



Managing Difficult Business Relationships with Mark Joyner

Ever hit a wall when it comes to managing business relationships? Mark Joyner and James explore communication blocks and how to deal with them.



Mark Joyner

James: James Schramko here. Welcome back to SuperFastBusiness.com. This is episode 899. Today, we have our special guest, friend, Mark Joyner back, thank you for coming back, Mark.

Mark: Happy to be here, man.

James: We had a great conversation last time, we sort of talked about how you were the godfather of the internet and the generation before the generation before me, which, you know, it's really important to me to bridge the history, because a lot of the people I'm coaching have no history of the online world. Some of them don't know who [Jay Abraham](#) is, or [Mike Filsaime](#), or [Rich Schefren](#), and so forth.

And I love just bringing back people from my past and filling in the gaps, in the same way I'm doing with my surfing. I'm going through all the history of surfing, reading books, learning about the different shapes, and it just adds that extra dimension, having respect for where we came from. We had this great conversation last time, and we felt like we had so much more to talk about.

Why today's topic is a timely one

But I've got a specific topic today. And that is how to manage difficult relationships. This is a sort of a broad statement, but I'll just provide the context. We've had a bit of turmoil since the beginning of 2020. There was elections, there was changes, there was a pandemic, there were solutions to the pandemic, which have divided people, family, friends.

There's been lockdowns, masks, changes to business. I was just reading some news today, because I changed states, as my audience would be well aware, I [went through quarantine](#) and everything. When I left where I was, we were under a mask at all times outside, five kilometer radius from house, stay indoors, orders, only go out for food, etc. And it was like an apocalypse.

And then I went to this sunny paradise where it's like pre 2020 at the moment, that'll possibly change. But it's just, I'm noticing as a coach, people seem to be worn out, tired, frustrated, confused, on nerves' edge, uncertain about their future. And in particular, they're getting engaged in toxic fights, disputes, nagging.

I'm seeing friends, a friend of mine come over for a tea the other day. And she said one of her close friends has basically just cut her off, because they have a disagreement over a certain policy. I've spent time with family, I noticed that there's some friction going on and stuff, without getting into it.

And then there's of course, the good old-fashioned business relationships. And even people who are in business, they might individually be affected by stuff, but then they bring it to work and have blowups. You've got a lot of experience with this, with your military background, your communication interests, your passion for engaging people on social media.

So let's pull up a toolkit that people could use to be aware of what's happening and how they can better maneuver through life in a less stressful way.

Mark: Yeah, man, such a great and big topic. I want to do my best to give everybody a shotgun blast that will give them some tools. I want to start out by pointing out something that you did in the beginning, which I think is very important and very emulatable, and it's very apropos to the conversation...



The thing every person wants

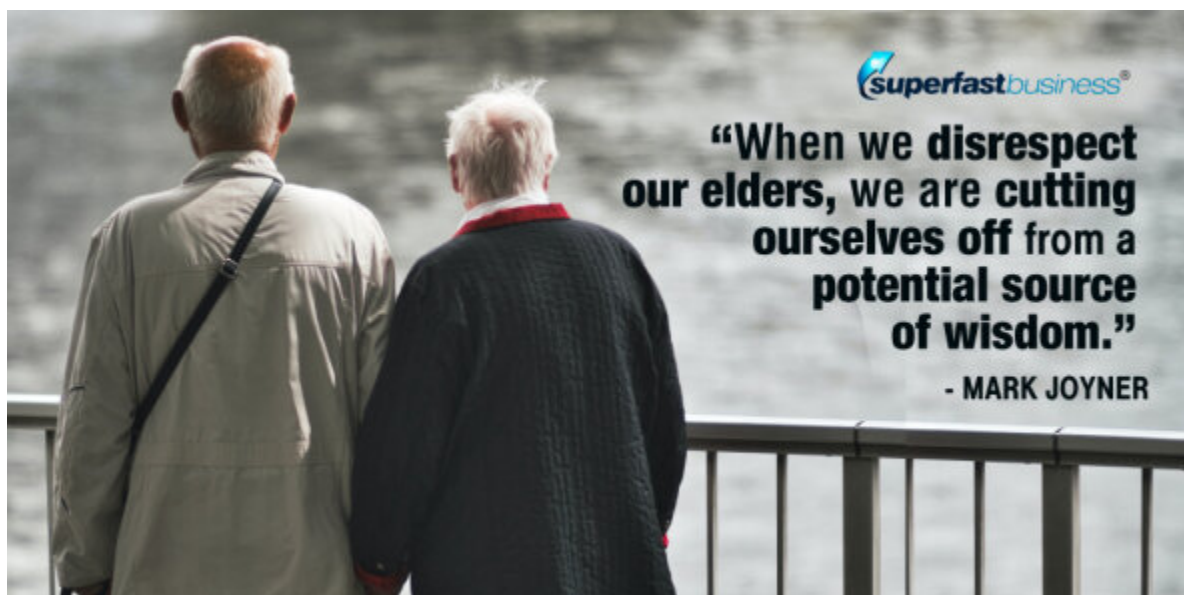
So you were talking about how you thought it was important to consider the history. And I want to bring up another reason why it's important. Nobody likes to feel disrespected, right? Everybody wants to feel important in some way or another. When I was young, in the digital marketing space, I was the disrespectful punk to a lot of guys, right?

Here I was, I didn't have any background in formal marketing, I was just sort of inventing my own playbook and doing well and I was, you know, kind of smug and full of myself, with some people, sometimes. There were some old school direct marketing guys that I was a little flippant to. I was very friendly with almost all of them, right?

A couple though, I was like, Okay, you think you're a big shot? Well, I'm Mark Joyner. Who the f*ck are you? That kind of thing, right? And I smoothed things out with almost all of those guys. I tend to get along with most everyone, I endeavor to, right? I kind of fall in love with everybody, man, like, I just love people, people are amazing.

Some people get under my skin, but I really, I think deeply, like, I'm like, Hmm, so what's going on in that person? Why are they acting that way? And when I try to look at things through their perspective, I want to like them, right? It makes them easier to understand, it makes them easier to like.

One thing that we're missing right now, in general, and again, I take responsibility for this, because I kind of set some of the tone was, there is a bit of a flippancy. And I don't think this is new, I think that going all the way back to the literature of Socrates, you can hear about how the youth are corrupted, and they're disrespectful to their elders, and all of that, it's probably not that new.



But it's also something that we're not teaching kids right now, you know? And when we disrespect our elders, we are cutting ourselves off from a potential source of wisdom. That's very important. And we're also cutting ourselves off from their friendship. Again, nobody wants to be disrespected, everybody wants to be liked. Everybody wants to feel important.

When people come at people with this attitude of, my view is correct, and I don't care who you are, I don't care what you've gone through in life, your view is wrong, I'm going to lump you in with the monolithic totality of everybody on the other side, the left, the right or whatever. And again, as we said in the last conversation, the left and right thing is a rather facile, and beyond useless, and actually destructive way of dividing people, right?

When we see each other in that way, we're preventing ourselves from being able to gain wisdom, we're preventing ourselves from being able to have really rich friendships with people, you know? I think that's part of the table stakes that we need to talk about here, is just a tendency towards respecting other people, giving them the benefit of the doubt.

Where education generally falls short

And the other side, and this is a much larger topic, would be a foundational education in epistemology that is lacking in schools right now, that we are not teaching children epistemology. And for those who are not familiar with that word, because it's rather unusual, it's the study of knowledge. How do we know what we know? That's the big question that it asks.

We need to have a fundamental education in epistemology, and how we can know what we know. We need to get an education in logic, critical thinking, logical fallacies, media studies to know exactly how manipulated the media is.



I think that if we - and I'm using this as sort of a foundation for the conversation here - if we were to have an education in those areas, right, and sort of couch all of that in a general fighting stance of respect for other people, which by the way, would be part of a good communication class, because you don't have good communication without rapport and without respect, it's going to be very challenging to have rapport. Right?

I think this is the beginning of the conversation. I obviously opened up many, many loops there. Right? That could take years to close. But that's the entryway.

James: I think it's ironic you've used a term to explain learning about knowledge that most people wouldn't have heard of.

Mark: Right. It's an interesting irony. I hadn't thought of that.

James: It's crazy. I like to break things down, like Hemingway score style. So the keywords I've picked out of that are that everyone wants to feel important. I've sort of talked about this before, we have this inner drive for significance. So a lot of the people I talk to want to make \$10 million a year. And if you sort of peel it back, it's probably because they want to be attractive to the other sex and feel like the alpha person of the tribe.

Mark: A hundred percent.

James: And it's important to have [empathy](#). Certainly, that's a skill that helped me a lot when I was in my sales career. Well, in the part of my career where they called it sales. We're obviously all in sales. But when that was my actual job, being able to listen to the person and to feel their problems, and I'm deliberate with the word feel, but I would actually feel their problems and concerns as if they were mine, and then to be able to help them solve it in a way that they could actually resonate with.

I've noticed that is rare, because most people have their own agenda. And they're so busy, ready to push the agenda, they're not sitting back and listening. One of the most popular episodes we did recently was an episode called [Just Listen](#), and that was such a useful skill. And then you've talked about elder people having a source of wisdom.

One of my mentors used to say, age equals wisdom. And it made sense to me because I spent so much time with my grandparents. And they transferred to me incredible lessons. And then even later, I discovered the diaries of my great grandparents and was reading those and learning about the history of my own family.

Mark: That's cool.

James: It was even cooler than I could possibly imagine. Because it turns out, he does the same thing that I did, my great grandfather used to travel around the world, and he used to buy and sell things, did arbitrage. He would buy land in Russia and sell it in America. And he'd write down little wisdom gems from Japan, or whatever.

So he was like an old school blogger, but he did it on a boat. And he used to set up iron ore mines, and then put them on the stock exchange and sell them and stuff. So it was really fascinating to learn all about this, about my own heritage. But I think disconnecting from that source is such a shame.

And if people would study a little more, by the way, I was never interested in history until a few years ago, I just didn't really get it, it was like a subject at school that didn't interest me that much. And I was asleep when they were talking about the history of Indigenous Australians and such, and I've just had such an awareness now.

Even in part, helping my kids do these subjects at school. I'm like, Really? Geez, we gave them a hard go, we basically killed them all off and infected them all, and then stole everything from them. It was like, gosh, I just wasn't soaking that up when I was a kid. And maybe, you know, like they say, the winners write the history books.

So I think it's important for us, especially at this time, to study what happened in the past because things do tend to repeat themselves. Like you mentioned that expression about the young kids, you know, coming up, you know, that has applied to every generation of children that I've raised. You always think, Oh, my God, they're nothing like what we were.

And then suddenly, you get to a point in life where you think, Gosh, I'm actually, I'm one of the older people now. And then all these younger people, it's really interesting. And by the way, just for anyone out there who is lamenting their birthday, you know, you see people like when they hit 40, they're like, Oh, my God, I'm 40. Life is over as I know it.

I'm like, I reckon it gets way better as you get older. When I hit 50, it was like, incredible. And so there's hope for everyone. And by the way, that's where most people make all their wealth, is in the latter part of their life, hopefully.

Then logical fallacies. If you could teach one subject at school, that would have to be right up there, because that's what guides most people into extremely poor decisions, especially when it comes around communicating in difficult situations. They're so busy attacking and not listening and not feeling for the other person. And they'll never actually win. And it's like, they never read that classic book about how to win friends and influence people. It's like, it's one of the fundamental principles, isn't it?

Mark: Yeah. You know, as you're saying all of this, I think I can give a little bit of an interesting lens into all of these topics in one brief go, right? So you brought up another thing that I think is very important to add into this. And it's a subset of epistemology in a sense. So when we talk about history, right? And we're also talking about how journalism is corrupt. I mean, media is used to teach people things, not to inform them, it's to persuade them for the most part, right?

Even the stuff that is professing to be for your betterment is often written from the perspective of somebody else getting some benefit from that. And there's a whole range of ways people can benefit. For various reasons, governments, interest groups, corporations have wanted to persuade the way people see the world for a very long time. And one of the ways that this occurs is through history.

The things that separate us

Now, right now, history is being used as a weapon to divide all of us, right? And I'm sure there are some people who are going to be a little bit triggered by this, but I would say, you know, I want to caution you not to be triggered, right? So, if I say some words that trigger you, I want you to think clearly about it, right, because you have emotional attachment to these words.

So the sociological topic of critical theory and critical race theory, these are ways that if you look at the historical roots of these topics, they came from the Frankfurt School, which was basically a group of Neo Marxists who were saying, Well, Marxism may have been utterly disastrous and murderous up until now, but we weren't doing it right. So we've got to change things a little bit.

And instead of focusing on the class struggle, and stoking, this is what Marx was advocating, he was like, Hey, look, get people palpably aware of the class struggle, and this will create a rebellious proletariat, which will bring on the revolution, which will make everything better for the world, right? So the Frankfurt School guys were saying, Well, the class struggle wasn't enough. Let us stratify the world in as many ways as possible.

And that was what critical theory was about, it was saying, Hey, be critical of anything that you can, and start finding distinctions to separate people. So now we have, you know, as the intellectual children of critical theory, critical race theory, we have gender studies, it's men against women, the LGBTQ people versus the straight people, right, it's blacks against whites, colored people against white people.

And now we're coming up with all of these definitions of words, like, you know, whiteness doesn't mean white people. It's this horrible, evil thing. And we're teaching this to kids, by the way, right? And the reason I bring this up, is there's a very interesting linguistic game that goes on there. So when people talk about this, go, Hey, man, this seems to be actually making race relations worse. And guess what? It's designed to, right?

It says that the whole thing started out because they were dissatisfied with the civil rights movement or the past or like, we can't be colorblind. That's not really enough. Right? Because there's so much racism built into the system. If we have a colorblind system, that actually becomes a way to cover up all of the racism. It's very insidious, the way they phrase it, right?

So it was never intended to bring people together. It was intended to divide people and to make them aware of their differentness, to stoke the flames of revolution and usher in a new form of Marxism. That's what the Neo Marxists are talking about. So history becomes a weapon in this, right?

So now what some people are teaching as history, and some people say, if you don't want critical race theory taught, you don't want history taught. And that's not what the critics of critical history are saying at all, right, they're saying, you could talk about the evils of our countries all you want. We would like for people to get along. We don't want to stratify society, we want to unify society.

So who can you believe?

So history is taught by different people, for different reasons, as weapons. Right? And this is a little bit of a build-up to something really interesting that I want to bring up, something very recent. So I want to give one more example before you go to a recent example.

If you were to go to Korea and read textbooks about the period of time where Japan was occupying Korea, and then you went to Japan and read those textbooks, you would get very, very different stories. Okay? Because the Japanese talk about their occupation in Korea in very different terms from the way the Koreans do. Right?

Who's right? Can any of us really know? Now, when I served in the military intelligence community, I learned how to speak the Korean language and spent a lot of time with Korean people. I was super sympathetic of the Korean lens. I was like, well, the Japanese are lying. You know? And they probably are, to a certain extent. There's a lot of evidence in that.

But then I look at it later on, and I'm like, Well, how do I know that the Korean version of the story isn't the incorrect version? How do I know any of this? And it's our inability to unpack these things that gets us in a lot of trouble.

The thing we couldn't talk about that we now can

Now, here's a really recent interesting example. When the Coronavirus first came out, and maybe we can bleep out that word. I don't know if that's going to....

James: I don't know. I'm no Russell Brand or Joe Rogan. We're just guys talking. This is a thing that has affected a lot of my customers. So it's okay to talk about it.

Mark: It's affected a lot of us. So you know, when the thing first came out, there was this lab leak hypothesis, right? You know, they were like, Hey, maybe it came from the lab in Wuhan. I don't know. There's an institute in the same city where they discovered it that studies exactly this kind of virus. Seems like a pretty rational hypothesis.

Now 30 intelligence community professionals signed a document saying it was not possible that it came from the lab. Now, I immediately looked at that. And I said, Well, whoever you 30 guys are, you lost my respect, because there's no way you can say unequivocally something is not possible like that, with the kind of evidence that they were presenting us.

Now, we come to this, a year and a half later, and suddenly the lab leak hypothesis is no longer verboten. It's acceptable to talk about this. So what went on there? Okay, so speaking of logical fallacies, one logical fallacy is an appeal to authority. We had 30 authority figures saying, We are intelligence community professionals, we signed this document, we all believe it's not possible. If you say this, it's due to racism, you're a xenophobe, you're a bigot, or whatever phobe labels we want to throw on people today.

So how is it that these intelligence community professionals sign this document, which is clearly full of sh*t? You know, I mean, it's bogus, straight from the get go, right? Number two, how do we have a media complicit in this, pushing this thing out there, telling everybody that they're bad for thinking a rather rational thought? It's entirely rational to consider that maybe that virus came from that lab.

James: That's smearing, isn't it?

Mark: Right, yeah. So it's a nice way of, we're sort of like taking this brush and splashing the smear of xenophobia on people for considering a super reasonable hypothesis. Now, if you look at that one thing, it makes us question history, it makes us question the media, it makes us question the government, it makes us question our own ability to discover what is rational and what's not.

Because if you cannot say to yourself, hey, this is a reasonable hypothesis, I don't care what other people are saying to me about it, I'm not going to be intimidated into thinking something that is counter to my clearly rational thoughts. Our inability to do that is the primary exploit that people are using that.

So let's dovetail this into the main topic, right? You have people that have been conditioned in one direction or another.

James: Like, polarized.

When oppositely polarized people meet...

Mark: Polarized, that's right, they're totally polarized, because of the different types of media they're consuming. Then when they meet, they're going to have a difficult time, because part of that polarization also includes the demonization of the other side. We have all of these people out there demonizing the individual people who have been persuaded in one direction or another.

James: So it's almost like they've got an implant that when it meets the other, it activates and causes a reaction.

Mark: Almost like that. Almost like that, entirely.

James: So what I'm taking from this, and this really lines up with something my mentor taught me, probably the fundamental thing he taught me, which I have even a placard on in my kitchen, it's, question everything.

It sounds like if we could just possess the ability to say, I don't know, then we might be able to step back from a position and be open-minded to be able to change our point of view based on new criteria or being able to see what the other person sees. And that we could reclaim ourselves back from whoever's trying to inject into us and program us the way they want.

Mark: That's right, I think that's the start of it. The second part would be, you know, like, we talked about this, I believe, in [our first conversation](#), you know, I have this sort of philosophical framework that I came up with, I call Utilitarian Model Flexibility, right? And it's just this notion that, if we can't know what the ultimate truth is, we do have to make some judgments and decisions about things to be able to function in the world.



We don't have the wetware that's capable of understanding the totality of the universe as it is, we can only understand and ponder a very limited section of it. We have to make decisions. So therefore, we need to use shortcuts. I think we need to use as an overlay on top of that, the ability to say, Well, I'm looking at it this way now, like, it's a lens that I'm putting on for this moment for a particular purpose. And it might serve this particular purpose quite well. But then when other occasions arise, I may need to take this one off and put on another one.

And I believe that if we do like we were talking about, you know, question things, and then also become aware of the fact that you don't have to marry the current hypothesis that you have about the way things are, you can look at that and say, Well, this is my current understanding of it, I'm not going to be attached to it, and when I meet other people who have other ways of viewing things, because how could I not? Right?

James: It seems a lot of the directives from certain organizations is that they require detachment from this independent thought, and that you must accept that indoctrination and that anything other than that indoctrination is false, is sinful, is forbidden. And then, of course, they get raised into that system from a very early age to the point where they've never had the ability to reflect on a different perspective.

You know, like me, being a regular white kid growing up in a regular suburb in Sydney didn't get as much perspective. And thankfully, my parents used to take me out and about and expose me to all different things. We used to visit homeless children. So they've always been very charitable with Red Cross, The Smith Family, it's been my mom's life passion.

But even then, you're still in your version of the world, it is very hard to accept. It was only when I saw a little comparison of our planet versus other planets versus the sun and then our universe, and then you realize there is a point of overload where you can't even comprehend what you can't comprehend. It's unbelievable to even try.

A couple of shortcuts people use

You said the key point, we reach for our shortcut. And I think in the managing difficult relationships topic, some people, shortcuts are harmful for the ability to move forward or to reconcile things.

Mark: Yes, yeah, a hundred percent, a hundred percent. And I mean, we're not aware of the shortcuts that we're using.

James: Could you label a couple?

Mark: Sure. So well, some of the most powerful principles of persuasion, in fact, some people could argue that all of them, right, because there's a really interesting model of persuasion. Well, there's two that are quite similar. There's the Heuristic Systemic Model and the Elaboration Likelihood Model. And they're both really ultimately saying the same thing. And that's this notion that we have so much information bombarding us, we have to use shortcuts heuristics to make determinations.

One, I'll tell you probably the two of the most common, well, obedience to authority. We're talking about, you know, so an appeal to authority is considered a logical fallacy. But obedience to authority, if you look at it through a slightly different lens, is a very powerful persuasion tool. Right? So it's interesting that many of the shortcuts we use are inherently fallacious.

However, they're fallacious, but they're sometimes useful. Let's say, you know, I don't know much about plumbing at all, really, right? You know, if I've got a problem with my plumbing in my house, I'm going to call a plumber, I'm appealing to an authority, probably a sensible thing to do, you know?

Some authorities are genuine. Some, however, are completely fake. Or either they're fake, or they're corrupted. I mean, they may be legitimate scientists or legitimate this or that or whatever they are, but somebody may have said, Hey, you know what, we'll pay you X dollars, we'll give you whatever benefit, or we'll not reveal certain things about you. And by the way, this is how a lot of the tradecraft in the intelligence community works.

James: Is this like if the plumber has got a manufacturer whose product he gets a special rebate on, and then will recommend that even if it's not the best solution?

Mark: That's right. And that's one of the more innocent ways.

James: Yes, but it's a common business way, right?

Mark: It's a common business way. There are far more nefarious ways that this stuff manifests that are super real. I mean, the intelligence community is involved actively in bribing people, controlling people, and it's not just, it's the whole world. I mean, the intelligence community around the world is involved in these things. It's super well-documented. I could bring up some historical cases.

James: Oh, we've been seeing it in movies. We've got a scent of it, haven't we?

Mark: Yeah. I mean, a lot of that's glamorized and not really the way it works, you know?

James: But they had to get an idea from somewhere, you know, maybe the seed of it was somewhere, somewhere it was a thing.

Mark: Yeah, yeah. I mean, for sure. You know, I mean, there are many cases, we could loop back around to this. I want to answer your other questions because we've got so many open loops.

James: Well, we'll definitely need other podcasts for that.

Mark: Yeah, right. So one other shortcut, one other heuristic I'll bring up is conforming to the group, right?

James: Big one.

Mark: Which again, is also a logical fallacy, you know, right?

James: Is it, okay, if everyone jumped off a cliff, would you jump off a cliff?

Mark: That's right. Well, you probably would, actually.

James: That's what I mean, I can, that's pretty frightening, isn't it? It's like, your parents said, if Johnny jumps out of a tree, it doesn't mean you have to jump out of a tree. Yeah, like people can be a bit like lemmings.

Mark: That's right. But Johnny's so cool, you know, this is why everybody wants to do it.

Some eye-openers for Mark

You know, I'll give you a really interesting way that this manifested in unhealthy ways for me. So when I was very young, I was raised in California. And in California, there is a very strong anti-rural bias, you know, pro-liberal, anti-rural.

And when I say liberal, it's not really a very useful term because it needs modifiers to be useful, but what we call liberals in the United States, left wing, you know, whatever. Again, it needs more nuance than that, but this is how we bifurcate people, but they're wanting people to conform to that particular worldview.

So much so that anybody who's a Republican, redneck, rural-living person in a flyover state, should be shunned and ridiculed. They're probably uneducated and very stupid. And I had this perspective for quite some time, the first, and I found it manifesting in ways that I still have to get out of my habitual forms of communication now.

If I want to make fun of somebody who's dumb, I might put on a country twang, I might go, Oh well, yeah, that's a smart thing to do, Cletus, you know, something like that. Right? And I didn't realize how enormously disrespectful and also enormously uninformed that is.

I was working in a restaurant once playing some chess. And there's this country guy who worked in the restaurant with us, and he came up and goes, Oh, I see you guys playing some chess. I like a little game of test of intelligence. I'll play the winner. And you know, me and the guy playing we're looking at each other and go, Yeah, this guy, right? You know, this country bumpkin is going to play us some chess. Oh, this will be fun, right?

So I was the winner. He sat down and played me and kicked my ass up and down the chessboard. And my ego could not handle it. I did not understand. And I played him three more games after that. And he just trounced me, every time. And finally I was like, Okay, this guy's a better chess player than me. What? And It took me a while to kind of unravel all of this.

When I joined the military and started meeting people from all over the United States and even some of the US territories, Guam, Guamanian people, Puerto Ricans, my view of the world started to open up, I was like, Holy sh*t, my view of the world was very, very limited, and super bigoted. And we were supposed to be the tolerant ones, right?

You know, we were trained that we were tolerant, but we were actually the biggest bigots of all of them. And that's how a lot of this stuff seeps into our minds. But we're unconscious of that process going on because our cultural view, the people around us, are forming our worldview for us, and it's happening invisibly.

James: Would you say that it would be good for people to hold a passport? Would that be one test of global awareness? People who travel versus people who don't?

Mark: That's interesting. You know, I do see people travel and not get that kind of awareness.

James: We all know that. The stereotypical tourists. I know Australians are known for being loud and drunk. And Americans for paying too much and being oblivious. I'll try not to offend every single race in this declaration. But basically, I remember, when I was in the automotive industry, there were stories of how Japan trounced the American industry, and that almost none of the Board of Directors of the major American companies that ended up going bankrupt actually held a passport or whatever, traveled outside America.

So they were operating in a vacuum, not being aware of what's going on in a global situation. Their cost of manufacturer was too high. Their retirement fund obligations were too much, they ended up having to go bankrupt. And I thought that's a nice little test of, you know, that's a starting point.

Maybe if people traveled more and exposed themselves to different environments, it's like, my world's definitely crept in awareness since I traveled quite a lot in the last 12 or 15 years. It's like, it's humbled me more, because I'm like, Wow, there's so much I just didn't know, I was living my own little version.

So let's bring it back to a bullet point to end up for this episode. And I think we've got more in it later, I definitely want to ask you about spycraft.

Managing difficult relationships. So the build up we've had is that there are people out there who are creating deliberate scenarios that would cause us to be in a precarious situation with the relationships around. That's why we're being divided, because it's been engineered.

Knowing that, we could definitely decide to be more empathetic with others, to be more open minded to change our position, to draw more from the wisdom of elders who have probably navigated through more aspects of life than us. We should be aware of, and definitely research logical fallacies. I think there's an episode in that one.

Perhaps we could question more things about why things are happening. And when we're faced with a trigger, maybe we can look within ourselves a little, Now, why does that make me so upset? What is causing that? And how do we smooth over or decide whether to have a relationship with someone when things get tough? That's the last question and we'll wrap it for this episode 899. And I'll ask where people can find out more about Mark Joyner.

Examining what's really important to you

Mark: Cool. Well, man, yeah, you know, whenever you and I have these conversations, so many things. You know, I think a really good place to start would be asking yourself what's really important. Everybody comes at these conversations, thinking, my view is the one that's best for humanity. This is how we justify it, right?

But isn't it interesting how, if your view was the best for humanity, why isn't it working with the human who's standing right in front of you right now? Wouldn't doing what's best for humanity mean as table stakes, that you need to do your best to get along and understand the person right in front of you?

Isn't everything else just kind of a manufactured fantasy in your mind? Like, you know, Oh, I feel really good about helping this group of people or this group, I want to defend this group of people, I identify with this group of people. What about the person in front of you? Right? Isn't that the most important thing?

James: So that's putting aside the story in your head, and listening to the story of the person on the other side?

Mark: That's right. You know, Robert Greene in his fantastic book, The 50th law, it's the least known of his books. It was sort of a sequel of sorts to The 48 Laws of Power, and it came from him following around the rapper, 50 Cent, for a year or two. And basically, what it came to, he was like, How is this guy such a really good businessman?

And what it came down to was 50 Cent's sort of, you know, gangster sensibility, what he calls the hustler's eye, and the hustler's eye is the ability to see reality as it actually is. And most of us, of course, can we see reality as it actually is? Is it possible for us to see reality without coloring it, without everything that we're bringing to it, without these lenses that we, by definition, must be wearing at all times?

The bonds that are worth preserving

So, I think that's kind of the place to start, and to see the value in getting along with people, especially family, you know? I mean, this is the most important bond that you have. When everything else is stripped away, your family is likely to be the thing that's still there. Nurture that, take care of that.

And yes, sometimes it's hard. Some of your family members may not have the best intentions, or maybe they seem like they're horrible, you know, whatever it is, but damn, it's worth the work, man. I've had family members I've had serious problems with, that I took the time to mend. And it was so worth it. And friendships, too.

You know, sometimes it doesn't work. There's still some that I've never resolved, and may never, and that's fine. But the ones I have repaired on have paid enormous dividends. It ends up that, man, some of the people that I didn't value because I thought the answers to everything were out there, were right there the whole time. They were the ones that were really the valuable relationships, and I discounted the value of those things. And I regret that, and I'm glad that I've changed it.

James: Wow, you've been really revealing on this episode, Mark, very vulnerable, and sharing a lot, and I appreciate that. I'm definitely appreciative of our relationship, even though we're new old friends. I feel like we've known each other forever when we chat. And thank you for sharing.

I think from my perspective, it's definitely helped me to get more points of view, like a GPS system. Having a few different interesting characters who I talk with, who have very different points of view, have helped me, well, in my own mind, I feel fairly well grounded and reasonably comfortable with how things are, based on getting all these different viewpoints and not just plugging into one source as the only source.

And I think what you said about it, it's worth it. That's the bullet point I'd love to end this episode on, that it is worth building those difficult relationships, and repairing them, and putting in the work to make them whole again. And hopefully, this episode is inspiring someone. I'm pretty sure my mom's going to say she loved this one, Mark.

So where can we find out more about you, Mark Joyner?

Mark: Well, from this perspective, I would ask people to go check out my print book called [Simpleology](#), there's the company [Simpleology](#), which is software that helps you get done in a couple hours what normally takes you a full day or longer.

James: And we'll put a link to that in the show notes as well.

Mark: Thank you. The print book, Simpleology, is kind of talking about these topics, right? And it's giving people that basic epistemological education that I think we're all missing, and hopefully it helps open up people's perspectives so that the process of creating this kind of peace with other people will be easier.

James: Well, thank you so much. And I hope you have a nice workout today or a good steak. I know you enjoy your steak.

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

James: Thank you.

Mark: Thank you, man.

James: This is episode 899. We'll put up the show notes at [SuperFastBusiness.com](#) and a full transcription. And if you enjoyed this episode, be sure to reach out to Mark, let him know you heard him on SuperFastBusiness. And if you want him to come back and talk about something else, then let me know what you'd like to hear about, because I have a suspicion he's a treasure trove for all of us.

And from a personal note, I've been sitting on top of a book draft that my good friend, [Kelly Exeter](#), helped put together for me, and I still haven't completed it because I still feel like every time I'm talking to a guest like Mark, I'm learning so much, and it's going to round out and make this thing better.



Manage your
business to
enhance your
life with James's
help

[CLICK HERE](#)