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Speaker 2: Bulletproof Radio, a state of high performance.

Dave Asprey: You're listening to Bulletproof Radio with Dave Asprey. Today's cool fact of the day is that scientists have found the metabolic limit for human endurance. All right, every time they say that, it makes me mad. What they found is what they believe to be today's current metabolic limit for human endurance, which is still interesting, but seriously, you're going to tell me there's limits? That just means you haven't hacked them yet.

Dave Asprey: Anyhow, this did come from Duke University, which is a pretty good group. They looked at energy expenditure during the world's longest, most grueling sporting events, and they found that no matter what the activity, whether we're talking Ironman, triathletes, Tour De France, Leadville 100, Arctic trekking, everyone hits about the same metabolic limit. When it comes to physical activities that last days, weeks, months, the researchers found that humans today without modifications or upgrades can only burn calories at 2.5 times their resting metabolic rate.

Dave Asprey: This is a maximum possible level of exertion that humans can sustain in the long-term with current biology, not even the world's fastest ultra-marathoners could surpass that limit. And beyond that threshold of 2.5 times a person's resting metabolic rate, the body starts to break down its own tissues to make up for the caloric deficit, and the body can downshift its metabolism to help stay within sustainable levels.

Dave Asprey: This is interesting because we used to believe, from previous research, that human endurance was linked to our ability to regulate our body temperature. It turns out there's something else going on. It's probably mitochondria because it's always mitochondria, those little pesky bastards. But if you think that you're a stud because you ran an Ironman, or does know them, or something like that, it turns out that the maximum sustainable energy expenditure amongst the world's most elite endurance athletes was only slightly higher than the metabolic rate of a woman who's pregnant.

Dave Asprey: So, there you go. Your mom had a metabolic rate just about as good as an Ironman triathlete. And if you are a mom, you know what I'm talking about. What makes me sad about this is that coauthor of this study, Dr. Herman Poncer says, "This defines the realm of what's possible for humans." Stop it, Herman. That's called academic arrogance. We will beat it. It is a foregone conclusion. Just give us time and tech. And today's guest knows a thing or two about endurance, and a thing or two about time.

Dave Asprey: Today's guest is defying aging by pushing the limits of his own endurance well into his sixth decade. Robert Owens is an athlete and adventurer who's 68 years old, former member of the US Air Force Pararescue special ops team, which comes in to rescue soldiers during war. He's a special ops candidate coach, and coaches younger and older athletes. A 12-time Ironman triathlon finisher, and one of the first people to participate in the now-famous race, 1980 Honolulu Ironman. And he did it in its third year.

Dave Asprey: After taking 20 years off as a competitor, he started competitive events again at age 50, and by age 65, he was ready to take on five of the world's toughest endurance events in the same year. This is something that most people in their 20s and 30s have a real hard time doing. And so, this is a guy who's literally young when he's old.

Dave Asprey: You might've heard Joe De Sena from the Spartan Race and the Death Race talk with him. In fact, it was Joe De Sena who recommended that I talk with Robert, and he calls Robert the fittest 66-year-old in the world, which I believe is totally, totally real. And if you like the interviews I've had with Mark Divine about SEALFIT, you'll find that Mark has also interviewed Robert. So, this is a guy who's just incredibly tough but also wise. Welcome to the show.

Robert Owens: Hey, well, thank you so much. Good to be with you, and get to know you.

Dave Asprey: One of the other reasons aside from Joe's recommendation that I wanted to chat with you is, I've made it a practice to learn from my elders. So, you've got more mileage than I do, literally, in terms of triathlons because I haven't done one. I'm not planning on it either, as part of my anti-aging strategy of not beating the crap out of myself, although I have great respect and admiration for people who do that. But you've accumulated a lot of wisdom about resilience and toughness, both in what you did before you turned 50, and then when you said, "Oh, I'm just going to turn this competitive thing back on." So, I want to know, first off, why did you decide to go back to these highly competitive events? What did you have to prove?

Robert Owens: I have five kids, and my oldest son said to me at my 50th birthday, "Hey, dad, you're really old." And he said it kind of way that you want to just do something to him. I said, "Really?" He goes, "Yeah, dad. You're half a century, you should be at a museum." These competitive things got inside me, and I said, "I haven't done an Ironman in 20 years. Let's make a comeback and see what happens." And I've been doing endurance stuff around locally running and keeping in shape and stuff. But I thought, "I'll make a comeback."

Robert Owens: I found out that I liked it so much, and I liked the shape that I was in, and I liked the training and the focus, and the journey's just as good as the destination, that I started doing them every year. I wanted to see if I could do them the way I did [inaudible 00:06:24]. And the first one was, I never rode a bike one time prior to the race. I just used... What we used back then was rollers. You put your bike on a bunch of rollers on stationer and just roll. I put a [inaudible 00:06:37]

pound pack on my back, and just by the poolside, rode my bike because I was living in Tulsa, and there weren't roads wide enough for bikes. You'd get hit.

Robert Owens: So, I started doing that again where I would only swim a month before the race, and I would run about a month and a half before the race outside. And then I'd start swimming and running, and then doing the bike thing by training indoors. It was an old pararescue training thing of, "Can you get in super shape and then just dial in for whatever it needed to be?" Which would be a triathlon. And it worked at 50, and it worked at 51, it worked at 52. It was just fun to say I'm not a triathlete, I'm just a guy that can do an Ironman one time a year.

Robert Owens: That's all I do is I never do half Irons or anything else. I only do Ironmans because I want to see if I could continue doing what I did years before. What happened was that as I got into 60s, I began to ask the 60 to 65 guys that I'd see, or the 65 to 70s, or the 70 to 75 guys, "How are you doing?" I introduced myself to them, and they'd tell me their story. I could see that they were becoming weaker. Their muscle tissue, their tensile strength, their muscle consistency, you could see aging. They would always say to me, "I can do these things, I just can't push the pedal the way I used to. I just can't pull the water the way I used to."

Robert Owens: And so, I had this experiment in my head, "I want to know if I could grow older and stronger at the same time, and I want to know what that would look like to, again, go back into training. I'm going to get stronger. I want to see if I could be in my 20s, if I could match my goals of my 20s." And that's when I went to Mark Divine, and I said, "Hey Mark..." And another CrossFit guy, and I said, "This is my game plan." And Mark said, "Well, then you need to shoot for Kokoro, our 50-hour nonstop challenge." And I said, "Great."

Robert Owens: And so, I started a journey of three years of training with Mark and another CrossFit to see if I could grow older and stronger at the same time. And that was the journey, the experiment is on me. I was the Guinea pig. I just want to see what would happen to myself if I actually focused, and wanted to age better. A lot of guys can't get on the floor with their grandkids. I just thought it was a new experiment.

Robert Owens: So, I did that experiment and found out you could grow older and stronger, and get your tensile strength back, sleep better, eat better. And with Mark, discovered that that 20X principle that's always been around, which is we at any age can do 20 times more than we ever thought possible. But it takes a coach, it takes a trainer, and a submission to somebody who will take you past your boundaries. And that's been my experiment, and that's what I've been doing. It has been fun. How's that?

Dave Asprey: When you did the training for Kokoro, how similar was that to the year after I was born? When you went to US Air Force Special Operations School, you made team leader, you were one of seven out of 157 people who could finish the training. Was it the same when you went through Kokoro in terms of the amount of difficulty?

Robert Owens: No.

Dave Asprey: Was it easier because you'd been through it before?

Robert Owens: No, it was harder.

Dave Asprey: It was harder.

Robert Owens: The Air Force has a culture, and it's different than the Army and the Navy, or the Marines. And the Navy culture for BUD/S, and Hell Week, and all that stuff is a different kind of intensity. We in The Air Force, we're defense, we come in and rescue guys. And so, our work is mental, but it's mental medical, it's surviving stuff. Get in, take your guns, take your knives, whatever, set IVs, set bones, and then shoot your way out if you have to. The Navy, Marines, and the Army are offense, and they have a different mindset. So, it was fun for me to take my brain into a Navy world. And I was the first Air Force guy to ever attempted this stuff.

Robert Owens: The Navy world is much more negative than the Air Force world. So, when you get called, you're an effing loser, and you're effing embarrassment, and why don't you effing quit? Every two minutes for 50 hours. The goal is, for them, "Can we take you out of your positive mindset and can we put you in a negative surroundings and drain the why out of you?" The why being how bad do you want to do this?

Robert Owens: Everybody can do things in a positive environment, but war, many times, is not positive. It's negative. And so, they will want to find out in a negative environment if you can stay focused, and stay in your why and not be talked out of why you're doing this. They'll do anything possible to discourage you. And they really like to get inside your head if you'll let them. It was different in that the Air Force thing, I had that in my bank in my brain. I'd been through all that physical stuff. But it was a different level of negativity than I'd ever experienced in my life.

Robert Owens: So, I had to make sure that my mindset stayed positive in a completely negative environment. And that was very difficult. I talked to Mark... At the end when he shook my hand and said, "Hey, you're the oldest guy to ever done this in the world. You're the oldest guy to attempt it, the oldest guy to do it. We knew you're a PJ, and PJ's pararescue, you guys never quit. You'd rather pass out and die than quit. But we didn't know at your age what you'd put up with." And so, I told him, I said, "What really scared me is that you got in my head about the last six hours."

Robert Owens: About the last six hours, about the 40-hour mark, they began to crack this thing. They were just relentless on coming at me to see if they could get me to quit. It was a different world, different experience. And what we try to say when we train these kids, whether it's through SEALFIT, because I work now with Mark, or

I'm at Lackland Air Force Base working with Air Force Special Ops kids is, "We know who you are in good circumstances, but you don't know who you are in bad circumstances. We need to find out who you are when things go bad, and you need to find out who you morph into when things go bad for your sake." So, that's that.

Dave Asprey: Do you wish that the training that you had in the Air Force would have had more of that, or was it not the right thing for you had to do back then?

Robert Owens: No. What we did is that I had 13 weeks of training, BUD/S is only eight weeks. What they did was once they got enough guys to quit... They start with 150 guys... the class gets whittled down. And when you get whittled down to about 30, 40 guys, you've been at this thing four, or five, six weeks and they see the guys that are pretty much going to make it, and therefore, then they stop the negativity in the second half, in the old days of pararescue training, and they begin to talk to you like civil human beings like, "We're going to make your life miserable, but we're going to talk to you." And the cussing and the negativity begin to change because we're paramedics. And so, they start talking to us more rationally. "We're going to press you, but we're to press you mentally to do things." It just isn't all the negativity for the whole length of time.

Dave Asprey: Got it.

Robert Owens: In the Navy, it's negative the whole time. Remember Marcus Luttrell from Lone Survivor?

Dave Asprey: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Robert Owens: He's shot, he's crawling. He's been shot three times, he's crawling on his stomach, and he's pushing the rifle out in front of him, then he crawls to the rifle. He does that for 12 miles. He says in the book, which is better than the movie, says, "This is so much easier than Hell Week. This is a piece of cake." And I watched the video with Marcus Luttrell recently and he said, "I so thank God for Hell Week because it taught me how to persevere in tremendously negative circumstances because I didn't get it inside my head."

Robert Owens: And that's the lesson. In war, don't let anything get inside your head. Stay focused and stay in the game or else you're going to die. The Taliban is not going to ease up on you. Al Qaeda is not going to use up on you. They want to know if you're weak because they're going to swarm you if they find out you have a weakness. So, that's why Navy is the Navy.

Dave Asprey: I've been fascinated for years by people way older than I am, as I started in my 20s, who were getting younger and going the opposite direction than what we all think of as aging. Partly, I was fascinated because I had the diseases of aging in my 20s, and I wrote Superhuman, my anti-aging book. It just came out recently. I credit a lot of the anti-aging nonprofit work that I've done with

learning from my elders. I talk about how there's an epidemic of lacking these village elders, where throughout all of history, there were a few older people who were healthy enough in your village, they could tell you where the game was. They could tell you, "If you marry that person, you're going to hate your life."

Dave Asprey: They've been through everything you're going to go through. They've seen it all, and they've done the pattern matching. It's their function in a healthy community to pass it down, and they want to do it. But today, most older people, they're getting to the point where, "I don't have the energy to do that. I'm not healthy enough. I have Alzheimer's, I can't get down on the floor and play with my grandkids. I'm having a hard time connecting. I just want to play bridge and go to sleep."

Dave Asprey: So, I'm working on that, but part of that is getting engaged with people who are a half or a third of your age because they'll keep you young. You're talking about a kind of toughness that it seems like it's missing. I see studies now, half of people, millennials, and especially Generation Z, are experiencing regular anxiety from life, like clinical-grade problematic things. You're talking about toughness, you have someone swearing at you telling you you're going to fail. And we have a culture sometimes where no one can have an opinion that's different than yours, or you melt down. They've coined the term snowflake and all. So, I'm going to call you, with great respect, a tough old bastard. And there's this... I don't know if I'm phrasing the question right.

Robert Owens: A lot of folks call me an old David Goggins.

Dave Asprey: An old David Goggins?

Robert Owens: And I say, "Hey, David, I appreciate what you're doing in your 40s, let's talk when you're 50 and 60s, and see how this thing works out."

Dave Asprey: Yeah, that's what I want to know. So, if you could download your toughness into me when I was 20, going back in 25 something years, what would you have told me to do if I wasn't going to go through a military experience? How would you build me as a tough human if I was a young man?

Robert Owens: Again, I don't know that the goal is to be tough. I think Duckworth in her book, Grit, talks about kids. If the listeners haven't read that, that's a great book to read, Grit, and especially the first chapter about what happens at West Point with the plebe class.

Robert Owens: I think that when a person has a why, and the why is, "I want it really bad, I really want to date her, I really want to make that money, I want to pass that class," I think that when people have a really strong why, they'll do things to get to that goal. When their why is not so strong, they will give up quicker, or find excuses not to go on. And I think when you say mental toughness, it's because

some of us, we have a desire to do something. We're willing to pay that price to get to what we want to do.

Robert Owens: I think the key is to teach kids, "You can do stuff if you want it bad enough, but you're going to have to know that there's a cost." So, the reason I think David is so sought out today, and is being watched and listened to so much is he talks about suffering, that you have to suffer your way into your future. Nothing's going to come easy. It's going to be hard. It's going to cost you something, and you're going to have to wrestle with yourself.

Robert Owens: I think that what will work with kids... I have five kids, and I... Beacon High Schools, and I work with 20 to 30-year-olds in the military kind of thing... I think it's just teaching them, "We can help you learn how to attain your goals, but you're going to have to really learn to desire to really want to do something. Then we can start the magic of let's peel off the layers of your excuses and your lack of focus. Show me your friends, I'll show your future. We'll begin to help you grow." But a person has to want to want to grow, and they have to be willing...

Robert Owens: And what we say is, in the Navy SEAL world, or Spec Ops world, there's 20 times more potential in you than you've ever allowed someone to bring out of you. Meaning, most people will hit a natural mental ceiling. Your mind is geared to protect you. You think thoughts to protect you, you don't want to be hurt. And yet to get to the places you want to go, you're going to have to go through pain; mental pain, emotional pain, relational pain, financial pain, situational pain. And you don't want pain. None of us do. But the only way to grow is to embrace that pain of, "I'm going to say no to cigarettes because I want to be healthy. I'm going to say no to donuts because I want to lose weight."

Robert Owens: You can't grow without learning to say no. And no is the beginning of discipline, no is the beginning of everything. And until a millennial learns that they're going to have to say no to get to where they want to go, they're just going to go in circles like probably many of the generations.

Dave Asprey: You've got the notion of toughness, which I brought up, and what I'm hearing you talk about is also a discipline, which is different from toughness, but there's also resilience of saying, "I can handle whatever the world brings to me." How do you think about toughness versus resilience, versus even vulnerability? It seems like you've mastered all of these things, but I kind of want to know what order did you master them in?

Robert Owens: I don't know about that. Well, let me start with vulnerability. I learned a long time ago that I needed help, and I needed to ask questions, and I needed to not act cocky like I know everything. And so, once you-

Dave Asprey: How did you learn that though? I didn't know that until I was in my mid-30s. I beat my head against a lot of walls because I didn't. Who taught you that? How

did you learn it? How would someone listening to the show learn what you learned?

Robert Owens: I'll take you back. In high school, at 15 and a half, I wanted to be a beach lifeguard. I was a swimmer and a water polo player, and you had to be 16 to be a lifeguard. I was not a great swimmer. I was a high school swimmer, three years swimmer, sophomore, junior, senior against age groupers; six, seven, eight, nine, 10 years old. And so, when you go to a lifeguard tryout, you're swimming against, for me, Southern Cal, UCI, UCLA, SC San Diego state swimmers, plus great high school swimmers. But they were all pool guys, they were ocean guys. I was an ocean kid.

Robert Owens: And so, I went and said, "I'd like to try out at 15 and a half just to see what it'd be like for next year at 16." And so, my lifeguard friends from my high school who were lifeguarding said, "Come down to the beach, and we'll show you some stuff." So, I asked them for help to learn about tides and about high tide, low tide, currents, what we're doing, what it does in blooming days, blah, blah, blah. So, I studied the course. And I worked out that course.

Robert Owens: I went down there, the cold, the fog, and swam that thing, and knew what I was going to have to do. So, when it came game day to go down there, I said to my water polo coach, "I'm going to try out." He said, "Have you paid your dues?" And I said, "Yeah." He said, "Remember, hard work can beat better talent." I said, "Okay."

Robert Owens: So, on that day, there were three races, and I ended up getting two first and a third, and I was underage, against the college swimmers. And when I got out of the water and they hand me the Popsicle stick with a number one on it twice, and the people are going nuts, like, "Who is this kid?" Because all these hotshots were there, but I body surfed past them. They were swimming, I body surfed past, I got out and looked behind me, and they were behind me, and the crowd went nuts.

Robert Owens: Anyway, when I went inside, they said, "You're number one in the class. We're going to hire a team this year. You're underage, but we want to interview anyway. How did you do this?" I said, "I asked for help. I went to the guards, and they've mentored me on how to be smarter than the fastest swimmers." And they said, "Wow." And I said, "My coach told me that hard work strategy will beat better talent." And they said, "That's phenomenal because you're only 15 and a half and you smoked these guys, and you're smaller than these guys." And I said, "I just came down here a lot and practiced."

Robert Owens: So, that next Thursday, they called me up and they said, "Would you like to be a lifeguard?" And I said, "I can't. I'm underage, I'm 15 and a half. I was doing this for next year." And they said, "We went to the city manager and asked for insurance waiver for you, and they gave it to us. So, we're going to hire you as the only guide ever under 16. We want you to be a lifeguard. We'll put you right

by the pier next to the headquarters. We'll keep an eye on you, and you can be a guard.”

Dave Asprey:

Wow.

Robert Owens:

My whole water polo swim team went nuts as my coaches, as my beach lifeguard friends, because I'd gamed the system. I had asked for help. When I got into rowing crew at college, I didn't know how to do that, so I asked for help. I said, “How do you hold the oar? Do I want to be port or starboard? What do I do?” I asked these older guys, and they helped me.

Robert Owens:

When it came to pararescue, my lifeguard friends, there were a bunch of pararescue reservists. The Navy would come by, in my day, and they'd say, “We're looking for water guys like you, beach guys. Do you want to be a Navy SEAL?” And the chief would say, “That's a good one. The pararescue guys are coming in next week. Listen to them before you figure out what you want to do, if you want to do it.” And so I listened to PJ guys. Four guys became Navy SEALs, and four of us became pararescue guys.

Robert Owens:

But in doing so, they then said, “Owens, you need to be a pararescue guy.” And I said, “I can't make it because I'm just an average dude. I'm not hot. I've never won anything. I'm not your golden star guy. I'm the guy that'll ask a girl out and she says no. I'm the guy that tries to get a first place and gets a third place, maybe. So, I don't have a lot of confidence.” And so, they said, “This is what you do. If you'll train like we tell you, you'll make it.” And so, I listened to them, I got mentored by them, and they kept saying to me, “What are you doing? What's your workouts like? Do more, do this, do that.”

Robert Owens:

So, I went rogue for six months and just trained to get ready to go in the Air Force, as an average guy with rejection of, “I'm afraid again.” When I get in, low and behold, they make me team leader out of the seven guys that graduated. And I said, “The good guys all quit.” The good guys, the talent guys from the book, Grit, the ones who couldn't get rock got rocked. And those of us that were scrappy, we just stayed in the thing. And again, it wasn't because I was hot, it was because I had gone to people and said, “Could you please help me? I want to know how to do this.” And they schooled me in getting ready to have this mental beat down as well as the physical beat down.

Robert Owens:

So, the rest of my life, I've been asking for help. With five kids, I said, “I need to know how to raise better kids.” So, I saw a family guy who had great sons, and I went to him and said, “How did you raise such great kids?” And he said, “Read these books, and we'll have coffee, and blah blah blah. You help me with some stuff, I'll help you.” And he mentored me on kids. Went to a different guy and said, “Hey, you teach your kids how to make money, show me how to talk to my kids about making money and stuff.”

Robert Owens: And so, I've just, all my life, just asked for help and showing vulnerability. And then I learn something, because the other guys act like they all have it together, and they don't. And so, I just believe in villages and I believe in elders, and I believe why reinvent the wheel when somebody else knows what to do and can make it easier for me?

Dave Asprey: That's really been your half-

Robert Owens: Starts with vulnerability.

Dave Asprey: Since you were a teenager was, "I'm going to find someone who's already done it, and I'm going to learn from them instead of doing it all myself."

Robert Owens: Right.

Dave Asprey: Well, it's kind of funny. Here I am on Bulletproof Radio interviewing someone who's aging and getting stronger as they age. Pretty much all of the episodes, 600 whatever we've done so far, it's always a chance to learn from a master. It's the same as an entrepreneur. People say, "How did you do this so fast?" I put in my time 20 years in Silicon Valley doing the grunt work and learning, and when it came time to step up for-

Robert Owens: It's true.

Dave Asprey: ... Bulletproof, I sure had a lot of help from guys like Jay Abraham, and Joe Polish, and JJ Virgin, just all these incredible people who had already been New York Times best-selling authors, already knew how to do what I wanted to do, and sat me down and told me how to do it. It's just so much easier that way. What people don't know... When you asked those guys for help, did they want to help you? Was it an imposition?

Robert Owens: Sure.

Dave Asprey: Really? You think it was an imposition [crosstalk 00:29:15]?

Robert Owens: No, they were happy to help.

Dave Asprey: Yeah, that's what I was thinking. Most people are happy to help, right?

Robert Owens: And I tell guys, I say, "You act like you're the big stud. You're a gun, and you want everybody to think you're hot. I'm just telling you, if you'll just humble yourself a little bit and ask for help, people are more than willing to want to help someone who's teachable and open to learning." And especially guys over 45 with young people, they just dream of some kid asking them for help so we can give them back. But most kids don't ask for help, and therefore it dies. And the village elders never share it back down line.

Dave Asprey: Have you asked for help on aging here? Again, I'm looking at the research I did for this. You did something that seems like it would make me old; seven marathons in seven days on seven continents, the world marathon challenge. Your speed swelled from size 12 to size 14, and then you say, "All of us have a choice how we age." Do you feel like you made yourself older when you did that? Are you hooked up with anti-aging physicians giving you testosterone and all the cool stuff that I like to do? How do you handle that side of things?

Robert Owens: No. I have a book that I want to write, and it's on how you do great things. I think research is huge. Before you get going, try to find out as many crashes and burns as possible to learn from so many people so you don't have the same thing. I went online, and I just looked for anybody over 50 who had done this. And I did it in year four, this year was year five. And year four, there was only one guy who I could find who did it over 50 years of age. And he wrote down on the website, he said, "I figured I could do it if I could do five 20 mile days in a row." That's all the advice I got.

Robert Owens: So, I said, okay. I said, "I'm going to go out on a limb and I'm going to put a 20-pound backpack on my weight vests, and I'm going to shoot for five 20 mile days in a row with a 20-pound pack because I want to practice mental pain." If you know Matt Fitzgerald in his book, How Bad You Want It, he says there's a different chemical released in your brain from mental pain than physical pain. And so, I wanted... I always knew that your brain quits before your body does.

Robert Owens: So, I want to go put myself into mental pain because I had no idea at all what seven marathons in seven days on seven continents with little sleep would do. And so, I wanted to get that place where, "Oh, it's one of these moments. How do I practice this moment? How do you break through these limits?" And so, I ate good. I leaned out my diet, well, almost all vegan except for some little bit of chicken and fish occasionally, and just ran. And then, I mentally had to have some wins.

Robert Owens: So, when I got to 20 miles that week, I went further. I went to 23 miles, 22 and 23 miles to go past what I thought I could do. I wanted to press that envelope so that... I had that mental win in my bag, "Whatever I'm going to hit in the 777, it couldn't be any worse than this." So, when I got into it... There are some things you don't know until you get there. One is, when you land in Cape Town, you get on a 757 with all your guys, and you fly to Antarctic, and it lands on some either airfield or flat piece of ice, but your Quonset huts with Russians, origin teens and stuff working in this little things. And you land and then you run the airstrip, and the airstrip is three miles long until you run a little bit longer around that.

Robert Owens: So, you do four sixes, and then you do four laps, and you do a couple extra things, you get 26.3. Anyway, when you run that thing, you just didn't understand that when the sun begins to drop like Alaska, 24-hour sun, it drops from... for us, it dropped from 20 above to about 20 to 30 below in about an

hour. You can't train for that. You just have to figure out, "Now how am I going to get through this? It's not a marathon. It's just a full-blown adventure."

Robert Owens: And everybody is suffering differently. There's the two-hour marathon guys... excuse me, the three-hour marathon guys, the four-hour guys, the five-hour guys, the six-hour guys, the seven-hour people, each one suffering in a different way. But you just sort of adapt and figure out, "I'm going to do what I've always done to mentally get through it."

Robert Owens: Anyway, you get through this thing, you're frozen, you get on the plane, you fly back to Cape Town. When you land in Cape Town, you don't get a shower from the first one. You just get off the plane, put on your running stuff, they take you right downtown, and you start again in the middle of the day at noon, and it's 90 above. So, your feet are swollen from the plane, and then you get in that hot heat at 90 above along the ocean, they're at sea point, and your feet swell. That flipping 120 degrees, 30 below to 90 within five and a half hours, you'd have to do that and you have to run two marathons within the first 19 hours.

Robert Owens: I don't know how you train for that. You just mentally have to say, "I'm going to go into mental resiliency. I'm going to do my goals, which is, I'm going to breathe." Holding nose breathe. I'm not going to mouth breathe. I'm going to do my micro-goals, my mini-goals. I'm going to do my positive visualization, and I'm going to speak out loud my positive self-talk. I'm wanting to talk and mental my way through this new experience that I didn't even know we're going to have to do. I thought you had seven marathons in seven days versus two marathons in 19 hours in that kind of a heat thing." And every single one of us made it.

Dave Asprey: Wow.

Robert Owens: But there were casualties. There were some passing out and falling over, and there were some interesting issues. Anyway, that was a mental kind of thing. You finally had a marathon versus an adventure, but that's an adventure on its own. Then, I don't know if you want to hear all this, but then you get on a plane to fly to Perth. When you get to Perth, it's a night marathon. It's 11-hour flights. All you do is sleep and run. The moment you get off the plane, you run, get back on the plane, sleep, eat, and then get off the plane and run.

Robert Owens: So, next, you go to Perth, and that's a night marathon. And I'd never run night marathon before in my life. I never thought about. Much less, when you're at night, you're all by yourself. You don't see anybody's in the dark. And so, for my five or six hours, whatever I thought I'd programmed myself to do, you're by yourself. It's not like there's crowds, or cars, or people, or, "Hey, how are you doing?" You're just alone in the dark.

Robert Owens: And that's a new experience mentally because you have all these snakes in your head. The snakes are saying on one side, "What the hell are you doing here? This is stupid. This is crazy. Why did you sign up for this? You paid good money

for this.” The other side says “This is the adventure of a lifetime. This moment's not too big for me. I'm going to hang in there, I'm going to crush it.” So, you have that thing and you get done about two in the morning, and then you back on the plane, and you fly then to Dubai. You get off the plane in Dubai and immediately you start running again. It's another night marathon.

Robert Owens: Anyway, you have four-night marathons in a row, which I'd never even considered doing a marathon at night, much less ever done one. So, you do Perth, Dubai, Lisbon. You get to Europe, and it's cold and rainy. It's January. It's just sleeting, and it's windy. It's Europe, we're on a river in Portugal. You just go, “Wow, this is a trip all night.” Then you run all night long again in the rain. Some of the time on cobblestones. Then you get back on the plane, you fly to Cartagena, Colombia. And when you get the Cartagena after 11-hour flight, now you're back in the tropics and it's super hot. It's at the equator.

Dave Asprey: They've got stuff there to make you run faster, so that's better.

Robert Owens: You just sweat well. You're back at the equator. It's like, “Oh, here we are back in Cape Town.” But it's the tropics with the sweat. Anyway, you do for all those, then you get on a plane, and you fly to Miami. The challenge is you only get a two and a half hour flight from Cartagena to Miami. So, you were in the last two marathons within 16 hours, 17 hours. And so, you run two in the beginning in one day, two at the end in one day. And the whole point of that is that you can do a lot more than you think and time becomes irrelevant.

Robert Owens: Funny thing, the guys Cartagena, I come into the hotel, they were there before me, and they were staying up all night. They just said, “Screw it, we're tired. We've been tired since the beginning this thing. Who needs sleep? Let's go run another marathon.” There's 45 people having sandwiches at two in the morning in the lobby of a hotel saying, “We're not going to bed. Let's go to Miami, get this thing over with.”

Robert Owens: So, you learn to adapt and change, and your mind learns to adapt, but it takes practice. I try to tell folks, “Mental resiliency is a craft. It's a skill. It's something that you develop and grow with time, but you've got to suffer your weight into those barriers and then find out that those barriers really will move. They're not barriers, they're just things that you've never done before.” And Mark Divine told us at Kokoro, it's 80% mental, it's 20% physical. When you normally think Special Ops training is 80% physical, it's really not. It's physical for sure, but you've got to learn to manage your mind, have mental discipline for resiliency.

Dave Asprey: You talked about finding that voice in your head. A lot of people on endurance events will listen to stuff. They have music, whatever. I have the tiger, I have no idea what you listen to when you're running that long. Do you do that, or do you just battle out in your head?

Robert Owens: I battle it out my head in the dumb. And there were a lot of folks who headphones on in the 777. I need to be alone. I need to be alone where I can think about every step, every hip movement, every arm. I need to think... I'm intensely going through this thing of, "Is this the best that I can do?" Best style, best form, best breathing. I did those seven marathons with nose breathing where you inhale, and I choose either exhale through my nose or through my mouth, but every breath...

Robert Owens: I go into like a monk state that you learn from Mark Divine. You go inwards. You shut everything else out and you go inward, and you're focused and you get control. And that just comes from practice. And it works for me. If I put music in, I get all distracted, and I get thinking other things. I like the music, it's just, for me, I need to stay focused.

Dave Asprey: I was going to ask you for your playlist, but darn there's no hack for that.

Robert Owens: Well, a little bit AC/DC, for sure. [inaudible 00:40:38] stuff.

Dave Asprey: Of course, all the good stuff. Now, you also said something, you want to write a book on that. But you actually just did write a book that I should have mentioned in my introduction. It's called Beyond Average. It just came out recently. You talk about leadership and developing yourself, which is, I think, really important. Why did you decide to write that book first?

Robert Owens: People kept saying to me, "How did you do these five events?" For my 66th birthday, which I haven't mentioned to you. What I did was I... You remember the movie 300?

Dave Asprey: Yup.

Robert Owens: With Spartan. So, we did a Navy SEAL fundraiser for the guys that died in Benghazi with our ambassador. Those four Navy SEAL contractors left behind families. And so, a Navy SEAL chief put together a Navy SEAL warrior run to raise money for these guys that they knew. And so, we redid the 300 of Sparta. We did 238 miles in eight days, which was 30 miles a day. And we went from Sparta to Thermopylae where they all died.

Robert Owens: I was the oldest guy there and they all said, "You sure you want to do this? You're pretty old, 30 miles a day up and down mountains. You won't do that." And I was challenged by the thought that they said that was impossible because I was too old. You tell me I'm too old, the game's on. Second of all-

Dave Asprey: There's your secret motivator.

Robert Owens: Well, I like a good challenge.

Dave Asprey: It's funny you mentioned 300. One of the guys who was kind enough to endorse Super Human is Gerard Butler, who played the lead in 300. When I first met him, we were sitting at a table that wasn't a typical celebrity kind of thing. I had no idea who he was. I'm talking to this guy and I'm like, "You're in really good shape. How do you do this?" We're talking about all these hacks, and finally, he drops a couple of hints. And I'm like, "Oh, wait, I think this guy must be famous or something."

Robert Owens: He's got some abs, doesn't he?

Dave Asprey: Yeah, incredible abs. I'm like, "Come on, were those airbrushed on." He goes, "Not mine." He goes, "Some of the other guys, but not mine." And it was interesting because he also talked about how he channeled as an actor, how he actually channeled the toughness and the spirit of the people who were actually there, and that that was how he was able to bring it as an actor. When you're doing these events, are you... This kind of weird spiritual out there question, but are you calling on the power of your ancestors? Are you channeling Superman? Are you doing something weird like that, or is this just straight up like, "I'm going to think about every step and I'm going to do it." Because I've talked to guys who do both.

Robert Owens: Yeah, I'm not a channeler. I was fortunate enough to say, "If I'm going to do this experiment, I'm going to start training at SEALFIT with Mark and all these guys." And when you go there, there's a warrior culture. You suffer in silence. You never put your hands on your knees, you never put your hands on your hips, you never show weakness to the enemy. You never cuss, you never make a sound. All you do is go through your workout.

Robert Owens: It's Spartan. It, "Just get focused on yourself. We don't want any hotshots here acting like they're some stud. Just do your workout and shut up." Doing that for three years, going down there with those guys, with those Navy SEAL instructors and stuff, and they just look at you like, "Shut up, do your work. Don't cause any attention to come towards you at all. We don't want to know you're here. We're here to breathe."

Robert Owens: And so, that kind of a thing set you into... And there's no music. So, that kind of a thing, you just sort of sets you into. Whatever you're going to do, just lockdown and go for it. And I appreciated that training. I remembered it in my 20s. But to get back in that kind of environment, that Spartan-ish type environment, you don't need a channel. You just need to focus on the guys around you and get mentored by them, and watch them, and learn from them, and grow. And that's all I needed. But maybe I should channel too.

Dave Asprey: It depends. There's so many amazing techniques that people use when they're pushing the very edge of human endurance. There's breathing. There's another famous musician, I'm not going to name him until he says it's cool, but I asked him about, "How do you perform?" If you're a musician and you go on stage on tour every single night for 60 days in a different city, it's grueling, and it's a big-

Robert Owens: Grueling.

Dave Asprey: ... high energy performance. And this guy... This is reminding me, I got to see if he'll come on the show. But he's like, "Look, I know how many breaths I'm going to take before I go on stage for a two-hour set. I know where I'm going to step." I was just blown away at the level of perfection that he drilled into himself. And this is a multi-Grammy kind of guy. Grammy's are what you get from music, right?

Robert Owens: Yup.

Dave Asprey: I was stunned. I didn't even know what to say when he told me that. And when I hear you say, "For seven marathons in seven days, I paid attention to every arm swing," it definitely... For me, I'd want to leave my body and install someone else in my body if I could figure out how to do that. Maybe.

Robert Owens: I understand. Can I mention on the channel thing? If you want to know about the 300, there's a book out, and the book is called Gates of Fire by Pressfield, Steven Pressfield. And I'm sure that all the actors had to read this book. It's the most intense look at Spartan culture. And when you read that book, it's not hard to channel. [inaudible 00:46:36] what, these guys were a different breed. It was a mandatory read for everybody who went on this run. You had to read the book first. Thank goodness because it gave you a mindset of this is what these people lived as a culture for a long time, and it's a lot tougher than me.

Robert Owens: So, when you're out there on the course, I was thinking about these guys in that book and I was thinking, "I want to be like them. I want to see if I can experience that." So, maybe that's channeling. But I had that background reference versus just me and training of this is a Spartan thing, and these guys were Spartans. They weren't the most functional. They were pretty dysfunctional society, to say the least, when they killed their own babies. The mothers are breeders and they kill all their kids that they think are weak.

Dave Asprey: I still remember being traumatized in something like fifth or sixth grade when we learned about Sparta for the first time. And there's a story of one of their heroes is this kid who was about my age, and he had a baby tiger that he caught. He put under his robe. It started chewing on him in class, but he wouldn't show anyone, he'd get in trouble. He just sat there until it ate through his gut and he died, and they celebrated him as a hero. And I'm like, "That was the most disgusting, horrible story." I still remember this 40 something years later thinking, "Man, that is a culture that is seriously screwed up." But at the same time-

Robert Owens: [crosstalk 00:47:56].

Dave Asprey: ... they were able to do things that were unimaginable, right?

Robert Owens: Right. Yeah. If I was in Michigan state, I'd say, "I don't know that I really want to be a Spartan." But when you carry your own kids and the wives see themselves as breeders, and they kill all the weak ones. They start knife fighting at five years old. It's survival of the fittest from five, six, seven years old. If you don't live, you don't make it, and that's okay because we only want the certain breed to make it to the top. That's a whole another world. And the wives are sitting there going, "I'll kill this baby boy. He's not good enough for us." That's tough.

Dave Asprey: The Vikings and the Spartans were like that. And you do that for 10 or 20 generations, you build some strength, but I think it comes at a long-term cost on other fronts as well. I don't think I want to live in a world that's like that.

Robert Owens: Well, the world passed them by.

Dave Asprey: Yeah, that's true.

Robert Owens: They were good for a season. Then the world grew by them, and they were out of sync, and they faded.

Dave Asprey: That is a very good point. Although don't tell Norway with all their oil money. I'm watching you Norway. My wife is Swedish, we have to watch them. All right.

Robert Owens: [crosstalk 00:49:06].

Dave Asprey: I want you to tell me about your dad, because you spent a decade with him in his 90s, and decided that you were going to help him get stronger as he aged, even at that [crosstalk 00:49:18]-

Robert Owens: [inaudible 00:49:18].

Dave Asprey: ... age. Tell me about what you did there. I want to hear about the ping pong paddle trick.

Robert Owens: Oh, gosh. Well, I moved home. My mom died at 91, my dad was 92, and I said, "What do you want?" And he said, "I want to die at home." And so, I said, "Okay. Since..." I'm an adopted kid. I don't know my parents, they adopted me when I was three months old, and my sister was adopted too. So, I thought the best way to honor my mom and dad for giving me a family, and a good family, was to go home and take care of my dad. So, I shut down and just moved home.

Robert Owens: When I got home, my dad... The older you get, you want to sit, and the more you sit, the more your atrophy, you lose what you got. So, my dad had a really favorite chair, and it was a deep chair, real comfortable. I liked to sit in just this deep old thing. And he couldn't get out of it. He needed somebody to get him to stand up, and who in the world wants to be around every time your dad wants to stand up to help him get up.

Robert Owens: So, I said, "Hey dad, we're taking the chair away from you." He said, "You can't take this chair away from me. This is my chair. We've even had to re-upholster it twice because we like this chair so much." And I said, "Hey, dad, you're going to have to earn that chair. You can't get out of it. And if you can't get out of it, we're not going to just be codependent with you and be around just pull you out of it all the time. Go to the bathroom, go to eat, this and that." And he said, "Well, what do I got to do?" I said, "It'll be fun."

Robert Owens: So, I got him up and he had a cane, and I said, "Hey, dad, I want you to give me your best squat. Show me what a squat looks like for you." I said, "Put both hands on your cane, put the cane out in front of you, put your hands one on top of the other on top of the cane, and then I want you to bend. I want to see what kind of squat you got." So, he had this little sort of a small little three or four-inch kind of a move down. And I said, "Okay, this is what we're going to do, we're going to do some squats, dad. We're going to get your thighs back. You want your thighs back? You want to be able to stand up, get more balance, and this and that?" He said, "Sure."

Robert Owens: So, I put him on a program of doing 25 squats four times a day on his cane. So, we'd walk down the street, I'd take him for a walk. And I said, "Dad, give me 25." He'd get behind some car, and then he'd get all his hands on his cane, he'd start giving me 25 squats. Not just squats, good ones, 90 degree parallel ones. And so, his thighs came back. And when his thighs came back, he got out of the chair all on his own. He went, "Wow." And I said, "Dad, there's more in you than you think. At your age, there's still more in you."

Robert Owens: The theme of my book, there's 20 times more potential in you at every age that you have to let somebody bring it out of you because you don't want to do it. He said, "This is great." He didn't have to have a walker for a long time. And when he finally got on a Walker, he didn't need the walker, but for balance so he could get out of a chair to get to his walker. It was a big win for him.

Robert Owens: He said, "I'm losing my balance more." And I said, "It's an inner ear thing, like a kid on a trampoline." So, I gave him the ping pong paddle and the ping pong ball, and I said, "I want you to just do this. Can you stand up 10 times in a row, hit this pink pong ball?" He said, "Yeah." So then I put him on one leg. I said, "Can you be on one leg and do this ping pong ball?" And he was better with his left leg than his right leg, so I said, "We're going to work on this because we're going to get your inner ear back to get your balance back."

Robert Owens: And then I began to have him do the ping pong paddle to the right, to the left, and to the left, to the right bouncing the ball while on one leg. And so, all of a sudden, his inner ear came back, and he regained his balance. And we did exercises like that, real simple in the hallway, and made it fun for him. I'd count out the numbers, we'd do it for time. He wanted to get better. He was competitive. So, he worked on this stuff, and got his thighs back, got his inner ear back.

Robert Owens: And when he died at 101, he died in better shape, in some ways, than he was at 91. But he'd gone back to exercising. And so, I talk to seniors about you choose how you age at your 50s, 60s, 70s, 80s, 90s. It was fun to watch my dad have wins. I'd sometimes show him off at a restaurant. I'd say, "Dad, see all these people lined here? Give me 25 right now, will you?" And he would do it with his hat on, and all the people look at him go. "Look, guys, he's 97 years old. Can you do that? No."

Robert Owens: And he'd laugh. They'd want to buy him a glass of wine, or pat him on the back, "You're a great old guy." Each smiled. He felt like he was in the game, and he was getting positive strokes. So, I gave him something that he could do that he could show off, but it would work for him. And it was a wonderful thing. The other thing he said to me was, "They retired me out at 60." He said this like 95, "If I'd known I was going to live 35 more years after they retired me, I would have started another career. But they just gave us a watch and told us to go play golf and go die. Your time is over at 60. You're done."

Robert Owens: And he said, "You're in the best place of your life at 60. Two things. One, you're going to have to fight to stay relevant because after 60, people begin to write you off as old, and they don't want to talk to you. You tell old stories and they go, 'I know, we've heard that story before.'" And so he said, "You need new stories." So, at 60, he said, "You need a new business plan. You need a business plan from 60 to 90. What are you going to do after I die?" And I said, "I'm not sure." He said, "Well, you need a business plan for when I die. What are you going to do to stay relevant, have new stories, stay excited, and do something all the time?"

Robert Owens: So, that's when I began to think, "Who do I want to be at 60?" At that time, I was like 52. I said, "Who do I want to be? When I come back out of this thing, how do I want to fade? How do I want to go out?" And Jerry West was interviewed by Colin Cowherd on Sports Fox radio in LA. And Jerry was asked, "How do you like being 81, Jerry West? If you were to be with the Clippers, can you do it again?" And Jerry made the comment, "I'm the happiest guy in the world. I'm thrilled every day to wake up. Why? Because I have purpose. I have something that I really enjoy doing when I get out of bed. I get to go create great basketball stars and create the other team's winners. And so, I'm the most fortunate man in the world because I have a purpose every day on why I want to get out of bed, and therefore, I don't want to retire. I'm excited about what I'm doing."

Robert Owens: Conversely, three months ago, I met with my high school water polo coach, and my high school water polo coach got hired away from my high school and he went to Long Beach State, and he was the Long Beach State water polo swimming coach. He got hired away by Michigan. Michigan made him the head water polo swimming coach at Michigan, and then he became the US Olympic coach. And so, he's Michael Phillips grandfathers. It's Jon Urbanek, and Bob Bowman, the coach, and then Michael Phelps.

Robert Owens: And so, today, he's 83 years old, and he's the of the USA Swimming. And he's the liaison to the Tokyo Olympics coming up. And I said to him at 83, "How are you doing, Jon?" And he goes, "I'm doing great." I said, "Why?" He said, "You know what? I'm loving it. Why stop? I get to go and speak around the world for USA Swimming, and blah, blah blah." And between Jerry West and Jon Urbanek, I said, "I'm the most fortunate man in the world because at 60, my business plan is I want to stay healthy as long as I can, and I want to do endurance things to see if I can do them."

Robert Owens: And so, I'm excited because the game is inside me, and I'm just playing my game of, "I want to go out healthy. I want to speak to groups about being healthy. I want to speak to athletes about being mentally tough. I can do this by staying in the game, and I sleep better, I eat better, and I can do this to the day I die." So, that's when I put together the five events to say, "I'm going to come back out as a senior. I'm going to make my debut as a senior, and do what Joe De Sena said, 'There's 20-year-olds that should not even attempt to do what this old man's doing.'"

Robert Owens: He said, "Robert Owens, you're a badass." And I said, "No, I'm just an old guy that wants to stay in the game and prove to those young kids that we still have game too. I'm happy to clap for them, but they should not write us off at 60. Let us continue to do stuff that they clap for us." So, I'm living the dream, I'm having a fun time.

Dave Asprey: What do you think about when someone looks at you and says, "Okay, boomer?"

Robert Owens: I have some political things beside me. I ran for state legislature, and I have political... I've been in many TV debates, and blah, blah, blah. And so, my daughter said to me when I'm driving my Suburban... She's at UC San Diego. She was this nice girl until she got to the UC system, and she turned this super liberal. Like, "What professor fed you that crap?" She'd come home with stuff from school and I say, "Take me to your professor, would you? I'd like to meet this guy. I want to meet the guy who's feeding your head with all this..." Anyway.

Robert Owens: So, she said to me, "Hey, dad, you're a boomer. Why don't you get rid of that Suburban and help save the world since you as a boomer, your generation is screwed the whole thing up. Why don't you do something for us?" I go, "What do you want me to do?" And she said, "I want you to get rid of that Suburban and buy a gas saver." I said, "What do you want me to buy?" She said, "A Prius." And I said, "Why?" She said, "Because there's less carbon emissions. You're a boomer, you screwed things up."

Robert Owens: So, when you say to me, "What do I think about a boomer?" I have all kinds of things go off inside me from different age groups about looking at us. They listen to our music. And I say, "We invented that stuff. There was no rock and roll before us. Every time you turn on AC/DC or wherever you do, remember,

that's my generation." But on other things, "Okay, I'm a boomer." I want to be a good boomer, a good role model boomer, a nice boomer. I want to have a conscience, and I want to put it down some people's throats. I want to stuff the senior thing down their throat.

Robert Owens: Fortunately, like on the Today show right now, they're doing Super Seniors. On the Today show on TV, they are highlighting these seniors that are doing tremendous things. I watched the Today show sometimes just to see who the super seniors they are going to have. They had some 82-year-old lady the other day that beat up a guy that broke into her house. And she's [crosstalk 00:59:53].

Dave Asprey: I saw that. That was awesome.

Robert Owens: [inaudible 00:59:55] and she beat the stew out of that guy, and stuck him with that table leg. The cops came, and wanted their pictures taken with her, and wanted autographs with. This guy's in the hospital, this 18-year-old beaten by an 82-year-old. I just thought, "There we go." I want to be a good boomer. I want to enjoy it and tell people, "Relax."

Dave Asprey: I love that. I love that mindset. It actually pisses me off. I'm not a boomer, I'm Gen X, no one talks about us. There aren't enough of us to matter, apparently. There's more boomers and more millennials. I don't really care because I don't identify with those whole buckets too much. But I can tell you showing disrespect to your grandparents is pretty screwed up, just in general. And when your grandparents were kids, they probably also showed some disrespect to their grandparents, but they got smacked for, so they learned not to.

Dave Asprey: I'll just say I've learned a lot more from boomers and whatever you call the people before the boomers. When I have the honor of interviewing someone in their 90s, which I've done a few times, Nobel prize winners and people in the fields of psychology. Man, I've learned a lot. And I spend every minute I can with people 20, 30, 40 years older than me. And if I blame someone for socioeconomic, large trends and say, "You didn't do what I wanted," that would make me the world's biggest douche. So, I'll tell you, I'm standing firmly with, I don't use racial slurs, I don't believe in ageism, and I don't put people in buckets like that. And I think for anyone to do that is pretty crappy.

Robert Owens: Got it. I just want to remind all your listeners, when you see a senior and you're sitting down, and there's only one chair, be a gentleman, lady, and get up and honor them and say, "Would you like to chair, please?" It's so much fun for me in New York City on a subway, crowded subway, and there's a senior, and every look won't move for him. And I get up and I say, "Here, would you like this?" And people look at you like you're crazy. Like, "Why are you giving up your seat?"

Robert Owens: I say, "Ma'am or sir, take my seat." I stand up. I do it just for the effect of all these people around me going, "This is New York. You don't do that." I still open

doors for people, and pull out chairs, and try to model niceness. And I think our generation needs to remember that you need to honor everybody, but especially seniors. Not me, I can handle it. Think about when you see a nice older person, you go out of your way to do something nice for them.

Dave Asprey: It'll actually do something good for you no matter what your age is to do that. I remember one of the surreptitious videos, and no one knew what was going on, but Keanu Reeves is in New York on the subway and he actually gets up for someone. He had on headphones, and kind of surreptitious sort of thing. And someone noticed who it was, and the video went viral for it. But that's just a classy thing to do. So, whenever I get a chance, I'll do that.

Dave Asprey: And same thing, if you've got a pregnant woman, they're carrying a lot of work. You heard that cool fact of the day, the metabolic activity is the same as yours when you're running one of those endurance races. Like, "You know what, have the chair. It's all right." All right, I've got one more question for you, Robert. How old are going to live? How long are you going to make it?

Robert Owens: Having lived with my dad till 101, my ego wants to go for 102.

Dave Asprey: I love that.

Robert Owens: The challenge is though that he was a very lonely man because all of his friends had died. And so, he wasn't happy. Once my mom died, and his friends were all dying, and he was the last man standing alone, he just felt out of sync. Once you lose your purpose, it doesn't really matter how old you are. If you have a purpose, every day is great. If you're just surviving and you're stuck in your rut with your excuses and you get sour, you've already lost your life.

Robert Owens: There's one thing to live and there's one thing to exist. And a lot of folks at above 50 are just existing, and they've stopped living a long time ago. So, I want to live as long as I'm functioning, and I'm healthy, and I can do my exercises, and I can eat good. But having taken care of him when he was lonely, I don't look forward to being lonely, and people not talking to you. You lose your hearing, and it's hard for you to hear them, and your world gets smaller and smaller and smaller.

Robert Owens: So, I don't know how long I want to live, but I want to live as long as I have quality of life. Let me just say before we close. The reason, again, I wrote the book *Beyond Average* is, there's a lot of people listening to this who are not hotshots. They're not the best, they're not the smartest. They're just average people. And I'm an average guy. And what I learned in this process was that if an average person will continue to do the right things and persevere, they'll do far more than they think they can ever do.

Robert Owens: And what I would encourage the listeners is, if you have a tough time with humility, you need to work it through where you need to go to mentors,

whether it's health, or finances, or family, or whatever it is, and say, "I need to learn what you, could you help me?" Let that person bring out of you the stuff that's in you.

Robert Owens: There's two people in you; there's you, and then there's the person you wish you were. You have these moments, "I wish I could do that." Or you see something, "I want to do that." Well, there's another person inside of you that wants to live. And you need to make place for that person to live. And that comes with getting encouragement from people who can bring you through those barriers to get into those things that you really would like to do, but you don't have the confidence to do.

Robert Owens: Many times of my life, I didn't have confidence in me, but I had confidence in the people who had confidence in me. I just lived in their confidence. If you think I could do it, then I'll believe it too, because I don't have the faith. But if you think I can, I'm going to ride on your faith, and I would get into their jetstream of what they think I could do. I got A's, or I got better grades, I did this, or I did that. But it wasn't because I was so together, it was somebody helped me go to the next level. And I want the listener to know that inside of each of these listeners here, there's more in them, but they've got to go after laziness and unfocus, and they're going to have to find help, and ask for help, and they can grow past where they are today. That's what I hope the listener gets.

Dave Asprey: Profoundly useful, interesting, and just provocative knowledge. And I love that you've pretty much given aging the finger in the biggest possible way. And I respect that. I certainly learned something from you, and I'm hoping that all of our listeners today did too.

Dave Asprey: Your website, [roberthamiltonowens.com](http://roberthamiltonowens.com), your book is Beyond Average. And I got to say, if you're in your 60s and you read the book, fantastic. But this is the stuff that I wish I knew when I was 20. Almost everything that I do on Bulletproof and all is, if someone had just told me, I would have saved so much work and suffering. So [crosstalk 01:07:12]

Robert Owens: That's right.

Dave Asprey: ... if you read the book.

Robert Owens: I would like to see if some fathers would give it... or parents give it to their kids and then say, "I need you to write an outline of what you learned out of the book. Just like Rich Dad, Poor Dad. What did you learn out of the book?" I gave \$100 to each one of my children to read Rich Dad, Poor Dad, but they had to write something about it. Did the nickel drop? Did they get the point? And so, there are certain things. What did you hear? What did you get out of that? What did you learn? Have those dialogues.

Robert Owens: I took my kids to that first Ironman, made them all seat at the finish line. And I said to the teachers, "I'm pulling them out of school, but they'll write a paper on this." And I said to them, "What did you see at the finish line?" And they were profoundly moved to tears. You see people crawling across the finish line, you see people blind, you see people with one leg, you see wheelchairs.

Robert Owens: I said, "So, what did you see?" And they said, "These people were just overcoming." And I said, "So, what's your excuse? What excuse are you going to use, kids? If you've seen all that and see what they do, then are you going to be an excuse person? I don't want to hear any excuses out of you. You have two arms, two legs, you're smart, you're gifted, you're fed, you have clothes, the sky's the limit. You have positive parents. Don't give me the crap. You need to take this life lesson from that finish line and say, 'If they can do these kinds of things, gosh, what can I do?'"

Robert Owens: And I think that parents need to put the right materials in front of kids so that those kids get stuck. That stuck in their brain. They read something like, "Wow, that changed my life." And those kind of moments you and I have had, and we wish the parents could do that for other kids to help them grow. It's been an honor to be with you on the podcast. Thanks.

Dave Asprey: Thanks, Robert.

Robert Owens: Good.

Dave Asprey: If you liked today's episode, I'd love it, and Robert would love it too... He actually asked me to ask you this. If you would just go to my Instagram page, or if you could go to my Facebook page, and tell me what you think about the interview. He's actually going to read those things. He'll probably answer a couple of comments. I'm going to do it. And certainly, if you go to his webpage, he's very accessible on his own social media, so you can actually ask him questions. He just likes to help and that's what motivates him.

Dave Asprey: So, you can ask them questions, you can tell him what you thought. You can tell me what you thought, but I'd really like to get the feedback. And as always, leaving a review on iTunes is one of the most powerful things you can do. So, thanks for your feedback.

Robert Owens: [crosstalk 01:09:33].