Introduction and Action Plan

I am so delighted you are back again here with me today. It is such a delight to be sharing this information. And as you know, in each of these interviews, we aren't just focused on information or even on inspiration or even motivation.

We're focused on practical things that you can do that are concrete leverage points to shift your life. So I encourage you, as I do with every episode, to listen with a pen and paper in hand.

If you like to use a modern digital version of pen and paper, go ahead and do that as well. But whatever you do, write down these ideas and I'm encouraging you to turn every interview.

All these pieces of information into an action plan. So by the time you've spent the next 45 minutes or so with us, you should have not just some great insights.

You should have some ways you will apply those insights in your own life starting right now. Okay, so you aren't allowed to watch unless you got to take notes and apply them in your life and make this concrete.

And that's what you want to do with every single one of these amazing interviews. You want to really find ways of applying them in your life. You can move from trauma to transcendence.

You can take the things that have most crippled you in your life, the things you thought you'd never get over. And those can become the fuel for transformation in your life as you take these action steps.

So it's a joy to share all these with you, to welcome you today, and to know we're going to spend some powerful time together, reshaping our consciousness for ways in which your life would be dramatically better and move to the next level.

My guest today is Jason Prall. He's a former mechanical engineer turned filmmaker. 20 long years of health challenges led him to look for answers beyond the traditional medical model.

His findings about health optimization and lifestyle medicine culminated in an online documentary film series called The Human Longevity Project. His following series is called The Return of the Wisdom Keepers, and it explores ancient healing methods from indigenous cultures around the world.

Jason is also the author of the book Beyond Longevity. You can find out more about his work at awakenedhealthacademy.com Jason, it's a delight to have you here.

Well, it's a pleasure to be here. Like I was saying before we got on, is it's great to to chat with you and get to know you a little bit. And I love what you said at the beginning, because it's a trap that so many of us have fallen to.

I felt have fallen. I continue to fall into it so many times, which is that it's just this information overload in this, this sort of paralysis by analysis where you don't actually take concrete steps forward.

So I love that intro. I couldn't agree with it more. Hey, well, I'll be doing this. I'll be interrupting the end of you on several occasions to make people literally take notes that write down elements of their action plan and do the little exercises to apply what we're doing.

Even as we talk. So 20 years of health challenges, Jason, that's too much. I mean, that is just the kind of burden early in life that can crush people.

What was it like for you? I mean, it was in a way, it's all I knew, right? Like that. That's the crazy part, is that at 13 years old, you know, I was an athlete.

And at 13 years old, my knee problem started, and, and I was never really provided very good answers from the people that I looked up to. Right. Which was parents, coaches, doctors, etc..

And I was kind of lost. Right. And I, I followed what they gave me, but it never really helped. And so and of course, everyone is trying their best to help me.

and they had good intentions, but I could never really get over the hump. And in fact, things got worse. And then in my 20s, I had a skin condition start to appear on my face and so this was, you know, this was college is a very social time in some in a young person's life.

Right. And I had what's called Seborrheic dermatitis. But it's this red, scaly, patchy, oily. And at one point I could actually I would play football.

And I took off my football helmet and I'm very sweaty.

Jason's Health Struggles and Self-Directed Search

And I scraped across my forehead and I peeled off probably five, six, seven layers of skin, almost like wet newspaper on glass. And I just threw it down to the to the, to the ground.

And I thought, what the heck is going on? You know, it was like my face was peeling off, right? And it revealed this kind of like fresh pink, skin underneath, almost like a hot ham coming out of an oven.

Right. Like it was. It was a very interesting experience, and I didn't have any answers. And so, it's I felt lost, I felt confused, I felt very frustrated.

it's kind of one of my, my core temperaments, that I've, that I'm aware of and constantly adjusting. So I was, I was bitter, angry. Right. And and the thing is, I didn't know what I was bitter and angry about or to whom it was just this.

I didn't have anywhere to direct it. Right. And in some ways, I was kind of directing it internally. Right? Because, I was blaming people out there, was blaming myself because I couldn't figure out answers. Right.

So it was a very confusing and and difficult time. So, that was just kind of the, the, the impetus for me to, to eventually kind of follow the path that I'm on.

But at the time, you know, after eight, ten years of experiencing knee challenges, knee pain and skin issues, I kind of reached a breaking point, and kind of had just had to take things into my own hands.

So those injuries and issues, along with the lack of advice you were getting, or rather the well-intentioned advice that wasn't working, made you really question what you were hearing.

And then when you do take things into your own hands, you're in an uncharted territory at that point because, you know, don't have the advice of specialists and doctors and coaches and experts, and you have this whole, huge range of options out there.

How do you then decide where to go next? Yeah. So so I think this is where, it depends on your kind of personality type or maybe the conditions that you in which you've kind of, grown up.

Some people lean more toward looking for advice from everyone. Right. There's the extreme version of that, which is that I don't trust myself to solve the problem.

So I lean on every, every other person. I was more in the other direction where I didn't trust anybody. And so I did

everything myself. Right. And I would I would, kind of venture to say that there's generally a happy medium if you're more like me, probably a good idea to start trying to incorporate some help, even if it doesn't always work.

But but leaning a little bit into the help side, if you're always asking everybody else for help, well, then there's probably a little bit more of a balance to where you can take a little bit more action on your own. Right?

So there's this internal kind of trust that one can, can, can have in that situation. And so for me, this was early 2000. Right. So the internet wasn't like it is today.

Social media didn't exist. Right. So you know, I remember on web Crawler I'm trying to type in things and learn about what was going on, what can cause this, what's good for my skin, what's bad for my skin.

Because the advice that I was getting from death from the traditional medical system wasn't working right. They were basically telling me to put dandruff shampoo on my face, you know, take.

There was just all these strange advice, right? Of course, medications and various creams and steroid creams and none of it was really working. And so at that point, I didn't know enough to go to, let's say, what I would call back then alternative care, alternative medicine.

I didn't know kind of the more functional medicine, chiropractic, naturopathic. I didn't I didn't know where they were. I didn't know how to find them.

I didn't really they weren't even in my awareness. So just using the internet, I started to kind of use logic and deduction about what made sense, you know?

So I came across all these blogs and I think chat rooms were kind of big at the time. And, and so it was basically people sharing advice, kind of like we do on social media now.

But that was the beginning of me starting to question everything that I'd kind of been taught. Right? Today we might call it red pilled, but back then there wasn't even a name for it, right?

We were just I was just kind of getting all this really strange information and taking it all in. So I think the first step for me was I opened up, I opened up my, the capacity for to to take in information that what I may have thought or may be thinking or may think that I know could be wrong, right.

And maybe some of the things that other people were telling me could be wrong. So it was this. It was an opening up of my awareness to accept a different level of reality than what I had been taught, or what I'd instinctively or intuitively taken in.

And so as I was able to sort of do that, then this kind of like it all started to coalesce into a different reality that was forming. That makes sense.

This with this person saying, you know, that makes a lot of sense. Let me give that a shot. Interesting. It didn't didn't harm me. Maybe it's working right.

So there was this kind of like trial and error type of thing, but I was using logic and deduction based off of what I, what made sense and what people were saying.

And so kind of like these, these summits and these, you know, films and these things that are out there now, a lot of it starts to make sense. And so as I took in this information, my reality began to shift.

It's like I opened up into an entirely new world. And it made sense. Right? I just did things that made sense. I started to eat organic food. You know, I stopped, you know, consuming so many, you know, starchy processed carbohydrates, you know, alcohol, like all these things that were that were creating, an inflammatory condition.

I started to, to just take away. And slowly but surely things started to improve, right? So as soon as I. And this is the key, with any kind of challenge that we face, it's like all you actually need is a little bit of progress, right?

When you're in the depths, you feel like I just need to get better. But that's actually not not the case. You just need a little bit of forward momentum and that ignites this hope, right?

This, this, this, this potential that you can keep moving forward. And so once I got that little bit of momentum then it was like it was off to the races.

Right then it was like, okay, I'm on to something. Let's go. Right. And not everything I tried worked, but but I was on a path and I carved a new direction, and that was enough for me to kind of really just, stay true to that.

And, and as pieces of the puzzle began falling into place, I could see the picture a little bit more clearly. Right? And then more pieces started to get put in place, and then the picture became even more clear. Right?

So this was the progression, all the way into the point where I decided to do this for a living and, and follow the this sort of path of becoming a health practitioner to quit my job in engineering, you know, because I was able to kind of help people.

And people started leaning on me for for advice because they figured out, they realized that I figured some things out. So I was kind of doing as an amateur.

And then I decided, I can do this as a professional. I don't really like engineering. I love problem solving, but I don't really like the engineering that I'm doing.

So let me do this problem solving thing, the systems approach to whatever the challenge is, let me take those inherent skills that I have and apply them to the health world.

And so then I followed the kind of path of becoming a functional practitioner. And, and this, again, was continued to be this process of putting the pieces in place, constantly, destroying my old worldview and, and creating a new one.

Right. So it and it continues to this day. Right. And I venture to say that until we're fully enlightened, this process probably doesn't stop. We take something away. We we throw it away.

And that that's that was wrong. I didn't realize it, but that was wrong. Cool. But there's a there's a really cool aspect to this that as you get practice at doing that, in other words, saying I was wrong or this whole way I thought about this.

It actually is better if I think about it this way, where I'm missing some pieces, right? So you get to this, this very humble, excited aspect of, of tearing down your old worldview and creating an entirely new one.

Right. And so I got, I got really good at that. And I got excited to do that. Whereas before I hated being wrong. I kind of took the know it all approach.

Trial, Error, and Early Lifestyle Changes

And now I realized that I really don't know much, and I'm constantly readjusting what I think I know, and that frees me up to learn so much faster and take in information that's so helpful.

And also, your engineering background gave you that systems thinking approach, which most people don't have. And an empirical approach doesn't work. It doesn't it.

That's a pretty stark divide. And, it's interesting how, we keep on doing things in our lives often that aren't functional. We keep on doing things in our medical system that I'm functional.

I did a paper with some distinguished colleagues from various universities a few years back. We looked at the US government data, and we found that it takes an average of 17 years for a new therapy to go from the lab to the patient.

So this is enormously long lag because we just keep on doing the stuff in medicine we've been doing for for decades. That same, the US government data also showed that, every five new advances in therapy, one of them makes it to the patient, the other for for fall by the wayside.

Just because it's so hard to get this to change. So, it's it's a it's a system with inherent biases to it to not change. And so, it's really necessary to bring a different view to your healing process because of all your relying on it, you know, one fifth of 17 year old medicine, you all do. Well, doing well.

Now, before you go on, I want to just stop everyone and have you do a couple of little exercises. Based on what Jason said. One thing you said was really interesting.

He addressed you directly. He said, if you are the kind of person that always looks out there for the answers, try looking inside. If you're the person who thinks you have to do it yourself, go find some external resources.

So what you do is to take that on board and reflect for a moment. No need to make notes about this one, but think for a moment. Which is your style? Which is your informational approach?

Are you a person who is usually going to just keep it all inside, and then try and figure it out as though you're in isolation? You're in a silo? Or are you the kind of person that's always looking for a different approach out there?

And so you're looking at all these different possibilities. You're totally bewildered and just mentioned the term information overload or analysis paralysis.

And so are you that kind of person where you just know all these bits of information and you have trouble applying it? Just think for a moment about what your style is and what he was recommending then is that you counter your tendencies.

If this is my tendency to isolate and try to figure it out all by myself in my cave, get out of the cave. But if you're out of the cave and you're meeting a thousand people and you can't make up your mind, tune within.

What is your intuition telling you? What is your guidance telling you? What is your spiritual guidance sharing with you? What is your higher power have to say about this? So, notice your own tendencies in that way.

The second thing you said that was worth, doing some some reflection on is baby steps. He was saying making some progress is all you need. Eventually, if you've got a serious diagnosis, if you've got something that, for example, is called incurable by modern medicine, then if you have that condition, you might think of success as overcoming it.

Why no longer had M. S.? I no longer have fibromyalgia. My cancer is gone. I no longer have heart disease. You're taking this huge, big. Leap. Into a, distant goal.

And that's hard. Very few of us can do that. Very few experts can do that. Very few people in any industry are capable of leaping all the way across the football field in one single bound.

So focus on taking the next step. What can you do and what small thing can you do that will give you a sense of progress? And I want you to actually take notes now and journal on this.

So what is one small step you can take? You're not looking to solve your entire problem right now. You aren't looking to heal a lifetime pattern or a lifetime diagnosis.

In the next 30 minutes or the next 30 days necessarily. And as Jason said, were always learning but growing and

you don't become enlightened. I I've done I did one review of studies of enlightened masters.

These are Tibetan monks and Franciscan nuns, and we look to see if the ones who have been doing their spiritual practices for 50 or 60 years are changing.

Do they hit a plateau where they are enlightened? And the answer was really interesting. And we found that those people have been doing their spiritual practice for 5 or 6 decades.

We're still growing. That was learning. So it starts with a few small steps, and there's never an end. There's never an end to learning more, growing more, and to becoming happier and more delighted to be on the planet.

So think now for a moment and make a note. What small concrete step can I take? What's a micro goal that would move me along? We're not looking at this point for the macro goals.

It's a micro goal because after that micro goal will come another micro goal and another micro goal. And by the time you've done these micro goals for a few months or a few years, you look back on the notes you're taking today and you'll say, wow, that's progress.

so go ahead and do those exercises. So I'm also curious now. So, Jason, as you were getting advice, becoming a health coach, work with people. I want to ask you two questions.

What is about some of the dramatic recoveries you saw from issues which modern medicine had been able to help to share a couple of stories with us about some of those inspiring examples?

Yeah. And one thing I want to add to, to kind of just cap off what you said before, you know, when, when if you're a type of person that does this or you're type person that does that.

The interesting thing about this is that there's it's couple. There's two aspects to it. One is who we are constitutionally, in other words, kind of how we come into this world.

And the other part is conditioned and many of us get conditioned to behave a certain way. So so when Dawson's advice of like taking action in these ways, in other words, if I'm somebody who always does it myself to ask for help, this is a practice.

And so we can deconditioned ourselves just by practicing something, right? So if I'm always looking externally, the practice is to look inward and it may not work very well the first couple times. Right.

We're not very good at it. So the practice is is the way forward. And it's this the thing that I continue to give to my clients. Going to your question that people would come with autoimmune conditions, cancers, unknown syndromes, you name it, right?

They'd seen it 14 different practitioners and doctors and all the people, and they didn't have any any answers. And they eventually found me through word of mouth.

And one of the things that I really stressed with them was that this is a practice. Getting to a healthy state or resolving whatever you're looking to resolve is a practice.

Whether it's an emotional thing, whether it's a physical thing, whether it's a mental thing, there's practices involved. And so, you know, when somebody apply these very simple basic lifestyle practices, the miracles came.

It wasn't because I had some unbelievable trick up my sleeve. I wasn't really an energy healer. There wasn't any miracles in that way. The miracles came sometimes slowly, sometimes slowly, and then quickly.

They just kind of happened. You know, I'll give you one example where I, the the gal that came to me, she was in her 50s. She she wanted to lose a little bit of weight. She, she she couldn't sleep very well.

She had, some immune related issues, thyroid issues. And, one of the things I noticed when I worked with her, because we can run all the tests, right?

Practical Recovery Stories and Circadian Rhythm

We can look at the her microbiome, we can look at her metabolomics, we can see how her body is functioning and if she has infections and all kinds of different things in her hormones.

But what I noticed was her lifestyle habits. And I said, look, the where we need to start is we need to fix your circadian rhythm. In other words, we need to get you operating with the sunlight and the darkness right in the proper order.

And so when you wake up in the morning, go outside first thing within 15 minutes of waking up, go outside and get your your ideal, your eyes and hopefully some of your skin in the sun, right?

In other words, you can sit outside and read your tea. You can go for a walk that's even better, but just get 15 to 20 minutes of that daylight. Even if the clouds are there, even if it's raining, even if it's snowing, doesn't matter.

The weather conditions, if the sun has risen, then your your eyes have unbelievable sensors that communicate to the brain that then communicates to the rest of your body.

Every cell in your body has these clock genes that are related to the signal sent by the super charismatic nucleus in the brain. So the light is guiding your entire biology.

And so she she did it. She she everyone she got up, went for a walk 15, 20 minutes and in very short order in in probably 3 to 4 weeks, she lost like 7 or 8 pounds without changing her diet or doing anything.

She, she, she felt better. She slept better. Like she slept. Amazing. And here's the kicker. Her eyesight improved. She couldn't believe it because I told her to take off her glasses and let the light into her eyes.

And we have various receptors in our eyes that that actually require these frequencies. And when they get these frequencies, our our eye cells are like every other cell in our body.

They repair, they can actually repair and regenerate. And so her eyesight, she was able to see her phone without her glasses at an arm's distance for the first time in like 20 years.

She couldn't believe it. She was so shocked that her eyesight improved. And of course, with this wasn't our goal, but that was the natural result of optimizing her, her, her habits.

And so when we get in rhythm with the natural world, these are the type of things that can happen. So 15 to 20 pounds without exercising. And some people could say it's the walking.

But she didn't really walk that far. And I've had other clients that lose weight just like that, without even doing the walking. They just go outside.

So when you get your your biological rhythms in on on track, then everything's starts to fall in place. Your immune system improves, your sleep improves, your mood improves.

You know, every aspect of your biology starts to improve. another client kind of following that same track. This is a 29 year old male who was in the Canadian Special Forces.

So he was fit. He was working out. His testosterone was a little low. Right. And then there and they're in the military. So they're doing all the tests and they're making sure these guys are are fit, you know, a little bit of a pudge on his belt.

And he couldn't get rid of it. He was so frustrated. He was doing exercise like crazy to try to get rid of this little extra belly fat. And to and his testosterone was low.

And that shot that really did not sit with him very well. Again we analyzed asleep. His sleep wasn't very good. So same thing. I had him go at night, make sure when the when the sun is setting, you kind of reduce all the lighting.

You calm yourself down, you follow the rhythm, which is we're starting to slow down as we as we approach bed. Right. And treat your bedtime as the most important thing in your life.

Right? So health starts with sleep. So we started going to bed, as soon as, as early as he could. Right. His body wasn't ready to go to bed when the sun went down at like nine, 930, you know, just after the sun.

And so he was going to bed when he got tired, but then he got up every morning and went for a walk or a run, getting that light in his eyes and that sunlight in the morning starts to set the clock for the night.

It starts to produce melatonin at night. So he started getting tired early. And he calls me. He says, Jason, I'm getting tired and like 9:00 at night.

Is that normal? I said, yeah, that's good, go to sleep. You know, and then and then maybe like 4 or 5 days later because Jason, I'm having these crazy dreams.

My God, this is great. This is what's what your body's needing, right? And so it wasn't very long after that, maybe two months. He lost the little extra belly fat on this on his belly.

No problem. That went away quickly. His testosterone shot through the roof because of getting good sleep and getting the light right. So again, these are the things that you can chase a million different ways to Sunday, right?

You can chase all these different things, but all you have to do is get back in line with your rhythms. Right. So these are the type of things, you know, another one that I'll give you just to close, a gal came to me and she had, these kind of spots on her abdomen.

She was a young girl. And, I said, they look like it looks like a like a fungus. Looks like you have an infection. So we ran some tests and sure enough, she had an infection.

But I looked in her mouth, because I always look in the mouth. Hardly any practitioners look in the mouth because that's they reserve that for the dental field.

And and she had she had some crowns. And I said, look, I think we really need to investigate whether or not there's infections in, in those crowns and in the teeth.

So I sent her to a and, a functional dentist, basically, who does operates in a little bit different way. and she took a look. Sure enough, she found infections.

She cleaned up the mouth, cleaned up the infections, and the the fungal sort of appearance on her sternum went away. Right. So these are the things that, when you start to look in the right places, when you start to understand how the body works and it's it's actually not overly complicated.

It's getting things in rhythm. It's doing things as we should. And then generally speaking, there's a blocking factor for health. I'll close with this.

That health is the natural state, right? We are all it's a God given quality that we all have. We have the capacity for health. And this is a very important thing because I can say it and it won't land for some people. It actually won't land.

But if I really want people to understand that health is a God given capacity and there's just something in the way

and it could be something in our environment, could be something in our mindset, it could be something in our emotional qualities and patterns.

It could be that the patterns that are operating neurologically, there's something blocking the natural state of health. And and when you're working with a practitioner, we're in this this can be health, this can be emotion, this can be trauma.

This can be anything that the idea is to we got to find the thing that's blocking the natural state of health. There's nothing wrong with the body. There's nothing wrong with you.

Things don't just not work right. Everything has the capacity to function properly. And I'm tackling the very, very dire cases, even that it can be resurrected, so to speak.

We can be born again, so to speak. We just need to figure out what is blocking this natural state of health. So let's just take that point on board really strongly.

And when you do study the body, when you do clinical trials, I've been involved in over 100 clinical trials. You get you develop such immense respect for the body and the way it works and what grace, the saying is absolutely true.

It just does its thing. It just works naturally. And you watch it heal, you watch it, have all of these metabolic processes. You watch cells function as they would generate, as they senescent, die and pass out of your body.

Your body is a healing machine. It just naturally heals. And if you aren't healing, there's something in the way and you for simple possibilities there.

It could be emotional. It could be mental. It could be a belief. It could be childhood trauma. It could be diet, it could be the environment. So there are many different possibilities there.

But I want you to just breathe for a moment and feel the reality that your body is in the state of natural health and natural healing. It may not look like it now.

You may feel all of those challenges, and those challenges could be depressing if they're long term. And we're going to show you over and over and over again that your body's meant to heal and that health is possible, and it is just a matter of finding those blockages, finding where you're blocked.

And then releasing a blockage to let the natural health in your, your body, come forth. There's no Zen healing story. And it talks about two groups of students who were each devotees of a different guru, and they were having this heated debate about whose guru was greater, whose guru was the greatest spiritual master.

And the first group was convinced their girl was the greatest spiritual master. And they said, and we know is the greatest spiritual master. He can levitate, he can read thoughts, he can tell the future.

And they list it all this long list of spiritual accomplishments. And in Sanskrit these are called the cities, the great spiritual gifts. They listed all the all the things that their master could do.

And the second group of Steve that just cracked up and said, oh, our master can do things that are infinitely more impressive than that first group is really, what can you master when what does he do?

And the laughing group of Stephen said, Our master eats what is hungry. He drinks what is thirsty. When he feels tired, he takes a nap. and he wakes up and is rested.

And the whole point was that is just in tune with his body and is in tune with all the cycles of nature in the world, and and that is the, the crucial thing.

I've done several clinical trials, people who have long term struggles with, with weight loss and they are so often

not in tune with their bodies. And so they often actually hate their body because their body is like this enemy that they're trying to overcome.

to get rid of weight they can't lose otherwise. And so, just making friends with our body, just breathing, loving and moving to that, that place of compassion with our bodies is so powerful.

And that's self-compassion. So we now have compassion for other people. It's wonderful. If you do and have compassion for your body, ask yourself, what is blocking its well-being?

And had that fundamental assumption my body is destined for vibrant health, and I can tell you to, when you're in your 70s and when I have many friends now are in their 80s and some of them in their 90s, that's where it really shows up.

And of course, that's led you to The Longevity Project. And I like to just, move now to how this shows up cumulatively over time as longevity. What do you find and what do you want to share and show with that series?

Longevity, Movement, and the Role of Elders

Yeah. Beautiful. and I want to I want to add to that is this is a realization that I came to about my body, you know, because there's we have the self right.

That is sort of beyond the body. Right? So most of us actually, I kind of identify as that, even though if we're not consciously aware of of that aspect of ourselves.

So sometimes we can view our body as is. It is a separate thing that is not us. And so for me, what I realized was that I was using my body like I was using it as a tool.

And then I eventually I realized, oh, that's that's not the appropriate way to have a relationship with my body. And so then it was a slight shift, but it was a, it was a, it was instrumental, which is that I needed to partner with my body.

My body is carrying me without the body at this life doesn't exist in this form. So this body is very important and it is an aspect of me. So, it's it's tying that all together and partnering with the body and kind of asking the body, what does it actually want?

Right. For many years I lifted weights and I, I did all the sort of more aggressive style of exercise. And then if I, when I really listened, my body actually wanted something else, especially as I go through different aspects of my life.

And as I get older, it's it's actually craving different things. So this is this is probably one of the biggest aspects of longevity is the recognition that we have the seasons of our lives, and that what we did at 14 and 18 and 20th May not be harmonious with what we should be doing at 40 and 50 or 80 and 90.

And this relates to diet, exercise. Right? Sleep patterns. Right. Everything that we're doing may shift. So it's constantly it's understanding that we are on this constant journey in our life.

So when we get into our 70s, 80s and 90s, there's a different there's different questions that need to be asked, what do I want to eat? How often do I want eat meat?

You know, our digestion isn't as good when we get into our 70s, 80s and 90s is. It was when we were our 30s and 40s. This is the natural state of things.

Our body starts to decline. It doesn't work as well. And that's okay. Right? So it's honoring the process. It's honoring that the life cycle, the arc.

and so when we when we listen right, this is where, you know, things like Ayurveda, right. A beautiful science really teaches about cycles and about the energies of each cycle.

So in our 60, 7080s and that's the winter time of our life. So we, we can follow the principles that offset the natural energies of winter, so to speak. Right.

So when when we get older, we're a little more dry, we're a little more, cold. Right. It's this has brittle kind of energy. So we try to combat that. We can do things that will add more sort of supple energy.

Right? So more warmth, a little bit more fluidity. Right. So there's these type of things. So it just it's it's constantly paying attention to the cycles of life and honoring that, without, without kind of the assumption that everything should stay the same and it shouldn't.

So it's, it's the honoring, it's the appreciation even as we get older, that I couldn't do things like I like I could before and when we can appreciate that that I'm not may not be able to do something at 80 like I am today.

Then I start to appreciate today and what I can do. Right. So there's this kind of inverse relationship that starts to happen to go, oh, actually, I'm as young as I'll ever be today, right?

I'm not getting actually younger. Right? I may get healthier and that's good, but but I actually am getting older every day and that's okay. Right. So there's there's is an appreciation for the cycle.

I would say the biggest thing as we, as we progress in our age is to continue to move. This is so underappreciated. It's the most important thing to the brain hands down.

It's no question. so to continue to move, even if we can't move the way we once did with all the people that I spoke with and interviewed and met around the world, and Ikaria and Okinawa and and Sardinia, you know, in Costa Rica, there is these 90 plus year olds that if they continue to move and engage with life, then they continue to to maintain a youthful energy.

So there was a 97 year old in Okinawa that was still climbing her fruit trees and picking fruit. And her daughter, who was in her 60s or 70s, was like, mom, no, no more.

You know, she was kind of worried for a bit, but she was still active. She didn't have this mindset of, I'm too old to to do these things. She was in her garden using the hoe and tilling up the soil.

so it's this it's this engagement with life, right? And in our culture, that's not it's not as much of a thing. And I should live in a rural area, you know, kind of the, the farming lifestyle, but doing anything to engage with life, whatever you enjoy.

And hopefully it involves movement. Because once we stop moving, we start dying, right? I mean, that's that's just the reality. And so we must keep moving.

It's and even in the, the, the elderly homes in Okinawa, they did these like, these little movement things, to continue to dance and continue to, did karaoke.

They did little plays and skits. Right. So it's it's kind of like it's really just a matter of engaging with life, whatever that means for you. and, and when we do that, we kind of revert back to this, this useful energy.

Right? We kind of stay engaged with this process. In fact, a 94 year old I met in, in Loma Linda, actually, I asked her straight up. I said, look, your husband's passed away.

You know, your family, most of your your kids, have either passed away or they don't live in the area. A lot of your friends have passed away. You know what keeps you going each day?

Why do you get up in the morning? And she says, well, I have to learn this song for the violin class on Wednesday. She just started learning the violin at like 91.

So she it was a it was a it was a very eye opening for me, right, to see somebody because it's not the norm. I'm not used to this, type of thing, but it was she had an engagement with life.

She still wanted to learn things. She still was. I mean, she was terrible at the violin. I used to play the violin, and so she's terrible. But it was so inspiring to see somebody who didn't have the dexterity that a young person has, you know, couldn't see the sheet music as well as a young person.

But she was still doing her thing and she was trying to get better. And she was going to class. Right. And so, it's this idea that that we're still here, that we still have something to offer, that we still have something to take in.

Right? It's participating in this thing called life. And I would say hanging out with the younger people is a big part of that as well. and this is one thing I think in our culture in the West that that I'm starting to see shift, and I, and I'm excited to see it continue to shift, which is that I think we seem to be missing some elders.

And then what I, what I say that is that the role of elder has kind of faded into the background. It's not a thing of honor anymore. It's like people are trying to stay young, right?

The got the plastic surgery and we're all trying to get younger and even in, in our sort of regenerative medicine culture, it's like stem cells and everybody's trying to get younger.

And so while I appreciate some of the reasons why, I think there's a really important role for the elder in society, and when you go to indigenous cultures around the world, when you go to more rural cultures around the world, the role of elder is still there.

And it's still really, really, in fact, it's vaulted. It's important. It's not somebody that they push off to the edges of society. This is something that they push into the center and say, teach us.

You've been there. You've done it right. And so I think it's it's incumbent upon the youth, to, to really look and to vote elders appropriately. And, and I'm hoping to see more elders step into that role consciously to here I am I can help guide.

Right. So, when we start to do that, then that role comes back into place, which propels the, the, the internal fire. Right to, to want to be here because they haven't been cast out.

So that's a big part of I think our society and cultures that we're casting out the old people and that's the wrong approach. It's not a good way to do it.

And and it's not surprising that they may not want to be here. Right. And so there's a really interesting thing that starts to happen in the, in the, I would say extreme elderly beyond let's say 90 or 90 and above.

It's, it's being here is kind of a choice. Like there's actually not a lot of life force energy in the body per se, but the mind and the emotions and the belief are so unbelievably powerful that it can keep people here.

And I've seen it many times where kind of this decision starts to get made of like, yeah, I'm kind of done. And then the health state's very quickly. Right.

So it's understanding the mindset, the emotions, the belief systems. Right. And in it. And we can we can improve those. We can recondition those. And if we want to be here I've been all we have to do is kind of will it so to speak.

And, and we're so powerful in that regard that we can sort of over overstay our welcome, so to speak, like we can really stay here a long time. And when people are ready to go, even though they might be in relatively good health, boy, that declines quickly when they kind of internally decide, yeah, it's my time, I'm okay.

You know, I'm good. Yeah. In the blue zones throughout the world. But people are unusually long lived and there's a big concentration of centenarians.

And you mentioned a few of them over here, and that was one level in this one. And it's interesting that the death process when it happens is really quick.

They're chopping wood and carrying water. They're doing things. Yeah, they're frailer than they were at 90 of they turn 100. They're they're not able to chop as much wood or carry as much water.

But this little gardening like an up and over everyone is a garden. And so, they're still doing things they can do even after 100 and that the other striking thing about the blue zones is that when they do decline and die, it's usually in two days, two weeks, very, very short period of time.

They just make that decision, hey, it's my time. And they accept there's no long, prolonged process of going into a, intensive care facility, getting hooked up to a respirator and spending, for the brain that the cabbage in that state.

So a very, very different approach to this. I would I like to end, Jason, by asking you about your spiritual practice and how that works into everything you're doing, both the mission driven work you're doing, what you found in this contact with these indigenous elders that you're doing your project with, and how spirituality has, layered itself into your journey.

Yeah, I in fact, I grew up, not religious. And in fact, I kind of, abstained from it. I didn't like it. I didn't like the religious kind of, teachings.

I didn't like the whole thing. So I was kind of had an aversion to the all the religious kind of, energy, so to speak. And, you know, even though I didn't dedicate much time into any spiritual practice or religion for most of my life, what was really interesting was when I was a practitioner and I was working with people that had really complex issues come to me, and I was teaching them all the things I could.

I was doing the tests, some of them I could get to a point where they felt like they got better, or they got over the hump. And then there were some that I, I couldn't help and I couldn't figure out what was going on.

And then I realized, oh, there's a whole other piece here, which is emotional trauma conditioning, which often gets left out. Right. And this is conditioned behaviors, conditioned beliefs, conditioned mental patterns, conditioned emotions that, that all of us, all of us get conditioned 100% of us get conditioned by our culture, by our family, by by everything in our environment.

So we get conditioned in a certain way that that is subject conscious behaviors and patterns that show up that are either helpful or potentially harmful.

Right. And so, and there's some of them are so subtle. And so when I realize this, oh my gosh, there's this whole other world. Then I started diving into would I at that time thought it was kind of just emotional trauma.

But then I realized that opened up. And so when I recognized that, I said, okay, how do I even approach this realm? Because I don't really know how to tackle this.

If somebody comes to me with, you know, sexual abuse or, you know, these very strong conditionings of one sort or another. And so I ventured into the realm of indigenous healing methods.

Right? And some of it involves things like ayahuasca and some of the plant medicines, again, in an indigenous setting, with the lineage guiding that process, which is very important in my opinion.

If one ventures into that realm, if they're called into that realm, the the lineage is very, very critical, not some random person that did it a few times and can now serve ayahuasca.

so, that was the beginning and that opened me up. It basically cracked me open. In other words, I finally recognized that this reality is not just the only reality.

Right?

Spiritual Practice, Awakening, and Integration

And I know many people don't need things like ayahuasca, but for me, apparently that was my path to open me up. And once I was opened up and cracked open, then I realized, oh my gosh, there's so much here to explore.

So working with, you know, some very amazing Vedic masters who, who go beyond, they go into the spiritual realm and the practices, that the Vedic philosophy teaches, was very instrumental, working with a variety of, let's say, more Western based, teachers that that teach from the eastern lineages.

was very, very critical. you know, Vipassana meditation was a very important, path to, for me to explore, which which informed me of some very interesting truths that can only be realized by, by the self.

so for me, it's, it's I ventured into so many different realms and then eventually, actually even back to the religions, and I thought, oh my gosh, this was here all along.

There's some really cool teachings. This is amazing, right? So, so, so much of it for me involves the traditional things that people might think of the meditation style, of practices and, and various awareness based practices, that involve using your awareness in a variety of ways.

But I come to really enjoy this idea of kind of what can Wilber talks about, which is there's the growing up part and there's the waking up part. Right. And the growing up, I needed a lot of growing up.

And in other words, I wasn't an adult for most of my adult life, but I still needed a lot of these child parts that were fractured off. and in the indigenous cultures, they'd say that the the soul is fractured.

And so they call back and retrieve the soul, which is a part of it, to, but I needed to heal, and repair, some of these, these child parts that were never really addressed.

And so a lot of this was was a reintegration of, of me so that I had an adult on board and I'm not fully there. There's still a bunch of child parts that still that still could use some, some tending to, but for me, the growing up was instrumental, along with the awaking practices.

So the waking up practices, the is the the idea that is expanding the consciousness to include awareness itself. So this sort of awake awareness. And so as I begin to understand and really it came from teachers that were able to point my awareness.

Right? Because we all have awareness, we all have infinite awareness, we all have awake awareness. We are already awake that we're already here and there and everywhere and nowhere.

So it's it's it's it's it's it's the reality. We just need to wake up to it. And so I had teachers that were able to point my awareness to this level of reality.

And so once that started to happen, then it's like my awareness can teach itself. So there's this, there's this natural, emergent property that starts to happen, and continuing to learn from others that can teach me along the way.

So for me, it looks like a lot of different things. the waking up, the growing up. And some might include the cleaning up in that process. Right. Which is kind of the shadow work or the things that we, we don't really like to look at, the aspects of ourselves that, that we try to sort of deny or shy away from, but it shows up in everything that I do, or it has the potential to I don't I'm not always awake to it.

But things like fasting, this is a spiritual payment that they might say in various cultures around the world. So when we fast and as you as you find out, fasting is included in pretty much all religious, doctrines or teachings, right.

And, and even the non-religious eastern philosophies, fasting is is an important thing. So that's one thing that we can do, as a sort of aspect of spiritual awakening.

We can meditate the, the Vedic philosophy. I love the very fast because it's, it's it's about the things that you talk about doing, all the things that you're it's aligning with the natural ways of the world.

In other words, there's natural energies. How can I tune into them? Right? If we tune into ourselves properly, we should be able to determine when the proper time to eat is for our bodies.

How much I should eat, what I should eat, when I should sleep, how much time I should need to sleep, and this should change based on the the day, the the season, the the geography that you're in.

Right? How old you are. Right. So I'm not saying that everybody should have this skill per se, but what I'm saying is, is that we all have the capacity to tune in to that level of reality so that we can determine, based on my condition, my health condition that I have now based on my unique constitution, based on the time of day, based on my age, based on the seasons, I should I can actually tune in to what my body's going to do well with.

So that's the capacity. So. So this idea of spiritual awakening can infuse itself into everything that we do. And every relationship is an opportunity to to engage with the spiritual practice.

I can open up my awareness right here, right now in conversation with you, Dawson. Right. Even though we're not in the same place and I can feel you, I can feel into how you responding to me.

I can even feel into the people who are listening to this, who aren't even yet listening to this in the future. Right. So this is the level of reality that I've began to accept, which is definitely, not where I started.

That's for me. But it's so much more fun, right? I think that's what was so interesting to me is that once I got cracked open, I realized, oh my gosh, this life is actually cool.

There is magic. It exists, and I get to participate in it. I get to create it, I get to watch it, I can do to take it in and all right like that if if we just I have goosebumps if we can start to like, really appreciate the gift that we have.

That's an it's an instrument apart to us staying healthy. It's an instrumental part to us being happy even though we're sick. It's an instrumental part to, the appreciation and the gratitude, even if a loved one passes right.

If we start to awaken to to our true self, then everything starts to come into alignment. Everything starts to organized for us. It stops becoming such a battle. Right.

And I'm, I'm, I feel how much of it was a struggle for me in the past. Like I can still tap into that. It was such a struggle. Life was such a struggle and I masked it and I created these ways to get through it.

But the reality is internally, externally, it all is just such a struggle. And as I began to awaken, as I began to let go, as I begin to relax, as I begin to to, open up, as I begin to, to look up.

Right. there's these times that we were talking about where you feel like you're in the depths. For me, it was the dark night of the soul, and I totally, totally identified with that.

It was this dark night of the soul where everything felt like this was death, and that's a part of it. And so, again, even in this awakening process, for me, it's like the death is so beautiful because the old selves can die.

And that's what had to happen is I had to die, and then I got to be reborn in a new. And this is a constant process. Every night we die and we get to be reborn every challenge that we that I come across now, even these things, that

there's still things I don't want to face, they may look differently.

I may have more strength, but it's there's still these things that I don't want to do. I don't want to face that are very hard. And so that's the opportunity for the old self to die, right, to walk in through the fire and to be reborn again to, to to create a new reality.

And the more times that we do this, then it just gets easier and easier and easier and everything just gets to be a joy. It's not always, but it gets to be if if we can, if we can accept it.

Yeah, after a while. If you do a lot of emotional healing, spiritual healing, you, you clear a lot of things and eventually you're looking around for more things to clear, and you finally find an old personality pattern, an old conditioned behavior, and you think, oh, goody, hahahahahahahaha.

Here's something I will, Later. And, you know, you just you find these things, they they arise. And of course, then those things happen psychologically.

And then in the aging process, they're going to happen in terms of your body, in terms of people around you dying, in terms of your life changing. And when you see people who have learned to do that end of life with grace, with wisdom, with acceptance, with integration of body, mind, heart when they're living as infinite being in a physical body which is declining.

And in the end game, it is just a beautiful thing to be in the presence of those elders who are fully alive, fully awake, who accompanies realizations and then are moving toward the end of their lives.

This way, you want to be that person. I want to know I mentioned being hooked up to a respirator for the last four years of your life. You don't want to be that person in an old age home that's brain dead, that's being kept alive by artificial means.

You want to be one of those vibrant people who is harvesting her fruit at the age of 97. Be one of those people. Have that vision for your your future.

No, it's possible and no from Jason and I that your challenges have solutions and your body is meant to be healthy. Take that big thing away. Take away the idea of finding one small step you can do today.

Take away the idea of self-examination. Take away the idea of self-compassion. There's so much richness here, so much you could apply here. We so care about you and about your life being good.

And we know your life can be incredibly good. And Jason and I know from our experience, your life can be enormously better than you might think it is today.

So, Jason, it's been such a, pleasure and an honor to connect with you. Thank you, dear Human Being, for sharing with us today. Thank you so much, Jonathan.

It's been a pleasure, I appreciate it. Yeah. Look forward to the next steps. And again, everyone, I look forward to connecting with you again. We have a lot more remarkable interviews coming up.

You'll have a lot more opportunities to pull out your notepad and make notes, have an action plan. And for the time being, love yourself, be in the space of compassion.

We're here for you. We'll be back here for you again. And thank you.