



Transcript of “On Vitality and Origins with Pedram Shojai”

Bulletproof Radio podcast #107



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Dave: Hi everyone. It's Dave Asprey with Bulletproof Executive Radio. Today's cool fact of the day is fingernails grow three to four times faster than your toenails. The nails on your dominant hands grow faster than the ones on your less dominant hand. The longer your fingers are, the faster they grow. Apparently, in summer, your nails grow faster than they do in winter. There must be a way to biohack your fingernails, but I have yet to figure those out.

Today's guest on the show is Pedram Shojai. Pedram is going to talk about his new movie called [Vitality](#). Pedram is well known, so to speak, for a website called [Well.org](#), which he founded. Well.org covers health news, nutrition stories, fitness, medicine, green issues and even philanthropy. It covers symbiotic capitalism, which is the new model of capitalism, where we look at how do we make a business that supports life all around us. That's really the reason Pedram and I've gotten to be friends.

Also, I had to meet Pedram after I read his first book called [Rise and Shine: Awaken Your Energy Body with Taoist Alchemy and Qi Gong](#). Pedram has led the craziest life ever. He has been a monk. He has levitated, okay, maybe not. This guy knows what he's talking about. Pedram, welcome to the show man.

Pedram: Dave, good to be here.

Dave: All right. One of the things that made me want to talk with you is, you studied biology at UCLA and then you have all these profoundness mystical experiences, wrote a book about it, learned about eastern arts. You have a master's in oriental medicine now. You've done like, Kung fu, Tai Chi, Qi Gong, yoga, meditation. How did you go from being a biology dude to being like Mr. Meditation and Mr. Wellness and Mr. Capitalism? You got a lot going on.

Pedram: Great question. I started as a biology dude, because it makes sense, you want to help people, you're studying science, you're going and then what happened was I was actually blessed in a way by meeting some really miserable people when I was at UCLA, in the medical department. I just

looked down the barrel of my future, and said, "Man, I don't this guy's life. This sucks." They were just not really helping people. The particular individuals I was looking to model, they weren't really helping people; they were just kind of stuck. Well, this is how we've always done it.

This is what we do. I was like ... I grew up in the generation where we all want to be Jedis. I said, well, at the time I was taking some Tai Chi and just got more and more into the stuff and met a Taoist master of Kung Fu, and then suddenly became a Taoist monk and started studying under a series of Qi Gong masters. I started studying ... I studied with Dalai Lama. I studied with a lot of internal consciousness cats.

Dave: How does one suddenly become a Taoist monk? It seems like kind of an unusual sudden change.

Pedram: It was a mail order thing.

Dave: Taoistmonk.com. Yeah, I'm in it.

Pedram: It's more of a .org, yeah. Yeah, I met this Kung Fu master, and the more I started studying with him, the more he was like "Hey, man, you're really into this stuff, you really get it. You know how about this book, how about these other things." As I started kind of going down the road, he had taken a series of his black belts and was going do kind of intense ... he was an abbot from a taoist lineage. The old man came from China is kind of one of the most reputable guys. He has now passed, but one of those reputable guys that came over that isn't playing like China Disneyland spirituality. You know, just the BS that you get when you go to some of these temples in China, and they're all just faking it because they want your tourist dollars. A legitimate guy who didn't get executed type of thing came over here and talked ... opened his hand and taught my teacher and then I ended up studying with him as well. It took about a couple of years before I devoted to becoming a monk, and studied pretty intensely with that guy. I still study with him. It's the way of life, right? I'll never not be a student of tao because to me, it's the coolest thing ever.

- Dave: Okay. You've also studied medicine though. How do you keep the science and the mysticism separate?
- Pedram: That's a great question. I really don't in some ways, because I've always been a scientist. When I first was approached by an acupuncturist in my Kung Fu tradition, and he is like, "Hey, you know, I saw you hurt your arm, let me help you out with something." He hit some points and all of a sudden my fingers are working again, everything is working fine. I scratched my head and say, "Oh, interesting." Right?
- Dave: No, no. You're supposed to say, "Acupuncture doesn't work, therefore my fingers don't feel better."
- Pedram: That's right. "Or I don't believe in that." Which is one of my favorite scientific statements.
- Dave: Yeah.
- Pedram: Right. They get into this dogma and they can't get out of it. For me, as a true scientist I was like, "Holy shit; that worked. Now what?" Right? I started observing with this guy. Within the course of a very short amount of time, I couldn't explain what it was that I had witnessed, but I couldn't deny the fact that I witnessed it. A good scientist doesn't throw out data that doesn't fit their belief system.
- Dave: That's the "why" question, that forms the hypothesis, right?
- Pedram: Yeah, that's it. So good science says, "Okay, well, this warrants an investigation." That investigation led me through the Himalayas and the Andes and everywhere else I've gone in my life, because holy crap, there is something here, and I got to know about it. I don't think I've ever let go of my scientific mind. I just didn't close it off to dogma.
- Dave: We share that in common. I spent time in the Andes and Himalayas as well and at Buddhist monasteries. And same thing, it's a quest for understanding is scientific, and acknowledging a phenomenon that you can't understand is the core of the advancement of science. The fact that

there isn't a double blind study about a phenomenon you observed, doesn't mean a phenomenon didn't happen, it just means that someone ought to do a double blind study, except, maybe will never pay for it. But we can still say with relative certainty that the skies are a certain color even if we never actually double blind study that, because enough people saw it.

Pedram: That's sacrilegious, Dave. I don't even know where you're coming from with that.

Dave: Fair point. I see a lot of this in nutrition right now. I'm sure you do too. There are sites that would use epidemiology study to "take down" paleo or vegan diets or in certain name of some other diet here. The people who do whatever that is; they got something out of it. Even the vegans like, there is no question in my mind that when I went to be a raw vegan, I did lose weight and I felt great.

There is also no question later; there was a downside to it. But to deny that stuff in favor of these large population studies like, always seem crazy. Here you are. You're a guy, Taoist, Shaolin, and doctor. Let's just cut right to it, like, what's your take on, what people ought to be eating?

Pedram: I'm a big fan of the wild stuff. If nature made it, it's probably pretty cool. If it's been processed, just go walk through the stores that serve the most processed food. Go through Walmart and look down the aisles, and you get a pretty good idea what that food is going to do to you. For me, mostly vegetarian diet with lots of natural healthy fats, and animals that you'd want to emulate, I mean, think about a chicken that's been farm raised. It's this big fat useless bird that stumbles around, that could barely walk, and you want to take on the life force of that animal, then you are what you eat, right?

You're going to eat animals, have, ingest animals that will help enhance your health and have things that have the cheer, the power of an antelope, elk. When it comes to wild game, I like things that are power animals that you can pull out of nature without really disturbing it. That's a tough subject all in and of itself, because how we feed ourselves can be an issue,

kind of globally. But man, you've got to eat wild things that have not been miserable. Chances are you'll be fine."

Dave: It's really interesting. A lot of people assume that the tons and tons of meat and tons and tons of fat is something I really talked to, and tons and tons of vegetables that I talked to, but meat is the most dangerous food, because it needs to come from healthy animals that were not mistreated. We can measure the hormones, like, there's a scientific side of this, the cortisol and the stress hormones that are in those things have an affect on you when you eat them.

Whereas, if you eat an animal that led a good life, that wasn't particularly miserable or sick and wasn't drugged and chemically treated and fed crap, there is a difference. In your opinion, as both a meditation master and a doctor, is the difference energetic or is it hormonal, or is it both?

Pedram: What's the difference? Yeah, both for sure.

Dave: It's both, all right.

Pedram: Yeah. I mean, I think the mark of the west in how we look at things is we always try to segment things, like, "Well, is this spiritual or is this material? Is this energetic or is this hormonal?" I think that one of the real kind of advancements we're making in the way thinking is happening now is realizing the there is an energetic signature, a quality of the energy curve to everything that happens. There is a reflection in the body.

If there is an energetic state that is brought about by this animal, it will also drive certain hormonal outcomes, kind of as above, so below as the ancients would say, because you see it reflect on all levels, and even in the psyche.

Dave: It takes a certain amount of courage to say that, doesn't it? Because I mean you know that right now like a certain class of skeptics were like, "Ah, this guy doesn't know what he is talking about," because we haven't quantified that energetic signature yet. Do you think it will be quantified or do you

think it's always going to be sort of subject to interpretation of the people who eat it, but know they felt good or didn't feel good?

Pedram: Well, I mean if you'd ask my grandfather, whether or not I could be sitting here staring at you, having a conversation in Victoria while in Southern California face-to-face, I think they'd have thought that was magical and mystical, right? I think that we're probably within 30 years of having a lot of understanding in being able to quantify those things. I'm not a qi apologist, and I also don't basically send everything off and say, "Well, that's mystical or that's God and so, you can't touch that with your technology."

I think we're close. I think there is lot of people out there that are already very well established on that trajectory. You just won't hear about them in the popular media, because it just doesn't fit the cabal, right? It doesn't go with kind of the "mainstream science" that leads a lot of people down, the drug route and keeps people in the hamster wheel there. I definitely have my opinions about how medicine works. I have been in it long enough.

Dave: One of my big hopes is that the quantified self and big data in the cloud is just going to make it relatively simple. We have enough data from enough people. We can crunch it and go, "Oh, it looks like there are some definite patterns here that no one ever noticed before." Then you'll see some old monk in a cave "Oh, I noticed that 300 years ago," or whatever. We're going to confirm and disprove a set of things that different teachers around the world or different traditions around the world have taught for a long time.

End of the day it's all about observing and looking for patterns and then verifying them and making them repeatable. You talked about mass media, but you're a filmmaker and I want to talk about your two films, *Origins* and [Vitality](#). Part of this is because I'm thinking about doing a film myself about a subject that's near and dear to me about the affect that mold has on the human body. I'm not certain I'm going to even do that but that's kind of a side blind for my questions. So, if you hear me ask you a few weird things like that, it's because I'm thinking about something. Did you always want to be a filmmaker, I've never thought of making a film until recently, but you're doing this and you're doing some really good stuff, why or when did you cut over to making films from medicine and monking at the same time?

Pedram: Monking for a while. That's a great question. The answer is I just stumbled into it because it became ... if you lead your life in a way where you follow the breadcrumbs that the universe lays out in front of you, some things just suddenly become self-evident and they're your next step. You didn't expect it to come. If you let your ego get in the way, you'd kind of fall out of the path of your destiny.

For me, I had a large successful medical group in Los Angeles, California. We're doing well. We're making lot of money and all that. I was only getting paid when people were sick. I was having a crisis of conscience thinking, "Man, you know, Blue Cross only pays me for diagnosable illness. I'm in this game here where I have to wait till something breaks, and then it costs triple to fix it." I mean, we're on the front end of this. Then, the more I started kind of getting into corporate consulting and lecturing and all things, I started doing on the wellness side, the more I realized that the problem with the healthcare system is a lifestyle problem that needs to be solved outside of the healthcare system.

I'll tell you, one night, my wife was on me for not hanging out, which means sit down and watch my TV show with me. So I pick up my laptop and I say, "All right, sure," and I sit next to her with my laptop, I'm kind of working away on my stuff because I'm a multi-tasker, and I counted nine pharma ads in a half hour chunk.

Dave: I don't know what the purple is, by the way, but I really want to take one, just so we're clear on that.

Pedram: Well, yeah, they've said it long enough, exactly. To me, I realize at that point that this is a battle for the minds of men. Right? It's a propaganda war. The good guys are losing the propaganda war because the messaging is overwhelming, like a tsunami of messaging, saying, "You're not all right. The world is out to get you. You don't feel right. You need this. Go, tell your doctor." Right?

It just got to the point where I said, "You know what? I need to get into media because we're losing the game on this front, and we really need to step out in front of this and get the messaging that people need to hear in

front of them to help, literally liberate them from the matrix. I mean, wake them up, so that they don't fall into the hamster wheel of this pill for an ill model.

Dave: Now, how is that different than what supplement companies do? You know, you're not alright, you could have a risk of this, you have a risk of that, how do you draw the lines between a drug company and someone making herbal vitamin supplements?

Pedram: That's a great question, and it's a provocative one, which makes it a great question. I think that there has been a lot of kind of nasty crossover by the supplement companies mimicking the pharma business models and falling right into ... Okay, a pill for an ill is now an herb for an ill. It doesn't necessarily address the actual real politic of what lifestyle can do for you. It's about how you eat everyday. It's about how you sleep, how you focus and keep your mind. Just old things that we know better about.

It's still this false promise, right? It's this get rich quick mentality for health, right? Its like, "Don't worry about it. You know what, go to the party, I got this great hangover herb. Right? Just kill yourself tonight and you'll be fine. We've got something for you." I think that's ... I think it's the step in the right direction and I think that certain market dynamics made it easy for supplement companies to fall into that that modeling. It's also a very big trap, because anything that's disempowering, anything that pulls your personal power out of the health equation, I think in the long run is a trap.

Dave: It's a tough thing too, because we have the whole ... the you can do better model, which is one that I try to follow as a supplement manufacturer, where you have where you are, you can do better, and I've written articles like for [Ask Men](#) and [Daily Beast](#) about "What does alcohol do to your body?" I don't drink because it makes me weak. The risk reward isn't there. If someone is going to drink and there's all kinds of people even in paleo, "Oh I drink red wine." Because red wine has gotten the health glow which I don't think it deserves.

Aside from that, okay, if it's going to happen and there's a supplement or lifestyle practice, either that's going to make it better. It seems like people

ought to know about it, so you can make intelligent decisions and I'm always asking myself, I don't want people to take my stuff or any other stuff that's not useful, that doesn't have an impact on them, because we all have so much energy, we have so many pills we could take everyday even if you're going to take hundreds of them, there is a limit. You want everything to count as much as possible and I want every thing that I do as a human being to count as much as possible.

Am I going to play mindful with my kids or am I going to be distracted? It doesn't matter. That's my direction. What about filmmaking? What helps you do the same thing, like to have the most bang for the buck there, you can cure people as a doctor, you can write prescriptions, you can go into big companies, talk to CEOs; why film, ahead of all those other priorities?

Pedram: Because it's a medium in which you can get in front of millions of people simultaneously and reproduce yourself and your message in a way. If I want to work my tail-off, I could see 30-40 patients a day in a clinical setting. The world slides faster than I can fix. Right? It was about putting a loud speaker on and then locking arms with all the luminaries we have on Well.org and all that ... just all the wonderful messaging that I found is ... My motto is you put your camera on the good guys, and the second piece of that is we vote with our dollars.

If you could support people and products and companies that are doing the right thing, in effect, you're voting for a better world, you're helping make ... this messaging get up there. For me, it was just a profound transition. It's been a challenge kind of shooting my way out of clinical practice because I really enjoy it. This world is keeping me so busy that someone's got to do it and there's plenty of great doctors that will kind of pick up the people that got shrapnel in them and all from eating the Cocoa Pebbles when they were kids.

Dave: It's true that if you can amplify your message that you can do more to help lots and lots of people than you can to help the people who are in line outside your office. It's one of the reasons that I work to grow the traffic on the [Bulletproof](#) site as well, because if I'm going to spend the time doing the research, I want more people to benefit from it. If it doesn't work,

they'll probably tell me right there in the comments. Let's zoom in on your two films because they are both different and both really cool. Let's talk about *Origins* first and then let's talk about *Vitality*. What's the deal with *Origins*?

Pedram: Okay. I'm going to flip it on you, because ...

Dave: You want to do *Vitality* first?

Pedram: Yeah. I want to do *Vitality* first; because *Origins* follows *Vitality*. *Vitality* started as an answer to this whole healthcare crisis, because you know what these guys are bickering about in Washington isn't a healthcare debate. It's a healthcare finance debate. Who pays the extraordinary bills doesn't say anything about health. It's all these middlemen trying to like game the system and figure out how to make money and stay in, in all of this.

What we did is we did a top-down view of what *Vitality* is, right, because most people see health as no symptoms. Right? Most people say, "Okay, I'm not hurting, I'm not ailing, I'm well." Right? Then, the healthcare system comes from everything below that to death, making trillions of dollars trying to fix things at triple the cost.

When we start talking about *Vitality*, when we start talking about what's on the other side of this bar, what can be done to enhance, I mean all the stuff you're doing with bulletproofing and upgrading and getting people to their peak potential, how can I enhance my body's energy output capacity? How can I enhance my body's functioning, so that I can stay off disease easier, I can stay focused, I can stay calm, I can have more muscle mass, I can live a life filled with passion and adventure and meaning, and not necessarily be cannon fodder for this nonsense that people are falling into.

It's an inspirational movie to help people kind of look at health a little differently through, like, the four pillars of lifestyle basically, diet, exercise, sleep and mindset. It's actually done really well. The country Namibia is sharing it with every child in the country for just teach them how to live and

be healthier. I mean, we have governors of a number of states that talks with us to get it to all their foster kids.

Dave: Wow.

Pedram: It's done, yeah, IFN doctor groups love it. It's done really well in that capacity. The natural kind of progression from that was, "Okay, where would I take this next?" So, we want to Africa. For [Origins](#), I mean I went to the first caves that our ancestors stumbled out of hundreds of thousands of years ago after the last ice age and said, "Okay, what did food look like here? What was stress like here? How did we adapt? How did we rest? What did we do?" And so here I am tracking lions and learning to co-exist and survive on the land and really living like our ancestors did to really bring back the story of our origins and how far we've departed from that with our two-hour commutes and time with our cell phones on our laps and just all of the barrage of chemical and electronic pollution that has been challenging our systems that have adapted to life outside those caves, not necessarily Manhattan. Right? It's been a very powerful process. I've gotten to interview the biggest names in health and wellness. I have also got to travel the world in a pretty cool life, making a movie.

Dave: That's incredible because one of the arguments that I've made consistently around supplements is that it's totally okay to get all of your nutrition from food if you get all of your toxins and lifestyle stresses from Mother Nature, which no one does. Right? I'm just trying to keep my meat as fresh as I can. In order to do that, when I do something unnatural to the meat, I'm trying to do something else to counterbalance it. I know that it's probably better to just be all natural. It's not reasonable if you live in Manhattan. Are you talking about countermeasures like things you can do to hack or you're mostly trying to going back to what is nature and how far away from it are you?

Pedram: Well, yeah. Once the car starts sliding, you got your hand on the wheel and you're doing a lot of course corrections, because there is not much I can do right now about trying to cross the road and having some diesel truck drive by and gas me with a bunch of lead. Oops, I have been exposed, right? The basics are obvious. Right? Eat natural, fresh wild organic food. Don't be an

idiot. Don't take chemicals and things that you don't ... A lot of that has to do with ... Fine Italian colognes, it has to do with cleaning products, it has to do with deodorants.

All of these like nothing should be left off the table because your skin absorbs, your nose absorbs. It's like anything that you're ingesting in anyway is suspect. The first thing is always, line up the usual suspects and that's 90 percent of it is you stop the bleeding. Then there is a lot of things you got to do to detoxify and to chelate. The body has not adapted to a lot of these chemicals. Although it's very good at detoxifying itself with processes it's aware of, there is a lot of things that the body doesn't know what to do is because it didn't exist in nature. Right?

Now, we're in this ... I think this frontier land of having to make countermeasures against the measures we had that are not necessarily natural. It's just the world we live in and the mess we have gotten into. We're trying to now find a way to use technology to save ourselves and save the planet. Really that's been a big piece of what I do is like, look, there is a million things that are going on right now with innovations in technology that could help make the world a better, cleaner, safer place. Those are the things that I invest in and those are things that we put our cameras on, because you can sit there and grumble about the world falling apart and complain about Washington not being able to fix it. Or you just get up off your ass and start doing it. You start working with people who are doing it, and you become part of the good guy team.

Dave: All right. Let's zoom in on that better, because be part of the good guy team. What should people do? You're sitting at home; you've got a job, maybe a family. You want to help or just want to pay the bills like, I get e-mails like this all the time from people who are like, "Dave, I want to change the world but I have a crappy job" and the gap is so big. It's easy for you and I to talk like that because we both kind of made that transition at least partially. I'm still working it out, I know, in order to make it a full-time job. What's your advice for people who want to make a transition like you did, like, I know there is lots of doctors who want to do what you did.

Pedram: Sure. I'd say that ... and that's a great question because people who generally want to get out are stuck, right? They can't fight. We've all got our bills, we've got mouths to feed. You can't just leave and go, join the Peace Corp. It doesn't work that way. It should work that way because that's an old model. Right? My response to that always is your first goal, your first stop on that parade is always re-establishing your connection with your vitality, which means cleaning up the diet, getting your sleep, getting realized, getting all of these departments if you will, sort it out because you have ... you'll find the inefficiencies, you'll get more energy.

It's like cash flow, right? You get more cash in your pocket, you got more options. As you start to eek out vitality out of all these lifestyle parameters, you start feeling better. As you have this extra energy then, okay, then I'm going to devote two hours in the evenings to this special project. I'm a sales guy, so I'm going to triple my revenue this month and get myself out of this job. People always complain to me about not having enough time. My response always is "Look, it's not time, it's vitality."

If you had more energy, you'd be able to do more and be more clear in the time that you're given and just be that much more efficient of a person throughout your day. Most people are just exhausted because they got too much drag. They got too much inertia. That's always the first stop. Then along that path comes my favorite piece of it is the self-discovery. Most of us in the West spend the majority of our time building these edifices around who we think we ought to be, who we need to present as a storefront to our neighbors or friends. I mean you know you're in high school, people are already asking you, what do you want to do for the rest of your life.

Seventeen years old, then I was chasing girls. I didn't know what the hell I wanted to do for the rest of my life. I just wanted to play basketball and go see a movie or whatever. We have this culture of trying to establish who you are and making proclamations before you can even figure out who you are. By the time if you want to start figuring out who you're, you're already too busy pretending to be who you said you're going to be. Once you kind of step back and start to figure out what it is specifically that makes you tick

and talk and really where your personal passions lie. Then you take that extra vitality. You plug it into your new found clarity, and together you start moving.

You don't start moving mountains at first. It starts taking a step at a time. I know a lot of people that have really transformed and jumped out of corporate America and gotten out of whatever mess they were in by doing it this way. We got to eke out some life force first, so that you have the energy to carry yourself into your dream, because it's not a speculation. There's a lot of people talking about wanting to save the world. Life isn't a spectator's sports. You got to be a participant in it in every way. If you're trying to do everything right with that 10 percent, you're not doing, that might be the unlock to where you're still stuck and where you're not getting enough energy reserves out to be able to kind of push yourself to the next level.

Dave: Increase your energy first, and then use the energy to get yourself unstuck. This is basically what you're saying?

Pedram: Yeah. Then the third step to that, which is I think one of the most primal first level spiritual lessons is allow the universe to work through you, right, whether you're a religious person or a mystical person or whatever. Devote your life to something way bigger than yourself and just be of service to whatever it is that you devoted that cause, whatever it is. Then watch how the breadcrumbs show up. Watch how miraculous life will be once you're doing something that's not your own dumb ego play, right, where it's about helping people doing a bigger play.

Dave: My experience has been that when I'm authentically working to help other people that serendipity sure does happen in a non-serendipitous way, like, good stuff happens that makes important things happen. I don't know why, I don't have to exactly know why. I just noticed it. There is a question and I'm like, "Was that really random?" I'm not going to say if the good things happen are not random, so I just don't know. I can tell you that I'm happier and I get more stuff done when I'm looking out ... I'm really working out with other people.

I find that when I talk with people, who are on a spiritual path and have had some progress and some achievement, people like you, it's almost universal. They'll tell you like, "Really kind of crazy, good stuffs happens to me and I don't know why?" When I'm doing the right thing, obstacles get out of my way. Is it repeatable for everyone? I have no idea. It just seems to work for me and my life is different since I started looking in it that way. You had the same experience.

Pedram: Yeah, absolutely. The scientist in me has had enough proof to say, "Hey, this keeps happening." If you look at the champions of our economy, you look at like Reed Napoleon Hill and all these guys. He was following around the Carnegies and following around always like these ballers, right and watching what they did. They all thought this way. They all kind of committed to visualizing and seeing and being part of bigger projects. Some of them might have gone awry or any of this kind of stuff as often happens with people who don't remember to keep chiseling away at the ego. Right?

For the most part, if you can be of service and have the power behind you and the clarity behind you to keep kind of walking that path, it's like you're like a hot knife through butter, man. Like, the universe kind of just melts around you and you just keep cruising and everyone goes "Wow, that guy is really blessed," but what he is really doing is ... a part of the formula, right? I have seen it time and time again.

Dave: It sure seems to work, sure seems to work like that. This gets us into the kind of the mushy part of the [Bulletproof Executive Radio Show](#). I don't know what the heck is going on with all this stuff to be honest. There is a reason you should meditate and has to do with internal calmness. Maybe it has to do with people are calm or on a mission or something that they just get more done. There is lot of things that we may never figure out about all that. There is something to it and I think Pedram you referenced it directly.

You're not exactly a slouch from a western perspective. You studied medicine and you studied monkery, which is a word that I have to put in the dictionary, if it's not already there, because this is awesome. Monking, monkery, what it is, it's cool. It just comes out of that, even when you talk with guys like [Mark Divine](#) who was on the show earlier from SEALFIT.

Wow, you'll hear a similar stuff coming from Mark Divine, Navy Seal Commander guy, and why is this in common across all these people? Do you touch any of that in *Origins* or *Vitality* or is it more like we're go off on a personal tangent?

Pedram: *Origins* starts to go there. *Vitality* I kind of kept ... I pulled my punches a little bit because again we're going to really kind of mass audience trying wake up the zombified masses and help people who are awake use this as a tool or a frame of reference in how to have this discussion with the 10, 20 people in their lives that just need to listen. A lot of doctors use it as a tool to wake up their patients a little bit, but in *Origins* we start going there. I'm not an apologist. I will tell like it is. I don't care if people don't agree with me, I don't need them to, right? I'm just another guy talking, right?

Dave: I've hung out with you at dinner enough times that, yeah, you'll always just say it like it is. All right, so speaking of hanging out at dinner, we talked a little bit earlier about kind of nutrition and all, you're mostly vegetarian. Any tips, I mean, you have done a movie on eating for energy as well as the other practices for energy. What are some nutritional tips that you would have for people?

Pedram: Look, I think that a lot of what you say and do really works well. In the mornings, I like high fat. I will do a [Bulletproof Coffee](#).

Dave: I know I have given you beans, but I don't know if you have actually used them.

Pedram: Yeah, I'll do a [Bulletproof Coffee](#). I will put in a couple of scoops with my protein shake in there. I got enough protein and fat in the morning. I'm good and I'm going all day. If you're going to have carbs, have them after a workout. I like to have protein right before dinner for people who are not like, some chicken and some olive oil or whatever it is just before sleep, so that it could help kind of keep your, if you're having blood sugar issues at night.

Really, for me it's about things that you'd find in the natural environment, eighty percent of the fruits and vegetables. I'm being very generous about

this. It's probably much more than 80 percent. Eighty percent of the fruits and vegetables you can find out there did not exist during Paleolithic times. Right? This all, it's all been adapted. It has all been modified to enhance the sugar volume over tens of thousands of years, because we like sugar. It's awesome. Right? It's hard with some of these paleo arguments to make an apples-to-apples comparison, because apples used to look like these little like... crab apples, right?

It didn't even look like it, but you have to work and get through a bunch of fiber and like a tough skin to get some water and some sugar. It was a treat. The nature of all the food that we're eating even has changed to such a dramatic degree that the closer you could get to your own garden, great, wild harvesting food is really hard to do, especially when talking about vegetables and stuff. If everyone started doing that, we'd have some trouble.

Dave: Yeah, we have no more wild.

Pedram: Yeah, there will be no more wild. I mean, we're already threatening. If we didn't have national parks, I think it would already have been over. There is definitely some kind of societal considerations with that. I mean the closer to nature, the better. That has always been my thing, as a Taoist all we do is hang with nature. The more you can eat natural stuff, the closer you're going to be to nature, and the closer you're to nature, the further you have gone from your origins, and you're in the flow.

Dave: Do you have your own garden?

Pedram: Yeah. Actually we just bought this house; there is a good bunch of guys doing landscaping right up there, working on the house today. And there's a whole area cordoned off over there for our new garden here.

Dave: Beautiful. You do kind of practice what you preach?

Pedram: Oh, yeah, absolutely. You can't. When people aren't ... if you have a 400 pound cardiologist telling you, you need to exercise, run. Right? Because they are not in sync with what's up.

- Dave: Yeah. I know people who said, never trust a fat nutritionist. Do you ascribe to that philosophy?
- Pedram: Yeah. Look, and the problem is never go to a crazy psychologist either. Good luck with that. It's hard. I think a lot of people go into psychology because they are trying to sort themselves out and then they get in there and they are extrapolating things based on their own limited worldview and their own pain points. We live in this culture where we're constantly trying to give people our power and say "Tell me what to do." Part of my central message in a lot of the stuff that I do ... I know you do is trying to empower people to wake up to their own potential, right? Wake up to their own inner truth and learn from the wise, but then really look at how that applies in their own life and really step into their own ability to make better rational decisions and make better food decisions and all of it, because at the end of the day, you don't want people walk around like zombies. We're in the business of waking up the zombies.
- Dave: Yeah. I have a really personal mission, I have kids. They are young. I want there to be less zombies because I want to live in the world with them. There is lot of people who are listening to this now, probably 50,000 or so people the first week. I don't think many of them are zombies. Every time one of them does what you just recommended about having more energy or making a decision to do things that are good for those around them, like, other people will start to pay attention. Same thing, they watch one of your films, they watch *Origins*, they watch *Vitality*. It's great.
- I can do this and I can share it. It becomes relatively simple just to lead by example, like, "Okay, I'm not eating the junk food in the restaurant and I'm just going to have the salad because there was nothing else on the menu I wanted." People will notice, especially if you lost 100 pounds along the process. Maybe they'll lose 100 pounds, and it's just kind of the way to be from a rational perspective, at least from where I sit. I think you'd share that?
- Pedram: Absolutely. The thing is there's this tendency for people who are in the know to be like "Oh, I already knew that." A lot of that, a lot of our messaging towards people who are smart, nerdy or awake isn't to say,

"Hey, dummy, I'm trying to talk lower than you." What we do is we create messaging that they can use for the people that are asleep in their lives. Right? I love high level conversation, but there is like four people to talk to, you know what I mean, like, there is such a ... the people that are already having this dialog aren't the people that will have problem. These are the upper echelon ones that are trying to like step to that next level, whether it's employees, family members, friends whatever in their own universes that are still struggling. What we're trying to do is give the world's leaders more tools to help wake up the unenlightened masses all around them, so that all together everyone can lift, right?

Dave: Yeah, I like that. Filmmaking is an important part of it. I got back from [SXSW](#) earlier this week and there were so many people making films. I realized it seems at least not having done it, at least as hard as writing a book. You've written a book and you've made some films, which one is harder?

Pedram: It's hard to say because my first book, I sat on my ass a lot, and so I got up with back pain. I realized never again in my next book I'm going to write dictating while hiking. I'd say making movies is considerably harder, because the way we make them is I go capture genius. Then have it fit into an argument, and sometimes the movie makes itself, and sometimes you can say just the right thing, but it's not delivered in the right way. I'm not dealing with actors. I'm dealing with thought leaders. I'm dealing with people who are really moving the needle. It's hard to not get, one of the hardest things about making *Vitality*, and we're editing *Origins* right now. It's a challenge. Always it is.

Dave: The *Origins*, I'm really excited about that partly because I might be in it.

Pedram: That's right. I'm stoked because there is actually some things that you've got a really unique contribution to the world and I'm very excited for you to kind of have a spotlight in that movie saying those things. The whole point is you have all of these like some of the smartest pieces of *Vitality* that I could geek out over like, I just feel like, wow that was really genius that really kind of stokes my doctor brain. It's not appropriate for a mass level movie. We have to create an offline like mastery DVD of *Vitality*. To be like, here are some nuggets of the super smart stuff, but here is the stuff that's

going to craft an argument for the masses to kind of wake up. There is lot of layers of thought that go into making a movie, because it also has to be entertaining, it has to be funny, it has to be punchy, it has to be visually stunning. Yeah, it's a symphony. There's a lot of pieces that go into it. I welcome the challenge. I'm a martial artist. Do you know what I mean? I don't anticipate a jab or a cross, I'm just ready. Whatever comes, comes, right?

Dave: That's awesome. Speaking of whatever coming, coming; we're just about up to the end of the show, and that means my favorite question of the show is coming as well. Put on your Shaolin hat, Pedram. Top three recommendations for people who want to kick more ass, so people who want to perform better at all walks of life. This isn't just from your doctoring or your monking or anything else you've done. Your entire life's experiences, three pieces of advice for people listening at various levels of expertise about what they can do to perform better?

Pedram: Yep. First and foremost, I'd say right upon waking, get up, take at least 20 deep breaths to your lower abdomen and then visualize your day and how you want it to go, and really drop into your lower abdomen and see your day the way you want it to go. Be a master of your circumstances, and don't be the drift wood tumbling around the beach of life, first and foremost. Second, raw substrate, get up, get fueled and get going, and really stay charged for what it is that you have visualized throughout the day, so you can manifest things. There is a lot of stuff that will come in and distract you. And then to book end it on the other side, there is a million things I could say. The book end on the other side is really start turning things down after 6 or 7 pm., so turning down the lights or getting away from the blue lights, the cameras and the TVs and all the stuffs. Some nights we'll go by candle light. Start toning down as the cavemen would and have some darkness and silence in your life. Find to get better sleep and you have more qi and mojo getting into your next day. You can really thrive into the next cycle as you bring this one to an end on a daily basis.

- Dave: Beautiful. That seems like you have got the circadian hacking down pretty well. Start it out and close it down. That's a very orchestrated answer, Pedram. Did you prepare it ahead of time?
- Pedram: I had no idea.
- Dave: Awesome.
- Pedram: Like I said, always anticipating a jab, I'm just saying ...
- Dave: No, no. That was really cool. I don't know anyone in the 110 or so podcast so far who made all three of them stack up like that. Very elegant, my Shaolin friend. I can't wait for the next time we get to hang out. Thanks a ton for being on the show. For people who are listening, there will be links to vitality.org, well.org. Is it vitality.org; is that right?
- Pedram: No, well.org is where most of our stuffs hangs out. Now, we have our BeMore magazine, which you could find in the new stand, which is awesome, and you're part of that. Dr. Sarah Gottfried and I are also doing the Health Bridge, which is the podcast and we get to hangout. We'd love to have you on it. Just out there doing our thing and having some fun doing it. Well.org is probably the easiest hub to find me, and that's where I hangout.
- Pedram: Lovely. Awesome. Well, talk to you soon. Thanks.
- Dave: Thank you.



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