

Announcer: Bulletproof Radio: The State of High Performance.

Dave: You're listening to Bulletproof Radio with Dave Asprey. Today's cool fact of the day is that young scientists are doing more innovative research than you'd ever possibly believe. When I was a high schooler doing a science fair, I don't remember what I did, but it was pretty lame. This year's winners, it was 2018 Regeneron Science Talent Awards. This is the nation's oldest, prestigious search for young scientists, found these three teenagers. A guy named Benjy developed a mathematical model that uses disease data to predict how weather patterns spread spores of a fungus, which caused the Irish potato famine. I can't even imagine doing this as a young person. How would you have access and resources and things like that?

Second place was a young woman named Natalia Orlovsky from Pennsylvania, who looked at the response of lung epithelial cells to fluids in vaping. Third place went to Isani Singh of Colorado, who figured out that women with Turner Syndrome, which is a genetic abnormality, do have some cells with two X chromosomes. What's going on here is the sum of human knowledge is greater than it's ever been in all of history, and it's more accessible than it's ever been, because you don't need card catalogs and microfiche, or even mostly libraries. Although libraries are amazing places, they're not the only places to go to learn things.

We have a whole generation of young people like this young man and these two young women who are going out there and using this knowledge at a relatively young age to create even more human knowledge. We're at this point where we're creating this feedback system. We're snowballing our knowledge, and people who don't have a PhD can go out and make actually useful, interesting new discoveries and be seen and heard and share those discoveries, which lead to even more discoveries. I think that's a fascinating cool fact for the day. We're getting better at figuring stuff out, and it's sharing what we learn to the point where we can do it at a younger age than ever before. At the same time, we're going to be living longer than ever before, which is a great combination for making the world an awesome place.

Today's guest is Chenoa Maxwell. She's going to talk today about living life without limit, but the reason that I've asked her to come on is, there are lots of people who would like to talk about that, but she's gone through an incredible journey. She was a former actress in popular indie films like *Hav Plenty* and *G*, which was a retelling of *The Great Gatsby*. Had her own TV series, did a docu series on the Oprah Winfrey network, and even did a series of web celebrity interviews called *Closet Talk TV*, and is an artist as well.

She's got a fantastic story that led her to what she does today, where she does coaching for executives and people to just unlock human potential, but she does it not just as an entrepreneur, but as an artist, a visionary, and she runs a company called *Live Limitlessly*, which teaches people that strange art of personal mastery. If you've listened to the show for all of 500 episodes or some portion of them, you know that personal mastery comes from this fusion of what's going on outside of your biology, inside of your biology, and then inside your head. What I want to get into here is what's going on

in all those levels, but very specifically inside her head, in her path, and what that has to do to teach you. So, Chenoa, welcome to the show.

Chenoa: Oh, hi Dave, and hey listeners, how are you guys? Such a pleasure to meet you and be on the show.

Dave: Chenoa, where does your name come from? Is that like your stage name because you were a TV celebrity?

Chenoa: That's a great question. Actually no. I'm Native American, and my name means "first-born daughter," but it also means "white dove, beauty, and peace." It depends on what you're trying to do. I was indoctrinated to the Shinnecock Reservation, which is in Long Island. I'm one of the very few people that you'll actually meet that did powwows as I was growing up, so that's really part of my heritage. I actually use some of that indigenous rituals in my practice.

Dave: Did you grow up actually on an Indian reservation?

Chenoa: No. I did not grow up on an Indian reservation. However, my mother did.

Dave: Wow.

Chenoa: My grandfather was the chief of the tribe. He was Chief Redfox. It was really important for my mother to make sure that we were well versed in our history and in our Native American languages and our rituals and just understand who we are. We went every single year, I spent many times on the canoe with my grandfather, with my cousins, learning how to fish, doing really cool things. And then doing powwows every year. I've been indoctrinated, and so, again, my name Chenoa is White Dove, that's my indoctrinated name. White Dove, Beauty, and Peace.

Dave: Now, you became interested in this limitless living because you sort of did the opposite of that? You talk about how you stopped talking for an entire year when you were an entire year to just be less noticeable at home. Here you are now, you're on TV and teaching people how to live limitlessly. It's been a pretty interesting journey. I want you to talk about what made you who you are today, and specifically, tell me about what happened when you were a kid.

Chenoa: I'm glad that we have an hour, Dave, because it's a very long story. Actually, you know, as a child, I endured a lot of challenges. My mother, who has now passed, she was suffering with a lot of postpartum and emotional depression, some undiagnosed bipolar tendencies, and so when we were younger, I'm the eldest of three, she actually left us when I was about five years old. To give you a little context, one of my brothers wasn't even a year old. He was six months old. My other brother was about two and I was about five.

From that moment on, we got kind of shuttled back and forth into a lot of caretakers' hands, and a lot of the caretakers were really abusive in a lot of different ways, from

being molested to emotionally and physically abused. To the point where one of ... My father got remarried to my stepmother, and she was actually arrested for her abuse. It was so physically bad. At that point, I was so afraid to talk. Every single time I said something, if we ran up a stair or just by breathing, we would get hit. That was kind of my circumstances, and I just learned if I'm invisible and I didn't speak, then I would be safe.

Dave: Wow.

Chenoa: Yeah, wow is right.

Dave: Now, there are so many people listening who have childhood traumas. Probably not always that severe, but in my own work with entrepreneurs, pretty much everything that holds us back as a human ... Not everything, but most things, can be traced back to early traumas, things that just set up a pattern in our nervous system that becomes part of the reality you live in.

Chenoa: That's right.

Dave: And you don't act like someone who had an extraordinarily abusive childhood. What did you do to change?

Chenoa: Well, I had a breaking point, which I always think that a lot of times crises provide real pearls of gold, you know? There's so much in there for us to learn and get out of these challenging situations. When I was 15 years old, I tried to kill myself. I didn't try to kill myself as a call for help. I really tried to end my life. I just remember, I used to wake up every single day so upset that I was alive, because I just couldn't understand why the universe had given me this life to just endure so much suffering.

It was literally when the state took me as their ward and they put me into a psychiatric unit for adolescents. That's when the gold happened. That sounds really strange, because it was really painful to be locked up, almost like you're in jail, with a lot of other children who were going through some really horrific emotional challenges. But for me, after they tested me to see if I had any mental illness or where I was as far as my intelligence level, they realized that it was my circumstances that were creating all of my challenges.

They teamed me up with a doctor, Dr. Eleanor I'll never remember her. She was about six feet tall. She looked like Big Bird. She was the most incredible angel life that life has ever brought me. She really, really took a real interest in me, and she saw something in me that I couldn't have seen in myself. That was the start of my breakthrough.

She told me that I am not my circumstances and that I can change my life at any moment. That I'm beautiful, I'm smart, and that it is not my conditions that will make me. It is my decisions that will make me. It is learning who I am and why I react the way I react that's going to change everything. She actually, it was wonderful, because at that moment, it was the first time I got an opportunity to be away from all of the things that

were hurting me. I got an opportunity to quiet my mind. I learned meditation. I learned breath work.

Dave: This is when you were 16?

Chenoa: This is when I was 15.

Dave: 15, okay.

Chenoa: 15, yeah.

Dave: What kind of breath work did she teach you?

Chenoa: You know, at the time, I don't even recall what she taught me. I know because I was so young, I didn't have a technique. She told me that any time that I started to feel anxious or sad, what I needed to do was I needed to place my focus on what's happening in front of me. So, actually take a moment and pause. Take a deep breath. Ground myself. And then look outside and see what's actually happening. What's actually happening, there's nothing happening right now. There's no problem or challenge in front of me. What's happening is the sun is shining, the sky is blue, you're actually present and alive. There are people laughing in the background. Really get connected to your present moment, and all of a sudden, you'll be disconnected from that pain.

It wasn't so that I can become numb or disconnected from the pain. It was just a technique to help me go, oh, wait a second, I don't have to get so wrapped up and caught up in this. I can actually become really present, and then learn how to deal with the why. Right? Why am I feeling this way? She said, "You know, everybody has a choice. Everybody has a choice at every moment. What are you doing to focus on in that moment?" She basically taught me all of the things that I'm teaching my clients today. It was really miraculous, because I went from being a very unhappy, depressed, overweight child into a woman who really understood herself and understood where she was going, why she felt the way that she did, and that we're not our feelings.

Dave: Now, that's a powerful story. When someone takes the time to work with a teenager or even someone younger than a teenager, to sort of take them out of a bad environment, or frankly, even someone who's in a relatively good environment. No parents are perfect, but just takes time to hear and teach kids about feelings and things like that. It had a pretty radical effect on your life. What do you recommend for people today who have kids? Do you have kids?

Chenoa: I don't.

Dave: You're talking about childhood stuff. You don't? Okay. When you're dealing with clients who have kids, do you tell them to do things as a result of what you experienced or to not do things? Or do you focus more on how adults have changed as a result of what happened in their childhood?

Chenoa: That's a great question. For me, I think one of the bigger things when I speak to adults, as far as when they come to me with their challenges that they're having with their children, usually teenagers, one of the biggest things, I have to say, is kids learn through action. They don't just learn by what you're telling them. They learn by who you show up as every single day. One of the biggest things that you can do to really help your children is to understand who you are, to have real great emotional intelligence where you understand ourselves, and you're able to be more aware, express and manage your own emotions. And also just be in integrity with your vision of what you want in your life. They will learn so much by you showing up that way.

Secondly, I always tell them to listen. Listen without adding. Every single person wants to be heard, seen, and loved. When you have a teenager who already feels misunderstood or who doesn't feel loved or who doesn't feel like they have some support that they can count on, they just really want to be heard. I remember when before I tried to kill myself, I told my mother that I wasn't feeling well. I didn't know what the term of it was, because as a child, I didn't know, oh, I'm depressed, or, I'm feeling suicidal. I wasn't that aware.

I just knew that something was off with me because I cried every single day. My mother just brushed it off. She was like, "Oh, nothing's wrong with you. You're a teenager. You're fine. You're beautiful. You're okay." No, something's going on, and I think far too often, there are a lot of signs or a lot of expressions that people, that they communicate that they are not feeling well. We far too often dismiss that. I think that's one of the biggest things or biggest tips that I can tell people. Really listen.

Dave: You talk about divine energy differentiation and about love, is actually a major factor in living limitlessly.

Chenoa: Absolutely.

Dave: How do you define love? How do you explain that to a client? It seems like we all know what love is, but you, I think, have a specific meaning or a thought about that.

Chenoa: For me, I think that love, it's not just for me, it's actually the truth. Love is the largest and biggest connective energy in our whole entire world. It is conscious energy. It is the thing that is constantly creating what is every single moment. If we can tap into that love energy, that energy, that of gratitude and of grace, it changes and shifts everything. It's such an easy thing to say. It's a harder thing to actually practice. Like showing up every day feeling and giving pure love. How do you do that? How do you do that? How do you show up every day and say, "Oh, wow, thank you for waking me up. Thank you for this breath. Thank you for my vision. Thank you for your sharing this moment with me."

If you can show up fully present and fully in the practice of gratitude and grace, you will be surprised how many doors open for you, because energetically it shifts everything. When I was about 18 years old, this was another moment, an ah-ha moment for me, I had a teacher who was ... I was going to cosmetology school at the time. I was still in my

practice, but I hadn't shifted all the way. She used to tell me, "Chenoa, you know, you're such a beautiful girl. Why don't you smile?" At the time, I was living on my own at 17, I was working a full-time job, I was trying to pay for college. I really wasn't feeling very happy.

Dave: You didn't have a lot to smile about.

Chenoa: I didn't have a lot to smile about. I was not in the best of moods. Interestingly enough, I would walk by her office, and she would say it to me every day. "You know what, Chenoa? Why don't you smile?" And I got so sick and tired of hearing her say that to me that I would just walk by her office and put on a fake smile. I would just walk by and just fake it. Ironically, that faking it became my habit, and then that habit changed my life. Why? Because when I started to smile, I appeared differently for other people.

Even though it wasn't real, even though I didn't feel like smiling, the habit of me smiling created a shift and a change that was so big that it shifted everything in my environment. That was a really big lesson for me. That's exactly how showing up with love operates. Being of love, yes.

Dave: So you smile when you don't really feel like smiling, because it helps other people. You talk about practicing gratitude as a gateway for love, and I fully support that in my own practice in my own life. Do you practice gratitude for the childhood of abuse that you experienced?

Chenoa: Absolutely. When I was a child going through it, of course, it felt so dire and everything was so bleak. I couldn't see any light. There was no light inside of myself. I didn't see any end to the pain. But, I always tell people that there's nothing greater than a crisis to break through. Because that's when we usually find our breakthroughs. Most people don't proactively go through that, like, "Oh, I'm really ready to shift and change." Right? It's usually because they have to do it, they have to shift.

It's the things that melts us down, that recasts your life in a new way, that actually leads us to new opportunities and new gateways of thinking and being. Right? So, for me as a young girl, even though at the moment, it was really horrendous, right now it has taught me so much. Everything that I have gone through has prepared me for the kind of life that I live now, the gratitude that I have for my life now, the way that I'm able to hear my clients. I really believe that I was really meant to be a guide and a mirror for people in pain.

I really can hear people do differently than most. I really can, because I've been through things that so many people have never been able to even experience and come out of. I've come out of it with such ... I don't know, I'm so full. It's very strange, because after I practiced these tools of transformation, I came out on the other side as if it's never happened.

Dave: Is your mom still alive?

Chenoa: No. She just passed in September.

Dave: She just passed in September. I'm sorry about that.

Chenoa: Thank you.

Dave: When she was still alive, could you call her up and have a conversation with her without anger-

Chenoa: Absolutely.

Dave: Without that clenching in your chest, you could do that?

Chenoa: Absolutely, yeah. Absolutely. Part of love ... When you're really ready to heal, when you're really ready to heal, you really have to take a look at the whole experience. You cannot just take a look at your own emotions. To have to really find understanding and empathy for people as they are. That's part of unconditional love. So when I say show up through love every single day, being in the flow, the universal flow, the divine flow of energy, that's basically what that looks like. Knowing how to love in every moment unconditionally. It's not that easy, but you can do it and you can get there. I love my mother. I showed up for her, and she was fantastic, and we had a really wonderful conversation before she passed.

Dave: That's one of the reasons I wanted to have you on the show, is that that's extremely unusual. In fact, one of my clients, who lost a half a billion dollars in one day, like a reasonably successful guy by all measures. I could look at him in the eye and say, "Tell me about your mom," and he'd literally choke back tears, and his mom was still alive. But just so much trauma, and his childhood wasn't nearly as rough as yours. We worked, we did some of the neurofeedback, 40 Years of Zen sort of stuff, and he let that go. But he'd already become phenomenally successful, maybe not phenomenally happy, but phenomenally successful, maybe because of, maybe in spite of, his own childhood.

But very few people listening to this show can actually go through every one of their childhood experiences without an emotional, visceral response that's like, "Oh, yeah, that sucked, but I'm good with who I am today," but carrying the weight of that. You strike me as someone who's actually, genuinely gone through and let go of all that, and you had more to let go of than most people. I want to know more about how you let go. Did it happen all in one day? Was it this breath work practice? Was it just that when you were 16 you hit rock bottom and the doctor who finally ... Was it sudden? Was it an evolution? Just walk people through that, because everyone listening, if you're holding anything that's a grudge from childhood, from bullies, whatever, it's affecting everything you do in your relationships, in your business, in everything, and my own life was the same way. Tell people how you did this, because what you did is phenomenal.

Chenoa: Yeah, it's interesting. I really believe that ... To answer your question, it is not just one way. I worked really ... I did the work. That's one of the things that I am very proud of, and that I always tell my clients in my practice and my workshops, be prepared to do the

work. It doesn't have to be hard. It is not hard. But you do have to do it. And what the work looks like is different for everybody, because there are some people who really hold on really tight to their pain, to their fear, to their past, to their projections. They hold on. They are terrified to let it go, because it's so comfortable for them.

For me, I really believe that it is important for you to get quiet. We have so much peace and so much knowledge and so much love on the inside of us. It is really important to connect to that spirit part of who we are. I know that people say that all the time, and there's a big disconnect. Like, what does that mean? A lot of people go externally for that. They go to church, they go to synagogue, they go to all kinds of various classes, they look for it outside of themselves. But all of the peace and the healing that you need is really inside of you, but you have to connect to it and you have to believe it, right?

So, first of all, it's get quiet. Spend some time really doing some journeying on the inside. Find out where your pain is. Where is it stuck inside of your body? Your body is a very big communication tool. It tells you everything. If you have back pain, it's telling you "back off." If you constantly get headaches, it's telling you things. Find out where you are, where you're holding a lot of your pain, and deal with it. I did a lot of meditation where I had to go back and talk to my inner child. I take my clients through that. I deal with a lot of celebrities and executives who, like you said, Dave, they're really stuck, and they can't get past the pain.

But the very first thing you have to do is first choose that you want to get past the pain. Then you have to get quiet, get in touch with your breath, connect to your spirit self, your love energy. There's a light inside of you that is so beautiful and once you sit still and connect to your breath and feel grounded in that, you can connect to that. You can actually talk yourself through and walk yourself through the pain and bring yourself out of it. It's a reprogramming, if you will.

Dave: In my 20's, I would have said, "I'm not in any pain." By the way, I was absolutely anxious and angry all the time and running away from failure more than towards things that were meaningful. I recognized the ego and error of my belief system. A lot of people listening to this are like, "What do you mean, what pain? I didn't have a rough childhood. My parents were quote pretty good." Frankly, all of us are pissed at our parents when they stop breastfeeding us or when they didn't give us the cookie, because we're irrational two-year-olds at some point in our life, and that stuff sticks.

Chenoa: That's true.

Dave: But aside from all that stuff, for people listening who are like, "This is totally not relevant to my life," do you believe that?

Chenoa: Oh, come on. No. Every single person-

Dave: Excellent answer.



Chenoa: Every single person, we are all, no matter where we are, we can be rich, we can be poor, we are all going to hit a hard place in our life, where we are dealing with a loss of a child, a loss of a job, a loss of, like you said, financial gain, success. There's always going to be a time and a challenge where you're going to have to deal with something. And it's not always going to be that easy, because life happens, and it's happening daily, and just trying to find and create space to deal with yourself is already challenging enough. We don't do that often as adults. We don't say, "Hey, wait a second, pause, life. I need a moment to regroup."

Like you said, we barely admit that we have challenges or issues at hand. But it's very important for us to take the time that we need. That's why self-love is the greatest love that you can give yourself. I am an advocate for people to really understand how important it is to tap into their divine spirit and source energy, which is self-love. Once you start to get really familiar with who you are to your core, what do you value? Why do you value that? What do you want to do in your life? Why does this affect you in your life? Ask yourself questions. Ask yourself questions. Go on an investigative journey. Really challenge yourself to know yourself. You will be surprised by what you come up in.

And then, once you understand who you are and what you're going through, then you can start unfolding it and unwinding it. I think that's what's been really beneficial, and that's what I really, really work with my clients on doing. I really work with them so that they can become awake, awake within their own self, within their own life. Because once you're awake, you might fall asleep for periods of time, but it will not allow you to stay there anymore. You will be forced to deal with yourself. You will be forced to say, okay, what works for me? For some people, it's breath. For some people, it's meditation. For some people, it's sounds. For some people, it's ecstatic dance. How do you get your release? How do you feed your spirit?

Dave: I'm so glad you said that. Those are all practices that I've experimented with, that entire list and then some. For people listening to the show, if you haven't gone out and experienced altered states from all of those things or whatever else, Burning Man, whatever you want to call it, it's important that you find an altered state that improves your performance and lets you tap in, and it's different for different people. But if you don't go to the salad bar and try every ingredient and see which ones you actually like, it seems like you're living a relatively tasteless life. Would you agree with that?

Chenoa: Absolutely. I think most people operate in habits, in habit loops. They focus on what they either can or what they can't control. It's really important to break up the patterns. It's really important to understand and to experiment and to move yourself out of the conditioning, the conditioned states of being. It allows you to see better, it allows you to connect to yourself. There's no right or wrong in whatever you do, you know? The bottom line is, everything that you do, your mind is filtered. The altered states of being is really a profound state.

It really connects you to your source energy and to your ... There's something else happening. I think we are all operating so much from the place that we are human beings, and I know this is going to sound a little wonky, okay, so bear with me. We very

rarely realize and tap into the fact that we are really spirit beings, too. I know that when you shift into understanding that you are a spirit being connected through one single cell to the universal force and consciousness, which is love energy, that you have this immense power inside of you that can create anything that you put your mind to, including healing.

Dave: It's funny. The mission statement for Bulletproof is to help people tap into the unlimited power of being human.

Chenoa: Oh!

Dave: I definitely agree with what you're saying there, and that's the power that drives healing and drives everything you do in your life, right?

Chenoa: Absolutely.

Dave: It seems, though, that you have a unique ability. You talked earlier about how you could sort of sense what was going on with other people, how you could feel that. Do you think that comes as a result of your lineage? I ask this question, before you answer it, because I did some heavy duty, very interesting work with a Native American shaman who actually lived in New York at the time. He could go into these altered states and just do things that frankly, as an engineer, I could tell you are absolutely impossible, except he could do them reliably, so they weren't impossible, because that's what the data tells me. I said, "How do I learn to do that stuff?" He just looked at me and he laughed. He kind of came across as a typical New Yorker, but the guy has superpowers, right? He goes-

Chenoa: That's funny.

Dave: He goes, "You know what, Dave?" He goes, "You're a white man." He goes, "I can do this because this came from my people."

Chenoa: That's right.

Dave: "This is my lineage, and you just don't have this. You could do other things, but you don't have the wiring." Do you think that's part of your powers?

Chenoa: I agree. I hate to say that, but yes. I believe that our cellular makeup, who we are, who we're here to be, it doesn't just start when we're born today. It happens through many, many lifetimes ago. It's funny. When I was in Bali, I do an annual retreat in Bali, a really huge spirit quest and healing and transforming lives there. I went to see a healer there, because my mother had just passed. She actually said, "Oh my God, I can completely" ... She took me back through my many lifetimes, and she saw that I had this healing energy that came through my ancestral blood and that I was here to actually do it. All of my life, even though I've practiced this, you're absolutely right. I have felt always plugged into something beyond, something that is almost unexplainable, something that really gives

me cosmic intelligence, that gets downloaded in me, and then I just know. But I do accredit that to my practice of just really dropping it.

Dave: So part of it's your practice-

Chenoa: Part of it's my practice, and part of it's my lineage, yes.

Dave: Got it. Now, this guy, who is now retired, but he's like, "I'm done fighting my spiritual battles. Now I'm going to hang out with my family." I'm like, "All right, full respect, man." I hope he's listening. But we're talking about that weird ability to download things, and I've talked to a bunch of ultra-successful people, and one of the guys who comes to mind is Jack Canfield. I interviewed him recently. You know, the Chicken Soup for the Soul guy. In his other life, has worked with huge numbers of CEOs, just really successful people.

I asked him, "Are there such things as guiding angels, or those things, are they real?" He's like, "Well, they don't really look like that, but I can sense there's something going on there," and he said, "Most of my most successful clients, included captains of industry, are plugged into the same thing, and they'll actually tell you, when you're not going to think they're crazy, that there's something going on there that's noteworthy."

Chenoa: That's right.

Dave: It sounds like you're of that same mindset, and that's actually your experience with the world, probably differently than mine, right?

Chenoa: I do believe that we are all energetic beings, and that there are things and energy, magnificent, powerful energy that we cannot see. Some of us can, some of us are plugged in that way where we can see in between the lines, but most of us just see what's in front of us. We can see the table, we can see the chairs, we can see each other. There's other energies operating around us and surrounding us all the time. They are angels, they are light angels. They're here to help us, they're here to guide us, they're here to talk to us. But it's really about your belief system, right? It's really about your ability to tap in. I believe we're also creators that are in charge of our reality. We are limitless beings, and if we tap into that divine force, we will see, we will see that there's universal spirits all around us helping us at every single moment. There really are.

Dave: I came to this realization, even though I'm a classical Western engineer raised by a family who subscribed to the Skeptical Inquirer, to put down anything that might not be universally measurable with a meter. When I was 16, I bought a radar detector because I might have one time had a speeding problem, or gift, depending on how you look at it. I just remember when I first got it, I'm like, I'm driving through town, and it's going off at all these different places. I'm going through all these invisible fields that I totally have no sensation of, but I know they're here because I have this little thing that beeps every time I go through one.

Chenoa: That's right.

Dave: It sort of changed the way I thought about things. I'm like, okay, there are things present that I do not sense, but I know they're present. Over the course of getting to know a large number of classical, Western-trained scientists, but also medical healers and shamans and just people who are living in monasteries in Tibet and places like that, there are people who have detector systems I just don't have, and they're detecting things, oftentimes the same things, even though they're from different schools of training, that I'm willing to suspend my disbelief or at least my lack of ability to see them right now. All right, there's probably something going on there. Can I tap into it?

Chenoa: Absolutely.

Dave: And, my experience is that yes, I can, even though I still don't have the sensor network that some other people have. For people listening who might be in that, "Maybe there's something going on there, I'm willing to suspend my skepticism," how do you tap into it?

Chenoa: Ah. Well, Dave, we are all our own genies, okay? We do, we own that wishing well, but doing the inner work and letting go of, first, all the things we've held on for so long is where it starts. We have to remember and realize that there's more intelligence here than we know, right? There are things that are happening in our world that are unexplainable. They really are. How is it that certain things come to fruition? If you can understand that there's a greater force, that there's a greater energy that is always happening around you, but that you are also part of this energy, then you can, first, because it's the first thing you have to do, is you have to open your mind to experiencing it and believing it.

I can give you several techniques. I can say, okay, power down your eyes. Sit down, breathe, ground yourself, connect to your inner eye. What does that mean? Bring the focus in to your nose and breathe deeply, and I can say all of these affirmations or mantras. I can give you so many different techniques. But the very first technique that I would have every single person do is to first say, "Okay, I'm open. I'm open. Show me something new, show me something more. I am trusting that the universe has more for me that I cannot see. I am a spirit being, and I want to be connected to it." If you can first open that pathway, then you're off to a great start. Then we can start talking about the different modalities that might work for you, depending on where you are or where you're at.

Dave: It's funny that you're saying that, because I've had a guest on, I'm going to blank on who it was, one of the first, early episodes about cognitive enhancement. There's a study out there that says, you actually can increase your IQ, but only if you believe you can increase your IQ. It doesn't work, and Dan Sullivan was just on, who has been coaching successful entrepreneurs for 30-something years and planning to live to 156 or maybe a little bit more.

Chenoa: Wow.

Dave: We had this conversation, and I'm looking for 180 or more, that's my number. We talked about it, and the first step there is the same thing. You have to believe it's possible.

Chenoa: Absolutely, it's possible.

Dave: Here's the things, you might be wrong.

Chenoa: That's right.

Dave: You might die trying, but if you don't believe it's possible, it is not.

Chenoa: That's right.

Dave: So you're saying this is kind of a third instance of that that's come up on the show recently, where you're saying, first, believe it might be possible, or be open to the possibility at least, and then find a practice.

Chenoa: Absolutely.

Dave: If you didn't know anything about someone, is there one practice other than being open to it that's the most likely to have a high hit rate?

Chenoa: Yes. I believe that the practice of really shushing your inner critic is a really powerful practice.

Dave: How do you ... So, I don't have an inner critic anymore. Literally, I nailed that little you-know-what.

Chenoa: Fantastic, that you-know-what, exactly.

Dave: That four months of electrodes and trips to Tibet and ayahuasca, and I've gone as deep as I know how. It doesn't pop up and say bad things anymore, but no one believes me when I say that.

Chenoa: That's amazing.

Dave: But really, it's gone.

Chenoa: That's great. My inner critic is also gone, by the way.

Dave: Is it? Okay, that was my next question.

Chenoa: It is, yeah.

Dave: Have you done that, all right?

Chenoa: I have, yes.

Dave: So, people listening to this are like, "No, come on, there's a little fearful voice in there going, you can't do that," but there really isn't. How does someone listening go about doing that? I don't know how to tell someone how to do it. With enough electricity, I can do it, but how do you go about that?

Chenoa: Well, I have a really simple technique that I always offer my clients. It's a homework assignment that every single one of my clients or my workshops, we always go through, and it's very, very, very simple. Take seven days. Seven days of your life, and all I want you to do is catch yourself with anything that you are saying that is negative or derogatory about yourself, someone else, or your future. Just catch yourself. Become self-aware of your inner chatter. What do you say to yourself? What do you say about people? What do you believe? Okay?

Once you get aware of that, I want you to write it down. I just want you to keep a journal of it, so that you can become present to how often you speak to yourself in this negative manner. And the minute that you start to bring up something negative, something that's fearful, something that is talking about someone else, go cancel cancel, and replace that thought with something really powerfully positive. For an example, I might say, "I'm not worth of love." This might be a subconscious conversation, but it might start with, "Oh, I hate my body. I'm too fat. I'm not worthy of love. They're not going to love me." Ah-ah-ah-ah, cancel cancel. "I'm beautiful, and my body's amazing, and I'm doing my best to work on it every day." Write it down, cancel. For most people, this little simple practice is going to be a very long process, because what they're going to do is they're going to start to realize how often they negatively talk to themselves.

Dave: Now, you use this with celebrities, with really successful entrepreneurs, like this is something that happens in everyone's brain until they train it not to, right?

Chenoa: You will be surprised. The more successful we are, the more beautiful we are. The richest person in the room still battles with this on the daily, because we're never taught. We're always taught to look on the outside, compare ourselves, go for success. We're programmed every single day by the television, by the media, what we're supposed to have and what we're supposed to do, so we become highly critical, and we create these filters in our mind that tells us that we are just inadequate and we're not enough. And then that becomes our subconscious belief system, and our subconscious belief system actually creates our reality, the way in which we see.

So if we can first stop that and get ahold of ourselves, become really self-aware and say, "Wait a second. These things that I'm saying, these things that I'm beating myself up about, they're not true. This isn't me. This is just an automatic part of my brain that is undisciplined and not trained, that I need to stop and start to put a habit of positive, loving conversation." Once you do that, you will actually start to see things shift.

Dave: Dr. Daniel Amen, who's a dear friend and one of the leading brain doctors out there, and has been on the show a couple of times, he calls these automatic negative thoughts, or ANTs.

Chenoa: Yes, ANTs.

Dave: My experience, even today, is that if I drink a couple alcoholic beverages, which I will tell you is just not good for you, and I do on a very rare basis, or if I eat something I probably ought not to have eaten, whether it was on purpose or not, the odds of that voice in my head coming back online, usually not negative thoughts towards me, but negative thoughts towards other people, it turns up pretty rapidly. How much of a role does your diet, your environment, have on the strength of that inner critic?

Chenoa: Well, you know, life is holistic, Dave. Every single thing that we do works together. I believe that your diet, if you're eating garbage, you're thinking garbage.

Dave: There you go.

Chenoa: You're not working very effectively. Especially if you have a goal or a plan to be optimal. If you have a goal or a plan to be optimal and then you're doing things that are against that plan, then what you're doing is you're building shame, and then that shame just wreaks havoc in every area of your life. So it's very important that what we do is ... Self-awareness, to me, I got to tell you, it is the number one golden rule. Once you really understand who you are, and I'm talking about in every arena, from being emotionally intelligent to understanding why you have the filters that you do, why you're not able to be present, why your anxiety comes up. When you have your self-awareness in check, then every single thing stems from that, because then you can say, "Okay, I'm self-aware. Now, I know I want to have this goal, and now I need to be in integrity with that." I would say, self-awareness and integrity are the master keys for life.

Dave: That's powerful advice, and I agree with it. A lot of people are still working on mastering their self-awareness, and they may not have a good sense of when they're doing something that's out of integrity. How would you recommend someone listening knows when they're about to make a decision that might be out of integrity?

Chenoa: Yeah, we all battle with blind spots, you know? Even with as much work as I've done on myself, I know that there are still areas that we all have that we're just blind to. I would say, you know, asking questions, again. It's really interesting, when you really become interested in knowing yourself. When you become interested in knowing yourself, then you can really become interested in knowing someone else, right? That's why I always say it always starts with self-love. The more that you can know, honor, and love yourself, the more you can know, honor, and love someone else.

A great way to start is asking people around you. "Hey, you know, how do I occur for you? How do I show up for you? Am I the way that I think I am?" That is a really great way to start. Another way to start is really listening to your instincts. I think all of us know when we're out of alignment with ourselves. We just don't pay attention to it. I think that really taking time to hone in on your body, your gut feelings, those little voices that kind of say, "Hey, hey, hey, hey, you might be off point right now," are really important. The gut tells us so many things and we ignore it far too often, but we really are intellectual beings, and we do have a lot of source information inside of us. All we

have to do is take the time to listen. If we're blind to those things, then we need to ask the questions. If that doesn't help, then you need to take my number.

Dave: That's actually, yes, it's a joke, but having good friends, having advisors, having business coaches or executive coaches or whatever you want to call them, I do all of that stuff, because having the most personal awareness and spiritual awareness, emotional awareness, all that stuff, that I know how to do, still, if there is a blind spot, I'm not going to know it. That's why it's called a blind spot.

Chenoa: That's right.

Dave: That's the role of outside helpers, right?

Chenoa: They're very important. I think that every single one of us ... There's nothing that you can do and do well on your own. We all need a community and we all need a team. We all need a group of advisors that can really help us excel and be our best selves, always. We don't need them all the time, but it's really important to have a trusted advisor, coach, counsel, therapist, or friend that you can actually say, "You know what? Hey, I need a little bit of help. I need a little bit of guidance. I need you to put this mirror up so I can really see myself clearly. I'm a little lost here. Help me get directed."

I think at every point in life, there's a reason and a season for something, and there are some times when we're not able to just do it on our own. We really do need professional guidance. I say professional because I'm going to go back to my childhood. Again, I was a child at the time, but there's a certain kind of ear that a professional has, whether it's a coach or a therapist or a guru or a shaman. Hopefully, if you have a great one, they're not judging you. They are listening without adding. They can see you clearly. There's no story attached to you. There's no narrative. It's just you, sharing all of who you are and what you need and what you're trying to get to, and so I think that it's really awesome to have someone that you can trust and go to that you can expose yourself to and be fully authentic and show up without worrying about that, and someone who can actually hear you in all of your glory, whether it's happy, sad, confused, it's very important.

Dave: That's profound advice. It's something that I, at time in my life I regretted it. At this point, I'm cool with my path, but when I was a kid, or even just a young man, there were opportunities around formation of the internet and things like this, and I remember I wrote for one of the big magazines. I wrote a review of Marc Andreessen, the guy who invented Netscape, the first web browser. Review of the very first beta edition of his web browser versus the one that came before it, something called NCSA. It was the birth of the internet, the birth of the web, anyway.

Marc Andreessen's a multi-billionaire, a very famous investor today. What he did, and he was the same age I was, he went out to Silicon Valley and found coaches and advisors and hooked up with someone who'd lived the life for 20 years and said, "Tell me what to do. Tell me where I'm weak." What I did is I said, "I don't need anyone's help. I'm so good, I've got all this." The thought of even asking for help just wasn't even



in my universe at the time. So, I actually had some of these great ideas, but during summers, I would weld Toyota truck frames or put auto parts in boxes, because it paid three times the minimum wage, and then I started this internet e-commerce company to sell T-shirts out of my dorm room so I could pay my tuition. But that, I could have just walked, well, driven, 80 miles and got that thing funded and been a multi-millionaire. But I didn't do it, right?

Chenoa: Aww.

Dave: That's all right. I made

Chenoa: You're there now.

Dave: No, I made \$6 million when I was 26. But I lost it when I was 28 for the same reason, because I wouldn't ask for help. I was unwilling to have any external mirrors, because frankly, I'd been obese, I didn't want to look at myself, and all this psychological stuff that becomes a part of success, right?

Chenoa: That's right.

Dave: I look at Zuckerberg. Same sort of thing. He had this innate wisdom as a very young man to go, "I'm going to talk to people who have done this before," and just to be open to that. The reason I'm telling you all this stuff is I want your take on this, having worked with a good number of people and just having done your own work so deeply, how do you get through to people who just don't necessarily know any of this is possible? Like, how would you have gotten through to a fat, 19-year-old kid with a really angry, negative voice in his head who knew some stuff? How would you wake someone like that up?

Chenoa: Well, I'd first start with sharing. I just think that sharing your story and sharing your history of what you've been through is very powerful, Dave. It's interesting, when people don't feel alone, when they feel like they're understood, it changes everything. That's one of the things that I really love about my past. I've definitely witnessed and overcome and experienced so many different things, from, like you said, obesity, to abuse, abandonment, you know. My mother was bulimic/anorexic, my brother was schizophrenic.

There were so many different levels of what I've had to experience that I can identify, and so one of the first things to do when you're with someone who is like, "You know what, you're not hearing me, you're not listening. You don't understand," because that's usually the case. They don't feel like you can identify, and so their defenses come up. Is to say, "Actually, I do. Let me share with you a story." That's why I think your podcast is so powerful, because you get an opportunity to bring on all of these incredible people, but then you're also sharing your story, and there is a magic to that. There's a healing to that. That's why group therapy works, retreats work, so yeah, share more.

Dave: That is such a point. It's such an important point. I don't think any guest has talked about it the way you just did there. Whatever your inner dialogue is, as bad as you think it is, once you share it with even a small group of people and you realize that none of them really thinks anything different about you after you share it, the inner dialogue loses a huge amount of its power.

Chenoa: That's right.

Dave: That's why portions of the neurofeedback, the 40 Years of Zen thing I do, portions of that have a small group of people. Just because talking about stuff makes you remember it better and makes it lose its power, and that's certainly something that a lot of people don't talk about, and I've always been highly skeptical of any of these group things, at least historically. But, bottom line is, there is power in sharing your story. You put it really eloquently, and I think that's something listeners can walk away from this interview with, saying, "Hmm, maybe I'll talk about the stuff I don't want to talk about." In fact, because you don't want to talk about it, you should talk about it. Do you agree with that?

Chenoa: Absolutely.

Dave: You do?

Chenoa: Absolutely. I think that we carry with us so much shame, and we don't realize that most of us are carrying the same burdens. We're all going through the same things. It might not look the same, but each one of us, we've all been hurt. We've all been brokenhearted. We've all lost to some degree, right? We've all had these same human experiences, so you know, let's release that shame, guys, and let's start sharing more. I think talking about it, like you said, that's a powerful point. Talking about it really lets go of the power.

You asked me when I was younger what happened, and that was one of the things. Talking about it, talking about it, talking about it. To the point where it just, you release it. It's gone. And also, I got to just say this one point, stop focusing on what you don't want in your life, people. Stop focusing on what's hurting you. Stop blaming people. Stop focusing on those things. If you want your life to change, you have to change your conversation. You have to change your conversation, what you focus on, on a daily basis. Put in your mind all the things you want, and spend all your loving energy focusing and creating on that. That's what changed my life.

Not focusing on the pain, the disappointment, the abandonment, the abuse, the blame, none of that. If I would have focused on that, I would have still been stuck there, because I would have grown that energy and that feeling and that emotion. No, I talked about it, I let it go. I talked about it, I let it go. And then I started visualizing and focusing on all the things I wanted to achieve. And then creating action plans and practices to do it. And one by one, you knock it off, you accomplish it, and you feel really proud about yourself, and all of a sudden, all of that thing that you were fearful of or in pain of is gone. It dissipates.

Dave: That is incredible advice. Chenoa, I've got another question for you.

Chenoa: Yes?

Dave: If someone came to you tomorrow and said, "I want to perform better at everything I do as a human being," what are your three most important pieces of advice? What would you offer them?

Chenoa: Man, well, first, I'd say stop focusing on what you don't want in your life or focusing on your fears. Focus on all of the loving emotions and the visual, and the things that you want to create. Focus on creation. Focus on being. Focus on loving. Focus on all the positives in your life. That's the first thing. Two, I'd say stop giving your needs the lowest priority. We do ourselves such a disservice by taking care of ourselves last. I think when we're whole and we're full, we're full of creativity. We're full of love, we're full of energy, we're full of vitality, we're full of all the things that actually bring us joy in our life, and we actually have more room and more space to be more.

I think that I would say to stop wasting time on things that don't matter, because life is short. It is not promised, and at the end of the day, it's really about how you're living, how you're connecting, how you're touching lives, how you're making a difference, how you're just looking at the sunrise and the sunset, how you're breathing fully and deeply. Stop wasting time on things that don't matter.

Dave: Beautiful. Chenoa, thanks for being on Bulletproof Radio. People can find out more about your work at [livelimitlessly.com](http://livelimitlessly.com), and you're on Instagram @chenoamaxwell, C-H-E-N-O-A Maxwell. Any other places where people can find out about your work?

Chenoa: No, that's really it. [livelimitlessly.com](http://livelimitlessly.com). We have a really great retreat for couples coming up in October that's going to be all about intimacy and restoring your partnership and transforming your partnership, October 21st and 26. We also have a Glow Up Goddess Retreat that's coming up that is all about putting that spark back into your life. If you want to learn more about that, come and visit me, and give me a call. I love talking to people. I love meeting people, I love sharing. Dave, you're so kind. Thank you so much. This was wonderful. Such a pleasure to meet you and yeah, thank you.

Dave: Thanks, Chenoa. If you liked today's episode, you know what to do. Check out Chenoa's work at [livelimitlessly.com](http://livelimitlessly.com) or head on over to Amazon and leave a review for one of my books, *Head Strong* or *The Bulletproof Diet* or leave a review for this show on iTunes if you thought it was worth your time, [bulletproof.com/iTunes](http://bulletproof.com/iTunes) is a quick link to take you right there. Anyway, express some gratitude, maybe just to someone in your life. Do something cool, because hey, the world's a better place when we all do stuff like that. See you on the next episode.