



Transcript of “David Gottfried on Explosion Green and Finding Your Impact”

Bulletproof Radio podcast #135



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Dave: Today's cool fact of the day is that about 20 minutes ago, a bald eagle flew literally 15 feet over the balcony where I'm recording this podcast, which is awesome. I've switched the location in case you haven't noticed if you're watching on video. For the next couple months, I will be recording Bulletproof Executive Radio in this amazing location on Vancouver Island. After that, we'll be moving into our permanent offices, which will be a full-on biohacking facility. So not a cool science fact of the day, but still, I saw a bald eagle and it was this big.

Today's guest on the show is none other than David Gottfried, who is the founder of the global green building movement. He's a founder of the US Green Building Council and the World Green Building Council. You might wonder why would a show like Bulletproof Radio, where we've got high performance and executives and things like that, why would I have David on the show?

The reason is that biohacking is the art of changing the environment around you so that the environment around you affects your performance. You also change the environment inside you, from a gut [inaudible 01:15] perspective from a hormone and a metabolic perspective or even from a software program in the head. Bottom line is what's going on out here has a direct impact on what happens here and what happens here. If you're on the radio, the here and here I'm putting to my head and my heart and my gut, basically my body.

If you don't pay attention to your surroundings, you're actually not paying attention to how you pay attention. This is why I talk so much about the temperature of your room when you sleep, about what toxins do to your focus and things like that. Here it is, I found out that David and I actually had met in person. We knew each other and I had no idea what an amazing guy he was. This is because David, in addition to being this amazing guy who I just described, is also somehow related to Dr. Sara Gottfried, who is a regular attendee on the Bulletproof show, a regular interviewee. How cool is that?

David, welcome to the show.

- David: Hey, thanks, Dave. It's so great to be here. I knew about you before you even met me because Bulletproof penetrated not only my wife's professional life, but into our kitchen with your coffee. You helped me finish my book, which is out through your streaming pure coffee that would create this ... I don't know. This clarity that I didn't have with anything else.
- Dave: I had no idea that you were actually using the coffee when you were finishing your book. Oh my goodness. That's so cool. I certainly ... We were just talking before the show. I finished the second draft of my manuscript back from the publisher at about 5am this morning. I stayed up all night doing the final, final edits so we share that in common, having fueled some books with this coffee. That's cool and I'm grateful for you mentioning that.
- David: No, it's great. Needless to say, you're little charcoal pills got me through some wine tastings.
- Dave: Oh, no kidding? If I'm going to have wine, I always do charcoal. That's just a requirement.
- David: We've been enjoyed it. Now we're doing the butter and the coffee and collagens.
- Dave: It's working for you. I love hearing that.
- Alright, your new book. I had a chance to go through it. Everyone who hasn't heard of the book will probably be interested in it so give us the title, gives us the [inaudible 03:35] and all that stuff. Let's just jump in and talk about why you wrote a book about global green buildings and all of that.
- David: Sure. It's called Explosion Green. You can find it at [explosiongreen dot com](http://explosiongreen.com). You can learn more about it and also it's at Amazon and the bookstores. Just came out early June. At [explosiongreen dot com](http://explosiongreen.com), we've got a free, live enthios conference. You can sign up for 40 interviews of green gurus.

Explosion Green is a memoir and it's our 20-year story of the green building movement, globally. It's told through this rather awkward self-deprecating character named David, who happens to me. It's the story going back 20 years of ... First career, I was a real estate developer in the go-go '80s, I call it, Washington DC. Before that at school, at Stanford, I studied solar engineering.

I fell in love with the sun. Both of us do. Sara tells me we get vitamin D. We generally lock the sun out of buildings. We do get it in terms of daylight, but we don't control the daylight. That sun can power and fuel cleanly the world. This memoir starts from the early days as an engineering student into real estate development, the go-go '80s, very much non-green and then goes through this 20-year story of founding the ASTM Green Building's standards committee for the US, which trips into the USGBC in '92.

That grows into the leed green building standard, those round plaques you see on buildings. We have 300,000 buildings now in 140 countries and we grew with green building councils in 100 countries. We think we're probably the largest green effort in the world and we may have become or been the largest, fastest-growing non-profit in the world. It's the story.

Dave: It's a fascinating story because it shows how, over the course of only 20 years, which is a long time as a percentage of the human lifespan, but not actually that much time in the overall scheme of societal change, you've had a pretty big impact. Many people now have heard of leed-certified buildings and you actually had the highest rating leed-platinum home in the world and helped to design the standard.

You're starting back in the pot-smoking, I guess it was the '80s, but maybe it was more cocaine-snorting with maybe a little bit of pot, go-go '80s. Literally no one in the '80s give a rat's ass about the environment for the most part. You were at the fringe back then. In the short period of time since then, even early '90s, you have managed to create a global movement and the story of how you did that is fascinating. It included a lot of support from just a ton of people. How did you go about recruiting

support from people for your cause, given that the cause was not as popular at the beginning when you started this versus as it is now.

David: We were pioneering movement and whenever you track that, you start with the visionaries, the real passionate folks. I find them really easy to identify. You tell them your idea, your one-minute elevator pitch and their eyes either sparkle or they start looking away or they change the subject. If their eyes sparkle, we collected them and we did that around the world, including right where you are in Canada, in Vancouver. We had Ray Cole at UBC. You might have heard of the dockside green project.

Dave: Yep.

David: My buddy did that one, leed platinum. I could go through dozens of countries where we met people in the building industry. We said we're going to create a guideline for what is a green building. We're going to create a non-profit open transparent coalition of folks from architects and manufacturers to utilities, cleaning companies, tenants, artists, students, technologists and together, they'll define what is green building. Then they'll bring it in their language, their vocabulary to their world.

If you're a banker, you talk about the return on investment, the internal rate of return of green, the present value. If you're a lawyer, you talk about reduce risk. If you're a product manufacturer, you can talk about how huge this global marketplace is or was going to be. You create new products so you can create billions of dollars of new revenue. All that was wrapped up in ... We went from the pioneers to the visionaries to the early mainstreams. We've been making our way through that progression for 20 years.

Dave: You tuned your story for each of the audiences. You're able to dance on your feet, read what the person says and then say here's what's in it for you.

David: That's essential so in this show and a lot of your avatar, Sara's avatar. I'm not talking about environmental impact. I'm doing the personal bio

and what is the impact of the building materials on your endocrine system, on your hormones, your circadian rhythm. We have a [inaudible 09:25] for building products so I'm trying to pull it right into the health and productivity of the human body and even the spirit because daylighting, access to nature impacts every minute.

Dave: That was why I was originally attracted to having you on the show, was that my experience is that the environment around me is so impactful on how I perform on all those levels, including even the spiritual level. There's some amount of being in a flow state or in an uplifted state or just feeling like you're giving back and if you're in a ... I hate to say this. When I think of leap buildings, too often I still think of those curlicue fluorescent CFL bulbs that everything's dim inside, but at least it has a cool, swoopy entrance.

That's not what leap is supposed to be, but that's what it was in the very early days, where it was just bad lighting, as far as I could tell. It's progressed. There's LEDs in it. It's just much better, but you can also just go to an office, where it's like prison lighting, which is even worse.

My experience is that air quality in the lighting dramatically changes employee absenteeism and how good people feel, how nice they are to each other. I remember this time at, this is a company that invented cloud computing, it was called Exodus Communications. Google's first servers in our buildings and I was one of the senior people there. We built this four-story building, which for a long time, became Yahoo's headquarters, right at the corner of Mission College and 101 in Santa Clara, downtown Silicon Valley.

When we built this building, it had formaldehyde in everything. I talked to the facility's manager and he said oh yeah, we got to increase our building efficiency so he turned on the air recyclers, which meant instead of paying for air conditioning of fresh, clean outside air with a faint scent of San Jose Airport, what he would do is he would just keep the air inside the building, just boiling around over and over. Funny enough, everyone for those first six months, had more allergies, quote allergies, than they'd ever had before. People were sick all the time. People were not feeling so good.

I was dealing with my own toxin things at the time so it affected me maybe more than others, but I could tell this isn't an allergy thing. The air has irritants, mostly formaldehyde from all these new particles things. We put up particle board. That's just a visceral example for me where I could see how literally, probably 800 people were lowered in their performance, both cognitively and just employee absenteeism by building decisions.

When you go shopping for furniture every day, you make those same decisions. When you paint your house, you make those same decisions. How do you translate that message for people who just don't get it? You go to a big company, you say look, you're going to jack up everyone if you do this wrong. Is that how you do it or is there a more subtle message?

David: You're hitting it and that's what we call indoor environmental quality and our subset is air quality. In leed, there are points for that and we reward no VOCs, the volatile organic compounds. We're encouraging building managers to get fresh air or air samples to measure, whether it is indeed fresh and to have higher air filtration of outside air. What they did in the '80s was they tightened up the buildings for energy efficiency. They didn't want to run the outside air because they'd have to condition it.

We brought in all these toxic materials. Formaldehyde, but also the paints have bio size and fungi size. They put in preservatives so that the shelf life of the paint, it looks great three years from now. Really, you need it now, you don't need it three years from now. Maybe you're doing touch-up, but all those preservatives are what when they first applied the first coat make you sick.

We need to get those things out and in leed, we're measuring them, we're setting standards for VOCs, both in terms of the individual element and then we call it TVOC, the total VOCs. We're finding paints that are listing that and you find them in the stores, whether it's Home Depot. It'll say no toxicity or no VOCs.

We created a red list. There's another standard that was created near you called the living building challenge. It came out of our Cascadia chapter, which includes Vancouver.

Dave: I presented at the Cascadia conference about high performance building environments last year so cool.

David: So you're all over that and under Jason McLennan's leadership, they have a red list in the living building challenge. It's got about 13 items that you can't certify. You meet the living building challenge if you have products or materials in the house or the building that has those ingredients. If your architect or specifier can't find a given product without those ingredients, they send a note, they're required to send a letter to that firm in saying I don't want your product, but I can't find a similar product without this ingredient. Be forewarned, the second someone makes that, we won't be buying your product.

Dave: That is powerful and if people would do me the favor of that with Bulletproof products, I would love to hear that. It's the same thing. If you're on a mission to make really clean, pure stuff like that, you need to know what's bothering people even if don't know about it. Honestly, most manufacturers, I think are clueless. They think about this like chemists and they don't understand the interaction of their product with the endocrine system because honestly, the endocrine system isn't something they think about.

For you to do that service and say you've got this big [inaudible 15:25] hanging over your head and you don't even know it, that it's there and the cord's going to break, the store's going to fall on you and it's going to break when someone comes out with a cleaner product. That's motivation for people who are running companies or building products.

I've got to say I'm pretty into this stuff. I presented at that conference, I've read more than a few books and studied a few things here and there, I'm a biohacker. I, finally, after years up here in Canada, bought a house recently and it had a toxic mold problem, like half the houses up here. Every shower had leaked so I pulled out all the mold stuff, did

some custom things around that, but it needed a remodel in order to make it a place where I was going to put my family.

I had a very hard time. I'm working with a green contractor, but a hard time knowing what products are safe to use. I have to imagine, I had a hard time with this and I shouldn't have a hard time, if anyone on earth should be able to just go somewhere and find the list. I found it daunting. I work with experts and I did a good job, but there are still times when I'm like are you serious, is that actually particle board. Where did that particle board come from because I don't want formaldehyde in my house.

One of the problems I have that most people don't, my wife, Dr. Lana, went to medical school and she spent a lot of time with cadavers and when you breathe formaldehyde from cadavers a long time, you can get sensitized to it so she's sensitized to formaldehyde so when she gets around press board furniture, she just doesn't feel good at all. She gets really bad migraine headaches. We're overly sensitive to formaldehyde, you can say. F

or the average person saying I just want to paint my baby's bedroom and I'm going to do a quick remodel, how do I know? There's thousands of things. David, you're the guy who created the leed standard. You're the father of the green building movement. Where's my list, man?

David: You're hitting a very tough area. Even for us, when we did our home renovation, the list didn't exist, but it's happening. Labeling systems are coming, the manufacturers are starting to disclose through the red list and something else called HPDs, health product declarations, where we're asking for the nutrition label so we can see if there's formaldehyde and other stuff.

The living building challenge has put out a list of products that go alongside the red list. They're not doing it officially, but as a project goes through it like the Bullitt Center in Seattle, is trying to do living building challenge and they have to research a lot of this.

There's something called, there's a healthy building collaborative, but you've got to go back to the product and see their disclosure. Some of them are saying no VOCs so you can buy a paint. Maybe I'll get in trouble, but Mythic Paint is what we used. It's a firm I work with. It was invented for the multiple chemical sensitive and that works. In carpeting, you don't want to use adhesives if you can avoid it. There's a firm, Interface Carpet, that makes these 18-inch square carpet tiles that go down with no adhesive.

A lot of these guys are putting their products in air chamber tests and measuring their off-gassing curve over time. We're starting to request that information and get it published, way beyond the traditional manufacture safety list that they did in the past.

It's always better to buy a solid wood non-finished piece of furniture instead of these things that are made from who knows what is inside and held together with binders. Painting should be done off-site if you could do it so there's a lot of methodologies and some books coming out to guide you through that process. Some of the best materials from the chemical sensitive folks who were also architects and you navigate.

Dave: Your book, Explosion Green, definitely doesn't go into that side of things. It goes into the story of how to build a movement from something that went from zero to hero over the course of 20 years with a lot of amazing work from you. Along the way, you mentioned you have paint for chemically sensitive, are you chemically sensitive?

David: I'm not, although I have bad allergies so you can put a HEPA filter on your HVAC system, which we did in one of our houses so the pollen isn't brought in. Sara's got some allergies as well so we try to take your shoes off at the front door. You don't want to track in all that stuff. In leed, you get a credit for a grate that let's all your stuff fall down. You can collect it later instead of walking it through the house. I think about ten percent of Americans are chemically sensitive and it's quite a lot. It really impacts their productivity and health.

One of the first lawsuits for indoor air quality was in the early '90s in DC. Guess what building it was. It was a federal agency.

Dave: I've read about this. Wasn't it like the EPA?

David: Bingo, the EPA employees sued the EPA when they put in the new carpet and it had this thing called, I think it was called 4PC. It was their backing on the carpet that made people sick and they refused to go to work. EPA settled it so that ... We wanted it to go to court so we could really put forward this issue publicly.

Dave: That is truly funny when you think about it. Their own employees know about indoor air quality and I believe they've also had some problems with indoor toxic mold, which is maybe the flip side. I'm working on a documentary right now about toxic mold and what it does indoor and the people breathe it and how it completely can just change your brain long before it gives you cancer or something.

Some of the energy efficient things that were precursors to leed have actually led to terrible problems with indoor moisture management and maybe creation of an inadvertent secondary fact. You make a well-sealed building that's so energy efficient that fungus starts to grow and then it gets recirculated and everyone gets sick, not from the formaldehyde or from the volatile organics, but from the actual bio aerosols that are formed when bacteria and mold grow inside the ductwork. How do you balance don't put man-made chemicals in there, but also prevent nature's chemicals and defense systems from coming online and messing with the people who live there? It's a delicate balance. What's the answer?

David: Proper ventilation is important, not just shutting it down. In fact, I like operable windows even in million square foot commercial gorgeous platinum buildings. We're all different. Our hormones are different, our body temperatures. Sara had me for awhile, measuring my basic temperature versus hers. My T this and that.

Dave: These female biohackers are relentless. I get it.

David: What was it called, T-3, she had me taking? She wants to sleep at 64 degrees, which she thinks that women in her state should do and no guy

wants to sleep in 64 degrees. Proper ventilation is really important and clean air, good air as well that's filtered.

If you have a spill and a flood where your bathtub from your second floor leaks down and goes through your ceiling tiles and your dry wall, you've got to rip that out.

Dave: Amen. You can save your life. Maybe you don't feel it, but someone in your family, they just feel hung over all the time and they gain 30 pounds and they don't have any idea why. This has happened to me, personally, and 28 percent people have the genes where it's going to permanently wreck them without a lot of interventions. The rest of us just feel like crap all the time, but we get better. You just got to do that. It doesn't matter if it's a lead building or if it's really nice. If it's sat there for even a little while, if the dry wall got wet, it's got to come out.

David: Yeah, if you walk in to even a hotel room and it smells, that mildew and mold smell, don't rent that room. If you have to sleep in it, call the front desk, ask them for an air purifier. Most hotels have them. Open those windows, run that purifier. Better yet, just don't sleep there.

Dave: I've swapped rooms twice at four star and five star hotels. There was one in London, super nice, brand new hotel. The first story was one of those half-basements and it smelled. It smelled like turtles. If your hotel room smells like turtles, you should go.

That's just the way it is because you think oh, I can take it, it's no big deal, but you wake up the next morning and you actually get brain inflammation. Your brain cells can leak a little bit of fluid and then you sort of feel stupid. You might also get a cold, you might get a lot of post-nasal drip, but you lose your edge and you're quicker to anger and you're emotionally volatile. These are subtle changes after a sympathetic arousal, but you can get that from formaldehyde and fresh paint fumes.

They clean something in your hotel room with a really strong solvent like Toluene or Xylene or something or you can get it from the presence of these other things, but whichever one of those it is, if it smells like a

chemical factory or one of those things, I would say, honestly, you're spending a \$200 minimum and maybe a lot more for a hotel room, they have to do what you want.

There's a trick. I almost did this at the Shangri-La Hotel in Toronto on this last trip where I was. I was a speaker at a conference there and I showed up and they had given away my room. My flight was three hours late. I got in at 1am and they said sorry, we gave your room up. We're going to have to put you in another hotel. I'm like I have to be up at 6am tomorrow, I just want my sleep and they said no, no. I said that's okay, I'll sleep on the bench over there, the one by the front desk and they start looking alarmed. Then you say oh, and I sleep naked

When you say that, you're almost guaranteed you're going to get a hotel room because like the presidential suite magically opens up. It's okay if they give you a room that's toxic for you to just say no. It's actually, I don't think it's a manly thing to do, to say, I'll just deal with it, I'll take the hit. No, you paid for it. Get what you want.

David: You really do and anything you buy, if it's off-gassing and you have a smell, you need to investigate. That new car smell is not good for you. It's all the adhesives and even your new car, if you have a garage, I would keep the windows open for about a month. Keep that stuff out of the nursery, the new press board crib. Buy an old recycled one with solid wood that's off-gassed for ten years already. That's what we did.

All the stuff adds up. It makes you sick. It does lessen your brain focus and your health and productivity.

Dave: I would love to get your take on this because no one's ever been able to tell me if what I did was smart or not smart. Awhile back, I bought a Prius. By the way, it was a horrible car. Even though it was fuel-efficient, I sold it because I think it was unsafe to drive at any speed, just because it was a terrible driving car. Anyway. It was also too small for me.

It smelled worse than any car I'd ever bought. It had this incredibly strong, nausea-inducing smell so I parked it in the sun, turned on the heat at like 90, high as it would go and left it running for six hours and

just baked the inside of it. Opened the windows and this wave of crap came out. It seemed like that bake-out period really did release a lot of the organic solvents out. It made a film of crap on the windows. I had to clean those off, too. Good move or bad move?

David: It's interesting. A very early standards had, I think it was one week bake-off, for the building in it. Just what you did. Then I think it disappeared in later years because you do the bake-off, but then you need a certain period of running the fresh air before you come back in and have greatly accelerated your toxicity of what you're inhaling.

I'm not a scientist in that area, but I believe you accelerated off-gassing greatly. Then you have to have a period of really running the fresh air, where you're not breathing in. We recommend, I think it's about a week.

Dave: I left the windows down for the next two days. It's just to let a little bit of wind happen, but it seemed to really help. I could smell a lot less so my assumption was that it made a difference and I could drive the car without feeling like God, what am I breathing all the time.

David: That explains a lot, thank you.

Dave: I thought maybe you'd have a good answer on the bake-out period because [inaudible 29:06] for that. There's another kind of baking when you roll your windows up, but we're not talking about that.

Speaking of that sort of thing, in addition to creating ... You're the father of the green building movement. You're also a serial entrepreneur and you've been remarkably successful in multiple endeavors. I want to pick your brain about what you do to stay at your peak performance. What are your tricks personally to be an entrepreneur in the [inaudible 29:36] enough energy to go to all these states and countries and convince people to do stuff that's hard?

David: I call it a green hacker, [inaudible 29:46] off your biohacker.

Dave: I like it.

David: I came up with that for the show. It's hard. Honestly, a lot of the years, it felt like Sisyphus. I'd push that ball up the hill and the second I would take a deep breath, the ball would start rolling back down. What I realized is my light inside, my spirit, was going out. How do you keep the flame going, the renewable flame? Over many years I've had to find different ways.

First, it's just meeting really bright, engaged, creative, passionate people. I find they can restore your spirit. When you're down, you can tell them you're down. They're always doing cool things and that's exciting. That helps a lot. I'm always meeting bright people and asking them what gives them hope. In fact, my entios 40 interviews, my last question, the brightest people I could get my hands on in the world. I say what gives you hope that we're going to make it as a species? Where do we go wrong? What are you working on that's disruptive and has quantum leaps and performance to convince you and me that we're going to make it?

That rekindled my spirit more than anything. I'm a backpacker, hiker, fly fisherman. I walk through rivers and I go up the stream for a whole day. A great day, I don't talk to anybody.

Dave: You're an introvert, then?

David: Very introverted. I write books, which was cathartic. I like deep, meaningful conversation. Exercise and getting the endorphins helps a ton. I'm trying to think what else restores the spirit. Certainly hugs for some of the Oxytocin as Sara taught me. And nature. I just feel like I'm from nature so walking in nature ... Recently I've been ... I had this goal of buying one new plant a day on the way home.

Dave: Oh, wow.

David: And planting it that night and getting my fingers dirty and connecting with the soil. I can't tell you how much I love watching them every day. How are they doing? Are they growing? I think it's just reconnecting me to nature from where I came.

- Dave: You get your resilience and your regeneration from interacting with bright people and from spending time in nature and even from, it sounds like, from some gardening. Those are the practices that you've built and some relationship things as well, IE frequent hugs.
- David: Well, and deep, meaningful dialogue and a lot of that I get with Sara. I'm the type that I can't do anything until I can answer all the why questions.
- Dave: So you do a lot of thinking. Got it. A lot of time in your head.
- David: Well, and looking for the answers. If everyone's in a line and say hey, man, get in line. They're giving out at the front of the line. I don't just get in the line. I want to go to the front and check it out first and make sure it's not fool's gold. If I'm going to invest, I have to believe in the transformational elements of it and the heart and the soul of the person I'm working with.
- Dave: You sound like a guy who knows yourself pretty well. We have a lot of listeners who are driving in rush hour traffic right now, listening to this. In fact, tons of people, this is what they do during their commute. You're at a point in life where you've had significant success. You've figured these things out, but how is someone who's, let's say 25, going to figure out what pushes their buttons, what their regenerative practice should be? How did you go about figuring out yours?
- David: It's interesting. I did grow up backpacking and that helped learn that I had my own voice. It was hard to hear it in the house I grew up in. There was a lot of loud voices, mostly from New York in my house. Later years, when I was an undergrad, I was in all the classes trying to do well, but again, they were just feeding us all the equations, but not why that equation is important so I started reading Siddhartha by Hermann Hesse.
- Every year on my birthday I'd read the whole book. I'd sit at the fountain in the middle of the campus and ... I just did this a couple months ago at my birthday in May. It's mostly learning to hear your own voice. It's learning to listen to your own soul and quieting all that noise

from outside telling you here's what's right for you or even stop your playful spirit and become an adult. The second they tell you to become an adult, they mean don't play anymore, don't dream.

I remember when I wanted to create the green building movement, my father who I just adore and love and owe so much to him, I quit being a real estate developer, pretty good career. He said well, this green building stuff is a good gimmick, but don't come home when you starve. Hundreds just laughed at us so I needed that conviction to hear no, this is solid, this is real. This connects with my definition of value, that value is life and life-enhancing, not just putting up McMansion buildings and putting out your hand to make millions.

The young people, you need to listen to yourself because I really think that answers are inside of you and I think our divine path is given to us. You have to find it and it's not something someone else is going to tell you.

Dave: That internal reflectiveness is something that I probably didn't benefit from when I was a young entrepreneur. As a young man, you tend to be so focused on performing and executing and making money and doing deals and all that stuff. I consider myself fortunate that I found some biohacking tools that made it much easier for me to get some of that, to be able to understand what keeps me going, what makes me motivated.

It's a practice in and of itself to figure out well, wait, why am I more motivated today than I was yesterday. Was it how I slept or was it the way I interacted with other people? Sometimes it's weird. There are a whole variety of practices around even things as simple as making facial contact with people. You mentioned hugs, things like that.

I find one thing that works pretty amazingly for me, is I just get random messages from people I've never met, who they sometimes say hey, I want to take a minute and say thanks because I just x amount of weight or because I got my brain back. I can drink coffee again or whatever impact the work has had on them. Or, I just had a healthy baby, whatever it is. I'm like wow. I'm motivated all day long because I got this little, three sentence message.

For me, getting feedback that what I perceive as helping others is actually having an impact was one of the things that keeps me in a flow state and makes me motivated to write the next thing or do the next thing. Is that a part of what keeps you motivated, too?

David: Yeah, I think you said it right on and ultimately, it's about impact and what kind of impact are we making. In your short stay here, what do you want to hear at the end of your life? What kind of legacy would you like to hear? Just making a pot of money and your whole family suing each other over it, is that an impact? You're so wealthy, you had five homes and a jet. That's okay, but the book you just wrote, Dave, and the products you're putting out and your search for clean both inside and what you put in your mouth, that's a legacy bigger than you.

I think for the young and those of us who don't know how much time we have left, looking at our impact is huge and that drives me. In fact, that drove me more than anything because I wanted to do something good in my life. I wanted to live a life of mission and purpose. I wanted to plant seeds that could pull the CO₂ out of the atmosphere, but also grow into beautiful forests.

I try to water them a bit while I'm still here, but I'm hopeful that when I'm not here, that good is in the world creating, I call it a negative eco footprint. I want to sprout an economy that's a nega footprint economy so the products and services that we put into the world are doing good. They're regenerating the air, the soil, the water, our spirit.

Dave: Well, that's a pretty amazing legacy to leave, that's for sure. That's perfect segaway into the final question, the one I know you're probably expecting and one I hope you didn't prepare for. This is a question I've asked all the guests on the show. The question is of all the things you've learned in your life, many of which, by the way, are in your book, *Explosion Green*, which is a really neat memoir. Not just that stuff, but everything that you know, the three most important recommendations you'd have for people at any age, any walk of life in order to perform better, kick more ass at life. Three most important things you've learned.

David: I think the first one I just mentioned. Be true to yourself. I would say be true to thine self because that will steer you in the right direction. If you're really passionate on the second item about something, don't accept the no and work really hard to convert the no into a profound, bold yes.

Everything I ever love had a no attached to it. I even created a whole green consulting career based on nos so whenever someone said a no, this can't be done, I worked hard to turn it around and became a specialist who could take on the things that couldn't be solved. That fighting spirit created a maverick niche where I could charge the highest rates.

Third would be learn to say I'm sorry.

Dave: That's the first time that's come up in like a 120-something episodes. That's a cool one. Tell me more about why sorry.

David: It took me a lot of therapy so I just saved you gazillions of time and money. Sorry is linked to ownership. Not trying to convince that person that they didn't understand you and what they didn't hear, but just you know what, you're right, I screwed up and I'm sorry and I can do better. I hear you. That took most of my alpha male big ego years to try to do.

Sara and I have something someone taught us called a life boat. The B is a bit. You say to your partner your struggling with can we do a life boat? That's the bit. The O is I'll do an ownership, you do an ownership and you got to be quiet when the other person's doing. I'll do an appreciation, you do an appreciation. That's the A. The T is the touch. Let me give you a big hug now and you've repaired. Our kids need repair from the adult and that's what keeps them off the shrink's couch in the future.

Dave: Good, interesting, so you've defined a process where there's an initiation, protocol. Interesting. Sounds like a TCP/IP handshake to me, but maybe that's just because I'm a network engineer, the way I think about things. That's pretty cool.

David: We were given that. I don't want to claim ownership for it.

Dave: It's a neat idea in a relationship to be able to have something like that so that's part of your I'm sorry number three thing where you actually have the protocol for that, where you can take ownership of it. That's your apology and the other person accepts and acknowledges it and then you get a hug. That's cool and admirable. Thanks for sharing that with all the probably 50,000 or so people who are listening to this right now. Much appreciated.

David, where can people learn more about your latest book, about leed buildings and about the work you've done as the father of the green building movement?

David: My personal website is [explosiongreen dot com](http://explosiongreen.com) and you can also get a link there to the free conference I'm doing in September with these gurus. The book's also at Amazon.

If you're interested in leed, go to [usgbc dot org](http://usgbc.org) and click on leed, L-E-E-D and you can download for free, leed for homes or leed for new construction. If you're global and you're interested in the world green building councils, go to [worldgbc dot org](http://worldgbc.org) and you can see our 100 countries listed there alongside the Canada GBC.

Dave: David, thanks again for being on the show. We'll post links to all those things on the show notes for this when it goes live. Really, really appreciate all the work you've done on making buildings healthier places for people to live in.

David: Well, thank you for having me and thanks for your spirit and your biohacking, the legacy you're creating. It's influenced me and my life.

Dave: Much appreciated. If you're looking for a way to know which foods are making you weak, check out the free app called Bulletproof Food Sense.



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