**PEP 20 Edited\_Transcription**

[Daniel Hill] (0:05 - 1:15)

Welcome to the official property entrepreneur podcast with myself, Daniel Hill. On this strip back podcast, we're going to be going behind the scenes with special guests to provide insight and inspiration on all things business, life, and the actual realities of high performance in practice. Success and failure are both very predictable.

We hope you enjoy. Right guys, so very special session today, we're going to talk about is beast mode productivity, basically driven by the fact that Aakash and I were having a chat about, we've both got a reasonable track record for high performance. We're both driven.

Our biggest threat and weakness is that we do hit it too hard sometimes. And we started a conversation the other day about how we organize our time and how we make sure we're productive. And before we got into a big WhatsApp thread, sharing notes and best practice, I said to Aakash, let's just jump on the podcast and just thrash it out and see where we get to.

So we've had no preparation for this. I don't know what Aakash does, he doesn't know what I do. For the next 40 minutes or so, we're just going to let it run and see what we can get out of each other.

So welcome Aakash.

[Aakash] (1:16 - 1:16)

Thanks for having me.

[Daniel Hill] (1:17 - 1:18)

How you doing?

[Aakash] (1:18 - 1:20)

Very, very well. How about you?

[Daniel Hill] (1:21 - 1:23)

Yeah, grand. How productive have you been this week?

[Aakash] (1:25 - 1:40)

I'd say it's been, it's been pretty much on fire. At the start of every week, I write a list of things I need to get done. And I just slowly work my way through it.

And hopefully by Friday, around this sort of time, it's 1pm we're recording. Hopefully those things are nearly done.

[Daniel Hill] (1:40 - 2:01)

So I think when you're looking at that definition of getting to the end of the week, and it feels like a good week, sometimes you can have a beast mode week where you smash it out of the park, but you still don't feel content. How do you make sure that if you have done a good week, it feels like a good week rather than, you know, the difference between a to do list and a hamster wheel? How do you do that?

[Aakash] (2:01 - 2:38)

So I was thinking about this earlier, I was thinking, like, we talk about high performance a lot. And I don't think high performance lies in doing a lot of work, or doing, having the ability to go through a long to do list. I don't think it's the ability to just execute.

I think it's around really making strides in thinking deeply about certain things. And I find that if I get to the end of the week, and in the games that we play, there's always a problem, right? There's always a new problem that we're trying to solve.

If at the end of the week, I feel like problems move forward, then I feel like it's been a really good week. If I've had some level of breakthrough, if I've had some level of thinking, or if I've made a new discovery.

[Daniel Hill] (2:39 - 2:53)

And do you have any visibility on that? Because it's very easy to move from problem solving into just relentless productivity. Do you have any visibility to look at it and be like, you know what, to recognize the achievement rather than just keep flying through?

Do you know what I mean?

[Aakash] (2:54 - 3:48)

I think with the visibility, so I struggle with the actual, the idea of actually stopping and looking at what you've achieved. I think with the visibility on it, I find that when you when you do a lot of this thinking, it's always around some some level of big project, right? It's a, it's some some level of creative endeavor, especially for us.

And all that thinking is like sharpening the sword to then knock it out of the park. For example, for a couple of months last year, towards the end, I was thinking about the next book I'm writing, like I was every week, I was trying to get better and better towards where I wanted what I wanted to say in the book and how I wanted to come across. And then on Christmas Day, I was twiddling my thumbs not really knowing what to do.

And I thought, you know, it's probably the best time to start the book now. So I started the book. And that was on the 25th of December is, and this morning, I sent out the first draft to three or four people to just give me that first initial feedback.

[Daniel Hill] (3:49 - 3:57)

And I was 25 30,000 words later, done in less than two, January today, it's less than three weeks.

[Aakash] (3:57 - 4:30)

And yeah, I mean, I finished actually writing a week ago. And I thought, let me give it a week's break and then come back to it. So yeah, just just cranked out the work.

And I think when you put when you put in a lot of the preparatory work on these big projects, because the big projects are the ones that people don't want to do. It's the big stuff that really moves the business forward, it really moves your, your career forward, are the ones that face the most inertia, don't they? They're the ones that you're like, how am I going to tackle this?

But so you have to really put a lot of that preparatory work, which is involved in a lot of thinking. And it's very intangible. But then once you start, you should be able to just knock out the park.

[Daniel Hill] (4:32 - 4:48)

Well, that's the thing with momentum, you know, it's like, it takes motivation to start, but then you get momentum to keep going. Yeah, when you started writing the book, you see, for whatever reason, pulled the trigger on Christmas Day. Did that knock the first domino and then it was, you know, 35 days of just writing.

[Aakash] (4:48 - 5:04)

Yeah, it's momentum. So you gather momentum very quickly. And especially when you do things every day, you find that when you do something every day, the inspiration just comes to you.

I wrote something this morning around like waiting for inspiration versus actually just doing the work and the inspiration coming to you. And I think that's huge.

[Daniel Hill] (5:04 - 5:05)

Yeah, there's no droplets left.

[Aakash] (5:06 - 5:23)

Yeah, you know, you're waiting for, you know, people are waiting for that magical droplet to hit them or they're waiting for that rainbow to come in the sky so that they can actually do the work. But if you just make a commitment to yourself to do the work every day, you'll be surprised how much momentum you build. And then, you know, three, four, five months down the line, you're surprised just how much you've knocked out the park.

[Daniel Hill] (5:23 - 6:34)

If you were to explain that journey of going from having not even picked up the pad and then picking up on Christmas Day to how it happens with, you probably see it a lot with your coach, your coaches, your clients, with people in the gym, how that motivation and momentum curve changes. You know, the first day we go to the gym, it's hard slog. There's no return, you know, not looking forward to it.

It's painful, but then maybe it gives you a buzz and you want to go again. And then a few weeks in, the flywheels moving, you're all guns blazing, you know, people better get out of the way because there's no way you're going to stop yourself. How would you, for me, mine's always, I'm like, I'm an extremist.

I'm always 100% on, or I'm 100% off. Mine's peaks and troughs. It's like a roller coaster of productivity, execution.

It's a very high frequency. From the way you explained it, it sounded like you perhaps opened the book on Christmas Day and then just consistently, flawlessly with no change in motivation or energy levels, just rolled it out in a very tempo level. Is that right or is that not the case?

[Aakash] (6:34 - 7:52)

I feel like I get more energized as I do it. Every day goes by, I'm more and more energized. It just starts consuming my thoughts.

And I find I work like in sprints on different things. So for example, the book was like cranked out in two, three weeks. And then since then, since I've kind of finished that first draft, I kind of put it away for a bit.

And I've been thinking about something else and I'm trying to work on another project. But so I, I almost run a lot, a lot of projects at once. And then I pick and I'll prioritize them and, and kind of segment them accordingly.

But I would say that the biggest observation I've had in people who, who perform at high level for long periods of time is, is, is taking away the, the attachment to the tangibles, because we were talking about this the other day and around, you know, detaching from the reward and detaching from the result. If you think about people in the gym, if you're always obsessed with checking, if your arms are getting a bit bigger, you're going to leave yourself quite disappointed. But if you just fall in, if you just fall in love with the idea of doing the work, then you'll be surprised at how much things compound over time.

And that's when the momentum really gathers. And those who knock out the big projects are the ones who just love doing the work involved, not the ones who, you know, they obsess around the beginning bit and they obsess around the end bit because they're too tied up in the highs and lows of the tangibles.

[Daniel Hill] (7:52 - 8:05)

So I want to pull two bits out of that, prompt me if I forget the second. The first is around focusing on one thing. The second is around enjoying the work.

With regards to focusing on one thing, have you read Matthew McConaughey's new book, Green Lights?

[Aakash] (8:06 - 8:06)

No, I haven't.

[Daniel Hill] (8:07 - 8:59)

It's really good. It's basically his journals of 25, 30 years about successes, failures, I'd recommend it. And he talks in there about, well, there's a quote in there that says, the genius can do anything but chooses to do one thing.

Now, I would say one of my shortcomings is that I've got a million projects going on. I've got Get Up and Give Back charity, I've got developments going on over there. I'm starting a marketing company.

I've got a service accommodation business over there. I've got acquiring a new business over there. I've got a property entrepreneur.

I've got a million and one things. And I have to be really, really, really disciplined with my time to make sure they all get the amount of attention that they require. I have at least a dozen projects running at any one time in the map.

Are you saying that you perhaps are more one at a time rather than simultaneous?

[Aakash] (9:00 - 9:25)

I think I'm definitely more singular than you are. I know you have a lot of different companies which have different interests as well. My thinking with that knowing you is that I feel like you're waiting to stumble upon the one you really, really enjoy.

As opposed to the fact that you'd like having a lot of things going on, I feel like it's you on that search for what you really, really love doing.

[Daniel Hill] (9:26 - 9:27)

It's interesting.

[Aakash] (9:28 - 9:34)

Because I think if you'd land on one area or field, the only option really is to go all in.

[Daniel Hill] (9:35 - 10:04)

Yeah. Yeah. And I suppose that's definitely my track record.

When there's something, you get what you focus on, choose wisely. When there's something I want to achieve, I always achieve it. But my shortcoming is a lot of book.

Now, I keep dipping in and out doing this book, and I've got a bit more motivation starting this new book. But I've just got so many things going on simultaneously. That's the first thing.

I just wanted to benchmark that. And it does sound like we are different, I think.

[Aakash] (10:04 - 10:20)

But just on that, because I remember when we were talking about calendars over Christmas, and I was saying to you, do you still use a calendar? Because I, for some reason, thought you dropped it. But clearly not when I saw your screenshot.

When I saw your screenshot, I mean, there were literally like 20 to 30 minute segments just blocked. And I looked at it, I was like, holy shit, that looks really overwhelming.

[Daniel Hill] (10:21 - 10:32)

To me, that's standard. I just think, how could you run your life? I've got 15 minutes on there for a shower every morning.

How does anyone else run their life?

[Aakash] (10:33 - 10:56)

I mean, what I do is, if you look at mine, it's like two, three hour chunks at a time. It'd just be like writing through three hours or think about a strategy on sales and think about that for a couple hours. I find that it takes me, I really need to get into that trance to really get the best ideas.

I find if I'm looking at the clock in like 30 minutes, I'm like, I'm more thinking about that clock than I am about getting into the work.

[Daniel Hill] (10:57 - 11:12)

Well, that's, yeah, we'll come back to that because that is about, and I completely agree that I am the same in that capacity. I do have more, in my creative space, I'm absolutely creative. But I don't know if you saw the analogy I put on the Problem Entrepreneur Group the other day about the light bulb.

[Aakash] (11:12 - 11:13)

No, go on.

[Daniel Hill] (11:13 - 12:06)

So the light bulb is, if you draw yourself a light bulb, the little metal thread at the bottom, that's the whole of all, and that's the strategy, it's the idea, it's, I'm going to do this, I'm going to do a photo shoot. And then the rest of the light bulb is the execution. The bottom is the buzz, the top is the battle.

And the hardest thing as a creative is, there's a million, an idea is a 10 a penny, there's a million broke creators out there, is you've got to sit there for 60 minutes, 90 minutes every day doing your creative stuff and be like, you know what, this, this book is going to be banging. And that takes you 90 minutes or two hours or a couple of cave time sessions. And you're like, right, that's going to be amazing.

But then you've got to put your shoes on, you've got to go out and you've got to pull it in. And it's, that's not the creative, well, I don't know, maybe it is to a degree, the writing element, I suppose.

[Aakash] (12:06 - 12:47)

Well, I think the key thing is that you can't just keep your head in the clouds all the time, you have to have to get on and do it. But that's where I think, like, there's a, when it comes to productivity, I think there's a difference between like overall strategy and then the tactics you use to get you there. So that the hacks that we always talk about, and then there's the overall sort of overarching strategy.

And I think that lies in, if you know, it's an important project to get out the door, you will really execute on it. Like the book, for example, for you, it's probably more of a personal, if you get it, it's nice if you don't, it's not the end of the world. But if it was like, if it was probably a commercial element to it for you, there's probably, you'd probably approach it in a whole different way.

[Daniel Hill] (12:47 - 13:29)

Well, that's the strange thing, because it's a gift and a curse. Like when you said the other day to me, you said, you know, I'll tell you what, if you, if you didn't have a business purpose of writing this book, and it didn't have a commercial edge, what would it be about? And I sort of shared that with you.

And as soon as I took that off the table, I became more motivated. And I was like, you know what, I actually could really see myself writing there. So I'd like to put this chapter in my life to bed, I'd like to remember what it feels like before I forget.

So I was like, real motivated. But then the actual, which is the idea and the passion element, but then the actual execution, because it isn't commercially driven, and it's not built into my schedule. And it, you know, it doesn't come before or after the 15 minutes for a shower, it's like, very quickly falling to the bottom of the pile again.

[Aakash] (13:30 - 13:34)

I think that's where it comes back to making that commitment in your diary, making a commitment to your schedule.

[Daniel Hill] (13:34 - 13:56)

So you've got to every day, schedule it in nine at 9am till 10, or nine till 9.15. What I've done this week is I've got a dictate two chapters, and my new PA has downloaded a transcribing app for both of us to use. And I'm just going to bang them out over the weekend and just get one down, see how it looks. I'll probably share it with you next week.

[Aakash] (13:58 - 14:00)

Yeah, you had another point you said you wanted to prompt on?

[Daniel Hill] (14:01 - 17:32)

Yeah, what was it? The first one was doing things one at a time. The second thing was enjoying the work.

This is an interesting one, because my year off this year is purpose driven limit, where my journey just at the highest level was started a business because it's my passion, got the band of brothers in, loved it, caught the bullet train to success, smashed the living daylights out of it and let capitalism take over. Ended up becoming a CEO, managing director. That's not what I signed up for.

Completely burnt myself out, disappeared off to an arrow boat for a year. And then thought the definition of success is being away from the business, not in the business. And in December, the shit hit the fan, had to fly back and work in the business.

And actually getting in the business, building a new team, recruiting new people. I was like, you know what, this is actually like, same way Mike Tyson, when he put his gloves back on to find what punched in the face last year. He didn't think, what the hell am I doing?

He thought, oh my God, I'm home, I'm back. And I genuinely feel like that's me. I'm back.

This is my purpose. It doesn't feel like work, you know, recruiting people, driving people forward, leading, taking on challenges. And that was the honeymoon period of December into January.

And I spoke to Louisa, my life coach yesterday, and just said, do you know what I can see happening? I can start seeing myself fall into the old traps that made me not like business. And it's that overworking myself.

So I had a couple of nights this week where I didn't have enough sleep because my performance is so on a knife edge. A couple of nights bad sleep can really throw me off. I was saying to her, I'm starting to experience the things that I don't like about it, like managing people, like having a lack of patience.

And so I've fallen out of the honeymoon period into it. She ratted off a load of things, or questions, really, and answered them myself, as to how do I make sure I stay in passion and stay in that creative mode and stay in that feeling purposeful, engaged, so it doesn't feel like work. And, you know, just from making those adjustments yesterday and today, I suppose that's that point of, how do you not get carried away?

I've lost that, but last year, without a doubt, after a decade, I spent my whole life driven on the result, whether it was the photo shoot, or the award, or the target. I spent my whole life on it. And then every day, all you're dreaming of is this result.

And then you get the result, and it's just a huge anticlimax. You do that enough times, it's completely demotivating. But then when you do fall in love with the work, and you enjoy the process of the writing, and you're not thinking about opening the box and getting the book, it's like, that is the purpose.

But my mind can often wander to the result. Rather than sit there, when I'm loving a piece of work on a Saturday, I absolutely love it. I do it in my own time, I'll have a nice drink, things like that.

Yesterday, I was off the grid, which means I don't answer my phone, I don't go in the office, I don't talk to anyone. And I've created myself a list of high value step change projects. But then I find I'm up against the clock to get these projects done.

So I'm taking the enjoyment out of it, because I want to get 8 or 12 projects done during the day, because I'm so impatient. All of a sudden, I've created a day of work. Whereas, do you know what I'm saying?

Does any of that sound familiar?

[Aakash] (17:32 - 19:04)

Yeah, yeah. I think the thing you mentioned around realigning your flow is one of the biggest things for productivity. And just generally just enjoying the journey.

I think I know I'm very similar to you. I don't enjoy management. I don't enjoy the day to day sort of things.

I like kind of just being on my own and just creating something and rolling it out. And for two years, the last two years, I've used toggle, which I'm sure you've you've tried here and there, right. And the reason I started using at the beginning was to this is something I learned from you guys is around dump, delegate, automate, and deciding what I need to get rid of.

And because I was doing literally everything and I wanted to get rid of and just focus on my areas. And each week I'd use it was a way to kind of streamline it. And in the past couple of months, I started finding that toggle was restricting me because I find I kept having to box my days like I kept thinking I'm on the clock now I'm on the clock.

And I got to the last few weeks and I was thinking I'm actually toggling a lot less hours, like quote unquote hours, clocked hours. And I was thinking why is that? And then I looked at it and I thought I'm only actually doing like, I'm actually now only doing like four to six things.

And it's like, it's either strategy is writing, it's one to one to my core team. And then it's it's a bit of client work. And then like just general sort of inbox and slack.

And I was saying to myself, I don't need toggle anymore. So I stopped toggle this week, which is a which is a big sort of revelation for me.

[Daniel Hill] (19:04 - 19:07)

That must have been two years since you started doing it.

[Aakash] (19:07 - 20:01)

Yeah, two years of toggling. It started in January 2019. And I stopped it.

Yeah, I stopped it now January 2021. And it was only till I got to the point where my days are just the bits that I want to be doing. And it's not to say that my days are rosy, there's always stuff that always bad stuff that comes up, I try, I'm trying to be more and more intentional of making the days filled with with why enjoy and why because I know what really sucks the energy out of me.

And I get I get, I don't know if you get this. But when when I'm in like the inbox, for example, I start getting headaches, I start getting like, I just feel like rough. I'm constantly procrastinating.

And I just try and schedule that right to the end of the day now. And spend like as long as I can outside of the inbox before I have to go in. And then when I do go in, I use all these hacks, like pause the inboxes, bookmarks to get into certain threads and all these sorts of things just to try and avoid myself seeing all the reactive stuff.

So that's been really interesting.

[Daniel Hill] (20:01 - 20:43)

Because that's definitely key. We'll definitely come back to that. We'll get to a point where we go through our days and compare notes, just to challenge you on one bit.

So while the conversation started, where we were talking about this, this topic started when we were talking about enjoy it. So we're both very similar in the fact that the majority of our day is spent doing things that we enjoy. However, because we are such driven people, we can take those things that we enjoy and actually take the fun out of it by thinking it's got to be done yesterday.

I need to do three chapters today, not one. How do you find yourself swaying into that where you're actually, you're doing the things you love and you've worked hard to get into this position, but actually, you start punishing yourself to try and get stuff done?

[Aakash] (20:45 - 21:08)

Yeah, definitely. I overcommit. It was like the book.

Initially, it was like, yeah, I'm going for a Christmas launch. Then it was like, actually, September. And now I'm in my head.

I'm thinking, get this out by May. And then I was just thinking to myself the other day, I was like, why have I suddenly just increased? I've just added so much freshness to this whole process.

And then I was actually set on September.

[Daniel Hill] (21:09 - 22:49)

I was going to say about fake expectations or false expectations that we create for ourselves. And we put these pressures on ourselves. One of these projects I did yesterday was basically building a visual schedule for a proper entrepreneur.

And it's like, it's a big bit of work. But I did it. And I've been planning it for about three weeks.

Like you were saying about planning it, preparing it, thinking in your head how it's going to work, journaling it. And then the last sort of 40% of actually get 30% of actually getting it done. I sat down and nailed yesterday.

And bear in mind, I started work on it probably about 4.30, 5 in the morning. By 8.30, it was done. So it took me four and a half hours.

And I was working at quite a pace. And that was the first one of my 12 things. And I got to the end of the day.

And I was out having a walk. I took some of your feedback, actually. In fact, it's one of your daily blogs, I think.

It said about a 30-minute unplugged walk can solve the problems of the world. And I was just feeling like I knew I was doing loads of high-value work, but wasn't giving myself credit for it. And I thought, you know what?

If one normal person, and by normal, I say that with the most respect. But if one normal person had delivered that schedule, having spent two days working on it, to me or to anyone, they'd sit there proud of it, look at it, it'd be amazing. So I did that before anybody else had even had their breakfast.

And I'm beating myself up that I'm not getting enough stuff out the door. So I was just trying to let my foot off the gas a little bit and allow myself to enjoy it rather than just ticking things off the list. It is enjoying the process.

But then also, do you know what I'm saying? Do you know where I'm going with that?

[Aakash] (22:49 - 23:08)

One thing I've really enjoyed about the blogging thing, I was saying to someone earlier, I like the idea that before I start any work, I've already knocked something out the door. I've actually hit send and I've hit publish on something before I actually started work. And it's a really nice mindset to get because it feels like no matter what I do in the day, I know I've published one thing.

[Daniel Hill] (23:09 - 23:59)

Well, that's where I have quick fires. So I'm probably an entrepreneur with a hit list and a to do list. It's all about quick fires.

Unless I'm sitting there scratching stuff off a list, I don't feel... If I had a whole day on a project that was creative, I would never sit there at the end of the day and be like, that felt good, or that felt productive. Even if I've looked at a deal and I've bought it and it's made half a million pounds, I wouldn't sit there at the end of the day and be like, do you know what?

That was a really productive day. To me, productive is creative, it's progressive, it's moving things forward. But it's also, there's an element of bang, bang, bang, bang, bang, like getting things off of a list, crossing stuff in from red to green, getting a pen on a bit of paper and scratching off things.

That is, there's definitely a psychological reward mechanism in that.

[Aakash] (23:59 - 24:11)

Have you tried coming away from lists and calendars? And so I was forced off a calendar two months ago, because my laptop, my Mac broke down, and my Mac, my computer's on my...

[Daniel Hill] (24:11 - 24:13)

Just get a Lenovo, man, keep telling me.

[Aakash] (24:14 - 24:57)

My calendar's on there, and it always syncs to my phone. But now I have to go in and log in on my phone. And so it just, there's so much resistance to going into my calendar.

I haven't gotten in. So the last two months I've been forced out. And what I've done is once a week, I'll go in and kind of set it roughly in my head.

And then I'll write down a few key things. But other than that, I'm not tied like massively to it. And I think it's taken a lot of pressure off because before, I was feeling like I'm up against the clock, because when I had a calendar, always in front of me, I'd always be adding stuff to it.

And always be like trying to, you know, stack as many things as possible. And I found that it's started taking a lot of pressure off me. And I was just getting rid of unnecessary stuff.

It's like, if I didn't really want to do it, I wouldn't do it, because it's not on the calendar anyway.

[Daniel Hill] (24:58 - 27:09)

I think standard entrepreneur attitude and approach to things might as always change. So it depends what season is, it depends what season of the year is, it depends what's going on in business, it depends if I'm really active, or if I'm really passive. At the minute, I'm literally in the office four days a week, which I haven't done for probably two or three years.

So I've really, really built my calendar. I think that one point to note, which I think everyone will get value from is, I spend a significant amount of time. Adam described it the best.

He said he had nine weeks worth of school holiday when he was studying for his GCSEs. And so he had nine weeks. And at the end of the first week, he'd come running down the stairs, and he said to his mum, well, mum, I've just had the best first week, been the most amazing first week.

She's like, how many subjects have you revised for? He said, I haven't revised for any. She said, well, how has it been a great week?

He said, well, look at this revision timetable I've created. And she was like, are you joking? She said, you've been up there for a week creating a bloody timetable.

Go and read some maps, go and study some English, go and learn some geography. But that mantra of, you know, I think it was Abraham Lincoln said, if you had seven hours to cut down the trees, spend the first five sharpening the axe, that is my life to a T. It's that, although my calendar is down to the literally 15 minutes slot to have a shower in the morning, I spend as much time planning, not as much time, but you know, I spend a significant amount of time planning my calendar, planning my day and planning my week.

And then it's just a formality of turning up and running. So I haven't tried not having one, although I haven't tried not having one, but when I was more passive to the business, I would just have a to do list. I wouldn't have, I used to do one and a half days in the business, Monday, all day, one-to-ones with the senior team.

And then Wednesday, half day check-ins and emails. Outside of that, I wouldn't really have a calendar. I'd just have a pad and a to do list.

But I've got a lot on at the minute. So my diary is militant. I'm running a department and running all the businesses.

So it's a lot of work.

[Aakash] (27:11 - 27:17)

Yeah, that's interesting. I think, yeah, seasonal elements probably plays a part.

[Daniel Hill] (27:17 - 27:36)

In the summer, it's completely reactive. In the summer when I'm running campaigns, it's you're in that flow of the campaign. So when it's sales and campaigns, very, very reactive, whereas winter specifically is very proactive, you know, it's winter hit list, it's scheduling, it's yeah, it's spinning a million plates.

[Aakash] (27:37 - 28:02)

That being said, I still spend about 45 minutes to an hour, either Friday, Saturday, planning the following week, because I don't ever want to turn up on Monday morning with nothing, with thinking, oh, what am I going to do today? It's never that. There's always a thing that has to be a planning element to it.

And I think, I think I only started doing that when I met you, because before that, I've turned up on a Monday morning, thinking I was still getting a lot of stuff done.

[Daniel Hill] (28:02 - 29:57)

But it was always thinking, what I want to do today, rather than actually being a bit more blocks, like, whatever time you start on a Monday morning, it's it's out of the changing room, in the shower into gear, and then in the starting blocks and then running the race. So people who turn up, they get out of the shower, put the clothes and then they run up and they're trying to find the starting blocks and they're trying to meet the referee and they're trying to do this and that. It's just a false start.

But that's the whole thing about Sunday Xanadu is what we're going to do. And that is the good thing. One of the good things I do do whilst I'm sort of laboring the challenges, I'm just trying to get as much value out of conversations I can.

In my day to day journal, I've got all my top 10s for forever. So if I ever feel like, oh, do you know what, was that actually a good week? I just look at it.

I'm like, oh, there's 10 things that have fundamentally progressed the business. Also in my calendar, if it's high value business development, I colour it green. If it's business management, I colour it yellow.

And if it's delivery, I colour it red. And most of my calendar is green. So whilst my expectations can punish me sometimes because they're just unrealistic, or they're just unforgiving, it's constant progress.

What do you do to, I get the immediate gratification, the instant gratification of crossing off the list and colouring it in green and getting it done. What do you do to consciously feel like that was a good bit of work? You do a bit of work, or a day's work or a week's work.

But one of the hallmarks on a Friday is if I've absolutely nailed it and I'm absolutely exhausted, I used to be like, do you know what, that's a good week. That's one way to feel it. A more mature, sustainable way would be doing a good bit of work you're proud of and really acknowledging the process and taking the reward you expect for the recognition you deserve.

What do you do? Do you feel like that? How do you feel today finishing the week?

[Aakash] (29:58 - 30:20)

I feel quite energised to be fair. I used to be in the exhausted boat though. Used to get to Friday and wonder how I even got there.

You wake up on Friday morning just shot to death. But you still know you got a full day's work. That was pretty much the case for the first three years of business.

I would say it's only in the last few months that's sort of calmed down. I don't know if it's just the calmer period in business.

[Daniel Hill] (30:23 - 30:34)

How would you compare the words like product? Because as you're talking, I'm thinking about when you're reviewing a week, there's productive, which could be exhaustive, but there's also high value and sort of purposeful.

[Aakash] (30:34 - 30:45)

I find the exhausting stuff like you get to a lot of stuff that exhausts you is the mental and emotional stuff, isn't it? It's the managing and it's the dealing with the fires and stuff like that.

[Daniel Hill] (30:46 - 30:56)

Why do we like that as well? When we do the stuff we hate, when we get thrown in the trenches and we literally grab with both hands, we nearly kill ourselves to do it. Why do we enjoy that as well in a masochistic way?

[Aakash] (30:57 - 31:24)

That's the big question we're trying to figure out for a while. It's like when I was watching, it's like when I wrote about the other day, I was watching every time I watch these drug shows, I think the same thing. I'm like, why do these people put themselves like on the knife's edge of death or prison just for that extra bit of opportunity to do something else?

And I guess that's the big question that we're always trying to figure out, right? Yeah.

[Daniel Hill] (31:25 - 31:31)

And it's not the process without a doubt. And it's a delay.

[Aakash] (31:31 - 31:58)

I think there's also a sense of like, how far can you push yourself and how much can you take? And knowing that when you go through those sorts of periods, you do come out of it. It's like, it's like pushing yourself to the extreme in with your physique, right?

It's not comfortable, and you don't really, there's no benefit to going that lean. But the lessons you learn from there, and just the process of doing it, you think you can do anything. And it just increases your stress tolerance, doesn't it?

[Daniel Hill] (31:59 - 32:37)

Yeah, the pain to the shoulder is a huge thing. When it turns from satisfaction into sacrifice, where you go from a point where you're doing purpose-driven living, and you're really enjoying it, up to Elon Musk was my hero for a long time. We're on Problem Entrepreneurs, we talk about heroes.

He was my hero for a long time, because I was somebody who sacrificed. And I felt like that was an admirable thing to do, to sacrifice my time, my life in pursuit of allowing other people, supporting other people to achieve their goals or whatever. But then I realized that's not what I want to do.

Why does Elon Musk do that? He is literally suffering.

[Aakash] (32:38 - 32:46)

I think he's got serious psychological stuff he hasn't confronted from his growing up. It's definitely related to his childhood, isn't it?

[Daniel Hill] (32:46 - 33:03)

I said that to the Problem Entrepreneurs board members the other day. They're saying, I'm worrying about tenants smoking weed, and Elon Musk's worrying about getting a mask. I said, guys, this is not a measuring stick.

Elon Musk has a seriously bad upbringing in childhood.

[Aakash] (33:03 - 33:29)

A lot of it is related to that. It's dealing with confronting the muck, as I call it. It's dealing with the shit that's gone on in your past.

And sometimes for some people, work is just an outlet. It's just throwing yourself into the business for 20 hours a day or whatever. It's just an outlet to not deal with the reality of what's going on in your life.

And that's another thing we definitely run into. If you look at a lot of the top performers, it's obviously also an outlet.

[Daniel Hill] (33:30 - 33:37)

Most successful people were driven by a degree of pain somewhere. You look at any of them, they've all got a backstory.

[Aakash] (33:38 - 33:51)

Look at Steve Jobs. He was abandoned as a kid. He was an orphan.

He was adopted. And throughout his life, there was always that thing of he was trying to build something amazing because he wanted to make up the feeling of abandonment he had as a kid.

[Daniel Hill] (33:54 - 34:33)

Yeah. Anyone who had something to prove, the obvious thing is if you've got something to prove, then you go out and prove it. There's very few, well, I shouldn't say it, but I don't know if it's factually correct.

I suspect there's significantly less people who were born into comfort that then go out and seek absolute, they really put themselves through the grinder to try and achieve something phenomenal. And they normally are people who've either got nothing and need something or have had an incident or an experience and then they've got something to prove. And so yeah, it's an interest in that capacity.

[Aakash] (34:33 - 35:28)

I think the sacrifice thing, sorry, just on the sacrifice thing, I was thinking about it because obviously, in the latter half of last year, I put myself through a bit of self inflicted masochism. And I paid for it quite a bit in terms of my own health. And I'm someone who takes care of myself physically very well.

But I had a, I started developing a scalp infection around November, where it started off really dry scalp and end up being infected. And I had to have two courses of antibiotics to get rid of it. That's why I haven't had a haircut, by the way, because I couldn't get a haircut in November or December.

So I couldn't have a haircut because they couldn't aggravate the skin. And then that turned into a crazy rash all down my arm. And for me, it's still recovering.

And it's like, it's just like the war wounds, right of, of what we put ourselves through. And I was thinking, like, what in my head, I'm thinking, like, do I really want to go through something like that again? Or can I just be a bit more content with?

[Daniel Hill] (35:28 - 35:29)

Well, it depends.

[Aakash] (35:29 - 35:30)

Yeah.

[Daniel Hill] (35:30 - 37:01)

Because like, when we're at different periods in our life, especially with things like when you're being masochistic, or I don't call it self harming, but it is. Like Mike Tyson says, you do it and you're willing to die, but you would push yourself to either succeed it or you die. And you know, that is, you know, you have to be prepared to do that to a degree.

And I suppose sometimes in your life, you treat it as a badge of honor, because you're in that sacrifice process. And it's how many hours am I working, how little sleep am I having, I've got these XYZs, you know, I've got my telltale signs, I get ulcers in my mouth, and I get styes on my eyes, as soon as they start coming, but somebody else will normally know it's Friday. And I'll be like, right, they're now they're red flags.

So previously, I'd be like, I'd wear that as a badge of honor and be like, look how hard I'm working. Because for whatever reason, I feel like that's going to add value to someone in some capacity, whether it's an ego driven thing, or a lead by example thing, or whatever. But now I treat them as red flags.

I had what Wednesday was, I think, yesterday, actually, yesterday, Louisa, I said to Louisa, I had two nights bad sleep. I need to just get myself back into a good night's sleep. So I just got an extra half an hour last night, and I'm back in the game.

So yeah, so what's the heart? I mean, you've collapsed from exhaustion multiple times, haven't you?

[Aakash] (37:01 - 37:42)

Yeah, I've had three, three instances of collapsing. And then one near one in, in London Bridge station, that was really close. It was, it was about a year and a half ago, I was really pushing it.

And I was on the train, and I started feeling sick. And then I got off the train. And I started feeling my blur, my vision was starting to blur.

So I was leaning on the escalator trying to get up. And then I was getting to the point I was going to collapse, I had to touch the person in front of me. And I said to, I said, it was an old lady, not an old lady, but she was a lot older than me.

And I said to her, I feel sick, I'm about to collapse. Can you take me to the, can you take me to the toilet? And she literally, she held me and she like guided me towards the men's and I was just like...

[Daniel Hill] (37:42 - 37:47)

Good for her, man. I've tried carrying you before, you're not alive. She must have been, she must have been somewhere.

[Aakash] (37:49 - 38:25)

So, yeah. And even like in November, December, like I had the skin infection, and then it turned into like, like partial hearing loss. So I had to go to A&E.

I don't know if I told you that one. And yeah, I think my body just manifests stress physically. And, and I think I just, I just need to get better and knowing before it comes.

But I've tried to be a bit kinder, like I'm, I'm I'm sleeping a lot more. I'm trying to not do as much in the evenings and these sorts of things are helping, but see what happens as more challenges come in the way, right?

[Daniel Hill] (38:26 - 39:11)

It's such a strange paradigm that when, so let's say proper entrepreneur, for example, when people start in their first year, the things that we teach them on their first year is how to be more productive, how to be focused, how to be driven, how to work on the business, not in it. And we're trying to get them going. And by the time they get to like their second, third, fourth year or like the board level, the biggest thing we're trying to do is slow them down and stop them from killing themselves.

Like, do you not think it's a strange thing that we get to a point where we want to work so hard that it's at our own expense and we actually have to stop ourselves from, have you always had a strong working ethic? Have you always been the flywheels, the wheels have always been in motion?

[Aakash] (39:11 - 39:34)

Yeah, I would say so. Yeah. I mean, when I was a personal trainer, it was, you know, get up, uh, get the first train into London, 545, get the last train back.

Um, it's sort of being, you know, minimal sleep to as many workers as many hours of the day as possible. Cause I was on the clock and, um, you know, university, like after the first year, I was like, right, I just want to get, I just want to get cranking.

[Daniel Hill] (39:34 - 42:17)

Um, I don't have to tell you about my uni story where, uh, so I did a year's placement and that was where I, uh, that was my first time having a job realized I never, I don't never want to have a job again. So I was like, I'm going to go back and get my business going in my last year of uni. And as I was leaving, this one guy said to me, I said, I'm going back to uni.

So what, what, uh, grade, uh, uh, degree are you going to get? I said, I'm going to get a first class honours. He said, there's no way someone like you from where you're from is going to get a first class honours.

First class honours are for geniuses and academics. And I was like, fuck you, man. Like, do you know what?

I was like, I'll tell you what I'm going to do. I'm going to go start a business and I'm going to get a first. So I went back to uni, started my business simultaneously, went to do my degree.

I was doing like 20, 22 hour days, staying up all night, reading journals, doing the business, like evenings, weekends, um, in the school holidays from the university was out on the building site, getting money for, uh, keep to get the business going. And, uh, it got to the December and I was really, really ill and went to the doctors and they said, oh, uh, you've got tonsillitis. Give me some penicillin in the December.

So they gave me the penicillin and I was really, it felt real rough, but I was still just like hammering it, hammering it, hammering it. And it got all the way through to the January, middle of January. I went to my granddad's for dinner and I looked over the sofa and I'd been having these like been tripping out and you're only so tired.

You start sort of getting a bit delusional. And I was sitting there and his face actually came off of his skull and floated in the middle of the room. And I was like, oh no, this is not good at all.

And I was like full on hallucinating. And I laid down and I was like, yeah, I'm really not well. And he's like, I think you need to need to go to the doctors or go to the hospital.

So I went to the doctors and they're like, I was like, yeah, basically I've been hallucinating and I'm having out of body experiences. And I've never told you this story before. And, uh, and, uh, they were like, yeah, send me to the hospital for a blood test.

And they're like, yeah, you're just in the final stages of glandular fever, just getting over glandular fever. I was like, no way. And they're like, yeah, you should have been in bed for like six to eight weeks.

What have you been doing? And I was like, I've been running my business and trying to get it first, like, uh, 20 hours, 18, 20 hours a day. And, uh, I ended up with, I ended up with a short term memory loss for about two years.

And this thing called post-viral and post-viral disassociation, which basically means at random times, you'd end up hallucinating and having out of body experiences. And that was for about 18 months afterwards. And, uh, I still got the business.

I won the ICSR award for best new business. And I've got a first class degree. So I was like, needs master, got it done.

[Aakash] (42:18 - 42:26)

So even now you're talking about it in a, in a, in a positive light, but it's, I think for anyone listening, it's actually probably a lesson to be learned not to do that.

[Daniel Hill] (42:27 - 43:21)

Well, this is what, that's where I was going with it. It was like, it depends what you use it for, because if it's a badge of honor in that capacity, it's like, how would I use it nowadays? I would nowadays use it as a red flag to say, right, it's time to slow down, get some sleep, take a filthy gas.

But back in the day, it was like, that is the only reason I've achieved what I've achieved. But you can't achieve what we achieve and you can't progress as quick as we progress on eight hours a day or, well, dear, well, maybe not, maybe that's not the calibration, but you can't achieve the ultimate successes without the absolute grind and graft. And that's, that's like everything from being productive and being creative to physically rolling up your sleeves and doing what's required.

And I think I've got multiple experiences of that through my history. And that's, I would definitely credit that to one of the reasons why I've achieved what I've achieved. I don't know whether you'd have the same relationship in your experiences.

[Aakash] (43:21 - 44:38)

Yeah, yeah, absolutely. Even writing my first book, I remember I had a near collapse experience when I was editing it. I was trying to hit this deadline, like this self-imposed deadline again.

And I get all the symptoms were coming like sweaty palms, weak, weak legs, feeling sick. I was walking. I remember thinking, Oh my God, like this is gonna happen.

I don't know where I need to stop. Um, and I just needed a sleep extra and that's what it was. But I think, I think there's definitely a price to be paid for, for getting big things out the door.

Um, but what I would say is also that, you know, you said that as you, you know, the beginning, you're just trying to get people more productive. And then as you progress them through the years, it's about calming them down. I would still say a lot of people, the biggest problem is still just getting them productive and just getting people to just get the work done and actually do the work.

It's still the hardest thing I'd say. And even more and more each year as, as we get more and more distracted with things, there's more opportunities to not work when really the work still needs to be done. I don't know if you've, you've experienced that when you're looking at maybe it's only the sort of 10% that actually does.

You have to worry to actually say that you actually need to slow down to speed up. And the rest of the people you're telling them to speed up.

[Daniel Hill] (44:38 - 44:46)

I think even, yeah, without a doubt. I mean, I don't know if you listened to dopamine drivers that I did on Property Entrepreneur on Monday. Did you catch that?

[Aakash] (44:46 - 44:47)

I didn't know. No.

[Daniel Hill] (44:48 - 45:02)

I'd recommend checking it out because I've basically been studying dopamine for the last like year, year and a half, on and off, real years of testing it, trial and error, figuring out how it works. And because it's completely misunderstood. The dopamine has a, well, it's not even a, it's not a hormone.

[Aakash] (45:02 - 45:03)

It's a neurotransmitter.

[Daniel Hill] (45:03 - 47:54)

Yeah, exactly. It's like a monoamine neurotransmitter. And it's very, very misunderstood.

People think it's a pleasure. It's not. It's a, it's a motivator.

It's a driver. And it's what gets you to do what you want to do, not the reward from that. And in there I said, I'm not a conspiracist and I'm not saying this is the case, but if I was a conspiracist and I was to say that this society and this world has been created to slow you down, like the government and the powers that be, their only objective is to stop you from achieving what you want to do.

What they would do is they would make food that slows you down. They would create environments that slow you down and they would give you distractions at every opportunity to try and stop you being productive. And I was like, let's have a look at what we've got in the lives you live in.

You go down the supermarket, I'm pretty sure 70% of the stuff in the supermarket is not actually fit for human consumption. It's in a luminous purple and red and green packaging. You go on your phone and there's, it's multicolored, there's no locations left, right and center.

When you understand how dopamine works, the world is created just to try and stop you from doing anything of your own accord. And I was just like, you don't stand a chance. Like, unless you actually consciously try not to slip into this default distraction, you don't stand a chance of getting anything out the door.

And I suppose, and the upshot was the benefit of this training, which was taking probably entrepreneurs through, the benefit is, one is you're going to have a high level of awareness. And I started to call the things of hide opening tequilas. If you go on a night out and you start banging tequilas at the beginning of the night out, within an hour, two hours, you're not fit for that because you're not going to remember anything.

You're going to stumble around, add no value to anyone and probably won't remember anything. Whereas if you spend the night on wine spritzers, you'll have a great time, you'll have some good conversations, you might have a dance, you'll see lots of things and you'll make some memories. If you're getting out of bed in the morning, or not even getting out of bed, if you're waking up and you unlock your phone and start scrolling through Facebook, you're banging tequilas.

Then you're into Instagram and WhatsApp and Snapchat. By the time you've got out and had a shower and had some, and you have some way of a jam on toast or a bacon sandwich, by the time you've got out of the shower and you've sat down to do your work, you're absolutely wasted. You've been banging tequilas all morning.

There is no chance you're going to go home with any goods tonight. The odds are completely stacked against you. I said to everyone, the benefit is now you can bring your awareness around to it and start working with that so that the odds are in your favor rather than against them.

The good thing is that the rest of the world doesn't know this stuff. The rest of the world is still out there addicted to their phones, addicted to notifications, scrolling aimlessly through completely strategically wired and created programs and devices that are there to distract you. You can use that for your advantage.

[Aakash] (47:55 - 48:48)

One of the chapters in my new book is called The World is Conspiring Against You. It's crazy that you said that. The crux of the book is around staying in shape and how it's so difficult.

If you think about it, it's because the world is conspiring against you. I always say the biggest competitors we have are not fellow fitness companies. It's McDonald's, Netflix.

It's the addictive nature that they bring into it. A lot of the top executives are behavioral psychologists because their role is to think how can we make you most addicted and how can we create that dopamine spike so you want more and more and you want to crave more and more of it. It's like you said, the red colors, the yellow colors, the scrolling of next episode before you even come off.

I think one of the best things I got from you actually, I didn't even know it was possible, and I think everyone should do it, is make their phones black and white. If you go back into color mode, you just see. It's actually quite scary just how colorful it is.

[Daniel Hill] (48:48 - 49:03)

I picked Sav's phone up for the week. I was having a bit of a detox on my phone. I had to use hers for something.

I unlocked it. Honestly, I was like, I need to turn this down. It was bright light and it was multicolored.

I was like, I was like, that is a tequila right there. I need to put that down.

[Aakash] (49:06 - 50:03)

It's like if we think about, this is probably a bit of a rabbit hole, but like society, if you look at socioeconomics, there's proven research now to prove that in poorer areas, there's more fried chicken shops and there's more poor quality foods. It's always strategically placed in these poor areas. If you live in one of those areas, the environment is conspiring against you from being healthier.

It works. Now that we have virtual devices, it's bringing everything into our palm of our hands. I think the biggest productivity killers, I'm sure you've told these people all over and over again, is the phone.

I think the best thing you can do in the morning is to delay, keep on aeroplane mode and delay until you've done a significant amount of deep work. If you're in reactive mode from the get-go, your brain is going to be programmed to want reactive spikes throughout the whole day. I always find that once you open your phone to begin with, you're always wanting more and more of it.

[Daniel Hill] (50:03 - 50:09)

This is it about drinking tequilas. You don't bang three tequilas and then you crave a wine spritzer.

[Aakash] (50:09 - 50:29)

Yeah, exactly. I think the best rule I have for myself is no phone before 11am. It's aeroplane mode until then, because that way I can get a lot of work done in the morning.

Then afterwards, I just have to be careful and know where to put it, etc. That's where the hacks come into play versus the overarching strategy we've spent talking about.

[Daniel Hill] (50:30 - 52:05)

Yeah. They are just raising your standards and resetting the bar. I remember previously, I used to pride myself, this is years ago, I used to pride myself on the fact that if somebody messaged me at 5.15am in the morning, the fact that we'd get an instant reply, to me that meant I'm available, I'm up, I look at me. That was what I held in quite high kudos. Whereas now, when I go on some of the WhatsApp groups that I'm in, say 10.11am in the morning, and they've been fired off since 5am in the morning, I'm like, guys, you're seriously missing the best part of the day. You don't want to be in a WhatsApp in those early hours.

That's sacred time, the mornings and weekends. I'm doing a digital detox tonight. I don't mean digital detox tonight.

From 7pm tonight until 7am Sunday morning, my phone will be off, no social media, no messaging, no Instagram, no Facebook. Well, I don't do emails at the weekend anyway. But yeah, it's just really resetting those bars.

My newest rule is when I get out of the car, because four days' work week, I'm in the office building the business. When I get out of the car and I get home, that's the last time I look at my phone, and then it sits in my coat. I don't have an alarm clock.

This is the first winter without one. But two summers, maybe a year and a half, I've not had an alarm clock. So I've just got a time.

So when I wake up, I can see if it's time to get up, and then just leave the phone in my coat and then don't check it till 10 in the morning. So makes a big, big difference.

[Aakash] (52:05 - 52:33)

With social media, remember, if anyone listening doesn't know that remember, you're the product. You're not the customer, you're the product. Because the more you use it, the more data you formulate.

And you know, you said you're not a big conspiracy theorist, but I don't even think it's because it's not a conspiracy theory. It's genuinely how they run their business. It's capitalism.

Their role is to make it all inadequate. So you think, oh, I'm going to click on this. And then that forms your data profile.

You get more of that. And it just feeds that dopamine system constantly.

[Daniel Hill] (52:34 - 53:29)

Yeah, and it's yeah, exactly. And that's everything from chicken nuggets through to, like I say, social media, Netflix, and Instagram and things like that. Conscious of time, let's put pulling it back to productivity and maybe finishing off with a brief conversation about how we structure our days.

I think we've established that depending what season is, depending where we are, what growth stage we're in, in whatever business we're working on at the time, there is a variety. So this isn't the hallmark of how we've run our lives for the last 20 years. But how do you structure your day and your week?

If people listen to this thinking, right, these guys have obviously achieved some stuff. And let's assume that not everybody wants to collapse from exhaustion and have hallucinations. But if they wanted to take some top tips on or even just some insight to how other people are productive, because I'm interested in how you structure your day.

Let's run through that and just see. Let's just compare notes and see how it looks.

[Aakash] (53:30 - 53:45)

So I'd say I plan 70% of my week on Friday or Saturday and 70% just gives a little bit of buffer and a little bit of wiggle room. I don't do any, no phone usage before 11, no meetings before 10.

[Daniel Hill] (53:46 - 53:51)

What 70%? Does that mean you leave just at random places, roughly 30% black?

[Aakash] (53:52 - 55:22)

And usually those slangs are in the afternoons. So I'll be quite rigid up to about two o'clock. And then after that, I'm a bit more flowy.

And sort of just depends on what's happening in the day. So the sort of consensus I live by is maker. I got it from Gary Keller in the one thing that the book, the one thing is I make her in the morning manager in the afternoon.

So I don't do any, any managing or day to day or inbox before breakfast. I eat about 11, 12 o'clock, nothing before then. And then afterwards, it's all day to day in the business.

Monday, I try and batch sort of client work to the start of the week and just in one or two days. And then the rest of the week opens up for working with the team in the afternoon. So that's sort of the basic consensus making the morning manager in the afternoon.

I think that's one of the best ways to get a lot of work progressive in the business because that way, especially at the time we're in now with the winter hit list, and just generally making business improvement, you can you get like five, six hours in the morning to just move the business forward. And there's so much you can do. It's like it's like trying to find your eight hours of eight hours in four time, you know, where you can get eight hours of work and done in four, four hours.

It's understanding when that is for you. So if you know that's in your first four to six hours a day, that's what you need to really be protective about. So you asked me, do you want to do this podcast at seven in the morning?

While it's a great, while it's great, I know it, I'd rather do that around this time, because the, the I think you're probably right as well.

[Daniel Hill] (55:22 - 55:42)

Yeah, yeah, because it would, yeah, the idea of coming off a podcast and then going back into the journal was probably quite alien. I suppose in my head, it was, that's that that is more, I normally would not do my podcast on my own. That's when I'll do it because I'm quite creative and quite on my fly.

And yes, that makes sense.

[Aakash] (55:42 - 56:12)

So yeah, meetings in the afternoon is like, I'd say is one of the best things to do. Because yeah, you don't want to, because they, they so droning that if you have one in the morning, firstly, you're reactive, but secondly, you just, you're just getting drained and you're losing time. You can be productive because meetings aren't generally brain intensive, are they?

And most of the time it's just, it's quite functional development. It's not, it's very rare. If you're having a really creative one, then potentially, yeah, bring it early in the day.

And I will do that if it's a creative brainstorm session. But if it's very functional, then I won't.

[Daniel Hill] (56:15 - 57:38)

So mine's not hugely dissimilar. I'm just, I'm not my phone. I'll put it in colour so I can see it.

So I have my cave time. So mine is whilst, mine's got a structure that is very rigid, but it works really well, but it's, it's chunked up. So cave time, 4.30 to 6.15 is my cave time. So that's in the journal, meditation, thinking about things, creating stuff. There's all the great ideas for the day, or just great ideas, working on new assets, things like that. And then 6.15 to 6.30, I get showered. 6.30 to 7, I go, I drive to the office. And then 7 till 9, I have prime time. So cave time is in my journal, getting creative, coming up with the ideas.

Then you've actually got to pull the trigger and get the stuff out the door. So my prime time is 7 till 9, which is actually putting pen to paper, finishing documents off, getting projects done, getting them out the door. And then I have breakfast, 10 till 10.30, and check messages at the same time. And then I have 11 till 1 is my quick fires. So what I'll do during the week is I'll have, do you use Google Cam? You do, you know, you use Apple, but you use Google Cam?

[Aakash] (57:39 - 57:40)

iCloud, it's iCloud, no.

[Daniel Hill] (57:41 - 57:45)

iCloud. I don't know if yours is the same. I have a to-do list at the top of each day.

[Speaker 3] (57:45 - 57:45)

Okay.

[Daniel Hill] (57:46 - 58:42)

So at the top of each day, I'll have QFs, so what I call quick fires. And then I'll, which is just a list of things that take less than two minutes. And I have a maximum of 10 of them.

Let's say, for example, so I'm looking at tomorrow quick fires, and there's already 10 in there, then I'll put them in for Monday. I'll put them in for Tuesday. So I do my quick fires.

And then I check my messages again in the afternoon, 2 o'clock, have my lunch. And then 3 till 4.30 is my to-do list. And that's a maximum of five tasks.

But they might be like reviewing finance contracts, or they're quite chunky to-do list jobs, but they're normally quite functional. So they're like contract-based or finance-based. They don't take any creativity.

They're just stuff to get out the door. And then Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday, 5.30 till 6, I'll do my inbox. And then that's it.

I'll finish at 6.

[Aakash] (58:42 - 59:16)

One thing I would say that's important for me is training. So training is a massive part of staying productive. I carve out my training around 10 in the morning.

And then I always go for a long walk at 2.30. So that spits out my day. I do resistance training Monday to Friday. And then 2.30 till 3.30, I'll always do a long walk. And I'll always batch my calls during that period of time. Because I hate being on the phone while just sitting at home. So I'll try and do as many calls as possible at 2.30. That's when I do my voice notes and all that sort of stuff.

[Daniel Hill] (59:16 - 59:54)

You're about done. Yeah, if you're talking, you're walking. There's no point sitting down on your phone.

If you're talking, you're walking. And even messages, all those slots that have a message, they're all walking. Even if they're on that, we've just bought that treadmill for the head office.

So we can do this 100 million step challenge. If I'm on my phone, I'll just quickly run over there and just jump on there for 20 minutes, answer my messages. But I've not trained for ages, like weight training, not since I was in 10 or 8.

Obviously, the gyms are closed. And I've got next to no space on the boat. But I should probably fit that in somewhere.

I'm getting a shower installed here. And I've got a full Olympics weight jet set. It's just saying to the guys in the office, we should bring them in.

[Speaker 3] (59:54 - 59:54)

Yeah, definitely.

[Daniel Hill] (59:55 - 1:00:10)

Just train here in New Orleans. So we're just getting a crate to convert the disabled toilets into some of the disabled toilets into showers, because we're on the top floor. Disabled people can't actually get up there.

So we might as well use that to convert into a shower and get a bit of a gym going.

[Aakash] (1:00:10 - 1:00:40)

Yeah, I mean, training is, physical activity is one of the best ways to be more productive. And it's proven in so much research now. And I was reading something yesterday that's quite that you'll find quite interesting.

You know, when you get creative fatigue, where you've almost zapped out your creativity for the day, one of the best ways to consolidate your thoughts and to actually tap into further levels is if you're going for a walk later on, and you'll find you start consolidating all the things you were opening up earlier in the day, and you're able to consolidate them and tap into it even further.

[Daniel Hill] (1:00:40 - 1:01:01)

So that's interesting. I'll tell you one thing you did share with me recently, which has definitely worked for me is you saying about there's that state of being awake, where you're not actually awake, you know, just just literally as you wake up, whilst the cat, before I had a cup of tea while the cat was born, and I'm in my journal. And that is definitely a difference.

How did you explain it? Because it's definitely a different state of creativity.

[Aakash] (1:01:02 - 1:01:13)

It's like, I think it's between the subconscious and the conscious. And you're in that sort of bridge zone. I'll need to find ways.

It wasn't, it wasn't what I said. It was a quote I'd shared with you, I think.

[Daniel Hill] (1:01:14 - 1:01:36)

Definitely works. Yes. Yeah, it's that.

Sometimes I think if I could be creative all day, I'd love to be. But the reality is, you can't because you've got to have that creative cave time session, come up with the ideas, then you do have to put your clothes on and go and pull the trigger and get stuff out the door. I think that's one place where people fall down.

They've got the best intentions, they've got the best ideas.

[Aakash] (1:01:36 - 1:01:40)

Do you not find the actual doing is the creativity as well?

[Daniel Hill] (1:01:42 - 1:02:18)

I do. But this is where, this is where I'm just starting to fall back into my bad, my old habits. 70% of my work is business development.

It's creative and it's, it's enjoyable. But it's very easy for me to, you like a nice dinner, and you stuff your face, it's like that. I like being creative.

But it's very easy for me to turn into work because I do so much of it. It's, it's start, I start to think of it as work. And then I put pressure on myself to get it done.

Do you know what I mean? Yeah, yeah, yeah. Do you feel like that?

[Aakash] (1:02:18 - 1:02:28)

Yeah, yeah, yeah. It's very easy to, to turn into. That's the hardest bit.

I think if you crack that, this will, this will be a breeze.

[Daniel Hill] (1:02:29 - 1:04:20)

Well, that's it. And what I did with Louise yesterday was I said, right, I'm falling into bad habits. I'm starting to turn my purpose driven living into work, which is what I always do.

And I end up killing myself, pretend I don't like it. Talk about, I'm packing my bags, I'm moving overseas. And then I just, and then I feel like, you know, that doesn't solve anything.

And what she said was, if you're wearing a different hat, so you've got, she's like, you've got different hats to wear. You've got your, you know, you've got your Nutty Professor creative genius hat. And I wear that at the dinner at 4.30 in the morning with the candle on, the green tea going, the little Buddha sitting there with me. And that's my, you know, I'm in my, I've got my Nutty Professor creative genius hat on. And I'm sitting in my Nutty Professor creative genius seat. Then I get ready and I come to the office, but then I do prime time.

Now, when I'm doing prime time, I'm doing it in the same seat that I'm managing the business in. She was like, you should, if you, if you're wearing a different hat, you should be sitting in a different seat. So this morning, I was like, right, do you know what?

I'm going to do my prime time. I'm going to do it here in the asset factory. I was like, right.

So I locked myself in here and it was a lot more productive. It didn't feel like work. The team were coming in, you know, the office is filling up, but nobody, everybody knows not to come in here because they just don't come in here.

And all of a sudden it doesn't feel like work. And then 10 o'clock, I'm a clock off here, go and have some breakfast. And then I'm in, in that seat.

I'm in the business management seat for two hours, managing the team at that desk. And then now I'm back in here with you. It just doesn't feel like work.

I'm in the asset factory. It's, it's got all my pictures up. It's got all my bits and pieces.

It's got all my, all the things I need. And it's, uh, it's fun. That's it.

So it's, it's all a game, which is weird. It's all a game. It's all a game.

We know that, but it's a game against ourselves, which is just the strangest thing.

[Aakash] (1:04:20 - 1:04:26)

Have you ever thought about, you know, those 12 big projects you've got, have you ever thought about just chopping them all away and just sticking to one and go and making that massive?

[Daniel Hill] (1:04:28 - 1:06:01)

Well, that is what, that is arguably what I should do. Um, yeah, that is arguably, and they're not 12. I suppose they're not necessarily 12 different projects.

So for example, the first one was probably entrepreneur schedule. Then there's a proper entrepreneur when they hit this, then there's a proper entrepreneur dates for 2021, 2022. So they're like, then there's the board and the incubator, a new model for the board and the incubator.

They're all ideas and things. In fact, pretty much everything there is about entrepreneur and, and deals, like just getting some development deals done. Oh, and get up and give back the charity.

So, uh, Oh yeah, I have thought about it. I don't think it's me. I do like, I do like the chaos.

I do like the franticness. I do like multiple plates spinning. The next step for me, I think, and this is what I'm talking to Lucy about and Lucy, my EA and Emma, my PA about a minute.

I do think I need more people closer to me, like physically closer to me. Like, I don't know if you've ever seen like Branson on his island has his three assistants. And when he's working, they're literally sitting there around him.

So he can just say, can you do this? Can you do that? Cause it's getting to the point now where even sending a voice note to somebody to ask them to do something is quite time consuming for me.

So it causes delays. So it's like, I was thinking, I just need more. I'm recruiting a lot of people.

And then I think we're, I think we're recruiting probably if you include like part times, recruiting 10 new people at the minute. And all of that is, is bandwidth to, to take it, take it forward. If you know what I mean.

[Aakash] (1:06:01 - 1:06:04)

Do you have a lot of people who are operating at a high level in the business?

[Daniel Hill] (1:06:05 - 1:06:05)

At a high level?

[Aakash] (1:06:05 - 1:06:10)

Yeah. Do you share the high thinking load or are you the only one doing it?

[Daniel Hill] (1:06:12 - 1:08:18)

Yeah. I'm the only one doing it, which is probably a, it comes up a lot as a bit of bottleneck. So the team, the team don't make a huge amount of, it depends which businesses there are, but none of the teams really make strategic decisions without my input.

And I think the good thing there, the bad thing there is that I create a bottleneck because they're not able to run with the companies. But if you ask any of them, you know, I've got very clear expectations of what I want things to be like. And I have tried delegating that responsibility and it doesn't work.

And also when I'm trying to make a decision, I'll ask, I'll, I'll seek everybody's counsel and ask everybody their opinions. And I'll normally go against that seven or eight times out of 10, I'll make my decision and it'll be different to what everybody else has said. And they'll say, well, why'd you even ask our opinion?

Like, and it's like, but that's part of the process. Because sometimes the answer, like Steve Jobs said, if you ask people if they want the phone with no buttons, they wouldn't, they wouldn't know. People don't know what they want.

I think that is one of the things I bring to the table is I've got very high expectations and I've got also explicit clarity as to what I want. Obviously you're heading up, get up and give back first, you're leading the training. But rather than either you do something that I wasn't happy with, or me give you half a brief that you may or may not be able to run with, I pretty much word for word wrote it out for you.

Because I was like, that's what I want it to look like. But that'll tick the box. Put your own spin on it.

But in order for it to be effective, that's what it needs to look like. So yeah, I don't really. But I have a lot of people who run the business.

So our senior team is probably, or our board, which is, well, our board is only two now. Yeah, board is two, then the senior management team's three, then the senior team is six. And then underneath that, you've got heads of departments, and then their teams.

So there's a lot of people running the business, but I am definitely the bottleneck at the top of the triangle. How does that compare in yours?

[Aakash] (1:08:20 - 1:10:06)

So my business is not as big as yours. But I'm trying to get better at giving a little bit more creative responsibility to others. And it's working really well in the last few months.

And maybe that's what's helped me because actually, what's interesting is around November, December time, we're trying to build this new platform at the moment. And part of it is like creating this curriculum. And on this curriculum, it's about 120 pieces of things to do, and it's a lot.

And I was thinking in my head, I was like, I'll just do this all myself. At the start of December, I was thinking, I was in Lanzarote, I was like, yeah, I'll just do this all myself. Then I was like, I've got to do a new website, got to do the book, got to do that.

And I was like, yeah, I'll probably manage a way to do it in three months. And then about a week in, I was like, this is not possible. So then I said, all right, I'm just going to be the editor.

And I'm going to oversee everything. I'm going to approve the outlines. And I'll be the editor at the end of it.

But you two are going to write this curriculum. And I'll just oversee the whole thing. And that just took so much burden off me.

Because we think on the same page, that really helps. But that took so much of the creative responsibility away from me. And all I had to do was sort of, so you know how people can only see one channel, but you can see the whole thing.

So I just had to make sure that they're all syncing with each other. And then I've just, I've delegated that way. And that's freed up so much space.

So I can just focus on a few other things that I want to manage. So that's how.

[Daniel Hill] (1:10:06 - 1:13:16)

Yeah. I think you're bang on. There's definitely been a few cases recently where I've successfully delegated something.

I thought, actually, do you know what, I can't believe I didn't do that so long ago. So there's definitely been cases of that. And one of the things I did write down today is just to really start delegating more and more.

But then equally, it's like 70% at least of the stuff that I do is the stuff I enjoy. It is the creative. Even like the get up and give back stuff.

It's so clear in my head how the vision for this will play out. I don't find it laborious checking the stuff off. I just, because I'm so clear on how I want it to be.

Did you use a trustee? No. It's a perfectionist thing.

No, it's not a perfectionist thing. It's a, one of the things about entrepreneurs is they're magicians. You're a magician.

Everybody who listens to this is a magician. And you bring this stuff to the party that nobody else has. The reason that we get frustrated with other people and why don't they think the way I think?

Why don't they work as quick as I do? How do they not know the answer to that problem? The reason for that is that they're not you.

And the reason that they're not you, the reason that you're working together is because if they were you, you are you and they are they, and they need you and you need them. That's why it works. If you and I sat down to try and do a day's work together, we'd probably have a great time on a whiteboard and heads in the clouds, but we'd never actually get anything out of the door because that's just not how we work.

And I think that is the things that I create. I do take pride in the things I create. And I do look at the things I create and think, well, in fact, Adam says it well.

He's like, some of the stuff that I create for a proper entrepreneur, like the assets, I create all of them and then record how it needs to sound, what it needs to say. And then he'll go through and learn it, learn the content, learn the style, learn the bits and pieces. And he says, you know, this would take him two weeks to create and it takes me maybe two days or not even two days.

Maybe it takes me four hours to actually create a whole syllabus of content. So it's stuff that I don't think can be. A lot of it, I genuinely do think it can't be delegated, which sounds crazy.

We can't be spending all day creating new things. I think I probably am. I think if you looked at my day, most of it is creative things.

I think the 20% of things that are not creative, I need to really challenge myself and see, can it be delegated? And if it can, who can I delegate to? And that's why I've just recruited somebody to replace Lucy.

Yeah, I've just, we've got a number of these new recruits to free up Emma's, Lucy's and Rihanna's capacity just to become my PAs and to help run the companies because I just am out of capacity. But then am I out of capacity? Every day I sit down and write new things to go on the list.

So I can't be out of capacity. I just love being busy.

[Aakash] (1:13:17 - 1:13:19)

You want to be able to do more things. That's what it is.

[Daniel Hill] (1:13:20 - 1:13:56)

Yeah, always. It's just like, what's new? What's fresh?

What's exciting? Right. Anyway, we can sit and chat for another hour.

Any closing sentiments or closing things to tie it up? I think- If you were to offer top tips or key learnings about productivity for people who are listening, are there pitholes for them to avoid or things for them to bring on board? If they want to go in beast mode, where although we have taken a little bit of a softer tone than I thought we would, you and I are absolutely machines and we get stuff out the door and we get things done.

What would you say top tips or sentiments to close off would be?

[Aakash] (1:13:57 - 1:14:06)

I'd say be ruthless with your time. Plan ahead of the week. And more than anything, don't procrastinate in the search of perfection.

[Daniel Hill] (1:14:07 - 1:14:15)

You said that before we even went into this talk. And what is that? When you say that, because procrastination is not something I really struggle with.

[Aakash] (1:14:15 - 1:14:38)

It's when you're not procrastinating. It's when you're waiting for the clearing. It's when you're waiting for everything to line up perfectly.

You're waiting for the formatting to be perfect. You're waiting for the weather to be great. You're waiting to feel amazing.

You're just waiting for things to align before you hit send. Does that make sense?

[Daniel Hill] (1:14:38 - 1:14:40)

Yeah. Yeah. Like stop saying that.

[Aakash] (1:14:40 - 1:15:10)

It's like you're sharpening your pencils. You're erasing things which don't matter. You're saying, oh, I'll go for a shower before I start it.

It's all these things which really make no difference. You just need to get it done. And perfectionism can actually be a form of procrastination in many cases.

And it can actually lead to a lot of burnout if you're not careful. So instead of searching perfectionism, just do the work. And you'll be surprised how much you get done.

[Daniel Hill] (1:15:11 - 1:15:42)

Yeah, there's that whole 80-20 rule. Someone else can do the job 80% as well as you can. Very few people would actually be able to notice.

When I'm sitting there doing some of my work, and I am literally a perfectionist, when I'm creating these assets for a proper entrepreneur, I can spend 45 minutes finding the right photo to use as the backdrop for the logo, for the asset branding. And I do sometimes think, would anybody else? I genuinely think, would anybody else ever notice that?

And the answer is no. But I'll notice it.

[Aakash] (1:15:42 - 1:16:01)

But you get done. What I'm talking about is, I'm talking about waiting for the clearing. You're still getting it done.

You're just thinking around. You're actually thinking strategically around these. Because I know, when I see your imagery, it's very, it's very consistent.

It's very thoughtful. It's done. It's done before.

It's not just random stock images views.

[Daniel Hill] (1:16:01 - 1:16:14)

Very deliberate. Every single bit of it, the way the person's faces on the image, the way that it's positioned, the whole thing. It's not just an image that's half relevant.

Every single element aligns to what I'm trying to say.

[Aakash] (1:16:14 - 1:16:26)

It's the waiting for the clearing is like, okay, I'm going to go and do some cooking, or then I'll do some washing up, especially now when you're at home, you know, there's always something else to be done, but just do the work. And I think that's, it's the only way to do it really.

[Daniel Hill] (1:16:27 - 1:19:36)

Get out the door. That is interesting. Because that's so alien to me.

It's interesting to hear because I can definitely acknowledge that challenge with other people that I either know or I've worked with. And it's always good to remember the challenges other people face with that in mind. I think one of my top tips will relate to that, which is raise the stakes.

So, especially for entrepreneurs, you're the first one to let yourself down. You're probably the only one to let yourself down. Or in fact, sorry, you're the most likely to let yourself down.

You're the first person to let yourself down. But if you're quite happily, if you've got an expectation of yourself, you're quite happily not do it. Whereas if somebody else has maybe got an expectation of you, you're more likely to get out the door.

You're more likely to do it for somebody else than you would for yourself. I think one would be raise the stakes. Whether that means, say you're going to write a book and then pay for a publishing course, or say you're going to do a body transformation and pay for a photo shoot, or say you're going to raise £1,000 for charity and post it on social media, raise the stakes would be one, is I'm constantly under pressure for myself.

And the second I wake up, it's never good enough. It's never quick enough. It's never fast enough.

And they're all standards I created for myself, which work really, really well for productivity, but can also work really, really negatively for self-care and things like that. So that would be one, raise the stakes, get stuff done, pull the trigger. And another one would be, and we've alluded to it in this, what do you call them about energy units, mental energy units, MEUs?

Yeah, mental energy. Mental energy units, or BPT, best prime time, would be really to understand in your day, when are you good? I'm really, really good first thing in the morning.

Other people are night owls rather than early birds. Find out when that is and build your day around your energy levels, how they fit, how they start, and then throw stuff in there, whether it's a break or working by the ward, or it's some steps, or it's some fresh air, or it's going to the gym. Throw some stuff in there to break the pattern and reset the bar where it's needed.

And then finally, probably do stuff that matters. It's so easy to pick up a list of trivial things and sit there doing the trivial things, sit there sharpening your pencils, answering emails. Spend the time and the energy you've got in doing productive things that will fundamentally change your life and change your business.

Do more deals, recruit more people, raise finance, think strategy, just constantly focus on pushing the ball forward. Because all the other stuff that has to be done will get done. And if it doesn't, then it'll make its way to the top of your pile pretty quickly.

So yeah, we'll be focusing on the high value stuff, not the high value rather than the high volume. That would be the whole important versus urgent. Cool.

That was an interesting conversation. Slightly different tone to what I was expecting, but covered a lot of stuff. So thank you very much for your time.

What time are you clocking off today?

[Aakash] (1:19:37 - 1:19:38)

About an hour and a half.

[Daniel Hill] (1:19:39 - 1:19:48)

Good for you, man. Well, thank you for your time on the podcast. Enjoy your steps and look forward to firing off to get up and give back 100 million step challenge this afternoon.

[Aakash] (1:19:48 - 1:19:49)

Thank you. Appreciate it.

[Daniel Hill] (1:19:53 - 1:20:18)

Thank you for listening to the official Property Entrepreneur podcast. Trust, found value and insight in the topics discussed. And as always, very much welcome your comments, feedback, and any suggested guests or topics you would like us to consider.

Please give us a review and let us know what you think. Follow me on social media, Daniel Hill on Facebook, Property Entrepreneur on Instagram and YouTube. And if you'd like to hear more, please share, subscribe and forward seeing you on the next one.