuff done. Is that the real secret to doing less? Just give less shits about it?

Kate: Yeah, but I'll tell you why. I'll tell you why. First of all, like you said about privilege, I am at a moment in my life and in my career where I'm proud of what I've created, and I don't have as much striving energy as I did in my 20s. So I think partially, that's an age thing. Okay. However, I'm still super ambitious, and I have like a dream list a mile long. But I think that the beautiful byproduct of calming my central nervous system and really being able to actually be present is I've begun to cultivate this deep well of joy where... I'm going to sound like a huge nerd, but sometimes when I meditate, I get so happy sitting in my closet by myself, because that's where I meditate, because then there are two doors between me and my kids as opposed to one. They can't find me as easily.

Dave: The truth comes out.

Kate: I get so happy, and I am just by myself on my closet floor, and it is just this deep well of joy, and it is not caused by anything other than the joy of being in a body, in my own company. That doesn't cost anything, it doesn't require any achievements. So I think that for me, finding those pockets during the day where I can tap into something that's far beyond anything I could ever achieve, including a clean kitchen... Like, I'm not even talking about resume achievements, I'm talking about like the laundry is done. I just care less, and that's so great because I'm happier and I'm more present for my kids. I honestly don't want my girls to grow up with the same belief system that I did, which is that your worthiness in the world is based on how much you achieve, and your grades and your ability to be successful. I really want them to know that their worth is inherent and what matters is finding joy. So I hope that I'm able to model that to the best extent I can.

Dave: Now, we've all heard that, get rid of anything that doesn't bring you joy from the secret art of tidying things up or the magic art-

Kate: Oh, yes.

Dave: Of tidying things up. You know what brings me joy?

Kate: What?

Dave: Eating chocolate and watching Breaking Bad just over and over and over. And maybe some good soccer and sushi between the bouts of chocolate. Is that really the recipe for doing less and all this? I almost feel like it's over-simplified, because as humans... Oh, I also like to have a lot of sex. That brings me joy. None of that's productive for the world, for my mission and for my kids, really, but it brings me joy.

Kate: Yeah. [crosstalk 00:30:27].

Dave: How do we balance that out?

Kate: There's an intersection, right? There's the things that just bring you joy, and then there are the things that add value to the world. So if you were to create a Venn diagram, you want us to do work, ideally, that is the intersection of the two, that little... if it were the vesical Pisces, which is a beautiful sacred geometry sign. It's that little ellipse in the middle.

Dave: Yup.

Kate: So that is where we want to be in our work as much as possible. But PS, there are things that don't bring me joy that I do in our business. Like I don't love sitting down with my accountant and talking about taxes, but that's just part of the deal. So the way I recommend dealing with those things... because there are inevitably things. Oh my gosh, like I... Signing paperwork and talking about legal structures and trademarks, I just... Oh my God, it's so hard for me. However, I do believe that how we do something is sometimes equally as important as what we do.

So in my first book, Money: A Love Story, I talked about adding pleasure and fun to your financial practices to get yourself to actually do them. So what I had to do when I was in financial recovery is bring dark chocolate with me to do my bookkeeping, or drink kombucha out of a wine glass, or put on a favorite song. I think that we can infuse the things that aren't so joyful with as much joy as possible so that we just do them.

Dave: All right. I like that perspective. It's also kind of funny, because in end of the day, that whole joy thing, it's a double edged sword. When you qualify, I'd say do the things that bring you joy that actually are useful, and then you start kind of inching back towards that busyness thing, but recognizing that useful things that suck your energy, they have to be outsourced for you to do what you here to do. Probably the guest who's been on the show who's said the most about that and taught me the most about that is Dan Sullivan.

Kate: Yes.

Dave: I write, in Super Human, about the wisdom of our elders and how I've gone out of my way to cultivate friendships with people over 70. Because I'm like, "They have like 30 years more knowledge than I do, and I'd rather learn from them than making the mistakes myself that the average person who's 26% of their life... of their minimum lifespan would make." So Dan talks about that in Three Buckets, things that you hate,

that suck your energy, things that are okay but are necessary and things that you love. He's like, if you're doing any of that first category, get the heck away. The more you do that, the weaker you'll be.

So you have that energy in what you're saying. But speaking of energy, the reason I really wanted to interview you, aside from just overall alignment on that doing less thing, it's that you talk about when you have more energy, you can expand time. In your book you say, "Manage your energy instead of manage your time." You say, when you do that, you end up having enough time for things that really matter for you. No one talks about this. But the guiding light behind what I do... This is also part of Superhuman, my most recent book, is that there's a return on investment for everything you do. But everyone thinks investment is dollars. Or maybe they think it's time.

Kate: Mm-mm (negative).

Dave: For me, the ultimate investment is energy. You seem to understand that intrinsically, that if you don't have energy, who cares you have time and money? You're too tired to spend the time or spend the money.

Kate: Yeah, and you don't care about your life.

Dave: Right. You just don't care. So, how did you learn that energy was the ultimate currency for everything?

Kate: That is such a good question. I really am a very sensitive person. I am a very sensitive person, and people's energy and the energy of things and the energy of rooms and the energy of tasks, everything to me... I used to be a Feng Shui consultant in New York City-

Dave: Is there an amethyst pendant glowing right now?

Kate: No, I don't have one. Believe it or not-

Dave: Okay. I knew you were going to say [crosstalk 00:34:44] you had one and it was not even glowing.

Kate: I'm not even that into crystals. I sound like I would be a crystal person, but that's not really my thing. They're cool but... And no. So I'm just really into the energy of things, and everything does have an energetic quality to it, an energetic imprint. It's why there are solid pieces of furniture, that's just energy, and that's just the way the molecules are swirling around, and it's all energy. So yes, I... I don't know. I always knew, but here's what happened, is that I started realizing after having kids that... well, just the one, now I have two. That the quality of my presence with them mattered so much more than what I got done and what I did for them. That so much of the blueprint of what I had learned about what good mothering was, was about what you did for your kids, not your presence.

I know for me, I just so craved... Both my parents worked a ton, and I just so craved them, actually being with them, and I didn't get a lot of that. I think as the sensitive bunny that I've always been, I just was really aware of my own energy and other people. So, yes, it is so critical that when we manage our energy, we are so much better able to be present. When we are better able to be present, we get things done in way less time, and we get them done way more effectively so that they have a bigger impact. That's why I said the way we do things is almost equally as important as what we do, because I really do believe how we do something is what we get, and that's all your energy.

Dave: To your point about being a sensitive person, I was only kidding about the amethyst. I do know, from having started and having run 40 years of Zen, the neurofeedback brain training institute, five days of intensive brain training, and having hundreds of high performing people come through there, there's a brain signature. We can spot someone on their first day with a 24 channel clinical grade EEG set up. Oh, you probably have a sensitive brain, someone who just picks up on the energies of the world around you more than the average person.

So there are known definitive patterns that we've teased out. So it is actually a real provable thing. Some people have... they're more intuitive, or they're more creative, or they have a higher EEQ. It's usually in there. Whether it's a brain structure thing or a brain connectivity or what we call the connectome of the brain, I just want to say... We can all make fun of it and say, you probably have white robes and do Feng Shui and dance on one foot after eating mushrooms, all of which may be true. But you're probably doing that because that's part of how you're wired.

Kate: I love that.

Dave: So you're not as crazy as you might've thought you were. I'm saying that for you or for anyone listening to that's going, "Yeah, it's okay to be a sensitive person." It doesn't mean that you're better or worse than others, it just means that's part of your super powers. If you spend all your time trying to look at spreadsheets, it'll probably be toxic for you.

Kate: Exactly.

Dave: Talk to me about energy leaks. That's something that you talk about as well.

Kate: Oh, this is so huge. Okay. So, circling back to our very beginning of our conversation, if you're feeling overwhelmed, it is probably because something or someone is sucking your energy that you need to be focused on your own wellbeing or the other things that are actually more important in your life. It's usually-

Dave: You mean like a baby?

Kate: Well, yeah, it could be a baby. That's a little bit different, because they depend on you for their survival, and it's just such a short period of time with the sucking.

Dave: Oh God, there you go, right?

Kate: Yeah.

Dave: Literally, it's like-

Kate: No, literally. I feel like I've been nursing for a million years. But anyway. That's a little bit different, although it is kind of the same thing. No. But basically, I look at the areas of our lives of, you've got your house, you've got your finances, you've got your career, you've got your family, your romantic relationship, your community, your spirituality. You can separate it however you want, but those are kind of the key areas for me. I really recommend rating them on a scale of one to 10, one being like, "Oh my God, my life is being sucked out of me by this area of my life," or 10 being, "I'm going to leap over a tall building in a single step right now."

So then you can know which area of your life is sucking your life force the most, because what we tend to do as personal development oriented folks who I know, or the people listening to this, we want to fix all the things all at the same time. What I want to remind you is, it's all the same thing. We do so much compartmentalizing of like, "My marriage is over here, and my parenting is over here, and my business is over here, and my finances are over here." It's all the same thing. This is why I hate the conversation about work-life balance. I'm like, "Well, my work as part of my life. It's all life. It's all life. We're not trying to balance things, we're just..." I am all about integration.

So when you begin to understand that like, a conversation, a difficult conversation that you need to have with your mother is affecting the way you show up with your daughter, is effecting your annual revenue, and that dealing with the biggest energy leak first is going to all of a sudden free up all this energy for you to apply it and invest it in the other areas of your life that are going to give you a better ROI. Even though you think like, "Oh, a 10 minute conversation with my mom couldn't possibly make a difference in my business," it will. It's all the same thing.

Dave: Okay. That makes so much sense. In terms of plugging those energy leaks, what's the best way?

Kate: Well, you have to identify what they are first. Many people listening will automatically have.... [inaudible 00:41:33] you already know. If you thought of a relationship or something going on in your life, maybe it's your relationship with alcohol, maybe it's your relationship with your mother, maybe it's Instagram. I don't know. But you know, and the thing that came into your head is it. I guarantee you, whatever popped into your head, is it. And then the plugging of the leak, well, maybe if it's a substance or a scroll addiction that you're in or it's a self-defeating behavior, then I really do recommend looking at right with the work of Charles Duhigg, what's the cue, then what's the routine, then what's the middle thing and then what's the reward? Like, what's the cue, then what's the action, what's the reward, and changing that up so that the cue, you actually just do something else as the middle thing that feels rewarding.

So if you're finding you're on your phone scrolling too much, then the cue might be, "Oh, I'm bored at my desk," or "I'm stuck on what to write on this thing, I'll just pick up my phone." So instead of doing that, maybe it's that you go do 10 bounces on your rebounder, for example. So cue, new, action and then the reward is you feel great after 10 bounces. So that's one thing. Every energy leak isn't going to need a different plug. No plug is going to fit all situations. A lot of the time though, it's a relationship where you need to have a difficult conversation or limit the amount of time you spend with that person or try to stop fixing them or changing them.

That's a big one for especially a lot of women. We really want everyone to be happy, and if there's somebody we love who's close to us who's not thriving or not happy, we take it on as we think that's our responsibility. But we really have to hand people their emotions back and say, "That's actually not my job to take care of your feelings." We can be kind, but also give them back the management of their emotions.

Dave: So as an entrepreneur, that's doubly important with people in your staff.

Kate: Oh my goodness, yes. So this is really key. What I recommend is having clarity about how communication works in your company and what is and is not acceptable and how it goes down in terms of communication. So I heard about a book... and I'm going to say the name of this book, and I also have to say I have yet to read it. But it's next on my radar called, Radical Candor, about a way of having communication where everyone just agrees that if something's up, we address it right then. Because that prevents the need for all these side things and all these marinating and all the whatever.

It's so refreshing when something happens and then we deal with it, and then it happens and then we deal with it, as opposed to what a lot of people do, is something happens and then we sit on it. That will cut down a lot on... I don't want to spend my hours working, dealing with people's emotional issues, I want them to be grownups and do their work.

Dave: Yup. Some-

Kate: So we're just more clear about that in our company.

Dave: The other guy who just wrote a really good book about that is... Oh geez, it's the orange and blue book. Charlie someone or another. Ah, man, how can I not think of the name of this book? It's a really powerful one. Everyone who's listening has read this book. The guy who talks about... He's the largest hedge fund manager out there, and I'm completely blanking on his name. But he talks about believability and this idea of radical candor. Like, if there's a problem, anyone's empowered to do it, so you get the junior analyst who will talk to the billionaire hedge fund manager and be like, "You did a crappy job of prepping for this meeting. You showed up late, and anyone at any time..." It feels like it could almost be a bit toxic if you go too far.

Kate: Yes.

Dave: But at the same time, like, "Hey, that didn't work. I need you to fix it," is probably a good thing to say, even though need is a weasel word.

Kate: Well, that's true. Also, these things can be done so kindly. It doesn't have to be like, "You suck." It can be like, "Hey I noticed this thing. Maybe next time do this." And then if it's part of the culture and just part of what happens... I grew up in a family where we didn't talk about stuff. So being with my husband, he's the most direct person I've ever met. So it's given me so much practice in like, something is off, and I address it immediately. Because I know I could do that with him because he does it all the time, now I do that in my other relationships too, and it just keeps everything really fresh and current. Everyone knows where they stand, so we're not draining our energy with all the things underneath the surface that aren't being said. That is a huge energy suck.

Dave: Okay. I'm with you there. Let's go to the next part in your book that was really interesting for me, and that was time bending. You talk about how you can actually bend time. What do you mean when you say that?

Kate: So Einstein's theory of relativity says that essentially, time is completely relative to the object, essentially, observing time. But we all know this, there's two types of time, there's Kronos and Kairos. So this is from ancient Greek. Kairos is suspended timeless time and Kronos is linear time that told us we were going to show up at this recording at a certain time. They're both super valuable, but I think most of us are operating in Kronos linear time, and it's a very lack association with time, limited, whereas Kairos is... So the way I describe it as the difference between the five minutes you waited for your coffee this morning in line and the five minutes that you held your child for the first time in your arms.

The five minutes you held your child for the first time in your arms, you were not aware of time. Time stood still. It could have been five minutes, it could have been five hours, it could have been five seconds. You don't know, you don't care because the difference is inhabiting the time, is fully inhabiting the time. When we do that... Now, we can't do it all the time, obviously. But when we find more moments in our days to fully inhabit the time, we actually end up having more of it. Because when your perception of time changes, you feel as though you have more of it. From a Kairos perspective and from the theory of relativity perspective, because the observer of the time has shifted, you actually do have more of it. Because at the end of the day, all we have is our perception. That's the only thing, really, that's real for us, even though nobody's perception is real. That was like a whole other thing.

Dave: You're definitely energetically sensitive. Totally kidding. The idea of at time is relative... So we all know that if something is boring and one of the things that sucks your energy, it feels like it takes forever even if it doesn't, and you... something that's a really, really fun, you're like, "Wow, I was just there for four hours and it feels like it just started." So you can work on that. But you actually have a mantra in the book that I've not heard anyone other than God, in those conversations I have with him, say, "I am the source of time." But that's one of your mantras.

Kate: Well, I got that from Gay Hendricks in his book, *The Big Leap*.

Dave: Oh, is that from Gay Hendricks? Okay. So Gay-

Kate: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Dave: ... Hendricks isn't God. There we go.

Kate: Well, we don't know, but I think we're all God, but that's a different conversation. That is, yes. So, I am the source of time, is such a wonderful one. Actually this morning, I have a perfect time vending story. So, I had a 6:50 AM flight, I left my house too late because I was dealing with a toiletry issue, and whether or not I needed to bring conditioner was a whole thing. So I ended up leaving my house 10 minutes later than I would have like. Now, I live 20 minutes from the airport, and I like to get to the airport an hour early, even though it's a very small airport and I don't need to. But I just like the extra time because part of my way of calming my central nervous system is not needing to rush.

So, I dah, dah, dah, dah, I get on the highway, I'm going and I realize, Oh wait, I went out on a date with my husband on Saturday night, and I put my ID and credit card in an evening bag that I did not replace back in my regular daytime wallet. I had to go get off the exit, go all the home, dah, dah, dah. But on that ride, I just decided... I was like, "Well, this is an opportunity to time bend. I can either be in stress and anxiety, which I know will make me take longer to get there, or I can be in this moment of watching the sunrise, driving my car in the quiet of a main morning with no children and I can enjoy it." So I just decided, I'm looping back, I'm getting my ID, I'm going. I found the perfect parking spot, right across from the sliding doors where I waltzed into security. Nobody was there. I didn't have to take off my shoes, do the whole thing.

I go, they are about to close the gate. I didn't even have to run. I just waved to them down the thing and they were like, "Oh, yep, there she is." I walk onto the plane. Literally, from the moment I got to the airport, it was 10 minutes, and I was in the airplane and basically we were taking off. It was the perfect time bending, because I decided to inhabit the moment instead of trying to pop myself somewhere else. Essentially, that's the key to time bending.

Dave: Are you telling me you didn't drive in the high occupancy lane just a little bit?

Kate: Well, Maine is too small, we don't have one of those.

Dave: All right, fine.

Kate: Also, I will say it was a freezing rain this morning, and I didn't... I also drive a Prius, so it's not great in the snow and ice, so I-

Dave: Priuses aren't great when there's no snow and ice in terms of [crosstalk 00:52:21].

Kate: It is not a high performance car, not a high performance car, but I only pay \$25 a month in gas, and I'm very enthusiastic-

Dave: I get you on that front. Right. Okay. So-

Kate: So [crosstalk 00:52:31] no, I didn't speed because it would have dangerous.

Dave: You weren't running in and off the road with your Hummer, right? I got you.

Kate: Nope.

Dave: It's totally true. One piece of advice that I would offer for anyone listening if you have that sort of travel anxiety, go to the airport late a few times on purpose just to feel the anxiety and then miss a flight and realize, "Oh my God, there's always another one." All of your stress about travel will go down because [inaudible 00:52:55] Oh, I'm going to get there anyway.

Kate: Oh my God, that is such a good point. Also, I was in a blessed situation where I didn't have to be in New York city until 4:00, and I knew there were like eight more flights. So I just was in a relaxed state because I knew it was going to work out. But the truth is it always works out. It always works out.

Dave: That said, if you have to make it to New York because you're going on Dr. Oz the next morning... which is a story in one of my books that I talk about, and I get to the airport and they're like, "Sorry, you can't get through the ticket line for a variety of airport security, BS things." That's when you're like, "Okay." And then you put on your hat, which is, you don't believe in the can't. So in that case, I just bought a ticket for another flight so I can get past security and show up at the gate for my flight. And they were like, "How'd you possibly get through security?" Like, "I bought two tickets, guys, let me on." And they did. So-

Kate: Well done.

Dave: ... sometimes you got to be creative, but the deal is freaking out and all that, it actually makes time not work. But if you're a calm, it feels like time has bending, and sometimes things just work out more easily even though we don't really have math or an explanation for it.

Kate: Exactly.

Dave: something else in your book that I appreciate that you talk about is your experiment number six, ask for help. Tell me about that experiment.

Kate: So this one is huge. For those who struggle with asking for help, which is most of us, my message is this. When you have decided that your worthiness as a human being is based on your ability to get more done by yourself, then you will struggle forever with this. But if you can reorganize yourself so that your worth feels inherent and you're no longer

trying to prove something by all the things you can do by yourself and you know your worth is inherent, like your strength of self is that strong, then asking for help becomes so much easier because it no longer is a hit against your value as a human. A lot of us struggle with this because we think it's a sign of weakness.

But my invitation to you is a new belief, which is that asking for help or needing help is not a sign of weakness, it's a sign of being human. None of us were meant to do all the things by ourselves, and you're not getting into a special room in heaven because you did more alone. That's just a recipe for being tired and lonely. Literally, you're not getting anything from that. So, I wrote a lot about asking for help because I think so many people struggle with it, so many of my dear friends struggle with it. I actually wrote that chapter... It was the longest chapter, it's been edited, but the first version of it was 25,000 words, which was a full third of my word count guarantee with my publisher.

I wrote it with this one dear friend of mine in mind, because she had struggled so much with it, and I just wrote it as a love letter to her to please let go and let the support in, and it's been really beautiful to witness her dismantle the armor she was wearing around her worthiness and her independence and how much that was her identity. As that's been shifting, she's so much happier because she's able to let in the support. What we really need as humans is more connection, not more independence. When we ask for help, we're much more able to then give help when it's needed because we're not running on empty.

Dave: I actually grew up learning that if you ask someone for help, then you would owe them later, so you should never ask for help. This is actually a really common thing that people get taught when they're kids from whatever their parents go through or a teacher or something like that. It wasn't until much later in life that I realized people actually liked to help. Having an opportunity to help another makes someone else feel good. So when you ask someone for help, yes, they're doing you a favor, but by being there and asking for help and giving them the opportunity to help you, you're also, in some strange way, helping them, because they got to pitch in. When you pitch in and you did something... at least you pitched on something that matters, there's a unique sense of satisfaction that comes from that.

So I learned the hard way that it's okay to ask for help, and that when you do, usually the people are grateful that they got to help out as long as you didn't ask them to take your garbage out because you didn't want to. That's not what we're talking about here. But even then, right after you have a baby, there's lots of people who will take your garbage out for you because they know that it matters, because you're recovering. Even that can be an act of service that people are happy to do. It's not an imposition, it's an opportunity.

Kate: No, it is one of those things that it is such a joy to help the people we love. It fills something in us that no amount of money or achievement would ever fill. At the end of the day, aren't we all just here to be of service? When we reject help that's offered, it also feels kind of awful as the person who's offering it, at least in my experience.

Dave: Yup. I'm with you there. Okay. Let's talk about sleep. I've written some of the original articles on Hacking Sleep that have been echoing around the internet for a long time, and it's been probably 12 years now that I've tracked my sleep almost every single night and gone from being an absolute, "I'll sleep when I'm dead, I don't like sleep. How do I possibly minimize it" to, "It's one of the most important things I do." I still only need six hours and 10 minutes of it, but I'm sleeping more than the average 20 year old gets in eight hours I'm getting in six hours. I'm okay with it. But you talked about something I haven't written about in your book. You talked about yoga Nidra. What is it?

Kate: Oh, yoga Nidra, I discovered because of my postpartum insomnia. It's a deep meditation that gets your brain into a state of deep relaxation where you're not asleep but you're also not really conscious. They say, the people who have studied it, that 20 minutes of yoga Nidra actually gets you the same restorative benefits of three hours of sleep. For people who are having sleep disruption, insomnia or waking million times a night or whatever it is, they are able to get themselves able to sleep normally by doing yoga Nidra. So it's a guided meditation where you lie down, and it's 15 or 20 minutes, and somebody walks you through it, either in person or on an audio. It is a very profound experience of restoration and relaxation in an incredibly efficient way. For me, it's 10 million times more effective than taking a nap.

Dave: So you use a guided meditation, and there's a bunch of them online that you can get to-

Kate: Yeah, you just have to find somebody voice that you like. That's the trickiest part.

Dave: Got it. Pretty soon, we'll have some sort of like Siri plugin where you can change someone's voice so they sound like your favorite whatever-

Kate: Yeah, that's a good idea.

Dave: We're almost there, but in the meantime, yep, you got to find someone whose voice you like. But if you... Yoga Nidra. So, it's been a while since I played around with that, and I don't think I've ever used it for sleep. But I'm a big fan of yoga, so I like it that you just put that in your book and saying, "All right, sleep is part of this doing less thing and getting to sleep more quickly or more deeply is a way to do less, because you actually freed up a bunch of time so you can do less," which is cool.

Kate: Yeah.

Dave: Kate, your book is a wealth of knowledge. I don't think it's just for moms in business, it's for anyone who wants to focus on doing less. But I think your perspective as a mom of relatively young kids and an entrepreneur serves as a crucible for the high demand times of life, which is what makes you able to write the book. So thank you for creating it and sharing it. Your website where people can find more about your book and more about you is Katenorthrup.com, K-A-T-E-N-O-R-T-H-R-U-P.com. Kate, thanks for being on Bulletproof Radio.

Kate: Thank you so much for having me.

Dave:

If you liked today's episode, you know what to do; leave a book review for someone, because that's one of the easiest things you can do to help out. You hear me right now, I'm asking for your help, leave a review. If you like Kate's book, leave a review. You like my new book, Superhuman, leave a review, that kind of a thing. Reviews help the author and help everyone else find which books are worth reading or which podcasts are worth listening to you. So thank you for listening today, thank you for your time. I hope the return on investment in terms of the energy you got for the last hour was worth it for you. If it was, I'll see you on the next show.