

Jaime Masters Welcome to Eventual Millionaire. I am Jaime Masters and today on the show I am super excited to have Isaac Lidsky. Now, he owns an amazing construction company as one thing but the other thing is he just came out with a brand-new book. He is blind and he has a book called Eyes Wide Open, which I also think is hilarious. It just hit the New York Times Best Sellers list. You have an amazing Ted Talk, which everybody should check out. Thanks so much for coming on the show today.

Isaac Lidsky: Thanks for having me. It's my pleasure.

Jaime Masters It's funny because in your bio and everything it also talked about you being a regular on "Saved by the Bell", which I wasn't planning on mentioning but I watched it SO much when I was younger, so I definitely want to mention that. How old were you when you did that?

Isaac Lidsky: I was 13 years old when I was cast as Barton Weasel Wyzell on NBC's "Saved by the Bell - The New Class".

Jaime Masters I SO watched The New Class. I was so one of those people. So, we'll get back into business but I find that that is so interesting, especially the breadth of what you have done. So, can you tell me a little bit more about the premise of the book that just came out.

Isaac Lidsky: Sure. I'd love to. So, I lost my sight progressively from about age 13 to age 25 to a blinding disease, a rare retinol degenerative disease. You know, when I was first diagnosed, I thought it would destroy my life but in an amazing way, the sort of bizarre experience that I had... the way that I lost my sight, I gained these insights into how our minds work and how we are really empowered to shape and create the realities we experience and the lives we want for ourselves.

So, it turned out to be a profound gift, a real blessing for me and I wrote the book to share that vision with folks because, you know, I gained it sort of by losing my sight but it's really not about blindness or even disability. It's the vision for everybody.

Jaime Masters How do we go after that when it's not a big moment? So, you had to face fear – you had to deal with something that was more of a moment. I shouldn't say that. It's many, many years but still, you had to come to terms with something most people don't have that much pain to have to push through and see the other side. So, what do you suggest for people that don't have to go through this in order to see.

Isaac Lidsky: Yeah. So, a lot of the book I do talk about fear and challenge and sort of adversity, which everybody has in their lives, big or small, or at some point. But really the idea is broader than that. In every moment, whether we realize it or not, whether we want to believe it or not, you know, whether we want to admit it or not, literally in every moment we are choosing who we want to be and how we want to live our lives. That's the ultimate message.

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That's the core of the Eyes Wide Open vision and you can – it's not often easy to see. It's not often easy to DO. It takes effort but you can make those choices with awareness and accountability, with purpose and intention or you can choose to live as happenstance, live by reaction. I saw that choice as I lost my sight.

Jaime Masters How can we actually step – because this is out of your comfort zone, right?

Isaac Lidsky: Yeah.

Jaime Masters So, like you said, it does take effort to do. What do you suggest for people to go – because we also live in a popcorn time, right, where there's TV and there's so many things to distract us. It's so much easier to NOT make the effort. How do you suggest – what's that catalyst for people to take that leap and do it every day?

Isaac Lidsky: Yeah, so I mean, I think the first step is really to understand that the choice is yours and not doing the stuff intentionally is itself a choice. So, you're never off the hook. From there, you know, I have really committed myself to almost a brutal honesty and transparency with myself. You know, look at your life and look at what YOUR definition of success is because that's the only definition that matters, what value as a person and in life looks like to you.

Think about who you want to be in your relationships as a spouse, as an employer or an employee, as a parent. Think about how you want to be spending your time in your life at work, at home, and to the extent that the life you're living varies from, and doesn't resemble, what you want for yourself. It's up to you to do something about it and that I am convinced of beyond any doubt that, you know, we master our realities. We all confront all sorts of circumstances in life that are beyond our control, no doubt, but how those circumstances manifest themselves in the lives we live is entirely within our control.

Jaime Masters Self-responsibility... a very, very important and sometimes overlooked piece of life, right? So, how do we do that though because, especially this past few sets of interviews, values and figuring out those pieces are huge. They keep coming up over and over and over again and then people come to me and they go, "Yeah, that's great for THEM. They figured it out. I still haven't figured it out yet. What do I do?" So, enlighten us on how we can figure out what that is if we're uncertain.

Isaac Lidsky: You know, I think that if we are really honest with ourselves when you can really, you know, dig deep and ask yourself what's important, what matters, what are you trying to accomplish, how do you want to be spending your time? I think answering those questions really isn't the difficult part. Really, the difficult part is silencing to all the noise, all the chaos, that can distract us from that. So, you know, we all have critics in

our lives... real critics, folks from without who try to judge us and tear us down but also each of us harbors an internal critic in our minds.

That's that nasty voice in your head that's quick to pass judgement, quick to tell you what you can't do, quick to tell you what others are thinking and saying about you and that internal critic can be very pernicious. It can sort of keep us off the stage for fear of horrendous reviews, you know. So, silencing that internal critic is a big part of empowering yourself, enabling yourself, allowing yourself to pursue those things that are important to you.

Jaime Masters Yeah, because as soon as you bring up the honesty, then the internal – like, you're fighting against yourself. Your internal critic, along with showing what you actually want because you go, let me show you what you want, then the internal critic comes out and hits you.

Isaac Lidsky: Yeah, that's right. I mean, to your point, and I love the term popcorn... you know, we're barraged with cues from our family origin, from our current family, from friends, from media. We're barraged with cues as to how we should, quote unquote, be living our lives, what success should look like, what we should be doing, and that's a big distraction.

Jaime Masters Huge distraction but it's hard to know what is distraction, what is us, you know what I mean? Because there's so much of it and we're so constantly overwhelmed, how do we sort of see the forest for the trees when you're IN it?

Isaac Lidsky: Yeah, so that's another subject I talk about in greater length, or whatever. So, you know, I've talked about the critic. I kind of borrow the imagery of Teddy Roosevelt's famous remarks about the critic and the strong man, which I love, you know. It's not the critic who counts, yada, yada. The credit belongs to the man who is in the arena whose face is marred by sweat and dust and blood, or whatever. Anyway, so the critic? Well, having talked about the critic, let's talk about the strawman. So, we each – each of us – we're born... all of us are born strong men and women.

At our core is great strength. It's how we're designed. It's how we're built, right? I mean, this is the profound truth in Nietzsche's famous line. What doesn't kill you makes you stronger, right? So, the trick is to silence the critic by listening to that strong man within and then believing him. Again, it's not always easy to do but it's certainly worthwhile. It's certainly a worthwhile endeavor.

Jaime Masters How do you do that and how do you know which one is which? Right?

Isaac Lidsky: Well, you can tell by the way they talk to you. You can also tell by perspective. So, the critic's perspective is a lofty view high above it all, right, soaring high above it all where the paths of progress appeared invisible, you know, you're too high to see them. The ray of progress appears glacial. The towering magnitude of our

aspirations is overwhelming. You know, the critic deals in the world of perfection, right, which is impossible. So, the critic conveniently guarantees your failure.

The critic deals in the world of comparison... genius of comparison... folks real or imagined or fictitious of any era and the critic is obsessed with the outcome, the result, the overarching endeavor. The perspective of the strong man is the moment... it's now. It's progress and effort. The strong man has got no use for perfection, only for progress, for momentum. So, for the strong man success is, I believe, in actually striving towards a pursuit of importance to you... not in the outcome and not in the endeavor.

So, the strong man focuses on the next moment, the next step. You're right and there is a lot of noise. It can be tough to pull apart but, sort of, the perspective, the focus, is often a good clue. Is it a focus in the moment or is it not?

Jaime Masters Yeah, so if it's a focus in the future, it can be the not good view.

Isaac Lidsky: Yeah.

Jaime Masters So, how do you stop – so, it's one thing and there's a lot of tactics in stuff like this. It's one thing to start pulling it apart in your own brain... oh, wait, that was negative or whatever those pieces are.

Isaac Lidsky: Uh-huh.

Jaime Masters It's another thing to try and get yourself to stop doing it, right? I currently work on "I don't know". I apparently say I don't know too much. I'm like, oh, and now I pay attention to it a little bit more but that's the only tactic right now that I'm doing. Do you have any tactics to try and stop – because it's almost – it's not innate but it's just habitual where I've said it too much when it comes to feeling? When it comes to business I always say I know even if I don't know. I'm kidding. But when it comes to feelings, I'm like, oh, I don't know. So, how do we start taking the stuff that the critic is saying and preempting it or knowing that it's the critic so that way we don't pay as much attention to it?

Isaac Lidsky: So, there's some questions I like to ask myself along those lines. So, you know, the first step for me is I like to ask myself what precisely is my problem? Broken down into most discreet, specific, smallest form, right now in this moment, what is my problem? In a similar vein, what is it that I'm trying to accomplish? What is success look like here for me? What is it that I know versus what is it that I just THINK I know? Because we get ourselves into a lot of trouble in that second category.

Then once you're kind of grounded in where you're at, what the challenge is, what the opportunity is, what the goal is, the second part for me is asking myself if it's a problem, what precisely can I do about it... emphasis on I. What's my best next step? Too often we obsess on getting from A to Z and I'll tell you... you will not get from A to Z if you don't

get from A to B. It just won't happen. By the way, the world is going to change a million times between A and Z and you're going to change too.

You know, the real secret is until you die there is no Z, right? The alphabet of our lives keeps growing. So, yeah, those are kind of the questions that I try to ask myself to work through to kind of take back control of my reality and focus on the moment and on progress.

Jaime Masters How do you answer the questions that you said – what do I know versus what do I think I know? Because one seems like a head answer; one seems like a gut or heart answer but sometimes, especially in business, we reside in our head SO much. So, how can you distinguish between those two of what you THINK you know, which is your smart brain and what I DO know, which could also be your smart brain or it could be something else.

Isaac Lidsky: So, I'll give you one example and it will sort of be the realm of fear. When I was first diagnosed with my blinding disease I was terrified. I knew that blindness was going to ruin my life. Right? I knew that once I was blind it would be an end to achievement for me. I knew it would be an end of my independence. I know that no woman would really love or respect me as a blind guy because I didn't think I was going to love or respect myself. So, I knew I would never have children and on and on and on. All these awful thoughts. The real shame of fear in our lives is that when we're not aware of our role in manifesting our own fears, they can become self-realizing.

So, if I had not been able to see through the reality of my fears, those lies, I'm convinced I would have lived that. It would have been true. So, how do you see through them? How do you recognize the difference from what you know versus what you think you know? That's just being rigorous with yourself, zealous with yourself on the basis for your... is it assumptions? Is it inference? Is it prediction? Or is it something that you really know? By the way, usually the more we are fearful the greater the indication that we don't know much.

The thing we fear above all else in life is the unknown in times of crisis or in times of change. So, often the fear, the visceral fear, even though it can immerse us in this reality of all these awful things that we think we know, the emotional component is a great indicator of that. In fact, it's time to get some information, to get control, to broaden your perspective, to transcend. I don't know if that makes any sense at all.

Jaime Masters Oh, my gosh, yes. But I'm so thankful that we live in the world that we do because, like you said, unknown is – I mean, it's super scary where human beings were sort of built that way because certainty is kind of important for a living, in general. That being said, you can go and ask other people that were blind and be like, oh, you do have kids. Oh, wait, never – you know what I mean? So, other experiences and stuff like that – was that enough for you? Like, was it data? Was it just belief?

Isaac Lidsky: You know, I walked into a low vision rehabilitation specialist office, an occupational therapist office. In my late teens or early 20s as my sight had deteriorated to the point where it was more disability than nuisance, and I walked into her office, quote unquote, knowing all the things I just described and expecting to talk about Blindness (capital B), this amorphous concept, this boogie man that was going to destroy my life off in some distant future. I walked right in and when she started talking about practical solutions for practical problems today now using a cane, using a technique called sighted guide to walk around with people more naturally and more safely, tools and techniques for organizing my clothing and shoes and stuff. I liked all the suggestions and all the ideas. I was excited by them but I had this sort of feeling that I couldn't shake that we weren't talking about, you know, what I was there to talk about, right. My problem is not today. My problem is not now. I can handle now. You know, my problem is that I'm going blind and there is nothing I can do about it.

Then it really hit me and it was this moment of epiphany for me in my life that there only ever IS now and this moment. It hit me in that moment that the biggest takeaway of the experience thus far was that I didn't know the first thing about going blind or being blind. Worse, I hadn't bothered to do anything about it. I hadn't learned that. So, to your point, I hadn't asked blind people. I hadn't read up on it. I should have been visiting with the occupational therapist years earlier. So, you know, it's easy – we're lulled into this sort of complacency of living in the reality of our fears.

But by virtue of buying that reality, we make it true. So, I feel really blessed with that experience with her and at the end of the day I spent a lot of time and months and years thinking about it. You know, the sort of real heavy piece in all this was later realizing that my failure to learn more about blindness, my willingness to believe all these awful thoughts, all those things was my choice. I wasn't necessarily aware of the choice and it was an awful choice and all that stuff but that was a choice that I made and that's tough.

Jaime Masters There's that brutal [inaudible] [00:23:45] of –

Isaac Lidsky: Yeah.

Jaime Masters To your point too, the quote that I love whether you think you're wrong or you think you can or you think you can't, you're right. It's like ahh...

Isaac Lidsky: Right.

Isaac Lidsky: And it hurts a little because, you know, but it is one of those things where when you take that self-responsibility like you were talking at the very, very beginning, you have to accept ALL failures and ALL successes, right?

Isaac Lidsky: Yeah, that's right.

Jaime Masters No matter what they are. We normally would be like, well, I'll accept all the successes. That's great. Yay! Go me! And not necessarily go back and go that was bad... and learn from it. So, tell me a little bit about this because I can only imagine what you've been through. How is it with something that is progressively bad? So, even after you had that epiphany, it didn't change – I mean, it changed your brain state, thank goodness, but it didn't change the fact that your eyes were getting progressively worse and I'm sure every day that was trying to be noticeable.

Like, oh, how bad is it? How bad is it? When you're paying attention to that, that's just sort of the negative. So, how did you deal in your brain with that even after your epiphany?

Isaac Lidsky: You know, so I'm going to try not to ramble on here but the experience of sight itself is amazing. It's this illusion but it's just a miraculous illusion. It feels SO real. It's a mercy of its passing. You open your eyes and there's the world. We even say seeing is believing, right? The way that I lost my sight so progressively over those dozen years or so, it deteriorated in a way that produced all these bizarre visual effects that really destroyed the illusion.

I literally saw that sight is this reality that is constructed in the mind that implicates far more than just information from your eyes. It's conceptual knowledge, your memories, your opinions, your emotions. By the way, it's predictions, inference and guesses about the world. I saw all this and that was, again, a real blessing for me because it was the peak behind the curtain into the way that our minds work.

So, to actually answer the question you asked, then when I had that kind of epiphany in Chris's office. Her name was Chris, the occupational therapist, in her office... the realization there was that the same way that sight is this sort of complicated mental construction that we perceive as some immutable truth that's out there... that's not in our minds. I experienced my fears about blindness in exactly the same way, right. It was something that felt real and true and objective but was a concoction in my mind.

And kind of seeing the similarity in those two things really was the beginning of this new vision of velocity for me because we create our realities in so many ways in our lives that we don't necessarily realize we're doing it. But, you know, the self-limiting assumptions we make about ourselves... we touched on it earlier... success, value, all the things we tell ourselves about what strength looks like and what weakness looks like and what disability means, the way we misperceive luck in our lives, and all this stuff. So, yeah, it takes a lot of effort. I mean, living and leading Eyes Wide Open, you know, I stress is a practice of discipline. It's something I work at every day. Some days, frankly, I'm not so good at it. Other days I'm better at it, but it's a developed skill. It's certainly worthwhile, at least in my life. It has brought me immeasurable joy and fulfillment and great success.

Jaime Masters It gets to the heart. So, I love that you're here and so open to be able to talk about this because it's one of those things where it's one thing when we talk about

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Eventual Millionaire, right. It's all about the blah, blah, blah, money. I say life first, of course, before money but when we get to the deeper root issue, as you just said, fulfillment and joy and we don't technically go after those. We assume that the money will give us those things.

But when we start really deconstructing it, like you said, and really paying attention to what we are as human beings, it's really insane to see, like you said, the veil. Because when you were talking you were talking about memories and the thing that came up in my head is I remember memories visually. Oh, crap, what if I didn't remember them visually. How do you remember memories?

Isaac Lidsky: So, I am a very visual person. It may sound odd but I do dream and see things in my dreams. I do visualize things and conceptualize things and this is back to that point that the experience of sight is such an illusion. So, our visual core acts as that part of the brain is responsible for the experience of sight. It takes up about a third of your brain by volume.

Jaime Masters           Wow!

Isaac Lidsky: It gets a ton of data from the eyes to be sure but it gets a ton of data from all sorts of other regions of your brain as well, and it's hard at work and very active in ways that have nothing to do with your eyes, even when your eyes are closed. For example, dreams... visual cortex is driving your dreams. When you are conceptualizing things or visualizing things, the image of success – you see a car, a fancy car, and you associate that with the image of success.

Well, that's linkages that have been formed between the parts of the visual cortex that are responsible for processing data and saying that is a nice car and higher levels of your brain that have all these concepts about what success means and what aspirations look like and all that kind of stuff. So, you know, I'm a very visual person. I just don't get a lot of data from the eyes these days.

Jaime Masters I love that. That's amazing! That's the other thing – we just assume that it's like nothingness just because we haven't experienced it, right?

Isaac Lidsky: Yeah, it's just – look, the human side is I'm just fascinated by the experience of sight and I remember it vividly. It's the gaping, unbridgeable difference between how we experience it and what's really going on. It's just in that – I mean, so you talk about optical illusions and tricking the brain into making bad guesses. I mean, even things like there's the optic nerve, which is essentially the big cable that takes all the data from the eyes to the brain or whatever.

Well, I mean, there's a sizeable circle on each retina that doesn't work, doesn't have any detectors, doesn't have any photo receptors because it's taken up by this cable, for lack of a better way to put it. But have you ever seen a dark hole? You know, when you close

one eye, do you see in one eye or the other? Nope, your brain has developed the ability to create this experience for you where it somehow just wipes out those holes. Similarly, I mean, the data that comes into the eyes is two dimensional.

So, where do three dimensions come from in the experience of sight? That's all in the brain. That's all up there and I'm sorry to ramble but I find this so fascinating. Taking a step back earlier, you know, abstracting a bit, we have this thing we call the visible spectrum. As humans, we say the visible spectrum. You know, is that part of the electromagnetic spectrum that our eyes respond to? Well, that sliver is one ten-trillionth of electromagnetic radiation that floods our world.

So, our eyes respond to one ten-trillionth of this sort of electromagnetic radiation, which produces some data that goes back to the brain. Our brain then has all sorts of other ideas about what it's going to do with this information, concocts this experience for ourselves. We feel... we know – we're wrong but we believe that we see the world. We know what the world looks like quote unquote. The concept itself of what the world looks like is preposterous.

Jaime Masters I have a philosophy minor; I love all this stuff. I'm like you got it, you got it.

Isaac Lidsky: That's so, you know, and it's amazing. It's mindboggling. The same is true of the way we experience our fears, you know. Again, the way we tell ourselves there are things that are wrong with us, that we're limited in certain ways, the way we imagine that we understand what other people are thinking and feeling about us, without insisting upon meaningful communication to uncover that understanding and on and on and on. So, it's in our nature. We'll build to predict and assume.

It's very helpful for all sorts of things like, for example, survival but with some effort, the beauty of it is, you know, we have conscious thought. We have awareness, right? We're blessed with the ability to observe ourselves doing these things and if we so choose, they control.

Jaime Masters I love this stuff. I remember when I found that science says most of our memories are incorrect. I'm like, oh, right, so our concept of ourselves are flawed anyway. So, when you start thinking about that and you're like, oh, well, I believe all the crap. You could believe all the great stuff if you want. Most of it is fake anyway so you might as well.

Isaac Lidsky: Yeah.

Jaime Masters I'm a genius. That doesn't count for relationships, right?

Isaac Lidsky: So, you're sitting there and you're having a difficult conversation with a spouse or a colleague, a boss, an employee, or whatever... a child and you see a facial expression or a gesture and without conscious thought you tell yourself... you believe

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that you understand deeply what that person is thinking or feeling or what's going on for that person on the basis that you are hardwired to do it... on the basis of visual feedback, sight. It's craziness. It's absolute madness.

Jaime Masters Yeah, go ahead.

Isaac Lidsky: We're empowered to choose otherwise, to insist upon words, to listen effectively. These are among the things that I talk about... among the lessons that I learned through this Eyes Wide Open vision, or whatever, but we don't realize it but we're creating our own reality left, right, and center, and just experiencing it as the world.

Jaime Masters And it's so funny... and a lot of people, like you create your own reality. It's like but the sign says you actually DO. That's so crazy!

Isaac Lidsky: I get folks who, you know, maybe misunderstand me and say, oh, if you step in front of a car you are definitely going to die or like you can't see the walls. It's like I totally get all that. There are definitively, without question, unequivocally, there are circumstances and events that are beyond our control no doubt. How they manifest ourselves, how those circumstances manifest themselves in the way we experience our lives, that is entirely within our control and I have no doubt about it.

Jaime Masters Me too. There's a Derren – I was just discussing this with a friend yesterday. There's a Derren Brown. I don't know if you've ever heard of Derren Brown but he does mind-crazy things.

Isaac Lidsky: Yeah.

Jaime Masters And he proved that whether you're lucky or you're – just like the quote that we said before... whether you think you're lucky or you think you're unlucky – so they took this guy who thought he was unlucky and put money in front of him and he walked right by it. They did this – they made him quote unquote the luckiest person ever, randomly finding things. He found none of them. It's like our brains are not opened, our eyes are not opened to the opportunity because we think the world is this way. So, how - what's great about that is –

Isaac Lidsky: So, there's this chapter of my book about luck.

Jaime Masters Tell me more then.

Isaac Lidsky: Huh?

Jaime Masters Tell me more. I haven't read that part.

Isaac Lidsky: Oh, it's one of my favorites too because I think luck is such a fascinating thing. I believe we do not understand luck. So, you know, a couple of ideas I'll run by

you. One is we have this idea that events or circumstances are lucky or unlucky, we're lucky or unlucky, or something that happens to us is lucky or unlucky. The truth is far more complicated and nuanced. I'm almost to the point of saying lucky or unlucky is nonsense. It's what you do with the events or circumstances. For me, a dramatic example is going blind. Was I unlucky to go blind? No way! It literally was one of the best things that ever happened to me.

Jaime Masters Wow!

Isaac Lidsky: It has enabled me to have this life vision and philosophy that's been phenomenal for me. But if we insist upon applying labels to the event itself going blind I'm unlucky and the it kind of furthers this victim mentality. So, anyway, that's the first way. Lucky or unlucky we think there's a bright line. The second bright line we see that's not there is within our control or not within our control. You know, we think it's entirely luck or are those things that we can't control? You know, skill is the other stuff and there's this neat line. That's not true. Again, there's a nuance.

It's blurry. Then we tend to grossly underestimate the extent to which matters are within our control. So, you know, I think luck is - there's no question that there is a force of luck in life and I think it really bares a lot of thought and consideration but at first I think we kind of get it wrong.

Jaime Masters I remember way back when I was in corporate I was called Miss Lucky. They would call me Princess. I was one of the only females and they were like how do you do that? I go I asked for it. It's simple things where you're like, oh, I just asked. Who knew?

Isaac Lidsky: Well, there's the Thomas Jefferson quote, or at least it's been ascribed to Thomas Jefferson. I'm a firm believer in luck and I find the harder I work the more I have with it.

Jaime Masters Oh, yeah. We can see the things that we actually want to get what we actually want. Who knew? Oh, you can call me lucky all you want. I don't care what it's called as long as it works.

Isaac Lidsky: I'm happy to be considered lucky.

Jaime Masters So, I know we have to start wrapping up but I really want to see the things that you've learned from all of this, which I've LOVED talking about, translate to your business. So, we're talking about business and getting over and past because there's so many fears that come up in business. There's so much stepping outside your comfort zone and all that stuff. So, give us a couple of tips in business that sort of takes the correlation of what we just talked about into business tactically.

Isaac Lidsky: Sure. So, you know, we touched a lot on seeing through your fears, overcoming fears on part of seeing that internal strength. Those are very applicable in business. To touch on something different, you know, effective communication is critical to any kind of team success. It's not a new concept. I know I don't have to quote the idea but our fears, our vulnerabilities, our insecurities, can really inhibit us from communicating meaningfully, from contributing meaningfully.

And I am convinced... I've seen it firsthand that for a leader to succeed, for a team to thrive, you've got to get through that. You've got to figure out a way to be vulnerable, to expose your heart to others. Be willing to look into it yourself and expose it to others. You've got to be willing to agree to commit to goals and, you know, objectives, a vision that is larger than yourself that the team is all there collectively working towards. By the way, success or failure is all the same for everybody. Right? We're doing this together and we're either getting it done or we're not.

So, there's a lot more about it in the book but definitely my Eyes Wide Open vision has been incredibly valuable to me in the sort of business situation I find myself in. I thought of business and what I thought was a growing concern turned out to be a very dramatic turnaround situation and with my team we got through that and I do credit Eyes Wide Open to a lot of that.

Jaime Masters Wow! How in the vulnerability side, like you mentioned – where is that line now? Because I know some people that are like, oh, gosh, that was a LOT. So, where does that line come?

Isaac Lidsky: Let's talk about vulnerability in the realm of, or transparency in the realm of, you know, thoughts, opinions, ideas about the work, about the business. You know, when you get into a room with a team and someone proposes there is a challenge or a problem or opportunity and someone proposes a course of action, and you say, what do you think, to the team and folks nod and say, yeah, sure, it's great. Uh-huh, that's not enough. Like, what do you think? Yes, you completely agree with everything he just said?

Well, I wouldn't say that. Okay, so let's talk about the ways in which you might NOT necessarily agree with part of what he said. Do you know what I'm saying?  
Jaime Masters Yeah.

Isaac Lidsky: And let's get into it. People have these fears of looking silly or seeming vain or seeming dumb. I say, man, we are all in this room together working in common purpose. How freaking beautiful is that and awesome is that? By the way, we want to succeed so let's make it happen.

Jaime Masters I love that. Okay, my whole thing is I say no judgement. Like, no judgement, no judgement.

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Isaac Lidsky: In my leadership team meeting, we all get in a room, trust tree, no judgement, you know, part of the problem or part of the solution. All these clichés are cliché for a reason.

Jaime Masters Yeah, exactly. Sometimes we need to remind ourselves of them also, right?

Isaac Lidsky: Absolutely.

Jaime Masters You will catch your critic going, “uh”. I have to be like oh, no judgement, no judgement. I might do the same thing. I can’t judge, right?

Isaac Lidsky: Yeah. By the way, another thing too is – sorry, I’m rambling.

Jaime Masters Please.

Isaac Lidsky: We take ourselves way too seriously.

Jaime Masters That was going to be my – okay, so at the very beginning I almost asked you that.

Isaac Lidsky: We take ourselves, our jobs too seriously... life is FUN. Every moment can be fun and funny.

Jaime Masters So, that was the very beginning piece. I’m like, okay, when do we give ourselves a break? Right? Because of all – so, you went through many years of feeling like crap because the inevitable, quote unquote, was going to happen.

Isaac Lidsky: Yes.

Jaime Masters Could you have had fun and funniness within that space? I feel like you hold yourself back. Tell me more about –

Isaac Lidsky: Absolutely. I mean, I look back on those early years and it’s a mix of a lot of emotions.

Jaime Masters Yeah.

Isaac Lidsky: One of them is sadness. It makes me sad to think back to how I lived my life in those years and all the trouble I borrowed and all the, you know, hurt and pain and frustration that I experienced unnecessarily for no reason. And I did not have a lot of fun in those years. But I sure as heck do now and I’m telling you it is impossible for me to take myself seriously or really anybody else.

Jaime Masters This is why you’re on this broadcast right now... to share that with everybody else. They are doing it to themselves. If you’re happy you’re doing it to

yourself or if you're not happy, either way you are doing it to yourselves no matter what the circumstance is that we think is the cause of whatever these feelings are. Like you said, it's all construct anyway.

Isaac Lidsky: Four of my favorite words are choose to be happy. Yes, you can roll your eyes. You can say that's sentimentality. You can say it's silly. It's easy to be dismissive of it but, for me, it's pure and simple and it is truth. You can choose to be happy anytime, anywhere, anyplace.

Jaime Masters I agree. That was –

Isaac Lidsky: People have confronted far worse than blindness and done just that. I mean, you know, POW survivors, concentration camp survivors, you know, Viktor Frankl's Man's Search for Meaning is an amazing example. I mean, all these people that face just awful sort of circumstances FAR worse than blindness and transcend. You know, they wouldn't use the same language I use or I'm sure we disagree maybe on some details here or there but I assure you that every one of those people, you know, use him or herself as the master of their reality... as in control and chose a better path for themselves.

Jaime Masters I love this interview. Okay, so a lot of the times you are talking about tactics in business and that sort of thing and to me I have my own inner wisdom on this stuff and I don't have a chance to talk about it all that much but I feel like, in general, because we create our own reality and you ARE doing it to yourself, you can choose whatever you want and, yes, like you said, it might take some effort. But why the heck else are we on this earth? I think joy, happiness, enjoying yourself, potentially legacy if that makes you happy also. So, why would we take that away? I mean, you could hear the pain in your voice of going back. So, everybody that's listening right now, please take a page from his book. I mean, go buy the book also but take... rip a page... no, I'm kidding. Take a page –

Isaac Lidsky: Whether you buy it or borrow it or listen to it, this book was a labor of love. I mean, I wrote this book, to share a vision with people, that I hope will be helpful to them.

Jaime Masters And be freaking grateful that you could read it with your EYES. I mean, I love how you say vision, right? You use that word a lot, which I am inspired by because we take SO many things for granted. So, whoever is listening right now, please do not take any of this stuff for granted because you never know. And either way, whatever happens no matter what, you can be happy but still, gosh, let's enjoy it while we've got it no matter what it is. I love this.

Isaac Lidsky: Exactly.

Jaime Masters I know I have to start wrapping up but, like I said, I really love this in general, so give me the answer to the last question, which is very tactical I know. What is one action listeners can take this week to help move them forward towards their goal of a million?

Isaac Lidsky: Well, if their goal is a million, I would hope that everyone now would take some time to sit and say to themselves, what beyond the million is important to me? What do I want my life to look like? What's the nature of the team I want to be working with? What's the type of leader I want to be? What's the type of service or product that's important to me to be providing? How do I want to be spending my time with family, work, and all that stuff?

Just if you do nothing else, you don't even need to have all the answers right away but start thinking about those things because time is going to go by, your life is going to happen either way. I'm telling you, you have an immense opportunity to create the life you want for yourself if you so choose.

Jaime Masters So inspiring! All right, where do we get the book? How do we find out more about you and all that?

Isaac Lidsky: So, probably the best place to go is my website, which is just my last name lidsky.com (L-I-D-S-K-Y).com and I wrote a blog, which you can get there and there's information on ordering the book and links to my Ted Talk, or whatever. So, the one thing that I will definitely stress and ask is I want to hear from YOU. There's ways to give me feedback on the website. There's wisdom in community. I really wrote this vision to share with people and to hear what they think. So, please let me know what you think. I read every email and I genuinely want to know what you think.

Jaime Masters My audience members love sharing. They are an engaged bunch. So, make sure – we will definitely link up to your website so that they can link up to you and tell you also what they think and what they got out of it too because, everybody, he's doing this on his own for a reason, just to sort of share the message. He has a separate business completely, which these interviews don't necessarily make that business any money. Not that money is –

Isaac Lidsky: No, they were initially against my financial interests.

Jaime Masters Exactly.

Isaac Lidsky: Sacrifice financially to do this but it's not a sacrifice because a couple of years ago I came to my wife and I said our business is doing great. I don't need to be ten times bigger and bigger and bigger and bigger and I don't necessarily need to jump into the next one. I want to write this book. So, I stepped away from my business to write this book. In part, because I want my kids to read it someday but anyway.

Jaime Masters I just heard you have triplets also. I was hearing in the background, right?

Isaac Lidsky: You did hear my baby, Clementine, in the background, yes.

Jaime Masters Okay... so cute.

Isaac Lidsky: I'm in my home office and you heard my 15-month old daughter, baby Clementine who basically runs the house. She has already learned a tremendous amount from her 6½ year old triplet siblings.

Jaime Masters Go you... for the guy that didn't think he was going to have kids and then to have triplets? Go you!

Isaac Lidsky: Yeah.

Jaime Masters How crazy that must have been in your household! Anyway, I don't envy THAT part. I'm happy where I am. Single children.

Isaac Lidsky: It's never a dull moment.

Jaime Masters I can only imagine. Thank you so much for taking the time to be on the show today. I really enjoyed it and I'm sure everybody else did too. Thanks so much and have an amazing day.

Isaac Lidsky: Thanks for having me. I appreciate it.