



## Episode 601: Jim Kwik on the Keys to Limitless Brain Health, Focus and Memory

Child: Welcome to my Mommy's podcast.

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Are you irritable or anxious? Do you struggle with insomnia? Do you experience muscle cramps or twitches? Do you have high blood pressure? Are you sometimes constipated?

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Katie: Hello, and welcome to the Wellness Mama Podcast. I'm Katie from [wellnessmama.com](https://wellnessmama.com), and I'm here today with a personal friend and someone I have learned a whole lot from which is Jim Kwik, which that is his real name. You've probably heard his name because he's a widely recognized expert in brain performance, mental fitness, and memory improvement. And this is even more spectacular because he had a childhood brain injury that left him with a lot of learning challenges, and he created strategies to dramatically enhance his own cognitive performance and has since dedicated his life to helping others unleash their genius and brain power. He's the founder of Kwik Learning, which is an accelerated learning academy that we use as part of our homeschool and he's worked with clients like Google, Virgin, Nike, Zappos, WordPress, SpaceX, Cleveland Clinic, the US Air Force, Caltech, Harvard, Singularity University. He's also the author of several best-

selling books and the host of the acclaimed Kwik Brain Podcast, which I recommend, but I always end up learning so much from Jim.

And in this episode, we talk about the keys to limitless brain health, focus, and memory. We talk about how he teaches the software side of brain health, learning faster, and becoming more adaptable. The things he recommends for having a limitless brain, how a third of our brain performance is determined by genetics, but the other two-thirds are factors that we have complete control over. We talk about all of the tools for brain health, including his top ten, and why the brain is only 2% of body mass but requires 20 percent of nutrients. We talk about top brain foods, what mirror neurons are and how to use them to our advantage, how chronic fear suppresses the immune system, and how to reduce it and manage our stress. We talk about the importance of sleep and meditation, of sunlight, and hydration. We talk about the thought experiment he does every morning for brain health and focus, of having a to-do list and a not to do list and so much more. It's always such a fun conversation with Jim, full of practical tips. We talk a lot about the parenting side of this and doing this with your children as well. So, without further ado, let's join my friend, Jim.

Katie: Jim Kwik, welcome back. It's always such an honor to get to chat with you.

Jim: Katie, so good to be here. I'm such a big fan of you and a big fan of your show.

Katie: Well, likewise, I've learned so much from you and from all of your courses, and content, and books. And we've had some awesome conversations in the past that I will link to in the show notes for foundation for anybody who hasn't listened to them already. But I love every conversation we have, because I feel like I always get really practical things that I can take away, that make a really big impact in my life, and especially in my learning. Which I think personally is one of the keys to health and longevity, is to maintain our love for learning. And it's a thing I talk about so much with parents and with my own kids, and why even our education is focused on really nurturing their creativity and their love for learning, rather than just fitting them to a system of bookwork.

And I feel like you have such a fascinating story of how you've learned all the things that you teach. And your approaches are so amazing. You have this new book called "Limitless." And I'd love for you to start broad, maybe any areas of your background that you want to just kind of go through as an overview for people who may not be already familiar with you. And then maybe give us an intro into "Limitless" and what you learned through the writing of that book.

Jim: Yeah, thank you so much. So I think my purpose is to... I felt very limited, let's make a start there. My inspiration was my desperation, a series of traumatic brain injuries and learning challenges, some people call, and certain disabilities growing up, was a challenge. And because of it, I had issues around belief in myself, and esteem issues, and confidence issues. I was, like, paralyzed by the thought of being called on in class, and took me an extra few years to learn how to read. And I somehow, you know, in elementary school, got this label of, "That's the boy with the broken brain." And that was kind of my identity. You know, having been able to go from maybe below normal, whatever normal happens to be, to that normal, to doing the things that I'm doing now, I'm just very passionate about, I would say, redrawing the borders and boundaries of what's possible. I mean, I really want to offer real hope and help to anyone who was in a similar place, anyone who was called limited in some way, told that they weren't enough. And showing them really, the power that they really have, and the potential that they can access by learning a little bit more about the thing I'm very passionate about, which is the human brain.

And so I've made it my mission to build better, brighter brains, no brain left behind. And how we do it is through our podcasts, through our online courses, through speeches. I get to address... And this is weird from someone who was phobic of public speaking. I could be maybe in front of a quarter million people a year in total, maybe even three continents in one week, as you and I were just talking about right before we started recording. And, you know, I really do believe adversity can be an advantage. That through challenge, comes change. That through our struggles, we find strength. And so, yeah, this is my over... I've been doing it for over 30 years now, as a brain coach, if you will, kind of like a personal trainer, like a physical coach. A coach for your body makes you stronger, more flexible, more agile, helps you create more endurance, more energy.

Well, I want your mental muscles to be sharper. I want your mental endurance to be stronger. I want your memory to be, you know, enhanced, and so much more. And you might hear some of my dogs in the background. And so I'm very passionate about helping people of all ages and stages. And because I've been doing it for, you know, a few decades now, I believe genius leaves clues. That is not how smart you are, or how smart your kids are. It's more how are they smart. And so I'm really passionate about helping people discover and develop their innate intelligence.

Katie: That's one of the things I love so much about your story and about your approach, is that, really delving into the uniqueness of each person's genius. And I think that's where often I find holes in the education system is, it, of course, has to take into account so many children, which leads to a lot of sort of averaging and catering to everyone. And it's been really fun, even just with six kids, to see how unique and different they each are, and how their genius lies in different areas, and to get to hopefully help them really cultivate that. And to keep, as I learned from you so much, that love of learning, that's so important to them, and that curiosity. And I think your story is so incredible, and gives so much hope. Because knowing you now, it's hard to ever believe that you struggled with learning, and memory, and all these things. Because I've seen you in front of crowds, first of all, looking effortless at public speaking. But second of all, being able to remember really complex series of numbers, and all kinds of things, then even remember them backwards instantly.

And I certainly always leave inspired every time I hear you speak, and every time I read your work. And we've used your courses for parents listening. I've used your courses with my kids as well. Because I really do think, you know, that love of learning and maintaining that as we get older as a superpower, which you talk about so much. Because I think especially in today's world, where access to information is almost unlimited, it's no longer about memorizing facts, or just being able to get through worksheets and checklists. It's about learning how to learn and learning how to adapt quickly. I think that's what's so beautiful in your approach. And I love your new work as well, because you talk about brain health from several different angles. So to start off broad, can you kind of walk us through some of those keys to what you call limitless brain health?

Jim: Yeah, absolutely. And you're mentioning, you know, with your six kids, how everyone learns differently. And I am wearing a shirt if people are watching this on video, it says neurodiversity, which is this idea that people experience and interact with their world in many different ways. And there's no one "right way" of thinking, or of learning, or behaving. And these differences are not viewed as necessarily deficits.

You know, when you mentioned our courses, and we have students in every country in the world, 195 nations. We have a lot of data. And we teach people more of the software, if you will, metaphorically. How to read faster, how to focus, how to remember things, how to do better in school. But the hardware, you have to take care of also, right? Which is, you know, the actual physical performance of this brain that we have. You know, and our ability to learn, and to be able to relearn, or maybe even unlearn, is so very important.

Things that we recommend in terms of having a limitless brain are, well, we know that... My work of limitless was endorsed by the Founding Director of the Cleveland Clinic Center for Brain Health, by the top Alzheimer's researcher at a Harvard University. We know approximately, you know, one third of our brain performance is predetermined by genetics and biology, leaving at least two thirds in our control. And there are 10 things that I really focus on specifically, to be able to optimize that. And these are all things you've had experts come in to talk about. Quick summary. And I would recommend as I go through this rather rapidly, Kwik style, if you will, is to make it practical for everybody, is maybe they could...you know, I encourage people to take some notes, that helps with their forgetting curve. But maybe assess yourself. You know, maybe even something simple like, as you're taking notes on a scale of zero to 10, how much energy, or effort, attention are you putting towards this category. Because everyone wants, like, the one thing, and I really don't think that there's a magic pill, as so much there is processes.

And so in no specific order, let's start with a good brain diet. You know, you are what you eat. What you eat matters. What you eat and absorb matters, especially for your gray matter. An area of science called neuro nutrition, that your brain is only maybe 2% of your body mass, but it requires 20% of the nutrients. And some of the nutrients that your brain requires is different than the rest of your body. I like to get most of mine through food. And it's hard, because everyone is bio individual. So I'll state that. I don't think there's, you know, one thing that's good for somebody that could be something not so great for somebody else. You know, so foods that I personally eat are things like avocados for the mono saturated fats. I love blueberries. I can eat them all day. I call them brain berries. You know, green vegetables like broccoli, kale, spinach. I know some people talk about the hormesis in terms of some of the things that are in vegetables that are protecting them from danger. But I do things like, you know, cold, and heat, and do certain things purposely.

If people's diet allows, the choline in eggs is good for cognitive health. Your brain is mostly fat, so I like to incorporate some wild salmon, maybe some sardines, a little bit of turmeric here or there for some flavor, and, you know, lowering inflammation benefits. Dark chocolate is so important. And a lot of these things I could put even in a smoothie. You know, probably not the salmon. But it's just something that's nutritious and delicious. I mean, obviously, we know a lot of things to stay away from, highly processed foods, the seed oils, sugar, oh, my goodness. And so a scale of zero to 10, a good brain diet. Number two, killing ants. I got this phrase from Dr. Daniel Amen, a mutual friend of ours, automatic negative thoughts. And I believe that our beliefs are things, that all behavior is belief driven. Often at events where I'm doing these demonstrations, people will grab me afterwards and say, "Jim, I just have a horrible memory. I'm getting too old. I don't think my kid's smart enough." It's like, "Stop. If you fight for your limitations, you get to keep them." Right? Your brain is this incredible supercomputer. And your self-talk is the program that will run.

So if you tell yourself, "I'm not good at remembering things, I'm not good at remembering names," you won't remember the name of the next person you meet, because you've programmed your supercomputer not to. So I believe all behavior is belief driven, and that our mind is always eavesdropping on our self-talk. Not to say that you have one negative thought, it ruins your life any more than eating that one doughnut will. But I think the consistency and the habit of saying certain things could affect us in a very deep way. And so on a scale of zero to 10, how positive, encouraging are thoughts.

Number three, and I know you talk about this a lot, and I'll just talk about it, is just movement. You say sitting is the new smoking. I find that what's so important for me is, as I work, I do some deep work maybe 90 minutes, in cycles, 90-minute sessions. And I tend to stay, like, time chunk things where I focus on one activity. I don't want to just keep on going back and forth, or try to do this task, switching where I'm turning on a cognitive web in my mind, and then switching to another one, and then takes a lot of energy. But during a

brain break, I'll take time to hydrate. I'll take time to do some deep breathing. And then I'll take time to move. I don't know what it is, I have to get in my steps each day. It's something that works for me.

Every morning, I have to do, like, a good 30 minutes, usually around zone two cardio. And I just feel like it helps me sleep better. I feel like it helps me think clearer. The fresh air and the sunlight, you know, is very supportive also. So I don't mean necessarily Pilates three times a week or CrossFit. I mean, just, like, how much are we moving throughout the day? You know, as your body moves, your brain grooves. When you exercise, you build brain-derived neurotrophic factors, which people say is like Miracle Gro or fertilizer for neuroplasticity. We know there are studies done when people are listening to your podcast, or they'll maybe listen to an audiobook, and they're doing something rhythmic, like, they're on an elliptical, or a cycle, or they're going for a walk, that they'll understand it better and retain it better also, as well. So on a scale of zero to 10 is movement.

Number four is nutrients, brain nutrients. And again, I prefer to get it through my diet personally. But, you know, maybe we need to supplement also, as well, especially in the lifestyle that we have, which is really, you know, self and fast paced and ever changing. I would always go to the experts, and you've had many of them on your show. And I'd love to pick your brain on, you know, certain nutrients that maybe you find is useful for stress management, or focus, memory, or more mental energy. Also, you know, but also testing, right? Go to a functional medicine doctor, and do microbiome test, a nutrient profile, and see what we could be lacking. You know, if you're lacking certain B vitamins or D, your omega 3s, it could definitely compromise your ability to be mentally there. So that's number four.

Number five is...and I'm going through rapid fire, is a positive peer group. You know, we've heard this phrase in self-improvement, who you spend time with is who you become. That we are the average of the five people we spend the most time with. If you're around four broke people, be careful because you're on your way to be number five. And, you know, we have these mirror neurons in our nervous system, which allows us to feel empathy. If you're watching something like sports, or you could kind of feel what the character's going through in the movie you're watching, or the show you're watching. Your mirror neurons are turned on just like kids, and we tend to imitate how we say WATCH, W-A-T-C-H. We tend to imitate people's W, is their words, their language, the people around us. The A are the actions. We tend to behave like the people around us that we spend time with. The T are the thoughts. And we talked about how thoughts really are things. The C is our character.

I heard this quote recently. I don't know who to attribute it to. But they said, "Integrity is measured by the distance between someone's lips and their life." The distance between someone's lips and their life. And I think it's better well done than well said for sure. But we tend to model our character around the people we spend time with. And then that's the C and the H finally, are habits. And we know that first you create your habits and then your habits create you. You create your habits of meditation, of exercise, of journaling, or eating the best nutritious foods ever, and those habits create you back. So, positive peer group is so important. We all need people to encourage us, to challenge us, to cheerlead for us. And if you haven't found that person yet, or those people, I would recommend be that person for somebody else.

Especially we could be that person for ourselves. I think part of self-care is not just, you know, necessarily going to the spa, and doing those things. But maybe it's putting borders and boundaries around the things that you hold important in your life. You know, your time, your energy, your emotions, your heart. And part of his self-love is falling in love with the person in the mirror that's been through so much, but is still standing, you know. And I think sometimes we don't credit ourselves with how far we've come in the process. And so I think self-love is important. But going back to positive peer group, it's not just our neurological networks, or our

biological networks, it's also our social networks. Like, whether or not somebody smokes has less to do with their biology and more to do with, does their friend smoke, or their friend's friend smoke? So that's number five.

Number six is a clean environment. And this is something I'm putting extra focus on, you know, of recent. But just, I think our external world is the reflection of our internal world often. And we know that when we make our bed, or we clean off our desk, or we file the folders on our laptop, we have clarity of thought also as well. And so I think it's important to Marie Kondo our mind. That sometimes if you're in a messy environment, it takes energy and memory to be able to retain where everything is. And so, you know, why use that excess energy in processing for that when you don't need to. So that's number six. And then finally, 7, 8, 9, 10. Seven is a big one, again, that you've covered on your podcast. And I mention your podcast a lot, because I'm an avid listener, and our team listens to it also, as well. My business partner is always sending me episodes. Sleep, right, and especially when it comes to our brain health. And this is something I have an intimate experience with.

For five straight years as an adult, I slept 90 minutes a night, in total, not even straight, but very interrupted. I ended up being diagnosed with severe sleep apnea, where I stopped breathing 250 times a night. And each time counted as like 10 seconds. So that's what an episode was. If I stopped breathing for at least 10 seconds, they were counted. And there was over 250 episodes a night on average. And so I would wake up suffocating, and I would use a CPAP, and a dental device, and, you know, all these different things, and nothing really worked. I had this surgical procedure at UCLA with their head of throat over there, and they did something called the UPPP, which they took out my uvula, my soft palate, my tonsils. And my sleep jumped up to four hours, you know, which is not a lot of sleep, but it's remarkably more than 90 minutes.

But going back to sleep, I have since improved it with various recommendations from sleep experts, and coaches, which I have many. But everybody, again, I think there's a gift in every challenge. Just like, you know, my two biggest challenges growing up were learning and public speaking. And they became my strengths. I think there was a gift also in not sleeping.

And on a side tangent, I think one of them is, it forced me to double down on everything I teach. You know, I am an avid reader and focused, but I everything that I teach is something that I use personally, because I was at such a deficit. You know, every single thing was impaired. Because that's what happens when you don't sleep. Every biological function gets impaired and reduced. So it forced me to really get good at what I do, and live what I teach, and practice what I post, right? But the other thing is, the other gift in there was, I became extremely good at controlling my time and my commitments. Because when you feel like you have a limited amount of energy because you're not sleeping, or limited with a bandwidth of focus, attention, alertness, you don't over-commit. And so everything in my life really is heck yes or heck no. And, you know, I don't have too many tabs open, which I think a lot of people struggle with brain fog or mental fatigue, just because it's stress induced, because they have so many commitments. And I mention a lot of books, like "Good to Great," Jim Collins. That good is the enemy of great. That when you say yes to something, you're not saying no to yourself.

And so, like, right now, Katie, there's no one else I'd rather be talking to right now, nowhere else I'd rather be because my commitments are very clear. Because I think a lot of energy is being used up where, you know, we have this image of who we're projecting out there, we have this image who we fear we are. And we have this, you know, our accurate self-image. And it takes so much energy to be able to manage all that. And so, it's nice when you have, like, the level of alignment or congruency. And that came out of a deficit of sleep. And we've done multiple episodes on sleep optimization, as you have. We dedicate a whole chapter in "Limitless" on that, because when you're not sleeping, you know, you're not forming long term memories. That's where you

consolidate short to long term memory, the sewage system kicks in when you're sleeping in your brain to help reduce the beta amyloid plaque. You also dream, which is an incredible resource. We talk a lot about remembering your dreams and some powerful ideas that have come in throughout history, art, science, literature, inventions that came out of dream states.

And then finally, 8, 9, 10. Eight is... Zero to 10, again, for sleep. Brain protection. You know, are your kids wearing a helmet? Are they playing extreme sports? You know, your brain, it's very resilient, but it's also very fragile. And my parents immigrated to the U.S., my dad was 13, you know, our family lived in the back of a laundromat that my mom worked at. They had many jobs. And so I wasn't not very well supervised, which is why I had so many accidents as a kid. My grandmother actually was my caregiver. I had my accident when I was five years old, she started showing early signs of dementia. And, you know, she was my hero. And to see someone that you love, that you spend the most time with, you think the world of, and she calls you by your father's name, or she says something that she just said not 30 seconds ago, it put me on this path. Another, you know, kind of signpost, if you will, in terms of the path I chose to take.

And so, you know, we donated 100% of my book, "Limitless," all the proceeds to charity, hundreds of thousands of dollars to Alzheimer's research, specifically for women. Because women are twice as likely to experience Alzheimer's than men. And yet most of the research is done on male brains. You know, most of the treatments on male brains. And so I'm very passionate about that. And also building schools. We were very fortunate, you know, the past couple of years, we've built schools everywhere from Ghana, to Guatemala, fully funded this building of the schools, and textbooks, and teachers and health care, and clean water that keeps kids from going to school. But those are our two kind of, you know, things we're most excited about. You know, so at whatever age or stage, I could tell you, is, we grossly underestimate what our brain's capable of. But you have to protect that brain. So wear a helmet.

Number nine is new learnings. And I'm preaching to the choir, to everyone listening, but your brain is like a muscle, it's use it or lose it. If I put my arm in a sling for a year, it wouldn't grow stronger, it wouldn't even stay the same, right? It would atrophy. And so you want to make sure you exercise your brain. And for me, my favorite exercise...I know you're a speed reader, is reading, right? I think reading is to your mind what exercise is to your body. And it's my favorite way to exercise my mental muscles.

And then finally, number 10 is stress management. And this is the invisible one because we don't see it, but we feel it for sure. Chronic stress has been proven to shrink the human brain. You know, cortisol, adrenaline, you're in that fight or flight, you're not in that kind of parasympathetic, rest and digest. And it's scary. You know, like, even with all the fear mongering, it bleeds, it leads. There's an algorithm in our mind, just like there is in social media, that if whatever you consume on social media, they give you more of. So if you're on Instagram, and you just like, share, comment on all the cat videos, right? Then they show you more cats, and that becomes your reality, right? That becomes your news feed.

Well, if we're just looking at what's dark and scary in the world all the time, then that's what we're engaging with, then our minds are seeing more of that. And our reticular activating system is really charged for looking for those things. And that creates fear. And chronic fear actually suppresses the human immune system. It makes you more susceptible to colds, to viruses, to flus, a whole area of science called psycho neuro immunology. And so, you know, how are we managing our stress? How are you coping with stress on a scale of zero to 10? You know, my favorite thing is meditation. I do it twice a day, and I have for years. And that allows me, even when I wasn't sleeping, to be able to catch up, keep up, and also get ahead. And I use a number of devices that you mention also, technology, to be able to support that kind of parasympathetic, you know, spending more time in that alpha and those theta brainwave states.



So, those are 10 things that really, I go to. I want to make sure that those are foundational for me. And there are ways of doing these things that are really inexpensive. You know, you get the ways of forming your routines, maybe you have kids, that you could do a lot of these things with your children also as well.

Katie: Yeah, I think children are some of the best teachers of that. And I think each of these points you mentioned could easily be its own series of podcast episodes, because there's so much to learn on each of those. But to highlight a couple that I think really stand out, especially for the parents listening. I've always loved your focus on new learning. And I think that really is what keeps our brains, and our bodies, and our minds young. And I think for that reason, having children is amazing because they are our teachers in remembering things like learning new things and play. And I know one thing we do in our family is, at least every quarter, but usually every month, we have a new sort of family challenge that we take on that usually involves some aspect of learning. So this is involved in the past things like learning how to solve a Rubik's Cube, or playing chess, or different types of art, or new movement patterns. Which those are the most challenging for me not growing up as an athlete and trying to become one as an adult. But I feel like anything we're doing that's challenging our comfort level in our brains has so much payoff in other areas. That's just something I always encourage families to implement, is do these together as a fun family game, to learn something new. And often I'm surprised by just how rapidly kids pick these things up. And I'm the one struggling to learn the new language, or to relearn how to play the piano as an adult, and they just pick it up so instantly.

But I'd also love to really delve into the sleep side a little bit more, because like you said, this is something that you have personally put a lot of dedication toward improving in your own life. And I would guess, because it's a struggle for you, you've tried a wide variety of things, and probably have some great insight into what works and what doesn't. And, of course, with the caveat that there's personalization in the sleep space, as well, I know, sleep is often a struggle for parents, it's often a struggle for kids. And as you pointed out so well, if we can improve sleep, that ripples into all areas of our life. And you mentioned, you've improved yours quite drastically in the last few years through things you've done. So any tips, maybe some specific to parents that we can do to help our kids develop a really great sleep foundation from a young age?

Jim: Yes. Besides I had my family tested also, as well, my parents, my siblings, and they all have sleep apnea. So part of it was a genetic challenge that we collectively needed to be able to overcome. And then part of my sleep issues also came in terms of origin, was my day to day training. Because whatever you rehearse, you know, whatever you're doing repeatedly, you get better at. And because I had these learning challenges, it wasn't because I was not willing to work hard. You know, my parents really instilled that kind of discipline and work ethic. But I could work two or three times harder as the other kids in school, for far less grades. And so I was on the other part of the bell curve that made, you know, those achievers possible. But part of it was, I would pull these all-nighters in high school, you know, in the beginning, freshman year of college, before I learned these skills. And that, you know, was not something great to ingrain early on.

You know, I thought I was I was giving myself an advantage by working all night, when it was actually more detrimental. And so I started developing these grooves and these habits in terms of my sleep hygiene. And that's probably not advantageous. Even when I, you know, started teaching this and I started traveling, and I could be on the road more than half of the year, waking up in different cities. And it's really bad when you're a memory expert, and you forget what city that you're actually in that day. But sleeping in foreign environments, like, you know, different hotels, jetlag, time zones, all of that. So even as my career, I never had the consistency of having a sleep sanctuary, right? Having certain rituals, because the environment definitely gets coded in terms of what we're learning. That's why we say don't work in your bed, right? You know,

because you start connecting those emotional states and moods to that activity. And you wonder why you can't turn your brain off, you know, when you're lying in bed. Because, you know, you've conditioned that environment for that activity.

And so, that being said, as background, the foreground in terms of what I do, some of the things that move the needle for me. Okay, so I get direct sunlight first thing in the morning. And this is interesting, some of this stuff I don't talk about, but I did an episode recently about the elements. And it's interesting, elemental, there's the word mental inside of elemental. And, you know, the four elements were like, what thousands of years ago, they thought everything was made up of these four elements, right? Earth, and fire, you know, water, and air. And so, you know, if we're talking about biohacking and biohacking your brain, a lot of it can be done inexpensive, if not free. So I try to incorporate those four elements in my morning routine. So something simple like, when I wake up, within 15 minutes, I want to go outside, right? And when I'm outside, I get the fresh air, I hydrate, so I get my water because we could lose up to a pound of water while we sleep, through respiration and perspiration. And we know that our brain is mostly water. And just a drop in hydration could compromise our reaction time and our thinking speed.

So I'm drinking this water and I'm literally barefoot in my yard. So I'm getting grounded also as well. And I watch the sun come up every single morning. It's my non-negotiable. You know, and you've heard other experts on your show talk about resetting their circadian rhythm. But I just do that. And I'm outside for maybe 20 minutes. And I haven't touched my phone. You know, we hear other people talk about it, but I just don't want to rewire my brain first thing in the morning when I'm in that relaxed state of awareness. You know, you're very impressionable. If the first thing you do is pick up your device, you're reprogramming and rewiring your mind for distraction. Every like, share, comment, you know, ring, ping, ding, cat video is driving you to distraction. And then we're rewiring our brain also for being reactive, right? You get a message on social media, like, you know, a comment, or something, or a voicemail, and it could just hijack your mood for the day, as opposed to being proactive and designing your day.

And so when I'm outside, I kind of think about... And this goes back to sleep. But I think about, you know, bringing joy to the process. And I think I'm at the age of, you know, my career and my life, I just want to bring more joy. I feel like that if you could do what you love, or find a way of loving what you do, you could add five days to every week, right, you know, where most people look forward to the weekends. And so, I do this thought experiment every morning while I'm outside, and I mentally project to the future. And, you know, I imagine myself at the end of the day, and a family member or a friend asks how my day was and I say, "This was amazing. I crushed it today. It was incredible." And I say, "Okay, what had to happen in order for me to say those words, in order for me to feel that way?" And it usually is not like I did 200 things on my to do list, but it's usually, you know, three things personally, and three things professionally, that I want clarity on, I want to be able to hit that target. And besides having that to do list, I also have, like, a to feel list. What are the emotions I want to cultivate today?

You know, you mentioned one, like, curiosity, a level of fun, and playfulness. Because kids are incredibly fast learners because they cultivate those states. You know, somebody mentioned to me at one of the events because I do a lot of games in my speeches and our training, that, "Hey, I stopped playing because I grew older." And I was like, "No, you grow older, because you stopped playing." Right? And I think chronologically, just one thing, but it's, you know, speaking more about the age of our mind, and then the age of our spirit or heart, if you will. So in order to be able to win the day, you have to win that first hour of the day, you know, as we know. So getting the elements first thing in the morning is so important. And then at nighttime, I'll reintroduce those elements also as well. You know, it's funny, because, like, as hunter gatherers, we would

know, it was time to go to sleep, because there would be a drop in two things. A drop in light and a drop in temperature. But modern conveniences, you don't get that, right? You have, you know, the modern temperature thermostats in homes nowadays, most homes. You know, and also you have lighting, right?

You know, I don't go on my device, honest truth, the past 90 minutes in a day. I just don't. And not because I'm so enlightened, it's just I feel like I'm at a disadvantage if I do that, because I am so sensitive to that. You know, we hear about blue light and how it kind of tricks our mind in thinking it's still daytime, and we don't produce the melatonin and temperature. Right? And so I have my blackout curtains so I make it dark, right? Sometimes I use an eye mask if I'm traveling. Or for temperature, for me, what works is I do my sauna more in the afternoon. That just works for me. Sometimes after a workout also as well. I find I think so well in a sauna. I don't know what it is. And I have a traditional sauna and also a Sunlighten sauna. And I feel like I come up with, like, some my best ideas there. But I'll even take a warm bath with some Epsom salt. I think the magnesium, it works for me, it moves the needle for me. And when you get out of those heated environments, your core body temperature drops, and then, you know, produce the melatonin, which triggers that relaxation.

Going back to bringing more joy into things and more fun, I don't want it so structured just like with my diet, because I find that sometimes when I was... You know, I've experimented with various diets, almost all of them, just testing it in terms of my biology. But I found that sometimes I was so stressed about what I was eating that it kind of countered any benefit that I was getting. And same thing with sleep. Sometimes when I look at all my devices and I was looking so deeply in my deep sleep, or my REM sleep, or my light sleep, and measuring every little thing, I found for me, sometimes, that it almost became an obsession to really add more anxiety to the process.

But I use, you know, a pad on my bed, going back to temperature also. Some people like their ChiliPad, or a EightSleep, or what have you. And that's something that works for me also as well. I have a weighted blanket, and, you know, I play something on a NuCalm device for deep sleep. You know, in the background, turn off all the Wi-Fi in our home, because I am sensitive certainly to EMFs for me personally. And yeah, I don't do caffeine past noon. I don't eat too close to bedtime either. And I definitely don't work, you know, within a few hours of going to sleep. But those are some of my go tos. And, you know, I'm looking forward to having you on my podcast also to talk about yours, because you've probably forgotten more about these things than most people will ever learn. But sleep is very, very important. It's got to be the number one brain hack, for sure.

Katie: Yeah, I fully agree. And you just gave so many absolute gold tips right there, I think. And I love that you focus on the ones that are inexpensive or free as the actual core foundational ones. Because I think often, there's this tendency to get swept up in the idea of all these cool new bio hacks. But at the end of the day, to your point, it really goes back to our foundational habits, with sleep being sort of the cornerstone. And the ones you mentioned, of getting that morning sunlight, there's just continued research showing up that supports that as really an anchor point for your circadian rhythm, and your cortisol and melatonin patterns. And this is very true for kids as well. So I feel like for parents, if you can make this a habit in the morning, to get outside with your kids, it's a great time for conversation. If you can be, you know, barefoot on the grass, like you said, even better.

But that light... And it doesn't have to be an hour, it can be 10 minutes. Early morning light makes a huge difference, along with... One tip I tell parents that has made a big difference in our house is to sort of have two separate lights. So the bulbs in our ceiling are daylight bulbs with a broader spectrum of light. And then we have lamps that are lower down, that are warm red light only. With the idea that when the sun sets, it's not even just the color of light that's important too, we want to reduce the intensity of the light. But we want the

level of the light to be more eye level or below, because that's what we would experience with campfire, with those types of things. For parents, if you can just build that into your house with timers, so you don't have to think about it. That alone will help your kids be more tired at bed time.

Jim: That's a huge takeaway. I'm going to do that this week, 100%. Because I like looking at the sun going down also. You know, I make that part of the ritual to reconnect with family also as well. But I love having the red light actually at that angle, because that makes sense to me. I'm gonna definitely test that.

Katie: Awesome. Let me know how it goes. And also your tip about not eating too close to bedtime, very important for children as well. Obviously, you don't want them going to bed starving. But if you can put a couple hours between food and bedtime, it tends to help everyone sleep a lot better. And I want to also get a chance to delve into some of the more biohacking stuff as well. But I love that these are things anyone can implement in their home as is. And another one you mentioned earlier that I think is vitally important and often overlooked as well, is that social connection aspect. I recently had a Harvard researcher on who said, in the longest study of human adult development ever, that was the key takeaway for them. Was that, our social connections and relationships are the most important factor for longevity, more so than smoking or not, more so than obesity, more so than what we eat. And I feel like many people are suffering in this area after the last few years. And so to your point, if you guys can be the initiator, and be the one who starts this, and establishes those social bonds, and makes it a regular habit, I think not only is that one of the best things we can do for our own health, but modeling that for our kids can help them have that foundational aspect in their lives as well.

Jim: I love that so much. Even, you know, having family meals, right? You know, that was something that I was very fortunate, even though my parents were gone before I woke up to go to work and everything. But they would always come back for dinner. And having those family meals are some my core memories without a doubt. I would also say it's not just what we eat, it's how we eat and who we're eating with, right? And why we're eating those things. You know, instead of binge watching something while you eat, actually being conscious and mindful of the process. Like, mindfulness doesn't have to be just limited to our meditation time, you know, our whitespace time, but it could also be being mindful when we're brushing our teeth, or mindful when we're chewing. Chewing is like a lost art nowadays, you know, but we know that our stomach doesn't have anything mechanical to break down foods, right? It's more chemical. You know, but obviously, it'd be wonderful to be able to take more bites, if you will, and chew our food. And so it's even more easily digestible.

And I think that's really important, you know, where even we're talking about not just what, but how, who, where we're eating also as well, when we're eating. And so, you know, I don't want to be hungry or you don't want your kids to be hungry as a distraction. Just like cold, like, I want to make it cold, but I don't want it to be so cold that is distracting me from sleeping, right? It's keeping me from sleeping also as well. But finding that not even balance, finding that harmony. You know, for me, it's not about so much life balance. Balance, it's interesting, words have an effect on our nervous system, how we process it. Balance, if you look it up in the dictionary, it says, equal amounts of... You know, it feels like I'm on a balance beam. And that's very stressful for me. That any moment you could kind of tip or fall off. And, you know, I don't want to spend equal amount working as I do equal amount of time working out. But I think my metaphor, and part of how we learn and we teach kids is through metaphors, and parables, and stories, is more like a symphony, like an orchestra. You know, not every instrument plays an equal amount of time, but they come in, and they add their unique value, their unique ability, their superpower, and then they create art as well.

So I think there's a science to learning, a science to living. But I think also equally important, there's an art, and a creativity, imagination. Even when I'm reading, I used to read exclusively nonfiction. You know, for four

years, I read a book a day. And we've talked about speed reading and stuff like that in a previous episode together. But I would stay away from fiction. But the past 10 years of reading almost an equal amount of fiction. And fiction is what I read at night. I never want to get all heady in my mind, and do critical thinking, and read neuroscience or entrepreneurs' content before I go to bed, because that kind of puts me in my prefrontal cortex. But I like reading more fiction. And it's funny, because nonfiction, you're learning primarily through information. Fiction, you're learning through imagination, you know, instead of information. And it obviously takes imagination to write good nonfiction. And I know you're a bestselling author, and you know that. And also, fiction obviously has information in it as well.

But fiction reading has been shown to improve EQ, right, our emotional quotient, to enhance empathy, to help you see from different points of views, to understand storytelling, to be able to boost the things that are truly limitless, our creativity, our imagination, and so much more. So on my nightstand, I have a journal, because I feel like it's important for me to get things out of my mind. So I don't put energy towards it, and I write down my dreams, as part of it. I write down my gratitude, because those emotional states are important for me to get into that parasympathetic kind of rest and digest. I have a glass of water there. And that's more because... I don't drink it at night because I don't want to use the restroom and wake up doing that. But I'll drink it, you know, in the morning. And I feel like it's sets your environment up even with your kids to be able... What's good for you, you want to make it easier. And the things that are not so good for you, you want to make it more difficult. So I don't have my phone in the bedroom. And this has nothing to do with willpower. But if I put it into my bathroom, I want to touch it, you know, first thing in the morning. So I want to make it more difficult to do things that are probably not the best for me.

So I have my journal on my nightstand going back to sleep, I have a glass of water, and I have my Oura Ring charger. And then I have a fiction book. You know, and sometimes it's a comic book. You know, we've talked about this, I love superheroes. And, you know, I used to escape when I was being bullied, in my imagination, and not feeling like I wasn't enough. It allowed me to realize that, you know, we're all on this hero's journey. And even if you see the opening cover of "Limitless," I break it down the book based on Joseph Campbell's "Hero's Journey" also as well. So I'm a big lover of that. And it brings me joy, it makes me feel like a kid again. And I think those are good states to cultivate when I want to be able to, you know, have a safe place to be able to fall asleep.

Katie: Like you, I focused on nonfiction for a very long time. And I feel like my kids were great teachers in learning to love fiction, and even superhero stories and movies a lot more. And I think kids are so great at that imagination piece that you mentioned, that we can learn so much from them. We often as adults want to default to that more information-based learning. But I feel like we can get more in that childlike curiosity and playfulness and imagination space. That's how, to me, retention really goes up when you're able to be in that zone.

And I want to circle back to a comment you made earlier. You talked about if we fight for our limitations, we get to keep them. And this has been one of my personal lessons in the last couple of years, is just how profoundly our inner thoughts and our inner talk really affects our physical health, our mental health, so many aspects of life. I think it's also a challenging one for a lot of people to even first, become aware of, and then secondly, to start to cultivate better. So I'm curious if you have any tips for people in sort of curating and cultivating healthier inner talk and habits that way?

Jim: Yeah. And everyone's different. Just like when it comes to food or sleep, some things that move the needle. For me, I think self-awareness is a superpower. So I always start with... Meta thinking is thinking about our own thinking. So just that awareness that we do have this inner talk that's there, is the first part of making

any kind of change, because you can't change something unless, you know, you make it more explicit. I'm a big person that advocates for writing things down. Because I think it's the first step in creation, the creative process, where you take something that literally is invisible, and you make it visible. And so you made it something outside of you. And if you could do that, what else can you build on that? You know, changing the words make a big difference for a lot of people. Meaning, sometimes people have this inner talk about, "Oh, I gotta pick up the kids today. I got a workout. I gotta meditate." And just changing like a word from got to get, you know, one little letter, change it from an O to an E. I get to pick up my kids today. I get to move and work out today. You know, I get to study, or I get to prepare for this meeting, or whatever. I get to meditate. It just changes.

You know, I think the problem is rarely the problem. I think the problem is usually our attitude about the problem. And I think again, you know, if I think about a dominant question, like, how can I bring more joy to this? You know, what do I have to be grateful for in this moment? And not that it's, you know, a magic pill, but it does redirect our focus. I mentioned earlier, that reticular activating system. that RAS, that our brain is mostly a deletion device. At any given time, there's a billion, 2 billion different stimuli that we could be focusing on. So our brain is mostly trying to keep information out, because we would be overloaded and overwhelmed. And when we let in things that our reticular activating system deems something important, like our name. That's why, you know, I could be running a marathon in D.C., I remember actually doing this. I was running the Marine Corps Marathon and somebody yelled out my name. Like, Jim. And it's obviously a very common name. So I know I didn't know the person, but instinctively, I had to pause and look, because, you know, you've trained your nervous system to pay attention to things that are important.

And so, you know, asking certain questions will shine a spotlight on the thing that you're looking for. And I feel like we have to control those questions, because the questions determine our attention. the attention is going to determine how we feel. And then how we feel is gonna determine what we do, and how we experience things in our life. And so we have about 50, 60, 70 thoughts, 70,000 thoughts a day. And a lot of those thoughts come in the form of questions. And so, you know, changing a simple question from, like, why does this happen to me? Or why can't I ever learn this? Or why can't I ever lose this weight? Or whatever it is. Maybe we could come up with something like, how do I do this and find joy in the process? Right? What is the best use of this moment?

You know, a question I ask a lot is, even when it comes to our own self talk, is, like, I'm looking at my to do list and I say, "Oh my God, I feel so overloaded." You know, those thoughts affect me, like, those automatic negative thoughts. And I just say like, "Okay, what on this list here that if I did, would make everything else easier, or even make the rest of stuff almost, you know, obsolete if I did this thing?" Right? Because it's not even about time management, right? I was thinking about this the other day, that not everybody has equal, right? Not everyone makes the same amount of money. Not everyone has the same Rolodex. I'm dating myself, Rolodex. Like, the amount of network or contacts. Not everybody has the same level of education, but we all have 24 hours in a day. But it's not even about time management. It's about mind management. It's about even priority management. You know, and I always think that the most important thing is to keep the most important things the most important things. That the most important things keep the most important thing or things, the most important thing or things. Because we never want to do the things that don't matter, right?

And so, you know, I've heard you talk about on your podcast, the Pareto's principle, the 80-20 rule. You know, obsessed about finding that 10% or 20% of the things that give me the most kind of return, because I had to when I was, like, especially not sleeping. And so, when it comes to our negative self-talk, first be aware of it.

And then even if we find ourselves saying something, I would always say, like...I would do a redo. And you could have, you know, like, maybe put a little bit of music or cartoon music in the background and kind of rewind it, and then say something else that is more aligned, and more powerful, even when I feel stressed. I did a podcast called ABRA, because I love magic. I learned those techniques on how to memorize a list full of random words, you know, in and out of order through a magician. But the difference is, when I asked him, "Can I teach this?" He was like, "Yeah, share with whoever." I don't think he realized how many people I would share with. But I realized that there was a method behind what looks like magic, that genius leaves clues. And you could do some remarkable things, when you could organize your mind.

And then also, the last thing I would say when it comes to your negative self-talk, so there's four... Like, ABRA is an acronym, because I use these mnemonics even as I teach it. The A is you acknowledge that negative phrase that you just said. You acknowledge it, you don't resist it. Because what you resist persists. If I say, don't think about this, you're just gonna think about it more. So you acknowledge it. The B is, I tend to breathe into it. So I imagine where in my body. So if I feel angst, or I have a thought, like, maybe a pain somewhere, I acknowledge it, the A, and I breathe into it, right? And this could be not a physical pain, it could be a splinter in my mind. And I would acknowledge it, breathe into it. The R is I would release it. So with my exhale, I would release that thing that I would normally complain about, or make an excuse about. And then the A is I align. I realign to my truth, which is usually opposite of what, you know, that negative thought is or was.

And so, I think we're all here because we want to make some kind of change. People are listening to this right now because they want to make some kind of change. But change in our nervous system is sometimes hard, because our nervous system really is wired to grow until we experience some kind of trauma. And then our nervous system really wants to keep us safe, right? And so, you know, uncertainty or change can be a danger, right? And that's, you know, one theory of how we're organized. But there's only four different ways to make a change, right? You either want to do more of something. You know, let's say someone meditates once a week, they want to do more of it, maybe get up to twice a week. Or they want to exercise three times a week, instead of once. You know, you could do more of something. The second thing you could do is do less of something, you know. And so maybe you want to spend less time on your phone or less time, you know, binge watching that show.

And this is not a judgment on those activities. If you're getting the result that you want, that's great. But if you're complaining about it, we can't be upset by the results we didn't get from the work we didn't do. And that's just kind of the coach of me coming out, you know, because I think a coach is there to challenge you to make some positive change. But you could do more of something, or you could do less of something. For me, it's very binary. Or you could start something, right? And so maybe you've been, you know, hesitant to ever meditate, you think it's something that you have to quiet your mind, which is absolutely not true. You can't stop your mind from thinking any more than you could stop your heart from beating. That's what it does, right? But maybe that's kept you from it. But maybe you want to start something. And my recommendation is, start somewhere anywhere, but start small. Maybe it's not working out an hour a day, if you've never done it before. Maybe it's getting on your running shoes, right? Maybe if your kids don't floss their teeth, which we know oral hygiene is very important for longevity, maybe get them to floss one tooth, because nobody's gonna stop there.

Maybe your kids aren't reading, you know, for 30 minutes a day. If people have seen me on social media with Elon, or Oprah, or whoever, like, people ask like, "How did you meet?" We bonded over books, right? You read to succeed. If somebody has decades of experience like you do, and you put it into a book, you know, which you've done multiple times, then somebody sits down to read that book, they could download decades of

experience into days, you know. And that's an incredible way of cutting the learning curve. The challenge is, if a child's not studying, but maybe, you know, reading an hour is too hard, or 30 minutes is too hard, maybe getting them to open up the book, or reading one line in the book, right? Little by little, a little becomes a lot. So you could do more of something... There are only four ways you could change something. You could do more of it, you could do less of it, you could start something new, or you could stop something. Right? And, you know, Bruce Lee has a quote saying, you know, where you hack away at the unessentials. And I would say that maybe there's something in your life that you just want to stop.

I would say stop, you know, touching your phone for 30 minutes a day and see how that goes. Stop complaining, stop making excuses. Those kind of things frees up a lot of energy and, you know, power and attention towards things that you could do to make things better.

The fifth way is just continuing what you're doing. But if you're continuing what you're doing and not getting the result, and we all know the definition of insanity. But I also think that whatever we're not changing, we're choosing. So if we're not getting the result that we want, and we're not... There's a quote in "Limitless" from a French philosopher that gets shared a lot. And it says, "Life is the C between B and D." Life is the letter C between the letters B and D. B stands for birth, D stands for death, life, C, choice. I believe that we are the sum total of all the choices we've made up to this point, good, bad, or indifferent. You know, what are we going to eat today? Where are we going to live? Who are we going to spend time with? All the things we talked about. But, you know, when it comes to choices, I believe that these difficult times, they can distract us, these difficult times can diminish us, or these difficult times, they can develop us. But we always decide.

And I think one of the most important things with kids is reminding them of their own agency and their own responsibility. I mentioned this in a podcast that we did years ago introducing... I was going out to dinner with Stan Lee. And Stan is like the person I wanted to meet and spend time with. And he wanted to meet another individual. And I pick them up and I had to ask him, I was like, "You've made all my favorite superheroes, but who's your favorite?" And he says, "Jim, my favorite is Iron Man." And he says, "Jim, who's your favorite?" And he had this Spider Man tie on. And I said, "Spider Man." And without a pause, in his iconic voice, he goes, "With great power comes great responsibility." Right? And we all know that. But I don't know if it's because of the injuries I had to my brain early on, but even when I read or hear something, I tend to reverse things pretty often. And I heard something different. I was like, "you're right, with great power comes great responsibility. And Stan, the opposite is also true. With great responsibility comes great power."

When we take responsibility for something, we have great power to make it better. And, you know, that's what I would probably tell, like, the 10-year-old little Jim, that we are responsible. That maybe our environments and our experience shaped us where we are, but we are 100% responsible, you know, for today and tomorrow.

Katie: Oh, so many things within that, that could be their own entire episode. But I love the focus of reading, I think of Naval's quote that, "Read What You Love Until You Learn to Love to Read." And I think of your story and comic books being such great teachers for you. And I think often parents want their kids to read school books or specific books that they think are going to help teach them specific lessons. But I think if I circle back, that imagination, whatever story they love can be such a teaching tool. And that's a lesson for adults as well. I love the reversal of that Spider Man quote, it's something I say to my children often, also in parenting them, is that, if you want great freedom, great power, that comes with great responsibility. And to the degree that you show me you're responsible, I have no desire to restrict your freedom and your power.



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I also love how you talked about those internal statements and questions we make. I think this might be the most pivotal thing I've done for myself in the past five years, is learning to change those things, like to your point, instead of why can't I lose weight, to, a how question of, how can I make this so fun and so easy.

I think there's also a special power behind any statement that starts with "I am". And so I stopped saying I am sick, and I started saying I am healing. I think things like that that seems so small, really do have such big payoff over time. And that's something that is a slow process to learn, but pays dividends throughout life. And especially if we can teach that to our kids as they're young, is such a superpower to them.

And I know I could learn from you all day long. And I hope we will do many, many more episodes together. I'll also link in the show notes to all of your books and your courses, which I highly recommend. We use them as part of our homeschool program, actually, because of this idea that learning and love of learning is a superpower. And you encompass this in such fun ways that we've done as a family. So, so much gratitude to you for that. But a couple of last questions for this episode before we hopefully do many more rounds. The

first being, you're such an avid reader, are there any recent or ever books that have had a really profound impact on you that you would recommend?

Jim: Oh, goodness. Yeah. I mean, I read it every single day. I run and I read. That's my thing. I do have to do something physical and something mental. Goodness, some books that really changed my life early on. I got on this path when I was 18 years old. A mentor gave me a number of books to read, and challenged me to read one book a week. And some of those books were very early personal growth books. So some of those iconic books were, like, by Napoleon Hill, like, "Think and Grow Rich." Norman Vincent Peale, "The Power of Positive Thinking." You know, iconic books that I've read more recently are while preparing for podcasts. You know, I like to read the books of our guests, so I could be intelligent and learn also as well. And it's wonderful. I think, you know, the fact that you hosted, and you've had so many episodes, and you'd been blogging for years before people were blogging, and you have this, you know, big online presence. You do it because of what you learn, but you also do it how you could share with other people, you know, also as well.

And so I have a to do list, but I also have a not to do list, and I also have to read list. I can look at my shelves and I don't know if... I mean, I'm surrounded by...I could show you, like, I have books, upon books, upon books, like, on every wall in this office. And I have a full out library just adjacent to this because I do a lot of reading and research, you know, also as well. But some of the iconic books I mentioned are things like, "Mindset" by Carol Dweck, which is, you know, very amazing. I did a deep dive when I was writing the book on flow states. So I did a lot of reading in that area, especially by our friend, Steven Kotler. So, things like his "Superman" book, which is absolutely amazing, or "Stealing Fire." Those flow states is something that I want to be able to explore also as much as well. But there's so many amazing works out there.

Katie: I will link to those in the show notes as well. Of course your books too. And I know you read so much, and you have met so many people, so I'm really excited for the answer to this question. Which is, any parting advice for the listeners today that could be related to everything we've talked about or it could be entirely unrelated?

Jim: Wow, okay. Yeah, you know, a couple quick things. So Dr. Amen has this dominant question where he asks all the time, many people know his book, "Change Your Brain Change Your Life," which I would add to that list also, as well. He's written, like, 40-plus books on the brain. And he's done a quarter million brain scans, you know, including mine also, as well. And I always wear a brain on my chest, if you're watching this on video, or on social media, always pointing to my brain, because I think what you see you take care of. You know, you see your hair, you see your skin, you see your car, your clothes, you tend to take care of the things, because it's your constant awareness. But we don't see the thing that takes care of us, which is our brain. So I'm always wearing on my apparel. And, you know, we make this merch, and we give all the profits to charity for brain health and awareness. He has this question where he says, "Is this good for my brain or is this bad for my brain?" And I'm like, wow, that's really simple. And it's often the simple fundamentals, you know, the people are really amazing what they do with the professionals, the "masters" or experts. They never get bored of the basics.

And so, for me, my parting words would be, I want people to know their brain. Because if you want to improve your self-esteem overnight, just study how magnificent, you know, these 87 billion neurons really are. You know, each have like upwards of 10,000 synapses, which are...if you make those connections, more stars in the known universe. I mean, it's extraordinary. And no brain is, you know, exactly alike. So I find that incredible. That's what's the limitless, right? You know, limitless is not about being perfect, it's about advancing and progressing beyond what we believe is possible. But there's no limit to our creativity. There's no limit to our ability to come together in hard times. There's no limit to our ability to imagine a brighter and

more inspiring future for ourselves. And so I would say, number one, know your brain, you know, trust your brain, love your brain, and mostly, use your brain. You know, sometimes we get mentally lazy for things. And I think that hard work sometimes is a lost art. I think part of it is chopping wood, and carrying water, and doing those fundamental things that cause effort. You know, even with our children, getting them to know that not everything is supposed to be easy, that adversity can be an advantage.

If you will look at the word disadvantage, there's still the word advantage, you know, built into it. And I find that with struggles, come strength. So my message is, people right now, if somebody's listening to this, and they're struggling right now, that I would say, you know, that they inspire people with their grit, you're inspiring somebody with your grace. That the life we live are lessons we teach, you know, when we're talking about congruency. And I'm just saying that there's a version of ourself that's patiently waiting. And the goal is, we show up every single day until we're introduced. Lou know, like, I got this question in a recent media interview. They're like, "Let's say, Jim, like, who's one or two people you want to make proud?" And a lot of people say, "Well, it'd be my parents. It'd be my kids. It'd be my mentor." That's actually not what came to my mind. I mean, I hope that's the case, but I don't have control over that. But, you know, for me, I want to make that nine-year-old boy that was labeled broken, I want to make him proud. And then fast forward, because I hope to live a good amount of time, I'm looking at that 90 year old version of me and just saying, you know, I want to make him proud also, as well. Because I think the life we live, again, are the lessons we teach, you know, to our kids, to our friends, to our family, and the people we're blessed to be around.

Katie: I love that. And I think a perfect place to wrap up for today. But like I said, I hope there are many more episodes to come. You're one of my favorite people to talk to. And I feel like your heart is as big or even bigger than your brain, which is a huge statement because you teach so many, so many incredible things. And as always, it's a pleasure to talk to you, Jim. I'm deeply grateful for your time. Thank you for being here today.

Jim: Thank you so much, Katie.

Katie: And thanks as always, to all of you for listening and sharing your most valuable resources, your time, your energy, and your attention with us today. We're both so grateful that you did. And I hope that you will join me again on the next episode of the "Wellness Mama" podcast.

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