Unlock Your Health: Bryan Johnson's Data-Driven Methods Transcript

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Introduction to Bryan Johnson and Blueprint

Hi everyone. And this is Joseph Antoun, your co-host for the Fasting and Longevity Summit. Today we have a special episode. It's not with a physician, but it is with a person that has dedicated a lot of time to read, to now, to practice, to get results into longevity in general while applying fasting as well.

This is Bryan Johnson and a lot of you know him because he's the founder of Braintree Venmo He exited that and decided to change his life and humanities life by starting to put a lot of his investments into health care and longevity care and also tries to expand that into the knowledge that he can transmit to people around the world and see what works with this net and share that with people around the world.

So and I think Bryan is working also on unlocking a lot of complexities into longevity and transmitting that into algorithm that can tailor longevity for each one of us and get us to even an extra level of potential that can help us stay healthier longer.

That's the key here is to increase health span. Bryan, welcome. Thank you for having me. I'm excited to be here. Well, thank you for your time today. I want to just sit there right out right away.

And well, first I want to ask you. Anything you want to add to my introduction. Anything you want to emphasize that people could find interesting to know about you as well.

The the origin of Blueprint is a thought experiment. And after selling it Braintree Venmo, the question I posed was imagine that we're observing a conversation that people are having in the 25th century.

What do they observe about the early 21st century that they find remarkable that allowed intelligent existence to thrive in this part of the galaxy? And I found that to be a fun game because focusing on the here and now, you oftentimes can get trapped in the current Zacchaeus, the current status quo.

And if you look throughout history and we read biographies of people who lived in a certain time and place, basically lived in the past because they were parroting the views and opinions and science of what has been.

And there were a few people among them that had really seen the future, but they were thought, usually thought to be crazy or they were rejected by others.

And so it's always a fresh reminder that whatever you see today is actually the past. You're living in the past, and the future is already here. You just need to be able to discern where it is.

So that's really what Blueprint came from.

From Storytelling to Data-Driven Longevity

And I think this is something that would be remarked on this general thing we're all working on in the 21st century. Well, this is this is great. And we can mention a lot of names that even recently, you know, Elon Musk started and others, this is what they were blamed for, for being too futuristic.

And then they kind of too after they were the people leading the train in that sense. So I know you invested a lot of time reading, experimenting by. What have you learned that you would love to transmit today to people listening to us who are very concerned about not wanting to be sick long and want to make the health span, and if you can after them, give it to us on the fasting or an insistence on try and fast. Yeah.

Yeah. I'll share a little story that will capture this that will be memorable. So there's a Navy captain out at sea and

they receive a transmission change course 20 south.

The Navy captain radios back, change course, 30 north, and they receive back communication. Repeat change course, 20 south. At this point, the captain's irritated and they report back.

This is Captain So-and-so of the fleet. So and so change course 30 north and they receive the transition transition back. This is a lighthouse change course, 20 south.

Now, in that moment, the captain had always gotten its way because it could use their power and authority and bluster to make anything move out of their way.

In this case, there was a lighthouse that he had to contend with. And when I was approaching my health and wellness, I wondered, is health and wellness at a lighthouse moment or previously?

We used our minds to make this or that guess, like eat this or do that. We listened to your charismatic people tell compelling stories, but we recently crossed into a threshold where the data and the science has crossed the threshold of being good enough where it is now a lighthouse.

Our health and wellness no longer needs to thrive on stories. It can be you. We can look at data and evidence, and we can do this close up cycle with algorithms.

And that's what the blueprint is. It represents this moment in time where Homo sapiens transitioned from storytelling for their health to data and science.

And that's fantastic. And as you know, I'm a big believer, inspired with Valter Longo. I think he's one of the few as well that spent a good two or three decades just doing science on longevity before he came up with And I agree with that.

There's enough science on different corners now that if we aggregate them together and if we use I don't want to use the word the I, but but using more algorithm to tailor those to every person as well.

This is where we can reach the optimum longevity. Exactly. Yeah, that's a blueprint is like we basically I hired a team of 30 doctors and we never to say if we search through every single study that's ever been published on health span a lifespan, we rank them according to priorities and then we try to implement it and basically with a perfect adherence to the protocol, what could be achieved in science today.

And that's what we've tried to do is is provide a data point. Where are we at in 2023 with implementing all the best goals, standard scientific evidence?

And what are the things that you've learned? What are the things that you're applying to your health do you think people should do? What are the big Aha the biggest we are for short of that and then we'll say we're less sure about other stuff.

Fasting, Early Eating, and Sleep Optimization

Yeah, I think there's about 20 accomplishments we have as a project that I think are compelling. So for example, like I reduced my speed of aging, looking at my DNA methylation markers by the equivalent of 31 years.

I now my body accumulates aging damage slower than 88% of 18 year olds. My total bone mineral density is a top.02 percent of 30 year olds. My VO2 max is I measure my cardiovascular capacities in the top 1.5% of 18 year olds and so on and so forth.

So even if a scientist wants to comment that one of these markers is not reliable because of whatever this or that, if you look at my health profile, it's I'm in stunningly good health across the board.

And so I think the thing that's interesting is the science works. If you actually look at the science, you implement the science and you measure it, it is actually really promising.

So and that's especially true. I really trash my body and mind for two decades. So I did not come at this from a place where I'd lived this whole way my entire life.

And so if I can turn my my body around, you know, so can everyone else listening. But I guess the point is it really does work according to evidence and data, not someone's story.

And what are the few things that you do to to reach that point? I eat a very strict diet, so it's exactly 2250 calories. Every calorie has had a fight for its life.

There's nothing that's in there for a random purpose. I fast for between I guess it's about 18 to 20 hours a day, thereabouts. I, I go to bed at the exact same time every night.

I have I have six months of of a perfect one, 2% sleep score. Right. What time? A 30. Okay. And this is important because, you know, I met you a few weeks ago and you were kind enough to host me at your place.

And one thing that really struck me when it was when I was there was you do the opposite intermittent fasting than most people do. They typically skip breakfast.

They keep they start with their body all the way to the end, and then they binge or they eat a lot right at the beginning. And then can you talk about when do you eat?

Because I think this is one of one of the really effective secrets if you're taking the calories and you can develop more when your body needs them because which is in the morning.

But yeah, I'm pretty good about that. I ran a few hundred experiments about what to eat and when to eat. And as it relates to my sleep, because my sleep is there's nothing that changes my conscious experience more than sleep.

And I find after a few hundred experiments, I found that if I consume all of my day's calories by around 11 a.m., so I have about 10 hours or so of digestion.

By the time I put my head on my pillow, my resting heart rate is about 46. And while my resting heart rates of 46, I'm almost guaranteed a perfect night's sleep.

A two and a half hour of REM, two and a half hours deep, like less than 30 minutes awake. Like it's really high quality. Now, if I know if I ate my last meal at six or seven, I've exceeded my calories or I've eaten something that I shouldn't have eaten.

My resting heart rate will be somewhere between 56 and 65, and I will have a terrible night's sleep guaranteed. And this is, I think is critical because, you know, first thing you do and this is the number one diet in the US for several years and if you take away clean and low carb and and now this science is showing a lot of great positive impacts and some articles are showing that not great outcomes and it's not that fasting work or vision work is that you have to do white fasting.

I think this is what you do. A lot of us in the session and as in the vaulted logos of the world and as you and I, we're big believers of a goal run and intermittent fasting, meaning eat early in the day. Yes.

And then don't go to bed full on your. Yes, yes. This is when fasting fails in some of the trials is when people are just eating and then snacking before they sleep as well.

And it's the entire day and it's very important in the morning is where the essential because the morning will go to work so the brain is working in the highest capacity muscle.

Right. Sometimes we go to the gym in the morning. For those who do that, we go to work. So in the morning is the true needs of calories. This way you lose weight if you skip it, but you're skipping the wrong times.

Don't skip it in the morning. Skip it late in the day. And yeah. Yeah. I mean, that evidence kind of matches up with my life experience where I've had a few dozen friends and family try to do what I've done.

And I caveat in and say, Look, this is me. You may be different. Like you may find that you do better when you when you eat at night. And so I don't want to say anything about that.

You just run your experiments. And so far, every single person that has tried to do this has ended up eating their calories in the morning. I've yet to find somebody who does it at night.

Now, that's not to say that someone can do a night and still be successful. Maybe they can. It's just that my experience has been at work for me and everyone around me.

So I agree is pretty compelling with what I've seen so far. Yeah, and to be practical, a lot of us are also social creatures. Many want to still have their dinners. Yeah.

Hey, get it at 6 p.m., which exactly is six seven. Which is where? What our ancestors in human evolution. We didn't have electricity late. I noticed that they had to rush, gather a few things, go and prep asleep and then eat when the sun is down.

And this was we always talk about the Nobel Prize in Medicine in 2016 on Autophagy, but the Nobel Prize in Medicine 2017 was a biological clock of the organs.

Yeah. Like having to sleep overnight every organ has to sleep. It's not just the brain and the muscle, and it's important that they have a full, perfect sleep versus being disturbed by food.

So yeah, those listening to us today when let's say all of you, like why you should eat just in the morning, it's a pretty hard commitment that that he's making and he's trying to lead by example.

But 100% try to have your dinner as early as possible versus eating it. And another way around it. So for example, when I go out for a social event with friends, I found early on that if my plate has nothing on it, everybody at the table is so uncomfortable, you know, it's like, why are you not eating? Are you okay?

And so then all the questions get directed towards me and then no one gets to have the dinner experience I really wanted, which is to hang out and have fun.

As I started solving for that, I would save up around 500 calories and I would just get some steamed vegetables and I would just kind of pick away at a dinner.

So that way I have something on my plate. No one's going to ask me questions about my behavior and everyone's there and get to enjoy the social event.

So I do make modifications. When I do that, sometimes I'm okay. You know that my resting heart rate will be around 46, 48, 49, and I'll still be okay.

Diet, Exercise, and Recovery Protocols

But I will say that, for example, to your point on the perfect quality sleep, why it's so important is the next day following sleep. If you're staring down a cookie, like I say, like a, you know, a big delicious, you know, creamy chocolate chip cookie, the probability that you're going to eat that if you've had good sleep, I'd say, is like 1% because you have good discipline.

So you have a lot of willpower. If you had a poor night's sleep and you're not feeling great, you've got like a 75%

chance of eating it. So I found that my willpower is directly tied to my sleep, which then allows me to be strong and everything I do.

So it's, it's really building this cyclical compound of momentum where I can be the kind of person I want to be in life because I'm power to it. So I'll do a little bit similar when I go out and my friends are eating and I will be on the payroll or something.

So we have the soups and or the fast forward, the faster you can eat and your body would still even cross. You do it with vegetables and in but if you do a little bit of the healthy fats from the nuts which we have in the past but advancing so it even keeps your head.

You haven't you haven't you have an eight all that. All right. But thanks for the tip because a lot of people would be asking that, okay, how am I going to survive that dinner?

Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. And tell me, what do you eat otherwise? Like, what do you eat between at 8 a.m. and 11? What is what is your diet like? What are the ingredients?

Yeah, the first meal of the day is super veggie. It's broccoli, cauliflower, black lentils, ginger, garlic, hemp seeds, and then a tablespoon of extra virgin olive oil.

My next meal the day is not put in, which is macadamia nuts, walnuts, flax seed, pomegranate, two ounces of pomegranate juice, sunflower and berries and some pea protein and a tablespoon of extra virgin olive oil and third meal.

The day varies every day according to just average vegetables and berries and nuts. And then I yeah, I have some dark chocolate and that accounts for the 2250 calories.

And some plastic. And so it is a lot and we focus a little bit on pasta. You were saying what are the pillars of your your diet and lifestyle today to to be able to and I think you did you did the work for Augustus and other testified that show that you're younger then so yeah so what are the other pillars that you do throughout the day?

I exercise for an hour a day a combination of stretching, cardio strength, and I did markers on that. For example, like I, again, I'm top 1.5% of 18 year olds.

My body's ability to utilize oxygen, which is phenomenal. I can, you know, single like rep max and her pounds on my like press 240 on the bench so I'm not training for real strength but you know, like, I guess what I'm saying is our data to show that these things are compelling.

And then I'm always as a team, we're always trying to figure out new therapies that work. So for example, I'm currently doing whole body muscle skeletal rejuvenation.

So we're basically posing the question, can I get my tendons ligaments back to a teenage functionality? Now, it's a pretty big challenge because you can't regenerate cartilage, you know, as you know.

But we take on these unreasonable challenges to try to say, what can we do to really push the boundaries of what's possible like we've done for my other organs, like we've tried to say, Can we take my heart and get down to age 18 functionality?

It's a kind of a crazy thing to say at 23 that we do to these kinds of unreasonable endeavors to see what we can push the science. And that's like, do you do any intensive exercise?

I do. I do three times a week, 4 minutes of high intensity training, 4 minutes rest, 4 minutes, high intensity, 4 minutes rest. So a four by four intervals.

I do that three times a week. That's it. And how about stress management? Do you do anything for any anything for

stress management or. I meditate morning and night and then all throughout the day I'll pull off and I'll do some breathing exercises for just 2 to 5 minutes, like even the shortest window of time, just relaxing my body to shake away the stress.

So I do try very hard to keep my body in a in a relaxed state. And how about sleep? How do you optimize sleep or is temperature or type of any regulation of sleep that you.

Yeah, my my life is built around sleep that is exactly contrary to the status quo, where if you sleep under your desk, could go days without sleep. You get hero stories told about you.

And I'm here to say that a new norm is here. You know, just don't die. And so my eating is highly structured for sleep, but I have a temperature, temperature controlled mattress, eight sleep, blacked out curtains.

I don't do anything in my bed or my room except for sleep. So it's only for that same time to bed every night. And yeah, I've, I've, I just completed six months using Woohp with a perfect 100% sleep score.

No one has ever done that before and most of many people have.

Stress, Sleep, and Daily Discipline

You have used this wearable for a year, have never achieved 100% a single time and I got every single night for six months as it was something I wanted to show that you you can achieve high quality sleep every single night.

You just need to work at it. And how do you prepare for it? So we talked about eating early in the day, meditation before sleep, right. How you do it?

Yeah. Yeah, yeah. And most importantly on that bed is that I have an hour wind down time. So by 730 I need to stop working because if I don't have an hour for my brain to wind down and I worked right up to when I go to bed, my brain is still in work mode and I will ruminate on work problems all night long and my sleep will be terrible.

So I need the one hour separation and then I can be in my proper state. But I just know that from experience I wind up next to bed and I see some invisible night.

And brain and talk a little bit about your level of happiness. Social capital. Are you feeling you're compromising to enhance your longevity? Are you feeling, you know, is this like tell me a little bit about first, how this said versus your family, your friends, etc.?

And number two, how are you feeling going throughout this experience? Yeah, I never would have believed myself if I could travel back in time and I could tell myself how good we would feel.

I would never want to believe me. I've never been happier or more fulfilled or more stable in my entire life. I think I was on this roller coaster chasing my next dopamine hit, whether it be from food or some event, or been watching my new show, I was chasing this pleasure and now my life is just very steady.

I don't experience these big highs and these big lows. It's just very pleasant to be me and and for the most, most of my life. It was not very pleasant at all to be me.

I was I was chronically depressed for a decade. I went through some really difficult times as an entrepreneur, as a father or spouse, like some really hard stuff.

And boy, I wished that in those hard times, I wish somebody like myself would have been able, like, wish I could have spoken to someone like myself and say, hey, like, what do I do?

And, you know, making your health your number one priority, it's like when you're told in airplanes, you know, if a situation happens, put your mask on first and then help others.

And you do that because if you don't put your mask on first, you're going to pass out. You'll be unconscious in 7 seconds. And so you really need to put your mask on first in life, then you can help others.

So making life your healthy number one priority just makes life really much more enjoyable. That's fantastic. And what do you before we depart here, what do you want people to know?

What if if you went over I mean, we talk about a lot of things that we want them to know, but you want to summarize in two, three points. And if you want to try to impact their life, what would be your final messages to them?

Yeah, you you can do this if you're listening. You can do this. And I'll tell you the trick I did, they got me to get me started is at 7 p.m.. There was a version of me evening Brian and he was so stressed out and upset about life.

He had so many problems at work and he was in a challenging relationship and he had three little babies. 7 p.m. would arrive and the weight of the world would be on his shoulders.

And the only way he knew how to cope with the situation was to go to the fridge and get those brownies or cookies or whatever it was. And he would binge eat as a way to dull the misery and the pain he felt.

And that led to me being £50 heavier than I am now and just miserable. That would of course wreck my sleep, which would make my depression worse. And so one day, tongue in cheek, very frustrated, I said, Even Brian, you're fired.

Like I was just desperate. I'd tried so many times, like, Brian, I'm not doing it again tonight. I'll do it again tonight. And so I fired that version of me and he no, I revoked his authority.

So he didn't he never had the ability to to eat from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. And it changed my life. And once I really understood that I am a collection of Brian's.

I'm morning. Brian afternoon Brian ambition Brian dad. Brian. I like him. All these different kinds of persons. I'm not just one that changed my life.

And so for you who are listening sometimes stopping the bad things in your life is the most powerful thing you can do to start doing good things in your life.

Most of us think we want to start doing something positive, but very, very hard to get started.

Mindset, Motivation, and Starting Today

If you get a little bit of a win by tackling some version, the rascal version of yourself, sometimes I can give you the like just enough. Get up and go to get on the right track.

And when is the time to start with you? Talk to people. When is the time to start? Today. Yeah, let's see here. You know, it's really worth thinking about.

Like, for example, like if I am thinking through that situation, even in Bryan, I failed probably a few hundred nights, you know, where I said, I guarantee, I promise myself I will not.

Benjie Tonight I did. I probably took me a few hundred times so and it was discouraging. And I wanted it so badly every day to stop. But, you know, like the right time is like when you can really get yourself in a position where you're like, you know what, I think I'm ready, and I think I have the tools and the capacity to do it.

It's also important to be realistic with yourself. You know, like change is very, very hard and you don't want to beat yourself up and become make the situation even worse.

So you're okay. It's okay. You can get yourself out of any situation you're in, you know, and don't don't create unrealistic expectations of yourself.

Create a plan where you can win. So when the time is right and you'll know when it's right, I. I can relate to that. I had also a chunk of my life where, you know, I would do the same, which probably most people do the same.

And then until actually a notion of it wasn't just the right way of eating, but actually even as working, because we always say, if I don't work at night, I have a lot of work going to me to work.

Yeah. And actually when you stop doing that and you have a right sleep, you're more productive at work. You get your work much better, but in such a short period of time, the next day with a lot more fresh face and focus and mental clarity and all of it, and, and what helped me also, I was probably into the same reading some biographies about different time of people in a lot of them actually, you know, they, they, they do that and they just vigorously but at night in the morning, even they take time to to to wake up, be a little bit socially with the family or read the newspaper.

So it's not the time you put on a project is is the quality. I mean, sometimes if your job that's your job is pure mechanic, then you have to do the time. Yeah.

The executive to say, oh if I don't work 14, 16 hours am I going to get it done. It's actually no. If you work that 12 to 14 max hours, you'd actually would get more done versus work in that 16.

Exactly that that's a thing is like you there's been a paradigm shift. Most of people don't know what's happened previously it was imagined. If you want to build the future, sleep under your desk or work through the night.

And now I'd say if you want to build a future sleep, it's very counterintuitive. It's countercultural norms. It takes courage to do something. But that's where we're at as a species.

And I don't I think, again, when the 21st century looks back at 25th century looks back, they're going to see this don't die movement where we human Homo sapiens figured out that death was potentially no longer inevitable.

And it really changed everything on how we think about taking care of ourselves and each other. So Bryan, before we depart, what is your goal for your longevity?

What do you think you're good at? How do you see your future? I mean, after a few billion years evolution on this planet, lucky us. We exist when superintelligence is baby steps away, death has always been inevitable and for the first time ever, it may not be inevitable.

Now we don't know. But we're on. We're on the cusp of it. And so to me, the only thing that matters right now is don't die. Don't die individually. Live enough.

Live enough to live with the velocity. Exactly. Don't, don't die individually. Don't kill each other. Don't destroy the planet and like be around for what could be the most extraordinary existence in this part of the galaxy.

And, you know, it just would be such a tragedy for our loved ones, for any of us to miss out on this future. So it's a different time to be alive. And the faster you can hear this message and take care of your health, the better off you're going to be. You don't want to miss.

This is the thing, you know, like when when germs were discovered as this vector of people were dying during childbirth or surgeries, you don't want to find out about germs and infection 20 years after the discovery, you know, because you want to die, you want to find out right when it's done.

And that's why this this here is, I think is that moment for all of us. Brian Johnson, thank you very much for your time today. I appreciate it very much. Yeah, I enjoyed it.

Thanks for having me. Thank you very much.