

Jonathan Levi: The joke I give in the book is you had 18 years of classes on supposedly how to use your body. They were called physical education. You didn't really learn how to use your body. You had six months to a year of very awkward classes about how to use one specific part of your body. But no one ever taught you how to use your brain. As you know, the brain is the most complex object in the known universe. So a simple, "Hey, here's how it works. Here's how it likes to process information. Here's what makes information more memorable to it. Here's how to retain and maintain your knowledge." It's life-changing for people.

Speaker 2: Bulletproof Radio, a state of high performance.

Dave Asprey: You're listening to Bulletproof Radio with Dave Asprey. Today's cool fact of the day, spotlight imaging scans that can show now where symbols turn into letters in your brain. Do you know how legit that is, the fact that we didn't know any of this stuff five years ago, 10 years ago, 20 years ago? So our knowledge about every aspect of being human is skyrocketing right now. It turns out what we figured out is that there's a pecking order of brain areas that process information. This comes from three English researchers who figured out how we tie visual cues with language. They looked at a region on the back and bottom of the brain called the ventral occipital temporal cortex that we associate with reading. Over a two-week time period, scientists taught made-up words written in unfamiliar archaic scripts to 24 people who already spoke English, and they just gave the words meanings like lemon or truck.

Then they used functional MRI scans to track which tiny chunks of the brain in that region became active when those participants were shown the words they learned in training. It turns out the way the letters look, whether they have curves or staunch lines, it takes holding back of that part of the brain, and that's where we thought we process visual information. So we confirm that. But when the sounds and meanings come into play, an area further forward in that brain region that handles those abstract concepts kicks into gear. What this means for you is that if you're one of those font-obsessed millennials, maybe you are right because apparently fonts matter, right?

Okay. There's other things going on in here as well. But the idea that when you see a word, you immediately get it sound and meaning without any effort, this is actually how your brain does it, which is pretty cool. It's also really seriously, fonts actually matter. This is why. To me, just to saying, "Look." You react to the environment around you all of the time. You don't know it. You don't know how. You don't know why, but part of the world around you in that definition of biohacking that I put out there in that crusty looking infographic years ago, the art and science are changing the environment around you and inside of you. So they have full control of your own biology. Well, the fonts that you choose around you are part of your environment. They're a little part, but they change your brain, and that's kind of legit. Let me just say, if you're a fan of sans serifs, you're right. If you like serifs, you're a bad person.

Okay. Enough of that. If you don't know what a serif is you're probably someone who actually has been on a date, which is also a very good thing there. I know I've offended everyone except vegans. Sorry guys. Have some collagen, and you'll feel better. There. I have completed the trifecta of offense, and I just want to say I love you guys and thank you for the support on my book. Even if you're vegan, still love you.

Today's guest is an accelerated learning expert who is the founder of Superhuman Academy. He tutors online students on 13 Udemy courses and hosts weekly podcast. I'm talking about Jonathan Levi, a serial entrepreneur, published author, keynote speaker, born and raised in Silicon Valley. Now, I got this from your bio, Jonathan. I mean, you teach people all sorts of cool stuff. I just want to know the published author, anyone who's written a word.

Jonathan Levi: Published author.

Dave Asprey: Well, it pretty much isn't everyone who writes words and author slate isn't published author like saying I'm a trained physician.

Jonathan Levi: I suppose that's true.

Dave Asprey: Untrained physician. So publishing is a definition of author. So I'm just wondering... Sorry, the fonts were talking to my brain and got me all confused.

Jonathan Levi: I suppose in that time period between when you start the book and publish the book, which according to our mutual friend, Tucker Max, there are a lot of people who start a book and don't finish it. So I guess not everyone is a published author who is an author.

Dave Asprey: It's like if you're a waiter or a waitress in LA. You're an actor, except you're not really an actor because you've never acted.

Jonathan Levi: Right.

Dave Asprey: Okay. All right. I'm getting here.

Jonathan Levi: I'm going to give it to him. You know what? If they started the book but didn't finish it, I'm still going to give it to them. They're an author.

Dave Asprey: I would too.

Jonathan Levi: Now, if they didn't finish med school, they're not a doctor.

Dave Asprey: Oh, that's a fair point. Now, you have your, Become a SuperLearner thing. Did you use your super learning skills to let you write your book faster or better?

Jonathan Levi: I did, but I will admit that I worked with Tucker and his team to download all their knowledge about what makes a book incredible because the first two books I wrote came out as courses in text form, and I was like, "They didn't have the impact that I wanted." There was a lot of information but not enough engagement and entertainment. So I went down to Austin, and I learned from the best. I figured out not many people have sold 40 million books. So definitely, there's something to learn. Yeah. I mean, at every point in my business, five, six years ago, I didn't know how to podcast, how to do online courses, how to write books, how to lead a distributed team. At every single turn, I've applied these exact skills of learning faster to figure out, "Okay. What the hell do I need to know in order to climb this mountain?"

Dave Asprey: Well, it is a very hard mountain to climb, to become a good author. So I'm glad you decided to do that, which is worth doing because your book is worth reading.

Jonathan Levi: Thank you.

Dave Asprey: Now, I can say that because here's the deal. I really have people on the show whose books aren't worth reading. Plus, look, my new book, Super Human, you actually have the Super Human Academy podcasts. Sorry, man. I didn't plan it that way. It just kind of worked that way, but-

Jonathan Levi: Totally.

Dave Asprey: The anti-aging longevity field, we've got enough name for that or enough room for both names in there. So you've definitely got the right angle going on here. So I want to share with people the stuff you've learned about learning faster. That's really the whole point of having the podcast today is to just download some information into people. So number one thing that people do wrong when they're looking to learn.

Jonathan Levi: Yeah. So the biggest thing, how many times have you met someone and they go, "Oh, I have a lousy memory, I probably won't remember X"? People think they have a lousy-

Dave Asprey: I can't remember how many times.

Jonathan Levi: Exactly, exactly.

Dave Asprey: That was funny. You didn't even laugh.

Jonathan Levi: The fact of that matter is-

Dave Asprey: Give me some laugh.

Jonathan Levi: Totally. Totally, totally. Well, it's funny and in a tragic sort of way, right? Because the reality is extremely small part of your memory is actually determined by genetics. I always like to tell people, if you haven't been banged on the head, you don't have a lousy memory. You just don't know how to use it. In the same way that most people, I would argue looking at the body of your work, you've proved that people don't know how to use their physiology or biology either.

Dave Asprey: How-

Jonathan Levi: They live off diet Coke.

Dave Asprey: Oh, God. That'll screw up your memory. But how serious-

Jonathan Levi: I'm so dehydrated.

Dave Asprey: How serious are you about not having been banged on the head?

Jonathan Levi: Moderate banging. I mean, you'd actually have to have traumatic brain injury to have it affect your memory.

Dave Asprey: The reason I'm asking is 90% this is a plus or minus some standard deviation of people who come through 40 years of Zen. This is my neuroscience Institute five-day program. But we do a clinical grade quantitative brain map on the first day. 90% of people have evidence electrically that they got hit in the head. You're like, "Were you hit in the head?" They're like, "No, no." Then you ask them three times like, "Well, there was a time I was unconscious for three days when I was two, but that didn't count." You're like-

Jonathan Levi: Geez.

Dave Asprey: But it's not usually that big of a deal, but everyone who's young falls and hits their head. But it seems like it's an endemic thing. Between that and Daniel Amen's work, I think there is more traumatic brain injuries out there affecting memory, and so a lot of people like-

Jonathan Levi: Probably.

Dave Asprey: "I'm a bad person because I forget things." Maybe because they don't care enough. You're like, "No, you have a hardware problem." Then the diet Coke is another hardware problem. So just my question there was in your learning.

Jonathan Levi: Yeah. You're right. I probably should stop saying that facetiously because there are probably a lot of people who got banged to that. I always see babies, and I'm like, "They're so slippery. How do they not get dropped."

Dave Asprey: They're made of rubber. I'm just saying that the hardware problems are part of memory problems, and I totally derailed your point, which was okay. Assuming

you don't have a hardware problem from diet Coke or you're saying maybe it was diet Coke, your answer, not that we're picking on Coke specifically, any artificial sweetener, but-

Jonathan Levi: We don't want to get that kind of a lawsuit. Well, even if you do have a hardware problem, the truth of the matter is it's less about the hardware and more about how you use it. An old 1990s MacBook Pro can still browse the internet if you know how to close things down and use it properly. Most people don't know how to use their brain. I mean, at the most fundamental level, the joke I give in the book is you had 18 years of classes on supposedly how to use your body. They were called physical education. You didn't really learn how to use your body. You had six months to a year of very awkward classes about how to use one specific part of your body. But no one ever taught you how to use your brain.

As you know, the brain is the most complex object in the known universe. So a simple, "Hey, here's how it works. Here's how it likes to process information. Here's what makes information more memorable to it. Here's how to retain and maintain your knowledge." It's life-changing for people, just to learn these simple things that they can do to make information stick. You've been around the block, Dave. So I assume your audience knows a lot about this, things like visual and mnemonics, spaced repetition, structuring your study in a specific way and not just sitting down with a textbook and banging your head against it.

Dave Asprey: You call your book *The Only Skill that Matters*, which is basically how to use your brain. I'm not sure that I agree with you entirely that it's about-

Jonathan Levi: Talk to me.

Dave Asprey: ... knowing how to use your brain versus just having a brain that functions. As someone who had a brain that really... Okay. I was using artificial sweeteners, I had metal poisoning, I had massive toxic mold poisoning. I had holes in metabolic activity in my brain that Daniel Amen is like, "You have the brain of someone who lives under a bridge using street drugs." Like direct quote years ago. That's all been repaired. At least my brain works reasonably well. But I look at that experience plus being fat at the same time and sort of saying, "Look." At the time, I knew what a memory palace was because I've been into this hacking stuff for a long time, and I'm like, "I'm going to use a memory palace, and I'm going to grit my teeth, and I'm going to organize all these things."

You know what? It still didn't stick. Right. So let's assume that everyone who listens to this, they've read *Head Strong*, my book about how to turn your brain back on. I kind of had to do that myself. Once you have a basic hardware level of functioning, and so I'm just going to say, there's some amount of that that matters because otherwise what happens.

Jonathan Levi: Of course.

Dave Asprey: Jonathan is you. It's like when you're fat, and it was like, "Oh, you're actually fat because you're lazy, and you have no willpower." You're like, "I will kill you, and then I'll eat your bones." Because here's the deal. I have practiced my willpower every single day. I'm actually willpower athlete. I'm just fat. But when your brain doesn't work, you develop shame and guilt.

Jonathan Levi: Absolutely.

Dave Asprey: Right? It becomes like, "I am unworthy." I had this in business school at Wharton.

Jonathan Levi: Absolutely.

Dave Asprey: I'm like, "What's wrong with me?" I'm dumber than all my friends. It's a big deal. So if you got a hard thing-

Jonathan Levi: I can relate. I can relate.

Dave Asprey: Okay. Anyway, I'll get off my soapbox then.

Jonathan Levi: No, I had the same problem. I would say the only skill that matters to me is the ability to learn. A big part of that is brain health. Well, because there's folks like you writing amazing books about brain health, I steered clear of that.

Dave Asprey: It's good.

Jonathan Levi: But I assume that people are taking care of their brains because this is the only school that matters, the ability to learn, unlearn, and relearn, and you don't have basic brain health. By the way, basic brain health is... When I say basic, I'm talking stuff like, are you sleeping enough? Which not your audience, but a lot of people out there are not. They're not sleeping well enough yet. Then they're wondering, "Why don't my memory stick?" So I completely agree with you, by the way. That's foundational.

Dave Asprey: Thank you. I just wanted to have the people who were struggling with their brains who are listening. I didn't want them to feel guilt about that. All I'm saying is if you don't have the skills that are in your book, the only skill that matters book, you are not going to perform very well. If you are totally struggling and you add these skills and you're eating the fried stuff and you're drinking the artificial sweeteners and corn syrup and all that stuff, and you don't get the results, it's not your book's fault. It's like the person who's eating the fried stuff and artificial sweeteners and whatever else they're doing. It's the combo.

Jonathan Levi: Right. Well, it's like Tim Ferriss always says. I've heard him say this numerous times. People love to come up and ask me what stimulants I'm taking. Am I

drinking Bulletproof? Am I taking Modafinil? They asked me this over a diet Coke and fries.

Dave Asprey: Oh, God. That's so annoying.

Jonathan Levi: Get your basics in order, and then we can talk about... You know what I mean? You can be drinking the best organic Bulletproof Coffee. If you're washing it down with a bunch of sucralose and then it goes alongside a big Mac, you're not going to feel at your peak.

Dave Asprey: Well said.

Jonathan Levi: You might throw up as well.

Dave Asprey: So let's assume that you're at least a five out of 10 for basic brain health functions. So you're average, right? You're not broken. Then-

Jonathan Levi: You're exercising, you're sleeping, and you're eating a reasonable diet.

Dave Asprey: Okay. So then we would get into the only school that matters is learning. Now, you've got the basic hardware. We're not talking about being a Ferrari brain. We're talking about just being like a Honda brain.

Jonathan Levi: Right.

Dave Asprey: Okay. All right. Then you-

Jonathan Levi: Well, I mean, neuro-plasticity, though. You can turn that Honda into a Ferrari. It's a kit car brain, man.

Dave Asprey: Was that [crosstalk 00:14:37]-

Jonathan Levi: Your work, if anything, has really proven that-

Dave Asprey: Well, you-

Jonathan Levi: ... you can change your brain.

Dave Asprey: You can. So let's just assume for the purpose of this conversation that people are a little bit on that path, that they've done enough to be... Maybe they want to be a Ferrari, but maybe they're just okay with being a Honda. Everything in your book, having gone through it, is applicable to a baseline brain, not an upgraded brain, is the main point I'm trying to get here.

Jonathan Levi: Oh, yeah. Absolutely.

Dave Asprey: I'm not shaming people whose brains are struggling because that sucked.

Jonathan Levi: Absolutely.

Dave Asprey: I didn't like shaming myself then. All right.

Jonathan Levi: Absolutely. I want to be clear. You and I, I think respect each other's work so much because we go on the research. Right? So when I make the claim, you can actually rewire your brain and change the way it works, I'm setting a study that was done at a university in the Netherlands, and the headline when they published it in neuron magazine was brain training can rewire your brain circuitry. I'm not using marketing speak. Literally, I'm saying we can rewire the way your brain works.

Dave Asprey: It does. If you look at brains structuring neuron connections and multiple layers of the PFC, there's all these... In fact, I bet that there's a very high correspondence between people say, "What you eat doesn't matter. Only calories count and your brain can't rewire itself." These are the people who are super overweight and have white lab coats and got their medical degrees online in the 1960s. I don't understand. They didn't have online in 1960s, get the joke. But something's not right in their mindset. So let's just assume everyone listening believes that their brain can change, which you have to believe for it to change.

Jonathan Levi: You do.

Dave Asprey: Let's talk about getting into this thing you say, learn like a caveman in your book, which ties in. That's why I chose the cool fact of the day. Talk to me about how cavemen learn.

Jonathan Levi: Yeah. So I want you to imagine everyone in the audience that you are a paleolithic caveman or cavewoman. You're roaming the Savannah about half a million years ago. What kind of information is relevant and valuable to you? You have so much knowledge you can identify, and we know this from tribal peoples today. You can identify thousands of plant species. You know when they grow, where they grow, what they're used for, what are medicinal ones, what are poisonous ones? You know the animal migrations. You have tons and tons and tons of knowledge. You can navigate using the stars. But you can't read and write. This doesn't bother you at all, by the way, because you know the entire oral history of your tribe dating back 10 generations. So we're meant to have all of this knowledge, but that knowledge is meant to be visual, experiential, engaging knowledge, not boring stuff from a textbook.

So the way caveman learned is through engaging visual experiences. If you look at the top memory athletes, world record holders, people who do what you would call superhuman feats of memory, all they're doing is learning like a caveman. They're turning every piece of information they need individual symbols, and then they're putting it into things like the memory palace to harness this evolutionary advantage we have to remember pictures and

remember location. It's part of our survival circuitry. So that's how men learn. If you can turn reading about world war II or reading about the Japanese-Russian war in the 1800s and turn that into a visual experience where you're imagining actual scenes, creating these vivid connections in your brain, it's going to be much more engaging and much more memorable.

Dave Asprey: Now, I came across a study that was actually a cool fact of the day if I remember right. See what I did there. I'm not remembering. But it actually said that hearing a story, an oral story is activating the same parts of the brain that reading a story does. So the people who are saying, we're going to bag on audio books, that we're activating that visual system the same way, at least if it's a well-written audio book or visual book, do you agree with that? Because you talked about oral traditions that were handed down for these cavemen. But in your book, you're kind of more visual, and then you describe it. So auditory versus visual, does it matter?

Jonathan Levi: I haven't checked the research there. But what's interesting to me is what happens once it goes either in your ears or in your eyes.

Dave Asprey: Okay. So [crosstalk 00:18:53]-

Jonathan Levi: Are you actually imagining? Exactly. One of the skills that I teach people, because it takes quite some time to learn how to speed read proficiently. so one of the things that we'll teach people is as you're learning this technique of, we call it visual markers, creating these visualizations. So to give people a concrete example, let's say that I meet someone named David. Okay? I want to remember their name at a conference. I might picture them as David and Goliath, and I'll picture them with the sling, and I'll picture them fighting Goliath so that I have a visual marker and I have an association to existing knowledge. So it's pictures and connections.

That way, if I don't remember the person's name, I just go back. What was the visualization that I came up with, and it's connected to something that I remember from my childhood, learning about David and Goliath.

Dave Asprey: All right.

Jonathan Levi: So you can do that with conversations. You can do that with any information that's coming in. But the key idea is, do you convert visual information? There was actually a really interesting study in 2017, where they're starting to realize that there it may not be possible to have memory without visual stimulation. That all memory may be connected to visual stimulus, which is crazy.

Dave Asprey: I'm just thinking, there are some people who are born blind, like Stevie Wonder. On Instagram, there's a picture Stevie Wonder actually got to spend some quality time with him, which was a highlight of my experience in this life. He's never been able to see yet. My God. That was a special person.

Jonathan Levi: Isn't that incredible?

Dave Asprey: With what you're saying though. How can we have blind people who don't have sight, who never had sight?

Jonathan Levi: Yeah. I would argue. Again, this is something I haven't researched in depth because it's a fringe case for us. I would argue that... So first off, the vast majority of blind people have some sight. So I learned about this when I went to dining in the dark, and I discovered something like 70% of people who are legally blind, they can see color or they can see light or they can see shapes but not well. So that's I think part of it. I don't know. Part of me wants to believe I need to ask a blind person. But part of me wants to believe that they can still imagine things because when you hand a blind person a statue of an elephant, they're able to identify it and go, "Oh, yeah. I've felt this before. This is an elephant." Right.

Dave Asprey: So there's a representation in the brain that's usually visual, or there's some... maybe made out of-

Jonathan Levi: Exactly.

Dave Asprey: ... fairy dust if you've never seen an actual one. But it's a concept that's going to have that. Okay. I'll go with that.

Jonathan Levi: But I need to research that. I love that question.

Dave Asprey: I'm going to be a little bit skeptical here, Jonathan.

Jonathan Levi: Talk to me.

Dave Asprey: I've read books. I've sucked. So I used to have Asperger's syndrome. Because my brain was so dysfunctional, I actually tested higher on that. My whole family, engineers and on that spectrum. I don't think I mostly have it anymore, especially when I was younger. I would've said I was face blind. I mean, people that I worked with, I wouldn't recognize him at the mall. I just had no idea who they were. Without context, I couldn't categorize anybody.

Jonathan Levi: That's a real thing.

Dave Asprey: It was a real problem. I felt horrible about it. I'm much better now, but I'm probably below average still. But I trained it. So I tried. I read books about this as a teenager and as a young adult. I tried this. Their name is Buddy. I'm going to picture it. Okay. That shit doesn't work. I'm so sorry. Every memory expert says that. It has never worked one time for me no matter how hard I try. So do you really do that?

Jonathan Levi: You might be face blind. I do. I do. I do that or for foreign language names? If I-

Dave Asprey: [crosstalk 00:22:36]-

Jonathan Levi: ... meet someone named Sanjjanaa, Sanjjanaa is their Indian name. I'll just picture Jenna Marbles, this funny YouTube comedian sitting in the sun with this person. So I really do this and Harry Lorayne.

Dave Asprey: Your brain really does that, and it actually works.

Jonathan Levi: I've trained it to do it. Harry Lorayne went on the Johnny Carson show many times without memory palaces, which is amazing to me. I interviewed him. I was like, "You really never used memory palaces." He would memorize 1,500 audience members names doing this. But you actually might be face blind. That's a real thing. The problem there with face blindness is you can't even call up that you've seen that face. So you don't even know how to get to that visualization because you're like, "I don't know if this is a new face or if I have a visualization." That's a totally different thing. That's actually happening in the PFC, where you literally... Because the human brain can recognize a familiar face in 0.015 seconds and assess the emotion of it. It's like a hack, right? You can identify a picture in something like 0.13 seconds. But you can identify a face faster. Why? Again, because evolutionary advantage, what's important, is this person a friend or a foe, and are they angry? Are they really happy to see you?

Dave Asprey: Have you ever done those tests, how fast you recognize an angry face versus a happy face?

Jonathan Levi: Yeah. Yeah.

Dave Asprey: Did you score normally, or how were you?

Jonathan Levi: I scored pretty high.

Dave Asprey: I was like three times better.

Jonathan Levi: Yeah. Micro expressions, they call it.

Dave Asprey: Okay. I was three times faster recognizing angry people than happy people.

Jonathan Levi: That's interesting.

Dave Asprey: That's so bullying.

Jonathan Levi: But you might actually have face blindness. I mean, that's a real legitimate thing.

Dave Asprey: I feel like I don't have it as much as I did. I've improved to put that way. But just the other day, I actually know him pretty well. He's a friend. But he's a friend that I've spent quality time with only three or four times, and the rest of it's all on the phone, and it's kind of a femoral. But I've really helped him a lot and

someone I've really valued who's helped me. But out of context, I run into on the street, and I'm like, "Who the hell is this?" It takes me a minute. I hear their voice, like the sound of their voice. So maybe my brain is just weird enough.

Jonathan Levi: So you get free pass.

Dave Asprey: Maybe that's-

Jonathan Levi: I might actually have some level. It is a spectrum, like Asperger's.

Dave Asprey: It is. Right.

Jonathan Levi: It's a spectrum of face blinds. But you can still use in every techniques. It's crazy.

Dave Asprey: So you're saying, for me, maybe this name thing. I might be able to remember the name, but I might not match it to the face because my brain is weird. All right. So if you're listening to this and you're like, "There's that one time David didn't recognize me," it wasn't personal. Trust me. You could just walk up and be like, "Hey, remember me?" I'll be like, "Dude, of course, I remember you." The odds are [crosstalk 00:25:08]-

Jonathan Levi: I'm just so honored that every time I've bumped into you, you've recognized me.

Dave Asprey: No. I'm just pretending. I had no idea who you were. No, I'm kidding.

Jonathan Levi: Okay. Okay. Cool. This guy's got orange glasses, and he's talking about memory. It's a match.

Dave Asprey: I'm totally messing with you. So I'm going to just say my experience will be so many standard deviations away. So for most people who have even some my normal brands, the associating David and Goliath or a picture with someone will permanently or at least for a couple of hours, let you remember someone's name.

Jonathan Levi: So that's a great question. It will last a lot longer, a lot longer. But here's the catch, right? There's no magic pill. Although I heard that Bulletproof is developing the magic pill. But there's no magic pill for memory. Every memory expert that I've interviewed, talked to, had on the show, they all say, "Look, you have to do this space repetition." We know, right? Our memory is subject to exponential loss. Our brains are 2% of our body's mass, 20% of the energy. In order to maintain that ratio and not go even further, they have to forget things. They have to do regular maintenance. So we have the hippocampi.

Dave Asprey: There's two things that you've talked about that we haven't defined for listeners yet, and they're going to get confused on this. You talk about memory palaces, and I did too. But we didn't define what they are. There's lot of people that

don't know what that is. So we got to talk about that. Then space repetition is another technique. So in terms of adding the most value, tell us about-

Jonathan Levi: Let's talk.

Dave Asprey: ... memory palaces first and then space repetition if that's the right order to go in.

Jonathan Levi: Yes. Perfect. So the memory palace is this 2,500-year old technique. Essentially, it's such a simple thing. It was used by the ancient Greeks. In fact, they think that the Iliad and the Odyssey, because the Greeks were very against writing. Actually, Socrates was quoted as saying, "Writing weakens the mind and softens the memory." So the Greeks used this technique to transmit stories, and it was lost most likely because the Catholic church is like, "You're doing what in your head." So the memory palace technique is basically this. You take those visual markers, right? So we just met David, and we have an image, just a little figuring if you will, of David fighting Goliath. We take that, and we put it in a location. So if it were a person, I might do, I'm in this conference hall. Where did I meet David?

You actually put that visualization in the physical space. We met Sanjjanaa. We might put Jenna Marbles, his famous YouTuber, tanning with this Sanjjanaa in the sun. We'll put that in another location. Now, you can do this for anything.

Dave Asprey: These are the locations you're talking about. Is this the location you met them, or do you have this storage warehouse, and you put them on shelves?

Jonathan Levi: Yeah, great question. For people, if I meet them at a conference, I'll just put them where I met them. If I'm memorizing a speech, what I'll do is I'll go around the perimeter of the house, apartment, whatever it may be. When I say location, anything that you can anchor to. So you've got your desk chair, put one there, the computer monitor, put one there, the keyboard, put one there, the corner of the desk, the desk drawer, the bookshelf.

I just advise people not to get too condensed. Don't put three on one bookshelf because you're going to start to confuse them. Just like, Dave, you can tell me... I mean, you were just traveling a whole bunch. We both were. You can tell me the layout of your last hotel room. You don't know why. It wasn't important to you, but you know exactly where the restroom was. You know exactly where the shower was. You know what corner of the shower the soap was on. Your brain just does this, and it's very simple why. That's survival advantage. There was an amazing story where they took a Brazilian Amazonian tribes person down to a university in, I believe it was Sao Paulo because they wanted to study him, an ethnographer. The entire time, he's frantically looking out the window of the Jeep, just looking for the moon and looking at all the trees that he was passing.

They get them down into the basement where they stuff all the ethnographers and anthropologists because they're underfunded. They realized after talking to them, they're like, "Well." He kept pointing back in my tribe, and he was pointing in one specific direction and like, "Why are you pointing in that direction?" He's like, "Because my tribe is exactly in that direction." First off, they had to check Google Maps, and they realized he was right, and they go, "How far?" He goes, "If I walked for five nights and four days, in the middle of the third day, I would get there," or whatever it is, right? He was right. They realized this is a huge survival advantage for people who are hunter-gatherers. It's like, "Where's the winter food supply? How do I get home? Where are the tribesmen who have a habit of eating us? Where are the tribesmen that we trade with?"

So it's this huge survival advantage that our brains do naturally, which is why you'll never forget every home you've ever lived in. You know the layout. So I always tell people, it's like, "You can't remember silly little things that you learn in a textbook. But you have all this..." Just think of it as raw storage, like a USB that you would plug it in. You have all these empty memory palaces, and all you need to do is start putting your memories in there. So this works, and we teach systems. If you need to memorize numbers, if you're a trader or whatever, symbols, numbers, there's a way to convert those into pictures, and we can talk about that if it interests your audience. There's ways to convert names, foreign language words. I've developed systems to convert grammatical systems.

So I learned Russian years ago. I was struggling so much to learn the grammar until I converted it into a memory palace. It's like, "All right. This is the date of case. So therefore, words must end with this." I put an E-M-U in here because actually emu is a word in Russian in the date of case. You create these fun visual symbols, and then you can just go into your memory palace. If people have seen Sherlock Holmes with Benedict Cumberbatch, it's almost exactly like that. It's you go into your memory palace, and you have all these different symbols of whatever it is. I have one for the NATO phonetic alphabet. I have one for Russian grammatical case system, circle of fifths in music theory. You just create these fun symbols, and then you place them in places, and all of a sudden, it's like reading off a cheat code. I mean, you just have it.

Dave Asprey: You talk about this in not this much detail in your book, *The Only Skill that Matters*. But I think that there's enough of this that... You have whole courses on how to do it. It's not that straightforward. But at least the idea that your brain can do this and why and how is covered in *The Only Skill that Matters*.

Jonathan Levi: Totally.

Dave Asprey: So my experience on this, and I've talked a lot about brain hacking, but it's used like electrical and feedback and biochemical. I really got into memory palaces probably when I was... Geez, this had to be 23, 24 maybe. So this was 20 years ago. I got to where I could do it, and I had this kind of layout, and I'd always put

stuff in the same place. Even as I'm talking, I'm gesturing with my left hand and like, "Look, I can still go there." But I-

Jonathan Levi: You still know where it is.

Dave Asprey: But after a while, I stopped using it. But people who have talked to me in person or people who have seen me be interviewed, I know stuff. I know a lot of stuff. I think what happened is that, after using a memory palace consciously, I do know that all of the things that I know about the brain and mitochondria and all stuff, it's all visual, and it's all in a big picture in my head. But it's not in a palace anymore. The palace dissolved. But-

Jonathan Levi: It's in a mind map. It's in a neural-

Dave Asprey: It's mind map.

Jonathan Levi: Yeah, yeah. I've seen you, and I've actually... You talk a lot with your hands as well when you're talking about mitochondria and stuff. I've seen you work through these maps in your head and when we talked about Lyme disease, which of course, I... Here's a fun experiment. I'm taking a risk here. But do you remember when we were talking with Tanya Rising about Lyme disease and mold? Do you remember where we were, where we were sitting?

Dave Asprey: I have no clue.

Jonathan Levi: Really?

Dave Asprey: Not at all.

Jonathan Levi: So I remember exactly where we were. We were outside of Genius Network on a round table, the first round table closest to the cement. We were the three furthest away from the center. You remember this?

Dave Asprey: Lucky you.

Jonathan Levi: You got to remember this.

Dave Asprey: I remember-

Jonathan Levi: It's in a mind palace.

Dave Asprey: ... a conversation there. Keep in mind, I grew up in an Asperger's brain, so I'm very fact-based. I remember the conversation. But the other thing is if you have ADHD, which I certainly do-

Jonathan Levi: You and me both.

Dave Asprey: ... you only pay attention to the stuff that you really, really care about. Right? And-

Jonathan Levi: Totally.

Dave Asprey: So I find that my brain, it'll store the nuggets. But where we have the conversation, it's not useful. So maybe it's in there somewhere. But I totally don't have a picture of it anymore. Or maybe I do, and I just don't know how to access that. That's probably more likely.

Jonathan Levi: Right. To your point though, it is interesting that all of your knowledge is these pictures, right? So when you're talking about mitochondria or Lyme disease, you have pictures, which I think probably does come from using memory palaces because the research shows us that once you've learned how to do this, there was another study, the title of which was brain supersized memory is trainable and long lasting, is the title of this study, and it's true. They tested people six weeks later, and they still were naturally doing this. They were just creating images. That's why I like to say. It's just rediscovering your natural way of learning. People love to say, "I'm an auditory learner, a kinesthetic." My answer is you just haven't tried unlocking your real photographic memory because we all are naturally wired to be photographic.

Dave Asprey: When you were writing your book, did you draw pictures and then write your book?

Jonathan Levi: We have a lot of diagrams in the book.

Dave Asprey: Yeah. I mean-

Jonathan Levi: For me, it's all up here.

Dave Asprey: It's all in your head.

Jonathan Levi: I've got all these pictures up here and all the examples that I give and all the stories. There's pictures. That Sanjjanaa example, that's an image in my head from a real person that I met at INSEAD who was from India, and her name was... I mean, that's a real example. Another example I love to give people is caber, the Spanish word for to fit, cab, bear. Picture, a taxi cab, and you're trying to stuff a grizzly bear in there, right? Cab, bear. What's beautiful about that? It's an outrageous image. So you've got the outrageous... I don't know if I mentioned, but violence, sexual, absurd imagery works better. Our brains love novelty. So it's violent. It's an image. It's connected to the actual meaning of the word. People won't forget that for quite some time, and then we still need to talk about space repetition as well.

Dave Asprey: We're going to get to space repetition, I swear. But okay. Violence, sexual imagery. Okay. I've kind of written a few things about the effect of porn on the

brain. I tried the violence, sexual imagery. So I'm like, "Oh, everyone I meet at this party, let me just imagine violent, sexual things." But I don't think that's good for your soul.

Jonathan Levi: I don't think it is. Like I said, this stuff miraculously disappeared. The Greeks used it for 1,000 years. Then roughly about the time of the Catholic church's rise, they burned a guy at the stake who wrote a couple of books about this that did not help the popularity of the memory palace technique, and it just disappeared and disappeared until about the 1950s when guys like Tony Buzan and Harry Lorayne re-popularized it.

Dave Asprey: Wow. But you're not telling people to walk around the, I guess, violently stuffing a bear into a cab. But it seems like we-

Jonathan Levi: Yeah, it's absurd. It's bizarre. Sanjjanaa, there's two women in a bikini, and that's pretty, at least in my brain, entertaining. So I always tell people these images are for you only. I'm not talking about horrific mass murders. Gabriel Wyner has some really good stuff. He's a language learning expert, and we see eye to eye on this visual stuff. His one is, if it's a masculine verb, languages which have masculine, feminine, if it's a masculine verb, it's lightning striking, whatever it is. Right? If it's a feminine verb, it's on fire. So that's pretty violent imagery, and that'll get the job.

Dave Asprey: But it's visceral. But it's not violent like heads getting cut off kind of stuff. So okay.

Jonathan Levi: Exactly.

Dave Asprey: All right. I don't-

Jonathan Levi: Exactly.

Dave Asprey: I don't want to share information on the show that's going to make people walk around imagining porn and violence all the time. But I do get it, unusual noteworthy, and titillating basically is what we're talking about.

Jonathan Levi: Bingo. Bingo.

Dave Asprey: That's a word that I can remember easily.

Jonathan Levi: Right, right. Do you remember the word for to fit in Spanish?

Dave Asprey: It was caber, but-

Jonathan Levi: There you go.

Dave Asprey: ... that it also helps. Of all the languages that I know something about, I'm quasi literate in Spanish when I spend time in the Spanish-speaking countries, so that helps. All right. So we've got a good idea of what a memory palace is. When you put stuff there, you can have one location where you always put things. You can sort of remember in the room. So you're just visually placing these unusual images to help you remember stuff, and you have more advanced stuff in some of your courses.

Jonathan Levi: I would encourage people, build a lot of them. I think where you might've gotten into trouble is you were reusing one. They're free. They don't cost anything. They're already in there. So I have a separate one for the NATO phonetic alphabet. I spend a lot of time on the phone as I'm sure you do. So I learned it, and it's so much easier. I have a different one for the circle of fifths. We're actually in my memory palace now for the circle of fifths. Just create new ones. They're free.

Dave Asprey: Okay. So we may have different words for it, but I have a bunch of different images that I use. Oh, this is my mitochondria one. This is my stack of brain hacking. So these are analogous I think to them. But for me, they're more 3D blobby structure things. But just for people listening to this-

Jonathan Levi: Oh, yeah. No. I'm saying create new palaces but same images.

Dave Asprey: Okay, got it. Now, when you go from this memory palace technique to spaced repetition, first, tell us about spaced repetition and then tell me whether I should be using that with my memory palaces because I'm probably not.

Jonathan Levi: So we know from a guy named Hermann Ebbinghaus who did the worst possible study you can do, which is for years and years, he memorized BS syllables, like Z, F. He memorized sequences of them and tested himself. What he figured out, which it became seminal. He was one of the first people ever to publish. He was actually the first person ever to publish research on memory because people thought it wasn't real science, like so many things. He discovered that we have what's called exponential loss in our memory. The first time you learn something, it drops off almost immediately. The second time, it lasts a little longer. The third time, it lasts a little longer still. With time, you can get to a point where the drop-off or decay of the memory is longer than your lifetime. So for example, if today you stopped speaking English, you would remember it for the rest of your lifetime, even though you're going to live to, what is your number, 200?

Dave Asprey: At least 180.

Jonathan Levi: At least 180, you and Dan Sullivan. So you can get to a point where you'll remember something effectively indefinitely. It takes a long time. So spaced repetition is essentially a way of doing that, but doing it intelligently because there's nothing worse than work you don't need to do. Spaced repetition is

either using a system, a flashcards and organizing them in a very intelligent way or using a software algorithm. There's an awesome free app out there called Anki, A-N-K-I, which will ask you every time you review something that you're learning, whether that's foreign language words, names and faces of people. Whatever it is you're out there learning, it'll ask you, how hard was this? One to four, and it'll time how quickly you answered it. Then it will build a prediction algorithm that says you are likely to forget this in eight days. So let's review it on day seven and not before.

So what you're doing is you're spending 20 to 30 minutes a day reviewing your body of knowledge, and basically, you're doing the absolute minimum you need to do to maintain it. Now, when is this useful? When you're learning a new language, you need about 2,000 words to be competent in that language. That's a lot of words. If you're reviewing all of your flashcards every day, that's a lot of time. Or if you're learning at once and then going time to move on to the next 100 words, you never come back. That's how you get into situations where you're like, "No, I swear, I speak Spanish. I just don't remember the word for fork." So really, really cool technique to do that maintenance because talk to any memory expert, any world champion, anything, and they'll tell you the techniques will get it in, but you have to do the maintenance.

Now, in your regard, I know you Dave, and I know you are always talking about this stuff, and you're always learning about this stuff. So you're always calling those memories up, and you're using them. People who are doing that, if you're using your knowledge, you're getting a free pass. If you are learning Russian, and you go out everyday, and you have a 20-minute conversation in Russian, you get a free pass. You don't need to review it because you're doing something better than that, which is actual application.

Dave Asprey: Check this out. Almost 700 episodes of Bulletproof Radio talking about this kind of cool stuff. I do get twice a week spaced repetition. Not always the same stuff, but general thing. Right?

Jonathan Levi: Totally. Totally.

Dave Asprey: Plus, because you just wrote a book, you want spaced repetition, write a book, man. You will beat it into yourself. If there's a book you love, try reading it aloud. I think there's something to that. Is there any science that you've come across as an expert on learning? It says reading a book aloud is different than actually drawing pictures in your head.

Jonathan Levi: I got to be honest, I've never looked into it [crosstalk 00:42:58]-

Dave Asprey: Someone's going to do a study.

Jonathan Levi: ... speed reading. Someone's going to do a study, but we're focused about-

Dave Asprey: It's the opposite of speed reading, by the way.

Jonathan Levi: ... how to do it faster. Yeah, exactly. [crosstalk 00:43:04]-

Dave Asprey: Reading out loud and stuff vocalizing is terrible. It's the worst thing you could do to be a speed reader. I've learned to read at 18 months. I scan whole pages and all that stuff. Each word is a picture, all that stuff. But there was something weird happened in my brain from that. So I'm just wondering, someone out there, if you have a study posted on my Instagram, DM me or whatever. I want to see.

Jonathan Levi: Do you know what's interesting, though, what you're saying, is there have been studies that being in a new and novel location. Again, there's been multiple studies on this about memory and location. But when we go into a new location, what happens? Our brains go, "Oh, crap. I'm in a new environment. I don't know if this is safe or not." You crank up, I believe it's norepinephrine cranks up. When we're in new locations, the CA3 region of the brain lights up with dopamine, which is weird. They didn't know until 2017 that dopamine had much to do with longterm memory, but now they do. So all this is to say, when you are in a new and novel location, your brain chemistry goes, "Boom, I need to pay attention, focus hormones and neurotransmitters so that I can get myself a meal."

Dave Asprey: That is a very, very good point. All right. What else? I know we got memory palaces. We got spaced repetition. You talk about, in chapter six, talk about why and how to 10 X your memory. So how do you 10 X your memory? What does that mean?

Jonathan Levi: It's transitioning from the auditory, not imagining pictures, to imagining pictures, and then really at the highest levels, it's building those memory palaces. I mean, every single person, I know this happened to me in second grade. I met a kid who was like, "Yeah, I have a photographic memory." That person naturally has discovered how to tap into exactly what we've been talking about, Dave. They can just see things and visualize them and remember it. So many people come up to me, and they're like, "Oh, man. They see what I can do. They've seen me speak. I wish I could do what I do. I wish I had a photographic memory." My answer is always, "Congratulations. You do. You just haven't dusted it off and used it yet."

Once you do, the joke I like to make, it's like going from a beat-up 1960s diesel to a new electric motor. It's faster, it's more efficient. Once you make that transition, your brain runs on electric, and it's just fast. It's pictures, like you said about your reading.

Dave Asprey: What is the single fastest or the first way that a person listening to the show could dust off their photographic memory?

Jonathan Levi: Yeah, perfect. So I want them to go out, and when they meet a new person... First off, the example I always give people, give an example people can try. People are always surprised. My thing is go learn names and faces. Because it's cool to learn numbers and everything, but the world would be a better place if we all looked each other in the eye and met people and smiled at them, and I don't care if it's the waiter or waitress or it's the Uber driver. Learn other human beings names and use their names and smile at them and treat them with kindness. I think that's the best possible use of this gift. Go out today, and I don't care if it's the grocery, what do they call it, bag boy, the Uber driver. Whoever it is that you encounter today, go out and learn their name. If their name is Chris, imagine them on a cross like Christ. Again, that's absurd image, a little bit violent.

Dave Asprey: That's pretty dark.

Jonathan Levi: It's a little dark, but you'll remember Chris's name. If their name is Mohammed, I want you to imagine them at Mecca. So create these associations. Go out, and I would love if everyone in your audience would just create a visual association for the next five people they meet. Then the next day, tell Siri or Google or whatever, remind me in two days to recall all the names. You may never see that Uber driver again, but test yourself, and you will be very surprised that you'll remember Mohammad, you'll remember Chris, all those names that you learned.

Dave Asprey: It's interesting because there's two people I know who are really top notch memory experts, and both you guys do this. It's you and Jim Quick. Jim, so a good friend. I've seen both of you at restaurants, and you know waitresses or waiters name, and it's like you just build it into your life.

Jonathan Levi: Always.

Dave Asprey: Right. Which is very unusual.

Jonathan Levi: Always.

Dave Asprey: Almost, the reason that this stands out to me is I don't know anyone else who actually does it that much. You'll see Joe Polish is another guy who's been on the show who's a friend of all of the people I just mentioned here, and Dan Sullivan who you mentioned earlier. But Joe, he's pretty good at that. He knows more people's names and most people, and he goes out of his way. But not to the extent that you and Jim do. Now, are you doing that because you want to make people feel good or doing that because you're like, "Look what my brain can do. I'm going to make it stronger."

Jonathan Levi: Few reasons. One, if I'm honest, I don't like waiting for the bill. When everyone's saying, "Check, please, check, please." Then I go, "Christine." I don't even have

to shout it. I just go, "Christine." Obviously, we hear our own name in a crowd. But that's not the actual reason I do.

Dave Asprey: So you're cutting your mind. I got it now. Yeah. Okay.

Jonathan Levi: Exactly. Yeah. I have not had to wait for a check in many years because, even in Japan, I'm like, and this is your table, "What's your name?" "Yaku Wokou." All right. How are we going to remember? But then when I need the bill, Yaku Wokou is there. But the real reason to do it is Dale Carnegie, this book, how to win friends and influence people was the first book, Dave, that was given to me when I was 13 years old by my late uncle, Ernie, who was like a grandfather to me. It was the first time I ever realized that words on a page could make me a better human being and could change the way I show up in the world. That opened this journey that led in and is still leading to podcasting and writing my own books.

But it was this revolutionary idea that books were not just this boring thing that taught me about people I didn't care about in history or math that I was never going to use in trigonometry. But books could actually be used to make me a better human being. Dale Carnegie says, "Remember that a person's name is, to that person, the sweetest sound in any language."

Dave Asprey: It's a very good point. I mean, we're both authors. I got to say it. If you were to just pick a couple of books to read, How to Win Friends and Influence People is probably going to be on the list. Think and Grow Rich ought to be on your list, the original-

Jonathan Levi: Up there.

Dave Asprey: ... personal development thing. What Think and Grow Rich actually had in it that did something for me is a memory palace. The idea was, he would say, "Who are the people I'd like to get advice from?" He's like, "You close your eyes. You go into this space. You imagine this table. Sitting at the table has Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson and Jesus Christ or whoever else you want to meet with and get good advice from and then have this conversation with them." But I mean, I can't say that I practiced this regularly. I did when I was 16, I'm sure. But the act of thinking about these people, imagining them and giving form to them because you're just thinking about them. You're seeing them at a table. There's a lot going on with that memory things. Then you remember what happened there. What do you think about that technique-

Jonathan Levi: Exactly.

Dave Asprey: ... for brainstorm or anything else?

Jonathan Levi: I think-

Dave Asprey: Is that part of your teachings?

Jonathan Levi: Well, I think in order to learn something right, we need to actually use it and implement it and have this experience. I think the genius of that, how many people have read Benjamin Franklin's autobiography. But there is so much gold in there or better yet, the Walter Isaacson biography of Benjamin Franklin, which if people haven't read some of Isaacson's stuff, Steve Jobs, da Vinci, I mean, he's a great biographer, and I personally love studying great people's lives. But how many people read that book and then implement nothing from it.

What I love about that idea is you're actually going in, and you're having an experiential learning process of Benjamin Franklin or of Thomas Jefferson. The second it goes from information to implementation, that's when it creates transformation, right? So this idea of, can I go in, can I actually have an experience talking to that person, that's what's then because it's not the knowledge alone. Right? I can know that Benjamin Franklin started a printing press when he was like 16 years old. That's information. Transformation is actually having an experience around it. So I love it. I love that.

I'm big on visualization. Hal Elrod, actually another mutual friend of ours really changed my mind about visualization. I kind of thought it was BS, and I thought affirmations were BS. Then I interviewed Hal a couple of times, and I was like, "Yep, no. This is a real deal, real deal."

Dave Asprey: There's power in that. I mean, Hal is as superhuman as it gets. I mean, he was just real public about, "Hey, I just had cancer, and I just recovered and..."

Jonathan Levi: He cheated death twice, and may he live to 280 or whatever it is the number that we're going for.

Dave Asprey: Now, I have two more questions for you, and they're both number-related questions. The first one is, talk to me about how many words per minute most people read at and how many words per minute you can read without starting to lose information. You have the numbers in your book.

Jonathan Levi: This is a great question because there have been a lot of snake oil salesman throughout the years teaching speed reading. Two of them actually were fined half a million dollars for making false claims. So there's been a lot of misinformation out there. I learned how to speed read and didn't succeed. Then I read books about speed reading and didn't succeed. Finally, I found some tutors who taught me and I succeeded, but only to a certain speed, which I'll get to in a moment. So I dug deep into the research. In fact, we hired a neuroscientist, Oxford-trained, who worked on a Nobel prize-winning team or Nobel Laureate winning team, and we actually hired him to audit all our materials and look at the research and tell us like, "Are we based in science?"

What the science says is this, there is science, "disproving" speed reading. Those very same studies come to the conclusion that reading at 5,000 words per minute, it's not possible. The study found that, unfortunately, the fastest you can read without losing any comprehension is about 600 words per minute. Not coincidentally, we've been teaching for six years how to get to 600 words per minute with 100% comprehension or 750, sometimes 800 with 80% to 90% comprehension. So if you're willing to make that sacrifice, that's what the scientific literature supports. I've met people who can read faster. There are gifted people out there who can read 1,200 words per minute. I've never seen convincing evidence of people reading above 800 words per minute on things that they aren't intimately familiar with and retaining it.

Dave Asprey: At a certain point, you're getting into the Ferrari level of performance. You're saying, for the average person with the average brain, 600 words a minute is possible, and they're probably at 250 now, so you can double.

Jonathan Levi: Yes. The average college-educated person reads at 250 words per minute in English. I don't have the statistics for con-G or whatever other language.

Dave Asprey: Interesting. Yeah.

Jonathan Levi: But in English, people read about 250 words for a minute. We can get you 600, and people come up to him, "But what about photo reading? What about Kim peek? There are edge cases. But that's what scientifically I can claim, and I have the research to back it up. That's still three times faster. For God's sake-

Dave Asprey: It's-

Jonathan Levi: ... people want the world, but three... Can you imagine if you could read at that speed, at 750 words a minute, and I will give the caveat, I can't speed read for three hours straight. I need naps because it's so mentally taxing for me.

Dave Asprey: Okay. I got a hack for that.

Jonathan Levi: Okay. Yeah, you do. It's called Bulletproof coffee, right?

Dave Asprey: It's part of them. Do you want the whole hack if you want to be able to sustain that?

Jonathan Levi: [crosstalk 00:54:53]-

Dave Asprey: The reason I know this, okay, 40 years of Zen, the neuroscience institute, I'm measuring people's brain waves. That kind of really intense meditation with computer keeping you honest is as taxing as really high-speed reading. It is a workout for the blind.

Jonathan Levi: Yeah. I know people who've done it, many people.

Dave Asprey: Okay. Got it. So that's a testing laboratory because we can also measure voltage [inaudible 00:55:13]. We know when it drops. So we can push you to two and a half times longer than normal. Yes, brain octane is part of it. We don't actually use the coffee. We use decaf coffee because there's good stuff in coffee that helps, but it's not the caffeine. So brain octane, keto prime, another Bulletproof supplement, unfair advantage, and something called MitoSweet, which is another thing that allows you to make more energy. This is gonna really... I don't normally do this at 40 years, but if you were to just you do what I just said there, those things, and you were to about an hour in have maybe four or five grams of, are you ready for this, glucose. But the reason is that all you're doing there is you're saying, "I'm going to make it so easy for my brain to keep making electricity beyond when it's supposed to."

It's the same thing, someone who's running a marathon, like, "Oh, do you want to have like a gel pack at mile 20?" You probably do, even if you're one of those people who's-

Jonathan Levi: Right. Of course, yeah.

Dave Asprey: ... running in ketosis, which is probably not a good call anyway. Maybe starting in ketosis but ending not in ketosis. So you could do this with your brain. I think you can go for more than three hours, or you can go for three hours straight.

Jonathan Levi: I'll tell you what my concern is, but you might have an answer for it. During meditation and stuff like that, you're not creating as much metabolic waste in the brain. In fact, during meditation you can actually clear... Some studies show, I haven't seen convincing evidence, the only time the brain can clear metabolic waste, unlike your muscles, is when you sleep. You have to be physically unconscious to move because your brain creates waste. Many people don't realize, similar to how your muscles create lactic acid.

Dave Asprey: The glymphatic system. Yeah.

Jonathan Levi: Right. I wonder if speed reading because I know, right, when I have this pressure feeling right up here, audio listeners can't hear, but right up in the sides of my brain, I know that's metabolic waste buildup, and a 20-minute nap can clear some of that out. I wonder if supplementation could get rid of that.

Dave Asprey: It will. Because the reason you're getting metabolic waste is that your metabolism is inefficient. So if you take things that allow you to get more electrons per Krebs cycle spin, that would be ketones or things that repair holes in the Krebs cycle.

Jonathan Levi: That's [crosstalk 00:57:29].

Dave Asprey: I absolutely know you can do it because in meditation, I'm just going to quiet the brain and just be quiet. That's not what we're doing in 40 years anyway.

You're going to go in and edit your physical responsiveness. So it is hardcore personal development work with a lie detector. This is like the Buddhist open heart compassion, where you learn to feel compassion for everything that ever was an inhibitor for you, so that compassion cancels things out. So I'm just saying it's a similar amount of cognitive and visceral load. So just try this. Everyone listening, that will increase speed reading. I know this. That's where your work and my work comes together on metabolic activation to good speed reading.

- Jonathan Levi: The only caveat I will give people, you can only consolidate memories during sleep.
- Dave Asprey: That's totally true.
- Jonathan Levi: So don't use this to not sleep because if you want to remember what you speed read at some point, go to sleep.
- Dave Asprey: Amen. All right. So there was our first number's question. The next number's question is also a very fun one. How long are you going to live?
- Jonathan Levi: I want to live to 180.
- Dave Asprey: Copycat.
- Jonathan Levi: Well, so here's my thing. Here's my thing.
- Dave Asprey: Why 180.
- Jonathan Levi: I did the whole lifetime extender with Dan Sullivan, and I came up with 127. But here's my thing. I see it as one of two ways. I see one, we figured out a way to transfer consciousness, and then it's, I don't know, 250 indefinite whatever. We're not limited by this biology. So I figure it's somewhere between the 127 that I got in the Dan Sullivan workshop, lifetime extender, people can check it out. It's an average between somewhere in the 250 and 127, which I think this format of body can handle.
- Dave Asprey: Nice.
- Jonathan Levi: Always.
- Dave Asprey: All right. Your new book is definitely worth reading. If anyone listening, if you want to make your memory work better, you want to make your brain work better at the software level, not at the hardware level, it's called The Only Skill that Matters by Jonathan Levi. So what's the best your world to find the book? Do you have a landing page or something they should go to?

Jonathan Levi: Yes, superhumanacademy.com/book. I keep it easy because the people who come to me are the ones with the memory problems.

Dave Asprey: Alright, superhumanacademy.com/book.

Jonathan Levi: Yes, sir.

Dave Asprey: All right. You guys got that. You know how to go get the book. Hopefully, you picked up some cool tricks here. At least you know some stuff is possible that wasn't before. Because you want to be a better, faster, smarter human being, reading does it for you, and you want to be a happy human being, showing gratitude does it, and you show gratitude to authors by leaving reviews. So just click, take five seconds, just review the books you've read. Everybody wins when you do that. Other readers win, authors win. By the way, give me a bad review if my book sucked. I totally want that. But I think my book is worth your time, and then give it a good review if it was. I'm sure Jonathan said the same thing. Wouldn't you, Jonathan?

Jonathan Levi: I would. Make sure to leave a review on Bulletproof Radio-

Dave Asprey: Oh, good point.

Jonathan Levi: ... because I don't know about Dave, but I'm pretty confident that it makes his day. It certainly makes our day at Superhuman Academy. So leave a review. It is not easy to do a podcast, especially with Dave's busy schedules. So please leave a review.

Dave Asprey: That's so nice. We're begging people to leave reviews. On that note, if you guys decide not to do it, you're like, "Screw it. I just wanted free content." Enjoy the free content and learn something cool, and that's good enough. So have a beautiful day.