

Announcer: Bulletproof Radio, a state of high performance.

Dave: You're listening to Bulletproof Radio with Dave Asprey. Today's cool fact of the day is hot. It's actually about the world's hottest pepper. A guy ate the world's hottest pepper, called a Carolina reaper, and this thing is about 250 times as spicy as a jalapeno with about a two million Scoville heat unit measure. He ended up being the first person ever to have severely narrowed arteries in his brain that showed on a CT scan as a result of eating a hot pepper. I can tell you I was one of those people who would slice raw habaneros on my omelets and I just love to cry when I eat until I realized that I was absolutely sensitive to nightshade vegetables and unfortunately my soul food, these peppers that make you cry, are in that family.

When I eliminated those things, which are really good and anti-inflammatory for about three quarters of people, if you're in the quarter of people like me, they're actually a kryptonite food. They're on the suspect foods list, and they're a suspect food that actually can be guilty for some people and really good for others, so you got to know. But in the meantime, even if you do enjoy peppers as much as I used to, you probably don't wanna eat the ones that are that spicy straight unless you want to experience a thunderclap headache, which apparently is pretty, pretty negative.

Today's guest on the show is a friend and a best selling author, a motivational speaker, and a guy who's helped about two million people online with his teachings. I wrote the foreword for his last book called Claim Your Power, and it's none other than Mastin Kipp. Mastin, welcome to the show.

Mastin: Dave, super stoked to be here, man. Very, very excited. I want to publicly thank you because you turned that foreword around in like three seconds. Fastest I've ever seen in the world. So thank you so much. It's beautiful. Thank you so much for having me, for supporting the book, and being here. I'm very excited to be here with you today.

Dave: Mastin, you're, I think I may be short [inaudible 00:02:08] to you a little bit on the intro because Oprah called you one of 100 awakened leaders, and put you on the list with people like Tony Robbins, and Deepak Chopra, and Marianne Williamson, and Eckhart Tolle. You're definitely leading, I think, a new generation of people through a really pragmatic, a functional approach to just dealing with what's going on in your head.

Long time listeners know you want to perform better as a human being, you listen to the answers on this show, almost all of them include something about like being more mindful, or more aware, or getting out of your own way. It's not enough to just eat the right stuff and exercise the right way. That's a good foundation but it's what do you do with the software in your head? I want to interview you specifically, Mastin, about what you're doing with Functional Life Coaching, which is a field that you've created, and just what you're doing to get people to make better decisions that maybe don't have anything to do with food, although I know you talk about Bulletproof all the time.

Mastin: Oh my gosh, all the time.

Dave: But that, it's not about that.

Mastin: Totally. I've had a lifelong relationship with food that's mostly been adversarial until the last few years and being, getting my diet in control, and I mean doing most of the Bulletproof protocol is pretty much compliant, has changed, completely changed my life. There is another layer to stuff. I think it's that the times that we're in, Dave, is I think if you look at the 1900s, there's all these ideas. You have the birth of William James and American psychology. You have Carl Jung. You have Freud and all these guys making these distinctions and creating these mental models that, oh my God, you have a brain, and a mind, and psychology, and mindset.

Now I think we're in a different phase, we're in an ontological phase of embodiment. That means we have to go out of the head into the body. That's happening with programs like Bulletproof, with tools like Viome and then also with protocols like Functional Coaching because when you look at it, trying to change your life with personal development, reframing a limiting belief, or changing your story, or doing a meditation, or a mantra is sort of like numbing symptoms of something much deeper similar to functional medicine. Functional medicine doctors when, as you know, when you have that high cholesterol, don't just give you something to reduce your lipids. They look at that root cause.

So the coaching and personal development space has to pivot and change to include and really start with the root cause trauma work because that's why the affirmations aren't working. A lot of times the root cause trauma is what causes that dysbiosis in your physiology because you're coping with this emotional issue that you haven't cleared with cookies, too much alcohol, drugs, you name it, which is producing dysbiosis in the body. That dysbiosis produces more pain and suffering, which you want to then cope with, with bad food and stuff like that. So it's completely related to food. They're completely interchangeable for sure.

Dave: Your stories is pretty interesting. You were a Hollywood music manager. When I first met you, I think you'd just stepped out of that life. You were still, I think the technical word is, pretty fat.

Mastin: You could call me morbidly obese. I was at my top, 35% body fat was my top. 35%, so that's pretty big.

Dave: Where are you now?

Mastin: I'm at about 22 and it's been fluctuating. The hard part has been, actually because my career has been taking off, the travel stuff. I just figured out actually about three weeks ago how to like lose weight on the road and [crosstalk 00:05:29]

Dave: It's hard.

Mastin: Yeah. It's hard. It's so hard. It's mostly just making the decision that I was worth the investment to make it happen. But now I've been back, I have about a 10 week stretch

and I'm dropping about five pounds a week now that I'm back in the zone because when I can really dial in my hormones and my sleep and stuff like that in my training, it comes right off. But the travel stuff was what was been throwing me off. But we're, we're getting the, I can talk about that too. There's a lot of cool travel hacks you can do.

Dave: It's kind of funny because you travel maybe as much as I do. A lot of people assume I travel for work or something like that. But there's a certain thing that happens when you're one of the so called road warriors where you're just always on a plane somewhere. I travel between 125 and maybe 170 days a year. I do it for a good cause and I recognize I'm taking a hit. It's not good for you to do that. However, I feel like I'm producing more good than harm when I do it. Everything I know to undo or prevent or mitigate the damage is just built in. I've actually dropped weight this year too. I'm, depending on which day when using an electrical scale, a very high-end one, I'm somewhere between like 9.5 and 11% body fat as I-

Mastin: That's fantastic.

Dave: I don't know what my top percentage body fat was but I used to weigh 300 pounds and I'm about 216 now and relatively muscular.

Mastin: And you're Benjamin Button-ing, dude. Like somehow you get younger. You know what I mean? In 10 years you're going to look like you're 15. You know what I mean? It's crazy.

Dave: I think that's possible for all of us, man. That's a whole different conversation. But yeah, the getting younger thing is possible and real and it takes way too much work and it's, frankly, too expensive right now. But that'll all change. Someone has to show it can be done and then we can figure out how to make it cheap and widely accessible. The bigger thing is, even if you do all this stuff we just talked about, if the voice in your head and sort of your patterns are off, even if you're saying, "I'm going to take care of myself when I'm traveling," you're not going to do it.

Mastin: Yes.

Dave: Something's going to stop you and that something is you. When I read your book and decided to write the foreword for Claim Your Power, you know you've got a bunch of exercises, but just a basic awareness because you had to go through it as the, literally drug addicted music manager, loser. Fat loser, actually, it would be an apt descriptor.

Mastin: Thank you. You're right. No, you're right. You're right.

Dave: I mean like that's how you describe yourself in your book, and maybe I'm paraphrasing there, but I'm allowed to say you were fat because I was too. So otherwise you have to say, "I was obese." But-

Mastin: No, man. I was fat as fuck.

Dave: There you go. In fact-

Mastin: I was.

Dave: In fact you can say that without like-

Mastin: Totally.

Dave: Without feeling it in your gut like oh, I was a bad person because of that. You've dealt with the trauma of that. In your book and in a lot of my own personal development work and a lot of the stuff I do with neurofeedback, 40 Years of Zen, and some other recommendations around EMDR, it is about getting people out of their own way. What's your picture of trauma? How does it come into our body? How does it manifest itself?

Mastin: So trauma is, first of all I just want to clarify, when people hear the word trauma they think significant, like you're on a battlefield and you lost a limb or you have some type of sexual assault that was violent or you were mugged, and of course those things fall into the lens of trauma. But there are a million shades of trauma from like your parents were gone and you didn't have an emotional connection to them to like your father five minutes late. It all boils down to really these two ideas. Whether in the beginning of your life you either had a level of anxiety and attachment with the core idea that my needs won't get met or you had a sense of healthy attachment to the world. Einstein would say, "Is the universe safe or is it dangerous?" If you have anxious attachment, how you go through stuff is far more traumatic than if you have healthy attachment. That's why it's not what you go through, it's how you go through it.

Viktor Frankl, when he talks about Logotherapy and he was in Auschwitz. He talks about meaning and the other thing that we're now learning is that it's not just about the meaning, it's also the physiology because long-term dysbiosis can occur when you go through trauma with anxious attachment. So we can get into that. But the fundamental question you have to ask when you're a child is, "Is this place safe or is this healthy? Is this attachment healthy attachment?" So yeah, I get very excited when I talk about this. So if you have anxious attachment, which most of us do, then what starts to happen is you start to have coping mechanisms and that starts usually with most of us with some version of sugar, high fructose corn syrup, and then it kind of sugar is a gateway drug into everything else essentially.

Then what does that start to do? Chronic leaky gut, that starts to happen. You have all kinds of fascia issues and tissues. Then if you go through something traumatic like a breakup or an assault than your system isn't resilient enough to handle it. So it's just kinda like, just like starts to bottom out. Which is why certain people can go through a very intense things and have post-traumatic growth while other people, and most people, go through post-traumatic stress because their system wasn't ready for or resilient enough to be able to handle it emotionally. So think of it like leaky gut. If you have leaky gut and you try to eat something that's not good for you, it's gonna have a way worse effect on it than if you just have a really strong gut but a treat meal. It's a very different scenario.

So that would be sort of a very sort of high level approach to it. This trauma stuff, when you don't address the trauma and you're trying to do a personal development process, it's kind of like think of it like a pressure cooker. You can open it up a little bit, let off some steam, but eventually close that thing back up and the pressure starts to build up again. So we have this high level coping mechanisms that we use. The quantified self stuff can just be coping if you don't do the underlying trauma work. If you do the underlying trauma work, it's a dashboard to your life, if that makes any sense.

Dave: I love it that you're defining trauma, what I would say properly. We all hear about trauma doctors and we all think like blood and guts. One of the most traumatic things that has happened to most of us is there was a day when your mom said you can't have the boob anymore and you're a year old or whatever and going, "I'm really, really pissed off that I don't have this anymore." That like little angry experience is a trauma. And for some people it lands like really deep. It's like I used to get nourishment and love together and now I don't. You end up with these patterns. It has nothing to do with whether you're a strong human being or a good human being. It's just like your body picks it up, but it's not anywhere in your conscious mind and it becomes invisible. That's in my own life what I figured out was the sneakiest and sort of nastiest thing about traumas is that they set up a pattern in your nervous system that's totally outside your awareness and it flavors the world around you so that when you see something, you see it through that lens but you don't know the lens is there.

Mastin: That's right.

Dave: How do you go about teaching someone, and I know some of this in your book, but I want you to walk listeners through it.

Mastin: Of course.

Dave: Like to know that maybe they have an old pattern that isn't serving them?

Mastin: If you're a human being that's alive, you have a pattern or two.

Dave: There you go.

Mastin: That's first and foremost. Our brains aren't even really fully developed until we're about what, mid-twenties. So we're going through things as kids that we don't even have a meaning or context or awareness of what that actually is, and then we just take it on as normal. Here's how trauma manifests in everyday life. It manifests as anxiety, low-level depression. It manifests as worrisome thoughts. It manifests as obesity. All of the sort of chronic illnesses that we're seeing have two components and one of the big components has been the focus on physiology, chronic inflammation. But you also look at the underlying emotional component to what drives that physiology and it's a chicken and the egg.

What's more important, your physiology or your trauma work? I would say probably both. You need to focus on your microbiome health and your trauma work. You have to focus

on reducing inflammation and reducing traumatic inflammation. So on a very simple level, if you have anxiety, anxiety is sort of the clinical word for fear. Fear is the achiever word for stress. That is all just sort of something that we need to kind of focus on. If you go underneath the stress, well, why am I stressed? Well there's a threat here and I'm telling myself a story about this experience that I'm having and I'm telling myself this specific story because underneath that story is an emotion that I'm experiencing that I may or may not be aware of. Usually it's unconscious. You start to look at what produces emotion and that's the context in which that's the lens that you were just describing.

It's the context or the beliefs that we have about what is this universe safe or is this universe healthy? Then just look at, well, what happened in your life to create that context? People talk about having to go to therapy for 10 years to figure this out. You can do in 20 minutes. It's not a hard thing to figure out. The hard part is creating new habits, environments, patterns, belief systems, and cultures, and people that you hang out with that reinforce who you're becoming. That's really the hard part to do. These personal development protocols that say you don't need to know what happened to you, what they're really saying is, I don't know how to get there, and the Functional Coaching process is just it's a systems approach to get to that root cause trauma and say, hey, this thing happened.

You had an anxious attachment because of it. So everything you've ever done as a result of that makes complete sense from the lens of survival, so don't have to be mad at yourself or beat yourself up. You can have compassion that you did a great job surviving and yesterday's medicine just for surviving is today's poison for thriving. There's a level of a chill and relaxation and awareness that starts to happen when you know what you did and why you did it that is something that we just haven't focused on yet. But it's necessary now because a lot of these tools are relieving pressure, but they're not creating long-term change and transformation.

Dave: When I was about 30 I started doing really heavy duty personal development work, probably just to figure out why I would get in bad relationships or just make crappy choices and then afterwards just be like, why did I do that? I questioned like, am I stupid? I know I'm not stupid. Is there something wrong with me? I was working with this group and they're like, "Dave, you're afraid," just like you're talking about, Mastin. But I looked at this woman, her name is Barbara, and said, "How could I be afraid? There's no reason for me to be afraid, so therefore I'm not afraid." I think this is a very common mindset, especially amongst my peers in Silicon Valley. If you're a well educated or even not a well educated, just a highly rational person who thinks about things, when you think about this it doesn't make any sense. What do you say to people who are like, "What do you mean fear? Screw you buddy. I'm not afraid of anything. I'm just pissed off at those people."

Mastin: Sure. I would say your cup is too full and we've discovered your first limiting belief, which is that you don't have any trauma to work on. But in all seriousness, well, there's two things you just said. I love exponential thinking and I think exponential problems solving problems is everything but you're not going to be able to sustain exponential growth without exponential healing at the same time.

Dave: Exactly.

Mastin: You can't do it. So first of all, it's the thing that nobody's talking about. When you talk about everybody losing their job to AI, the bigger problem is how they respond to losing their job. Which is, if they don't have their trauma figured out, it's over, basically. The machines won't kill us. We'll take ourselves out. So we have to have a focus on exponential healing but what I would say is that if you're not experiencing equanimity or peace, and this is not like the healthy stress of like a micro-trauma to build muscle or to live in a certain level of high performance, this is like if you're consistently angry, if you're not in a nurturing relationship, if you're not in a relationship that's serving you, if you're not really lit up by your work, if you're not experiencing general flow consistently trauma's in the way. The real thing you should do, especially if you're a high achiever, is get curious because if you take the approach of Elon Musk or any of these billionaire guys that are doing big stuff, they all have root cause analysis in their mindset.

So what's the root cause of my anger? I guarantee you it's trauma. It's just we haven't had a lot of a framework for it and there's been a stigma like, oh, if I do my trauma work, then I'm weak. It's kind of like when we used to think therapy was weak. Or when Richard Gere came out as a Buddhist, everyone was upset at that time. But what's so cool about what you're doing Dave, and I think this is amazing that you're leading the way on this, is that I've seen you talk before Claim Your Power came out about how trauma work is sort of a part of being a high functioning person. So really you're actually behind the curve if you're not doing your trauma work because the people who are doing their trauma work are making a better impact. They're feeling safe in their success. They're building better nurtured relationships. They're going to be able to better adapt and handle exponential growth.

So especially the high achievers, the minute you start to think that you know you are so screwed and you know that in business. We know that when we we're the experts, Naveen Jain talks about as soon as you're the expert, you're no longer relevant in the industry. So you need to just approach it, even if you're a billionaire or even if you're someone who's highly successful, with that sort of open mind in that empty cup philosophy just like you would a brand new business.

Dave: There's this, the model of a high performance car. It seems to work really well. Although, I have a surprising number of friends who don't have cars or know anything about them anymore. I'm still going to use the analogy. If you have a car and the engine doesn't work very well, it just can't make enough power to go as fast as it could, you can solve that problem. That's usually like a food and toxins sort of thing. That's why I started out there. But if the brakes are always on on the car and it doesn't steer right, that's where trauma comes in. Because you think the steering wheel is pointed forward but it's pointed sideways but you don't know and you don't know that the brakes are always on a little bit until basically the car won't go as fast as it could.

So the high performers, they make sure that the steering wheel matches where the tires are going and they make sure the brakes aren't on a little bit. That's why trauma matters for high performance because that's what changes your direction. But it's invisible. You just don't know. I believe that I wouldn't be able to do the things that are part of my life,

just being a good parent and husband and to be able to like podcasts and books and you know, events and just all the stuff I'm doing and to be the CEO of a medium-sized company at this point. With trauma, with my brakes on all the time, I would hit the wall. I would be nuts. I'm actually feeling pretty happy, which is kind of astounding.

Mastin: And rare for someone in your position.

Dave: It is. And I kind of keep questioning myself, am I really happy or am I just following some old pattern, but I'm pretty sure I'm really happy. What about you, Mastin? I mean you've had phenomenal growth in your online presence. You've been on Oprah's list. You've been on stage all over. You're flying all over the place. Your career on fire. Where's your happy level?

Mastin: I would say that I'm at a, probably right now out of a 10, I'm at an 8 coming out of a 4. I just went through a crazy contraction for the last couple of years actually. I've been coming out of that. The reason why I've been coming out of it is because you teach what you got to learn. I've been deep in my own work for probably the last two or three years because I did hit a upper limit. I hit a wall. I hit a growth and I was like why am I not, I should be growing faster. I started looking at, wow, your parents weren't there emotionally for you, so you got really good doing stuff by yourself. But I need collaboration to be in a partnership with Jenna, my girlfriend and partner. I need collaboration to be in an ecosystem of peers. I need to learn how to integrate and do that type of stuff because it was scary for me to interact with people. And also when I put out the Claim Your Power book, there was a lot of people, unexpectedly who came and supported it and there was a lot of people who didn't. So I've had a major shifting around of relationships.

I had to ask myself what does that mean? When I was there for people who weren't reciprocal, what does that mean? It's just been a soul searching process. And then who am I? You know, I had this blog called The Daily Love that got millions of people reading it and we could be at Mind Body Green size by now if I had kept pursuing it, if I wanted to. But I decided to shut it down because something was calling me and I had to do soul searching and figure out what differentiates me from a Louis or you or Brendan or Tony. I had to figure all that soul searching work out. I had to go through a sort of dark night of the soul to figure all that out. So there was a re-birthing process that was extremely scary for the last couple of years. All of our numbers were down. Revenue was sort of stable and declining but in growing a little bit. There was just systems that weren't in place. It was painful. Then there was the existential pain of who am I, how do I fit into all this? I started to slowly figure that stuff out. Now I sort of have come out of that like I know who I am, at least for right now. It might change in 5 or 10 years. But I have a pretty good clear sense of that and like how I can uniquely contribute. But that was terrifying to go through. Awful. Because you thought you had something and you had to basically burn it all down, essentially.

Dave: It sounds familiar to me. I talk about how I made \$6 million when I was 26. People always hear that and then they don't hear the second part, which is and when I was 28, I lost it. I've just learned from watching entrepreneurs, from coaching them, and it just from being one, I think the state of your business directly reflects the state of your

energy. And this is true of even bigger companies where if the CEO or a primary leader in the company is having bad relationship issues at home or just going through a rough emotional patch, I can't tell you why unless you want to invoke quantum woo-woo whatevers, which I'm okay to do, but I can't tell you I know that's why, but there's something that happens where why did the business wobble when it shouldn't have? It's because the person who's feeding the energy into the business wobbled. Do you buy that?

Mastin: 100%. I mean, there's peer reviewed research and then there's just experiential data. Experiential data is way more valuable. What I'll say is I've absolutely seen that be the case for me, most of my clients, I would say pretty much all my clients. There is an energetic frequency that absolutely happens. Just, I mean if you think that's weird look at your cell phone. You can't see the connection but wifi exists. LG, whatever, 4G, 5G exists.

So like I absolutely believe it. Especially in looking to my research in the microbiome the last four or five months. I'm absolutely convinced those microbes talk to the field, 100%. I'm convinced of that. But I do see that there is a direct correlation between how the leader is vibrating and how the organization vibrates. One of my core values is to view everything that happens in my life as a living lesson. When I view things that way, then I can start to take responsibility and pivot and change and not let it have to define who I am or make it become a part of my identity.

Dave: Let's go back to what you said about your book launch. If you're okay with it, I would like to explain to people listening exactly how some book launches work. Sort of walk through the book launch model the old way, the way I think that you were that you were relying on and were like, "Who are my real friends?" kind of thing.

Mastin: So here's the thing. I don't think a lot of people in this space, maybe I'm just speaking, I'll speak for you and me because I know this is true for you too. I don't ever give with the expectation of return, but I enjoy reciprocal relationships where there's mutual energy exchange. That to me is like, that's abundance mindset.

Dave: You help someone who's doing good work without expecting something back.

Mastin: Yeah. You just, you give. Then you expect or rely on or hope that the people that care about you sort of, there's a reciprocation because it's just abundance. That's all it is. That's the abundance mindset. I don't believe in the whole buy a bunch of books and give it away for free thing and hit the list and then disappear. When I put something out I want it to be iconic and a long-term plan. So people ask me like what's up with my next book. Claim Your Power is my next book because I'm going to have like a very long promotional cycle and I want to keep talking about it because it's a very important book.

So when we went to put the book out I started, this is like 10 years in the making of my frameworks and learning stuff and I'm just very excited about it. A book launch, it's like, "Oh, poor him." But no, a book launch is a vulnerable moment. It's like a scary moment. It's terrifying for everybody, whoever goes through one. You look at the people who in

your network and your relationships and say, "Hey, I need help with this. Would you put this out? Would you talk about it?" It's incredible, Dave, when you do that you get to see who shows up and who doesn't show up. It's a very different conversation than when you have something that other people want and they show up and they ask for things. Because I'm just a very, basically if you ask me for something I'll give it to you for the most part. So this was instead of me having a leverage to help somebody, this is me needing some support and help. It was very scary for me to do that, to ask for help. I was very surprised at who showed up, including you, you did it. I mean, I'm super grateful. It was amazing.

We had a lot of people support the book, Tony Robbins, Deepak Chopra, a lot of people. Then there were people who for me were like, "Oh yeah, that's my friend" and then they kind of like disappeared. You're just kinda like, "What's up with that?" Then you call them on it and then they say the completely, they just give you lines of BS. You just have to realize, I realized that I'm not in a relationship, I've just been giving to you and you've been taking. That's just a completely different experience. It was very heartbreaking at the time because you think you have a certain relationship with certain people and then you realize that's actually not the case. I then asked myself the question, what does that mean? What's the lesson in this?

The lesson for me has been differentiation. And then nurturing really solid, generative relationships like the one that we have. You have always been so generous and so kind and so giving for no reason and that's been a major blessing in my life. You are the example of somebody, I'm not saying this 'cause I'm on your podcast, this is just what's true, who just operates in that abundance mindset. When you go through a book launch or any type of promotion where you're asking people stuff, especially people you've done solids for in the past and they don't show up, it's just you start to realize hey, this is a transactional relationship in one direction and cool, but I'm just not going to vibe with that anymore. Then you create that hole in your life and then cool new things start to come in from that vacuum, I think.

Dave: It actually triggers abandonment for a lot of authors, which is an old trauma. Abandonment usually happens, it's a feeling you get when you're a small child. Then it can happen if your parents break up or if you have a bad relationship. All sorts of things can trigger it. But it is incredibly vulnerable. It's like here's my best work. I'm going to throw it out there in public and see if people shit all over it. Or just no one will even pay any attention. It is emotionally really intense. This is something that, that people listening, unless you've written a book or had a really big project like a play or something that you're putting on, and that opening that you just don't know what's going to happen. So there's always a little bit of something in the pit of your stomach going, "God, I hope this is as good as I think it is." Maybe it is that good and still no one listens, which is a failure of execution, which is also still your fault.

Then all of us out there who have the ability to reach people, we know each other, at least most of us do. Most of us know who were the people who steal content and the people who are untrustworthy and they're all kind of on blacklists. Then it's weird when you ask people for help and sometimes I'm not in a position to do it. I'm in a weird place

right now, Mastin, where I'll always help people when I can, but I literally have 800 authors who've asked to be on Bulletproof Radio

Mastin: I can't imagine.

Dave: And I'm like-

Mastin: Wow.

Dave: There's 110 episodes a year. We just interviewed Lara Logan, CBS correspondent and some really just profound people I want to talk with. I'm like, actually I want to help everyone but I'm realizing I also have a personal capacity where if you're always giving, I just, I can't make it. I can't fit it in there.

Mastin: Right.

Dave: So I don't want to trigger that feeling of abandonment in people but I'm also willing to let them feel abandoned if I'd give them a genuine, "Hey, like I'm not going to have you as a guest on the show, maybe because your book really isn't that good. Or maybe because you're saying something that people who listen already know about." But that feeling of vulnerability and then questioning and then maybe being let down, it takes just guts to do it. How did you develop the guts to do that? Like just walk me through like what went through your emotional energy when you were launching Claim Your Power?

Mastin: I always, and this is something I learned in the music business, when you're in the position of power and you help people, that's a really good thing. If you're in a position of power and you take, that's not a good thing because long-term the marathon of life, you're not going to net have any positive. So I always have a helper mentality and in the Give and Take by Adam Grant, I'm definitely a giver. So that's how I build everything. I try to add as much value. I always ask questions. How can I help? How can I serve? That's where I lead with. So I had done a lot of investing in friends and relationships and just giving and giving and giving and I was like so excited. Guys, I've been working on this for so long. I can't wait to share it. I just had this sort of desire to be like, just share this work and the excitement around it.

I would say that there was a good, probably 60, 70% of the people who showed up who were there and then a bunch of people who I'd never anticipated to show up who were there. Then there was this like 30, 40% of people who, some of them were busy, which is understandable, but there was a couple of few people who like they absolutely had no reason not to do anything other than they just chose not to, which we can get into why that was. I have ideas. But in me that felt like, what the fuck, anger, resentment, absolute abandonment, 'cause that's my core wound is alone. Like I'm used to being alone and I would rather be in the worst toxic relationship than be alone. According to my-

Dave: Still?

Mastin: According to my trauma pattern. That's present pattern for me. That's why I speak about in the present moment. Because if I said "I used to," that would be denying that part of me. It's a very small part of me now but it's still there. That part of me would rather be in a toxic relationship than alone. Now I've worked on it and I give it what it needs, but here's the thing. Because I created Functional Coaching and because I know what my patterns are, I know ahead of time when I'm going to go into a vulnerable moment like that. Here's the five or six things that's going to get triggered in you and here's what you should do instead. So I have like a preparedness plan and it's not like this like doom and gloom thing where I'm like casting doubt or fear on myself. It's like I know these your five or six triggers and when you do that, here's what you do.

The only difference was in a book launch, it's just more exacerbated. It's a bigger experience than just sending an e-mail and nobody responds to you or something like that. It's a very different experience. But I had my self care, I had my positivity team. I also really focused. The most important thing is to focus on the thing that's in front of you and the relationships that are generative and nurturing. That's the most important thing. Then the rest of it you just kind of you have to like let it sort of slide off your back. But in the moment I had two or three people that I would call and just not have to be the coach and just not vent, but just disclosed this is what I'm experiencing and to have those safe containers in relationships is super valuable because I know all of us are doing big stuff and high performance and best sellers and whatever, but we all have our stuff we have to talk about and we had to work through and we all have to self disclose. So having those core group of people that were helping me through that process was vital. Then my own self care and best, all that type of stuff as well as super vital too.

Dave: That pattern that you described around choosing to be in a toxic, bad relationship instead of being alone. That's what leads to codependence where were you tend to build response for other people and you basically make them responsible for your happiness, you're responsible for theirs.

Mastin: All day.

Dave: How prevalent is that pattern in the world today or maybe in North America today would you say?

Mastin: Well, it's an interesting thing, Dave, because if you look at, for example, how the microbiome is oriented, the microbiome is all of these different things are interdependent on each other. I think there's a level of interdependence that's sort of innate in how we're wired and how we're programmed. The problem is when you make the leap from, hey we should, we need to be working together to I will save you, which is like way different. I would say that that's an extremely prevalent pattern in the world today because of mostly Anglo-Christian values of thinking that some savior will come back and save you. That's something that's sort of like type of epigenetics. That's a story that's in most of us, almost all of us. Even if you're not Christian, a lot of the old Egyptian myths of Osiris has someone being born of a virgin and crucified and risen three days later and will return. So we're kind of like waiting around for someone to come save us. Then some of us, no one handled it as a kid. No one was taking care of stuff, so we decided we're going to take care of it.

So most people are either waiting to be saved or finding, trying to find someone to save. That's basically how it is across. I see that everywhere. I work with mostly women. Strange. I'm six foot five white guy who works with mostly women and there's a very, very prevalent mend and attend pattern that definitely borderlines on codependency for sure because if you look at the epigenetics of how most women have been treated essentially forever, it's been be quiet, take care of things, shut up. That's basically how it's been. And you're the spoils of war. Now the last hundred years has had a major shift in how women's empowerment and a recognition has changed. And especially the last two years with the Me Too movement, that's completely changed the conversation, but there's still a very deep inbred-ed survival response to take care of things. Which is not a bad thing, but at your own detriment, that's when things get really bad. And that's not just for women, but it's because that's what I mostly work with. That's why I'm talking about women in this context, but men have this too, absolutely.

Dave: For me, I was born with the umbilical cord wrapped around my throat.

Mastin: Oh my God.

Dave: In the course of just doing my own personal development work, I actually, I remember in some weird kind of floaty, emotional way, making a decision like right after I came out of the womb being like something tried to strangle me. I don't, I don't know what's going on but I know how I got that pattern. I literally was like, oh, if I'm going to be alone then I'll just be alone. And I literally didn't make, I didn't connect people for like 30 years of my life until I was like, oh, I have this old trauma. Now I've identified it and I can work on that. I actually got rid of that pattern and now I have good relationships and healthy relationships. I would say that there isn't any of that left, that pattern where I'd rather be with a total jerk than be alone. No, I have codependent repellent. But for me that was a huge amount of personal growth and it wasn't particularly easy.

That's one of the reasons I wrote the foreword for your book is I think you highlighted some activities that would at least make it apparent. Because I would have told you that you were a lying jerk if you suggested that to me. I would've been like that's impossible. That makes no sense. That's dumb. And I'm just, I'm incredibly fortunate that some really, really well educated, just powerful people out to do good, they kind of picked that up and pulled me aside and were like you need to look at this.

Mastin: Yes. Well the one thing I will say, and I'm not going to tell you that you don't have a handle because I know you do but what I will say is when you look at neural pathways that are created, you never get rid of one, it just lessens and atrophies. So what I would tell you is I would say it's probably still there, but it's dormant just like a virus. The reason why I'd say that is because I believe that they're, you just never know life circumstances that could re-trigger that. That's why I say there's always a part of me 'cause I like to acknowledge that yeah, that's still, that's a neural pathway that exists in me. It's not the dominant part of who I am, but I would just say that you have it massively handled. But just the reason why, I just want to be crystal clear, I don't identify with that pattern as my identity or who I am, but I speak, I acknowledge it because when I acknowledge it, it calms down. It can flare up. I mean think about an inflammatory response, trauma is the same way. You can have those inflammatory

patterns happen. So the more that I acknowledge that pattern, it's unlike Voldemort, nothing bad happens, but I absolutely think that we have neural pathways and they never really go away. They just kind of atrophy over time.

I think that's why people relapse and stuff like that. So that would be the only thing that I've sort of noticed as it relates to the physiology of trauma and patterns is that we can absolutely create new neural pathways and new myelin pathways, all type of stuff. But the old ones are still kind of there. They're just kind of chilling. So that would be because I'm with you. I love my life now and I can imagine 10 different scenarios where I could one second trip back into like that sort of like stoic alone jerk who's like fuck you to the world and I'm going to do my thing. I do my best to like just be at peace with that, but also acknowledge that that part of me is still there. I've just found that to be a wise mindset, which is not encouraging it. I think it's allowing it to know that like, oh, I see you, you're good, and it keeps the monster at bay.

Dave: The price of freedom is eternal vigilance.

Mastin: So true.

Dave: What you're talking about there is if you want to remain free of it, you've got to always watch out to see if it happens again. And also there's that knowing that you know you're not going to let it happen which I think-

Mastin: That's right.

Dave: Helps.

Mastin: That's right.

Dave: You write about something else in your book that ties to this in a way a lot of people might not expect. Something that also encouraged me to want to write your foreword was that in Claim Your Power you talked about finding your purpose. I've fielded this question from so many people, "I don't know what my purpose is. I'm still trying to find it." Knowing what your purpose actually is versus what your parents told you it was or what society told you it was and all these things is something that most of the people like you, Mastin, who I've worked with. I'm thinking [inaudible 00:39:41] is another guy like that who sits down and basically says, "Look, I've got to find my purpose. I'm going to stop believing all the just BS rules that are out there and get down to why am I really here?" What is the value of knowing your purpose first? And secondly, how do you find it?

Mastin: Oh man. Wow. We could do three hours on that question. There's two primary values to finding your purpose. We'll talk one which is physiological, and there's all kinds of peer reviewed research on this, but it raises HDL and lowers LDL and lowers A1C. It can extend your life up to 10 years. You look at the blue zones in the world and all the folks who are centenarians have a sense of purpose. So purpose, in a very practical sense, think about, it sends signals to your body that you have use therefore be healthy, think

of it that way. And so that's really important. On an emotional and financial level, it's like a compelling reason why you're going to do something. When you really get linked into I got to do this then there's no limiting belief that's going to get in your way. There's no financial circumstance that's going to get in your way. When you're really motivated by a sense of purpose or a mission larger than yourself, competition disappears and collaboration starts to emerge. So it's really important if you want to have longevity and if you want to have high performance. It's so important. How do you find it?

Dave: Hold on. Hold on a second. I got to call a little bit of BS in there. Competition disappears. You know the people who directly copy and paste your content and sell it as their own.

Mastin: That's not competition, though. That's thievery.

Dave: It's a definition thing, alright.

Mastin: That is absolute illegal behavior, right there.

Dave: It is.

Mastin: What I mean is, for example, I decided, gosh, Naveen talked to me about in December about working with Viome. He said, I've been helping them with some of their marketing stuff. He says, I'll pay you whatever you want. I said, I want zero dollars because I want to help with this cause. And I literally meant it and I've been working with him now and I haven't made a dollar off of it. It's been a contribution because my mission is to end emotional trauma in my lifetime. That's what informed that decision. And anybody who is on that page, I can't be in competition with, I have to support them because we're on the same mission. And so it's that. That's what I mean by competition.

Dave: Okay. Got it.

Mastin: I do not mean that piracy disappears because that's horse shit.

Dave: That's an important thing. I'm like, sometimes I look at people. I'm like really like that's a really original idea. You're going to put butter in coffee and say you invented it. It's like, seriously, like there's so much opportunity. So I hear you there. But your perception when you have a sense of mission is like, okay, that's an annoyance versus a mortal threat and a lot of smaller and smaller size companies and younger entrepreneurs, but this happens even with 60 year old entrepreneurs, it doesn't really matter when your company is small, it's like your baby and a threat to your baby is a threat to you. So it triggers all those survival trauma things that we all have. That's one of the things if you have a purpose, the threat of trauma to quote "your baby", which is your company, seems like it's a lot less. So that's one of the rules of purpose. I think I'm restating what you're saying there.

Mastin: Yes. Yes.

Dave: Okay.

Mastin: Yeah and semantics matter. So yes. that's absolutely accurate because when you're motivated by a cause larger than yourself and sense of purpose, survival tends to take care of itself. That is absolutely true. We have client after client, after client who say, "As soon as I started focusing on serving and taking care of people and really living a life of purpose and meeting my own needs, money just starts to show up" or they wouldn't even pay attention to it and money would start to come in. That's a funny thing happens when you're not focused on the food, you lose weight and we don't focus on the money that comes in, when you're just in that flow state, that's when the magic happens. Now, how do you find your purpose? So real quick, there's two types of definitions because purpose is a term you have to define because there's no common definition.

There's two ways to look at. One is clinical and one is my own definition. Clinical definition of purpose is basically a life aim that stimulates behavior. That's it. It's something that stimulates and motivates behavior. That's all it is. My definition of purpose goes a little bit deeper to say, well what's that life aim and why do you want it? Well, any goal, financial, losing weight, whatever it is you're trying to achieve, a relationship, all has an emotional payoff. So the real thing we're going for the real target is an emotional state, not a thing. So that's why when you get somewhere and you're not happy, you focused on the wrong target.

I had a friend of mine who wanted to be a New York Times best seller. She was happy for three days. It took her two years of stress to get to have three days of happiness. That's not a good investment. So you have to start to look at my real target here is an emotional state, a positive emotional state. So you have to have three things. You need emotional awareness. How do I want to feel? You need emotional intelligence, which is, well, how do I produce that feeling? And then the third thing you need is emotional fitness, which is actually doing it.

Dave: Right, right.

Mastin: Over time. And so when you start to realize, wow, my purpose is really an emotional state that I cultivate within myself and then express to others in the form of service. Those are three big steps, cultivating it, expressing it in the form of service. Then things start to shift because you can lose a business, you can lose, God forbid a child or something like that, and you're going to go through a hard time, but you don't lose purpose. And when people lose purpose, that's when like suicide and depression and all type of stuff starts to become very real for people. I've been there myself.

So when you realize that things on the outside will change, but your inner emotional states are things that you can influence and eventually control, then things start to really shift and change. And the other thing is there's always someone to help. There's always someone to serve. There's always a problem to solve. So it's not about finding my purpose, it's about serving someone and then you will start to figure out what you're here for. So it's really a craftsman mindset than it is like a singular focus on yourself because if you haven't found your passion or your purpose, it's probably because you're too focused on yourself and you're not focused on helping somebody or solving a problem.

Dave: I confused, early on in my career quite a lot, I confused that idea of having a purpose with having a goal. And so when I made that six million dollars that I lost, I literally looked at another friend, pretty much everyone at this company, we held Google's first servers the hot .com company. Everyone was just making money like you would not believe even in the bitcoin froth we're having right now, we were making money at that level and it was stupid. And I looked at a friend and I said, "I'll be happy when I have ten million dollars." Yeah then I'll stop. And like my whole goal would have been like, money is going to make me happy. Like money is my purpose and that was totally wrong. And that really directly contributed to me making really bad decisions to lose the six million dollars. And your New York Times example there where my purpose is to hit the New York Times list. Well, there you go. You got three days of happiness and you're back and you actually didn't have a purpose, you had a goal and you told yourself the goal would make you happy. How do you teach people in your work and in Functional Life Coaching to find what's a real purpose versus a goal that they think is going to make them happy?

Mastin: There's a couple of things. Number one is I would say 99.9% of the time, whatever trauma you went through, once you address it and focus on it, that's kind of going to contribute to what you're going to do in the world. For example, one of my big traumas was around being overweight. That was a big trauma for me. And I love helping people figure out their microbiome health and how to have a healthy life. I love that stuff. That's a big part of what I do. And so when you realize that your pain can become part of your purpose and you can contribute, then what you've been through has a greater sense of meaning. And then there's three I would call it sort like purpose prompts and there are three questions you can ask yourself or three things that you can really tap into to like get your butt moving.

Number one is maybe what you're going to do right now is prove the naysayers wrong. The people who say you can't do it. That's a great way short term to have a motivator to stimulate a goal. Like you know what you say, I can't do it, screw you. I'm going to do it anyway. That's a real powerful motivator for people, especially in the beginning.

Dave: But that's not a purpose. That's a motivator.

Mastin: It's a prompt. It gets you started because sometimes you have to get in it for awhile before you can clarify it. The second thing is taking care of a loved one. I want to, I'm going to start this business because I want to make sure that my child is around a parent who is modeling someone who's living what they want to live. Or I want to, for me it was I had to spend 30 grand and put my mom into rehab. That was motivating my behavior for a period of time. Or buying my girl's parents a house. That was motivating my behavior for a period of time. Taking care of people that you love. And the third thing is a mission larger than yourself. Where it's not just about you anymore, it's about something much larger.

Depending on where you are in the survival scale and depending on where you are in your trauma work, one of those three things or all three will resonate with you. Either proving the haters wrong. That's a great way to get started. Taking care of a loved one. That's also a great way to get started. Or a mission larger than yourself. Because if you're in survival, you're not going to be focused on a mission larger than yourself. But

proving somebody wrong, that's a great start. And then you can move up from that process because there's a lot of people who may want to start a business or they want to do something and people are like you can't do that. So just using that leverage to start is huge. At the end of the day when you get through all the survival stuff, you have abundance. It's always about solving a problem. And that's what I love about exponential thinking and exponential tech is that we are focused on solving big problems.

And so my problem, my focus is emotional trauma. My moonshot is to put an end to emotional trauma in this lifetime, in my lifetime, because I think it's the root cause of all the other problems. Because like Elon Musk can go to Mars, but if we don't solve the trauma, it'll just be traumatized Martians, that's all it's going to be. Because it gets passed on. It's true. And most of these billionaire guys are just guys who got made fun of in high school that like wanted to do ultimate one-up to the jocks and like get really far away from earth, but it's like you'll bring your trauma with you. So there's a huge value in creating this like a Dyson sphere or some type of interplanetary system that's awesome. And I'm all for it. I love Star Trek and Gene Roddenberry.

But the other thing is that you got to do your trauma work because otherwise you're just a traumatized person alone in Mars. And Matt Damon can tell you how that was. It was not a fun experience. So you have to have this other element. And that's what motivates me today to have courage, to get up, to bust my butt, to work hard. That motivates me. But at the beginning it was just like proving the guy wrong who screwed me over in my first business. So there's different levels of it I think.

Dave: That was actually a surprisingly concise answer because it's really big question. Sometimes I think there's great value in coaching for that stuff. We all like to think, especially guys like you or me who kind of have that alone thing in our past, it's like I've got this, I can handle it. No one else can do it. But I've had great value from working with coaches where they're like, "Did you look at that?" And you're like, "How could I not see that?" But if you don't have that mirror, sometimes it's a spouse or significant other, depending on the type and quality of your relationship. But I think sometimes a coach is different than a therapist. A therapist is going to do something else but maybe that's a part of the answer. And I know that you train people to do that kind of stuff themselves.

Mastin: I'm biased about coaching. Obviously I created Functional Life Coaching.

Dave: Right.

Mastin: But the thing about, just broad strokes, therapy is really focused on what happened. And coaching is sort of focused on forward momentum on a very broad level. Functional Coaching is a combination of what happened so that you can move forward. And that's why I think it's a really cool sort of innovation in the space because, and also a lot of therapists today, I'm not knocking the profession, but there needs to be disruption innovation because a lot of them are leaving the profession to become coaches because there's far too many limitations based on their license. And the people want results, not necessarily just a licensed practitioner. And I've had Gestalt therapists and all kinds of, marriage and family therapist, all kinds of people come to my work and go, how the

heck do you do that? And I'm a college dropout. I mean my only certification is in Ashtanga yoga. That's my only certification. So I have zero certification, I just have experiential data.

And I absolutely think that a mentor and a structure of support is absolutely essential over a period of time to get the result. You have to have a mentor who is further ahead than you are. And the other thing is as you're forming new beliefs and self images, you need to be in an environment that matches that too. So it's not just enough to have a vision board, you got to really live in your vision board to make it happen because over time if you think beliefs or environment will win, environment will win a 100% of the time.

Dave: That is totally true. Speaking of things, my wife Lana just texted me. She saw that I was interviewing you on my calendar just now. She said, "Tell Mastin I said hi. I actually read his book and I actually liked it." So that was a real text that just came though.

Mastin: No way. No way. That's so cool. That's amazing.

Dave: I give her all the books I get but like you, Mastin, you must get like five books a day. People mail you to read.

Mastin: Tons. Yeah, a lot.

Dave: So I have like a stack of them, like all over the place. But she actually was like, "Oh I want to read that one." And she liked it. So there you go. That truly just happened.

Mastin: That's so cool. Oh my gosh.

Dave: All right. I got one more question for you.

Mastin: Yes.

Dave: If someone came to you tomorrow and said Mastin, I want to perform better at everything I do as a human being, like on all levels. What are the three most important pieces of advice you have for me? What would you offer them?

Mastin: I would say the first thing is to really make sure that you're doing your trauma work and that you're making it your aim for success at the next level to feel safe. That's super, super important. Success has to feel safe, otherwise you won't sustain it. Second thing is you got to be around a tribe of people who you're supporting and who's supporting you and you got to ask for help. There's no shame in that. You can call it a mastermind, you just call it friends, but you've got to be around people who are going to support you and lift you up. You absolutely 100% have to do that. And the third thing is get rid of any ideas of building billion dollar companies, being a best selling anything, and just really focus on solving problems. If you want to be, and Naveen talks about this. If you want to be a billionaire, solve a ten billion dollar problem.

Dave: Right, right.

Mastin: So it's like get your mind off of yourself and know what you need to take care of yourself, but really focus on solving problems and that will just completely change your life, those three things. If you're doing your trauma work and success feels safe. If you have a good supportive peer group and an environment that's nurturing and you're really, truly actually focused on solving problems and not just trying to appear that way, you will outperform anything that you think possible and pretty soon people will be asking, hey, how'd you do that?

Dave: That is fantastic. And Mastin, I know you're doing a bunch of live events now, which is new thing for you. Your book is Claim Your Power. Where can people find out more about the stuff you're working on?

Mastin: Yeah, so we actually, the process of the Functional Coaching, I've sort of been inspired by you and I call it trauma hacking and I really believe trauma hacking is a very interesting process people have to go through. The Claim Your Power live event is a four day event. It's a four day deep dive into the Claim Your Power Functional Coaching process. Think of it as hacking your nervous system and really helping success feel safe and that's over at [ClaimYourPowerLive.com](http://ClaimYourPowerLive.com). And we're going to be in Orlando, Florida this year, which is fun. It's July 12th to 15th. It's a super fun event and there's nothing quite like it out there. So yeah, if you want to do stuff with us, that's the best way to do it because the book is amazing. But there's nothing like a live experience. Reading about an orgasm and having one or two different things.

Dave: There you go. Mastin, thanks for being on Bulletproof Radio.

Mastin: Dave, thanks for having me, man. I really appreciate. It's been an honor to be here today.

Dave: If you liked today's show, you know what to do. Head on over to Amazon. Pick up Claim Your Power, which is a book worth reading, mostly because of the forward that I wrote. I mean the rest of the stuff in there, I'm not really, okay, just kidding. It's a fantastic book and while you're at it, if you like the book, leave a review for Mastin after you read it or leave a review for me on iTunes thing. [Bulletproof.com/iTunes](http://Bulletproof.com/iTunes) will take you there or review one of my books. Authors like Mastin and me, and we just talked about it in this episode, just knowing what people think about your work actually matters and knowing that your work is useful is incredibly motivating for authors and creators. And when you take literally like 20 seconds, to leave a few stars and say, I liked reading this, et cetera, et cetera, it actually helps other people but it really helps authors like us create the next big thing. So thanks for taking the time to do that.