

Human Upgrade with Dave Asprey: Jason Wachob

Dave Asprey:

You're listening to the Human Upgrade with Dave Asprey. Today's guest is my friend from mindbodygreen, Jason Wachob. And he's run mindbodygreen for about 15 years, along with his wife, Colleen, and we've known each other for the vast majority of that time. This is a major site where you can find information about health and wellness online, as well as some really cool products.

Dave:

They've gone down a path of creating a book of curated knowledge, which is an approach I really like. And it's called, *The Joy of Well-Being: A Practical Guide to a Happy, Healthy, and Long Life*. And because I'm such a curator, I'm like, "What would happen if I curate a curator?" So I wanted to invite Jason back on the show today to talk about the lessons learned from looking at joy, and looking at joy from a variety of experts to see what we could all take away about consciously and intentionally increasing the types of the quality of the amount of joy in our lives.

Dave:

What do you think, Jason, you up for that?

Jason Wachob:

I love it. Always great to see you, Dave. I'm excited for the conversation.

Dave:

The last time we chatted about wellth, W-E-L-L-T-H, building a life instead of just a career, which is really cool. This feels like a bit of an extension of that, but instead of it being more your story, it's, "Well, what are the lessons from others?" Why go down this path?

Jason:

Well, for a couple of reasons. One, I would say my why changed.

Dave:

Why go down this path?

Jason:

Well, for a couple of reasons. One, I would say my why changed. Wellth was written, I think, back in '16, 2016. And fast-forward to 2023. I'm 48 now. We have two little girls, age six, and almost four. When the 40s started to creep up, I started to really get serious about longevity.

Jason:

And the men in my family have a terrible track record. My father died of cardiovascular disease at age 47. My paternal grandfather died of cardiovascular disease at age 49. Excuse me. Maternal, 49. And then the paternal grandfather died of cancer at 44. A terrible track record. And I believe in epigenetics, like you do.

Jason:

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And I believe we have the power to turn off and turn on genes, and I believe that terrible track record stops with me. And so I really became passionate around longevity and really started to, I think, dial it in a little bit too. I think about the 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0. So 1.0 is, let's just increase lifespan. Let's try to live to 100. So, okay. We're living to 100. But then you just start thinking about quality of life.

Dave:

Yeah.

Jason:

You want to be mobile. You want to be active. You want to be able to do the things you want to be doing at that age. So in a perfect world-

Dave:

Maybe remembering your name is a good place to start.

Jason:

Exactly. And so ideally, you want that quality of life for 99 years, 11 months, 30 days. And then you rapidly decline over 24 hours, or drop dead of a heart attack then. And then I view the 3.0 as joy span. And this idea of joy very much resonated with Colleen. Ideally, look, you want to be fit, mobile, healthy, active up until the end, but you also want to be joyful. I don't think anyone would want to live an existence where you're ripped and you've got cognitive superpowers, but you're in a terrible relationship, and your kids don't chat with you, and you have no friends.

Jason:

That's not an existence we want to be part of. Through the history of mindbodygreen, I go back to the early days. We've come so far in this conversation, and there's so much information. And it's so overwhelming and almost impossible to keep up with everything. And I think in many instances, could add even more stress into one's life.

Jason:

And so the why and the book for Colleen and I was an effort to really take all of the best information from all the experts and really curate it in a way so that those who feel like they've been left out of the conversation, whether they don't have the time or the resources, which are the two major objectives to health and wellness.

Jason:

That we could create something where you could read the book and say, "You know what? I don't have the time. I don't have the resources, but I can do this." And our thesis is, "Look, we may not be able to get you to 100%, but I think we can get you to 80%, to maximum well-being. And that's a huge step in the right direction.

Dave:

That's the thing. Any movement in the right direction is good. Any movement that takes less effort is even better, but you'll never be done. And if you look at that as, "I'm not going to be good enough until I'm done," it's called asymptotic. It's like the math term. It means it's always almost approaching and always getting closer, but never quite there.

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Dave:

If you get 80% of the way up that curve that's accelerating, it's good enough. And if you're at 82% or 78%, you won't know. And maybe over time, you climb to 90%. Or maybe it wasn't worth it because you were too busy doing stuff that was really fun, and that's okay too.

Jason:

Yeah.

Dave:

And just that relaxedness happens. I've seen that shift in you. You've gotten more relaxed about that stuff than you used to be.

Jason:

Yeah, absolutely. I think really understanding, it's a journey and be open to the fact that a belief you may have held prior may change, and that's okay. And science changes, and information changes. And I think something we've talked about as well on our show is, unfortunately, having an informed conversation with empathy and curiosity on different views in our space is not one that really happens. And it's something I've seen.

Jason:

My personal views have shifted with certain... I'll use protein, for example. I go back 10 years ago, when yoga saved me from back surgery. I was pretty close to being vegetarian. I experimented with being vegan. I was doing yoga all the time. And I fast-forward it to today.

Jason:

And that is not the case. Protein is a major focus for me, and strength training, for all the reasons. Longevity in the context of maintaining lean muscle mass. Sarcopenia is real. There's that crazy statistic, which is very real where one out of four people over the age of 65 fall. If you fall once, you are twice as likely to fall again. If you fall and break your hip, you have a 30 to 40% chance of dying.

Jason:

So let's pause there. That's insane. And keep in mind, because someone will try to cancel us on this. It's not the broken hip that necessarily kills you. It's all the unintended consequences after. It could be complications from surgery. It could be an infection in the hospital. That's very real, infections. If you want to get an infection, go stay in the hospital.

Dave:

Yeah.

Jason:

Hospitals save lives too. I don't want to just crap on hospitals. Or you could come home and not be mobile and be depressed and fall into a deep depression. Unfortunately, I've seen this anecdotally with a lot of friends.

Jason:

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So going back to strength training and protein, that's very real for me. I started experiencing a little bit of sarcopenia. When I looked in the mirror and I said all the, "Oh, my God. I've got old white man's ass. What's happening?" My college basketball ass is flattening. I'm not here for the vanity, but I'm here for maintaining lean muscle mass. It would make sense, since I didn't...

Dave:

So Jason, you're telling me that you wanted to have an apple butt, and that that's why [inaudible 00:08:28] exists?

Jason:

Well, yeah.

Dave:

That's what I'm hearing.

Jason:

Well, you know we live in Miami now, Dave. A lot of lifestyle changes for us. No. In all seriousness, I really didn't focus on... I was doing some resistance training, but I never liked doing legs. And so the last time I did legs was probably the day before I went to the gym, before my last college basketball game, in 1998.

Dave:

Wow.

Jason:

And so I just didn't do legs. I just walked. I lost a little weight, and I'm like, "This doesn't make sense. I look the same. Everything feels the same." And I looked in the mirror. I'm like, "Oh, my God. My ass is flattening." And so I was like, "It looks like I need to start doing legs." And the ass is coming back. But, look. We do lose lean muscle mass. And going back, sarcopenia is very real.

Jason:

I think we lose 1% every year in our 40s. And I think if you make it to your 80s, half of all Americans suffer from it. And going back to that stat for falling, ideally, if you have that strength, you have that mobility. Let's say you're about to fall, you want to be agile enough and also have the cognitive function where maybe you can grab something or prevent the fall.

Jason:

Or you have the muscle mass. If you do fall, you break the fall. And so how do you get there? How do you build muscle mass? One, you have to do resistance training. And then, two, you need to have enough protein. And you know this better than anyone. This is where it's a very emotional conversation. It is a fact that animal protein is superior to plant protein.

Jason:

If you want to build lean muscle mass, you need to consume animal protein. You need to make sure you have enough leucine. You need to have 2-1/2 grams to activate muscle protein synthesis. Otherwise, the protein you're consuming doesn't really count. And so that's a focus for me. And I look at me, where I was 10 years ago practicing yoga all the time, pretty close to vegan for a while.

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Jason:

And, look, that worked for me, but it doesn't work for me now. I had the ability to kind of take a step back. A, I'm fortunate enough to work with doctors and do testing, but actually really talk to experts and look at the data and say, "Okay. I need to change. What worked for me at 38 makes no sense at 48."

Dave:

Just maintaining this, maintaining your body, that's enough work. But if you're going to do that and grow another business, that's a whole different level of demand. I always think about that when people are coming along and trying to judge. I'm like, "It's interesting. Where did I put my energy?" And I want to ask you that.

Dave:

What percentage of energy do you put where? How much energy goes into you and your body, versus your relationship, versus your business, versus your family and your kids?

Jason:

I would say it's in a constant state of flux. Wherever it needs to go at that moment. I would say having children was life-changing and all of a sudden they put everything into perspective. With that said, Colleen and I will always say our first child was mindbodygreen.

Dave:

Yeah.

Jason:

Look, we're very fortunate. We love what we do. We're so passionate. With that said, as you pointed out, the stresses of running an everyday business are very real, and being a parent in 2023. This is also a big why of the book. I think the challenge we had is, "Look, there's so much great information. There's so much great science. There's so many great protocols or modalities available."

Jason:

And even someone like myself and Colleen, we're embedded in this space. This is our job. We're really struggling with, "We can't do all of these things." We can't fit it into our day.

Dave:

Yeah.

Jason:

So how do we take the best of everything and to incorporate it into someone's life, who is busy with a family or a job, and says, "You know what? I got a half-hour. That's all I have. Help me." We can get you there. I think that's the big change. Where 10 years ago, if you said, "I got a half-hour," I would really have to think very hard about where you would spend that time. What would you do?

Jason:

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I think we're in a place now where I do think even though it may not seem that way on social media with the Epsom salt baths and what we say, "The Kardashians wellness and all the gadgets." I do think it's possible.

Dave:

I genuinely am curious about this. I want to try every one of the cool biohacks, especially ones that I've thought of that don't exist yet. I'm like, "Who can I get to make that one for me, so I can try it?" I have a system that uses VR to retrain your eyes. You actually have a point of looking at the world.

Jason:

Mm-hmm.

Dave:

"And my God, I really want to use that, but it takes like 45 minutes. And when do I have 45 minutes that I don't want to do something else?" So it's not exactly FOMO, because it's not like I'm afraid that I'm missing out. There's an abundance of opportunities for biohacking, and I'm looking for the ones that are so potent that I want to put them into Upgrade Labs, and make them really big or something so interesting.

Dave:

I'm like, "I want to interview this person on the show." How do you deal with that? You must see as much cool stuff as I do. How do you just deal with having an ever-ending influx of cool health-related stuff to do?

Jason:

I don't have a good answer. It's still a process for me. I think I try to ruthlessly prioritize, and I still struggle with that. The struggle is real. I would say the struggle is real. And one thing I do try to do, and you are one of the few people who do this as well, is I also like to talk to people who have different points of view, and have them on our show.

Jason:

I think that also maybe changes the way I think about things. And I also think that's part of the process in curating information and deciding where you spend time. Because I think it's very easy to all of a sudden develop blinders and find yourself in an echo chamber with people who all believe the same thing you do. And that doesn't really set yourself up for growth, which I think is part of the process.

Dave:

How do you define joy?

Jason:

For me, a lot of it's intentionality. What are the things that are going to make you happy? Where are you spending time on the things that you want to spend time on? I do think it comes back to intention. I think a big part is connection. Look, it's no secret we're in a mental health crisis right now.

Jason:

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There's a study we reference in the book. In 2019, Cigna did a study that about half of Americans say they had meaningful day-to-day face-to-face social interactions. 2019, 50%. Can you imagine what that number is in 2023?

Dave:

Mm-hmm.

Jason:

And I think meaningful connection is just so paramount, and I do think for many people does really bring joy. I think emotional health has kind of been not, I will go as far as saying deprioritized in our space. I think it's very easy to go to nutrition and exercise immediately, and that is foundational but...

Dave:

Yeah. You talk about things like breath, and sleep, and eating good stuff, and even movement. But one thing that you've got in the framework in your book is you talk about teaching the body stress resilience. And resilience seems like the holy grail. Because if you're resilient, the next time some elected douche bag, it doesn't matter what color they are. They're all douche bags.

Dave:

Some elected douche bag tells you to do something that's harmful for your mental wellness. If you're resilient, it won't harm you, and you probably won't do it. So how do you teach that? That is a cool part of your book.

Dave:

So in terms of stress resilience, hormetic stress is something that's very topical right now.

Dave:

So in terms of stress resilience, hormetic stress is something that's very topical right now. The science is real and I think has been popularized by essentially cold plunges. And one of, I think the best experts on this is Dr. Alyssa Apple.

Dave:

Yeah.

Jason:

She'll go as far as... She was actually at the Revitalize you were at, in 2015. I remember that.

Dave:

No kidding. I interviewed her recently but...

Jason:

Yes. And on your show. Yeah.

Dave:

Yeah. That's a very early... Revitalize. Do you still do Revitalize conferences?

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Jason:

We haven't done one since 2019, but we're starting to do some local events, smaller versions.

Dave:

Okay.

Jason:

Less work.

Dave:

Yeah, no kidding.

Jason:

More impact. But getting back to hormetic stressors and Apple. She essentially says that these little stressors of modern intensity can produce this idea of stress resilience. They have benefits of recovery and possible rejuvenation of cells and tissues. There's also this idea that can help you lose weight and recover from all sorts of illnesses, which I've seen on... I get to see a great study in recovering from a serious illness, but anecdotally, I've seen that on social media. So it must be true.

Jason:

The great thing here as we think about the cold, again, time and money. Cold plunges are fantastic, but if you don't have time for that, you can get the benefit with a cold shower. 30 to 90 seconds, cold shower; then hot, then finish cold. You can get there. I think that's one of those hacks, if you will, that are really meaningful.

Jason:

And coming back to this idea of joy, I don't like the cold at all. This does not bring me joy, so I will not do it. And to your point, I don't feel guilt or shame. People maybe try to shame me for not doing this, but I think it's okay. And I think it's also important to acknowledge practices that have real science and meaning behind them and be okay if it doesn't fit for you.

Jason:

Because any practice you don't like, you're probably not going to do. January 13th is Quitters Day. And so what you have is millions of people go to the gym. They don't like going to the gym and they're not prepared to go to the gym and come January 13th, they're all gone. It doesn't fit in their lifestyle. And so for me, cold showers do not fit my lifestyle, so I'm not going to kid myself into doing them.

Dave:

Well, here's a question for you. If it was fun, it wouldn't work.

Jason:

I don't know. I think it depends on your personality. I think if you got a bunch of great fun people and we all got in the cold plunge together. Let's say there was a communal cold plunge. And there's some people actually trying to make this happen.

Dave:

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Oh, yeah. I've been to ones like that.

Jason:

Yeah. I think maybe I'd try it. But ultimately, I don't think I would drag myself out of bed to go do it, because I don't find joy in it.

Dave:

There's a convincing case though. That for thousands of years, humans have intentionally exposed themselves to painful things because it makes life more joyful the rest of the time. I'm talking about eating hot peppers, getting tattoos, getting a spanking, self-flagellation. There's an endless list of things that people have done. Yeah.

Jason:

So I would rather be comfortable with being uncomfortable going to the gym and getting a burn,-

Dave:

Interesting.

Jason:

... feeling a different... For me, that's more enjoyable. I will do that, but I won't do... So the gym I go to, there's great energy. There's great music. There's great people there. I like that experience. It's warm. I'm in Florida now. I don't like the cold. And so that, I will push myself and sometimes push myself without getting hurt. I think that's an important point, but feel that uncomfortable burn. But I would not find joy in the cold plunge. That's me.

Dave:

Yeah. I don't know many people who do. I have a cold plunge outside. I don't like the cold. I've got a cryotherapy chamber. It's part of Upgrade Labs. And by the way, guys, own an Upgrade Labs.com. If you want to open an [inaudible 00:21:41] facility in your neighborhood, you can do that now. We're opening dozens of these things.

Dave:

But it's probably the least favorite of my activities. But I recognize that if I do that, my joy and happiness capacity goes up for the rest of the day. And there's good dopamine signaling around doing that painful thing. But I don't know if it works. But it feels like if I ate really, really hot wasabi that had me just crying and just completely, "My mouth is on fire!"

Dave:

It may do the same thing for happiness as a cold plunge, but it wouldn't give you the metabolic benefits. I do make it a practice most days to do something that is briefly either uncomfortable or painful. And cold plunge is just one of the more accessible things. Because that brief, showing your nervous system what could be happening, makes it happier about all the other stuff.

Jason:

Look, I think you're unique. In that most people, if they don't like something, when life catches up and the schedule gets tight, and-

Dave:

I'm not unique, man. I skip it more often than I do it. I only to do it like three times a week. So don't [inaudible 00:22:52].

Jason:

But I think a lot of people, it doesn't matter if a cold plunge or doing yoga or whatever it might be, when push comes to shove, if they don't enjoy something, they'll let it go.

Dave:

It's true. This is one of those things where I'm not one of those stoic... I will suffer for the goodness of everything all the time. I have no interest in doing that. I want low friction in everything. And I always look at, "Okay. If I'm going to do something that I don't want to do, is the return on investment for that totally worth it?"

Dave:

I'll do five minutes of cardio, if it gives me the same results as an hour of cardio. But I won't do an hour of cardio. I don't care how many results you think it's going to do. I like my joints. I want to have them when I'm old and cardio sucks, and I'd rather spend an hour doing anything than cardio, probably including getting a tattoo. Don't [inaudible 00:23:43].

Jason:

I hate running. The last time I ran was the last game I played in college. If you see me running, call the police. I'm in trouble.

Dave:

You should have a T-shirt that says that. I love that. All right. What about sauna? I know in your book, you talk about sauna.

Jason:

Yeah.

Dave:

So you don't like cold. You like heat. You're in Florida. Do you do saunas?

Jason:

I do do sauna, occasionally. I like the heat. The heat doesn't bother me. So if there's a sauna that's available, I'm all for it. I enjoy it. I will do it. I like Florida in the summer, when some people will say, "It is a sauna outside." So it doesn't bother me at all. Again, the benefits are fantastic.

Dave:

All right. I like your perspective on that. It's always interesting because we're fellow entrepreneurs and you have a deep journey in health. And you just wrote a book about it, and writing the book makes you think about it and structure it in a certain way. You went somewhere that I really liked in your book as well.

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Dave:

You talk about regenerative change and actually being a force for regenerative change. Why, and what does that mean to you?

Jason:

Well, in terms of the environmental conversation, look, you've talked about this. I think we all want to live on this planet for as long as possible, and I think we've got a lot of issues, collectively. This manifests on the personal level, where plastic is an issue. I think we're kidding ourselves with plastic being recycled. Only about 10% of the plastic manufactured in our lifetimes has been recycled.

Dave:

Jason, it totally gets recycled into small creatures in the ocean. I don't understand your problem.

Jason:

Yeah. We look at all the endocrine disruptors. There's a scary number. From 1973 to 2011, total sperm count of Western men dropped by 59%. Just think about that for...

Dave:

I think we have lots of them. Huh?

Jason:

Yeah. And PFAs are everywhere. It's your frying pan. It's your sofa. It's your makeup. It's plastics, chemicals, everywhere. Look, it's a big problem. We both agree that fake meat is not the answer at all. People are kidding themselves that fake meat is going to play a significant role here.

Dave:

No. Not at all. It's a [inaudible 00:26:33].

Jason:

Exactly. What's going to actually move the needle? Food waste is a big one. We waste a lot of food. That's a big one. And clothing waste is a big one.

Dave:

Clothing waste is probably bigger than food waste. Food waste isn't that big of a deal. If you just feed it to chickens, it turns back into food. It's not a big deal. It's that we take it and we put it in dumps, where there's also a bunch of chemicals that then ruins it. So you can't make good soil out of the typical stuff that people put in their compost in a normal city. I wouldn't use that soil in my garden.

Jason:

Yeah. And, look, I do think we have a solution, and you've talked about this extensively on your show. Regenerative farming is very encouraging, in terms of sequestering huge amounts of carbon dioxide. And it's a win for supporting the planet. And also treating animals the appropriate way, and also making sure those animals are grass-fed and eating the right nutrients, if we're going to eat those animals. Because, again, we don't want too many Omega 6s in our diet.

Jason:

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And it's just the right thing to do. I think we'd all agree that factory farming is terrible and inhumane and also producing food that isn't good for us. And so we have something right in front of us that can solve a lot of problems and we should be spending our time there.

Dave:

You're one of the few people who's saying, "Let's pay attention to pollution before we pay attention to carbon." I don't even worry about CO2. And by the way, I have put a very large amount of my money into the carbon problem, before I just realized what was happening. Carbon is an issue. We're not sure exactly what's causing it.

Dave:

There's different perspectives and there's actually sound science arguments in both sides, which means I don't really know. We're still learning. But what I do know is if we keep spraying glyphosate everywhere, the amount of carbon in the air won't matter. Right? So when you see all this media about a problem that requires everyone to sacrifice for no actual gain. Meanwhile, they continue making the problem worse by spraying chemicals that are harmful to you and me, and to our kids.

Dave:

I'm not okay with that. You will stop the atrazine. You'll stop the glyphosate. Full stop. You'll stop antibiotics in environmental feed, and then you've earned the right to talk to me about carbon. Until then, shut up.

Jason:

And look, the problem is in our home. Maybe not in your home, but... PFAs. Think about the coating at the bottom of the cardboard pizza box leeching into the crust. We thought about that. Or the microwave popcorn bag, or the wrapper from the burger. The more you read about PFAs, you quickly realize they're everywhere, and they are extraordinarily problematic with what they're doing.

Dave:

It's rough. A lot of people I know will say, "I don't have any of that in my house." And then you look around, they do. And I'm sure I do too. Right?

Jason:

Yeah. We all do.

Dave:

It's just because we've allowed it in our manufacturing. And if maybe you have \$50,000 for a sofa, and you can have some German sofa-maker stuff it with wool from organic animals that hasn't been treated with chemicals. And dye it with the blood of oxes, or whatever the heck they used to do.

Dave:

There's going to be some, and that's okay. They just need to not be noxious, highly persistent, and overused. And so you can handle a normal amount, but you can't handle what we're putting out there now.

Jason:

Yeah. Look, for this chapter, it could have easily turned into an episode of Portlandia, where it's just never good enough.

Dave:

Yes.

Jason:

And to us, to Colleen and I, it's very much about ROI and the impact. "What are the real issues and impact?" So, one, we wanted to make clear that fake meat, not the answer. Regenerative farming, extraordinarily exciting, and we should try to support that. The endocrine disruptors, the PFAs are everywhere.

Jason:

And look, they're everywhere. You're never going to be able to completely have them disappear from your life, but just be more mindful of where they're at, and just try to be a little bit less wasteful. We talked about clothing. What's interesting about fast fashion is it's not the lower income groups of people who can't afford who are driving that industry.

Jason:

It's people who actually can afford clothes and they're just buying so much of it, and they're discarding it, and it's terrible for the planet. This idea of just get the clothing, wherever it's sourced. And obviously, pay attention to where it is sourced. But buy clothes that you like that you're going to wear for a while. Don't throw them out.

Dave:

You know what I found, is that clothes that aren't just made by prison labor, but they're made by child prison labor, those are always the best clothes. Right?

Jason:

Again, this conversation quickly goes to, "Okay. I'm holding up my iPhone. Apple technology. Well, we don't talk about that." Look, I am a consumer. I'm an entrepreneur. It's a conversation that can quickly segue way to you can't own anything, and I don't think that's productive either.

Dave:

No, it's not.

Jason:

Let's rather focus on the things that we're really going to have an impact.

Dave:

You're right about it. And to the extent that I can, and oftentimes it's intentionally hidden. You don't want to buy stuff that was made in a place that is mistreating humans. It's intentionally obfuscated. So it's really hard to know.

Jason:

Yes.

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Dave:

It's like we all do our best, but if you walk around carrying a huge amount of guilt because you might not have been enough, that's an old program. And I've had plenty of guests on the show talking, in fact, including the book, *You Are Enough*.

Dave:

The bottom line is, we talked about health and all early on. How it's asymptotic. You could always do better. The same thing on this. Being aware and making moves in the right direction, it makes sense. So I want to boil this down. Okay?

Dave:

Let's say that the section on your book on joy, people really resonate with the regenerative thing. What's the first thing you do, if you believe in a regenerative future?

Jason:

Look, I think you vote with your dollars. I think there are a lot of people who can be very angry and quick to cancel other people on social media, and they're very loud. Unfortunately, that doesn't really have an impact. And to prove that point, it will impact, is I think people tune it out. And to prove that point and just share how sad it is, and it's symbolic of the state we live in.

Jason:

There was a stat in the book we shared, where the Wharton School analyzed the most emailed articles in *The New York Times*, essentially the most viral articles in the world. And they classified the articles by emotion. And the top three were anxiety, awe, and anger. Anger was number one. Anger increased virality by 34%.

Jason:

In other words, if you read an article and you got angry, that article was more likely to get more eyeballs, or more listens or views, more engagement, comments, revenue. That is the state of media where we live. It pays to have extreme polarizing views that cause people to be angry.

Dave:

So what do you do about that in your own life?

Jason:

So I'm an optimist. I believe that the majority is silent here. And I think silent because when things start to go south in a way that is not productive, a lot of people just stay out of the conversation. And I do think that most people are looking for a little bit more of a balanced approach. And I think this has trickled down from politics to our world, to health and wellness.

Jason:

For me, I try to look at all sides and pay attention. I'll give you an example. Politically, even though I don't really talk about politics. When something's happening politically, I will watch, an evening. I'll watch Fox News. I'll watch CNN, and I'll watch MSNBC. Just flipping. Just getting an understanding of what everyone's saying.

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Jason:

I want to know what all the sides are thinking or talking about. So maybe there's a different point of view, that I don't share. And maybe that causes me to look at things in a different way. Maybe I become a little bit more empathetic to my neighbor or a family member that has a different point of view.

Jason:

And I just think that's an important process for all of us. Especially in our world, the health and wellness world, is to have that open mind and try to come with compassion, and empathy, and curiosity. Because you know what? Your views may change.

Dave:

They may change. In fact, they probably will, as you become more aware. Right?

Jason:

Mm-hmm. And look, you may disagree, and that's okay. Again, you're one of the few people who do this. You'll have people on your show who I know you disagree with, but-

Dave:

Yeah.

Jason:

... you'll still have them on.

Dave:

I have to make fun of someone. It's not about that at all. If you're learning, you might be wrong. Real scientists do that. And fake scientists just say that their competitors are misinformation. And even the word misinformation is incredibly, incredibly, insulting to other people.

Jason:

Mm-hmm.

Dave:

It's something I'm very comfortable saying, "Jason, you're wrong about that."

Jason:

Yeah.

Dave:

But if I instead say, "That's misinformation." What that is, is I'm saying that I have the ability to look inside your mind and to know that you know that what I'm saying is right. But that you're intentionally lying about it, or that you're so stupid, you've been deceived by someone who's lying about it.

Jason:

Mm-hmm.

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Dave:

Both of those are incredibly unempowering and insulting, and that's why the government likes to use it to disempower you. Misinformation is a made-up word. It is doublespeak straight out of 1984.

Jason:

Mm-hmm.

Dave:

The reality is there is fact, and most facts are actually hypothesis.

Jason:

Mm-hmm.

Dave:

"This is the fact we believe to be true until proven otherwise." And if you have that view of everything in your head, you'll be free. And if you have a view that everything in your head is a fact and that is the way it is, and anyone who disagrees with you is misinformation. Dude, you're actually a bad person, and you need to get a therapist, like two of them right now. I think. I could be wrong.

Jason:

Yeah. There's a children's book that I had growing up, which my mother kept. And it's a whole series, and there's one that we read to our kids. And it's about Louis Pasteur, and it's about the power of believing in yourself. And this was a man who developed a vaccine for rabies, and he was an outcast.

Jason:

And no one believed in his science, yet we all know the history. He was successful. I fast-forward to today. So many breakthroughs in science come from the outcasts, who proves the status quo differently. And it's unfortunate that it doesn't seem we're open to that right now.

Dave:

It feels like we aren't, but maybe soon we can be that way. It's interesting, just to be able to pick your brain about this kind of stuff, and see where you're landing with it. Because 15 years of building a company that's affected many, many millions of people is something that few people ever get to do. And then you've got kids.

Dave:

So you're going through the life journey on this. And then you did something similar to what I did with Game Changers, a book. I think that was four books ago. What did 400 people I interviewed all agree on? Maybe I want to write about that instead of what I think. And it feels like you went through and kind of boiled down all this experience and put it into a book that that's a very high density of wisdom.

Dave:

Because it wasn't just what you think, but it's what you curated from all these different people. We talked about resilience. We talked about regenerative stuff. But you also, in your book, you talk about meaningful connection.

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Human Upgrade with Dave Asprey: Jason Wachob

Jason:

Yes.

Dave:

I had the current U.S. Surgeon General on my show, on this show, right before he was named back to be the Surgeon General. And the only book he's ever written was about the epidemic of a lack of meaningful connection.

Jason:

Mm-hmm.

Dave:

And it's funny. It's almost like as soon as he went back into politics, magically that became not the epidemic to pay attention to. What's your take on meaningful connection, and what people can do to curate it?

Jason:

It is absolutely an epidemic, and it's really sad with kids and mental health and that's something that's top of mind. And I think 30% of girls strongly consider suicide. This is what we're experiencing as parents. And it's not just girls. It's every... It's really, really sad. Look, I think, again, in the health and wellness conversation, nutrition and exercise, absolutely paramount. Sleep, absolutely paramount. Breath, very foundational.

Jason:

And I think emotional health can sometimes get cast aside or deprioritized. I think most people know if they're not eating well. Most people know if they're not exercising enough. But are they emotionally well? Sometimes those are a little bit more difficult questions to ask oneself.

Jason:

And there was a study, it's one of my favorite studies, where this really hit home. Maybe this was the message I needed to hear. And it's the Rosetta Study. And Rosetta was this small town in rural Pennsylvania, in the 1950s. This is when heart disease enters America. And that was not the case in Rosetta. People over 65, had half the incidents of heart's disease. Under 55, men under 55, no cases of heart attacks.

Jason:

So like heart disease is not happening in Rosetta. So they said, "What are these people doing? Let's take a closer look." While they were smoking. They were drinking. They were eating lots of pasta and meatballs, all the things we know we shouldn't do. This makes no sense. They took a closer look. They had really strong social connections.

Jason:

Multi-generational living was very common. There were lots of parties and parades, and constantly celebrating with food and drink, with family and friends. The 1960s happens. The community starts to break apart. People move away. Guess what? Heart disease catches up with the national average. And to

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me, that study really hits home. In that we can do all of the things, so to speak, with nutrition, exercise, sleep, and so on.

Jason:

But there is the magic of meaningful connection that is just something that is just so crucial. We're seeing it, unfortunately, play out in real time with the mental health epidemic and people being forced to isolate. And it's very real. It's something for me. I've lost touch with a lot of...

Jason:

I had a huge group of friends coming out of college. We'd all be in New York. We'd be drinking, having fun, doing all the stupid things I probably shouldn't have done. And I lost touch with a lot of people.

Dave:

Yeah.

Jason:

You know, work, family. It happens. And it's something I'm working on. And I don't think I'm unique there. I'm not alone. It's happened to a lot of people. And it's just so critical to our well-being. Again, I know that... And you know this very well. With studies, you can kind of cherry-pick. But there's studies that say that essentially exercise can lower your mortality by 20 to 40%. Good diet about 30%.

Jason:

But being in a romantic relationship, having friends and being connected to community can lower your mortality by 45%. There's a lot there. And given the state of our country and our world right now, I just can't emphasize this enough.

Dave:

So what I'm getting out of all of this is drink coffee with a lover, and you'll live forever. I think that was kind of...

Jason:

Drink coffee with a lover. Get some dry farm wines. Enjoy a grass-fed meatball.

Dave:

There you go. So, yeah. Meatballs, and love, and coffee. That's pretty much human connection in a recipe. I appreciate you taking the time to write a book like this. It's actually hard, I find as an author. Because there's a tendency to zoom in on a certain thing. Right? And there's also a tendency to zoom out. And if you zoom out so much, you get one of those kind of, "Don't worry, be happy" sort of things.

Dave:

And what you've done is you've, I think, landed somewhere right between those two extremes. Where you read it, and it reaffirms and supports and usually provides additional knowledge. Because at this point, if someone's listened to the show, you could have listened to more than a 1,000 hours of me interviewing people. That's six months of full-time, eight-hour-a-day work kind of a thing. And more than you'd get in some college degrees.

Human Upgrade with Dave Asprey: Jason Wachob

Dave:

So you probably have heard some of these things before. The problem is, how do you structure and prioritize all these things? Because there's always more than you're actually going to do. And I think you've done a really good job of making the point there. And sort of saying, "All these matter, but how do you go in and feel which one matters more to you right now? Not decide, but feel into it?"

Dave:

I like the name of, The Joy of Well-Being. It's a good way to put it together. And thanks for writing it.

Jason:

Well, thank you so much, Dave.

Dave:

And thanks also for being a guest again on the show, and just pondering the virtues and joys of human existence. And honestly, with the work you're doing with your business, you're making the world better. You're helping a lot of people, and I appreciate that, too. So thank you, Jason.

Jason:

Well, always, it's an honor to be here, and I always appreciate your point of view, and your willingness to have people on who maybe don't share your point of view or my point of view. And I think that's an important part of growth, and an important part of being a leader in health and well-being. Unfortunately, it's not too common, but I very much appreciate that about you.

Dave:

Oh, well, I don't think I know how to change that. And since we're in a gratitude central thing here, I just wanted to thank you for saying that vegans are bad people on the show. By the way, vegans, to be really clear, if you're still listening, I love you, guys. I was a raw vegan. Jason was too.

Dave:

I want you to be happy. I want less suffering for animals in the world, and we all want regenerative future. That's why I do the grass-fed thing. That's why Jason does.

Jason:

Do you think you have any vegan listeners?

Dave:

There's tons. There's tons. Because the ones who are really doing it for spiritual reasons, not for anger or orthorexia, reasons like that. They understand. We want higher consciousness. I've taught my yoga teachers to eat meat so they could do more yoga and it worked. Right? Because they were running out of energy on a vegetarian diet, trying to teach seven classes a day.

Dave:

No. I genuinely want what all of my vegan friends want. You have the idea, that you have to hate on vegans. Guys, I don't hate on you. I actually love you, which is why I'm teasing you about it. And if the teasing hurts so much, then either eat a meatball, or go to a therapist. They'll both benefit you.

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Human Upgrade with Dave Asprey: Jason Wachob

Dave:

Jason, thanks again, man.

Jason:

Thank you.

Dave:

I never get tired of this.

Jason:

Thank you, Dave.

Dave:

All right. I will see you on the next... The next time you write a book, come out with something cool. We'll do that.

Jason:

Thank you. Thank you, thank you.

Jason:

And Upgrade Collective, guys, thank you for being in the audience. For your questions and for your moral support, and laughing at my dumb jokes. I very much appreciate it. Guys, if you're listening, you can go to Our Upgrade Collective and join in.

Jason:

There's a ton of things. I teach you all of my knowledge, all of my books, all that kind of stuff. And you get to get in on that, on the podcast live interviews, which is super fun. So you get to hear them first. See you all soon.