



**Transcript of “Hal Elrod: Be Happier, Healthier, & More Productive - #176”**

Bulletproof Radio podcast #176



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Dave Asprey: Hey everyone. You're listening to Bulletproof Radio with Dave Asprey. Today's cool fact of the day is about why you're so addicted to checking Facebook and text messages, or maybe why you spend an hour searching, but you don't get anything done. It turns out, that's because of dopamine, which we thought was kind of a pleasure hormone of the brain, not only controls pleasure, it controls our seeking behaviors. So dopamine makes us want things badly, things like information, and it makes us engage in goal-directed behavior to get the things that we want. It's actually our opioid system, not our dopamine system that controls pleasure. But if you combine the opioid system and the dopamine system, well then you've got addictive pleasure, and we all know where that leads.

Today's guest is Hal Elrod. Hal, you're an interesting guy, because when you were 20, you were hit head on by a drunk driver, doing 70. You were dead for 6 minutes, in a coma for 6 days, broke 11 bones, and were never supposed to walk again. You did, you became an ultra-marathoner, and you've been a multiple #1 bestselling author. You wrote *The Miracle Morning*, about some sort of weird crap about getting up before 8am. I don't even understand that, but I'm sure we'll talk it. 8 am dude, that's like the middle of the night. You're also a husband and father, a [bulletproof coffee](#) drinker, you're a rapper on iTunes, and like, basically, you're a guy who hit the wall, almost literally, although apparently it was an oncoming truck, but you've recovered. One of the things that I'm really interested in personally, and that's a part of the Bulletproof philosophy, is around resilience. I think you're a living example of someone who has learned how to be resilient, even from very large things. I wanted to talk to you about that today.

You sound how like someone who's maybe studied buddhism, what you described as, "Classical nonattachment." You're not

attached to the outcome, you're more focused on how are you, essentially what you have control of, and how is your response to it, like what's the sensation of it. It's unusual for anyone who hasn't spent a lot of time in meditation, or studying in a monastery or something, to have that level of understanding of the ways of the world as a young man. You said you had some mentors. What kind of mentors did you have that would teach you this kind of unusual knowledge?

Hal Elrod:

Yeah, so you mentioned Buddhism, and it's interesting, but it wasn't until I read books after my accident. Probably 5 years after my accident, I read *The Power of Now* and some of these books, and that helped me articulate what I was doing without realizing it, which is interesting. I wouldn't have, the way I just described it to you, I couldn't have described it at the time. I described it that way 5 years later, when I had some way to articulate it. But here it was laid out.

My mentor taught me something called The 5 Minute Rule in my sales training at Cutco. My mentor, Jesse Lavine, he was my manager. The 5 minute rule simply said it's OK to be negative sometimes when things go wrong, when they don't go your way, but not for more than 5 minutes. He said, "Set your timer on your phone, look at the clock. You get 5 minutes to bitch, moan, complain, and vent," and then after 5 minutes, he says as an intelligent human being, you stop putting your energy into something that you can't go back in time and change. Right, unless you're Marty McFly, you can't go back in time and change it. So the only logical intelligent response is to go, "OK, can't change it. Where do I want to go, and what's in my control to get there?"

I applied that for a year and a half in my sales training, and granted, it was for much milder adversity, right? I was dealing with no sales and rude customers, not being told I'd never walk again, but the principle was the same. What happened was, I came out of the coma a week later, the doctors called my parents in, because they were concerned. They sat my mom and dad down, and they said, "Mr. And Mrs. Elrod, we're concerned with Hal.

Physically he's doing well, healing is doing great, but we believe your son is in denial," yeah. They said, "Every time we see Hal, the nurses, the doctors, the therapists, every moment we spend with Hal he's always laughing and joking, and making us laugh," and they said, "That's not normal. Not for a 20 year old young man who's been told he's never going to walk again." So they said, "We've seen this before, where his reality right now is so scary, it's so painful, it's so unacceptable, that he's checked out of reality, and he's living in a state of delusion." So my dad comes in that night, the doctors said, "You need to get him to admit how he's really feeling, feel the pain, sad, angry, depressed. He's got to go through those emotions to get to the other side."

So my dad comes in one night, he says, "Hal, hey buddy, how are you doing? How are you feeling? We've never really talked about how you're feeling when there's no one around. You have a lot of visitors, but when your friends are gone and family's gone, you're turning the lights off for bed and you're by yourself thinking about how the doctors are saying that you might not walk again. Are you sad? Are you angry? Are you depressed?" I could tell my dad had been crying, his eyes were red, he had tears, and I really thought about his questions. Am I sad? Am I angry? Am I depressed? And I looked at my dad, and I just smiled, and I said, "Dad, I thought you knew me better than that. I live my life by the 5-minute rule. It's been 2 weeks since the accident. I can't change this, so what's the point in feeling sad, angry, or depressed? What's the point in wishing it didn't happen?" And that's when I transitioned into, what I said earlier, which is I said, "Dad, there's only 2 options. Number 1, the doctors are right, I never walk again, and in that case I accept it. I'll be the happiest person you've ever seen in a wheelchair. Number 2, I'm going to walk again."

One week later, I think it was 6 days after that conversation, the doctors came back with x-rays, and they said, "Hal, Mr. and Mrs. Elrod, and Hal, we don't know how to explain it. Your body is healing at an incredible rate. We're going to let you take your first step tomorrow in therapy." So it went from never walking again, to 3 weeks after I was found dead, my femur broke in half, my

pelvis broke in 3 places, the doctors let me take my first step, and a month after that I left the hospital. Against doctor's orders I got back to work. I was selling, breaking records again, using the sympathy angle, because that's what I had at that point. So that's what happened.

Dave Asprey: Wow. That's an impressive story. You almost used the word miracle there, when you were talking, you self-edited that. Why did you cut that out?

Hal Elrod: I doubt the doctors use that word. I could be wrong. I just, when I re-explain the story, in various parts, I mean there's a lot of different components of my accident. Half of it I don't remember first-hand. I only know it, like especially the first week, I have 0 memory of the first week when I came out of my coma. I only know how I responded, what my feelings were, based on my mom and my dad and my sister and my friends. All these people that visited me, they wrote in a journal, every person that visited wrote in a journal, and they basically said, "Hal, you're insane, like, you were funny before the accident, but now you have no filter. You're saying really inappropriate things, but I'm going to bring my friends back in next weekend, because this has been a blast."

That's why I edited it though, is because I doubt that they would have said, "Miracle," and I don't remember word for word what they said, but that was the general idea, is they came back and said, "We don't know how to explain it, but your body is just healing beyond what we expected, and tomorrow we're going to let you take your first step."

Dave Asprey: I've talked to a few people, over the years, who've had quote, "Miraculous," we'll just call them really unexpected recoveries, "Oh my spine was broken, but now I'm walking," kind of things. Most of them have a similar attitude to what you're doing, and most of them spend a lot of time visualizing, or somehow working the interface between the mind and the body. To tell the body, "Uh, you're supposed to be doing that, so maybe you can." It sounds like you got some benefit from something like that.

Hal Elrod: I always tell people, "I don't have a graph to show you here's how positively I thought, and here's my bones healing," like, I don't have that graph. I just have my real-world experience, and I apply it to everything, I mean, *The Miracle Morning*. We'll talk about the book, I know, later, but one of the things I talk about is I go, "Look, I know I'm not a scientist, but there is so much research that shows you need 8 hours of sleep, but there's as much research that shows you need 7 hours, you need 6 hours. Yet some of the greatest minds of our time, right, Thomas Jefferson, Albert Einstein, Thomas Edison, all these bright ... they slept 4 hours a night! Or 3, or 5."

Dave Asprey: Yeah.

Hal Elrod: So, going off, "OK, some of the greatest contributors to society slept that little," so, in my book *The Miracle Morning*, I say, "I'm not going to tell you how many hours of sleep that you need, but here's my belief." I believe that my mind could influence the healing of my body, to where broken bones became repaired, then I believe that I can go to bed and if I can set my intention at, "Tonight I'm going to sleep 5 hours, and I'm going to wake up feeling better than I've ever felt before in my life." I believe that I influence my cells to generate that reality for me when the alarm goes off in the morning. That mind-body connection, I really believe very strongly in.

Dave Asprey: I would say there is enough scientific evidence that there is a mind-body connection, especially if you look at Sarnoff's work, where if people with intractable pain, like, "Oh, wait," and he just explain things a certain way, and clinically significant results. Suddenly the pain goes away, because we're so unaware of how our mind and our body interact. A lot of the weird stuff that I do with neurofeedback, and other forms of quantified self things, are around teaching my conscious brain the control systems for the rest of the body, that are there, but they're just not labeled, and they're not even that easy to see. But they are there. It sounds like what you're doing is working those same things in whatever way works for you.

Hal Elrod: Yeah. For me, I'm not a real details guy, I'm not a real scientific guy, you know. You are. We'd actually be a good team. But for me it's just like, "Hey, these are real world, this is my real world experience, here's the real world experience of other people," you know, "Try it for yourself." That's always been my approach.

Dave Asprey: The N equals one study, which is does it work for you, is the most valuable one. Honestly, maybe you're leveraging the crap out of the placebo effect, but dude, you're walking. That was pretty useful.

Hal Elrod: Absolutely, absolutely.

Dave Asprey: So now, are you an optimist, or are you a realist? How do you identify the difference between those 2?

Hal Elrod: Yeah, really good question. I would probably say I'm both, but I opt to realist, but my look at it is this, is that optimism is focusing on what's possible, it's focusing on the positive, and it doesn't solve all your problems. When I give speeches, I always tell the audience, I go, "Look, we could all sit here and meditate on our bank account balance growing, and I bet you if we all checked it, it would be the exact same," that's my guess, right? So, positive thinking doesn't magically solve all your problems. My belief is it puts you in the best possible mental, physical, emotional space to solve your problems, to create optimum results in your life.

Now, one thing I always say is, and again, when I'm speaking, I say, "Raise your hand if you complain a lot," or, I'm sorry, "If you know someone that complains a lot." I always get like, most of the hands go up, and I say, "if you're not raising your hand, that means you complain a lot, and you're not aware of it."

But here's the point, people that complain a lot often justify it with, " I'm not negative, I'm just realistic."

Dave Asprey: Yeah.



Hal Elrod:

Right? And I say that's BS, because how is it an ounce more realistic to focus on, think about, dwell on, and talk about all the things in our life that are 'negative,' or don't make us feel good. Don't empower us, inspire us. How is that an ounce more realistic, to talk about the problems in the world, than for you and I to focus on, think about, and dwell on all the things that make us feel good, that make us feel empowered, inspired, grateful. To me, realism is simply a choice. The quality of your life depends on which one you focus on, and they're both equally realistic. It's just as realistic to be super negative, and focus on all of the problems in the world, as it is to be super positive. I always say that I'd rather be the person that's so frickin' positive I annoy some other people, than the people that are so miserable that they get annoyed by positive people. That'd be my choice. So I'll be a realist, but that's my realism, right. I learn a lot from all the mistakes, and the failures, and the negativity, and people treating me bad, I learn a lot from that. I learn what not to do. I learn what to stay away from. But, I live over here, right?

95% of my time is over here, 5% is over here, just long enough to acknowledge it, compartmentalize it, and put it in my bag of assets. To live a more happy, healthy, and productive life.

Dave Asprey:

Have you seen the research about skeptics? People who self-identify as skeptics are 3 times more likely to have senile cognitive dementia than those who don't.

Hal Elrod:

Really?

Dave Asprey:

Yeah, like later in life. So basically, being a skeptic, and looking for the worst in everything, is no more, I couldn't agree more, is no more realistic than looking for the positive. But, there's also what I suppose you could call Gulliver's travels, whatever, the land of the lotus-eaters. And people were so positive, like think of your favorite hippy yoga teacher. They tend to fall on that side of the, "Everything's so wonderful, and like I'm 15 minutes late for that class I was going to teach, I can't balance my checkbook, but like, I love you all.

Hal Elrod: I have a friend that's a world-famous yoga instructor, and you just described her perfectly. Yes, and I love her to death.

Dave Asprey: Yeah, lovely, lovely, but there's a certain side of positives were like, you can't function in the world, because you're so positive. And then there's like, the curmudgeon, like, "It doesn't matter because everything sucks," and you know, "It's all going to fall apart in the end." If you're on either spectrum, one is a nicer place to be, no doubt, and one's a pretty dark place, one's a pretty light place, but you also may not actually achieve your goals in either location. How do you avoid being that guy that's so positive that you walk into walls, because they were pretty?

Hal Elrod: It's good, because I've been there. For me, I had to realize that there is a fine line between optimism and delusion.

Dave Asprey: Well said.

Hal Elrod: A very fine line, and I cross it often. I cross it often. But there's a fine line between the 2, and here's a great example, when the US economy crashed in 2008/2009, I went down with the ship, and I was one of those. I think that was the greatest lesson, where that was the time when I went from being blindly optimistic to being a realist, because the people that were blindly optimistic, when the economy starts to crash, they go, "Oh, I don't pay attention to that, I'm not going to buy in to the negativity. I don't watch the news," that was me, right?

Then all of a sudden you go, "Oh wait, this shit's really happening," pardon my French. Then you've got to be a realist. So to me, it's focusing on the positive, while being very honest, and acknowledging reality. Again, it's living over here, but it's also visiting here on a daily basis. You just don't dwell on it. This being the positive, this being the negative. It's just not, you don't dwell over here. You look over here, you go, "Oh. Got it I see this is really happening right now. I need to be aware of this, I need to learn from this, I need to correct course and adjust. Got it. Will do," and then you live over here. So, to me it is a balance. It is a balance

between being optimistic, and also always being aware, and in tune with reality. So that you don't you don't cross that line of delusion.

Dave Asprey: Do you have any specific pieces of advice, for people who are listening to this, who feel positive right now, and wonder if they're self-deluded? How do you know when you've crossed that line?

Hal Elrod: I think that it's every day, here's a great example, every day asking yourself, "What could I have done better today?" I think that's one of the simplest ways to do it. every single day that you, literally a daily basis, it's where you can systematically, in fact, you and I were talking earlier, I use the five-minute journal. I use, they make a hardcover version, I use the app on my phone, there's a morning and evening.

Dave Asprey: You've just been on the show, definitely, talking about that.

Hal Elrod: So the evening entry, one of the questions is, "What could I have done better today?" And if that's all you do, that's a way to stay in touch with the realist, right, which is like, "OK. I'm not perfect," and it can be painful sometimes to acknowledge where we're falling short, or the mistakes that we're making. But if we do it every day, number one, we get we get a little bit numb to it, so that it doesn't hurt our ego, it doesn't hurt our self-concept. We do it as a proactive approach to bettering ourselves, and becoming a better ourselves. That, to me, the simplest way to do it. In writing, every day, "What are 3 things that I could've done better today?" If you do that, to me, that keeps you grounded, and it keeps you in touch with where you're not perfect in your execution, you're not perfect in the way you make decisions and live, but you can get closer, and closer, and closer, by learning from what you're doing that's not optimum, and not in line with this page over here, of all the perfection of the positivity.

Dave Asprey: That's a great answer. And if you look at from, going back to the Buddhist perspective, what you're doing there is you're keeping your ego in check. Because, the ego's the part of you that's like,

"Oh, I'm so perfect," et cetera, et cetera. So just keeping an eye on that sounds like a valuable approach to walking that line between, "I feel good, and I have a positive worldview and I'm happier, and my biology feels safer," and walking into the land of lotus eaters.

Hal Elrod: Yeah, absolutely. I love what you said about, that are late to everything, they're late to everything! It's like, "Hey, you can be positive, and also respectful of other people's time, so sorry."

Dave Asprey: I'm with you there. I will also admit that some of my very favorite, most powerful yoga teachers have a very thin grasp of time. It's probably because of their yoga practice, but you're like, "Really? Like, your class was amazing, but it just started 20 minutes late," oh well. So, let's talk about time some more, because we just talked about delusional things, and you're offering a Miracle Morning, transforming your life before 8am, and you've got some really big claims. The life you've always wanted, absolutely is all possible. So I'm with you, biohacking is there for maximum results, minimum effort. So what's your secret there? For doing things before 8am, or really, changing your life before 8am.

Hal Elrod: First, I'll give you the short so version of where this came from. this was this was never, I've never written a book, not yet, that I intended to write. Meaning that yes, at some point I had to intend to write it, but I never intended to be a writer. If you had asked my high school English teachers, they would be like, "Hal's the," they'd vote me least likely to finish an essay, let alone write a book. both of my books written out of a sense of responsibility, where something dramatically change my life, I felt like I owe it to pay it forward and share this. So, when the US economy crashed, as I mentioned earlier, in 2008, I lost everything, monetarily speaking. I lost my house, I was \$50,000 in credit card debt. I was 25 years old, just living on my credit cards, and as a result of so much fear and uncertainty, I got deeply depressed. I stopped exercising. six months went by, I hadn't exercised a day, and physically, mentally, emotionally, and financially, I really was at a rock bottom. To keep a long story short, I went on this run, and I heard a quote from Jim Rohn. The quote was one I had heard

before, but, you know you hear something sometimes over, and over, and over, and over again. Especially if you're not drinking [Bulletproof coffee](#) every day, that until it finally clicks. Here's a quote, "Your level of success will seldom exceed your level of personal development," in that moment I realized I'm dedicating time every day to my personal development, in other words, I'm not becoming the person that I need to be to create the success and sustain the success I want. In any area. Physically, mentally, emotionally, financially, spiritually, relationally, you name it. The realization is I've got to dedicate time every day to my personal development.

It sounds pretty simple. Here's the thing, I was at such a low point, that I went home with my intention going, "OK. how can I create the most extraordinary personal development routine known to man, so that I can accelerate my success. So that I can turn my situation around as fast as humanly possible." The 2 challenges were what am I going to do to do that, what am I going to read, am I going to write, what am I going to do, and the second thing was when am I going to do it, because, like most of us, I was already strapped for time. It's like I woke up at 6am, I worked until 10 pm, I watched an hour of TV, and then I went to bed, and I rinsed and I repeated. That was my life. I did it feeling depressed, I hated waking up, I thought about suicide, I didn't want to live this life that was just getting worse, and worse, and worse.

And the next, that night, I do a little research, what are the best personal development practices known to man? I'm reading Entrepreneur, and Huffington Post, and Fast Company, and at first I'm very disappointed, because everything I came across, I had heard of before. I'm looking for like, you're unique, in that you get all this stuff, like butter and coffee. Like, what? That's not old school, that's like a new thing. You're always on the cutting, and we're always looking for that. That's why I think there's such an appeal from what you do, because you're looking for advancement. we're always looking for the edge, the unfair advantage. We're always looking for ...

- Dave Asprey: You've been to the store, obviously, thank you.
- Hal Elrod: Products and apps to fix it quickly. I had come across six practices. Meditation. What? Affirmations, visualization, exercise, reading and journaling. And I go, "These aren't new! I need something cutting edge."
- Dave Asprey: You could have just read Napoleon Hill and got that done.
- Hal Elrod: Yes, and I think that was actually the first book I read during my Miracle Morning.
- Dave Asprey: Nice.
- Hal Elrod: So, what ended up happening was I get over myself, and I realize, "Wait a minute, just because I know these things, I don't do these every day, but highly successful people swear by any one of these," and I thought, "What if I did all 6 of them?" Because there are successful people that they attribute meditation to their success. Russell Simmons, founder Def Jam, from Run DMC, Fubu clothing. One of the most successful men in America, he swears by meditation. So I thought if any one of these can be a game changer, all 6 of them are like personal development on, you know, steroids, Bulletproof, et cetera, et cetera. Then I think, "When am I going to do it? I'm not a morning person, but that's the only time that makes sense, I wake up at 5 am. I've been reading all these articles. Successful people wake up early, they have a morning success ritual." So I suck it up, I put in my schedule, "5am: personal development," Here's the game changer.
- Keep in mind, I was the lowest point in my life, rock bottom. Depressed. It broke, losing my house, physically the fattest, most out of shape, I had ever been in my life. that night, I go to bed feeling hopeful for the first time in 6 months. I kind of attribute it to, like, when I was a kid on Christmas Eve, I was actually excited to wake up in the morning, because I wasn't waking up to my shitty life, pardon my french, my mess. I was going to wake up to, what I thought, could be, theoretically, I didn't know, but it felt

like it could be the one thing that changed everything. I woke up in the morning, 5am. The crazy thing is, I didn't even want to hit the snooze button, but I woke up like a kid on Christmas, I jumped out of bed, and I go through these 6 practices.

Keep in mind, I didn't know how to do half of them. I didn't know how to meditate. I googled how to meditate. I'm sitting there, I'm like, "OK. Clear my thoughts. OK," and I'm like, "Dammit! I had a thought! I suck at this!" And I go through all 6, but this was the defining moment of my life. Who I am today results to this moment. at 6am, even though my life was in shambles, I felt incredible. I felt inspired. I was energized, I was motivated, for the first time in 6 months. I realized if I can start every day feeling like I'm at a level 10, then, inevitably, my level of personal development, who I am as a person, if I can start every day at a 10, my outer world, now it's at a 2, but theoretically, I think it's going to eventually near my inner world. I didn't know how fast it would happen.

Now, to wrap this up with the results. Two months later, I had more than doubled my income, I didn't get new job, I didn't switch careers, I didn't get a promotion or a raise, I was doing the exact same profession. I was a success coach, doing the exact same profession, I'd more than doubled my income. Because of the clarity and the purpose, the energy, all of the things that I got from that morning routine. it made me start every day at a level 10, and I started crushing every day. And if I had a bad day, I got to hit the reset button before I went to bed, and start over at level 10. Doubled my income and I went from- oh, you want to say something?

Dave Asprey: Well, I'm curious what time you were going to sleep, because if you wake up at 5am, like, that's sort of limiting. and also, did you have kids when you did this?

Hal Elrod: No, this was before kids. But I do have a 5 year old, and a 2 year old now, and I would say there are probably 10,000 parents with kids that do the Miracle Morning every day, and I get emails all the

time. They're like, "So how do you do this? And how do you," you know, "My kids wake up all night." But, what happens, so I more than doubled my income, I went from in the worst shape of my life, physically, and having never run before, to doing a 52 mile ultra marathon, which I completed in 5 months from the first day of the Miracle Morning. I had never run before, other than in PE class. And then, my depression didn't take 2 months ago away. It was literally gone that morning, or at least it was so minimized that the optimism just overrode the depression. and because it happened so fast, it felt like a miracle. I started calling it my Miracle Morning. I never planned on it being a book, I never planned on sharing with other people, and it just evolved. I taught my coaching clients, and then I gave a speech on it, and it evolved, and now it's one of the bestselling books on Amazon. With 500 five-star reviews, or whatever, and it's neat see that other people experienced the same profound benefits that I did. it wasn't just me, which was always my greatest insecurity, is maybe this was just me. I don't know if it's going to work for the people, and now I'm seeing it happen.

Dave Asprey: It's interesting, before I had kids, I went through something similar. For about 18 months, and I'm like, "All right. I'm just going to wake up at 5am." My circadian biology, since I was about 3, has been set where I'll stay up until about 2am, and if I do 2am-8am, that's 6 hours, and I could do that for the rest of my life and be perfectly healthy. That would be more than enough sleep. But, for me it was unnatural, but I'm like, "All right, fine, I'm just going to not care what time I got to sleep, and I'm always going to wake up at 5," and my dealing is I know that an hour meditation can replace 2 hours of sleep. And to this day, it still can. So I'm just like, "All right, I'm just going to cut me sleep as much as I need to in order to wake up at 5am, I don't care how I feel. I'm going to do like a set of breathing exercises, a Kriya meditation thing," at the time I was doing Art of Living, and then I would do this really intense energetic medicine thing, sorry, energetic meditation thing. I'd sort of go about setting my intentions, and it totally rocked, and I found when I had kids though, that it wasn't necessary to do that timing, that it actually didn't work very well,



because when I would wake up, no matter how quiet I was, kids sense when their parent's up, and they want to play. So you're like, "OK. I could go do this, but it takes away from some of the parts of being a dad."

So, I'm with you there, that you can do a lot at that quiet period. Do you think that there's any significance to the various religion and spiritual practices, who say that the best time to meditate or pray is actually the last third of the night. You know, around the 4am, 5am, and 6am, like there's more mojo there, for lack of a more technical term. Is that something you've experienced?

Hal Elrod:

I don't, I know for me, so I wake up now at 3:30am, 7 days a week. I started 3:30am, 7 days a week. Really, to be clear, I used to post on Facebook, "Up at 3:30 for my Miracle Morning," and I didn't realize, people thought, "Oh, to do the Miracle Morning, you have to wake up at 3:30, I'm never going to do it." So, the premise of it is waking up not, most people, here's kind of the point. Most people wake up because they have to. They set their, they go, "OK. When do I have to be somewhere, or do something, or answer to someone," OK, and then, "When's the latest I can possibly wake up to be able to do that?" And that's how most people wake up. I feel like there's that energy where when start your day, you hit the snooze button, you're literally starting your day with procrastination. You're starting your day with procrastination. You're starting your day with a lack of self-discipline to get yourself out of bed, let alone do everything else that you want. So, a big premise of your Miracle Morning is waking up with the discipline, when you want to get up, to work on yourself, and become a better version of you were when you went to bed. for me, the meditation, I do it in the morning, I also do it sometimes in the evening, not every day. But, I think that there's something special about being up before the rest of your household. It really is extraordinarily you time. it really is quiet time. nobody's calling, nobody's, you know what I mean. you really have that special time that's just for you.

- Dave Asprey: My special time, when no one is interrupting me, is usually the 11pm-1am. Do you find people who do miracle evenings?
- Hal Elrod: Absolutely, in fact, I mean that's probably going to be a book at some point, is the miracle evening. I even said in the Miracle Morning book, I said, there's a whole chapter called Customizing the Miracle Morning to Fit Your Lifestyle. And I said a few things. Number one, I said, if you want to wake up, let's say right now you wake up at 11am every day.
- Dave Asprey: That would be nice. Haven't done that in like 20 years.
- Hal Elrod: Yeah, or 8am, or any time, the Miracle Morning, like I said, it's about backing that up by about 30 to 60 minutes to do an extraordinary personal development routine. SO that's it. It doesn't mean that you've got to get up early, it just means that whenever you have to wake up, you back up by 30 to 60 minutes, and you do the Miracle Morning. you do what are known as the life savers. Savers is an acronym for those 6 practices: silence; affirmations; visualization; exercise; reading; and scribing, which is a fancy word for writing. So, journaling, writing your intentions, et cetera, et cetera. I do talk about you could even do the miracle evening. Here's the thing about that though, Dave, here's the thing about this. If people go, "Couldn't I do the life savers at any other time of the day," evening, afternoon, spaced out, whatever. Yes, you can, but they provide benefits that if you don't do them in the morning, you miss out on those benefits for the entire day.
- I'll just start with the most the most straightforward one, exercise. Could you exercise in the afternoon or evening?  
Absolutely, and I still do. I still go to the gym, I still play basketball in the afternoon or evening. There are irrefutable benefits to getting your heart rate up, the oxygen and blood flowing, right, during in the morning, releasing the endorphins et cetera, to improve your cognitive ability, et cetera. So, yes you could wait.
- Meditation, same thing, you can meditate only in the evening, but it does calm your nervous system, it does lower your stress. why

would you want to miss out on the benefit throughout the entire day? Affirmations are a great example. affirmations in the evening, I believe, in a lot of ways actually have a more profound impact, because when you go to sleep, your conscious mind is no longer shifting the focus of your unconscious. To read affirmations in the morning, you then often get distracted with something else, and now the effect it has on your subconscious, it's kind of minimized. Now, your subconscious new stimulus that's affecting it. in the evening, you read it before bed, go to bed. No other interruptions, no other distractions, you're really taking those affirmations and really programming the subconscious. But, here's the thing, in the morning, your affirmations, not only, I mean they do impact your subconscious, but more importantly, they direct your conscious mind, which then directs your action for the day. When I read my affirmations in the morning, it influences what I do during the day, which impacts my results, which impacts my quality of life. Again, you can just do affirmations the evening, but you're missing out on the profound benefits that you get doing it in the morning.

each of the lifesavers, silence, affirmations, all of those, you can do them at anytime that you want, but when you understand the benefits that come, and that affect your entire day, when you do them first thing in the morning, you become ... Once you do it, you become hooked, you would never want to miss a Miracle Morning.

Dave Asprey: Yeah, I'm with you on the affirmations. With the Napoleon Hill stuff, think and grow rich, he said, "Put your 3 most important things, write your statement, and review it, put it on the mirror, review it, in the morning and at night." I started doing that, when I was 16. I said that I make \$1 million by the time I was 23. And, I made \$6 million when I was 26. So it totally doesn't work.

I also didn't but, and keep it, because I lost it when I was 28. But, live and learn. You should be precise in your language, apparently. But, it is true that for each of those savers practices that are in the Miracle Morning, there's probably a tweak. Maybe you should do them 2 times, or maybe the optimal spacing is actually every 28 hours for one of them. Like, I don't think we have good science for

that, but the idea that all of those are powerful, and you if you do them, or most of them, that it will rock your world. It's been my experience, for sure.

Hal Elrod:

Absolutely, and that's, you know, people ask me which ones are better than the others. And I go, well I have my favorite. Affirmations are my favorite. But if I had to pick 1 that was the most important, I would say it was exercise, because that improves everything, mentally, physically, and emotionally, you put yourself in that optimum state. But, again, it's now that I've done all of them, and I know each one has unique and profound benefits, I don't ever want to leave any one out if I missed, if I leave journaling out, there is a whole, there is something that I could have experienced that morning, but I didn't experience. so yes, you could do just a few of them. If all you did was read every morning and exercise, you're better than 99% of society.

Dave Asprey:

It's interesting too, as you do them, you develop skills, and you can get essentially better at them. One of the things I've done is I meditate less now than I used to, because I've done so much neurofeedback, that my ability to access meditative states is like, it's there. And, I do a regular, probably once a quarter, I spend a week with electrodes on my head at 40 years of Zen, which has really made my meditation path progress. To the point that, well if I take that week, and I spread it out over X amount of time per day, I'm probably meditating the same amount, but I'm doing it where I don't take some amount of time to get in to a meditative state, and in so, an amount of time to come out, I'm just diving in, and going as deep as I know how to go. Sort of like running a marathon once a quarter with my brain, instead of running 3 miles a day, 3 days a week, kind of thing. So, I believe there is probably some optimizations in each of those practices that are that are accessible, and much of the historical writing about self-improvement and all that meditation and various practices around the world, a lot of that was how do we do that stuff better? There's so many different little tweaks that come from different things that it seems like the next hundred years of big data, and getting more things from our mind, and putting it all online, and

talking to each other in a way we never could before will help us to do exactly what you did. You put together a recipe for how to use these amazing techniques, in order to help people do what they're going to anyway, just faster, and better, and obviously with less work, than walking around going, "Everything sucks all the time, and I'm not happy, and life is hard," and all those messages we play to each other that probably aren't true.

Hal Elrod: Yeah. It's something that each of the practices is a lifetime to master. Literally, every single one, you'll never achieve your full potential in any of them.

Dave Asprey: Really? Never?

Hal Elrod: I think you can always get better. That's my thought. I say that there's always, the one thing on common, is the next level. When I'm on my death bed, I'll be like, "Oh man! I was still trying to get better," you know. There was that next level I was working towards on the day that I die. I think that we'll always, it'll always be a process of growth in mastering each of them. One thing I wanted to mention, on probably one of the most popular chapters in the Miracle Morning, and it's also the one that is, people, you mentioned skeptics earlier, this is the most skeptical, if I heard this I would be like, "That's a gimmick." It's called the 6-Minute Miracle Morning. It's a 6-Minute Miracle Morning. The way that it happened, again, it was an idea for chapter, it was one day there were enough days where I would skip my Miracle Morning, because I would wake up and be like I don't have time today. I got to be somewhere, I got a meeting, I got a morning conference call. And one day, I thought, I've got a call in like 15 minutes, I thought what if I do a 6-Minute Miracle Morning? What if I do 1 minute for each of the life savers?

And so, I go and I do one of meditation, I just sit quiet, I take a few deep breaths, but it was amazing. One minute. But I'm calmer, I'm clearer. Then I pull out my affirmations, and it really only took me a minute to read through them. Now I'm focused and empowered. It's like wow, yeah, that's a reflection of who I can become, you I'm

committed to being. I close my eyes, and I visualize what I need to do that day to crush the day, to win the day, and I feel I'm ready now, I saw it, I know what it looks like. Then I do a minute of jumping jacks, right, exercise. Heart rate's up, I'm feeling good, I'm thinking clearer. Pull out a self help book, read a page. I get one idea that could change my life. Then I pull out my journal, write down one thing I'm grateful for, and the number one thing I need to do that day to win the day. Six minutes go by, and it was profound, because I realize that was, you talk about biohacking, doing more in less time. It was 1/10th of the time, but I would say I got roughly 80% of the benefit. in one 10th of the time.

Now, I don't advocate doing a 6-Minute Miracle Morning every day, because you can only go so deep in that amount of time, but it is really, it shows us that there is literally no excuse to not dedicate at least 6 minutes to our personal development. So, that was a profound breakthrough that I had, in terms of scalability and doing it quicker.

Dave Asprey: That's, I wouldn't call that a gimmick, you might call it a hack or something, because you're not doing it perfectly, you're just going it good enough to get the results you wanted quickly. That's kind of how I do many of the things, because I didn't know how to achieve all of the things that I have achieved, if I'm going to pursue perfection, because perfection is the enemy getting things done. If you have no integrity, or you have really low standards, you're going to do everything crappy anyway. But that's a different problem, if you know perfection, but you shoot for in the neighborhood of perfection, you're going to be pretty happy with the results, knowing that you can always get a little bit better, and over time you will. That's cool.

let's see, how often do you run? I'm curious about this.

Hal Elrod: I don't run anymore. I hate running. I hated running before, and the reason I decided to run, so my friend runs a nonprofit called the front row foundation, and it's one of the fastest-growing charities in America. they send people to the front row of the

favorite event. Could be a play, or a concert, or a sporting event, and they do a run every year. My friend John, who has run an ultra marathon, a couple of them, to raise money for the charity said, "Why don't you come out this year? This is our second run, come run,"

I said, "Dude, I hate running. There's no way. I'm not going to run,"

And he goes, "You can do like a 5k walk with the grandmas, just get your butt out here and support us."

So I was like, "All right. You're right. I'll at least do like a 5k jog or walk," OK. And then once I committed to that, I thought, "That's weak, I can't do a 5k with the grandmas. Maybe I'll do like a half marathon." Like oh my gosh, this is crazy. And then, here's what hit me, Dave, this is what hit me. Ever since the accident, this has been my mindset, is wow that scares the heck out of me. Wow. That's really difficult and intimidating, therefore, if I just commit to it, and I make it public, then I have to do it, and it will force me to grow in ways I've never grown before. become better than I've ever been before. so I called, "Dude, I'm going to do a half marathon."

He said, "OK. If you grow some balls, let me know when you're going to do a marathon."

Dave Asprey: That doesn't sound like a very good buddy, by the way.

Hal Elrod: I know. Well, he is, because he challenges me.

Dave Asprey: I'm just kidding.

Hal Elrod: I called him back, I'm like, "All right. I'll do a marathon,"

He's like, "OK. Well that's pretty good. That's half as much as I did last year, so I'll talk to you later."

I have the phone, and I was like, "Gosh danggit!" If I don't do a ultra marathon ... I literally, and here's my warped logic, I went, if I

could go from never running in my life, except for in PE class when you had to run the mile. If I could go from never running, to doing a half marathon, or a marathon. If I could run 26 miles from 0, then I could run 52 from 0. That was my logic, was if I could go from nothing to 26, well then what's another 26? So call them back, and I'm like, it had taken 24 hours, but I'm like, "I'll do the ultra marathon, man. Count me in." It was crazy, and I bought this book called the non-runner's marathon trainer. Because, it was for people that don't like running, have never run before, and how do you mentally wrap your head around this, and then what's your training regimen? it's kind of crazy, this was not an ultra marathon. This was the Atlantic City Marathon, so what we he'd to do is you actually had to show up at the Atlantic City Marathon Course at 3:00 in the morning. five hours before it started. we had to run a marathon before the marathon started, and then we ran the marathon with everybody else. Hardest, worst day of my life. at the end, it was hard, I mean I was in a wheelchair the next day, I couldn't walk, I was wrecked.

People go, "What are you going to do next?"

And I go, "I'm going to check that off my bucket list, and never run again in my life." I've held pretty true that.

Dave Asprey: Do you have any idea what happened with the first guy who ran a marathon? I don't know, maybe that was not a bad strategy. Do you know what happened to the first marathoner?

Hal Elrod: No.

Dave Asprey: It was kind of a joke. I have great respect for people who have achieved running a marathon. But, the first guy that ran one, we celebrated his death. He ran from, I think, one city in Greece to another one, I'm forgetting what cities. And he's like, "The bad guys are coming!" Then he died of a heart attack. He gave his life for his country, and all that stuff, but like, we're celebrating his sacrifice when we run, and I believe that you could be a healthy marathoner. I also believe that when you get people who are



really out of shape, and have a core metabolic problems, haven't addressed their core biology, like, " I'm going to get healthy, I'm going to go run a marathon," they are probably causing more inflammation than they are preventing. So, the marathon is a sign of achievement, hallelujah. As a way of getting healthy, I'm scared of that kind of practice.

Hal Elrod: I think long-distance running is, and I'll piss off a lot of people that, right, but I think it's one of the worst forms of exercise. It's really hard on your knees, like you said inflammation, and for me it was kind of, part was the doctors saying I would never walk again. That was another part of it, it was like this would be a profound statement, not for me, well, for me personally, but for human beings. Like, don't ever listen ... I'm a speaker, I'm a motivational speaker, keynote speaker. I'm always looking at how can I overcome something, so that I can share with others, and I felt that this is great story of told I would never walk again, ran a 52 mile ultra marathon, that is simply evidence that is a human being, we can do anything that we commit to do, and never let anyone else's fears or limiting beliefs limit what's possible for you.

Dave Asprey: It sounds like you were giving the middle finger to those doctors who said that you would never run again in the most public, spectacular way you could. And, good for you, man. That's awesome.

Hal Elrod: Respectfully, yes.

Dave Asprey: I don't mean it in a negative way, but just like, no, really, but you could do this. So, yeah, those guys saved your life, that's pretty legitimate.

Hal Elrod: Yeah, they deserve a little bit of appreciation and gratitude for that, yes.

Dave Asprey: Well Hal, this has been fascinating, to sort of get your perspective on things as diverse as running, versus what you do in the morning, and I don't think I'm convinced to switch back to the

5am wake up time. But you and I do share a lot of practices in common, and I've got great respect for your work. I'm thankful that you follow that inner vision, that said, "All right. I need to share the practices that work, I'm going to write a book," I have very similar motivations with what I do. This stuff kind of rocked my day, and there's other things that really matter. So let's share it.

Hal Elrod: Yeah, yeah. Absolutely.

Dave Asprey: What are your top 3 recommendations? this is the question that always ends the show, but what are your top 3 recommendations to people who want to kick more ass at life? So, this is not savers, that's 6 things, you've got to pick the 3 most important things that you know of.

Hal Elrod: Sure. I can take the same course, but I wrote a couple things down. number one, relentlessly upgrade your circle of influence. I think there is nothing more important, and what you could do, you know, Jim Rohn said it the best, Jim Rohn's a pretty smart guy right, but, "We become the average of the 5 people we spend the most time with," and it's so true. It's true with your health, with your weight. If everybody you hang out with eats unhealthy food, your friends, your family, well, guess what you're probably going to eat? The way they say it is, "If you hang out 5 people that are broke, you'll be the 6th broke person. If you hang out with 5 people that are overweight, you're going to be the 6th person." So, I think there's almost nothing more important that you could do, because who you're surrounded by, and who you talk to, it influences your thinking more than anything. I wouldn't have run a 52 mile ultra marathon if I hadn't hung out with people who ran 52 mile ultra marathons. I wouldn't have written a book if I hadn't have hung out with people that were authors. So that's the first thing

The second thing is relentlessly program your mind for success. there's arguably, again, right there with the circle of influence, nothing more important that you could do than program your

mind for success. So, identify what beliefs are holding you back, identify which behaviors are holding you back, and then every day create a written statement, which would be called an affirmation, that reflects what you want, why you it, what's holding you back, and what you need to think, believe, and do on a daily basis to make your achievement. your attainment of whatever you want, your biggest goals and dreams, to make it inevitable.

Then number 3, create, this will be a surprise for you, Dave, and the listeners. Create an extraordinary morning success ritual. I was very pleasantly surprised, are you familiar with Evan Pagan, and his work?

Dave Asprey: I don't believe so. What's the name of his work?

Hal Elrod: You have to look him up, so, go to Evan Pagan, E-V-A-N, EvanPagan.com. He's brilliant. So, Tony Robins interviewed him, he does about \$25 million a year as a solo-preneur, with all sorts of different stuff. Tony Robins interviewed him a couple years ago, and this is my favorite interview, I've listened to it dozens of times always, it's always in my car on a CD. at the end of this interview, Tony just picked Evan's brain for an hour and half, he said, "Evan, you've given so much value, you've taught so much. If you had to sum it up in one lesson that would make the biggest impact for everybody listening, for their business, for their life, what would it be?" I was very pleasantly surprised, I was actually writing the Miracle Morning when I heard this.

He said, "The number one thing you can take your life to the next level, and in your business to the next level, is create a morning success ritual," he said, "Make sure that what you do for the first hour of your day sets the context for who you need to become to create everything that you want for your life."

And that's where I realized, that the Miracle Morning, that's what it is for me. It's the most effective success ritual, to ensure that every morning you become a better version of who you were when you woke up that morning. and if you do it every day, your

success, at any level you want, it's inevitable. You eventually, you get there. It might happen when you're 23, or it might happen when you're 26. Either way, when you get there, you're like, "Wow, I see it didn't happen as fast as I wanted it to," but it might happen for some people faster, but eventually you go, "Everything was perfect, and I'm living the life that I was wanted to," Dave. And you're a living example of that.

Dave Asprey: That's an amazing set of 3 answers, and Evan's site it [getaltitude.com](http://getaltitude.com).

Hal Elrod: Yes, there you go.

Dave Asprey: Yes, and we'll put show notes to all that stuff in here. I have to admit, I just looked it up, I have not seen his before, but I'll check it out now.

Hal Elrod: You'll love Evan. He's very cerebral, and intellectual, like yourself. I think you'll like the way he processes and the way he thinks

Dave Asprey: Beautiful. Well Hal, would you please drop the name of your URL and your book, Miracle Mornings, so that people can buy it and leave positive reviews on amazon, which are manna from heaven.

Hal Elrod: I'll even show the beautiful cover. It's the Miracle Morning. get it on amazon. Miracle Morning, on amazon, and then my URL right now, I'm putting on my first live event, Dave. I just went to your biohacking conference, I was there. I don't even know if we shook hands or not. But, you were so busy.

Dave Asprey: Sorry, I did my best to meet everyone, but.

Hal Elrod: It was amazing. My first live event is this December, Best Year Ever, [Blueprint.com](http://Blueprint.com).

there's I think we have 32 spot out of the 200 left, so Best Year Ever, [Blueprint.com](http://Blueprint.com). And it is going to be, literally, unlike any event that anyone's ever been to. I don't as a sales line. It's going to be, it's hard to explain, but very experiential. We're going to do

things, and it's not about what you're going to learn there, it's about what you're going to do that's going to set you up for the most extraordinarily successful your life in 2015.

Best Year Ever, Blueprint.com. I'd love for you join us. Dave, you're invited to buddy, on the house.

Dave Asprey: Oh, thanks man. Best Year Ever, Blueprint.com. All right. Everyone, you got that? You're driving, it's going to take you a while to type it into your phone, which is technically illegal, so you could just pick up Siri, and say, "Siri, when I get home, remind me. Best Year Ever, Blueprint.com."

Hal Elrod: Oh, I love it. Thank you.

Dave Asprey: All right. Hey Hal, I really appreciate having you on the show, and I'm broken hearted that we didn't at least get a photo together at the conference. We had like 500 people show up, and it was actually the busiest time I've ever had in my life. Where it was like, every minute, everything was like run here, run here, run here. It was a rocking conference. So thank you for coming.

Hal Elrod: Yeah, you put on an amazing event. I can't wait for next year. I'll be a regular, annual attendee for sure.

Dave Asprey: Beautiful. Have an awesome day, and thanks again for your work.

Hal Elrod: You too brother, take care.

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