



**Transcript – Downward Dog Like a Real Life Warrior  
One with Mark Divine - #319**



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Speaker 1: Bulletproof Radio, a state of high performance.

Dave: Hey, it's Dave Asprey of the Bulletproof Radio. Today's cool fact of the day is that there's a new discovery that yoga can increase heart rate variability because it stimulates your vagus nerve which is the big boss of your inner nerve center. In fact, there's a recent podcast about Polyvagal Theory if you really, really want to dig on that, dig in on that.

Your nervous system can respond to mechanical stimulation, so when you're doing, say, the warrior pose and breathing deep, you're rousing your vagus nerve which sends signals to your heart to optimize the spacing between your heart beat or the heart rate variability which is cool. That's one of those things that no one ever knew about yoga except the people who invented yoga who probably sensed it was doing something good to the nervous system.

Before we get going on the show, if you haven't had a chance to check out the new Bulletproof InstaMix, you've got to check this stuff out. We just made Bulletproof Coffee on the go, a lot easier and more powerful. This is brain octane oil and grass-fed butter. You just add the powder to your upgraded coffee, put it in your bulletproof, travel mug, shake it up and you're actually good to go.

This is a complete game-changer. I'm going to spend two weeks on the road in Greece, France and London flying back and forth, all these things and I'm bringing cases of this with me, because it's pretty much on and have for breakfast. You can find the mugs and InstaMix on Bulletproof.com.

Now, today's guest is a friend and a second time guest on Bulletproof Radio. He's a retired Navy SEAL commander with 20 years of active and reserve duty under his belt. None other than Mark Divine who has probably the coolest name of anyone I've ever seen. Mark is the CEO of SEALFIT.com, a multi-black belt martial artist, a hand-to-hand combat expert and this is why the cool fact that it was so cool. He's a certified Ashtanga yoga teacher and he created something called the Unbeatable Warrior Yoga Program.

He's a New York Times best-selling author and he's on the show to talk about his latest book called, "Kokoro Yoga: Maximize Your Human Potential and Develop the Spirit of a Warrior--the SEALFIT Way." Mark, that is one hell of a long title for a book. Welcome to the show.

Mark: That's the subtitle. Yeah. Great to see you Dave. Thank you for having me on your podcast. By the way, when I stimulate my vagus nerve, it just makes me want to gamble, so I don't know how that relates to yoga, but ...

Dave: Does it really? You get the urge to go play poker when you stimulate your vagus nerve?

Mark: [Crosstalk 00:02:44], I don't play poker, so I'm just ... It is the vagus nerve after all.



Dave: Sorry, I missed that entirely. Vagus, there we go. I can't believe I missed that. I'm just a dork. I was looking at ...

Mark: [Crosstalk 00:02:58] too much.

Dave: All right. Before we start recording the show, for everyone listening, my team just yelled at me enough and said, "Dave, you have to get on Snapchat." I said, "Guys, do I really have to take my pants off at work?" Apparently, it's used in a different way now, so I just started Snapchatting. It's daveasprey, all in together. If you want to follow me on Snapchat, I did Snapchat when Skype was hiccuping and whatever. Mark, are you going to Snapchat?

Mark: You know what? I'm not going to Snapchat. No.

Dave: All right. I could see that [crosstalk 00:03:33].

Mark: I probably should, but I can't keep up with all the stuff.

Dave: You're kicking someone's ass and Snapchatting at the same time. The situational awareness is diminished with Snapchat I think so.

Mark: Yeah, exactly.

Dave: All right, let's go back to the interview, because you totally got me with an incredibly lame pun and there we go. What is Kokoro? Why do you name the book that? Kokoro, coconut oil?

Mark: Kokoro is the way I pronounce it, but it actually is Kokoro. It's a Japanese word if you hadn't figure that out and it means heart mind or whole mind. As you know, in English, there's no one word that capture that essence. We have to use two words like heart and mind.

I started using the word for my SEALFIT 50 hour crucible experience back in 2008 because what I notice when people are going through this crucible that they were having this transformative experience that I could only characterize as dropping in and connecting to their heart and being really vulnerable and asking for help and requiring help and receiving help from teammates to survive the program.

Then at the end, having this wonderful intimate connection that they've never experienced before, but all special operators and many people who have been in combat have experienced. That experience of loving your teammates so much that you're willing to take a bullet for them. Now, we don't have the Kokoro students take bullets and there's no live rounds or anything, but they were experiencing this which is unique in our society today. To have something that can trigger that and get people that connected.

Later on, fast forward a little bit, I started training SEALs in this yoga techniques that I have been using personally and I wanted to train them, because it was very effective at cultivating mindfulness and focus and skills that are really good for combat. I said, "You know what? I think Kokoro is a great term to use for this yoga too." You can experience Kokoro through a long term

dedicated practice of yoga and you can experience Kokoro through the fire of a crucible like hell week or Kokoro camp.

Dave: How much yoga do you have to do in order to experience that?

Mark: 10,000 hours. I'm just kidding. To me, yoga ...

Dave: Great answer.

Mark: Yeah, yoga can be experienced as little as 5 to 10 minutes a day. It's the consistency of practice. A good yoga program ... Kokoro yoga is what I call integrated training and it integrates breathing practice with functional movement. That functional movement can be traditional asana which most people associate with yoga, but it can also be crossfit, swing in a kettlebell or fighting type movements. Anything where you have to be aware of your body and space and time and connects your breathing with the movement and then learning how to move with it, more of an internal focus as oppose to an external focus. That's the functional movement.

We integrated breath, breath with movement and some form of mental training to include concentration, visualization or meditation. All three of those components exist in every practice session of Kokoro yoga. Those practice sessions can be an hour and a half long like my traditional Ashtanga practice was or five minutes like a quick morning routine. Wake up, do three to four minutes of your breathing, do five visualizations, visualize your day, boom you're out the door.

It's the really consistent practice day in and day out where you're cultivating the inner domain, curating your thoughts and emotions and really connecting with that warrior spirit. That's where you're going to find Kokoro in your life.

Dave: Ashtanga yoga, if you're listening to this and you're a yogi, it makes great sense, but a lot of people don't know that there even are different schools of yoga or different kinds of things. Ashtanga yoga prescribes a set of recurring poses, you do the same poses and the same order each time. You're just describing pretty different. You're talking about doing other types of movement that isn't the full Ashtanga series. What made you learn Ashtanga but then not do Ashtanga?

Mark: When I found Ashtanga, it reminded me of my martial arts training. Each series was a long kata and you had to memorize them and you had to have the progressive nature of going through it. Like graduating from the first series in Ashtanga to me was like getting your black belt and then you do the second series and be like your secondary black belt. That's the way I looked at it. It's very achievement oriented.

A lot of people approach Ashtanga that way which is, in my opinion, not a great way to approach yoga training. Many people don't know this, but Ashtanga yoga was developed by a guy named Shri Pattabhi Jois and it was transmitted to him by what we considered to be the father of modern yoga, a guy named Krishnamacharya.



Krishnamacharya taught this version of yoga to Pattabhi for the training of young athletes and warriors, so it's a very militant style of yoga. It's very militant. It's very challenging, it's aggressive, it's athletic. You stay in an attention all the time and it's very focused on the physical, but traditional yoga was meant to be about mental spiritual development. The physical was really just to prepare you to sit in meditation.

Dave: It's funny that you just described it that way. I practice a variety of yoga and I was pretty serious at yoga for probably eight, nine years. I was doing it on a very regular basis. I would do an Ashtanga class, but I always describe it as like militant yoga. You do a vinyasa ... I also found the Anusara form for a long time where it's a little bit more playful and a little bit more breathing and just energy focused.

You started out ... You're a military guy, so you are attracted to the more militant form of yoga, and then how long ago did you diverge and go into Kokoro yoga?

Mark: 2004. I noticed a couple of things. One was an event that happened. The other was a series of injuries and burnout that I was experiencing. Because you're doing the same set of sequence over and over, it would be like going into the gym and doing the same crossfit every single day. You develop dysfunctional movement patterns and a lot of people get injured in yoga. Yeah, in Ashtanga.

A lot of people actually get injured in crossfit, because they come to it with dysfunctional movement patterns that they don't have the sensitivity or the coaching to fix and then go from zero to hero and boom they spring a gasket. Same thing happens in Ashtanga.

I notice that I was getting injured and I was getting burned out and I said, "There's got to be a better way." The second thing that happened is I was mobilized ... As you mentioned in your introduction that I was a reserve officer for about half of my Navy SEAL career. In 2004, it was my time to go to Iraq. When I got to Baghdad, there was really no place for me to train. There's no gym, so most of the guys at the Joint Spec Ops Task Force that I was over at with the SEALs would just basically run the three mile loop around the compound and do PT. Just like calisthenics.

That wasn't good enough for me, so I found a little place behind ... We're at Saddam's palace compound. It's all packed, marked with bullet holes and mortar rounds and stuff like this. I found a little spot near this lake and I started to do early version of Kokoro yoga. I called it warrior yoga at the time. The traditional Ashtanga thing wasn't going to work for me, and so I just started experimenting, combining and integrating these different things and that's where it started.

What I found was that it was much more effective. I could do a recovery. I could choose ... This time Dave, I had enough knowledge of the movement and breathing practices to be able to combine them sensibly. If I needed to recover, I would choose the poses and the breathing and the visualization that we're going to lead to recovery and that help me ward off combat stress.

If I wanted a workout, then I would choose a more aggressive poses to warm up, then I would

actually get a workout in the middle of it like a crossfit wod, body weight only, because I didn't have any tools. Then I go into some seated poses and do my concentration training afterwards. It evolved in this very module or modular I should say practice that was customizable and personalized for anyone who wish to take it on.

That's what I try to convey in the book that authentic yoga as Krishnamacharya taught, it was personal practice, meant to be done on your own, meant to be adapted to your stage of life, your goals, the time of day. Only once in awhile would you do it in a group setting and that was like for an exhibition or to go get some skills like at a seminar. That's kind of how I approach it. I rarely go to a studio anymore for yoga unless I'm going to go get some additional training or I want to tune up or I want to go check in with a teacher that I've connected with.

Dave: You talk about combat stress and burnout, tell me more about that. What is that like? What happens and how does that relate to the rest of us who haven't been in combat?

Mark: PTSD can be experienced ... I would say most military members who go to combat experience some form of PTSD. It's your resiliency before you go in that will affect how much it impacts your nervous system and then the resiliency of your ability to bounce back and to recover from that.

Navy SEALs, we tend to be pretty immune, although we're not entirely immune to combat-related stress because of our training. Our training is so intense. It's very realistic. It's punishing. When we go to combat, we're like, "Okay, we've been here before." Guys tend to do fairly well in that environment. They don't tend to get combat-related stress as much.

Having said that, the effect of it is really debilitating because it's not something you're always consciously aware of, but it shows up in your emotions and anxiety and the sense of dread. Of course, you've heard about waking up in cold sweats and having flashbacks. All this just starts to really whittle away at your confidence and your nervous system is just completely afraid.

What happened is, let's say you spend a year in a combat zone or even six months, every day your sympathetic nervous system is just getting bombarded. It has no opportunity to calm down and so your cortisol levels are jacked. Everything is jacked and you get so out of balance that unless you aggressively work to overcome that balance by going in the opposite direction.

Everybody coming out of the combat zone should go to a monastery for a month and just practice breathing and meditation and some yoga and then probably be fine, because the parasympathetic would go to work to overcome that balance. Instead, they go right back to families that have missed them, there's a lot of stress from maybe going, gone, there's financial stress. It just exacerbates. It's a crushing issue.

A lot of military members who have lost their lives and have committed suicide from it. I'm hoping that at Kokoro yoga, we can do our small part in helping military members and others that could be anyone in life. Think about a busy corporate executive. It's almost like your version of combat going out into the business world every day. It moves so fast and there's so many stressors.

We can use these skills as an antidote. Every day, if you're doing 10, 20 minutes of Kokoro yoga, your breathing and movement and mindfulness or concentration training, then it's going to help you ward off. It's like you go through your day with this force field around you. These stresses just bouncing off of you. You become very stable and balanced and just non-attached to those stressors so they don't affect you as much.

Dave: I see what you're saying there. The CEO stresses is different. You get the daily grind where there's always more, always more. I've never been in combat, but I have veterans working for Bulletproof and certainly friends who haven't. It's something that hangs over your head, you're waiting. You're not actually in combat, so you get a waiting time, but waiting with pressure, because you don't know.

Then you get intense firefight for some amount of time and then waiting. There's a pressure cooker mentality. On the business side, it's different in that there's always something to do. No matter how hard you push ... It's like running a marathon, but the finish line is never there. No matter how hard you run, there's probably someone next to you. There might be different people and they're always running too, so we tend to grind ourselves down.

There are more than a few CEOs who have PTSD from something in their life. It's different than combat PTSD, but it's the same activation of the brain. I had lots of PTSD from the way I was born. I had the cord wrapped around my neck when I was born. Birth trauma like that will literally ... Your nervous system believes that everything in the world is a threat because that's the way you're wired. I've rewired myself that way. I don't have that in my behavior patterns anymore. It's lost its charge.

You could someone like something triggers them. It can be something big or something little. Is it your experience that you can take someone with that kind of ... We'll say non-military PTSD, but trauma-derived nonetheless. Whether it's trauma or not, it's not that relevant. How quickly could Kokoro yoga help shift someone, CEO or not, out of that reactive post-traumatic sort of thing into a more functional pattern that's going to improve their happiness?

Mark: Great question. Of course, it depends upon the receptivity to the training and so if they've had some prior yoga experience or meditation or even athletic training, then you've got some neurological pathways that are going to be receptive to this. I would say generally, 30 days of training done day to day will have a profound effect. This is generally the feedback.

I get feedback from people said they've been practicing for two weeks or three weeks and boom, all the sudden, things start to change for them. The way they respond to stress, their world view, their ability to reframe very quickly. Something they used to take on as negative stress and have it be boiling with them for hours or even days. They're able to let it go really quickly because they've created a new mental orientation around their relationship to the world and other people in it and also the information that they're receiving.

It really can be as quick as 30 days and we just launched a 30 day challenge and gave it away for free. We had a couple thousand people enroll just because I wanted people to experience this.

It's only like seven or eight minutes of training a day, sometimes a little bit longer. The feedback has been phenomenal. It can happen fairly quickly. The brain will rewire itself really quickly. You know that more than anybody.

It's always seeking new ways to run the rivulets of information. The breathing in particular is so intensely ... We say in yoga that the breath is the link between the body and mind and then the mind and spirit. The breathing exercises are like a whole new way to use your brain and they just stimulate all sorts of activity, all of it good. When you combine the breathing with the movement with the visualization, magic happens. It can happen pretty quickly.

Dave: I appreciate hearing that. It is hard for some people to do that. I didn't when I first started practicing yoga. It's actually kind of a cool story. I just met the woman who's now my wife and we were just getting to know each other. She hadn't moved to where I lived yet, so we had a long distance relationship and she said, "Yeah, you should start doing yoga." I'm like, "Okay. I'm dating a hot woman, all right, I'll do some yoga."

Mark: Why not?

Dave: Like, "What the heck, sure. Maybe next time you see me I'll be more flexible, it will be fun." She gave me this great piece of advice. She said, "You know, what I recommend you do is you find the hottest yoga teacher you can possibly find." I said, "Okay, I like this advice, but why?" She said, "So you'll actually go to yoga." I'm like, "Okay. I like this advice and I like this woman it turns out."

What effect that had and just the fact that I had not much else to do was that I went to class probably for five times a week which wasn't seven days a week, but it was enough to really get me immersed in it so that I could experience some of the benefits you're talking about. Eventually, you sort of get to the front where you don't feel right if you don't at least do a few poses every day just because your body gets used to it.

I don't know if I felt a difference in 30 days, so I was given I was doing hour long classes with different forms of yoga at different times of the day. The recurring thing is something that I've not heard anyone say on Bulletproof Radio before, but I think there's great value to that. Having a practice that happens every day in order to get maximum results. What about on the exercise side of things? What do you recommend there outside of the yoga side of things in the book? Just talk about what the exercise program looks like.

Mark: What I recommend is that your yoga is a complement to a solid functional fitness program. It doesn't replace it. It didn't work for me when I was doing Ashtanga for my fitness program. Like I said earlier, it led to injury and a monostructural exercise just as if I was a long distance runner. It's an incomplete fitness. A lot of people use yoga for fitness and it's looked as a group exercise in this country.

This is one of the things I want to try to change with this book. What my routine is, because I also run SEAL fit is I do an hour and a half, sometimes two hours. I have the time and it's part of my routine, but it doesn't have to be. It could be a half hour or to an hour of varied functional

fitness that includes several really intense workout space throughout the week. Then others of lesser degrees of intensity and also to include some form of weight training, so you had that resistance because it's phenomenal for growth hormones and testosterone balance, those types of things.

It could look like a really good crossfit coach. You can build a training plan for you. You got that, but every time you do a hard physical training session, your balance your system out with some sort of recovery. Kokoro yoga provides that. It doesn't have to be Kokoro yoga, it can also be just active stretching, some sort of mindfulness. It could be rolling out in a foam roller.

The point is, you want to have more focus than is common on the post-workout recovery. Kokoro yoga has a lot of that benefit, because now what you've jacked up your nervous system, you stimulated, you've thrown energy out in the world. You've expanded all this energy. Now, you want to basically rebalance, reabsorb energy and recover. This leaves to progressive building of your fitness skills without degrading your performance through ruts and burnouts and being force to take time off through injury or through not getting enough sleep because your cortisol level is jacked or something like that.

I would say to summarize a functional fitness program where you're doing a variety of different training to include weight lifting and high intensity interval training. Some hard, some medium, some long, some short, because variety is the spice of the physical life. Then to balance all that with a daily practice of anywhere from five minutes to 45 minutes to an hour of Kokoro yoga. That's what I do and it turned out to be, at 52, to be a really incredible balance. Working out and working in I call it. Those two together are mutually supportive.

Dave: All right. I could put my ankles behind my head, but I can't do the splits. Talk to me about flexibility. I've got some flexibility, but what the hell, why can't I do splits? Give me the secrets to flexibility.

Mark: I can't either.

Dave: What?

Mark: I know, right? The point is to be doing it. I would look at flexibility as a secondary physical benefit. Maybe almost a tertiary physical benefit to the movement of yoga, the movement practice of yoga. The primary physical benefit Dave, and I know you're going to approach this, is spinal health. We want to flex the spine, twist our spine.

We're working in almost like you would work a paperclip, except your spine isn't going to snap eventually. The paperclip will. It's just going to get healthier. You're going to be keeping the space between the vertebrae open allowing the blood and the energy to flow through your vertebrae. If your spine is healthy, then your nervous system is going to have greater health and that will radiate out to the rest of your body.

Spinal health needs to great structural physical health. That's the primary benefit of yoga movement practice. Secondary benefit I would say is detoxification. You're helping to detoxify

your internal organs by twisting or squeezing them and also your mind. You're detoxifying your mind and getting much clearer focus of your mind. The mind body system is starting to really fire at a much more efficient manner. The third would be flexibility both in joint articulation and muscular flexibility.

Here's another place where I differ from the traditional yoga community. It doesn't matter if you can put your feet behind your head. What matters is that you have a balanced structure and that your muscles ... After you tighten your muscles, you lengthen them and that you're working on your flexibility for your entire life because a flexible body is a limber body, it's nimble and it's not going to break or get sick as easily.

There's a lot of ego in the yoga community around being able to do certain poses and always heavy to do harder and harder poses. It is irrelevant. Even Krishnamacharya would say those are ... They're stupid human tricks and when you're 50, you don't need to stand on your hand for 20 minutes a day. You don't need to do poses where you twist yourself into pretzel and put your foot over your head.

Those are fun to do when you're young and athletic and it makes us seem like you're doing some esoteric movement, but they really are irrelevant. You could stick with 10 or maybe if you're aggressive, 20 basic poses and get all the benefits.

Dave: I have always amused by the idea of a yoga competition.

Mark: Yeah, I know, [crosstalk 00:28:12].

Dave: It's like, "Who are you competing with?" It's like yourself, right?

Mark: Right. That's all ego. That shouldn't exist in the world.

Dave: I am with you there. It is all ego. I also agree with you there on putting the ankle behind my head. So what? It exactly a stupid human trick.

Mark: Unless you're in the bedroom, there's no utility value for that.

Dave: That's a fair point. I have to work on that. Right. There's something though about continuous improvement and you get that. That's core to what you do, core to your program. Where I'm like, "All right, today I can do this pose. Tomorrow, I want to do one millimeter more." At the same time, that's a young person's game and we're all getting older. No matter how old you are, you get older every day, 24 hours at a time.

Mark: [Crosstalk 00:29:04].

Dave: You might get 36 hours at a time. I don't know. What I find is that ... I'm in my early 40s, but there's a thing where I want to continuously make my splits better. I also know that my body doesn't really want me to do that, so there's that intention which is also a part of yoga. I'm interested doing the splits not as a stupid human trick, but just for that, "Okay, I've continued

..." I've shown myself that I'm making progress in the right direction which is just a physical progress even though most of the progress is actually more meditative. You write a lot about meditation in the book as well.

Mark: Yes.

Dave: Talk with our listeners about how you meditate, why part of the warrior spirit is meditation. What's your take on meditation, because it's a little different than most people would expect?

Mark: First, I want to address your last point real quickly. It's okay to have a physical goal in yoga. I don't want to say it's completely relevant. It's okay, but just recognize it that it's a goal that some of you are working toward, but that the primary benefits really are the internal ones. The internal benefits are ... They're not benchmarkable. They are if you hook up one of your funky machines. They are [crosstalk 00:30:25].

Dave: Yeah, that one.

Mark: Yeah, that one behind you, that biohack machine. You can track the progress and see what's happening to your brain waves and neural pathways and all that, but from an experienced standpoint, subjective experience, all that we can do is talk about it. In the monasteries, they would track progress by the quality of the conversation. Did the aspirant have the insights and is he present in his conversation? Could the head monk or the guru detect that the mind is wandering or he's in his ego state?

It was very hard without a master so to speak to determine, "Hey, am I making progress?" We recommend journaling and feedback from others as a great way to track your progress, how would people respond to you. What I noticed very quickly, people will start responding to you differently because you're showing up different. You're showing up more positive, more authentic, more grounded, more peaceful.

You're smiling, your eyes are clear, you're able to have direct eye contact, deep eye contact with people because you've gotten rid of any fear that may exist in personal relationships. All of a sudden people are like, "What are you eating? Are you doing Bulletproof Coffee or something like that?" You know what I mean? Something is going on.

Dave: Yeah, something is different.

Mark: Yeah, something is different. It's hard to track. It's really subjective and you can just feel your progress as you progress. Meditation, I love this subject. In the West, you're just like everyone is conflated yoga to group physical fitness, group exercise. Everyone has also conflated meditation with just sitting with the eyes closed.

"From sitting with my eyes closed and watching my breath, I'm meditating." That's true, but the way we teach it is meditation, first of all, authentic meditation, has some prerequisites. That's why the yogis taught movement and then breath and then concentration before meditation, because it's very difficult. If not, outright impossible for a busy Westerner who has trained their

rational mind to be like a 400 pound dead lift for us.

It's very difficult for us to just immediately leap over to a meditative state which is a deep state of focused presence where you're focusing that awareness unto a particular subject. It could be something you're trying to learn or the yogis would say first prerequisites on focus on your own patterns. That's why we would focus on the chakra or the energy systems and route out this functionality or what they call knots. Knots in the energy system which were holding you back.

It required almost a complete re-framing of your life like your birth experience. Meditation in the way that is traditionally taught by the ancient yogis was an effective form to overcome those early childhood anxieties. That's meditation.

What most people practice as meditation is either concentration training, concentrating on the breath. We're still focusing on one things. A box breathing that I teach is a concentration practice. Inhale, hold your breath, exhale, hold your breath. What happens is I'm teaching my brain to concert on that one thing. Then whenever it starts running off with something else that is not that one thing, I'm teaching it to notice and to bring it back and to let it go.

What happens is I'm able to concentrate for much longer periods of time on one thing or of narrow range of things. I'm also getting very, very clear that when my mind starts to wander off, I notice it much quicker than used to. I can bring my attention back. It's attention control training. In fact, that's what the SEALs call that, attention control training.

We first start with concentrating to get our mind more precise, enable to focus on one thing. Then the second form of meditation that's popular here in the West is mindfulness. That came from Buddhism. Mindfulness is similar to concentration, except it's really the opposite. It's just to be aware of everything that comes up, but don't attempt to control it.

Mindfulness is very relaxing and that's why studies on mindfulness have a lot of, "Hey, it has a big impact on stress. It does trigger that parasympathetic nervous system because you're calming your body down. If you're calming your body down, you're calming your brain down because that's an organ." Mindfulness will drop you from gamma, beta, into an alpha state, but it's not meditation. It's still a pre-cursor. It's preparatory training. Does that make sense?

I would put that in a sensory awareness category. Then breath, for breath training, breath training calms our nervous system down. Concentration training allows our mind to focus on one thing. Mindfulness or sensory awareness training expands our awareness to be able to pay attention to all the little nuance things that go around. We actually expand our sense of our reach both externally and internally.

Now, when we practice those three things, now we can get into meditation where we can take that concentration and then awareness and start to narrow our focus and deeply concentrate on something that we want to know more than before. We want to master a subject or a skill or ourselves. Of course, the yoga path was to master the self, but they do say that meditation has both what they call a bhukti and a mukti orientation.

There's internal mastery and then there's external mastery. That's why Kokoro yoga, they maximize your human potential. That's your inner potential so that you can perform in life. As the warrior path was both. We were not trying to back out of the world and just sit around together in a circle meditating. Warriors need to be in the world like you. CEOs were in the world. We're conquering. We're doing good works. We're creating stuff that helps people.

The warrior went into battle to serve his family, his tribe, his people. Yet, you couldn't go into battle if you hadn't master yourself. The warrior learns to win in their mind through the yoga practices before they step foot in the battlefield. Self-mastery comes before service. Internal development comes before external performance.

Dave: What do you do in the way of visualization? You've talked a lot about self-mastery, but a lot of times people have a hard time visualizing self-mastery, because you don't know what it looks like until you've achieved some degree of it, right? What's your visualization exercise? What do you teach in Kokoro yoga? Kokoro, sorry.

Mark: That's fine. We have a few. Visualization I might add can be used for concentration and meditation. It can be a practice of self. Like a guided visualization is ... It's kind of like a concentration practice. Of course, we know through sports performance that visualization can be used to practice a skill. I use that in that way.

I'm currently using visualization for healing because I keep injuring a back muscle. Again, back to crossfit when I try to snatch your clean and jerk too heavy and all the sudden, boom. I've got some structural issue with my lower back related to an early childhood injury, spinal injury which now keeps flaring up because I've exposed it with the lifting.

You can visualize energy flowing to that area in your body and there's a saying that where your mind goes, where your awareness goes, energy flows. Then it helps the healing process, so that's another way I use visualization. When it comes to performance, it's something that's not a skill. It's like visualizing myself, meeting my mission with SEALFIT and Unbeatable Mind. What I do is use my imagination to create a future image or viewpoint of what that success looks like.

It just helps to write it down. It helps to see what other people have done like finding mentors and seeing what their life looks like, what's the potential. To think much bigger than you believe even at the time is important. To put it out, far enough that you have a reasonable chance of achieving it. Then what you do is you come back and you re-engage this vision every day and you play it internally.

What happens is that ... This vision gets stronger and clearer and it feels more significant. It starts to feel heavier almost. Obviously, you're not weight it, but you're easier to lock onto it. You're able to hold your attention longer, because there's more energy wrapped in this vision every time you bring it up in your mind and you add emotion, the color and you can watch ...

Most people starts like a static image and then slowly it becomes like a motion picture. A lot of people starts from a third person perspective where you're watching yourself to then you merge with a first-person perspective. Those are all signs that you're getting better. You're getting

close to the mark.

I believe that this is like a magnetic force that just inexorably draws you closer to it. Also, by practicing this future state where you see yourself as the person who's worthy, who's got the character and the relationships and the skills and the knowledge and the personality to accomplish this beautiful vision. You begin to develop an internal confidence.

It works on your nervous system and your subconscious to begin to have that vision become more believable and felt inside of you. That would be like a long term visualization where I say 20 years out, SEALFIT and Unbeatable Mind, my companies have impacted 100 million people. What does that look like, feel like, I visualize it every day.

Then there's the shorter term. This is really the last way that I use. This is more performance oriented. Let's say I was going for the crossfit games which is not going to happen probably over again in my situation. For awhile, a few years ago, I missed it by one in the master division back in 2012 or '13 and I thought, I'm going to get this some day."

I've removed that as a goal because my back injury keeps preventing me from doing it. Let's say that was a goal and it was six months out or nine months out. Now, we have a very specific goal. This is classic sports performance to you. Visualize yourself on that day, accomplishing the goal, kicking ass and taking names. Then you practice that every day.

When I talk to sports teams, the team have a collective vision of what victory looks like to them. It could be a championship and then the team visualizes that while each individual also visualizes them in their skills, improving their skills, but the team visualizes the win and practice is winning in their mind. Then as you get closer and closer to that event, your confidence starts to build because everyone has got a clear picture.

Navy SEALs do this when they go out in a mission like the Bin Laden raid, I reference that. I wasn't on it, but I had some good friends on the raid. They rehearsed the read in an actual building that was a mock up. They would walk through it. They would go a medium speed, they go a fast speed, they go blanks, then Simunition and live rounds. They would visualize it before walking through it.

They have a visual and then a walk through and then they do a debrief where they go back again through what they did. Hundreds of times of doing this have got such a solid mental representation as a team of what the team is looking like. What are all the moving parts look like. Where are the critical nodes are that could fail and, of course, those always happen.

When they happen, you immediately are able to execute the plan B or the plan C because you've practice it in your mind as a pre-rehearsal many times over. Visualization I think is super powerful for business executives to use and I'm a big proponent of ... I call it these four skills which are money when it comes to the performance side of Kokoro yoga. One is breath control, that's why I teach the box breathing practice. We've talked about that before.

Then the second is this notion of positivity. It's more than just happy talk. Positivity is this idea of

rewiring your entire mind, body system so that any negative that comes up, you can reframe it. This is really part of the stress management process we talked about earlier. Reframing, developing non-attachment to outcomes. Developing the habit of a positive attitude in relation to other human beings. Positive internal dialogue.

Your mind talk, yourself talk is always performance and you don't defeat yourself and then supporting that with a positive emotional state and being able to very quickly transmute emotions that are negative and maybe debilitating in the past into something more powerful, the second skill.

The third is visualization. We just talked through that. Then the fourth is task orientation. Being able to focus in the right task at the right time for the right reason and being able to laser focus on that task until you've reached completion and then you move on to the next task. It's something, of course, busy people who are over saturated with task and commitments would benefit from practicing.

Dave: Your task is basically Snapchatting for eight seconds every two minutes and then just ...

Mark: Yeah, just keep doing it all day long.

Dave: It's interesting to talk about that level of focus and execution, but I find a lot of the CEOs I talk with, they don't necessarily prioritize their task very well. Honestly, if you're a CEO and you're spending all your day on Facebook, we could have bigger issues.

Mark: No doubt.

Dave: There is this constant thing. I'll ask anyone of the creative entrepreneur types and they're like, "Oh yeah, I want to do that and I want to do that, and I want to do that, and I want to do that." That never stop, because that's ...

Mark: That's true.

Dave: That's who they are. I'm like that. There's only 4000 products that I want to make that are Bulletproof that will totally work. I prioritize, I'm like, "Just pick the top 2000 and launch for tomorrow and we're all good." My team is like, "Dave, you're a crackhead." We're talking about sticking to a task like that. Do you have any advice? You're running a company. You've been on very well planned and well executed mission, how do you deal with that? I have a lot of good ideas, but I want to stick to just one of them. How do you pick which one to stick with?

Mark: It's not easy. We always want to chase the next shiny thing and I come to that sometimes as well. I think it becomes a practice. The more you do the practices we've been talking about, the more patient you become. You can pause and reflect and say, "Is this yes or am I just feeling a yes because of my old patterns?"

What I started to do is say no or maybe all the time to give me some space to reflect upon it. Is this a really no or do I really want to do this, but at least I haven't committed to it yet. Then nine

times out of time, it tends of being a no and that no I've learned is in service to a bigger yes that comes along later and I'm like, "Oh, thank God I didn't say yes to that because this is what meant to happen."

I'm wiggling out of a book deal right now because I said yes when it was just not a good idea but it was kind of in my ego mind, this is a year ago. I'm working on this mantra to say no to the bigger yes. I recently read a book. One of my principles in Unbeatable Mind training is the kiss principle, because Navy SEALs keep it simple.

Navy SEALs have to be very simple with the way we live our lives. It's the warriors' way. We got to be able to live with a kit bag and be able to grab your bag and your weapon and go at a moment's notice. You may come back and find your house cleared out and your car gone, your bank account empty. I've seen that happen to a lot of my friends and you got to show up at work the next day ready for the mission.

You just become very unattached to physical objects, even unattached to your own brilliance and your own performance, but you just show up every day. My first martial arts master had a saying, I love it and it really represents what I'm talking about. It's one day, one lifetime. One day, one lifetime. All that we got is today. What are going to do today to move the dial toward our mission success? It can't be the work on 2000 products, it can only be the work on one major initiative.

You might have a few sub task that you've delegated out. Your team could be working on 10 things, hopefully not the same person, but we all got to be working on one main thing at a time. Part of the warriors practice is to define what that one thing is. Other great thinkers have always nailed this and it's one of the most important concepts. Stephen Covey used to say that your main thing is to keep your main thing the main thing. I love that. Isn't that a great quote?

In my book, the Way of the SEAL, I came up with a process I called the target selection process using a model that I developed that was based upon the Navy SEAL target selection model. You go in a mission, going after Bin Laden. There might be a number of targets that have to be achieved along the way. Certainly, Bin Laden was a target amongst other targets to be selected from.

The target selection process in the military is really elaborate but it helps narrow down what the most high valued targets are and then we just focus on those one at a time. Boom, boom, boom, as a unit that is. It's the same way. We have a target selection process that will help you to determine whether the target you're looking at fits your personality skill sets and your company right now, because that's always evolving.

The fits is an acronym. Whether it's important. Is it the most important target that's going to lead to the highest return on investment. The T is, is the timing right? As you know, especially as an entrepreneur, sometimes you might have the best idea, but your timing is wrong and the market is not ready for it or you're not ready for it. I've experienced this like where I'm way ahead of my team.

Even though what I want to develop is a great idea and it fits me, it's really important ... The team doesn't have the skills. I'm missing some critical talent, blah-blah-blah and I'm literally nine months away from being able to execute on it because I got to fill those gaps, so timing is critical.

Then the S is, is it simple enough that you can communicate it effectively and get everyone wrapped around the vision? Complexity kills in business and in life, so we want to keep things simple and really be able to radically focus on the right targets that are going to have the highest return on investment.

Then the last thing I want to say in this subject Dave is this notion of de-cluttering. I am relentless about de-cluttering my life and it's freed me up to be able to train for three hours a day and to be able to do podcast and to be able to write books and stuff. It's a process that you have to look at every day.

Dave: Are you reading that Marie Kondo book? Are you folding your socks and underwear in a special pattern and turning away everything that doesn't bring you joy? Please don't tell me that.

Mark: I've never heard of that. No.

Dave: Thank God.

Mark: I know there's [crosstalk 00:51:27].

Dave: We'll talk about that [crosstalk 00:51:28].

Mark: I'm mostly talking about de-cluttering commitments and people. I don't sell any boards or directors. I don't go out to dinner socially very rarely. Maybe once a month.

Dave: You do it when you want to, not because you [crosstalk 00:51:48].

Mark: Right. I don't watch TV. I try to spend every waking moment really focused on something that's going to even improve me, improve my team, improve my business or improve the world. In order to do that, I had to really de-clutter from ... I don't have any toys like boats or motorcycles. I don't go out into the desert in the weekend to do ATV-ing. I try to spend time with my son. If he says, "Let's go for a bike ride," that's what we do, because that's quality time.

You know what I'm saying? I'm not putting myself out through the model, I fall down in this area quite a bit. I've just noticed that it's really important to constantly say no and to let go and rid of commitments, because we just take too much on in our world and we get the sense that the world is moving too fast. That's why you ask me if are you going to take up Snapchat. There's no way. No way. I don't want to add one more thing. I'm sure it's brilliant, but ...

Dave: It's funny. I hold things up to a lens like that and I'll actually do Snapchat only if it's going to add value and if it's going to add more value than it cost me. If I'm going to be able to reach out to a whole bunch of people ... If Snapchat is the way to talk to me when I was 19, if I could go back

20 something years, 24 or 25 years. If that was the way I could have reached me and made me go, "Oh my God, if I just do these three things, I'm going to avoid all this pain," then I'll do Snapchat all day long. That's part of my mission.

In fact, I just had a meeting with five people on my team and reached out to two big Snapchat experts. I talked with Gary V and I talked with Benny Luo who runs NextShark. These are friends or people I've met and I'm like, "Is it worth it?" That was my one question for my team. All the people from different ages who use Snapchat just to determine whether I was really going to turn on my account because, "Yeah, I'm going to try it and see if it's adding value."

Very similar thinking with you there, because for me, that's the most toxic thing. If I really had to do an eight second video every five minutes of useful, I'm never going to do that, but I do a couple a day maybe and it's an experiment.

Mark: Yeah, let me know how that goes.

Dave: I will, but the book I was talking about with tidying up or de-cluttering, Marie Kondo, has been on the New York Times best-selling, was for 80 weeks straight and just wrote a book called The Secret Japanese Arts of Tidying Up.

Mark: My wife does have that. Yeah.

Dave: My wife has it too and I loved it but she took all of my blender, coffee maker, grinders and put them under the counter. As a functional human being, I didn't care how magically tidy my kitchen counter looks if I can't make my goddamn Bulletproof Coffee in the morning like, "There are limits, okay?"

Mark: I'm with you. Yeah.

Dave: There's like a tension between functional and beautiful and calm. There's got to be a tension there and so for other things, you have to ...

Mark: Most people or either skewed toward OCD or ADD, they want to find the center point so we can balance and not take these things too seriously. We've talked about this before, but when it comes to nutrition, people say, "Hey, which form of a nutrition?" I think of some elaborate formula that I have and I said, "I generally try to eat whole foods in the right proportion that my body desires 80% of the time. Then 20% of the time, I don't give a crap. I'll eat whatever because it's impossible to be perfect and it takes all the fun out of it." That's my course of nutrition right there. I tell you what, it's worked for me. You know what I mean?

Dave: It's definitely working, you're looking pretty good.

Mark: Thanks.

Dave: Then again, this is something I didn't ask you on the last interview. We get a chance to chat socially occasionally which is fun too without cameras and recorders and all that. You're pretty

much like a real life Superman. A lot of people think that. You're a warrior literally. You look kind of like Superman. You've got that V shape and you're just a successful guy in multiple fronts in your life. If everything is a Superman, what's your biggest weakness? What's your Kryptonite?

Mark: People think I'm a total purist. This kind of goes ... I'm a total purist and I'm not. I love red wine and occasionally we'll over do it. That's Kryptonite for me. That's part of the SEAL culture though that I'm just kept on. It was kind of fun. Myself assessment is off right now. I'm Superman, I don't have any other weaknesses.

Dave: "Shut up Dave, I'm using my laser vision on you right now."

Mark: I'm going to stare you down. I will come back at you. I don't know. Maybe it's taken me awhile to believe that I have the capacity to do what I described to you a little while ago with my vision. That's been a growing thing in me. I didn't leave the SEALs in 2012 ... Or actually active duty was much earlier than that, but my first business was the brewing company, [growing out 00:57:13] on a brewing company.

That's about as far from what I'm doing today as you can imagine. I would say my own vision has needed to clarify for my own purpose to unfold in this world. That I would think was a weakness for a very long time and it's one that I'm very cognizant of that requires daily practice. I don't let down on that, that's why I'm so much an advocate for things like Kokoro yoga where you turn it into a daily practice. You habituate working the inner demand, because if you don't, it atrophies just like your body.

If you don't get to the gym four, five times a week and do the work, then you're marking time and as we get older, we're sliding backwards and then accelerating backwards. I do believe that we can really stem the tide and really enhance the quality of our life and most likely our longevity by daily focus on physical, mental emotion, intuitional, spiritual training and that's what I'm all about in my own life, but also teaching that. I'm still trying to wrap my head around my Kryptonite, but I guess my Kryptonite is I wish I had known this when I was 18 or 19 and a lot more, but that's wishful thinking.

Dave: It is wishful thinking, but a lot of what motivates me is like if someone who just told me all this crap, in a way, I could have heard it when I was younger. My capacity to do what I do would have been 10 times what it is today. It's already pretty good. I'm doing all right. I'm helping other people, but I suffered so much and I did so many stupid things. Frankly, I heard so many people, because I just didn't know any better. I hear you there.

Mark: I think about this a bit Dave. Like my son is 16, he grew up with the internet and iPhones. He grew up consuming content like this ... I grew up with three channels on the TV and a cassette deck and an 8-track later in my car. I have a lot of hope. When we met at Abundance, I love Peter Diamandis' message. I have a very abundant view of the future. Even though we are in the most negative seems like anyways.

From my experience, most negative period in American history from the media and politics and the large consumeristic battle being played out between big pharma and medicine and

government and bureaucrats. It's just really negative and then what's going on the world, but I'm very optimistic about the future, because I see the next generation coming up and their brains are not like ours. They've been stimulated in so many different ways. They're consuming content like freaking carnivores.

It's content that we've spent our entire lives to learn through experience. They're soaking it up and a lot of it is hitting home and they're going to be able to ... I think they're going to change the world a lot faster than you and I ever will. That's part of my mission also is to really affect the younger set so they can [crosstalk 01:00:29].

Dave: Got to make sure the content is worthwhile. I did some math. Bulletproof Radio and I think some of the other content, I just looked at the number of downloads where it's like 32 million now. It's somewhere around 165 entire human lifetimes spent listening to Bulletproof Radio. I'm kind of a mass murderer if I'm making content that's not worth time. That's actually a weight and is one I'm happy to carry, but it only gets bigger.

Mark: Congratulations.

Dave: I get it, but then I'm like, "Did I do something worthwhile today?" Like, "Did I create content that did something?" With those numbers, I don't want to play around. I don't want to do it wrong, right?

Mark: No, it becomes a responsibility. Yeah, we just hit a million, so I got little ways to go to catch up to you and [crosstalk 01:01:11].

Dave: A million hours is a million hours. That is something that most media companies 10 years ago or 20 years ago, they're dreaming about that kind of radio. It was big responsibility but you're well cut out for that. Absolutely.

Mark: Thanks.

Dave: All right. Well, I've already asked you or talked through recommendations for being Bulletproof. I asked you what I think is going to become my new question for a second time guest which is, "What's your biggest weakness?"

Mark: That's a good one. Yeah.

Dave: I'll answer that too because I was going to ask me that now, so I'm just going to answer it. When people do job interviews, it's like the dumbest question you could ever ask a candidate. "So what's your biggest weakness?" I've been asked that at least 10 times in job interviews in my life and my answer has always been the same. "Sometimes I work too hard." The boss is like, "Yes, I want to hire this guy." It's a dumb interview question.

Actually, that has been one of our biggest weaknesses historically. I put too much into my career and now that it changed my career focus in putting food on the table to having more of a mission and to achieving good without the, "I need to have a job," kind of perspective and just

moving from a survival to a thriving perspective. I think I've most resolved that problem, but that certainly has been a weakness for me historically. Mark, where can people find out more about Kokoro yoga? Kokoro, goddamn it. Kokoro, okay.

Mark: That's a heavy penalty Dave. The book website where you can learn about the book and also get a free chapter if you just want to take a look at the first chapter, it's called [warrioryoga.com](http://warrioryoga.com). The funny story there, I told you, I was calling it Warrior Yoga for years, and so I contracted to write a book as Warrior Yoga. We are going to launch the program as Warrior Yoga.

Right on the cusp of ... Book is entirely written, we're about to launch it, but a month before, I find out ... I was too dumb to do my research that there's a trademark for Warrior Yoga. Some guy at Santa Monica has a trademark for it and he got it in 2000 so it's not a new thing. It's not like he was trying to get the jump on me. He did get the jump on me by about 16 years.

Anyways, I contacted him to see if there was a way to buy it or license it. He didn't have anything to do with that, so I had to change it, so we chose Kokoro because it's got deep meaning, but I'll have to brand the term because it's obviously hard to say. It doesn't mean anything to people until they get connected with it. It will be a longer battle to brand it.

Anyways, back to your question, I kept the domain, so [warrioryoga.com](http://warrioryoga.com) which would be great for SEO and stuff is where you can learn about the book. [unbeatablemind.com](http://unbeatablemind.com) is where all the online training for Kokoro yoga will be housed or hosted. You can learn about my Unbeatable Mind Academy there which is also a really cool online program. The Kokoro yoga challenges ending on the 24th of this month and we'll be rolling out an online practice community for Kokoro. It's going to be really, really amazing.

Then for folks who are a little bit more rugged and looking for a series of challenge, then [sealfit.com](http://sealfit.com) is where you can learn about SEALFIT training, a Kokoro Camp which is our 50 hour crucible, the 20x team and sport. We just did an event with Fresno State which is a Division 1 football team and we're going to do Alabama pretty soon. We're starting to work with D1 and D2 college football teams and other sports in high schools and corporate teams. Really, really powerful training that we do through SEALFIT.

Dave: Beautiful. Mark, thanks for being on the show. It's always a pleasure to get to hang out whether we're recording a show or just hanging out and I'll look forward to the next time we'll get to see each other.

Mark: Likewise Dave. Thank you very much.

Dave: If you like today's show, you know what to do. Pick up a copy of Mark Divine's latest book. You'll find that there's neat stuff in there that's different than what you'd find in a normal book about yoga, because let's face it, most yoga, you should actually do yoga instead of read about it. There's enough in here that's worth your energy to read. Have an awesome day and leave us some good reviews on iTunes. Yeah, you can follow me on Snapchat at [daveasprey](https://www.snapchat.com/add/daveasprey), all run together. Have an awesome day.

