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Jaime: Welcome to Eventual Millionaire. I am Jaime Masters, and I am ridiculously excited to have Tom Bilyeu on the show. He's cofounder of Quest Nutrition bars, which are my God send. Thank you, very much. And he also cofounded and hosts Impact Theory, which is an amazing podcast video channel that you should all checkout. Thanks so much for coming on the show today.

Tom: Thank you for having me. I'm honored to be here.

Jaime: Seriously, when I told everyone the Quest Nutrition guy, everybody went crazy. You have such a name for yourself. What made you start Impact Theory to begin with? Because, you already had so much success, why bother starting something new?

Tom: That is the question that is on everybody's lips. And the idea, really, behind it was wanting to address the mind as well as the body. And I had secretly hoped that the Quest brand would be flexible enough that we'd be able to pull that off. But, brands are very particular. So, for people out there that are building their first brand, let me tell you, the way that people perceive your brand gets really specific really fast.

Jaime: Really? You think Quest is a perfect – even just the name is a perfect alignment. What didn't work about that?

Tom: Well, the great irony is when I first started it, it was called Inside Quest, the podcast that's now Impact Theory. And people were saying, "What is the protein bar guy doing talking about mindset?" And now, the irony is that we just launched the new show on our channel, the Impact Theory channel called Health Theory. And people are asking, "Why's the mindset guy talking about health and protein bars?" So, the great irony of my life is that, but to me, there's really to **pandemic** that are happening right now.

There's the pandemic of the body, which is incredibly visible, people totally get that. But then, there's the pandemic of the mind. And that's largely invisible, and people don't think of it in the same way that they think of physical health. So, I wanted to be able to address both. And thankfully, we had just gotten to the point at Quest where we had had so much success. The business was going so well that I had to **wear** with all to build whatever I wanted to build. Ultimately, at the core of my being is a desire to empower people.

And in one of the very first episodes of inside Quest, I had actually

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said that, that when I'm out in my most authentic – even more than I'm about the helping people master the body, I really want to pull people out of the matrix using my language. So, I want to find a way to help people get empowering beliefs that are going to allow them to accomplish what they want in life. And that, I find, is really what holds people back, and is certainly what held me back. By starting something new, by rebranding it, by really making the intent of the company very specific to that, making that the mission of the company attracted a different audience, and is now allowing me to do what I think is the ultimate aim of my life.

Jaime: So, I love that you messed up, also. I love that. But, it's also really interesting to think of the way that people are putting you in boxes. So, do you find that the people that love nutrition side and body stuff don't as easily want the mindset stuff, or vice versa?

Tom: You know, I don't think it's that. What I think it is, is people really look at companies in very specific ways. And so, the first mistake that I made was when we were at quest, we actually launched a high fashion line – if you can believe that. And it made so much sense to us. And I really want people to understand, that are listening to this like, it made all the sense in the world to us because, for us, behind why we started Quest, like you were saying, with the name, was a belief system.

And it was the belief system that drove us. And it was the belief system that drove us. And it was the belief system that led us to believe that we could make food the people chose based on taste. And it was all about mindset and even transforming the body is about mindset, and it's about setting a goal, and going after it. And so, we thought, "Hey, let's capture that mindset. Let's put these slogans and ideas on nice clothes. It's something nobody's doing. A lot of people are doing it on t-shirts, but nobody's doing it on nicer clothes."

And we just didn't have the **sobriety** to see that the world looks at our brand as being about protein bars. And so, they think of consumer-packaged goods, they think of being in a GNC, or they think of being in a **Ralph**'s. And for them, they couldn't cross that chasm to think the same people that are doing that are making clothes. So, even though it is the same people, and it is even the same mindset that maybe drew them to the gym and eating right in the first place, they don't think of the brand the same.

So, the invisible feelings that people have about your brand come

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to there when you try to launch another product. So, that's why normally, the other products that people launch are going to be adjacent to what they're already doing. So, if we had launched a line of athleticwear, I think people would've understood it, it would've made all the sense in the world. But, in the beginning, they didn't see us, they weren't buying the protein bars because of the mindset, even though that's what was driving us as the business guys behind it. And so, everything that they felt about the brand was just totally different.

Jaime: I like that you said sobriety. Like, entrepreneurship is the drunkenness because, we can't see outside from what we're doing.

Tom: Yeah, we really can't. And that's something that I think about a lot, and remind the team that you've got to be able to put yourself in the shoes of the consumer if you really want to understand your marketing.

Jaime: Yeah. Because, sometimes, we get too close to the problem. So, then, how did you capture the intention of the same people that are eating Quest bars with Impact Theory, even though it was just a different brand sort of segment?

Tom: It's legitimately brute force. And this was ultimately why I moved it out of Quest. So, I could've done it in Quest. It would've been very expensive. It would've taken a very long time. But, ultimately, people are going to get there. Right? So, by moving it out, not only did I get the ease of the rebrand, which made it easier because, now, it's just a clean slate. But, I alone bear the costs. So, my partners don't have to go on that very expensive journey when they don't necessarily share my passion for pulling people out of the matrix.

So, that was really one of the deciding factors was, "Okay, if this doesn't work, I'm not dragging other people along with me." Because, literally, all I'm doing is adding value. And I think at the end of the day – Take Apple. Apple's the case everybody always gives going into a marketplace that is not **tangential** in any way, shape, or form. When they first went into iTunes, that – I don't think people could recapture today how weird that was back then. But, that was a move totally to the side. But, they saw something, an area where they could add value, and then, they just stuck to their guns because, they believed that it added value.

And so, that's where I'm at with the content. I knew it added value,

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and I knew that ultimately, people would get over the hurdle of “Okay, yes, I’m the same guy that was making protein bars, but at the end of the day, I’m finding a way to add value to people’s lives.” And so, sticking with that, and doing that, and putting in the time, that ultimately is the punchline.

Jaime: So, that actually leads in perfectly to what I wanted to talk about. Because, I feel like long-term, you knew the vision, you could totally see it. And when you go short-term, and you go, “How the heck do we get this to work?” How did you know when to switch from the quote, unquote “Failure” on inside Quest, to going out on your – especially because, you had all the resources within that, and then, you went out. Right? So, like that weird middle spot where you know the vision is clear, “Yeah, I’m going to inspire all these people” but the short-term, “What the heck do I do now?” How did you figure out the force for the [inaudible] [00:07:18] in that?”

Tom: So, there are really two things going on there. No. 1, is that you have to have business acumen, and I have a deep and abiding terror that I’ll become known as like the inspiration guy, or the motivation guy. I want to be known as the execution guy. Like, I want people to turn to me when they need the answers on how they actually cross the chasm from idea to reality. And that’s certainly what I did in my own life. And so, that was Part 1, was I understand business. I know how to monetize. I know how to do something profitable. I know how to run a team.

So, I knew going into a new endeavor that I’m not starting from scratch in that perspective. I still have all my knowledge. I know how to do this. So, cool, I’ve got that. Then, the second part is, I’ll just give everyone the punchline to what they’re thinking about now as either an entrepreneur who’s at the beginning of their journey, or somebody who’s thinking that they want to go into this. And literally forget everything else that I say, the following statement is the most important thing that I can convey to you. And the fact that I’m really taking the time to stop, I want people to listen.

This is so important. I lost eight and a half years of my life to this because I didn’t understand this. The goal of the game that you’re playing is not money and is not success, it’s brain chemistry. It’s how you feel about yourself when you’re by yourself. That’s it. So, I spent eight and a half years chasing money. I turned myself into a multi-millionaire. And I was miserable in a way that like I know

people listening to this get. That like, lost, hopeless, “What am I doing this for?” like, nothing feels good, nothing feels right. “I’m profoundly unhappy. This isn’t worth it anymore.”

And so, I went into my partners – this is when we were running a tech company. Because, the company before Quest was a technology company. And I went in there, I said, “Guys, look, I quit.” I had taken myself from copywriter to being an owner in the company. They gave me 10 percent of the company just because I was delivering that level of performance. And I said, “Look, here’s your equity back. I’m not going to cross the finish line. I don’t think I should get anything for this.” So, literally gave up millions of dollars and said, “I just have to go feel alive. I have to go enjoy my life. I need things that give me more energy than they take.”

I can’t tell you how surprising it was to me to be living the cliché of “Money can’t buy happiness” because, it’s so predictable. So many people say it, and it’s like I still didn’t get it. And so, I thought a lot about this, and here’s why I didn’t get it. Money is insanely powerful. Whatever you think about money. It’s better than you think. It’s more powerful than you think. But, it’s entirely different than what you’ve been told. Money is the great facilitator, but that’s it. It is inert. It doesn’t do anything.

So, if you don’t know what you want to facilitate with it, all of the energy, all of the late nights, all of the failures, and having to face up to that, all of the risks, and the blood, sweat, and tears, it won’t be worth it. You won’t have the energy to fight through it because, you don’t know what you’re fighting for. You’re fighting for this inert piece of paper, or zeroes and ones inside of a digital database somewhere. Like, it will not be enough. I just can’t say that emphatically enough.

But, answering your question about why Impact Theory, and why did I go out and leave this sort of warm thing, you know, of that enclosure, of quest, and so successful. At the end of the day, I’m beyond proud of that, and helping people overcome the issues of the body will forever remain one of the most important things that I do on a day-to-day basis, which is why, I guess, that we’ve launched the new show here. But, I know how I want to feel about myself. I know what the impact is that I want to have on the world.

And I’ve worked in the inner cities a lot. And at Quest, I had 1,400 employees and 1,000 of them, let’s say, roughly had grown up in the inner cities, because it was all manufacturing, had grown up in

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the inner cities, had grown up hard. They just witnessed unimaginable stuff. And the mindset that they had was so limited that even though they were extraordinary human beings. They were never going to go and do anything. And so, the time that I spent with people one-on-one, like saying, “Okay, look, I used to be lost, and alone, and feeling like you feel, and this is what I did to actually execute all my dreams.”

And trying to teach that and give that, that made me feel so good, and made my life so worthwhile that I was like, “I want to do this.” But, I have an absolute obsession with scale. I’m not interested in doing one-on-one mentoring because, at the end of my life, if I absolutely just murdered it, what could I do? Could I help 10,000 people? Would you even give me a million people? Which [inaudible] [00:11:50] if I will just to tell you right now, you’re never, ever, ever going to be able to do it.

But, even if, I was like, 2 million people, 3 million people, it’s nothing. When you think that there are, what, 7.2 billion people on the planet, it’s like it just wasn’t the scale that I wanted to do. So, when I started looking at the problem at scale, it was just a totally different business.

Jaime: So, the exact thing that you just said is the reason why I have this seat. I had a million-dollar goal, realized, life first, then money. But, that self-awareness is painful, also, when you’re like, “I’ve been working this hard, and this is what I have to show for it.” How do they actually, a) have the self-awareness of that piece, and b) jump the chasm that is, “Okay, I now know I have self-awareness” but that “How.” Like you said, how do we actually go after the thing that’s unknown, the thing that’s scary, the thing that brings up all sort of insecurity and fears when you also have no idea what you’re jumping over to.

Tom: So, 1) the notion of them getting the self-awareness, like, that’s already such a big deal that they believe that because, that is the key. You’ve got to believe. And humans lead with belief. So, you’re going to need to believe you can do something before you actually go out and do it because you’re not going to do it unless you believe your efforts are going to be rewarded. That’s where most people stop. Because, they don’t –. So, I have just a core belief that’s irrespective of me, regardless of who you are, what you’ve done, what you’re capable of, what you think about yourself.

Set it all aside. Humans are the ultimate adaptation machine. We are literally wired from the ground up to grow, to encounter a stressor, and to grow in response. I knew that at a biological level. So, even just looking at neuroplasticity, the way that the brain works. So, the way that it works, you go, you encounter something, you're learning it through repetition. Your brain wires for that. Your brain is trying to make things as easy as possible, so it reinforces these neural networks, so that doing something, whether it's dance, whether it's playing a video game, whether it's running a business.

Like, the things that you do over, and over, and over, your brain is going to facilitate the ease of that by wiring those together. So, they say that neurons that fire together wire together. So, now, if you'll just give me that, if you'll just believe – like, in the gym. You go in the gym, and on Day 1, you can't lift the same weight that you can six months later if you're disciplined and you stay at it. That's what the body does. Responds to stressors with an adaptation response. I don't need to believe I'm cool. I just need to believe that that is fundamentally true about humans.

Okay, cool, I believe that about humans. So, training anything, self-awareness, business acumen, whatever it is, I know I can get good at it if I do the reps. So, if people are willing to believe that, then it becomes a question of clarity. So, now, what do you want to do? Because, to cross the chasm, you have to first identify the chasm, which means you need to know where you're going, and you need to know where you are. So, self-awareness is going to take care of where you are, but it's not going to tell you where you want to go. And I find that most people have absolutely no clarity on where they want to go, whatsoever. It's literally terrifying.

And the worst part is, like, I'd be okay with that if people knew that they didn't have clarity. But, they don't know. And so, they think they're clear, and they'll say – they'll come to me and say something like, “Hey, Tom, I'm super clear on what I want to do.” “Awesome, man, what do you want to do?” “I want to win a gold medal.” “In what? The Olympics?” “Yes, the Olympics.” “Fantastic. Winter or summer?” “Summer.” “Great. Tennis or swimming?” “Swimming.” “Fantastic. Do you want to do the freestyle medley? Do you want to do the breast stroke?”

Like, you've got to get so clear because, if you just tell me that you want to win a gold medal – and I don't even know if you're talking about the Olympics, let alone what sport, then I don't know how to

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tell you to train. And that's the chasm. It is a lack of clarity that kills everyone.

Jaime: So, in that clarity – because, I think that's the thing, it's very vague when people talk about clarity. They're like, "Oh, sure, I have it. I have a gold medal." How do we know what level we dive deep in of that? I know metrics, I know that sort of stuff. But, what would you do to make sure that they are super clear without having you in their living room?

Tom: Well, you've got to be able to say not only what you want to accomplish, and like, with a scary degree of specificity, you need to know exactly what person you're serving. You need to know exactly what problem their facing. Like, you need to be able to articulate these, not in run-on sentences, in like really single, simple sentences. So, I'll give you an example in my own life. Okay, Quest, what is our mission? To end metabolic disease. Awesome. How are we going to do that? By creating who the people choose based on taste, and it happens to be good for them.

Cool. Now, I have a filter. Every decision that I go to make, do I use this ingredient, or that ingredient? Well, which ingredient is more metabolically advantageous? Cool [inaudible] [00:16:16]. "But, Tom, it's more expensive." "Yes, I understand that. But, here are my goals." They're very clear. My goal was not to build a billion-dollar company. That happened to be the result of saying, "I'm going to end metabolic disease, and I'm going to do it by making food that people choose based on taste, and it happens to be good for them. Like, see, I can repeat it. Right? It's really easy. It's really **conscious**. It's really concise.

You've got to get to that point. So, the same is true with Impact Theory. So, what is Impact Theory? Impact Theory is designed to pull people out of the matrix. And by that, I mean, we all have a set of beliefs, and those beliefs will set you free or limit you. So, I want to give people empowering beliefs. How do we do that? The way that humans assimilate their belief system is through narrative. The story they tell themselves about themselves. What's a very easy way that people get those modern-day narratives?

They get them from friends, they get them from family. Well, I can't control that. The third thing they get it from is pop culture. Cool, I can impact that. What are the five forms of narratives that have embedded themselves in pop culture? Books, comic books, TV shows, movies, video games, and ultimately, VR. Well, there it

is, so I know I'm going to be playing in those arenas. Well, how do I get good at that? Well, there is a high failure rate, so I know all of that. Cool. Movies and TV will say are the ultimate. They're the most impactful. The ones that reach the broadest audience. They're also the most expensive.

So, what's a traditional feeder into that? And look, I just keep going until we get to like my day-to-day actions. But, until you get to a line item on a to-do list that can be done today, you haven't gotten enough specificity.

Jaime: This is the whole point. This is why I asked that last question about one action because, that's the thing, people don't take it from the top and put it all the way down, which are the reps that you're talking about. But, what I find is that people change where the goal is. Right? So often. So, you go pick a mission. Pick a mission. They start going, "This doesn't feel right" back up, go over there. How do you --? You seem extremely clear. But, how long did it take you to get that extreme clarity? Did you know Day 1 that that's what you were going to do, or did it evolve over time?

Tom: The path changes a lot. But, the mission – once I have a mission, then it doesn't change. So, once I decided, "Okay, what I want to do is give people empowering beliefs" then – I haven't waivered on that, not, literally, for half a second. But, the path has changed a lot. So, there was stuff early in the beginning where I wasn't sure if we were going to be focused more on businesses and incubating businesses, and really being a business accelerator, or if we were going to focus more on the media side. I wanted to do both because, I think the fabric of society is really made up of the way that people think, and the companies that they crate based on that thinking. And so, I wanted to do both.

And then, I just realized in terms of what gives me more energy. While I love the active building businesses, and solving those problems, and all of that, building a bunch of companies where the day-to-day grind of that company is not something I'm interested in was less interesting. So, we took on a couple of portfolio companies, and then, just sort said, "All right, we're going to move forward with these companies." But then, on the media side, that's where we're going to be putting our day-to-day effort and energy into.

So, that changed, but it was entirely me, looking at, going, "Okay, uniquely me, with my desires, my skillset, what's the best way to

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have the impact in terms of giving people the empowering belief system?” And so, if I find out tomorrow that building the media company is not the way to do that, then I’ll switch and pivot. But, I wouldn’t be pivoting away from the giving people an empowering belief system for one reason, and one reason only. And that is it makes me feel alive. It makes me feel good about myself.

It is the thing that I have completely built, like this entire just fire, just burning intensity of need and desire in my life. And that’s so real that no one has to convince me to do anything that has to do with that because, that’s what I’m just intrinsically driven by.

Jaime: So, when we look at the reps and the action like you were talking about before, but during a pivot, you actually have to change what those reps are. Do you have the foresight, like, “Okay, we’re going to make a pivot. Now, the next three months look like this for actions” and you wipe away what you were planning on before? How does that work on a strategy standpoint?

Tom: So, again, you’re working backwards from the goal, “This is what I’m trying to accomplish. This is the path that I think is going to get me there. Here is the gap and skillset. Here’s what I can outsource so that I don’t have to deal with. And then, here’s where my area strengths are so I can really push hard in these.” You know, the 95 – 5 percent –. So, 95 percent of the stuff that need to be done should be done by somebody other than you, and you want to stay as much as possible in the 5 percent, where you’re really powerful.

But, that is not an excuse to ignore the things that need to be done that you’re weak at. You don’t have anybody to outsource it to. So, then, you have to go and learn about that. So, we’re building a comic book publishing company. And when I say I knew nothing about this – I knew nothing about this.

Jaime: I’m a super geek, so –

Tom: A year ago.

Jaime: Yeah, so, I’m right there with you. I’m so excited for you.

Tom: I’m, “That’s amazing.” So, I knew nothing about it, but I know how to research. And so, leveraging that 5 percent – like, I don’t outsource my research. Not even with the episodes. I do all my own research. And the reason is that is something that I’m

uniquely capable of. I spent a lot of time and energy to get phenomenal truly world class at that. So, I want to make sure that I'm leveraging my strength there. So, I now go and I'm learning about this thing.

So, whatever it is, getting good at those foundational things like learning, like research, how to figure something new out, how to tap into your passion, how to leverage your time and energy. So, that's the first thing, is just you have to understand what you're going into. So, the best piece of business advice I ever got was from my father-in-law, and I ignored it for about three years. It's just so heartbreaking to me, and I apologize to him every time I see him. And that is no more about the problem than anyone else. No more about the deal than anyone else.

When you're walking into a room, or you're trying to build strategy, you've just got to know more about it, whatever it is than anyone else. So, knowing that we were going to build this comic book publishing arm, it was like I just went and bought every book that I could on the subject. I subscribed to every Twitter feed, every Instagram person, YouTube page. If anybody is talking about the industry, then I'm all in. And then, you just humble yourself daily. Ask questions. Sit at people's feet.

Once you understand the problem at a deep and fundamental level, the path to execution then becomes apparent. But, it's getting to the point where you understand the problem. So, it gets hard because, I'm having to be like general so that it applies to everybody. So, understand the problem. That's like the really specific takeaway, and then, get really good at identifying what you need to deliver to actually get rid of that problem.

Jaime:

So, like, going in a totally new space, right? The research thing, everybody is probably excited. Like, I was super excited you talking about that. I want to research comic books. That sounds great. I love that piece. And that seems not as scary to people. But, when we're talking about beliefs, and you have this big idea, how do you go from that gap to goal? So, for instance, you did the research piece, you know the problem. Now, you actually have to go do something with the problem.

Even if the way is clear, some people, me, also, goes, "That's huge." That's really, really big, and then, they hold themselves back, or they don't go all in, or they dabble, and be like, "It's going to come to fruition soon." How do you have that belief subset that

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you can do however big the problem is?

Tom: So, I try to abstract myself from – I don't want to have to believe that I'm capable of something. I just want to believe that the human animal is capable of that. Because, now, I just have to go, "Well the human animal is capable of this, and I happen to be a human, therefore I can do this." So, if it – and I'll just give everybody the magic takeaway: if it doesn't violate the laws of physics, it's possible. Cool. So, now that we know that, as long as we're not doing something that violates the laws of physics, we can do it, we can get that good.

The question becomes: Are we willing to put in the energy and the effort to get that good? And if the thought of knowing more about the comic industry than any other human has ever lived is so cool to me. Like, I love it so much, and I love being around that kind of storytelling, and the art, and just everything about it is cool to me. So, that was like, "Yeah, I want to learn about that." Then, it becomes like, do you fall in love with the process of learning? And here's what I will give everybody that will hopefully click them over into loving the process of learning so that – and will get to, then they need to put themselves on the hook.

They need to tell people that they're doing it so that they're embarrassed to not do it. So, they need to trap themselves because, otherwise, they're going to back off because, they didn't publicly profess. Like, for the last almost 18 months now, I've been telling everybody, "Oh, I'm building the next Disney, and we're going to create a comic book publishing –." So, now, if I don't, it's going to be really embarrassing.

Jaime: "That Quest guy didn't do that –" right, like –.

Tom: Exactly. So, you're putting yourself on the hook. But, before you get to that, just believing that humans can do anything they set their mind to, as long as it doesn't violate the laws of physics. Then, it's like you just go down that path, and you start doing that, you start learning about it. And again, I tie it to just, I know humans are capable of this, so I'm going to assume that then I can learn it. I'm not the person I need to be today. I fully accept that. But, I can learn.

And so, then, you can just look at yourself on a day-to-day basis to know, "Am I doing the things that I need to do to identify the problem? Yes, cool. All right, now that I know the problem, have I

made the list of things that I need to be executing against? Yes, cool. Have I put myself on the hook? Have I told people? Literally, have I told anyone who will listen that I am going to build this thing?” Right? So, I’m just out there relentlessly telling people I’m going to do it. Most people laugh, they think it’s ridiculous, they think I’m going to fail.

But, you can imagine how many people I’ve taken out. And I’m dancing around your question a bit, so make sure that I come back and really put a fine point on it. But, I want people to hear, “I’m just as scared as you are. And these are the things that I do to make sure that I do it. So, first and foremost, I don’t want to play at business; I want to actually do it. So, making believe like I’m doing it is something – that self-awareness that I have, I’m constantly checking myself. Am I really building a comic book publishing arm, or am I just telling people I’m building it?

I want to know, and I need metrics to check myself against. Then, I find anybody that knows more than me, and I ask them one simple question: Why am I going to fail? I don’t ask them how to succeed. I want to know how am I going to fail? First of all, people are often far better at giving you the advice of all the problems, all the pitfalls. And also, I find that if it’s not a good idea, it’s not going to survive criticism. If it is a good idea, if you have enough energy and intensity for it, then the criticism is not going to bother you.

It’s going to feel like you’re really beginning to understand something. And you’re going to see, “Do I have the energy and the excitement around this to overcome this stuff?” So, I go and ask that question. I find as many people who can advise me, as possible. Sometimes, it’s as simple as taking them out to lunch, and other times, it’s throwing money at them, and then, sometimes it’s finding a way to just add a freakish amount of value to their life, their ecosystem, whatever.

And then, they’ll be willing to answer a very short question. And if it’s something simple, you want to know one specific piece about whatever, have that question, make it as easy for them to give you the answer as possible. But, the thing that I do on that is I make sure that I’m not playing at what I’m saying. I make sure that I tell everyone that I’m doing it, which operates on two levels: 1) Congruence; I want to be accountable to the things that I said, and then, 2) you will be shocked, like, I had no idea that you were into comics.

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But, now, I say it to you, right, and you pull that little figurine, and now we have a Connection. But, neither of us would've known that if I had been shy and I didn't want to say anything. So, man, I like go crazy. I literally tell anybody. And because I just find that you get all these weird little connections. And then, because I tell people, and I'm willing to humble myself and sit at their feet, and truly just want to learn, those things create the mechanism by which then I actually know how to go out and execute.

And then, look, identity is a huge thing. Like, it is a huge part of my identity to be willing to take these huge risks, to aim for things that are just absolutely massive. And my gut check is always terraforming Mars. So, **Elon Musk** is terraform Mars. Building a comic book publishing company just doesn't seem anywhere near as scary. Right?

Jaime: It's all perspective.

Tom: So, ask yourself, is what I'm doing, is that going to be as hard as terraforming Mars? Is that going to take as long as terraforming Mars? Like, Elon Musk is literally building rockets that didn't exist in order to go to Mars, and that's just the beginning. So, that's my identity. And so, identity controls behavior.

Jaime: But, what if your identity is not that? Because, what I'm hearing from you, especially when you say, "Oh, I'm a human, and I am capable of this" a lot of people can say that logically, even think it, be like, "Yes, I know he's correct." And then, all of the feelings of insecurity don't feel that way, in any way. Even though they know it's logically correct. How do you program the whole rest of your body to believe it also? Does that make sense?

Tom: Yeah.

Jaime: Just convincing your mind.

Tom: So, I have a belief system that I call the Impact Theory Belief System, which if anybody wants 25 bullet points, you can download it at [ImpactTheory.com](http://ImpactTheory.com). And it is the 25 things that you need to repeat over, and over, and over in order to change your life. So, I really belief there are only two things that matter in building a mindset: What you say to yourself and repeat over, and over, and over; and what you say to others and repeat out loud, over, and over, and over. That's it. Literally, those two things, they will determine the course of your life.

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So, if when you have that moment of panic like, “Oh, I can’t do this” you allow yourself to repeat that, you’re done. I can’t help you. Jaime can’t help you. Nobody can help you. You are screwed because, that’s how much that matters. If, on the other hand, you go, “Ah, wait a second, instead of saying I can’t do this –” which, that is going to happen. You’re going to say that. That’s going to trigger in your mind. It still triggers in mine. So, it’s going to trigger in your mind.

But, if you use that as a reminder, is what they call a habit trigger to repeat the empowering belief, which is humans can do anything they set their mind to as long as it doesn’t violate the laws of physics. Right? So, I just shorthand it to: humans can do anything they set their mind to. “I can’t do this. Wait, no, that’s not true. Humans can do anything they set their mind to. Cool.” Elon Musk is going to terraform Mars. It’s just not that complicated. What I want to do doesn’t violate the laws of physics. And I repeat that over, and over, and over.

And there is, like I said, 25 of those things. Do and believe that which moves you towards your goals. Does believing that I can’t do this move me towards my goal? No. Then, I’m not going to believe that. So, because it doesn’t move me towards my goal, and because that is part of my absolute operating system, then I’m going to repeat – notice, I didn’t say believe. The only belief I need people to own is that humans can learn. That’s it. If you believe that humans are designed to learn, they’re designed to grow and adapt, then it’s just, “Okay, I don’t know it yet. I’m not the right person, yet.

But, I can become the right person.” And I repeat that stuff relentlessly. So, you are what you repeat silently and out loud. That’s it. Master that, and you’re literally 90 percent of the way there.

Jaime:

It’s like you’re growing your comfort zone of thoughts. Right? Like, because, you sound like you’re going, “I believe this piece, so I’m willing to go here. And I believe this piece, and I’m willing to go here.” How do you have the awareness internally? Like, I know what I – my best friend used to slap me every time I used to [inaudible] [00:31:30] so that way, I would be aware. Because, sometimes, I wasn’t totally aware. I’m getting better at this, and I will reframe if I say something to somebody else, and be like, “No, that’s not what I meant. It’s this.”

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Which, I sound like a weirdo. But, still. How do you do it internally? Sometimes, when thoughts – I have ADD, when thoughts go crazy, and you can't get every single one of them, how do I even pay more attention to the internal thoughts?

Tom: So, this goes back to humans can increase their capacity for anything. So, if you have ADD, if you find that your thoughts wonder, then take up a mindfulness practice, which is literally just practicing, always noticing that, "Oh, my thoughts have drifted. Bring them back. Bring them back. Bring them back." And while I didn't realize it was happening at the time, something that became a wax on, wax off thing for me when I was in a phase where I didn't believe in meditation. I thought it was stupid, and so, I didn't want to do it, which – it was dumb. But, nonetheless, is true. I had to, for business, I had to learn contracts.

And reading contracts for me, is like having bamboo shoots stuffed under my fingernails. It is beyond painful for me. It does something to my mind where my mind wants to be anywhere other than reading that contract. And so, I had to keep coming back, and coming back, and coming back. And I'm like, "You're drifting again, come back. Come back. Rephrase that sentence in your head. What did it mean? Did you really understand that? What are the implications of it? Ah, you're drifting again. Come back. Come back." And so, contracts became my meditation. It became my practice of like, "Coming back. Coming back."

And there's a much better way to do it, which is meditating. But, if you don't want to meditate for whatever reason, get really good at reading contracts. You just need some practice where you have to keep bringing yourself back. And so, then, there's a guy named Dr. Daniel Amen who has this concept of ANTs: Automatic Negative Thoughts. So, they're going to happen, they're automatic. Your job is to start recognizing them immediately, switch them through, what I was talking about earlier, as a **habit** to trigger to say the empowering thought. And just do that, just practice it.

Just like you would practice meditation or reading contracts. You just come back to it over, and over, and over. Every time you have a negative thought, say the empowering one inside, say it outside, do whatever you need to but just reinforce the empowerment.

Jaime: I so appreciate you saying this because, I've been meditating for a long, long, long, long period of time. And I've gotten so much

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better. When I mention meditation to business that are clients, or online, they're all like, "No, I can't. Not for me." So, good, we gave them other options. Reading contracts, yeah, that sounds so much more fun than sitting. Meditating, right? But, it helped me slow my brain down so I can be a lot more aware. Because, before, I wasn't conscious, at all. I'm sort of like moving through the steps. Right?

And so – I know we have to start wrapping up in a second. You're fantastic. I love the science side of this because, a lot of people, especially business people right now, that are listening are like, "Yeah, I know" but meditation is "woo woo" or whatever. And if we can actually go through and go, "Yeah." But, with neuroscience, it actually reprograms your brain. Wouldn't you like to do that so you don't have to think the crappy thoughts that led you to the crappy place that you are right now. Don't you want to be happy and more fulfilled? Huge.

So, I'm going to ask the last question. And everybody should download the –. Do you not call it affirmations, the repeated statements? What do you call them?

Tom: No, it's the Impact Theory Belief System because, they're not all worded in ways to be repeated. They're – when I wrote it, it was originally like, "Here are the things that I've had to come to believe, I've had to teach myself to believe in order to do what I've done. So, thinking of them like, rewriting your own mind to something that you can repeat I think is a very worthwhile endeavor.

Jaime: We're a computer program, and then, it'll just read – I'm going to print it out after. So, everybody make sure they check that out. But, the last question is what's one action, besides downloading them, and printing them, and putting it up, what's one action listeners can take this week to help move them forward towards their goal of a million?

Tom: So, I would write down the ultra-specific goal and path, like, they need to be very short, executable points. Doing that, like, the degree of specificity that you need to be successful is so crazy. It's, this is the thing that I don't know how to get over. That is that the most powerful thing I've said in this about specificity. And it's the thing that people think, "Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, I got that." And you just don't. I'm telling you, I've talked to so many people. And the specificity isn't there. And so, I'll give you another one since I've

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already talked about specificity.

Something I haven't talked about yet, which is to develop a morning routine where you're doing what I call important things before you do any other emails, any meetings. Keep a list of the most important things you could be doing to move yourself towards that goal of a million. And make sure that you attack that first. To give you an idea, I spend probably at least six hours working on my important things before I look at my first email, before I take a meeting with my first employee. That is just so critical. And I try to do eight hours. Now, I get up ridiculously early.

Jaime: You must. What time? Can you just highlight what you do? Because, I think everyone's going, "That's amazing. What do I fill those six hours with?" Not that they have to be six hours for everyone else.

Tom: So, my morning routine looks like this. So, first of all, your morning routine starts the night before. So, I go to bed at 9:00 p.m. like it's a religion. I don't set an alarm. I prioritize sleep. I think to be cognitively optimized you need to prioritize sleep. So, I get as much sleep as I need. Now, the great news is that I average probably about six hours of sleep a night. But, there are – I'll go on weird **benders** where I'll be sleeping eight hours of sleep. Hey, fine, so be it. I prioritize sleep.

So, I sleep until I wake up, because I go to bed at 9:00 p.m., and my average is six hours, that means I'm usually up around 3:00 a.m. or 4:00 a.m. I immediately go to the gym because I hate it, so I get it out of the way. I think it's super important. Again, for cognitive optimization. Super important to workout. Then, I immediately meditate. And for the science people in the crowd, the reason they should be meditating is it triggers the parasympathetic nervous system when you're breathing from your diaphragm.

It's a physiological trigger into a different state of being. You've got the sympathetic nervous system, which is fight or flight. You have the parasympathetic nervous system which is rest and digest. But, also, it takes you into an alpha wave state, which is calm and creative. So, you want to be as in the calm and creative state as much as you can. Meditating is the way to get there. Now, I used to get very frustrated with meditation. I wasn't supposed to think anything. And I would have these amazing thoughts because I was in a calm and creative state.

So, I started doing what I call “Thinkatating” immediately after. So, I do about 15 to 20 minutes of meditation, and really simple meditation, no guided, nothing – literally just breathing. And then, I’d go into “Thinkatating” where I maintain that breath control, but now, I start thinking about the biggest problems that I face in my business. And I’m in that calm and creative state. And so, a lot of times I’ll get breakthrough ideas. It’s amazing. And I’ll say, 30 percent of the time, it’s like breakthrough, 70 percent of the time it’s like “Meh.”

But, for that 30 percent of the time, it’s absolutely worth it. After I thinkatate, then I start going through, either I read, or I start going through my important things list, depending on what time I woke up. If I woke up really early, I read first. And if I didn’t, then I immediately move onto my important things list, which is something that I kept the day before. So, I’m not thinking of the important things. I’m just now going down the list and attacking them. What do I need to write? Like, today my important things was contracts.

We’re sending out contracts to writers and artists, and I needed to finish it. So, that was the first thing that I did this morning, at like, 4:30 a.m., or whatever time it was. I’m sitting there writing contracts. And that one, in particular, took several hours. But, doing that, going through all of that stuff. And then, I would just keep working my way down my important things list. My first employee shows up usually somewhere between 8:30 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. And then, I never take meetings before 10:00 a.m. So, if I got up at 4:00 a.m., and then, my first meeting isn’t until 10:00 a.m., there’s my six hours.

Jaime:

That was fantastic. And I love that you say you thinkatate. Because, I totally tell people to do this all the time. I have never branded it. So, now, I’m going to use your branding. Thank you so much. Everybody, please, please write it down right now, and then, set it for tomorrow. It’s not rocket science, people. I know how Elrod has come on the show, and over, and over, and over told people to do this. Please actually do it this time. I know most people won’t. So, do it.

Otherwise, you won’t see the results, and that’s sort of the whole point. Thank you, so much, Tom, for coming on the show today. Where do they find that? Besides the sheet, where can we follow you online? I know you’re on tons of social –

Tom: Yeah, I'm super active socially. It's @tombilyeu everywhere. And my last name is spelled, B, as in Bravo, I-L-Y-E-U.

Jaime: And we will definitely link that, and all the show notes. Everyone, follow him. He's fantastic. Thanks so much for coming on the show today.

Tom: Thank you for having me. It was a lot of fun. I appreciate it.

**[End of Audio]**

**Duration: 41 minutes**