

3 Pillars of Performance: Cold, Breath & Mind – Wim Hof with Dave Asprey – #750

Announcer:

Bulletproof Radio, a state of high performance.

Dave Asprey:

You're listening to Bulletproof Radio with Dave Asprey. Today's guest almost needs no introduction. He's known as The Iceman or Wim Hof. He's got multiple world records for crazy feats of endurance and exposure to cold and if you're a longtime listener, you heard him on Episode 403 where we talked about climbing Everest in a T-shirt and shorts, freezing yourself for long periods of time, and you realize this guy really is a superman. He's based in the Netherlands and he's proven that his methods can change your body chemistry, infuse you with a different kind of energy, change your brain focus, and he just wrote a book that is coming out almost as soon as this is published for you to hear and it's called The Wim Hof Method: Activate Your Full Human Potential.

I and countless of other people have been waiting for years for Wim to write a book. The only book you could get from someone he had trained and it was not the official Wim Hof message, which goes way beyond take a cold shower and get some ice. There's a lot more in there, so he finally did it. He finally put it together and before we get going on the interview, Wim actually has a message that he just puts out there and he says, "You can literally do the impossible. You can overcome disease, improve your mental health and physical performance, and even control your physiology so you can thrive in freezing temperatures."

Now, that makes Wim one of us. He's a bio hacker because that whole thing, control your physiology so your body will do what you want it to do, hey, you want it to thrive in freezing temperatures? You got it. And this man is a master. Wim, welcome back to the show.

Wim Hof:

Thanks, Dave. Thanks for having me. Nice meeting you again. Let's go deep into this conversation.

Dave:

I believe the last time we talked in person was sometime after you were on the show and we were at a Tony Robbins' Unleash the Power Within event. We both had spoken there and we were walking around in the streets of New York and I think you were only wearing a loincloth. Is that true?

Wim:

Yeah, sort of. Sort of. Dave, it is just because I got no money for clothes.

Dave:

You've done so much fun stuff, it's almost hard to know where to start, but I know that some listeners either aren't familiar with your work and many of them haven't heard Episode 400, because we're at about episode 800. So let's go through your backstory just a little bit and then we're going to go into your work specifically. You talked on the first episode about how as a teenager you got turned onto this. Tell me that again so that all of our listeners can connect to that.

Wim:

Oh, yes, my teenager years. When I was 12, I was always driven by a deeper urge, deeper drive within. When I was 12, I was already reading into psychology and Hinduism, into Buddhism, doing yoga in a time, this is like 49 years ago when yoga was a strange thing you do not do. You don't want to mingle with people who are doing yoga because it's strange. They are out of the normal. They are evil. It's bad for you. You've got to be Catholic. You've got to go to the church. You've got back to the rules. We know where that leads up to.

The new church is yoga, the new temple is to become divine within yourself, but not those days. In those days, I wanted to find a deeper meaning in life. I did not know what drove me but it drove me and so from 12 to 17, I did a lot, I read a lot of books, I did a lot of esoteric disciplines and it came to the point when I was 17 on a Sunday morning in the winter time, a thin layer of ice in the park on the pond and I looked around. Nobody was around, everybody's sleeping. I was pondering again about the meaning of life and then I felt the attraction to go into the cold water and I did. I did. I took my clothes off. I went in, layers, and I was in there. And then when I was in there, I felt.

I felt this is it, not words, I felt this it and from there on, I felt this direct connection with inner power, a power deeper into the physiology, which we never have learned in our schools. That's exactly what I was philosophizing and pondering about in all this time before, now I had found. It had nothing to do with words. It was a feeling, a deep feeling of being, and since then I've been doing the cold every day and I went into the extremes with that, because then I found a doorway into the deeper control at will, over our physiology. And I'm sharing these foundation of scientific understanding itself, to go into the autonomic nervous system was not known to be able to be done by [inaudible 00:05:58], and now it is. We showed that. We showed also injected with a bacteria, but being able to withstand that.

Dave:

Yeah.

Wim:

This was all not possible but, okay, my teenage years, went into the soul search, when I found the cold water, I got connection beyond words within myself and then the breathing began. Because when you go into the cold water the first thing you do is, ahhh. Deep breathe, it's like re birthing, rebirth into the change of the biochemistry inside. You do it through deep breathing and I just began to find out and a few months later, I could do incredible things just by using the breath.

Dave:

So let me ask about that. I remember I was probably 17 or 18, didn't know what I was doing and it was January in Santa Barbara where the water's not exactly warm and I decided I would try surfing without a wetsuit. And I walked out there and the wave hit me, just from the chest down and I couldn't breathe. I literally froze up, like uh-uh, and I got out of the water, which was probably the right thing to do. And I said, "All right, screw this cold water thing, I can't breathe in there." And you actually get this almost like a reflexive thing that says, "Don't do that." And took years for me to say, "I'm going to pay attention to this."

Your study at Radboud University in 2011 was about a year after I started blogging on my first Bullet Proof Executive site, which is now DaveAsprey.com, and what happened then is you said, "Look, by my cold exposure, I can hack my autonomic nervous system." And it was proven there and they had to rewrite biology textbooks, because they all said, "This is impossible," and they said, "Oh, man, we found this corner case, this weird guy Wim who just showed us you can do it so now we have to go figure it out." And I was already kind of blown away, I started doing ice therapy back then and we're

going to talk about why it makes you relaxed, but in 2014, you injected yourself with bacterial toxin called LPS, which is a major focus of fixing our gut, because the gut bacteria make LPS, and they use it in rat studies to stress rats' livers and it's bad for you.

So you go, "Yeah, I'll just inject some," and you had no biological effects from this. So you've got 10 years of real university research. Now cold does one thing but James Nestor was just on the show and I've done my vipassana, not vipassana, but my different pranayama types of meditation and breathing and all this. How much of what you do, do you think is breathe versus cold versus mindset? Those are your three pillars but one of them has to be first. Like what's the one at the top?

Wim:

First one is the soul search. [crosstalk 00:08:51]-

Dave:

Ah, so mission and purpose.

Wim:

Yes, mission and purpose. You don't know why it is there, it is there, and it's probably genetical. Whatever it is, it's there. It's irrational, it's there. It's there all the time, makes you think, ponder, search, philosophize, debate, talk, find out, explore more, more, more, and that's how you still the mind. Now when you go into the cold water, which I found attraction to, the thing that made, the cold water first did was to make me shut, it made my mind still. An absolute, dynamic stillness directly present, and now it shows, Dave, that these breathing techniques, which they go, are joined when you go into the cold water, the breathing becomes very deep.

Now these breathing techniques we have developed, they show to be in comparison with people who exercise mindfulness four hours a day for years, that these breathing techniques within 10 minutes bring people in deeper areas of the brain. That means in the not talking areas and there where you are activating non-talking areas, we can all it all kinds of names, because I know the names, but I say the non-talking areas of the brain. We normally do not experience, because we always think, we always think in numbers, in letters, in images, but we don't experience stillness, the non-talking awareness and that's what the cold water did. And then I became aware, oh, this automatically, the reflex to breathe. I began to notice that every time I did that, I changed inside and I could stay longer in this aggressive impact of this stress.

So the cold was the first. The deep breathing I became aware of and then I began to disconnect the breathing of the cold exercising at home. And when I did that breathing caused by the cold, apart, in at home, all the bloody chakras and heightening awareness, all the thousand bells, all that I experienced every day in the morning when I stood and I went in deeply through pneumatic manipulation into my physiology, my nervous system, my anything of the brain and body. So that came next and then my intuition, intuition and instinct, that is intelligence, cognitive awareness from the gut and the heart. It's all neurology. If I was able to make the talking a part of my brain, still, even not being in the water, I was now able to connect with the non-talkative part of my brain, naturally connect directly in open contact neurologically, with the heart and with the gut.

That is amazing. It's just amazing and then you begin to become aware of internal and sensorial perception and how it is showing inside. When I say proprioception, the seventh, after the sixth sense, you have the seventh sense, which is the proprioception. And the proprioception was thought of, you cannot top-down regulate it and we showed with the Radboud study, because part of the proprioception is the immune system. And with the Radboud study we have shown to get into the

adaptive immune system and the innate immune system and that is the problem even now with the COVID is the innate immune system. Everybody is talking about masks and social distancing, they should talk about proprioception, about top-down regulation over our immune system.

But I take that apart, then the number three, the mind. My mind is something else than just talking. It is being, it is intuition, instinct. And then talking is just a little bit of it all, and now we showed it in [inaudible 00:13:50] in brain scans, in one of the two best brain scans of the world with German doctors and professors. We showed to be activating through these breathing exercises 100% neural activity. 100, not 60, and all at will. I mean at will, activating 100% neural activity inside the brain. Then the brain is certainly having an all over equal blood flow.

Dave:

You said something really important there. When you said that people were getting the benefits of years of meditation by doing their breathing and we have this puritanical thing that came from Europe and the US, it's in the West, where you sort of have to suffer to get the benefits. And some people get really upset when you say, "Hey, maybe you could suffer less and still get most if not all the benefits?" What do you miss if you say, "I'm just going to do the breathing, I'm not going to do as much of the meditation?" Is there something that you don't get?

Wim:

No. You know what you do with this controlled pneumatic manipulation... Let's not call it pranayama or breathing exercises... It's pneumatic manipulation of neural activity in the brain by causing a different, a biochemistry in the brain and we do that all at will. We bring up cerebrospinal fluid, which is known as the [inaudible 00:15:34] and all that, but that's all take apart because we have rewritten science. We have rewritten science and to make it fit for the Western contemporary problems of say depression, inflammation, all that, all that needs different angles of tackling than say meditation of the old days or even vipassanas or they...

Look, they are great, but it takes eight days to get really through yourself and then come in and all the crap suddenly, boom, it's open. That is hormetic exercise. That is like enduring. What is breathing with us is bringing the neural activity into deeper parts of the brain active. That is exactly what meditation's goal is to bring the blood flow in deeper areas of the brain. But then through the breathing, you are able to bring it even deeper and then within 10 minutes, and it has been shown in brain scans. So that is much more fitted for the Western mind.

Western mind, it keeps on thinking. Hey, man, if you are waiting until the bus is coming, it's not going to come. It's not going to bring you home and you are just sitting there, pondering all the time and frustrated because you want to go home. You want to go to your wife and your children and look at stupid television, have a nice dinner, because you are tired. That's like you want to go home inside and being, just being. You recognize your deep being and we have been cut apart of our deep being.

Now what this society is doing with the world, we see it. There's a lot of stress, a lot of information, a lot of war, a lot of [inaudible 00:17:41], a lot of illusion, a lot of exploitation. [inaudible 00:17:46] this is what we have done with our mind and that same mind, we are not able to make it still. It's illogical because we are not connected to our soul or the deeper part of our existence, our brain. Now we have shown in the latest brain scans, I showed how to tap into, at will, into the deepest part of the brain, which is the periaqueductal gray hemisphere, the place of the opioids and cannabinoids.

So whenever you have that could be biological, chemical, mental, viral, it's stress. Stress makes you pain. Stress makes you feel not good, but if you have connection with the cannabinoids and with the opioids, you know how to battle that stress any time and it has no negative effects.

Dave:

How does cold exposure affect your endocannabinoid system?

Wim:

Yes, exactly. It is the endocannabinoid system and the funny thing is I come from Amsterdam, the cannabinoid, endocannabinoids. But we say, "Hey, get high on your own supply." Okay, how do you connect with the endocannabinoid system? Every time you go consciously into a stressful, hormetic exercising into a cold bath, you begin to neurologically connect with the adrenal gland, because you know you've got to be strong when you go into the ice water. And for the first time you don't choose comfort. You choose discomfort.

Dave:

Right.

Wim:

And then naturally, the neurology is able to connect with the part in the brain available for us to endure, to endure the stressful aggression of ice water upon the body, which is painful and suddenly, the adrenal access activation takes care that the endocannabinoid system is active and that I showed last [inaudible 00:20:09] in the brain scans in Detroit to make just by thought... listen well... Just by thought, we are able to endure and confront ourselves with stress, pain. I'm talking pain. Good, and this is the way they measured it. They got me in a [inaudible 00:20:31]. They exposed my body with ice water upon the skin, which normally makes the skin temperature go down and feel unpleasant, like pain. But in my case, just because I did not want it to happen, my temperature of the skin stayed one degree above the beginning, like a normal body temperature. But because I didn't want it to go down it rises.

This is the endocannabinoid system when you have it connected with the will. This is a protective shield, that's the way the adrenal access works and it stayed over there. Well, the [inaudible 00:21:21] seven minutes cold water, seven minutes warm water. Seven minutes cold water, seven minutes warm, and it kept on going, go and go, like 40, 45 minutes. And then, okay, so, it always stayed at the same. Now what happened in the brain, what they saw, because I could not move. In the brain scan you cannot move.

Dave:

Yeah.

Wim:

You can't do breathing. You can't do anything, because they can see it on the monitors.

Dave:

Yeah, it wobbles, right?

Wim:

So, yes, when they saw on the monitors the brain, the slices of the brain, they saw for the first time a at will activated, the endocannabinoid system, the periaqueductal gray hemisphere robustly activated all the time. And so my insula which is the part of, say, a meditative being, nice being lounging was very

active and my stress, the prefrontal cortex, the conscious will was like there was no stress. Because there was no stress, it was not activated.

Dave:

Wow.

Wim:

This was in contrary of 74 people who had done the same experiment before and they all showed the robust activation of the prefrontal cortex, because stress was going on. Insular, which is for lounging and ice bathing very down and for the rest, nothing was going on in the brain. I had shown for the first time to go into the deepest part of the brain, thought of inaccessible by humans. And how did I learn it? Just go every day into the cold, then your will knows how to protect, the cold coming do any kind of damage. I feel just bloody nice going into ice water, stay there, as long as I want and that's the power of our mind.

Dave:

It's funny Joe Dispenza, who's been on the show, wrote a whole book talking about "Hey, if you measure average people, none of this is possible but if you measure meditators or people with any kind of spiritual practice, suddenly they can do it." And what you did, with having a bunch of people who have done your practices, the ones that are in your new book, you basically showed, "Look, do these practices, get these skills," and this is not part of becoming super human that's possible because it's there, it's just not evenly distributed and we all would believe it's impossible. Except, it's not impossible if only you can do it. But if you can get dozens of people to do it with your method, what's going on is we just didn't know how to train it. Except it's kind of like we did know how to train it.

It's funny in the Wim Hof Method, you're new book, almost every one of the endorsements and forewords have been guests on Bullet Proof Radio, and you had James Nestor wrote one of your endorsements. And James talks about how, you know what, this has been discovered before and it goes away from our awareness, and then it comes back. And you connected with it at a young age, you figured it out. But it's funny, you have Dr. Andrew Weil, who's been a proponent, an outspoken of breathing forever, Patrick McKeown who's the first guy who came on and really talked about Buteyko breathing and all this, Lewis Howes, Gabor Monte, and then Elissa Epel who's talking about genes. So it's interesting, you have some personal development and breathing and medical experts in there and then all of a sudden, you kick right over to the telomere effect author. So why did you have someone writing about telomere and the length of telomeres write the foreword from your book which is endorsed by the who's who list of the people who know about breathing? What about telomeres?

Wim:

The telomeres, the length of the cell division, which is responsible for the length of our life span, a time span of life, yes, it favors because what we do with these exercising is bringing back the cell with a protective shield. That is, because we go always in comfort zone behavior, we really can ourselves condition around our cells, because there is no danger ever. It's always elected. Oh, when it's warm, air conditioning, too cold, heating, I'm not going to walk, I'm going to take the car from A to B. There's never exercise, there's never stress upon me, a conscious stress. How do you think you are able to consciously battle stress if you never exercise it within stress?

Then accidentally, it comes to you and don't know what to do because it makes you paranoid and anxious, and you don't... "Pass, we have to go inside." "Oh, the rain." "Oh, this, oh, that." You know,

you get that and that is not learning. The right learning is to go consciously seeking discomfort and this is what Blackburn, Elizabeth Blackburn and Elissa Epel of The Telomere Effect and the Nobel Prize Winners mean. They are the top of the top and they are talking about this and they see the value now of this. And they made the interpretation from the inflammation, that the inflammation had no chance to get into our bodies during this over reactive immune system reaction to the E. Coli bacteria.

In the end, if you look to the cell and you do this breathing, you activate protective proteins and you do it at will. What happens when we reinstall all the protective proteins around the cell? That inflammation is not able to get in and oxidative stress is not able to get in. What happens is that the telomere, they are freely, they are not under attack, they don't find any stress, they begin to grow as long and as far as you want and now comes the beautiful thing. We are able to control the DNA, the telomeres, and to bring the innate capacity of the cell to protect itself, just by will and that means how long do you really want to live? You're able at will to do it. But what it takes is first, you've got to go into hormetic exercising to bring the connections, neurological connections and now it's going to be proven in a couple of months, we get the result and then it will show that we are into rejuvenation, into recycling damaged protein in cells.

Dave:

Right.

Wim:

Into activating stem cells and killing cancer cells and all that, that it is all the same thing. In the end of this, we are born to be able to be the masters of our mind, which is connected to our DNA. The length of time, but now comes even better with the purpose of the length of our time and the purpose is to free genetical, hereditary damaged encrypted codes, that is the new thing. The new thing is, "Hey, we don't live just for ourselves, we live as living mediums to solve the problems our ancestors couldn't."

Dave:

Yes.

Wim:

And we got that encrypted in our genetical codes and now I am into, with these guys, with Elissa Epel and others, but it needs research more that we become enlightened I we are able to solve the matters of the genetical, hereditary problems of the past, the encrypted codes and that is first done by hormetic exercise to bring the full potential of our neurology alive. And then we are able to steer the ship towards wherever we want to go and if their journey takes 200 years, it does not matter because for the DNA and for its control, it's a piece of cake.

Dave:

Let's teach people how to do this, specifically. So I want to walk people through on this episode so they get the most value and, guys, you're going to have to read the Wim Hof Method to get all the nuances, there's no way we can teach you in this. You do workshops that are several days long and I'm planning to do one of those once travel is a little bit more achievable right now. So where do people start? I mean do you start with a cold shower? Do you start by waking up with breathing? So assume someone's a complete virgin, they don't know anything about breathing, cold or Wim Hof, what do they do first?

Wim:

I would say first of all, you are born to be the master of your mind and the captain of your soul, the captain of your purpose and no worries, because you going to live exactly the dream, the purpose of your life, and become fully bloom of your full potential within this lifetime so there is no worry. And you know what, you will learn about a fearless being within yourself. Because where we go with the DNA right now, into the past, into the future, into the present. It's much deeper, much further, much further back than ever before thought was possible.

And now we made it simple. We made it very simple, because simplicity is the nativeness of us. We disconnected from nature, we disconnected from simplicity and nativeness, from just being. But your being, just being is not connected with the complicated kinds of feed it minds through advertising, through television, through schooling, positioning. You can go do this, you are a patriot if you kill a thousand enemies and all those things, no. You are already beautiful as you are. Remember that, remember to a feeling that makes you be proud of who you are here and now. You've got the value, you are divine within and of course, this sounds a little bit, hu-ha, but the simplicity of it all is that people doing this, within a couple of days are able to shatter the foundations of science and psychiatry.

People come to me depressed and four days later, I mean, their physiology is like they are inside and four days later, they are like five hours in freezing temperatures, that means deep stress, in shorts, out there, singing, bringing, dancing. What is that? That is your being in the moment. That being that you dance, that you feel, that without too many words, that being is pure spirituality with two feet on the ground. That is what I bring to people, that it is there and now it's found the keys to-

Dave:

So step one is?

Wim:

Step one, step one, take a cold shower.

Dave:

Okay, so step one, isn't the mindset. That's overarching why you do it. Step one, take a cold shower. How do you take a cold shower properly?

Wim:

Take a couple of deep breaths, set your mind, you are here with the cold shower. What happens through the deep breathing, you alkalize the body and thus you influence into the temperature sensors. You become stronger. You become more able to endure the cold and to deal with the cold. It's all physiology, it doesn't matter. Just take a couple of deep breaths and that go in there and enjoy 30 seconds, get in there 30 seconds. Let the body do what the body is capable of. That is the adaptive power of the body.

Dave:

Yeah, most people who've never had a cold shower can't do 30 seconds.

Wim:

Yeah.

Dave:

It hits in the forehead, they get a headache and then they scream and they jump out after about 15 seconds max, even if they're kind of tough.

Wim:

They're good.

Dave:

So we're talking about full on, never done a cold shower, a little bit afraid, how do they start?

Wim:

Okay, start nice and warm on the sofa and do, take on the free app of ours, the free app we developed and you've got to take it on. Listen to my voice, I will guide you there into a breathing session and you will astound yourself, being warm and nice, and then suddenly you're able after in exhalation to stay there for one and a half minutes, without breathing. Even people who were like 80 years, 90 years were able to do two minutes, two and a half minutes more than they ever did when they were young. They were so astounded. We have an ability to control our physiology and biochemistry through breathing, conscious breathing exercising, and anybody, anybody.

Now, if you do that, then you change your body chemistry. Suddenly you get a better hold over your body chemistry to endure stress and stress can be mental, emotional, but also feel like heat and cold. It's all stress in the end, but you are able through the deep breathing to change your biochemistry and thus, you feel this, "Hey I'm stronger. I'm able to deal with that." You know, without words, it goes without saying. It is there and if people just do this then they astound themselves. The breathing exercises, done.

Hey, next step is take the 30 seconds and just do one leg, another leg, one arm, another arm. A little bit of the front, a little bit of the back, and go around like that. Like a little song. Somewhere over the rainbow, way up high, you know? Make it a little dance. Make something nice out of it, so yes, make something nice out of it. And then very soon, you see that the adaptive power of the body is taking over and this is what we want, that you feel that you equalize, that you neutralize, because the biochemistry in the body is able to become stronger. That's the natural effect and then the stress of the cold, because the cold stays the same but your body from the internal is changing. That's what we want.

Because when that happens, when a pathogen or [inaudible 00:37:24] stress hits you, in the body or out, from the outside of the body then your body needs to learn to change of the biochemistry and it is then able to generate adrenals dopamine, serotonin, cannabinoids, opioids, all these things. They come in, like the pharmacy's completely open, exactly what is needed will provided. That's the adaptive power and you learn to activate that through cold showers. Besides of that the cold showers tackles killer number one in the world, which is cardiovascular related disease. That's just the side effect of all this is that you train the vascular system and that makes you, having a transportation system which optimizes then the millions of little muscles and that helps the blood flow go through. It gets better to the cells, you get more energy and the heart rates goes down with 20 to 30 beats a minute, 24 hours a day.

There are so much benefit, people need to know, "Hey, but what is the benefit." Hey, man, the benefit is so much, more than the investment, the investment is just the little [inaudible 00:38:50] and what you get back is a whole field of big melons. I mean the benefits are so huge, you'd better invest this 30 seconds, mentally first, think about it. Hey, if we are able to harness our cardiovascular system through and learn to activate our adaptive power, which is able to endure stress, whatever way it comes

to us. Hey, then that means it changes all the perspective of... Through that simple exercise, we are able to reconnect with an innate capacity to deal with stress. Boom, there it is, very simple.

Dave:

All right, so...

Wim:

Yeah.

Dave:

Step one, I'm just going to say, guys, read, read the new book. Read Wim's book. That's going to be your start. But let's say that they don't even do that, they're going to download the app. Is the app free?

Wim:

Yeah, it's totally for free.

Dave:

Okay, so cold water is cheaper than hot water. So they're good, okay. So they're going to download the app, they're going to do the breathing exercise. They're going to get into a warm shower, then they're going to, at the end of the shower, they're going to turn to full cold and they're going to be able to do stuff they didn't think they could do.

Wim:

Yes, exactly.

Dave:

Yeah.

Wim:

And the thing is once you begin, you will see directly, direct result is that you handle stress much better and that you have more energy, directly.

Dave:

What about when people get a headache from cold water? How do you handle that?

Wim:

Don't put your head at first inside cold water, because the skull is directly connected... The induction of the temperature difference is big time when the conditions are not right. Very soon the vascular system becomes much more responsive and then you're able to go, even dive into ice water. But first we have to reawaken our vascular condition to its natural power and it takes a couple of days of cold showering.

Dave:

I found a study that I referenced in one of my books. It was in mice, but they did cold water exposure to mice and they found that after three days, that there was a change in cardiolipin, which is a compound

that's in the mitochondrial membrane. And that after that happens the mice were much more adapted to it and I've noticed the same thing with countless Bullet Proof people who are saying, "Showers suck, I hate you, Dave. Why did you ever talk about Wim Hof?" And then after three days, fourth day, like, "Oh, I feel good." I feel like that may be a part of it. Have you looked into cardiolipin and mitochondria at that level?

Wim:

Yes, so sure, sure. Not only, also there's a couple of studies. We have been the first ones, pioneering with these, a nucleus science and it's about brown fat first. They told of a man my age have no brown fat or very rudimentary, but I got plenty. I got plenty because I exercise in the cold. So the cardiolipin within the shield, this fat in the mitochondria is there to produce energy. It's directly related to brown fat [inaudible 00:42:36]. That is one. That's beautiful. That is any animal has it. So it's very healthy and the function of it is to produce, it's uncoupled protein and then it produces directly energy. Therefore it is, and it's amazing, because you feel warm when normally you should feel cold.

And not only, it learns to produce more energy. It learns to activate more energy and to consume more fat, white fat. And we've got a big problem with the white fats in the world because we don't have the cardiolipin going. We have no brown fat going and that is not the only thing. The second thing is we are able through going into the cold to learn to consume fat like four, five times faster than normal conditions, just by the mind. Just by our mind and breathing, we are able to consume or to bring up the consumption of fats four to five times more than normal, through the production energy to battle the cold, to battle the thermal stress.

The stress of the cold, the cold is my teacher to learn to battle stress and make the mechanisms to produce energy at work, at any level. And it's beautiful, because it not only works in the mitochondria but also in the DNA, in the telomeres, in the protective proteins, in the transcription factors, in the gene expressions. It works everywhere. The cold is not only my teacher, it's mother nature itself. It takes care of me. It makes me strong. It makes me able to enjoy deep stress and so, yeah, amazing, amazing.

Dave:

So you go into some esoteric stuff and there's an area that I think some of our listeners are going to be really interested in. Maybe anyone who goes skiing and all and it's around high altitude adaptation. I have been climbing in the Andes, the Himalayas, [inaudible 00:45:03], Shasta, all over the place, grew up at high altitude and I have a set of practices so I don't get altitude sickness wherever I go. But they don't actually include anything other than nasal breathing and it's a bunch of supplements and nutritional and ketones and coffee and all that kind of stuff.

You actually have something that's in your book where you talk about what to do above 13,000 feet with your practices. And because, I mean, you are the guy who climbs in shorts and no shirt at high altitudes, can you share that with listeners, because it is elegant bio hacking?

Wim:

Yeah, it is elegant bio hacking and it shows so much, but the first time I went with a... Because this is a psychological standpoint of view where we began. I told people, "Hey, guys, who are interested, let's go climb Kilimanjaro in three days, in shorts." "But I have arthritis." "I don't care. It's okay." "I have Crohn's disease." "It's okay. Are you motivated? You come." "I have asthma." "Okay, yeah." "I have cancer, prostate cancer. I cannot..." "Are you motivated?" I asked them all to be motivated and I had a lot of people with a lot of disease and then we put it out and we said, "We are planning..."

In short, I mean up there, down there it is tropical. You go through all the temperature differences possible. We set out. We talked to their doctors, physiologists, experts, Alpine experts, et cetera. And they all said, "This is irresponsible. People are going to die. This is not possible. Especially these people with these conditions. They are going to die because if you create an oxygen deficit, that will make, shut down organs and oedemas, brain oedemas or lung oedemas." And they all well explained it very much with a lot of arguments and they got us like a little bit schizo.

Like one group got fear, and the other said, "No, we go anyway." In the end, we went, but there was a dilemma going on, a dilemma of fear and was that because of all these authorities and experts telling, "This was impossible, irresponsible, et cetera." We did not do it in three days. We did it in two days and we all came back and we all summited. In short, the oldest man had four coronary bypasses, 65 years old. He did it in 48 hours. People with arthritis-

Dave:

At what altitude was that?

Wim:

Yes, without altitude [inaudible 00:48:03] disease.

Dave:

I mean but how high-

Wim:

You know, the outcomes... that is about 18,000 feet.

Dave:

Okay, that's a serious height, yeah.

Wim:

Yeah, that's like 6,000 meters, 18,000 feet, and around 5,895 meters. You have to triple it to make it feet. So when we told these people there in Africa we were going to climb Kilimanjaro in three days, they said, "No, Kilimanjaro is able to be climbed within five to nine days, fully dressed and then only 40% will..." and we got 100% within two days, and then in shorts, in shorts, without clothes, in the Arctic winds. And you know what happens on the top? On the top, there is less than half the oxygen and you need oxygen to combust energy to battle the cold. There was not and still did, they did it, with all their conditions. Now I will tell you how we did it.

Dave:

Yeah.

Wim:

We did it because we were motivated, that was one. I was not really aware what to do and how to tackle acute mountain sickness, acute headaches, oxygen deficit, et cetera. Anything that with, I was not really aware how these 26 people would react but I got, I just got a gut feeling to wake up everybody at 2:00 in the morning when we arrived at the second hut, we climbed through to the Rombo. Rombo is at 12,000 feet, and at 2:00 in the morning, I woke up all, everybody with a heart rate and oxygen

separation, you can measure and I told them, "Breathe as much, breathe like crazy, deep and go," with a retentions and go. Three quarters to an hour and everybody was back from say 70, 80 saturation to a 100 or 95s, 96s, 97s, 98.

Dave:

And this was breathing really deep?

Wim:

That was through it. Yes.

Dave:

To increase, yeah, which would increase oxygen.

Wim:

Fully [crosstalk 00:50:33], I had a, and then fully in, halt and then there you see it all rising on their saturation meters.

Dave:

Wow.

Wim:

I mean, the oxy meters and then the other morning, everybody felt so fresh.

Dave:

Yeah.

Wim:

Everyone felt great. "Chicken, like a chicken, man, let's go." "Whoa, [inaudible 00:50:56], yeah." That was well, the other day, we went from, say, 6,000 or was it 6,000 feet? 6,000 feet to 12,000 in once. And this was with no experience, these people had no experience in mountaineering. There they were and they were feeling great that morning and that day, we went up straight to the... and we, every time a person got sick, like headaches, because of building up deficit and accelerated pace, going too fast, for normal physiology, then breathe deep again. I say, "15 breaths, deeply in, then hold. Squeeze into your head and you will see the headache is gone. Why? Because you bring the cerebral spinal fluid full of oxygen inside the head and the oxygen deficit is gone." It worked. It worked.

And so the thing, the shameful thing was when we did it two days and we all came back in the Netherlands, and I told the people, I did not hear any physiologist, any Alpine expert or doctor who had argued before we went out there, saying that this was irresponsible, lethal, people are going to die and all, I did not hear anybody. We silenced them all.

Dave:

Wow.

Wim:

And we know we are right. We had no fear. We had a gut feeling. We went and it's so cold, impossible and the oldest guy 65 years old, four coronary bypasses he tried. I mean, amazing how he felt. Then I did it again and again and again. And the last time I did it, the oldest person was 76 years old, he was suffering from Lyme's disease and he did it in 31 hours.

Dave:

Wow.

Wim:

He had no former experience in mountaineering. He did it in 31 hours. He's healing. People with Lyme's disease, all the time, he's a gardener.

Dave:

It's really interesting having had Lyme disease and toxic mold and those two are conflated quite often. High altitude does something magic when it releases EPO and you start to feel better when you go up to that altitude even just for a couple of days. And you get that weird elation, only if you're doing other stuff, like the breathing you've talked about. I remember the first time I felt it at 18,000 feet. I hadn't learned the breathing exercises, but that was my first, Yak butter tea. But something happens, it's almost like, "Yeah, I feel better than I have... I want to dance," but you should be feeling like you're hypoxic and you're going to die but you feel better than ever.

And I'm so intrigued that you cracked the code on breathing, because every mountaineer who's trained knows the rest up. You take one little tiny step, then you go... Hah, one more step, and you're basically panting and you feel like crap all the time when you do it. And you totally broke all the rules and you're doing stuff that most people didn't think is possible, so kudos to you for that, because that really is the elegant bio hacking to say, "You know, yeah, you're 76, and you've got all these pre-existing things, but it's still possible if you have the roadmap." And the roadmap has been written in the 13th century. It was probably written in the 9th century and now we can measure it and you are measuring. You do know these studies saying, "See, those old, old cultures weren't crazy. They were actually very sane. They knew it and they just didn't know how to measure it."

So when you bring this science in, Wim, to your breathing, to your cold exposure, you're... it's the only way we can make medicine and we can make even the way we build the way around is our health, our environments, actually work with humans, it's... anyone can say this old stuff worked, and the modern doctors and researchers, will quite often say, "That can't be, therefore it isn't." And they'll tell you that you're lying right to your face, but when you throw a study down and some data they can't... It basically breaks that mindset and then you're doing the world a service, because you've shown efficacy.

So thank you for more than a decade, at least since I've become familiar with your work of doing that.

Wim:

Thank you for your work, too, man. You are a bio hacking mind. We advance because we believe in a higher consciousness, a higher, a greater potential within people, which is able to activate our unconditional just being. It's okay to just be because it's great the way we are born to be and that will become, and until it's not there, we will keep on giving the light to the direction and go whole hearted, every time. We yell, we talk, we whisper, we sing, we cry. We do it all because we love life. That's why we do this.

Dave:

Ah, I love it, Wim.

Wim:

And I salute what you do. It's about love.

Dave:

It is about love, and it's also about knowledge and just knowing what works and I'm so, I'm still frustrated. I spent so many years doing what didn't work, because I believed it would even though I was faced with evidence it wasn't working in that 300 pounds. So you've cracked the code and a lot of stuff.

If you like my show, guys, I'm telling you, you need to read The Wim Hof Method book because it's worth your time and it's worth your energy and there's stuff in here that will shave years of effort and struggle off and when you shave the years off, you can use them for something else, like being nice to people or whatever else you like to do.

Wim, thanks again for being on the show.

Wim:

Great, thanks, Dave. Just absolutely great. We keep on going and we meet again alive, a physical somewhere, somehow. Thank you.