Introduction to JJ Virgin and the Miracle Mindset

Through. Welcome back, everybody, to the bioenergetics summit. I'm your host, doctor Greg Eckel, and I have JJ Virgin on board today talking about the miracle mindset.

She's a triple board certified nutrition expert and fitness Hall of Famer. She's passionate advocate of eating and exercising smarter, helping people stay fired up and healthy as they age.

So we feel the best we ever can. At 40 plus years old, she's the author of four New York Times bestsellers The Virgin Diet, The Virgin Diet Cookbook, JJ Virgin Sugar, Impact Diet, and JJ Virgin's Sugar Impact Diet Cookbook.

Her latest book, The Warrior Mom seven Secrets to Bold, Brave Resilience, shows caregivers everywhere how to be strong, positive leaders for their families while exploring the inspirational lessons JJ learned as she fought her for her own son's life.

First off, welcome aboard JJ. Thank you for having me, Greg. You are welcome. I want to start with a quote in your book, and I think this is really going to launch us for where I'd like to bring to our listeners and viewers here.

You're I'm going to quote you, the woman whom I love and admire for their strength and grace did not get that way because things worked out. It got that way because things went wrong and they handled it.

They handled it in a thousand different ways on a thousand different days, but they handled it. Those women are my super heroes. I love that quote. It actually gives me chills as I read it.

Let's start there with your story, because this was an event that really changed the trajectory of your life. Yeah. And here's the thing that is not my quote.

That's Elizabeth Gilbert's quote. Oh, that's Elizabeth Gilbert. Thank you. I was like looking and going, didn't I cite her because I was like, that's I wish it was mine.

Yes, yes.

Resilience, Success, and the Power of Mindset

And and I think that when you talk to the most successful people out there in the world, and to me, I define success, that you can live life on your terms, hanging out with the people that you want to hang out with, you know, doing the things you love to do and making a big dent in the universe.

And when you really hang out with those people, there is one thing they have in common. They have gone through some stuff, like they have gone through the trenches, but instead of making them into a sour victim, they became like this resilient person who now can just handle more and more and more things.

So I think that really is like if you look at the most successful people, they can just handle more stuff, right? They just get back up. You know that song, I get knocked down and I get up again and, it is that ability to hold the vision, not the circumstance, to look at the situation going on.

And instead of going into the, like, dark hole of, oh my gosh, of looking at like and in the moment, Greg, I can say in the moment, first you might go into the hole, but you got to then crawl out and go, okay, you know, what's the vision here?

Where am I going? You know, it is life, right? Nobody gets out of here alive. And that component between what sets greatness up versus victimhood. You found some secrets.

You're you're sharing some secrets. And just even through your own life, I mean, for making a large impact and, leadership, etc.. How did that happen for you?

Like what? Give us the the trajectory here. This is the craziest thing. And it's not in the book. Because in the book, so many people, as I went through this experience in the book chronicles, what happened when my 16 year old son was literally hit by a car crossing the street and left for dead in the street?

And how how I and how my family, how we all had to show up and really hold that vision of him surviving something when he was at, he was dead on the street.

And then, you know, resuscitated, had the near-death experience multiple times, the doctors telling us to let him die and how we showed up for that. And everything else. Right.

Which I think is so important because it's how you show up in life that makes all of the difference. So that was the situation that I was going through.

And so and, and at the same time, that situation's going on. I'm a single mom. I'm the financial support for my kids. I have two, two kids. They're 15 and 16 now.

One's in the ICU in a coma. And I had invested everything and borrowed to launch my first New York Times bestseller, The Virgin Die, and it was coming out and the book launch was starting in a month.

I launched that book, bedside, with my son in a coma. And what's important about that is I had to show up for my son. Obviously, I'm not going anywhere. I'm going to stay with him.

But I also knew that in order for me to to be able to fulfill the vision I was holding for him, of him being better than before the accident, that this book had to go, because a lot of the things that I was going to want to do were not covered by insurance.

Right? And so, like, I had to shop for both of those things at once.

Grantu2019s Accident and the Fight for Survival

And, you know, people would say, oh, how did you do that? And I go, I don't know, I don't know. It was just in me. And after I write this whole book and talk about the different things I did to be able to make it through that, which, by the way, hint are all mindset.

They're available to everybody, which is what's so exciting. It isn't like, oh, you have to be six foot tall to do that or have an IQ of this or no, it it's all mindset.

I, I'm sitting doing an interview and they're like, well where did you learn that? And I'm like, oh, it's just in me. And then I went, wait a minute. No, it wasn't.

When I was 30, I had a mentor and she she actually featured past me. She was a client of mine when I was a personal trainer, nutritionist. And she said, you know, when you're 30, you're going to start caring about money.

Because I was in my 20s. She goes, why are you in graduate school? Why are you in doctoral school? And I go, I want to impact and help more people. And she goes, why can teach you how to make more money?

And I'm like, it's not about the money. And, you know, then you have kids and you're like, well, you got to feed your kid. So money definitely matters here.

And so she sent me she, she basically at the age of 30, which is when she said I'd start worrying about this and caring about it. She said, I will show you how to make money and be successful.

And I got awesome. So I sold my company in LA. I dropped out of my PhD program, and I moved into her house in Fort Lauderdale. I'm not sure that really was what she had in mind.

What do you do when someone drives up with all their stuff, like the clamp? It's just came. And for the first six months, she did not teach me one thing about being more successful in business, like the strategies.

And I think that's important to note, because the strategies, whether they're for business or health, they're everywhere. There's no shortage of strategies.

But if your mindset isn't right, you'll never, ever you might be able to have short term, be successful strategy, but you'll never keep it for the long term.

So she literally for six months just worked with me on mindset. And, you know, I was like at first going, I've got to make more money. What are you doing? Just sold my company. You have blah, blah, blah.

But that is what you know. I get chills now because I realized, like, my son is alive because of what she taught me when I was 30. Like, you know, you've no idea when you're imparting knowledge to someone or helping someone.

The ripple effect that that might have, like the changes that happened because of the way she taught me to look at things, to not look at the fact when the doctor said he had a.01 to 5% chance of making it as a bad thing, is just looking at that.

Like my other son said at the time, he goes, we'll take those odds. It's not zero. It's just knowing. We just needed a glimmer. We just needed that little sliver of hope to be able to work to to know that I kept that future self hold, held so tight and painted that vision for him so he would be there with me of him, 110% of what his life was going to look like, of who he was going to become.

So he just was there like, you know, he acted as if that's where he became. That's what his whole biology shifted, too. Right? And so, you know, these are lessons that are totally learnable.

And for some reason, they're also so ignored. Right? They are, you know, so talk to us about that. What is that specific process of future pacing. Because some folks may have not been introduced to this.

I think it's really simple. You know, like you could you can go through the whole, like, let's get into a meditation and put ourself there and feel the emotion.

And, and it's obviously really important to feel that emotion, etc.. But for me, what I did there was I just created the world where Grant was 110%. Now, I remember back when I was first pregnant, I had saw my world with two boys.

It was when I first I was pregnant with one boy and I saw two little blond boys right in a row. I like visioned everything going on, and what was so funny was I, you know, give birth to Grant.

And a couple months later I'm like, I don't feel good. You know, when is going on? I went to the doctor, I think I postpartum maybe have the flu. No, I was pregnant and honestly, I was breastfeeding like like there was no reason.

I think there was like one time sex, you know what I mean? There was no reason that that should have happened. And yet it was like such a manifestation.

Right. But I so I had everything there in my vision. And that's, that's what I think is important in future self is you. You act as if you feel as if like if I'm seen, Grant is 110%.

Future Pacing and Holding the Vision

And I will tell you, Greg, anytime in the hospital and there was nothing in the hospital to indicate he was ever going

to get out of the hospital. Nothing like.

And in fact, I remember the doctor said when he comes out of the coma, it will be ugly. And I thought, like I thought it meant he would, like, yell for a minute.

I didn't realize he'd be ugly for years. I didn't realize that when he first opened his eyes, he would stare off into space, make no eye contact, look to the side and just move.

The only thing that was movable because, you know, his legs were in a cast. One arm was in a casting. Just move one arm back and forth, back and forth all day long, and you're like, you're right.

Because you know, you don't have a crystal one. You don't have a leg thing. I'm anything saying, hey, this can be fine in a couple of years. So I just had to keep holding that vision and I would not let it.

And it would try, you know, that little creepy thing of what if, you know, it's like, stop. You know what it's like, just hold that. Get that vision so clear and be there with that vision and talk about the vision.

Make it real. You know, tell everyone I told all the doctors about it. All the doctors thought I was crazy. You know, one of them came into the hospital in Grant.

You know, when you have a son with a torn aorta that kills 90% of people right on the scene, and, and, you know, very few people survived a tornado or not.

Just that. That was what Princess Diana died from. And the doctor telling us that we're going to rupture in the next 24 hours and just to make peace with it, you know, that was step one is like, get that thing fixed and which is difficult to do when your brain bleeds.

It's a very specialized surgery. Once he was through that, then he's in a deep coma and we don't know if he's waking up from that. Well, that's the next thing that you got to get through because, you know, if you don't, they're going to die in a coma.

They're going to wither away. Once we got through that, it was so interesting because, you know, when you have kids, like they they get a little cut and you freak out.

Well, now he's got 13 fractures, a brain, multiple brain bleeds. And, you know, and I'm thinking crushed. He's a big deal. Right, right. But what I didn't know was a crushed heel is a big deal.

And it's a life changing injury in that like you may never be able to walk again. And I remember the orthopedic surgeon standing in the room surrounding his bed.

And here he is like lying there. And he's got his heel and it's an open wound with big. It looks like nails sticking out of it. It looked like like a Frankenstein thing.

And they're telling me and they're trying to hang his leg so this can heal and it won't heal. And they're telling me all the bad things about it. And I'm like, and this was years ago, so I will make sense right now.

It wouldn't make sense anymore to say, hey, imagine Kobe Bryant's here. But I said, imagine Kobe Bryant in that bed. Would you be telling him that you're just trying to get him to walk again?

I don't think so. Like you've got to hold the vision of him being an athlete because he is, and he's going to be out running in there like, okay, crazy lady.

But he is, he's running, you know, lifting weights, doing all sorts of sports. But because I wouldn't hold the vision of him hobbling around. Now, here's the thing.

I also thought, all right, I'm going to hold this vision of him better than before the accident, 110%, because I'd rather fall short of that than say, hey, I hope he's alive, you know, and get this vision of him at 30%.

I'm like, I'd rather drop from 110% to 90 than, you know, just pray for him to be alive. And he's lying in a bed all day long. So, you know, and I also recognize that you have to do everything you can, starting with the vision and then moving your feet to what you can do to make it happen.

And I something I loved early on, an audiotape I used to listen to that said, it's not the how, it's the why. And that once you got so clear on the wire that future vision, etc., the how shows up in it, it's true.

It just kept showing up, you know, and some things worked and some things didn't. I just kept stepping up to bat. Right. That is that's fierce. And, and that's, you know, in a mother's fierceness for her child.

And it's as if we, we need that for our own selves and for our life. Like, that's, you know, for doing that in creating and, and having that, that warrior like attitude of like, you know, this may it be so.

Right. Our thoughts create, you know, the energy flow that then creates reality. That's why I really wanted this conversation as part of this summit for folks to one meet you, but also the inspiration of that.

And your fierceness comes through so well and, and in your, your boy is a testament of what is possible, right? Because you wouldn't give up. I mean, you know, that picture in the hospital with the doctors and the, you know, the official vision of saying, no, that's not possible, and you're just saying no, like, get on board.

This is how it's going to be, even in light of really no inkling of it. Right? I mean, so that that is what is asked of us, in this reality of, you know, we're either going to do that or it will, you know, overcome us.

Where do you think the resiliency came from? I mean, there's the mother component, right? Is is huge, right? The mama bear and protect her. And, you know, this is what we're doing.

But, I mean, it would have been you. Really.

Community Support and Asking for Help

The deck was stacked against you. I mean, that was it was it would have been the easy choice. And actually, the recommended choice was to let him go. The doctor who ran the trauma center in Desert Hospital in Palm Springs was so angry at us that we overruled him.

He was like, you know, we got the chart afterwards because we did a docu series on it. And and he was so angry at us. And I'm like going, dude, you told us he was going to die in the next 24 hours, so why wouldn't like there's what's there's no risk.

There's no risk here. Right. So I'm like, are you kidding? Aren't you a parent? Would you ever, like, stop until you've exhausted everything? And I also knew that his brain stem wasn't gone right.

That he still had brain act. So, you know, you can you can look at this and go make a lot of smart decisions. And I just thought, you know, if I just don't fight, like, how would you ever live with yourself?

How would you ever be able to have any peace knowing that you didn't do everything in your in your power to save your child or to save someone you loved about or to save someone you know in any way.

Right? So, you know, I don't really see the, the difference. And I'll tell you, I believe that we all have this amazing resilience in us and that the reality is we are never better than when we are challenged.

It's when our greatness shows up and that we just often, so many people said to me, I could never do what you did. And I said, absolutely, you probably could do even more than what I did.

But you don't know, you haven't been tested. And we get little tests all the way along. And, you know, we get resentful and angry about them when the reality is those are all it's like.

It's like you taking your your mindset to the gym, right? You know, you wouldn't go to the gym, go, you know what? I'm going to go to the gym today. And I think what I'm just going to do is lift the 3 pound weights, and then I'm just going to sit on one of the benches and read my email like, why would you do that?

It wouldn't do anything for you. Got to push and make it hard and you know, and hurt a little bit because then you get stronger. And it's the same with any of this stuff.

You go through these challenging things and as long as you don't like, let it make you bitter, which is your decision, right? It's your decision if this is going to make you better or not.

And as long as you don't do that and you learn from it, then you know you're going to get stronger and stronger and more resilient and I had a woman write to me when I wrote the book and she said, oh, sure, it's easy for you.

Your son left. And and all the while I was writing this book, what they didn't tell me on that, oh, it's going to be ugly, was that people who have traumatic brain injuries, the suicide rate, the depression rate is is so high and multiple times he tried to kill himself during this time.

What I never knew writing the book was if he was going to be there. When the book came out, I didn't know. And it wasn't a book about Grant and his his health journey.

It was about it was about our family and what we had to do to go through this, whether he lived or died it. Right. And that so that component of that, I mean, it was it impacted everyone in the unit, in the community and the surrounding components that, you know, we've got resiliency as a as a backbone, but there's all of those layers that continue to this day.

Right. So there the the lessons learned, where you had this kind of mentor in, in your 30s that really set you up for this life event. What other kind of secrets can you share with us in on the life journey here of of JJ and just in the family, learning of other mindsets, components that play a play a role.

Here we've got the future pacing, and really the vision of really holding tried and true of the why that's a clear why in this scenario. What other what other things bubble up here?

Bioenergetics, Gratitude, and Forgiveness

Well, one bubbled up with just what you were saying, and it is that and I think especially it's especially relevant over the last two years, grant is alive and I'm saying because of the community, because and I, you know, you go back a thousand, 20, 10,000 years.

We are meant to be in community. We are meant to support each other. Women would go through childbirth. They would have that group of women supporting them.

We are supposed to be supporting each other, asking for help, getting help, and in fact, if you look at what happens with people's mental health, like when they're able to help other people, it's enormous for their self-esteem, for their self-worth, for their happiness.

So it was really interesting going through this because I, had always been kind of an island and I never asked for. I was very loved giving help, but did not want to be dependent on anyone.

Need anything, be reliant on anyone, owe anyone anything. Right. And this happens and I'm like, it's very different when I'm your kid. And I just put the S. O. S. out.

In fact, I sent an email to my whole community and I said, I'm not looking for your sympathy. I am looking for your

support. Anything that you got, any ideas that you have send on my way.

And it was wild how people showed up. What was wild. Greg was who showed up and who didn't. And what I found at first was some of my closest friends didn't show up, and at first I was focusing on who wasn't showing up, instead of the fact the people who I didn't even know were traveling hours to pray for him.

Like how wild, you know, people showed up and some people didn't. And and it was all perfect, because what I realized after the fact is, you know, we all have different capacities and capabilities.

And for some people, this there's just too much PTSD or something or a trauma that they've got that they can't go there yet with this thing. And for some people this is this is enormously healing for them to be helpful.

And, and, you know, the right people will show up for them and for you. And it was like it was crazy for me at first to go, why am I focusing on like, you know, who's now?

Like, what is that like, stop that, you know, and getting resentful. And I was like, that is so ridiculous. And after the fact, I've had friends say, gosh, I don't know where I was during that time.

What was I doing? And I go, you know, it just like it just wasn't wasn't what you were supposed to be doing. That's all. Like, it's really that is so fascinating because that that does come up.

You know, I've had that similar situation in my life of just being surprised at the kindness of strangers and really how we are all connected, like putting it out there.

You're very vulnerable. And to receive, you know, you have to put yourself, you know, kind of get over your own stuff, right? Right. Like, I can just do it myself and just a blown away at support when you ask for it.

Right. That component of just asking for it is pretty remarkable. You know, this is couched in a bioenergetics summit. JJ how do you utilize bioenergetics in your day today?

I mean, this you know, this is all in that realm. But I'm wondering, was that in your consciousness during that time or are you growing more in that realm.

So I would not have known the terms, but the reality is, I think that if you look at people again and you know how I define success now, if you look at successful people, healthy people, this is in their life, whether they know the terminology for it or not.

Right. Because when you really look at that, you have to be able to do that future pacing you. You know what I was taught early on is that there are no limitations.

The only limitations are the limitations in your mind, which is a super bioenergetics statement, and one that when they first said it to me, I was like, that's the the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard of.

Of course there are limitations, right? Right. You know, and then you just start to look at all of these things that happen in life and you go, well, there's clearly something else going on.

You know, just that ability to put yourself into a different state and to change your emotions. I mean, everything, when you start to look at it, you go, oh, that's what that is.

You just didn't. Most of us don't have the terms for it. So, you know, they call it Law of attraction or, you know, I'm going to meditate or pray. But the reality of all of that is that shifting that your biology, right, and shifting you into a state of gratitude, and it's shifting you into a state of receivership and that that is changing your field.

You wrote about seven secrets. So I'm wondering if you will share one. One more of you know, I like to end the interviews with putting people into an action state of something that they can work on, or, or take action on for kind

of on this miracle mindset front.

Right. Gosh, I was like going I went to this one, that one, this one. Here's the one I will do, because this is one that's super actionable. And it brought up so much stuff for people when I talked about it.

And, I have, Dave asked me to thank for this one. So I went to 40 Years of Zen with Dave. He made me bleed me into it, and I didn't know what I was going to.

And turns out what it is, is it's neurofeedback, but it's the way it's done is you do forgiveness protocols, and the machine can actually tell if you're actually forgiving the person or not.

Right. And I'm like, oh, wow, okay. No, no cheating here. Which is awesome. Because you know, when you are in this forgiveness state, it's raising your alpha and your creativity and all this stuff.

Of course, I'm trying to do everything I can to not do that. But you finally, at some point, succumb after seven days. And he had a very specific way that you walk through forgiveness and you walk through forgiveness by really.

And I detail this in the book, so I'm probably going to blow it a little bit. But, you know, first you identify that person who wronged you, right? And you have that person you wronged, and then you know why they wronged you.

And you set up like a judge and you set up a place where you're doing this. For some reason, I don't know why I like, decided that, Aslan from like, The Chronicles of Narnia was going to be the judge.

You know, I'm out in, like, a Greek Acropolis, and and we're going through it, and and you go out there and you just lay into the guilty person as to everything they've done to wrong you and you just get it out.

And while you're doing it with this headset on the tones, it's giving you musical feedback that's like, wow, you know? And you can tell you're emotional and getting all this stuff out, and you just keep going until you've left it all on the floor. Right?

Then you have to then step into your your accuser's body as if and explain why this happened. And what that means is all sudden you have to get super empathetic.

Why? You know, why did they do this? Because and you hear this so often, you know that person cut you off and you're seeing you're yelling at them. But they were racing to the hospital because their their family member was dying.

Right. And you're sitting here angry because they cut you off at a light. So you have to go and just really kick the empathy up, and then you go to the judge who's going to listen to this whole thing and, you know, figure out what to do.

And you've it really ultimately is so that you then come back and forgive them. And the judge kind of decides if you really did it or not, and if not, you go back and do it again.

But what really happens is you start to go through this, is that you see everybody's humanity. You realize that you have your story and they have their story too.

You know, it was one of the things that my mentor taught me early on, and it was another one that I had so much trouble with. She's like, there is no right or wrong, there just is.

And I'm like, of course there's right or wrong, you know? Of course there is. And I'm right. But you know, you look at all this and what really happened when I started to unpack this forgiveness stuff.

And, you know, an example would be that night Grant got hit by a car. He was mad at me and stormed out of the house because I wouldn't let him go to karate.

And I'm like, why the hell? And I just let him go to karate, you know, like a that, and so, you know, first I had to forgive the woman who hit him, and then I had to forgive him for stomping out, and then I.

But the ultimate one was I had to forgive myself and all that guilt of all those years that I was, like, lugging around that wasn't helping anyone, certainly wasn't helping me, and certainly wasn't helping my, you know, my field.

Right. So it that's what ultimately happens is we start to look at forgiveness, which is really interesting. And I had people say to me, well, I'm not going to I'm not going to call that person, forgive him.

Like, if this isn't you calling a person and forgiving them, this is you releasing them and blessing them on their path and, you know, loving them and that is it.

And, you know, phone call needed there. But as long as you're so angry and holding a grudge, and I'm willing to bet that you don't even register on their screen, right?

But you're sitting over here stewing in it. It's killing you. It's destroying your cells. It's changing your physiology. It's it's messing with your joy every day.

So, you know, this is for you, not for them ultimately. And it's such a powerful thing. And again, I walk through that whole process in Warrior Mom, and it is just one of those things that we don't think about.

And I'll check in because if I've got a lot of energy around someone, I need to go through it, and sometimes I can't go through it right away. Right. But, you know, but a lot of times I'll ask her to check in on that energy and I go, ultimately, I'm irritated with them, but I'm irritated more with me and the way I've been with them that it really comes through.

Right. So I think this one is one that you can just start to look and go, what do I have a charge around? Who do I have a charge around? What do I need to do some work on because it's it's impacting you, right.

Again, it's probably not hurting them. So true. Thank you so much JJ, for the interview and the and the wisdom and your fierce heart. You know, thank you so much.

Thank you for including me.