



How to Think Better And Win Hostile Conversations with Mark Joyner



Have angry trolls put you in a place of fear and frustration? James has been there. This episode's guest, Mark Joyner, got him out, and shares how.



Mark Joyner

James: James Schramko here. Welcome back to SuperFastBusiness.com. This is episode 897. And I'm chatting with Mark Joyner today. Good day, Mark.

Mark: Good day. Eight hundred and ninety seven.

James: Yeah, but who's counting, right?

Mark: Somebody, at least.

James: There's somebody. Look, I know I've caught you at an interesting time. You've just been down in the, what do you call it, a gym or a dojo, in your Muay Thai?

Mark: Well, dojos are usually Japanese. Korean, dojang. I do Muay Thai and Brazilian Jujitsu, whatever the hell we call it these days in mixed martial arts, it's kind of all blended together.

The power of accountability

James: I see your social videos now. I can see you're sort of getting bent around like a pretzel and doing lots of workouts. You've got someone pushing you a bit for peak performance. That's very important to you.



Mark: Absolutely. I found, you know, I can work out on my own, or with a buddy, but I don't work out anywhere near as hard as I would, were somebody to be there in my face, looking at me, making sure I'm doing things correctly. You know, throughout my life, I figured out, I don't know when I quite caught on to this, but I got to a point where I realized that the only really efficient way to learn is one on one with people.

I mean, I teach in groups, I've learned in groups. I prefer not to learn in groups myself, because there's so many things that get in the way of learning. So for example, when I'm doing MMA stuff, if I were in a group, and the whole group has to stop when somebody goes and corrects one guy, right?

If I'm there, and somebody's looking at me, sparring with me, Hey, you got to do this, boom, like right on the spot, they give you the correction, you know, you can go harder, it's like they're in my face the whole time, and correcting things and teaching me the whole time. And just in terms of what I learn, how much harder I push myself, all of that, it's really like a 10X improvement. You know?

James: It's a great metaphor, really, for business and what you're doing as a platform, which I want to talk about. Like, the purpose of today is really to introduce you to my audience. Some of them will know you, and some of them won't. I mean, you're known as the godfather of this online stuff, and I have to give some context.

There's four or five things I really want to talk about that I think my audience would really appreciate. It's a privilege to get time with you. And by the way, if you need to do a post-workout recharge, or whatever, go for it.

Mark: I was going to say I'm about to throw some steaks on. So hopefully, your audience is casual.

An introduction to Mark

James: No one's going to mind at all. You do your thing while I just chat for a bit.

Mark: Go for it.

James: Because I want to just go back to, I think, I first heard your name from Mike Filsaime when I was starting online. It was about 2005, 2006. And you'd already been well and truly into it by then. And I think your foundational programs are what a lot of the original generation of gurus had learned from.

And then I encountered some of your material from some of the courses I bought. I think the blueprint course, I sent you a picture when I was cleaning out my filing cabinet, an old thing. I bought your book, which helped me write better sales copy, your formula. I noticed something about you that really intrigued me. And this sort of goes to that one-to-one thing.

For the longest time, I had absolutely no idea what it is that you actually do. And I thought, mostly, you're just maybe semi-retired and just sh*t-stirring on Facebook. Because, like, every single day, there's these posts that could be deemed as inflammatory, or at least they agitate, and you'd post a statement, and you'd say true or false, or you would put forward a perspective that you know is going to create division. And then you'd sort of step back.

And then over time, I saw you create some frameworks for how you'd like people to respond. I'm sort of like, Hey, you're actually teaching people how to communicate better. And then I saw you actually reveal, Hey, look, I found out some people don't even know what I do. And you talked about simpleology. It's hard to pronounce that actually.

Mark: Yeah, I know.

A course in getting things done

James: And it's essentially an accountability program from what I gather, and it helps people get stuff done, which is great. And it's very clever. I've talked about this in several podcasts. You would have no idea about this, but I've talked about how you drip feed this course. I actually contacted you and said, Mark, can you help me deal with really hostile trolly sort of comments and stuff?

Whenever you run Facebook ads, you get toxic people, like, Get off my Facebook feed, or, You're a scammer, or whatever. And like, I'm the absolute antithesis of a hype master. I just produce low key stuff, good stuff, it works. And it used to upset me when people would make these comments. And I realized that you had training that helped solve that. You have this [verbal jujitsu course](#).

And I reached out to you. And I said, How do I buy the course? How do I get the course? And you said, I'll sort this out for you. And you gave me the logins, and I talked to my audience about this. Your course, it only lets me have a little snack at a time. I can't have the next one till the next day. And I learned a lot, a heck of a lot from you about, how do you set up the timing of training and how you deal with something in a way that's going to get the result done. And then it requires you to do an action step and so forth.

So thank you for that. Thank you for bringing me into that training. The tips in that training are outstanding. It transformed for me, it took me from a place of fear and frustration to being way more confident about dealing with maniacs. And when I discovered that if you delete Facebook comments, the algorithm doesn't like that.

Since I was able to start engaging with people and actually having dialogue with people who said these horrible things, my team and I actually sort of giggle about it, how much more resourceful we are. My team would post something and say, Hey, boss, this person commented this. Do you want me to delete it? I said, No, leave it to me. And then I go and answer it.

And then they'd all do smiles and emoticons, and they were kind of like, proud that we could stand up for ourselves. So massive shoutout for that. That's one of the things I want to talk about. The other one I wanted to talk about might hit pretty close to home for you. But I think it's a really important one. And it was that you had a business partnership that just looked like it went completely off the rails, right?

Mark: Yeah.

James: And the way you handled that was impeccable. And I think if there's any highlights from that that you want to talk about, you don't have to name anyone or anything, but I thought that was so vulnerable of you to share that, where a lot of people would sweep it under the carpet.

And it speaks volumes about your core integrity, and it taught me, as an outsider from things like this, military brethren, about the code and the way that people should operate. And it also just speaks volumes about doing research and responding to situations that might be hard to anticipate.

So anyway, there's some of the things that I thought would be interesting to talk about, other than the fact that for the longest time, I've been a massive fan of yours. And thankfully, having a podcast like this allows me an opportunity to create at least enough value for you to be able to share you with my audience.

Mark: Man, so many things to talk about there.

James: Yeah, I just thought I'll give you a little setup while you...

Rolling with the moment

Mark: Well, we'll take them one by one. And if I go on too long, don't hesitate to interrupt me or whatever. And I want to thank you for being so chill about this. Just to be in the spirit of transparency, I remember I had this event on my calendar to talk with James, I'm like, Oh, man, yeah, James and I got to catch up.

And I forgot that it was a podcast. You told me that, and I was like, Oh, yeah, I'll just roll into this, ready to eat my steaks, and we'll just chit chat. Oh, sh*t, it's a podcast.

James: You know, I was saying like, Hey, [Noah Kagan](#) ate breakfast on my show. Like, it's not even a first.

Mark: Awesome, okay.

James: Eight hundred and ninety seven episodes, you're going to have some interesting ones. One of my highlights, actually, is when I went up to [Ontrapalooza](#) in Santa Barbara.

Mark: Oh, wow.

James: And I was renting a car. I had to rent a car to drive back to California to Los Angeles. And when I was at the airport, where they rent the cars, there was this guy just sitting at the table.

He looked like he had a workbook from the event. And he was just sitting there. And I went up and said hi to him. I said, Are you okay? And he goes, Yeah. I said, You went to the event? And he goes, Yep. I said, What are you doing here? Are you catching a plane or something? He goes, I'm just sort of still trying to figure that out. I'm not sure. I might rent a car or whatever.

And I said, Hey, I'm renting a car, if you want to come together. And he goes, Great. And I said one condition. He says, What's that? I said, Would you be willing to go through your notebook and just sort of talk about the event on the way home?

Mark: Oh, sweet.

James: And I wrapped a Lav mic around the rearview mirror.

And on the drive back down, we talked about the event, and it was such good content that my friends at [Ontraport](#) invited me to go back the next year to review the event, because they got a lot of airplay from that event review.

Mark: Excellent. That's very smart, man. You know, just as a side note, the people who are able to sort of roll with the moment and see opportunity in the moment, and just seize that, it gives you such an enormous advantage in life, and most people are stuck. You know, we've got this voice in our heads that my old friend, old dear friend, the late Win Wenger, who wrote a great book called *The Einstein Factor*, all about improving your intelligence.

He talks about this mechanism he calls the squelcher in your head, the squelcher is the voice in your head that says, That's a dumb idea. That's never going to work. Everybody's going to make fun of you. You know, and you have to silence that squelcher. And one of the ways to deal with that is just to move forward.

Yeah, there's a whole conversation we can have about how to silence that. I'm planting a seed there. Maybe we'll talk about that later.

James: Yeah, and I [often have guests back](#). One of the things I've done on this podcast is I'm responsive to my audience, to some extent. I mean, I don't say to my audience, Hey, what flavor of ice cream should I eat? I hate that. It's like, frickin' make up your own mind. But I will say, Hey, here's some ice cream we ate. Did you enjoy it? You want more? Right?

And if they say yes, so you'll get a reaction when we publish this, and we'll get questions and so forth. But there are so many things we can talk about. Partly because we're so different. And partly because we have a lot of similarities. And I think that's the really interesting thing.

Mark: I like your metaphor about the ice cream. You know, that's probably the only integrous way to teach anything, because who are we to know what's good for somebody else? And the people that are running around playing dogma police, trying to tell you that you have to do this, you have to do that - can I use foul language on this podcast?

James: You can, yeah. It's fine.

Mark: Yeah, you know, I mean, they know f*ck all about your actual life. So I mean, what business do they have? And I mean, I like to tell people, you know, one of the first fundamental things that I teach people in Simpleology, and it's in the Simpleology print book, is that, you know, epistemologically, right, epistemology is the study of how we know what we know, right? It's the study of knowledge.

The trouble with Truth

And a lot of people who study epistemology will tell you that, it may even be impossible to know a single capital T, truth, a universal truth. Because think about it, right? To know that universal truth for certainty, you would have to have an omniscient data set in your mind. And we don't, so far as we know. Who knows, maybe through the unconscious, we can access the omniscient data set. But in our conscious working memory, we know that there's a hardwired limitation of around seven bits of data, plus or minus two.

And plus there are all sorts of other things that confound this. You know, the Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle, the very act of observing reality itself changes reality. So how the hell do we know what's really out there? So what do we do with this information? There's too much information for us to process. We don't have the wetware required to process that information correctly. So what do we do?

So I have a framework that I call, these are going to be some big, you know, highfalutin words, and I'll simplify in a moment, but it's utilitarian model flexibility, right? So utilitarian, you know, for a purpose; model, like the model of the universe; flexibility, the ability to switch between one particular model and another at will.

Now, why is this something that I prioritize as, like, maybe the fundamentally most important thing that we all need to learn? Well, it's because a lot of our suffering comes from our attachment to ideas. And this is a notion that is certainly not original to me. The Buddhists talk about attachment being the most significant source of suffering for humans, Alfred Korzybski, in his wonderful seminal work on the field of general semantics, posited that all mental illness comes from dogma, right?

It's the inability to be able to reconcile the map that we have in our head from what we're observing, because the map, as they say, doesn't match the territory, it's not the territory, but we act as if it is. So when we see people arguing, and we'll loop back around to what you were talking about, about me, you know, stirring up sh*t online, because there's a very specific reason why I do things.

James: No, I imagine you would do everything for a specific reason.

Mark: Yeah. So the utilitarian model flexibility is like, Okay, well, you don't know which of these models of the universe are good, so be flexible in the models that you use based on whatever the situation is. So let me give you a couple of practical ways of looking at this.

So I started out in the military intelligence community. And then later, did some work in the military as an artillery officer, which was super fun, I loved both jobs, you know, as much as you can love those things. In the artillery world, we used pure Newtonian physics. Right? Now, a lot of people will say that quantum physics has disproven Newtonian physics.

Well, we didn't really give a sh*t about quantum theory, when we were trying to get around downrange, you know, we could, 50 kilometers away, get around downrange and with an adjustment or two, get it right on the target. And not only do that, but get a whole bunch of other guns to do it simultaneously at the same time. Right? That is quite the feat. That is quite the technological accomplishment to be able to do that.

It's all Newtonian physics, all Newtonian physics. So it's like this, the simpler way to think about this is thinking of useful lenses. You know, the way that we look at the world, it shouldn't be like, you know, hey, the reading glasses that I have on right now, because as I get older, it's harder for me to see really close. You know, I don't need these in all contexts. And God forbid these were welded to my head. Right?

James: Well, they'll have a camera soon. If the world goes away, they're talking about.

Mark: That's right. Yeah, that's a whole other topic we should probably get into. So you know, I can take these glasses off and put them on, and I can wear other glasses. You know, when I was in the military, there were times when using night vision goggles was very appropriate. Twelve noon would not have been an appropriate time to use them. But 12 midnight would be pretty darn good.

So, you know, we have to start with this as the basis, because if we don't start with that as the basis, we run around with a lot of hubris. And we interact with people in ways that are not only going to make us miserable, they're going to make other people feel bad because it will make them doubt themselves, like, Hey, wait a minute.

Like in my gut, I know that what this person is saying, he can't have the confidence that he has about that hypothesis. But he's browbeating me with it in a way that makes me feel shame, because I think something different. I'll give one more example. And I'll shut up and let you comment.

James: Oh, I've got so much empathy. I'm thinking, you must be dying to put that food in your mouth. I'm stressed for you, man. You're going to starve to death in front of my very eyes.

The minefield of speaking online

Mark: That's right. That's right. Oh, it was a crazy workout today, too. So you know, let's talk about in the beginning of the - I'm going to talk in code now, because is this on a major platform, this podcast?

James: Oh no, just Apple, or YouTube, or whatever.

Mark: Well, this word might be offensive.

James: Yes, I think I know what you're saying. It'll most likely get flagged if you start using trigger words. Because if anything you talk about doesn't fit the narrative.... Some of the prior podcasts are on this exact topic of [cancel culture](#), the fact that governments are being lobbied to control that certain players have their own agenda.

And of course, just prior to this recording, we're in an era where there's been whistleblowing by Facebook employees about them knowing how addictive it is, but not doing anything about it. There's a name change happening for major platforms. And you could barely say anything without getting a label, which is one specific reason I've avoided taking any particular position on some of the hot topics, because I'm a long-term player.

And while you eat there, I'll give you an example of how long-term thinking benefited me. Yesterday, my little tech savvy friend, I love this guy, [Jarrod Robinson](#), he's my tech sniffer. He's into stuff well before the rest of the population. He's, like, on the earliest part of the innovation curve. And he sent me a message saying, Man, you've got to get your tokens, there's an airdrop.

I'm like, I have no idea what you're talking about. Do you mean send pictures from my phone to my computer? He goes, No, no, no. He said, Remember, we bought a dot eth domain? And I said yes. He goes, Well, they're now giving tokens. They didn't tell anyone about it. But you can get tokens because you bought a domain, so you can claim them. You'll probably get half an eth.

So anyway, we log in, and I go to get my tokens, and it's like 280 tokens. And he's like, Holy crap! How did you get so many tokens? And he goes, Oh, I remember. When you bought that domain, you bought it for a long time. I think I bought it for 10 years. Like, that's just my default position, I'm thinking, if I'm going to buy a domain, I want to - you know, I bought SuperFastBusiness.eth. I want to own it for 10 years, I don't want to dick around with it next year and the year after.

So because I bought it for 10 years, I ended up with, I think it translates about, I've got \$17,000 or \$18,000 today that I didn't have yesterday. And he goes, That's a lesson for me, because you automatically went for the long-term play when you registered that domain. And most people are just going to put a year on it or whatever.

And so, I think the long play is rare. But anyway, back to the point. I've been careful about taking a position because I think we're going through an extremely volatile time where otherwise good people are probably unnecessarily alienating 50 percent of their audience by taking a position. It might be their position, but it's also, unless they're able to survive without these platforms, which I probably can if we're being honest, I just don't want to go there, for whatever reason.

But yeah, I think it's very interesting times as a publisher, where we're being censored probably more so than any other time. And to the point where they've just released an update here yesterday, where I live, from next month, people who have chosen not to be a certain way, will not be able to participate in just about anything, and in other states that goes for the whole of next year. And in other places, it's pretty unspecified.

But what an interesting time we live in, and what a minefield. And to your point about people getting belief in their model, or whatever, it's fascinating how it's very hard, once someone forms a fixed point of view, if they're the type of person who is not flexible or able-to-adapt models, it's like they end up just going down the drain pipe, or they're kind of so brittle, they snap.

Turning disappointment into opportunity

And I'll give you one more example while you finish that mouthful. So take your time. In April of this year, I ordered a surfboard. And it was a celebration. It's something I do. I celebrate wins or things that go well, just quietly, I don't publish it on social media. And it was supposed to be ready in August, and it wasn't. I chased them up, and then September and then October, and it's November, and I just got it.

And everything was correct, except for one item. The tail was the wrong shape. Initially, I felt a bit gutted, talking about attachment. I'd been visioning that board, I use visioning a lot. I'd been visioning it. [I went through quarantine](#), I went through two weeks of quarantine in a hotel with a two-year-old, with no opening windows, no fresh air, sh*t food, with a policeman outside the door who would arrest me if I opened the door.

And that helped me carry through, just visioning that surfboard, imagining catching waves on it, I was able to just sail through that. And when it arrived, I just looked at it, I'm like, Gee, that's disappointing. I actually felt the disappointment. I let it come through my body. And then I spoke to the people about it. And also, I rode it, because I'd put my fins, I'd waxed it up. Like, I had to drive to pick it up after four failed delivery attempts. And so I rode it.

And I got in touch with them. I said, you know, I wanted to try and work with it and just adapt. But then this inner core value of mine about like, No, I really had an intention of this particular thing. And through their error, they just didn't deliver on it. So they said, We'll buy it back. But we'll keep an allowance for the fact that you rode it, and we'll replace it with the right one.

Anyway, where it sort of got to is, I've now reordered it the way it was supposed to be, exactly as it was supposed to be. They're speeding it up, it'll only take four weeks instead of eight months. And I'm keeping the other one. I'm going to keep it. And I'm going to take this opportunity. Because I've got a [surfing website](#), I'm going to benchmark them, because no one really can do this.

I'm going to take two identical boards but with different tails. And I'm going to tell people what the difference actually is, because most surfers would never know. They only have one or the other. But you don't often have the opportunity to bench test them, like it's literally an A/B split test. All things being equal, what does the difference in this tail make? So I'm going to turn this into an opportunity.

And then the funny thing is, the last time I sold a surfboard, I put it on our classifieds, which is called Gumtree, which is like Craigslist in America, because we do have an international audience here. And the guy that bought it from me goes, Oh, I love this board, I've seen it on your website. I'm like, What do you mean? He goes, Your surf site.

I'd actually pre-marketed my own board and created demand for it. So I know I'll be able to sell this board when I'm finished with it. Anyway, long story, but hopefully, you're replenished and we're good to go.

The chat takes a dietary detour

Mark: Still have lots of steak sitting here on the side, but....

James: I'm really interested how you cooked that so quickly, like your methodology must be supreme.

Mark: Ah, you know. Okay, so this is a funny side note. I've been doing the carnivore diet for many years now. I did it for two years straight, got off it. I was eating carbs for a year because somebody advised. Anyway, long story about that, got off the carbs, am more on, like, a ketogenic/carnivore with a very minimal amount of vegetables. I think that the requirements for vegetables, it's possible that we really greatly overestimated how many of them we need. There are people now who are thriving on carnivore, and I know that there are some vegans watching this right now.

James: I know heaps. I know heaps of them, heaps of them.

Mark: Listen, I was vegan at two different points in my life, two completely separate entire years, I was a vegan. And I tried it, you know, and I even did the most intense form of it, you know, what's known as 80/10/10 raw vegan, where all you eat is, like, fruit. Like, you probably heard of the 30 bananas a day.

James: I've heard of fruitarians.

Mark: It's like fruitarian, yeah.

James: I've even heard of the breatharian who got busted eating a burger at 7/11 or something.

Mark: I saw that dude. That was hilarious. Yeah, yeah. Well, there's the sunlight guy. Yeah, they saw him in an Indian restaurant eating food. So these two steaks, I just pulled right out of the freezer and put on a grill, like you shouldn't do that. You should thaw them out and get them to room temperature.

James: I probably compromised your meal today. But hopefully, our audience will benefit.

Mark: Well, you know, sometimes, I'll just pull them out of the freezer, and like, I eat less and less for the pleasure and enjoyment of eating than I do for just like, I want to get what's going to make me as close to optimal as possible inside my body.

You know, don't get me wrong, I enjoy food as much as the next person. But I've also detached myself enough from it. You know, when I was younger, I had so much attachment to food that I would get mopey.

James: I know very food-driven beings and animals. I've had food-driven dogs, food-driven people in my life who can oscillate massively up and down based on food mood.

Mark: I think these are learned behaviors, you know? And I think that they're very deeply attached and intertwined with our emotions, and with people and with events. And sometimes, if we have all of these deep memories, for example, of enjoying unhealthy food with people that we love, and there's a time when we're lonely, we might want to go eat to assuage that loneliness.

James: Makes sense. Let's take this example, right? And I've seen you do this, actually. So it's a real thing. If you post something on your feed about food, and it's about eating a carnivore diet, of course, there's going to be people who have different points of view.

When people are stuck on their point of view

How do you have proper conversations with people when they're extremely fixated on their perspective? What are some techniques?

I mean, obviously, I've been through your training, which I loved. What are some of the sort of go-to techniques that someone listening to this could start thinking about if they're on this sort of where I was at before I went through your training, which was, Oh, my God, this is like a fragile stick of gelignite, go and say the wrong thing, and it's going to blow up and then I'm going to have to end up deleting the post.

Mark: Yeah. First off, the thing to understand is that, you know, when I post, some people will accuse me of posting something divisive, and I'm like, Let's look at the presuppositions of that statement. Okay, so if I post a question, True or False? Donald Trump is a stable genius, as he called himself, right? True or False? Donald Trump's a stable genius.

By the way, when I posted that, there were some friends that I knew in Silicon Valley who were so anti-Trump and were so self-righteous about their point of view that they unfriended me because of that question. Okay? Like, why do you post up that's so divisive? And I thought, how is posting a true or false question divisive?

That would seem to me to be actually inclusive, right? Because I'm saying, Hey, you tell me your opinion, right? To me, what's divisive is if somebody comes in and says, I have a dogmatic lens through which I look at that particular thing. And if you don't look at that, you are a less good human.

And that is fundamentally how most people seem to approach these things in this day and age, partly because there is an influence of media. I was in the intelligence community, so I see things that most people don't see. Right? And I think most people are becoming aware of the fact now that most news is bullsh*t.

James: Mainstream media, for example, is bought off.

Mark: Yes. And I mean, by the way, we can have a conversation about that. And I can prove to people unequivocally in ways that they can know that.

James: I have no doubt about it, because I saw a classic example of that during the week. A guy across the border between New South Wales and Queensland, and on the news, it was reported, they said that he's so sick. He got hospitalized with COVID. And he was apparently so sick that he couldn't even be interviewed. And he's in ICU.

Anyway, a few weeks later, he's on the news. There he is. And he goes, That's not the case. I was not in ICU. That's totally made up. I'm like, So this is the health minister of a state and the premier of a state, on the TV, on mainstream media, with an outright lie. And it's been exposed. But there's not outrage. That's probably the thing that surprises me the most.

No matter what perspective, again, I'm not taking a point of view here. I'm just journalizing this, that I'm reporting on something I saw and how much that intrigued me that people aren't, from that point on, outraged or changing their lens.

Mark: Yes. So it's a great point that you bring up. And I think a lot of people are simply not aware that this phenomenon is occurring. And this phenomenon is driving people into intellectual ghettos, if you will. And because people will consume the flavor of media that they'll consume, you know, be it left or right, even though the left and right thing is a very facile way of attempting to understand the very, very rich and complex nuance with which we can have opinions on politics. So binary left versus right is absurd.



But regardless of which flavor of media you might consume, that starts to become your reality. And then every other reality, you know, we have, like this immune system now, where we're fighting that other reality.

Now, another thing that we need to think about here, is, when people come into this, and they're unwilling to change their point of view, or they're unwilling to be okay with someone when they disagree, we're starting to get down to the bedrock of the problem, right? I, for example, had people, because I would often say things in like, not so firm language.

They would say, like, what do you think about Trump? And I would say, you know, It's hard for me to know, because there's a lot of noise out there around him, for and against. And I would say that many of the things that they said about him that he did simply are observably not true.

And they go, You're defending Trump, and I would say, No, I'm not defending Trump, what I'm telling you is the most intellectually honest thing that I can say, which is I don't really have a firm opinion, because I don't feel like I've had enough information to really base my opinion on.

And so I remember this one guy who is somebody I won't name in the internet marketing community is like, You're a coward. You clearly have an opinion, you just won't state it. Actually, I can see it through a lot of different lenses. I'm just not married to any of them. Because you are and you're upset that I'm not either in your camp or firmly against, so you know how to interact with me. You know, that's the problem.

Cheat codes and decision-making

James: So you refer to this in your training as cheat codes. It's like they've got this shortcut they keep reflexing to, like a kid having a tantrum when they don't get an ice cream.

Mark: Yes. Well, so it's interesting, you bring up the cheat codes, right? There's another way of looking at these cheat codes. So the cheat codes, I love that lens or that metaphor, because it's something that can be inclusive of many, many phenomenon. And let's say one subset of those cheat codes that is super worthy to look into, because it speaks to what I think is one of the most powerful models of persuasion any digital marketer, marketer, any human being really needs to understand this.

There are two different models, two different labels for a very similar model. One is called the Heuristic Systemic Model. And the other one is called the Elaboration Likelihood Model. And they're both more or less saying the same thing. And that's because of the phenomenon we were talking about earlier, where there's too much information and we don't have the ability to process it, we have to use heuristic shortcuts to make really quick snap decisions.

So for example, let's imagine this is prehistoric times, and you're running through the forest, and you see a whole bunch of people running towards you, right? You would probably turn and start running in the same direction as them, because they all look afraid, they're running from something. Well, this is one of the heuristics that we use, which is sometimes referred to as conformity to group norms.

So why do we want to conform to the group? Because it's a shortcut that is more often than not going to be right, and is going to guide us towards a decision that could have practical life or death consequence for us. Now, these heuristics can save our lives, but they can also get us killed. Because the people who understand these heuristics very deeply are using those heuristics consciously against our best interest very often.

James: Which is probably why those investors say, you know, if you see the crowd go this way, then go that way.

Mark: Right.

Before the internet, and now

James: When did you actually get online?

Mark: Early 1990s.

James: Nineteen nineties, right. Like, literally a decade before me.

Mark: Even so long before that, when I was, when was it, probably around 1970 something, my uncle who was like a, you know, he's an actual rocket scientist, right? Well, he was, he passed away a couple years ago. He had an ARPANET machine. An ARPANET is a predecessor to the internet.

Now, that was this big teletype machine, you know, we had these big earmuff modems that we hooked into, and you would send a command, you'd wait like five minutes, and something would come back and the machine would fire up, and then it would type something on this piece of paper. That's the early internet.

Because I mean, the Internet was created by DARPA, you know, in the United States military, so that we could have uninterrupted communications. That was my first interaction with it. And then in the early 90s, I really started getting into that and the bulletin board system.

James: I'm just saying, like, you're a veteran of that industry. And I'd say 2020 might be the first year when most regular businesses started seeing the internet as an actual viable channel, when they've been so stuck in their retail ways, their in-person ways. Like, you're probably 30 years ahead of the curve there. And so you're definitely not running with the pack.

The childhood-script connection

Mark: Right. Well, that's one thing I've been very, you know, I thought I was cursed with having a very rough childhood. But then I realized later on, it was quite the blessing. You know?

James: So that's a lens, right?

Mark: Mm hmm. Indeed.

James: It's interesting how many surfing world champions grew up in poor upbringing, you know, like, it's a constant pattern that I see. Hard childhood, some sort of drive or inner fire. Entitled childhood, they tend to be a bit complacent. They get caught out a bit. And most definitely, people are just following the usual script in life.

Mark: That's right. That's right. Yeah. And that usual script, I mean, it gets you what everybody usually gets, which is mediocrity.

James: That's the essence of it, isn't it? That most people, they're not feeling quite rich enough, and they don't feel like they've got quite enough time. You only have to go on to a Facebook group of, in my case, where I came from, like Northshore mums or something, and you'll just see the same bullsh*t complaints, you know, the government this, and wages that, and can't afford this, and like, it's as if they never had a choice.

Mark: Yeah, that's right. That's right. Yeah, and that's this illusion. Right? But it's a very persistent illusion. Because, when I was very young, it was a strange phenomenon, this feeling that I was outside of where everybody else was. And I was, truly, in a sense, and there was a feeling of like, there's something that these people are all sharing and I'm not part of it, and I don't know what it is.

James: That's skiing for me. I don't get it. I'm like, when I was skiing, I'm like, it's cold, my feet hurt, and I keep falling over. I can't get what everyone else sees in this. And now, in terms of the way that I live, again, up until last year, I really felt like I'm an alien. I felt like, there's everyone on Earth, and then I'm just doing this completely different thing.

Like, there's hardly anyone you could pull up to in the street, talk about stuff that we know intimately, like a DNS or whatever. They're going to look at you like you've got three heads, or you're green and slimy or whatever. And now, if you pull an average person off the street and talk to them about DeFi, or NFT, or whatever, they're like, What are you talking about? It's kind of weird being on the early majority side of the fence.

Mark: It is. It is.

James: You'd be going past untold number of people on the tricycles off to do their fishing or work in the markets. You're in Thailand, right?

Mark: Yeah, yeah.

James: Phuket?

Mark: Yeah.

James: So, you know, it's like, you're in a completely different world. I saw [Trevor Toecracker](#) made a great quote on Facebook yesterday, it was something like, We're not one person in a world of 7.6 billion. We're one of 7.6 billion worlds. And that's like, Hey, we're living such different lives.

Mark: Simultaneously, there are consensus realities that people are members of. And, you know, when you're a member of a particular consensus reality, it becomes sort of like a self-policing prison in a way.

James: Like the guy who unfriends you, he's creating his own bubble.

Mark: That's right. That's right.

James: He only wants people who will echo chamber his same - so they'll probably all go in the same knitted jumpers to the same Christmas dinner in the same neighborhood. Is that why you do your posts? Is it to observe human behavior and to be a master at your craft?

Mark: You know, I do them for so various purposes. Sometimes I'll post things because there are things that I think people need to know and need to understand. And I'll introduce ideas to people in a way that's not directly didactic, but will lead them to the discovery of something.

James: I don't know what didactic means.

Mark: Didactic, like direct teaching, like, Okay, so I'm going to teach you now about the heuristic systemic model, right?

Some lessons in keeping chill

James: Okay, so the best post that you ever did for me was the one where you said, Okay, insult me, like, go for it, hit me with your best shot. I'm like, This guy is clearly insane. Like, that's my worst nightmare. And then, because of that post, I reached out to you and I went through Linguistic Jujitsu Academy, which I will put a link to it somewhere. If people can buy it, I don't know how they get it.

Because my audience need this. You taught me that you can have a strong core. You talk about this, your stance, and the shield, and the gentle sword and the hard sword.

And I see a hell of a lot of hard swords wrong on the internet. I see people moving off their stance instantly and exposing their weakness and then defending it with their life. And they're just going down in a ball of flames.

So my main strategy, and this might sound weak to some, was, firstly, I just cut back on socials, because it's just not worth it. I don't get into arguments. Two is, I had a positive-only rule.

I just zip it. I have to thank my wife for this. She keeps me humble. She said, Just leave it. Just don't. Just don't. And so I've managed to wean myself off getting into. I used to be a lot more argumentative 10 years ago, but back then I was just wielding a sharp-edged sword.

I was battle-hardened from being a general manager in a really difficult aggressive industry. I had things to prove. Now I'm not competitive. I don't want to get in arguments. But as I said, it's still if you ever run Facebook ads or whatever, you're going to get people attack you. And that's where the core came into it.

You taught me to keep my cool. You reminded me something I already learned that actually got me through my most difficult crisis in work, which was to be like water. I actually read *The Art of War*. That was my self-help therapy manual to get past this psychopathic maniac. I had this boss who actually spat on me. And he threatened to kill me with a steak knife.

At the time, I had a mortgage, I had kids to support, and all my income was tied to this one absolute psycho lunatic. It was very traumatic at the time, and I really wish I'd had access to some of this material earlier.

So if the only outcome of our discussion today, apart from learning how to get into this carnivore lifestyle, in the two-minute meal prep, is there are tools you can access, especially by Mark Joyner, to learn how to handle yourself better in communication. So that's your superpower, in my opinion, of so many. You've got so many.

My favorite part, I'm looking at my notes here, are you give people examples of what the kill shots are, and some of the things that you can actually say to people to handle the different situations that arise. That was so powerful for me. Like, you might ask someone, Why are you so emotional about this?

Mark: That's a good one. That's a really good one.

James: Or why do you feel so strongly about that? It actually leans into one of my most popular recent episodes I did, which was called [Just Listen](#). And we were talking about being a good listener. But that actually implies that you care about their response, and you want to understand them more, and that they should feel heard.

Mark: Yeah.

James: So that was good. It's really good stuff. And I can pinpoint this timeline where my approach to dealing with that stuff changed from fear and uncertainty to calm and confidence. And that, plus I did an interview with [Rob Moore](#), who just loves haters. Like, he's addicted to haters. Because they're sort of validating that he's doing something important that ruffles feathers or whatever, maybe different motivations there. But two influences on me this year that have helped me get even more chilled as if that was possible.

Mark: Right on. The surfing wasn't enough, right?

James: Surfing is everything, really. That is the absolute, that's my Muay Thai or whatever. The surfing is the core. Like, I'm an amateur, self-sponsored surfer. I'm not even very good at it. But it's got so many lessons for me. And then the business wraps around that. The business funds my lifestyle, and the business enables me to have this rich tapestry of incredible characters to access, geniuses like you. And to coach some of the most well-known people on the internet in a silent role, it's very satisfying.

Mark: Yeah. Yeah, you've always been really fascinating to me, I remember, you know, when you and I first interacted, I was living in New Zealand at the time, I think. And I think a mutual friend, maybe it was Mark Lindsay or Mark Lang might have introduced us. And yeah, you've always had a very unassuming and sort of a calm way. You know, while a lot of these guys out there, a lot of the people who are posing as digital marketing gurus, you know, some of them know what they're talking about. Some don't, and that's cool.

I mean, people are going to be on their journeys wherever they are. And a lot of them have this sort of like, this edge about them, and that was something that was very difficult for me when I was early on, like, you got in in 2005, right? Two thousand one, I was getting out of the digital marketing world. I did this thing called Farewell package.

And the reason I got out was because there was just so much chaos. So now we know about, like, social justice mobs online and all of that. I might have been like the first dude to ever get attacked like that on the internet, and I didn't know what the hell to do, because I found out later by the way that there were some competitors out there who were, like, creating fake sockpuppet accounts and attacking me with those and all of that, and they don't know that I know.

James: It was all very one-way marketing when I came online. It was red letters, red headlines, sales letters, push, push, push. There was no accountability. That's what's changed, is with social media, these bandits get pulled up quickly. And it's hard for them to respawn.

Mark: Yeah, yeah. It's harder to be a fraud on the digital marketing platforms.

James: And some platforms want you to be a person. Facebook wants you to be a person. LinkedIn wants you to be a person.

Mark: Yeah. You know what's funny, though? Well, it's simultaneously harder to be a fraud, if you have the right connections, it's easier, right?

James: It's easy to appear incredible, but I think if you look at the long-term play, almost everyone who was big when I started has faded out, there's very few long players.

The stuff you can and can't talk about

Mark: Yeah. Well, let me give you a really interesting example of something. So let's just say, there is an illness that shares the same name with a beer from Mexico, where they put a little lime on, you know, I thought, I'll just say that, everybody should know what I'm talking about. If you know what I'm talking about, pause, and it'll click and you go, Oh, okay. I know why he's not saying the word. Right. We don't want to.

So when that thing was first introduced to the world, you know, it came from a particular region, where there was also a lab that studied these particular viruses, right? And anybody who had the hypothesis that that particular virus might have leaked out of a lab was ridiculed and shunned. And in fact, so here's where it gets really interesting.

The mainstream corporate media was telling people that, you know, Hey, that's an absurd hypothesis. You know, only crazy conspiracy theorists are thinking that. In fact, we have a paper signed by 30 people, 30 senior people in the intelligence community, saying it's not possible for it to have leaked. And so as an intelligence community veteran, I said, Well immediately, I'm going to tell you that's bullsh*t, because nobody in the intelligence community would tell you that something is not possible. Especially with something with so few knowns.

That's not what the intelligence community is in the business of doing. Right? So those 30 people that signed that letter, I want to get that letter now and know who those names are, because they have identified themselves as being corrupt.

James: I'm just thinking, Occam's razor on that. It's like, Hey, we've got this crazy outbreak coming from this place. Where can we find out more about this? Well, as chance would have it, we've got a research lab that studies that exact thing, in the same place.

Mark: Hmm. who'd have thunk it, right?

James: It does make you think that there has to be an enormous amount of spin to distance from that.

Mark: So you know, what is known as the Overton window, right, the window of acceptable ideas that are allowed to be deposited, it changes at somebody's whim, somebody's deliberately adjusting it. Recently, the Overton window was adjusted so that you could make that hypothesis. And John Stuart gets on The Tonight Show, and does a big show of saying, Hey, isn't it crazy that we weren't able to talk about this before?

And it seems so obvious, he made a joke about it. I thought, wow. So here we have one of the best-known figures in popular media, popular culture, going out there and introducing this idea. So why are they making it okay to discuss that now?

The point that I'm making is that if you are in the club, and none of us are in the club, right? If you're in that club, you can get away with bloody murder in terms of lying, because you're going to have a whole bunch of really, really respectable-looking people saying, Well, I am this person, and I have this title. And I'm in this position of authority. And I'm telling you right now, on my authority, that your view is bullsh*t. Even though you're seeing with your own eyes, I'm telling you that what you're seeing with your own eyes is crazy. And if you see that...

James: There's something wrong with you.

Mark: There's something wrong with you. That is a very, very dangerous state of affairs that people have that power, and the individuals are not empowered to be able to go, No, dude, I don't care how many letters you have after your name. You're fu*king crazy. You're the one who's trying to gaslight me with bullsh*t. I see what I see.

James: It takes a lot to build that strong core where you can actually step away from being told what to do. I notice people at the moment are being told not to do their own research, to just trust the experts. Like, it seems very dangerous to tell people what they can and can't do, and for them to just give up on it.

Mark: It's extremely dangerous because, you know, throughout history, if you look at, and by the way, I want to plant the seed about something, and this is probably a topic for another conversation another time.

Mark: I would love to have as the topic of our next one, there's a book that I wrote recently that talks about what's going on in the world right now. And it was written in 2019. And it describes a lot of what has happened over the last two years. And it describes what I think a lot of what's going to be happening over the next several years.

And to me, the whole purpose of the book was, look, there are things happening in the technological landscape, about which, if you are uninformed, you're in deep trouble. You need to know this, because it's the important lens that you need to understand what's happening, as far as I believe.

Anyway, I want to plant that seed, because I would love to have that conversation with you. You're one of the people that would get it.

James: Yeah, I've read the book. It's great. I'm going to get 16 people email me as soon as it's published is, [where do I get the book?](#)

Mark: Yeah, where do I get that book? What's it called?

James: We'll put it on the show notes, whatever it is.

Mark: Yeah, put it on the show notes.

James: This is episode 897. We'll put it up there on SuperFastBusiness.com. We'll put it in the email that goes out. And I'll book you to come back. You're too good to let off the hook that easily.

The partnership that went south

Mark: Well, the one thing I wanted to close the loop on was, you asked me about that business partnership. And I thought, Okay, let me get that over with, you know, let me talk about that. How do you want me to go about that? Look, I'm a completely open book about these things. And I will talk very openly about the mistakes I made and the way it went down.

James: Well, in the short version I saw was that you had formed a good partnership that seemed quite functional. But then there were some revelations that some of the foundational promises or credentials weren't factual. And when you checked that out, that turned out to be the case. And you were just really gutted about that. And you were forced, from an integrity perspective, to end what was actually a profitable and equitable partnership, other than the foundations, for the most part.

Mark: There's a little more to it.

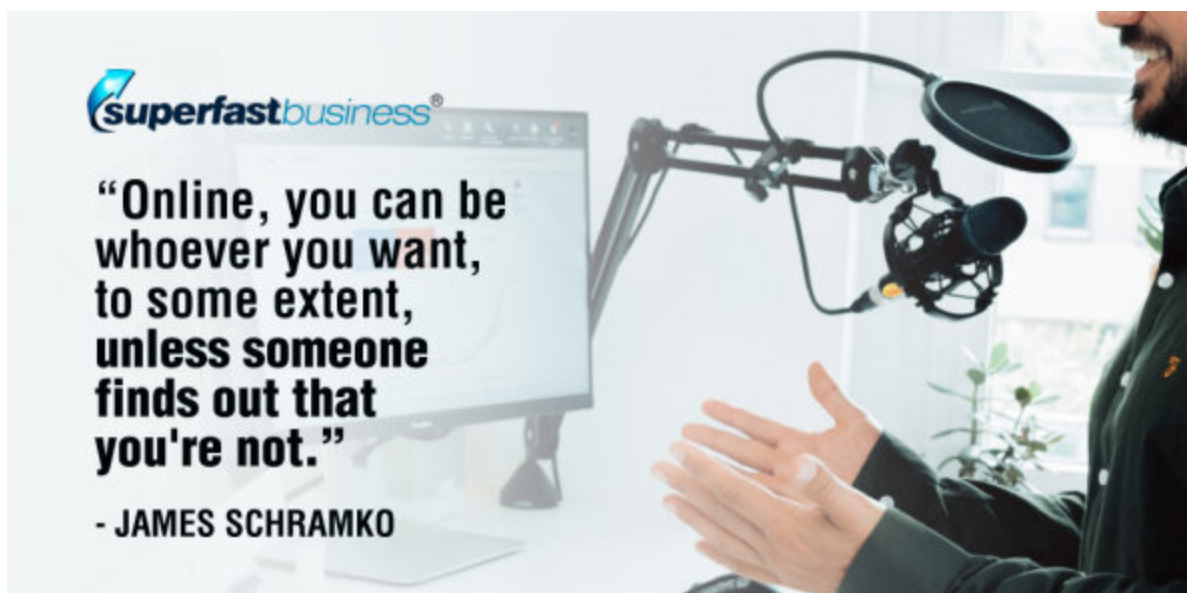
There's a lot to learn from that conversation.

James: You know, one of my favorite ways to learn? I do hate that saying, you know, fail fast and make as many mistakes as you can. I just love to listen to what's going on with other people. It's like putting forth on the golf course, you get to watch the lie of the land, and like, you can just get there in less putts.

We've all had business relationships that don't work, including me. We all have business relationships that aren't perfect. And I've had to stop some before. They're never pleasant. And it's going to be something that anyone that listens to this episode, if they're an entrepreneur, is going to encounter at some point, even if it's the next person they hire, as an agency or whatever, how to go about doing some checks or whatever, to make sure that what's being said is actual.

I think, in the whole time I've been coaching, I've only had one coaching student actually ask me for proof of bank balance or what my actual numbers look like. It's very rare. Fascinating.

Mark: People just assume that you're telling the truth.



James: Which of course I am. But in any case, I'm just saying, it's like, to your point where online, you can be whoever you want, to some extent, unless someone finds out that you're not. And then you're fu*ked forever. Basically, that's it. Game over.

A useful lens through which to look at life

Mark: That's right. So to wrap this episode up on a really interesting note, and I love the topics that we'll talk about in future ones, and I'm very much looking forward to those conversations, I think we'll have a really good one, well, good several ones. I want to share with folks a useful lens that is one of the most powerful I've acquired over my years, in terms of how to process just your life in general.

And stoicism is something that I've studied ever since I was very, very young, and I loved it. My nickname when I was a kid was Marcus Aurelius, and he's one of the great, you know, Stoic philosophers, although from a different era than the early Stoics. But I think it was Seneca, he was the one who came up with the phrase, that Latin phrase Amor Fati, right, which is Latin for the love of fate.



And the essence of what he was getting at with that particular phrase was that no matter what happens to you, you need to condition your mind to love it. Because the way I see it is this, it's like, the universe is potentially a growth machine. That's one of the useful ways of looking at the universe that I've found quite helpful.

And if you think about this, like, whatever happens to you, if you just trust that it's there for your betterment, right, so even if you like, do something as severe as like, lose a hand, if you love that fate, there is some greater good that you're going to draw from that, right? Now, what if the universe is totally random, and there is no rhyme or reason to it? These things just happen.

Well, okay, even if that's true, looking at the universe this way is useful because it's going to force you to find what good there is in whatever happens to you, you know? So I don't mind talking about mistakes that I made at all. I love showing, because I'm not afraid of somebody judging me. It's like, okay.

James: We got a strong core.

Mark: That's the core.

James: You know, something that [Vishen Lakhiani](#) said at a Mindvalley conference I went to in Dominican Republic, it struck a chord with me, it said, no matter what your mental model of the world is, whatever your belief system is, that it's got a self-fulfilling prophecy about it, so you could take a Christian, or you could take a Muslim, or you could take a Buddhist or whomever, whatever their model of the world is, they'll make things fit that model. And they can actually benefit from it.

Like, if someone thought that acting like a good Christian makes them a better person and they want to operate under that sort of operating system, they might actually be very charitable, they might be kind and caring to their neighbor, they might not commit sins or whatever because of that mental model, whether that's in the end, true or false. I've got no way of knowing, as it turns out.

Mark: Yeah, I wish we had a way. But then again, we don't.

James: It's one of my things from Peter Drucker that I love the most, he said, The best way to make decisions is really, to look in the hindsight and then learn from that for the next one. And it's like, we will look back at this period. This is a fascinating period, which I'm sort of glad I'm documenting.

I even documented my [quarantine episode](#), like I did record it on my phone in quarantine with my two-year-old running around, because I had to document this. We're going to look back at this in years from now thinking, Oh my god, did people actually believe this? Or do that? Or did this really happen? We're going to have to be explaining this to people, because there's some crazy stuff that I would never have anticipated.

And watching some of the videos that I've seen from other countries, especially China, on things like when they roll back their status and so forth, the way that changes behavior, it's really fascinating. And yeah, gosh, who knows what's going to happen, but thanks for coming and sharing, you know, the current chapter. I'd love to have you come back, Mark.

Mark: I'd love to come back. And you just tell me which of the topics, I think we've got four or five?

James: Oh, yeah, I want to talk about picking good relationships and managing fallout from that. And I'll take also some listener contributions. I want to mention your website, please? Simpleology.com?

Mark: Yeah, simpleology.com is a good place to start. Anyway, people can go there and learn what it is. And I'll just say that the simplest way of understanding what happens is that, in a common result of people going in and using the system - by the way, there's only one thing that you have to remember this, when you log in, you just click this button that says, Do today's training. That's all you have to do. That's all you have to remember about simpleology.

There's a lot to learn, but the system titrates it out and makes sure that you learn it properly. Within 48 hours to a week, it's very common that we get feedback from people that, Hey, I've only been working for two hours. I got as much done in these last two hours as I normally get done in a full day or even a week. Very common response we get from a lot of people.

And a lot of people hear that, they go, That's just bullsh*t. And so when you get in there and you realize how much time you're wasting, which is part of what simpleology will do for you, no, it's not.

James: It actually, it's like, it gave a system or label to what I automatically do, is I create systems and frameworks for things automatically. And it's just mechanically doing what I do anyway as a natural doer.

Mark: I love that. That's right.

James: And so I get it. Totally I'm like, This is so clever. It's great.

Mark: Well, thank you for plugging that.

James: Thanks for letting me in there and having a look, you know, like, and if the product was rubbish, I'd say it's rubbish as well. I'm not saying this just because I want to win social favor, but actually, it's one of the most important things that I've learned in 2021, is how to be a better communicator in hostile situations. And that's been fantastic.

Mark: That's great, man. Glad I could help.

James: All right. Well, we'll speak soon, and enjoy the rest of your meals, and thanks so much for sharing.

Mark: You're most welcome.



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