

# The Psychology of Elite Performers | Dr. Gio Valiante

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## SUMMARY

*The discussion explores the concept of human potential and the barriers that prevent individuals from achieving their best selves. It emphasizes the biological and psychological factors that contribute to underperformance, the importance of habits and environments in fostering excellence, and the need for self-awareness and agency in personal growth.*

- *Most people underperform relative to their potential due to biological instincts aimed at survival and comfort.*
- *The "central governor hypothesis" suggests that our brains have built-in mechanisms to prevent us from pushing ourselves too hard.*
- *Achieving greatness requires conscious effort to step outside comfort zones and develop habits that promote excellence.*
- *Self-efficacy, or operationalized confidence, is crucial for success, influenced by mastery experiences, verbal persuasions, vicarious experiences, and physiological states.*
- *Environments play a significant role in shaping behavior; supportive systems can enhance individual potential.*
- *The journey to mastery often involves rediscovering intrinsic motivation and passion for one's craft.*
- *Self-talk and affirmations can be effective in building confidence, but they must be grounded in reality and not delusional.*
- *Personal growth often involves addressing past traumas and understanding how they shape current behaviors and motivations.*

If you go through life overindexing and caring too much what people think about you, that's your ceiling.

>> I want to start with something you said last time we talked, which is most people are underperforming relative to their ability. Yeah.

>> Walk me through that. There's a term that I came across many years ago called the central governor hypothesis and essentially conveys the fact that most people underperform and any observer of the human condition I think going back to forever agrees that that's

probably true. Now why is that? Well, you have to sort of delve into sort of human biology and genetics and understand so what's what's the purpose of the of the brain? generally to keep you alive long enough to reproduce, right? You know, at a at a at a fundamental biological level, but we're not designed to overperform. We're designed to survive. And so overperformance or or achieving one's potential requires sort of a cognitive decision to push oneself there. Right? So to illustrate it, I think a common illustration is if you look at marathon runners or any extreme athlete, marathon runners, triathletes, these are people who design their lives around pushing human potential. And so it begs the question, well then then if these are people who are even even the ultramarathoners, right? People who do you know five marathons over the course of five weeks or 5 days, whatever they do, how many of them push themselves to the point of death? like how many people push their limits? The answer is is typically it's a very small percentage, single digits, you know, if you have five, you know, rounding numbers, 5 million marathoners, maybe five or 10 die in a year, and most of the time it's cuz they get hit by a car or some other condition, but it's not because they push themselves too hard. They cross the finish line and they're still alive and they go and they they carbo load and so forth. Now, why is that? because the brain has built-in mechanisms to shut us down so that we don't do self harm, right? And so those are the same mechanisms that at a drive

level for human beings, you know, govern our conduct. So, so underperformance is built into the human condition so that we can stay alive and that's why, you know, they they do these really interesting studies with sort of single cell organisms where you put them in a petri dish and you make the conditions uncomfortable, right? So you put these these various they use various types of organisms and you make it hot on one side of the plate and they gravitate to comfort. You make it too cold, they gra. So at a really at a fundamental biological level, you know, we are all programmed to seek comfort and safety. Well, comfort and safety are the exact opposite of overperformance or realizing one's potential. And so there in lies the starting point sort of table stakes you know if you want to be great at something you know the old adage is you have to get comfortable being uncomfortable but that's something you have to train yourself to do and so the central governor hypothesis suggests that yeah you know there's a governor in the human brain and that governor is built structurally by you know a couple things. Number one the survival instinct. Number two the desire for comfort. Number three, the desire, you know, at a at a fundamental biological level to for our DNA to replicate itself. You know, there's this there's this view from geneticists that we as humans, you know, we talk about human agency. Human agency being defined as the degree to which we have conscious control over our lives, right? Agency being acting on your own

behalf. The fundamental question is, do human beings have free will? Right? William James and the pragmatists asked that question. And again, most observers of the human condition suggest that we have less control over ourselves than we believe we do. And so what did William James conclude? He said, "My first act of free will is to choose to believe in free will." And if you really think about that and you go down that rabbit hole and then you look at the studies, people think that they're thinking where they're generally rearranging their prejudices. And so the few acts of agency we really have, one of them is to decide our path and then cultivate the habits which then become unconscious to push us out to the tail end of the curve in any domain. But again we all default to underperformance. So to become an really really good at something requires an act of agency to choose to become really really good at something. That's table stakes. That's the opening bid. And then from there, you know, that's where the work begins. So yeah.

>> So if I choose to become good at something, I'm going to be good at something. Like what is one practical thing that people can take away from this to change in their life to help them realize their potential,

>> right? So you know the the research on you know what the data shows on New Year's resolutions, right? 95% of them are over by the end of February and then the other 4% are over by the end of March. So the choice is just the beginning, right? I think the first thing to understand is that we are all

creatures of habit. As Albert Bentura said, behavior is a cause of behavior, right? Behavior is a cause of behavior. That the more you do something on a probability scale, the more likely you are to do the same thing. And so, if you really want to get out of, you know, your situation or you want to do it differently, there's there's a couple things to think of. Number one, it's in the doing, not in the thinking or the saying. Right? One of the things I always say to people is it it really doesn't matter what you say. It doesn't matter what you feel. It doesn't matter what you believe. It just matters what you do. Right? And taking that step, that action step, that behavioral step is a huge part of it. John Dewey, the American philosopher, beautiful, beautiful insight. He said, "We don't think our way into a pattern of living. We live our way into a pattern of thought. I mean, just really think about that. We don't think our way into a pattern of living. We live our way into a pattern of thought. And what he meant by that is, you know, going back to your question, how do people change? Most people think it think, you know, if I'm going to change my mind and what Dewey is saying is, no, no, no, changing your mind is one way toward change. What he's saying is we don't think our way into the into the living into the doing. We live our way into a pattern of thinking. So what he's essentially suggesting, what I believe is change what you do. And as you change your behavior, then you change your mind. So going back to what I said earlier, it doesn't matter what you think, what you feel, or what

you say. It's just a matter of what you do. And so to your original question, what is one thing someone can change if they want to be better? Find out the comfortable habit that's holding you back. Whether it's your phone, whether it's your food, whether it's the excuse you tell yourself or your just one thing. Change that and then hold yourself accountable on a repeated basis to that one thing. There's an everydayness to excellence. There's an everydayness to it. People often ask me, well, you know, I want to write a book, Dr. Gio. How do you write a book? And what I say is, you sit down and you write. You want to write a book, you write a book. You don't wait for inspiration.

You sit down every day. And on the days where nothing's coming, you stay in your seat and you write it badly because you have to write through the bad days to get to the good days. And I've conducted many writing workshops for master students at Rollins College and Emory University. And in writing workshops, I mean, that's what they talk about. If you want to write a book, if you want to be a writer, writers write every day. You know, say it badly, write it badly, but don't get up. And then so that everydayness is the hallmark of excellence in every domain. Why do some people grab on to these basics and use them and get better at them and slightly better at them and keep doing them and some people don't?

>> Yeah. You know, you're asking a question and you use you say some people. I would say everybody. Now, why is that? Not to sort of over psychologize this,

but I do think that there's there's a lesson in is that if you go back to fundamental human motivation, like why do people do what they do? And in fact, one of the earliest psychological studies I did in in sports psychology was I asked I interviewed 200 golfers, some on the PGA tour, LPJ tour, good amateurs, regular amateurs. And the the question was simple. It's why do you play golf? And you'd think it's an easy question. Why do you play golf? But what emerged from that was probably one of the most profound insights into really into human motivation and and golf just being sort of a petri dish for humanity. And what you realize is some people play for love of the game. I love golf. Some people play cuz they're competitive. I want to beat that other person. Some people play for money. But they use golf as a vehicle to solve other things in their life. Well, if you extrapolate that and you you ask doctors, you know, why'd you go into medicine? Lawyers, you know, why'd you go into law? us teachers, why'd you go into teaching? What you come to realize is people tend to bifurcate into two different camps. So, so going back to human motivation of why do people do what they do? People who have a mastery motivation, they engage in their craft or their task. It's governed by a few things like it's intrinsic motivation. They do the act for the sake of the act itself, right? It's they're not using it as a vehicle to get somewhere to do a thing. It's like the satisfaction's in the doing. Now, the alternative path of why people do what they do. It's called an

ego orientation. And and and it's it in the name, the meaning of it, it's why do you do what you do? It's to enhance the ego. It's, you know, I do this for money. I do it to feel important. I use the thing as a vehicle to make myself feel better. So if you go into medicine because you want to make a lot of money, but you actually don't care about medicine, invariably you're going to burn out. If you go into law because you want to be rich, but you don't love law, you're going to burn out. Same with all sports. Same really everything in life. So what you find at the very tail end of the distribution, the top 1% of 1%, the Alzheimer's, the origin of the greatness, right? the the first order variable, the first domino to fall is they tend to gravitate toward their calling intuitively. And the reason why they do it is for the love of the craft itself. It's a calling and they protect that purity. And so what you'll often also often see is people who have a rebirth or a renaissance in their careers. It's like where did this come from? What they often say is oh I fell in love. It's Kelly Slater. I fell in love with surfing again. It's Brooks Kepka in golf recently. I'm I love golf again. it's musicians, right, who who are practicing their craft late in life. And and so the journey, the developmental path is it starts with a mastery orientation. You do the thing cuz you love to do it. Then you start getting rewarded for it. And then the rewards itself become more more powerful than the thing. Then you lose yourself. Then you rediscover yourself and you

find your way back to mastery, back to the calling itself. Yeah.

>> How do we fall in love with what we do though? Like if I go into golf because I love it and maybe I eb and flow through, oh, you know, I start winning and I switch from this mastery mindset to this ego mindset and I start losing. That's very different than an office worker or an executive in a company who has a job and they kind of like it but they want to get better at it and they want to reach their potential.

>> Yeah.

>> How do we switch into a mastery focused mindset and something that we might not fully love?

>> Yeah. No, that's a great question and it goes back to what we touched upon already which is sort of the idea of human agency and free will. Like what do we actually have control over? So, there's a book that I'm I'm sure you've read. It's called finding flow

>> by Mihi Chicken Mihi.

>> You know the idea of flow or a flow state. It's it's the highest form of the human condition. Right? If you want to look at what human beings are capable of, just just go find people who have ever been in flow. Now, the research in on flow is fascinating because it shows a couple things. Number one, we can get into flow doing almost anything.

Gardening, people, you know, people can get into flow gardening or cooking.

Great conversations are flow states.

Playing sports, being in love, reading a book. Now, what are the characteristics of the hallmarks of flow? number one, time is transcendent, right? It's it's the idea that when you get lost in

a great book and you look up, you're like, that was 3 hours or a great conversation that, you know, 2 hours went by 3 hours. You know, athletes have told me it's like when you're when you're really in a flow state, you look up the game is over. It went by very, very quickly. there's a paradox of effort, like hard things feel easy. There's a paradox of perception. You're so lost in the moment, you're so present that you forget that you're being watched or there's an audience or there's an outcome. And so, human beings who are able to transcend their limitations typically get lost in a flow state. M so if you ask me what advice would I give to people who are sort of stuck in the middle part of the distribution or just quote unquote average but who want to be great I mean there's a few things number one be mindful of your habits number two get comfortable being uncomfortable but number three get good at being fully present get in the moment you know John Dwey John Dwey in in a book called how we think John Dwey said there's no greater enemy me to effective thinking than a divided interest, right? A fragmented interest. You partition your hard drive where you're here, but you're thinking about something else. You're here, you're thinking about, you're never fully present. The best of the best are present for everything all the time. So again, it's a bit of a Buddhist tradition, but but the habit of being present is a hallmark of excellence. So if people want to be great at their jobs, you know, get into flow. Well, how

do you get into flow? Get present, challenge yourself, fall in love with the details, and love the mundanity of your work.

>> I want to come back to flow for a second. Is that I'm assuming that's common amongst all top performers that people are fully present.

>> Mhm.

>> How would you explain that to somebody like they're fully present? What do I do when I'm in a meeting and my mind starts thinking about picking up groceries or the kids or all of a sudden I'm not fully present? How do I bring myself back to fully present? Like everything else being present is a habit and like any other habit or skill you can practice it. So you can't just hope to call on you know on deep immersion or presence or flow if you're not in the active habit of being present. Okay. So it begs the question, what gets us out of the present moment? Well, it's distraction. It's attachment. And so the good news for for you know, for anybody who wants to get better is a little bit of practice on a consistent basis goes a long way. So for example, what do I do in my own life? Knowing as much about psychology as I do, every Friday at the end of the day, I take 10 or 15 minutes and I ask myself a simple question. I say, "What are my attachments that have attached themselves to me that are interrupting my thoughts that I didn't put there by conscious choice? And what am I thinking about that that I didn't choose to think about? What am I feeling that I didn't choose to feel?" And you come to realize is is as we go through

the journey of life just by default to the structure of the human brain we attach to things or things attached to us actually goes back to the to what Nichi said you know Nichi and Carl Jung both agree on this idea that we don't have ideas have us right we don't often choose to think or feel the way we feel things happen to us that govern you know it's conditioning it's really true and so what I do the active practice of detaching from things that are shaping my thoughts or feelings or behavior, I detach from them. And what you come to find is what fills in that space of psychological freedom and presence.

>> So a little bit of practice of these things on a regular basis and all of a sudden you come to find you have psychological freedom and from there you can explore the best version of yourself. So yeah,

every few years a new platform earns its place at the top of every smart advertiser's media plant. The people who find it early build advantages that are very hard to close. Apploven just had the most remarkable run in adtech history and now they've opened that engine to businesses like yours. Over a billion people play mobile games every day. Focused, not scrolling with no feed competing for their attention. Apploven puts your brand in front of the right customers and optimizes purely for your growth. Brands like Wayfair, Kit, Ridge, and Nectar are already scaling on it while most of their competitors don't even know it exists. Ready to find your next million customers? Go to [apploven.com/shane](http://apploven.com/shane) and launch your first campaign today.

Video is the most effective way to communicate, but it's always been too slow and expensive to produce. Hey Genen eliminates that. You go from idea to professional video in minutes. No camera, no crew. Their avatars are rated the most realistic on G2 and over 30 million people are already using Hey Genen, including 85% of the Fortune 100. You can even reach an audience in over 175 languages with AI lips sync and translation. Same voice, perfectly matched. If you're someone who communicates at scale, take a look. Your first three videos are free. Hey [genen.com](https://www.genen.com) [heygn.com](https://www.heygn.com)

how curated important is shaping our environment and I mean this in in the sense of not only our physical environment but our mental environment the information that we consume the people we let into our life incredible question you know there's this there's a song by a b an old band called Sister Hazel and the lyric goes if you want to be somebody else change your mind and I and I I I like the band But I loved that line. But but the reality is the line is wrong. The reality is if you want to be somebody else, change your environment. Now why is this true? So there's this idea in psychology, it's called situated cognition. Situated cognition. And situ situated cognition conveys the idea that the human brain is constantly interacting with the environment around it on both conscious and unconscious levels, primarily unconscious. So think of it this way. When we're hot, we sweat, but we don't choose to sweat. When we're cold, we get goosebumps, but we don't choose to get

goosebumps. the human brain interacts with the environment on an unconscious level. In fact, the unconscious interaction the environment is the primary vehicle of human conduct. And so, you know, in the book atomic habits, the author has this really beautiful re really beautiful line that's getting a lot of traction in the world these days. Says, "We don't rise to the level of our goals, we shrink to the level of our systems." What does he mean by that? And what he means is let's say that you aspire to greatness, but you're in a in a school system or a classroom or a company or on a team that doesn't support your path to excellence, right? When you go to take risks, you get slapped back. If you're a hedge fund portfolio manager and you're in a place that is so riskaverse, right, that's governed by a risk manager or risk officer who's just trying to keep his or her job and so they're playing it safe. So every time you ask for more capital or you want to go outside of your risk limits, it's an automatic no. Well, all of a sudden that becomes right that becomes your ceiling. If you really want to understand human potential, ask yourself this question. What is greater? the difference between two individuals or the difference within an individual and himself or herself. So, think about just you and I. Let's say a company is looking to hire someone and they're like, "Oh, should we hire Shane or should we hire Gio?" And they profile us and they look at the differences and they come to realize, well, you know, they're pretty close to the same, you know, IQ or intelligence, you know,

similar education, like a lot it's it's a hard choice, but like we'll go with Shane. But they never ask the question what what does Shane look like at his best or his worst and where is he in that regard. So they hire they spend all these resources profiling people to make sure they hire the right person.

>> But once the person gets onboarded they don't really look at the differential of the person at the best or at the worst or how do we get the best out of them.

Now here's what research shows. Research shows that the differences within within individuals is typically greater than between individuals. In society today, we spend so much time comparing candidate A versus candidate B.

>> There's more psychological alpha within individuals than between individuals.

And teams and organizations and schools spend so much time comparing student A and student B or not realizing and this is where I live. It's like, okay, what's what can this person be? A person comes to me, hey, can you help me? It's like, okay, well, let's look at where you're at right now.

>> Yes.

>> What are the mechanisms of suppression? What are the things that you asked earlier, you know, what keeps people from overachieving? What are the we call them the mechanisms of suppression that lead to underperformance or underachievement?

And they're known. They're largely known what these mechanisms of suppression are. You start removing them and helping people identify them and then all of a sudden they start to blossom and there in lies there's a greater difference

within an individual than there often are between two individuals. And what contributes to that? It was a mission that had meaning to you. And you were part of a system of collective problem solving, solving hard problems together. And whenever a company or an organization in various fields more and more that I'm that I'm speaking to in a leadership level and this is true in schools as well and teachers job description should converge and boil down to really it's one sentence your job description everywhere I go it's always the same be good at solving hard problems together or get good or learn actually if I really were to articulate it learn how to be great at solving hard problems together. Now, that's a easy thing to say and a really hard thing to do because ego, right? Put a hard problem in front of two people, never mind 10, especially smart people who are used to being right, but they think there's a different solution than the other person and then they're wrong, but they've never been wrong before and they get defensive and it leads to argument, people closing themselves up. But if you can actually participate in a system where people are competent and capable, open and willing and their highest calling is to be great at solving hard problems together, that's the path to an autotellic state of being. It's the path to flow. It's the path to greatness and excellence. Two stories I'll illustrate that. Number one, Einstein, he was stuck on the problem for a very, very long time.

and he was on the walk on a walk with a younger colleague trying to explain here's what I'm working on and in the process of deconstructing and dissecting his own thoughts and explaining it to someone that's when he had his aha moment it was an epiphany and then over the course of the next 3 months he wrote two papers that led to the Nobel Prize so he was stuck stuck stuck stuck the synthetic function of language the process of trying to articulate his thinking led to the epiphany cricket and Watson who discovered the structure of DNA. It's the same thing. It was through the interactive process. There were four research researchers on that team. But it was it was the interaction of problem solving that happened. And so if people are trying to elevate and realize the full expression of their talents and abilities, the first place you have to look, I said earlier you have to look at your habits and your behavior. The reality is the first place you have to look is your systems and your environment. Whether it's a place that has all the hallmarks of leading to excellence, which is honesty and truth-telling, which is challenge and skill development, which is no ceiling. And one of the hallmarks, by the way, of these, you know, Daniel Coyle articulated this in really nice little book. he calls them talent hotbeds, right? They're places that that tend to graduate disproportionate amount of excellence. So, you know, great singers tend tend tend to come out of this little little school in Dallas, Texas around Dallas, Texas. Great for a period

of time, great tennis players came out of Russia. Great baseball players out of the Dominican Republic. Great female golfers out of out of South Korea. If you look at the world of golf, you know, historically great golfers out of Texas and California, these great golf states, one of the hallmarks of talent hopets is what do people do with mistakes? And so by and large, the primary mechanism of suppression, why people don't achieve what they're capable of achieving, has to do with how they're conditioned with dealing with mistakes and failure. But if you really want to be great, put yourself in an environment that allows you the freedom that's challenge and accountability and rigor and detail, but that's not overpunitive of mistakes. When you're interviewing somebody, I want to know the signs of greatness and the signs of this person isn't as good as they think they are. What are the markers of, you know, Steve Cohen called you a canary in a coal mine, but also you have an incredible ability to identify talent in very short period of time.

>> Yeah.

>> What are the questions you ask? How do you do that?

>> Of all the variables that psychology measures, the two that I think are the most important are confidence and motivation. Right? Confidence and motivation. People think it's intelligence, but it's actually not. So the story of intelligence is you know the way we define it is a very muddled story. So intelligence this idea of IQ

>> which people still use as a marker of

intelligence. IQ meaning intellectual quotient started I think it was in the late 1800s in France and Alfred Binet the French government said hey listen we need to be able to identify kids who are struggling in school. If we can identify them early we could do an intervention. That's all it was. Binet went and did some studies interviewed a bunch of people and came with his intellectual quotient said you know if we measure here these are the kids who will struggle in school and when this research made its way to America America did with it what Americans do let's commercialize it so they started selling people on this idea that the higher IQ the smarter you are it's it's undeniably false higher IQ doesn't mean you're smarter and then if people went just maniacal and intelligence tests, which is a multi-billion dollar industry, and that's why it's stayed alive to this day. The SATs and the ACT and educational testing systems, multi-billion dollar industry. That's the reason the idea hasn't died. It's financially driven. It's a nonsensical idea. Now, you can argue that there is a thing called G, which is general intelligence. But again, so so a Harvard researcher, a guy named Howard Gardner, who who started doing research in developmental psychology, then cognitive psychology, and he posited the idea that humans have what he called multiple intelligences. And it challenged the status quo of of IQ. And what he says is human beings have individual autonomous intelligences. For example, verbal intelligence, mathematical intelligence,

and all these intelligences have their own characteristics equals interpersonal intelligence, which you're a genius at.

What's inter interpersonal intelligence?

Interpersonal intelligence is the ability to read someone else in real time and sort of sense where they're at emotionally, cognitively, and steer them. You know, great politicians have great interpersonal intelligence, great school teachers. The fourth kind of intelligence is called intrapersonal intelligence. It's the ability to know yourself. How smart are you actually if you have a perfect memory but have no self-awareness? Right? That's not intelligence.

>> Gardner talks about bodily kinesthetic intelligence. The ability to know your body in space. Michael Jordan, Tiger Woods,

>> Martha Graham, the great dancer. Knowing your body and to be able to have this proprio perception, spatial intelligence that great architects have to see things dimensionally. Anyway, your question is what do I look for when I'm screening people? Well, I want to understand what is the entire profile of this person? Where do they come from? What's their source of their motivation? How do they handle failure? I want to know the degree to which they tell the truth. Because in most cases when people are having a conversation, particularly in an interview, they're presenting a version of themselves that they want you to see. But that's not the version of themselves that's going to show up in the workplace. So, one of the most important questions is this. It's tell me a time in

your life where you had to work with somebody you didn't like. Could have been in elementary school, could have been middle school, been a project in college, your last company, somebody who you fundamentally disagreed with and then viscerally didn't like but had to work with. How'd you handle that? And if you ask a version of that question and you just sit back, that will reveal the kind of person they are.

>> And it will also reveal how they will how they will respond when faced with adversity in the workplace, particularly if you're in a hard industry where you're trying to solve hard problems. How do you handle conflict? To what degree do you blame others? To what degree do you shut down? To what degree are you engaged? Research shows that companies that put brand management or image management over problem solving tend to deteriorate pretty quickly. So it has to be an environment or a culture where smart people are empowered to solve hard problems but they care more in your case more about the mission than about the self. So I look for all of these things and again it depends on the role because a lot of people are capable or competent but if you put the right person in the wrong role they're never going to flourish. So it has to be a fit for for the exactness of the role itself.

>> Are there any other questions that come to mind that you think are particularly revealing about people?

>> What is the biggest obstacle you've ever had to overcome in your life? The followup there is what resources did you lean on to overcome that

obstacle? In other words, how did you overcome it? So people stop at what obstacle did you overcome? Where it becomes interesting psychologically is how did you overcome that? So going back to a really important interview question is yeah tell me the hardest thing you've ever ever overcome and then what did you enlist? Did you go to other people? Do you have a network? What beliefs did you engage? It's really important to understand the method by which people overcome their obstacles. They have to rely on themselves. And this is what Tiger Woods was great at for a period of time. It's like, hey, here's here's what his self talk was. You got yourself into the into this mess. Now get yourself out of it. And that's the best version of Tiger. Obviously, we've seen some other versions of Tiger, but the best version of Tiger is Tiger telling himself, you got yourself into this mess. Now get yourself out of it. One thing I find you know with myself that I catch myself doing now that I never was even aware of until recently is shrinking the gap between where I am and what do I want to accomplish. So not the ultimate goal but like the first step. So we often look at like the thing that we want to accomplish. I want to be XYZ. I want to and that the gap between where you are >> and accomplishing that thing just seems really big. And I find that shrinking the gap and I was talking with Dr. I think it was Dr. Emily Balattis on the show and she gave the example of a marathoner and I thought this was like really apt and I'm curious to hear your thoughts on this but she said you know

when their legs start hurting and it's mile 11 like they're not thinking about the finish line. They switch their their focus to the next stop sign, the next red light and then you do that and then you do it and you do it and all of a sudden you're back in your flow state. where you're either not feeling it or you've worked through the pain.

>> So often times people like in golf when things are going well that came in this morning for the first time in my career I'm in a slump. You know first time in my career I'm in a draw. First time at I'm not making money. I'm So these are the messages I get. How do you walk someone out of a draw? Let's say you're running \$500 million and you're down I don't know let's call it you know let's say your limits of \$500 million. you know, the company's going to fire you, you know, if you're down 20 and you're down 15 and you don't have a lot of room to go, but like you need to put on risk cuz scared money don't make money. So, you need to put on risk. But, you know, if you're wrong again, you're out of a job. And the path to getting out of a draw, the step one is to get in the habit of making money again. But like you don't see where where people make mistakes is they look at the size of the draw and they start trying to make it all back in one swing. They they just start panicking. And what people do in panic is they they lose their rationality. they see threat instead of opportunity. All sorts of characteristics of a PM in a draw. And what I say is, you know, we're not going to make it all back. Let's let's make

\$100.

Let's make \$100 this week. So bring down your risk and let's get in the habit of making money. And then it's like but I'll never get out of this if I'm it's like no I understand that. But what happens is you know as Vince Lombardi famously said winning is a habit and so unfortunately is losing. Well so is making money. So is doing well in golf. A confident investor when he looks out in the world sees the world as a place of abundance. Sees opportunity. Sees the market as a place of abundance. Sees opportunity everywhere. I don't have enough time to get to all the opportunity. I don't have enough capital. I need more money cuz there's so much money to be made in this market. When we lose our confidence, we see the market as a place of threat.

>> Mhm.

>> Everything is dangerous. Landmines everywhere. And so you you come off your ability to take any risk cuz all you see is danger. And that's why you have to protect your confidence. Why is that? Because fear distorts our ability to see the world accurately. Fear is distortive. Fear means danger is everywhere. At least we perceive danger everywhere. So the first thing I have to do with a PM is get them in a habit of making small dollars. Why? Because the biggest source of confidence is success. So if you get in the habit of making \$100, it's like, well, the next we make \$1,000. Now you're confident again. Now you see opportunity. See opportunity. You start deploying capital into better opportunities. You're more patient when a move. So, one of the characteristics

of confidence versus fear is, you know, let's say you deploy money into an idea and that idea moves against you. Do you cut the position or do you put more money into it? Well, if you love the thesis and you love the work and you love the idea, you double down. You invest in an idea that's going against you. When you're scared, you see threat and danger. You pull out at the wrong time. You overtrade an idea. So, you have to protect your confidence at all costs. Confidence and motivation. But when you're scared, you never see that path. And so step one for anybody in crisis honestly whether it's a golfer PM people in private markets venture capital firms and it's what you said alluded to earlier runners it's like let's start finding small wins things that we know we can and then celebrate them because it changes the emotional profile and you start smacking stacking incremental small wins and and that leads to greatness. So yeah, let me tell you about the best new product that I've used in the past 5 years. It's the Madic vacuum. This thing vacuums, it mops. Maddic does everything. Other robots bump into things, but the Madic sees things. It actually avoids the problems. And the Madic automatically adjusts between my carpeted surfaces and my hardwood floors. It's also super easy to schedule. I have it run every night while I'm in bed and every morning I wake up to clean floors. Messes happen and when they do, Madic rolls into action. Go to [madroot.com](http://madroot.com) today and put Madak to work for you.

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That's [drinklmnt.comtkp](http://drinklmnt.comtkp).

Is there a difference that between types of confidence? Like we all know the person who's confident from arrogance y >> and then there's like a almost a confidence from humility. There's different types of confidence.

>> There are different flavors of confidence. So when we talk about the research on the self in modern times, there's three self constructs. self-esteem, self-concept, and self-efficacy, right? And in in simple terms, self-esteem is defined as how do I feel about myself, right? Self-esteem is my self-esteem is high or low, right? It's just an emotional feeling about oneself. And while it's important to have a healthy self-esteem, it's not empirically related to excellence in any way, shape, or form. Some of the highest performers don't feel good about their performance and the best in the world never feel good about it. And then underachievers feel great about themselves, right? This is overconfidence. They feel great about

themselves no matter what. So there's self-esteem. The second variable is self-concept. And self-concept is how do I view myself? So it's identity. When I look in the mirror, what do I see? That's somewhat related to performance. But then there's self-efficacy. And self-efficacy is essentially operationalized confidence. So here's what's known about confidence. There's two forms of it.

Confidence as a personality trait. Some people are born and if you talk to mom or dad, they're like, "Yeah, he's been that swashbuckling confidence. He's been that way his whole life. Whatever that thing is, he or she has always had it. So that's confidence as a personality trait. That doesn't necessarily do much in life. You have people who are failures who have it, people who are successful, and everyone in the middle. The way that modern psychology defines confidence is is is self-efficacy. Now, the beautiful thing about operationalized confidence is we can measure it. M

>> we know how the dominoes fall and we know what creates it. So for example, this is another question I ask in almost every interview. Tell me something you think you're good at. So you know any listener who's listening to this who's trying to be good at something. If I ask you tell me something that you believe yourself to be good at and they give an answer and then if I deconstruct it and I say tell me why you believe that what you come to find and this is true categorically across the human condition in every domain it boils down to four kinds of experiences that that

person has had the number one experience  
is is what's called a mastery experience  
it's simply success and failure here's  
how many times I've done this and failed  
here's how many times I've done it and  
succeeded did, but it's not  
arithmetical. It's the interpretation of  
success and failure. It's like when  
Michelle Quan in the Olympics lost  
the gold medal to Terra Leinsky, the  
media said, "Michelle, you just lost the  
gold medal. You must feel terrible."  
She's like, "No, no, I didn't lose the  
gold. I won the silver."  
Both are objectively true. Michelle Quan  
won the silver, but she did lose the  
gold. But the interpretation of it  
allowed her to protect her confidence.  
And guess what? Later that year she won  
the world championships. So right the  
number one source of confidence the  
first place the brain goes when it asks  
itself hey can I do this thing it goes  
to prior experience but what you have to  
be mindful of is the is the pain of  
failure hurts more than success feels  
good. So what happens is we tend to  
index toward our failures,  
>> right? We we bring the pain of the past  
failures to the moment. That's why most  
people are underconfident,  
>> right? Because because the way the  
memory and the bra  
>> because they're remembering all of the  
the things that they've done wrong, all  
the mistakes they've  
>> 100%. Golfers always want to talk to me  
about their bad shots. Portfolio  
managers always want to talk to me about  
the money they've lost and and what they  
didn't do.  
>> And it's like an anchor.

>> It becomes an anchor. Becomes their ceiling. Right?

The second source of confidence is verbal persuasions. We call verbal and social persuasions. It's the feedback we get from other people. You allude to that. Why do you think you're good at something? Because people have told me that. Here and again lies the bias.

Criticism hurts more than praise feels good. So if you just combine mastery experiences where failure hurts more than success feels good, verbal persuasions, criticism hurt more than compliments, over the course of the life cycle, people index toward the pain of their past failures and their criticisms and they index toward that and they start living their life in anticipation

>> of indexing toward that. Third experience is called vicarious experiences. How do I compare to other people? We judge our abilities relative to other people. But when we see someone Yeah.

>> effortlessly do better at something we work at, that lowers our confidence called vicarious learning. And the fourth source of confidence in the Bible, it's called physiological states. It's the butterflies in the stomach. Shane, why do you think you're great at interviewing? Cuz I can feel it. It's a feeling. It's But what you come to realize is that the butterflies that you feel when you're interviewing an important person that you feel great about that gets you excited, those are the same butterflies that people feel when they choke physiologically. It's the interpretation.

>> So in aggregate, confidence is is is an

amalgamation of prior success and failure. what people communicate to us and whether we're good or bad, how we compare ourselves to others, and then how we feel about what we're doing. So, if you want to become great at something, you have to understand if you're So, you talked about people who are way overconfident. Here's what here's what's known about confidence. If this is your objective skill and ability, measurable, your verbal intelligence, your mathematical intelligence, your skills as a as a hedge fund man, money maker, as a podcast interviewer, here's what I do. Well, I know how to construct questions. I know how to listen. I know how to follow up. I know this. Here's your skills.

A little bit of overconfidence >> is really is a really good thing. Why? Cuz that takes those skills and abilities and it elevates them. You see opportunity. You take more risks. You put yourself in more challenging situations. When you're a little bit overconfident, where does it get dangerous?

>> A lot overconfident.

>> Too overconfident. That leads to sloppiness, arrogance, laziness, self-d delusion, deception. Right? So you have to protect confidence. Now here's what else happens. When we lose our confidence, when our confidence is below our ability, we index toward that. So it doesn't matter how many skills and abilities you have, they're going to find a way to that belief. Happens all the time.

>> And what's the primary mechanism of

underachievement? People index toward their past failures. They index toward criticism what other people are going to think about them because we could. Now, where does this show up? If you look at the data on on on risk takingaking in financial professionals, investment professionals, what you'll see is a curve that that diminishes over time. It does the opposite of going. We lose our risk appetite as we get older. Why is that? The simple answer is, well, I've already made my money, so I don't want to put it at risk. That's not true. What actually happens is we accumulate even though we our skills get better when we're better than ever at what we've done, we've also accumulated enough failure

>> that we don't want to feel that way again. So we lose our appetite for risk. This happens across every achievement domain. And so it goes back to the fundamental questions. How do you live at the tail end of the curve? You have to have a playbook for what you're going to do with mistakes and failure because the four sources of confidence, your prior experiences, the brain is going to experience failure more painful than success feels good. Well, you have to use and override, use your agency to flip the script on that. That's why visualization works when it works. That's why self talk works when it works. Number two, verbal persuasions. You have to decide the degree to which you're going to care what other people think about you because that becomes your prison. If you go through life overindexing and caring too much what people think

about you, that's your ceiling.

Physiological states, if you never want to feel uncomfortable, that's your ceiling. Vicarious experiences. If you are going to spend your life comparing yourself to others and instead of indexing toward your own full potential, that's your ceiling.

>> You mentioned self talk. Do positive affirmations work?

>> They do. They work when they work so long as they're not delusional. Now, why do they work? You know, people misunderstand the dynamic between cognition and language. People think that the words I use are a reflection of what I think. That I have a thought and I use words and that word describes my thought. That's not what actually happens. What actually happens and it's a developmental thing. It happens early in life. Language and thought are separate, right? Like like think of an infant, right? There's all this they don't even have language yet but then they start using words you know second third fourth year of life and words are just random but then words start to reflect thoughts and then what happens is there's a blending where language and cognition become the same thing that's why certain words are charged with emotion that's the beauty of a great lyric in music or a great sequence of words in therapy or even in coaching you're trying to give people language that's empowering when we're young developmentally the language that others use becomes our own internal dialogue typically the parents. So how our parents talk to us becomes how we talk to ourselves or our teachers

or our coaches and if that's not functional and healthy and and directionally accretive to success that becomes our self talk and then we talk to our kids that way and then all is generational trauma or generational excellence. So self talk absolutely matters because of this interaction between language and cognition. Do affirmations work? Yeah. Where do we see this most prominently? In prayer, >> right?

>> So think of it this way. This is incredible. So if you think of all the major religions, they've had several thousand years of trial and error to get it right. So whether you believe in God or not or believe in religion or not, these are institutions that have had several thousand years to get it right. And what do they all have? They all have prayer as some component of what they do. Why is that? If I sit down to dinner with my children and every night I make them sit around and say something approximating grace where they simply articulate the words I, you know, I'm thankful for the food before me. They're practicing the habit of gratitude.

>> Yeah.

>> And so what happens in religious tradition is if you articulate the words, a profession of faith, say these words. Just say them. I don't care if you believe it.

>> The more you say it, invariably the randomness of experience is going to be like, oh, it is true. Then we start to believe the things we say. So self-talk absolutely matters. But not immediately. It doesn't work automatically. It's over the course of

time. The process of articulating and using words carefully galvanizes the kinds of beliefs that lead to success, failure, happiness, or misery. Yeah. One of the other things you said that I want to come back to cuz I think a lot of people live their life in a way that they don't want to be disliked by other people and it governs what they do and so it's fear in a way you know but they're letting other people dictate their behavior and their choices.

>> How do we let go of that?

>> Well, do you know why that is?

>> Why

>> why do you think this why do you think most people

>> I think there's an evolutionary component to it? So, if I have to answer this, I mean, my guess would be that, you know, we grew up in tribes.

>> Being excommunicated from the tribe meant death.

>> we evolved over thousands of years with this in mind. If you're not part of the tribe, you're out of the tribe. And if you're out of the tribe, you're dead.

>> And so, we have this mechanism that we hold on to that's rooted in our biology.

>> Absolutely. And and and evolutionary psychology, which is another branch of psychology, has done really wonderful research in unpackaging this, right?

that belonging part of a community is safety to be excommunicated as death.

Now what happens is through natural selection the brain does not evolve natural selection doesn't work as fast as changes in society. So I always say this to golfers your game your your brain did not evolve for you to be a PJ

to golfer headed hedge fund manager. Your brain did not evolve with the intention of you being a professional investor like that. That's not how natural selection worked. It wasn't directional. So you're trying to do a hard thing with an imperfect instrument which is the human brain. And this is the one thing that separates humans from every other animal on earth is we get to engage in abstract thinking. It's called metacognition, right? The ability to think about your own thinking. No, no other creature can do that. You get to think about your thinking and then make adjustments. So the beautiful thing about about abstract thinking is it gave birth to this idea of forethought. It's I can actually anticipate.

>> If I want to be comfortable in 10 years, I save my money today.

We anticipate a a a potential thing and it governs current behavior.

>> No other creature can do that.

>> That's the good thing is we get to anticipate and plan. Here's the bad thing.

>> Fore tends to lead to people overindexing to the future. So essentially what we start asking is what if questions. What if I what if this plane crashes? Oh my god. We know that people who are anxious are are live in the future. They create their own anxiety. What if the plane crashes? portfolio. What if I lose all my money? What if I get fired? Golfers, what if, you know, what if I lose my We camp out in the future and we go to worst case scenario. This is one of the weird features about the brain is I had a girl call me actually, I'll never forget it.

The morning of her wedding, the morning of her wedding. She's a friend of mine in college. And she's like, I'm so sorry to bother you. I said, no, no, what's going I said, shouldn't aren't you busy today? And she said, yeah. She goes, she goes, "What if I'm making a mistake? What if he cheats on me? What if he stops loving me? What if? What if all these and this is one of the tells ask people like what are the what if questions you ask yourself and what you come to find is people almost always go to worst case scenario. They bring that future state into the present moment. Then they start reacting as if it's real. Can't tell you how many hedge fund portfolio managers go through this. They could have made tens or hundreds of millions of dollars in their life. They start losing a little money like oh my god what if I get fired? And for some reason the story is always the same. And so when we talk about the powerful things about the brain, abstract thinking, forethought, hypotheticals, you have to learn how to leverage that to your advantage because the natural human default reactions, it's another one of the things that pushes us to the middle part of the distribution and and presents us from from overachieving. And so when we talk about evolutionary psychology and and and and survival, the reason that I I talk about forethought and and and abstract thinking is because it emerges at the same window of time which is adolescence and middle school. So what you see out of adolescence so we get to think in hypotheticals and abstracts and for the first time in our

lives this happens every human being everywhere on earth. It's a universality of the human condition is we ask the most important question in human existence. Who am I?

>> That question doesn't happen with young people because their identity is largely a part of their family. You know they don't but we start having these who am I?

>> Yeah.

>> And that's where this process Freud identified this process called individuation which is where we separate from a family identity and that's where the rebellion occurs. Right. Cuz kids need to answer that question. And then what you also start to see is this need to belong. Conformity. You see it all over middle schools and high schools everywhere in the world. I need to be part of this group. I need to wear the right clothes. I need to make the cheerleading team or the football team or whatever. It's that need for belonging. There's two psychological insights that I think are probably the two most important that I've ever come across. And here's one of them. We try on different faces until we find a face of our own. But what drives that for yeah for a large middle period of life, middle school, high school, college, even it's called this extended adolescence, even in the 20s and the 30s. is this idea of I'm trying to find myself, right? And this used to be these, you know, go west young man, you know, and Jack Carowak, you know, the open road. This used to be a healthy process where you go the process of self-discovery was the search, the

travel, the moratorium. There's this great line in the movie a river runs through it where where the one of the sons

>> comes home from college and goes to his father who's played by Tom Scar. It's like so son you've had four years at college. What do you want to do? He's like it's like oh I don't know. It's like but you've had four years to know. And that's what college is supposed to be. colleges. If you think about the the university, the etymology of the university is the word universe. The university was first born to be a repository of everything in the known universe. So it was a place you could come and there was civics, there was mathematics, there was theater, there was astronomy, there was there was language and you can come to a place of learning and the vehicle of that learning was critical thought and the pursuit of truth. And so this need for belonging is born out of evolution, natural selection manifests most most pronounced in adolescence in middle school. And then in a healthy identity, you get to this place called an achieved identity where you've tried on different faces,

>> you've done a search, you've done exploration, you've tried different things, you've taken some risks, and then you finally come to this moment where it's like,

>> I know who I am. I know the real me. I like that's not the real me. I I won't participate in that. This is who I am. And then what happens is is you can then you know what what Eric Ericson says is when we talk about about finding a

partner to love in life we call psychological intimacy. You have all these people trying to find a partner. What says is you can't give yourself to someone if you don't have self to give.

>> Yeah.

>> If you haven't developed a full sense of yourself, what are you giving to the person? Right. So that's what we talk about like work on yourself, develop a healthy sense of self. Who am I? Like sell for that and then go forth, you know, to your ultimate destiny in life. The second most important question, it it's something I think about. Usually you have an idea. It's like a song and you listen to it for a little while and then yeah, I don't like it. I'm on to a new song. This is a question that has never left me because I see it every day in my work. It shows up all the time and it's not even a question. It's an observation. A very keen observation by segment Freud. We spend our adult lives undoing the debris of childhood.

>> So just pause there for a minute and think about your life. When you ask somebody why do you do what they do? On a surface level, they're going to give all these answers. It's like, oh, cuz I love it. Oh, no. If you actually have deep conversations with them, what you come to realize is the fuel itself, the motivation is rooted in experiences that they had in their youth. Lance Armstrong, why what gave it Lance Armstrong the fuel to ride his bike while he had cancer? What was he trying to overcome or solve for? Talk to him or read his book. The trauma of his youth.

>> Tiger Woods. Trauma in youth. They didn't want black kids playing golf.

They made fun of them. That's the fuel.

Now,

>> one of the things I often have to say, your parents did too good of a job.

You're too well adjusted, right?

>> But if but that's not the case for most of us. Most of us are trying to solve for things that happened during those formative years. Here's where it gets dangerous. I had a Wall Street guy who I was working with. He was at the time he was late 40s had made five six 700 million, but he was miserable. He was married with two kids. He was up at 4:00 a.m. every day. Worked relentlessly.

his family was falling apart.

Relationships weren't great. Massive insecurity. And I'll never forget this through our work together. It was in our second year. He told me the story about a girlfriend he had in high school. He grew up, my client grew up really poor with a brother. It's like a drug addict

>> in a in a in a very sort of lowincome, low SCES family, dysfunctional parents, drug addict brother. And then there was him. High school. He had a girlfriend. She was the it girl of the town. Her mother, if I remember correctly, the mother drove a white Jaguar. She was on the tennis team, country club. So imagine a scenario where, you know, lower, you know, lower SCS class gets to date the girl. That validates you as a person, right? Because nothing else in your life is validating you. Then the time comes, it's almost like the the archetypal movie The Notebook, and she

breaks up with him.

>> And of course, he's like, "But why?"

Yeah.

>> And the answer is a story we've seen in millions. It's like, you know, at the end of the day, like mom and dad are never going to let this happen. You don't fit. Like we don't belong together. That broke his heart.

>> We come from different worlds.

>> Come from different worlds. You can imagine the kind of pain cuz that that validates what he always thought about himself like, "I'm a loser. I'm never going to get out of this mess." So what do you do at that point?

>> Essentially, what he told himself is no one's ever going to hurt me again because I'm too poor.

>> Yeah. and he went to Wall Street and he worked 20 hours a day and he was relentless and even people who worked with him was like that guy's animal relentless and I start working with him because he knew something was broken and it was his identity by the way that so what happened was going back to Freud's observation we spend our adult lives undoing the debris of our childhood he had never solved for that even after the hundreds of millions of dollars and we finally traced back that story it was katharsis and I remember having to say to him I said hey

>> you don't get a doover. She's never coming back. And oh, by the way, look at your life.

>> Yeah.

>> And from that day forward, I have a text on my phone he had sent to me a couple years later. He's like his family was intact. His wife loved him again because

he stopped trying to solve for the pain of an of of an 18-year-old self. But most people never do the work to do that. Most people never do the work to go into their, you know, their psychological sellers and try to understand the formative experiences that put them on their path. And what happens is if you don't do that, you spend the rest of your life compensating for childhood insecurity. You make yourself miserable. You make everyone else miserable and you never become, you know, the fullest version of yourself. So what I would ask everyone to do at a certain point in their life is, you know, to what degree do you spend your life undoing the degree of childhood? As you look at kids, and this is, by the way, there's a whole another level of dysfunction and that's the billionaire class. And those kids, which I've also met a lot of them, sort of the trust fund kids, the heirs and aeryses who've never had to earn money. You want to talk about an absolute disaster setup for life, it's because they never learned self-reliance. It imposes an identity. So, they never actually become themselves. They have this what's called identity foreclosure. It's like this is who you are. You're a thirsten. And and all of a sudden, they have crisis later in life when they finally wake up like I never chose this life. So the poverty path or the wealth path lead to the same kind of dysfunction because there's no self-discovery in the identity. The best identity path is you do your own work. you try on different faces and then you make a choice to who you want to become. But the convergence of those two

observations, number one, we spend our adult lives undoing the debris of childhood. And that that debris can come in the for form of extreme wealth. It could come in the form of extreme poverty. It could come in the form of trauma. It could be come in the form of of living in a country club and and beingcoming fragile and everywhere in between. And then the secondary thing is when you finally come to that awakening in that moment. Yes. Well, who am I and who do I want to be? That opens everything up and and that defines most of most of humanity almost in every domain.

>> That's a beautiful way to end this. We always end with the same question though which is what is success for you?

>> Success for me is I think a little bit different because I was successful pretty young in life. You know I had a a real period of time. I graduated from Emory University first in my classroom top of my class. I was a young professor at Rollins College the youngest professor at the time. I was one of the youngest to ever get tenure. I had a best-selling book. I was being celebrated by the the sports world, Sports Illustrated. I had two jet skis. I had a house and an apartment materially in the veneers of my life. I had one life, right? And I went to I had my friends from from undergrad from the University of Florida. We had all gone to an Irish pub and just catching up with each other in life. And one of my friends girlfriends, who's now his wife and we're all still really really close, she's like, "You're killing it. I want you there." She's like, "We're so proud

of you." She goes, "You must be so happy." And Shane, it was like one of those moments in the movie where you hear the record scratch and oh my god, I'm not that happy.

>> Yeah,

>> I'm not. I have all of this stuff

>> and I have all this superlatives,

>> but my life doesn't feel the way that people the way that it looks. And even even, you know, the articles people were writing about me, young, you know, you know, all these relationships, flying in jets, it looked great. I wasn't happy.

So what I did is I I went to the dean at Rollins College. I said, "Hey, I need to take a sabbatical which I had earned at the time." And so I went out to Austin, Texas, and I got a 1-1 unfurnished. And I and I really needed to solve for this case. And and what came out of that period of moratorium and

self-exploration. What I did is I went to a bookstore and I started buying books. You know who went through this was actually Michael Kryton, the great author and the great movie creator.

Michael Kiteon. He wrote a great book called Travels, which which he articulated his own life journey. How do how you become Michael Kiteon? So he went through what I went through. It's like, yeah, well, it's material success, but you're not happy. So, I went to a bookstore in Austin, Texas. I spent, I think at the time, it's like \$400 or \$500 on books, but I made it a point to buy books in everything outside of my area of expertise. I bought books, just anything. And I loaded the apartment up with books and I I got privileges at the Tech University of Texas because I

was an academic. They gave me a little office and I spent four months in Austin, Texas, back when Austin was weird, right? the the catchphrase of Austin, Texas in the 90s was keep Austin weird. It's where all the artists and creatives and poets and musicians went to to have a little bit of a hippie journey. And I wanted to immerse myself in that culture. I was hanging out with a bunch of comedians. You wonder who my best friends were at the time. They were standup comics. And what came out of that was my self understanding that there are essentially four things that make me happy. Number one is working out. I know I don't look like it, but I work out every day. I just love the process of working out and fitness. Number two is books. Working out doesn't cost money. You know what else doesn't cost money? If you have a library card or books.

>> Yeah.

>> number three is having really good conversations with smart people. This >> like I could do this all day every day.

>> Yeah.

>> Right. That makes me happy. And then the fourth one is a little bit indulgent.

It's I love hitting golf balls.

>> But like not playing on like like the the it's therapeutic for me getting lost.

>> Yeah. just hitting a ball at the repetition almost like you know at the end of of hitting balls for an hour it's cathartic and therapeutic and it clears my brain those books conversations working out and golf balls costs no money

>> so what I learned is unfortunately for

me more money doesn't lead to more  
happiness a certain level like I want to  
be comfortable and by the way I love  
abundance for people who love money so I  
want everyone to make as much money as  
they can if that's important to you  
what's important to me is if I have  
those four things if hot water comes out  
of the shower when I turn it on in the  
morning for me a hotel is you know night  
it's it's a bed it's four walls like I  
don't need more incrementally more stuff  
>> doesn't lead to more happiness for me so  
happiness for me is essentially those  
things and then I added a fifth it's  
raising raising kids  
>> who are resilient who are not fragile  
who want to be global citizens  
who are lifelong learners and who the  
expression they're going to have the  
full expression of their talents in life  
and do what I hope to do which is on  
some level be a light in the world  
rather than darkness elevate others  
and I know it sounds corny and cheesy  
but on some level you know make make the  
world you know a little bit better place  
ease others suffering because you can  
and make the world a better place that's  
and and that's my definition  
>> that's beautiful thank you  
>> thank you I appreciate the time man this  
is awesome