

EPISODE 144

KC: *“One day, my mind really creatively came up with this bizarre thought. I’ll never forget, I’m on stage in Mesquite, Nevada and I have this thought, I wonder if you could think about it enough if you could make yourself faint. And then right when I thought that I got dizzy, and I felt myself waiting out for a second because I remember everything going white and me just being like, “What the fuck?” And I had this fear. On the external, I’m just killing. I’m doing a show, and blah, blah, blah. I’m just having a great set. And inside, my mind is going, “What the hell was that?” I don’t know what I’m even saying on the external. I’m much more listening to the inside while some habit is doing its thing.*

So, I remember the next day, me starting to obsess over it and being worried that when I got on stage that night that I’d make myself faint. I would think about it all day and I’d started picturing it. I started seeing me collapsing, and this started escalating so much more. Then this also happened, I think, because I didn’t sleep years before. I was touring so much and eating drive-thru, drinking at night, and then drinking coffee in the morning with two hours of sleep, or whatever, nothing, just getting to the next gig. My body was just full of crap, was just full of drive-thru and nothing, whatever, and no exercise, nothing.

This ended up becoming an anxiety that became the only thing I thought of, became only what I was obsessed with. Every second was just – and all I would see when I see people all of a sudden on TV or something is them fainting or them falling apart, and basically, the belief was you can’t not think about something. Right? So, the belief in my mind was, I’m not going to be able to not think about this, and so that’s the whole thing.”

[INTRODUCTION]

[00:01:47] LW: Hello, friends. Welcome back to The Light Watkins Show, where I interview ordinary people just like you and me who have taken extraordinary leaps of faith in the direction of their path, or their purpose, or what they’ve identified as their mission in life. In doing so, they

have been able to positively impact and/or inspire the lives of many other people who have either heard about their story on podcasts like this, or who witnessed them in action, or who have directly benefited from their work.

This week, I am in a fascinating conversation with someone who I've admired, and who I've watched literally walk his talk for years, by creating conscious community by taking insane leaps of faith, and by inspiring other people to take leaps of faith as well, and bringing light to the spiritual path through storytelling and lots of very funny humor. His name is Kyle Cease, and Kyle is the New York Times bestselling author of, *I Hope I Screw This Up*, as well as the book, *The Illusion of Money*.

After over 20 years of achieving what he originally thought were his dreams of being a headlining touring comedian and actor, Kyle suddenly discovered that the belief, "When something happens, I will be happy", is not actually how it works, and that he needed to start doing what would make him happy first, and then everything else that he wanted would come from that.

So, following the calling of his heart, Kyle decided to quit his stand-up comedy career at its peak, mind you, and he rebranded himself as a transformational comedian. He now brings his one-of-a-kind wisdom to sold-out audiences around the world, and he reaches millions more people through his thriving online community. He has also made more than 100 television and movie appearances including, *10 Things I Hate About You*, *Not Another Teen Movie*. Kyle has been on *Jimmy Kimmel Live*, *The Late Show with Craig Ferguson*, and numerous VH1 shows. Kyle also has two number-one Comedy Central specials to his credit. And back in 2009, Kyle earned the distinction of having the number one ranking show on Comedy Central, *Stand-Up Showdown*.

I met Kyle back in 2014 when he graciously agreed to speak and then to host one of my Shine events. And for new listeners, the Shine was the nonprofit inspirational variety show that I started in Los Angeles. So, Kyle was there pretty much at the beginning, and I actually still post a lot of what I call Kyle-isms on my social media such as people don't break our heart, they break our expectations and that moves us closer to our heart. So, if you've seen that on my social media feed, that's actually Kyle Cease who I credit.

Anyway, in our conversation, Kyle shares some incredible stories about how he was able to walk away from his traditional comedy career at its peak, and he breaks down the whole anatomy of taking a leap of faith in case you find yourself in that same boat where you're thinking of taking a leap of faith or walking away from something that's more traditional.

Kyle also talks about how he overcame panic attacks that he was having on stage, and how he expanded his thinking and belief system about what kind of impact he was destined to have, and how that led to him taking a chance on booking a 2,000-seat theater for an event when his previous events he only had a couple of 100 people attending, and how he was able to convince himself to do that, and what he learned from his public roasting of Eckhart Tolle, when he was hosting an event that Eckhart Tolle and Deepak Chopra were in attendance of. And then how, at the end of the day, money is a huge illusion.

So, I know I say you're going to love this one with each episode, but you're really going to love this one. And without further ado, I want to introduce you to my friend, my source of inspiration. Mr. Kyle Cease.

[INTERVIEW]

[00:06:24] LW: Kyle, welcome to the podcast. It's good to see you again, brother.

[00:06:27] KC: Light, it's so good to see you, too. It's been a while. I'm happy to be here.

[00:06:32] LW: Yeah, I think the last time I saw you in person, Wanderlust. We did a couple of those Wanderlust days, I think, pre-pandemic. It's crazy man. Even that's changed. They're not doing that anymore.

[00:06:46] KC: Is that true? I didn't know that.

[00:06:46] LW: Post-pandemics. I think so. Yeah, so many things. My listeners have heard me mention the Shine events that I used to throw in Los Angeles and New York and places. But you

were talking about how your ex-partner, you and she met at the Shine. So, what happened exactly? Did she come up to you or she DM'd you later, or what was the pick-up?

[00:07:10] KC: She saw me first at Shine. And then later, I was on Facebook, and she liked a picture of mine. I just saw her and I was like, "How about Friday?" And we went out. The biggest point of that, I guess, I would say, is that this girl and all these pictures, is a byproduct of Christy and I are hanging out successfully. But I have this amazing five-year-old daughter named Vivi. So yeah, had you not had Shine, I don't know if Vivi would exist, which is just mind-blowing because she's so wonderful, man. It's just such a fulfilling thing for me to have this kind of shift and grounded thing. And then I almost feel like the pandemic in my area helps because it put me in a position to have to stay home, and like really become present and become a better listener to the now and not always be on tour, not trying to be getting to the next gig, and not just being how big can this get, and just being a dad.

I love being a dad. It's a really amazing experience. And it can take away some of your egoic happiness because you have this other energy here. But it brings fulfillment and purpose and reason and it's an amazing experience. I know that everyone knows what it's like to hear a person talking about having a kid and it's a long story, and it's a big thing for them. But like, it's really crazy how much has opened in my heart from being a dad.

[00:08:45] LW: I want to talk about that. But your description, it just kind of took me back to my childhood. I was trying to remember, what is my earliest memory of my dad, right? I remember my dad, he worked a lot. He would come home, he would watch the news, he would sit on the toilet and read Newsweek magazine in the evening. And then he would drink a beer, and then he would go to bed, and he would leave really early, and he would leave again, and he would work. So, my impression was like he was a hard worker who liked the news a lot. What do you think her earliest memory of you will be and through that lens, like a five-year-old? Some guy who meditate – who just sits on the couch with his eyes closed for two hours?

[00:09:26] KC: That's such a good question. What would Vivi's first memory of me be? Well, I mean, first of all, there's a lot of joy. We bond over music and we're funny together and play a lot. I know that as she was forming memory I was also showing her things, whether it be visually seeing something, hearing a song, or a movie or a character or whatever. I've never thought of

that. What is her – I'm really curious what it is. In fact, I might ask her later today what it is. You always try to make sure it's a good thing. I hope she's not like, "Oh, you were drunk" or something. But I don't think so.

[00:10:08] LW: You mentioned your mom in your book, but you didn't talk much about your dad. So, can you share a little bit about your earlier memories and what you remember kind of growing up and whatever? Takeaways you had from your parents, example?

[00:10:20] KC: Well, essentially, one thing that I've been playing with that's really interesting is our dreams that we have as a child, aren't always just your dharma or your calling. Sometimes our dreams are out of an escape from trauma.

So, to give you an example, the most present and connected I ever felt to my dad was when we were watching stand-up comedy. His uncle was the prop man for a comedian named Gallagher. His mom was a puppeteer for different celebrities. The Carol Burnett Show, she was on The Carol Burnett Show. I felt connected with him and bonded with him when we watched stand-up comedy. So, as a child, like in second grade, I started doing Gallagher's material for second graders, which was weird, because I was talking about sex and taxes with a southern accent and I didn't know what I was talking about. But like, every year, I would kind of negotiate with the teachers, if I could do stand-up, and I would, as a kid do Gallagher material or Steven Wright or whatever. And then I was doing talent shows and everything and everything was, "Dad, did you see that?" Or, "Mom, did you see that?" And creating a worth based on the stage.

This unconsciously can create a drive that we think is why we're really driven, but we're actually also driven out of survival. Like, these are my parents. So, they're the people that feed me and house me, they better see me and acknowledge me. I'm going to do the thing they seem to be the most focused on. So, I've been playing with the last few years, even though I had a massively great, successful, joyous, first half of my life as a stand-up comic from 12, to mid-30s, whatever it was, there's a me also going how much of that was to not get hurt, or to not have a lack of approval, or not be shamed or whatever.

So, I've been playing with a lot of our big fantasy lives that we have when we're kids, are out of pain. When you see like Orphan Annie going like, "Someday I'll be free." These are our

fantasies that we're coming up with out of the trauma and our bodies. One of the things that I've been really interested in is the fact that you can outgrow your dream. You can literally – I experienced my dream career, and at one point, it ran its course. So, there was a higher me coming through going, “You're something else.” This is so big, because there's so many people going, what's my purpose, and what's the reason for being here. And you're so much bigger than being able to narrow your purpose down to one thing. You're a constant unfolding of so many things.

So, my bond with my dad, the memories I have that are really joyous with my dad are stand-up comedy, are seeing stand-up or watching sitcoms, and different things like that. So, that's the main memory I have of him. And then with my mom, it's really interesting. I feel like for a certain part of my life, she was so proud of my musical abilities, my being funny and stuff. And then I also have a memory of her being cynical when I went into comedy, like we'll see if it becomes something, we'll see. I'd get on like a late-night show and be like, “I'm doing this show.” And she'll be like, “Well, what's it pay?” There was a me going, “See me, please see me.”

It's weird, because when I was really young, I felt like I was really seen for my talent and stuff and loved for it. And then it almost was like, there's this different person kind of had this hesitancy about it, which I really felt was a great combination, because there's this carrot on the end of the stick that I have to get her back to that person that's proud of me for the comedy and for the entertainment. So yeah, my childhood was primarily in Seattle, and I have lots of good memories, and some bad and lots of inner work that I'm doing every day.

[00:14:23] LW: Were you a naturally funny comic? Or did you have like a rocky montage of working really hard behind the scenes to appear natural in your thousands of sets from 8 to 12?

[00:14:37] KC: I think comedy was – because I saw stand – my favorite shows as a child were Evening at the Improv on A&E. I wasn't watching cartoons. All the other kids were watching He-Man and stuff. And I literally was watching stand-up comedy. I couldn't wait to watch that on Thursday nights, I think it was, Evening at the Improv. You'd see all these young Seinfeld. I'd remember every one of them.

So, comedy was in the blood. And then another thing is, I also have a very musical background. I have a musical family. I have an uncle on my mom's side who's a Grammy-nominated jazz musician who's incredible. So happy birthday, and our family was in three, four-part harmony often. And my favorite sounds were the Beach Boys. I love harmony. I love hearing different voices and everything. In fact, I hear the harmony, almost more than the melody in songs. The reason I bring that up is because I think that created a natural timing. In stand-up comedy, I can hear the beats of the pauses. The combination of music and hearing it, and then watching comics so much, and seeing their pauses, while I'm developing as a human being made it very natural for me.

I'll tell you the real revelation I'm having is that, and I've been playing with for the last 10 years, is I really learned how to be a comedian, before I knew how to be a person. In other words, I was on stage at 12 and working, and then making money at 15 and doing clubs. I had this thing that got attention and got love. I mean, I was bullied as a kid, and then would do stand-up and I wasn't. I remember being bullied. I was a chubby kid in school and being pants and yelled at and stuff. And when I got funny, everything changed. It was like protection across the board.

So, this comedian with all these hidden wounds started going on stage. But when you go on stage, and you're killing at clubs, and you're doing 300 people shows a night, and you're getting all this love afterwards. That is a nice numbing of the pain that's under it. All these things unfolded for me in my 20s and 30s that caused me to have to go inward and look at the wounds inside. It was like the biggest gift because I feel like I'm letting go of the idea that who I am, is a speaker or a comedian or a musician. They're clothes that I wear. But I'm still in the constant ongoing, expansive, every day changing search of what I truly am. I just continually find it more by identifying everything I'm not. Right? So, I'll have these moments where I'm like, "Well, I'm not a comedian, because I'm able to still do other things and that's the thing I can do. But it's just tools."

We get caught in, "I am a dad." No, it's a tool. "I am the now." If I'm the now first, then I can bring that into dad. If I'm the now first I can bring that into comedy. But when we get identified as this is what I am, you're setting yourself up for a lot of pain, because if that goes away, then you're screwed, right? If I am a stand-up comic, and then I get an anxiety like I did. I get an anxiety as a stand-up comic that undoes what I am, so is there even a purpose and living? When you start

to get, "That's not what you are, that's just a career you have." And most people define I am my cars in the garage or how much money I have or how much debt I have or my victim story or my achievement story, that's what limits you. All those things can change, so, it's such a lie to say I am that.

[00:18:14] LW: It seems like also being a comedian at such a young age. It makes you more observant as a child and makes you question convention more as a young person?

[00:18:26] KC: Totally.

[00:18:26] LW: Including religion. What is school really all about? Am I ever going to use trigonometry in day to day life? And what kind of bits can I create around all of that? So, what was your relationship like with the things that all the other kids were into? Maybe church, maybe school, maybe girls? Were you a normal? Were you considered a normal child growing up? Did you consider yourself to be an outcast?

[00:18:49] KC: It's weird because I had this combination of liking a ton of things that no one else my age liked. But being oblivious to that it was weird to them. I mean, almost, like for instance, in junior high, grunge was happening like and I lived in Seattle. So, everyone around me is into Nirvana and Pearl Jam and stuff. I'm obviously obsessed with Hall & Oates and Huey Lewis. I had no idea that I didn't have any sense of style. I'd wear puffy Mervyn's coats and I'd be in drama class and playing trombone. But I just was so loud about it. Like I had a horn, an air horn in my car that played Tequila and it also did it on a rotation, so it also start the repeat, so it sounded really bad. It'd be like, [inaudible 00:19:40]. I'd pull into the school and play that thing like everyone's thrilled this bizarre guy is here.

I think my absolute, undeniable oblivion to what a dork I was made it almost okay. So, I was an outcast, but thinking I wasn't. I was an outcast, but thinking everyone's loving what I'm about. And then really looking back on it, I just see the sky that I did stand-up at the schools and I had these things, and I was this bizarre combination of unbelievably dorky and mildly popular. So, I didn't have many of the same interests. I had one dear best friend, my friend, Justin, and he and I just wrote all kinds of stuff and cry-laughed and just bonded. He's still like, my closest friend, ever. Although my teammate Mary is also very close too. But I had this bond with a couple of

people. I've been both extroverted and introverted. And by that, I mean, like, I didn't like being with large groups of people, unless I was on stage, which is actually kind of introverted. But I also liked having one person. Like having one person I can bond with. So, I don't like just wild giant places of people that I'm just lost in, but one person is great.

[00:21:19] LW: You had more money than any of your friends back then, because you had been doing all those corporate gigs from your Chamber of Commerce experience, right?

[00:21:27] KC: There were a few things. I remember, one thing that – I don't know if this is something I got from my dad, but my dad was an unbelievably creative entrepreneur. And I watched my dad form companies out of thin air, in an always non-conventional way. I think that's part of – when I think about it, our family is this very unique group of people that like, my dad's just doing these things, there's no way to do it. It's just his way and it works. I remember being a kid and my dad giving me a bunch of business cards that said, certified babysitter, and lawn care and all this stuff. Whenever neighbors would come in, I'd hand it to him. Whenever I was, whatever age you got to be to do that.

So, whenever I go to all the neighbor's house, I'd hand them these cards, and I would work every night doing babysitting, or whatever else, that shifted into the same oblivion that was a good oblivion, that there's a way already to do something. Because I just went right through the world's ways of doing things, and did my own unique way. So, what you're asking about the corporate parties is a really good example. I one time I was in a club, and I asked a comedian. I said, “How do comics make really good money?” And he said, “Well, there's corporate parties that companies have a party or whatever.” I remember him also saying, “You're probably too young for that.” I didn't even hear that part. I was just like, “How do I do corporate parties?”

I asked my mom, I said, “Where do corporations meet up?” And she told me, there's this thing called the Chamber of Commerce, which is like all these heads of businesses meet up. In Redmond, that was like Microsoft, Sears, Nintendo, like all – in Redmond, Washington, many of the companies in the Chamber of Commerce were parts of enormous corporations. So, I called the Chamber of Commerce and I asked them, “Can I get the mailing labels for the businesses there?” And they said, “It's 50 bucks.” I remember my mom being like, “Why are you spending 50 bucks?” And I was like, “I'm going to go give them.” I drove over with 50 cash and was like,

“Can I get the labels?” And they gave me, I don't remember, 500, 700 labels, and I made a very basic, “Are you having a corporate party? Looking for entertainment? Call Kyle Cease.” I mailed it to all of them and paid the stamp for whatever it was, 500.

My mom's like, “Why are you spending this money or whatever?” Next thing I know, I'm doing corporates at 15 for Sears, Nintendo. I brought a keyboard. I did impressions a lot at that time. I had a business card also that said, “Comedian Impressionist” and the things said under it. It said, “Finally, a good Julia Child impression at an affordable price.”

[00:24:13] LW: I love that.

[00:24:14] KC: That's what everyone's looking for. My usual Julia Child impressions are too much. So, is there a price I can – it was funny because I would do the stuff and make agreements with these businesses, and I would go and do the gigs. Here's this 15-year-old being driven to their gig in like a full suit, holding a keyboard and I would do like Lexus's corporate event. And that was just because my body was like, “Oh, how do I?” And then I just did it.

There was an oblivion that I'm realizing I had that was so amazing. And the oblivion was taking me from the world of, “It doesn't work that easy. You can't do that.” All of those things that people say like, “You'd be too young to do that.” Or, “If you want to get a movie, you need to do this and this and this first.” I booked 10 Things I Hate About You without an agent or audition experience or a headshot. And it was because you could just create your own thing your way, and I really believe the universe is trying to give you all these unique ways of doing whatever you want and there are no rules, as long as you're not hurting anyone and it's expansive.

So, usually, there's a route to do everything that everyone else does and that's what kind of makes you cattle. If you want to get in the movie, you're going to go through an agent and submit nine million headshots to agents, and then hope and do that process. At one point, I was so oblivious. I was booking work every day and I remember getting crackerjack boxes, and making an audio demo tape of me doing voiceover work and putting it in the Cracker Jack boxes and sending it to producers. I sent it out, and they would open the Cracker Jack box, and

there'd be this demo tape that they put in the car. They'd hear me and then I'd get work. I was suddenly doing like voiceover for kids, educational software, and different things like that.

There was a company called Edmark that called me all the time. And it was weird, because at the time, I don't remember the price, but I might have been making like, somewhere between 150 and 200 an hour. But when you're 15, that's weird and it's '94. That was a crazy thing to be experiencing.

[00:26:30] LW: Did you have any exposure to any sort of spiritual ideologies or philosophies back in those late teenage days?

[00:26:38] KC: Not really. But because of our kind of counterculture way of being, my family saw any of that as just a scam. Mainstream churches have an agenda. I remember there was a woman named Romfa. Do you know who that is?

[00:26:56] LW: Yeah, of course. Yeah. Read all her books.

[00:26:58] KC: Yeah. So, we lived in Washington at the time when she was really big. I think she still is, but that was just –

[00:27:04] LW: J.K. something or another. I can't remember.

[00:27:07] KC: Yeah. I can't remember her name either. I want to say Rowling, but that's Harry Potter lady. So, I remember them being like the Romfas doing this thing. And there was this very – it was a bizarre combination of counterculture, making fun of things through comedy, meets mainstream media's belief system. So, we were very, like, we didn't go to church. If I asked my parents a religious thing, what is God? You just kind of feel this, like, "I don't know." And then my dad wanting to look like he'll have a big talk, but he didn't really have a specific – he's always, "Let's talk about that." But there was not really, I don't know. But not saying I don't know, it was just kind of like, it was not a thing yet.

And then when I was in my early 20s, as a comic, I always look at what I do now. If you showed me at 23 as a stand-up comic, that what I will be doing a 45 will be often shifting 60-year-old

women out of their traumas. I mean, my answer is all ages, but are absolutely everything passes, primarily women. There are moments I've been at like a retreat center, like in Rhythmia or something, and I'm sitting with 10 people. If you show this aspiring kid who was on his way to Comedy Central and everything, "Hey, just so you know, here's you in your 40s." I'd be like, "I'd become everything I make fun of, because the me in my 20s would have been making fun of what me and my 40s is."

[00:28:40] LW: Do you have like an Obi Wan Kenobi figure in your life at that time in your hero's journey, kind of mentoring you or giving you insight about life?

[00:28:50] KC: Another weird oblivion that I had was I always connected to what I perceived as the highest frequency in the room even as a child. So, to give you an example, I was more bonded with – this is an embarrassing thing to say. But I was more bonded with the teachers than the students in school. It would almost be like me and my third-grade teacher, Mr. Sisal sitting there and maybe I'm like, "What are these kids going to be up to?" I'm acting like him, like I know what's life's like, and I'm seeing it through his perspective. But here's where that really got cool, though, was in stand-up comedy when I started doing big clubs in Seattle, I really loved the headliners more than the people, that were the beginners where I was, I saw them as people to bond with and every amazing artist, I would always think that's available. That level of good is available. So, I became good really quickly because I wasn't really in the open mic circuit as much as I did a couple open mics. Then was asked by those headliners to tour with them, and I was suddenly seeing only the best work. It's really powerful to see the very best and just continually be surrounded by that, versus getting caught in a sea of people that are all new at it, and we're all in this cynicism of how hard it is in that frequency.

Because I was a working comic really quickly, and almost oblivious to that it will take time, and it's not that easy and everything, and really moving up to the best me. And then when I booked 10 Things I Hate About You, I lived in Seattle. And when it came out, I moved to LA. I remember seeing the best comics there. And I would be in the lineup at night at the Laugh Factory with Dane Cook, and Howie Mandel and Rodney Dangerfield and Chris Rock, and I was there nightly. I remember when the best would go on. And sometimes, some comics would reject that. I remember Dane Cook going up in some comics, not liking it, or something like that, and leaving, and kind of staying connected to each other in their hatred of the ones that were

successful or something. It's the same pattern as me bonding with the teacher, above the other students. It's like, who's the best I want to open to them? I did. It was amazing, because I saw those comics as permission, inspiration, and the level I wanted to be at.

So, I toured and had really good sets, because I saw a world where the hardest level of killing was possible. And that transcended to, after leaving the comedy world and feeling like that was done, seeing that in Wayne Dyer, or Michael Beckwith, or just the heroes of spirituality, and becoming friends with like Michael Beckwith and speaking at Agape and working with people that were the best that I could find. And now it's down to God, it really is. I'm noticing the teacher in the room now that I connect to is that higher self, that's trying to get me to be more that higher self. Boy, is that a revelation. That's the highest there is. That's the highest and your awareness grows. So, then the highest is you, and you are God or the universe or whatever. That's the one that I'm listening to the most now.

[00:32:20] LW: I have a couple more questions about these developmental years as a comedian, you've had a lot of experience, you put in your 10,000 hours, that college tour. But I'm curious, looking back now, what made you so successful compared to what everybody else was doing? And compared to what you thought made you successful back in the early days?

[00:32:40] KC: What made me so successful, and this is in the stand-up world?

[00:32:43] LW: You said you killed a lot, yeah. In the early days you were killing, which is comedy jargon for you. You were very effective. People love you.

[00:32:50] KC: They went very, very well. That's, by the way weird that it's called killing because bombing, which also means a type of killing. So, if you bombed, you did bad. If you killed, you did great. So, you have to have a very specific type of murdering if you want to do well. I think one thing that honestly helped me a lot was having booked a couple of big teen movies, and being college age, I would perform at these conventions of called NACA, where different colleges would get together, and they would book the entertainment for the year. I would have a set that was kind of edgy and talked about things that they grew up with, like blowing into the original Nintendo, the Pillsbury Doughboy, Sunny Delight. I had all these bits that were very

topical for our age, combined with that I had been in those teen movies, and I got to do so many.

So, I, in my 20s, performed nightly either headlining a comedy club, or doing what started off as hour long sets, but kept going to longer, and always like boot camp for me. Because I would go on a tour – I remember one time doing – I don't know if this number is right. This might be wrong, but doing I think 168 colleges in a row, and literally no day off. So, you're doing two, three flights a day, you're exhausted, but you get to the gig, and just rip it and you'd have the set and I went up so many times that the act started writing itself when I was on stage. In other words, I'd have these little kinds of tangents on a bit that would go off and longer. Sometimes I'd pretend like I made a mistake, like in other words, and then go off and then do a tangent bit on that.

I just noticed as long as I kept going up, I did another set and I would get paid for it and prove to my mom that I was legitimate with a check that the colleges were giving me and they were crazy pay. And that was the constant drive that I overlooked my health. I overlooked sleeping. I overlooked everything. But boy, did I go up a lot. And then when I went back to LA, those are like showcase clubs. So, I'd be doing 10-minute sets, which was almost harder for me than doing an hour and a half. But like I had so much material just developing itself, and then you just kind of start trying a potential thing and it would write.

So, what made it go well was doing it every day. I mean, it's that basic. And I wasn't practicing every day, I was doing it every day, and they're different. Practicing is this kind of energy that later is better. This was, I'm in my completeness, every second I'm doing it, and it's getting better as I'm doing it. So, I'm doing it again, and I'm doing again. But that kind of energy over there is the goal, is doing it for that would be very minimal compared to the energy of me in this.

[00:35:55] LW: You've written about how you got to a point where you just got bored, you stopped creating new material, and I don't know which came before, but you started having panic attacks as well. So, can you talk a little bit about that period of time?

[00:36:10] KC: Yeah. So, that was the opening of my first shift, right? Meaning this is the first moment of me understanding, there's a matrix, there's more than this, there's a changing of

thinking available. This is the beginning of the revelation. I'm a comedian before I'm a person and that I was also, because of all those colleges, I was able to do my act also pretty much in my sleep. In other words, if I wasn't writing more, there are times where I could go up on stage, do an hour and a half, and maybe I'd throw something in every once in a while. But it wasn't a challenge at all. On the internal, there was boredom. And on the external, I'm killing. I really believe if you don't keep creating, this is kind of a thing that I've said. This is especially for that consciousness. It's kind of I have new thoughts now on this whole thing. But if I don't keep creating, my mind will creatively sabotage me. Sometimes even though it looks good on the external, you might be living nowhere near what the truest you is or your potential. Just because I was able to go on stage and kill, doesn't mean that I was being challenged anymore. I could go on stage, rip the place apart, and be bored inside.

So, one day, my mind really creatively came up with this bizarre thought. I'll never forget, I'm on stage in Mesquite, Nevada and I have this thought, I wonder if you could think about it enough if you could make yourself faint. And then right when I thought that I got dizzy, and I felt myself waiting out for a second, because I remember everything going white and me just being like, "What the fuck?" And I had this fear. On the external, I'm just killing. I'm doing a show, and blah, blah, blah. I'm just having a great set. And inside, my mind is going, "What the hell was that?" I don't know what I'm even saying on the external. I'm much more listening to the inside while some habit is doing its thing.

I walk off stage and I said to a couple other comics, like, "I have this bizarre thing that I could make myself faint when I'm on stage." And they're like, "Oh, yeah, you totally could." I could keep thinking about it. And the underlying belief that I hadn't gotten to four years later, is if I faint while I'm on stage, then my career's over, and then I'm no person. I don't exist. If I don't have comedy. I'm not loved. If I don't have comedy. No one will see me. I don't need to be here. And so, the ego was like, "We got to fix this."

So, I remember the next day, me starting to obsess over it and being worried that when I got on stage that night that I'd make myself faint. I would think about it all day and I'd started picturing it. I started seeing me collapsing, and this started escalating so much more. Then this also happened, I think, because I didn't sleep years before. I was touring so much and eating drive-thru, drinking at night, and then drinking coffee in the morning with two hours of sleep, or

whatever, nothing, just getting to the next gig. My body was just full of crap, was just full of drive-thru and nothing, whatever, and no exercise, nothing.

This ended up becoming an anxiety that became the only thing I thought of, became only what I was obsessed with. Every second was just – and all I would see when I see people all of a sudden on TV or something is them fainting or them falling apart, and basically, the belief was you can't not think about something. Right? So, the belief in my mind was, I'm not going to be able to not think about this, and so that's the whole thing.

While I was at the height of it, when it was at the very worst levels, I booked my first Comedy Central appearance with three months' notice. My manager goes, it's a show called Premium Blend, and my manager it goes, "Well, don't blow it." The first thing I thought was, "How would I blow it? What if I faint on that?" This became this obsession that every second for three months, it was in my body to a point where it got to even worse than just on stage. It was everywhere. I got to a point where I couldn't walk anymore. I got scared of – the biggest anxiety came once when I was on a gym floor with a junior high school doing an assembly. This created this reverse claustrophobia where I got really big anxiety when I was on a big hard floor that was wide open. I wanted small things that I could hold on to the side that created this anxiety.

So, for three months, I just pictured myself fainting on it and got really worried about it and worried about how it would ruin my career. This is my big shot with Comedy Central. I'm going to blow it and I just got all this practice, and I'm so good as a comedian and now I'm not going to be able to – it's my one shot. So, I did premium blend, and I did it way faster than usual. Because every second was just me holding the mic stand like this, my feet turned into me thinking, "Don't faint, don't faint, don't faint, don't faint." I walk off stage and I'm so happy, it's done. Seconds later, they're like you got a Comedy Central half-hour – but that was so good, you got a half-hour special. And I'm like, it wasn't good. Now, I'm going to worry about fainting on that.

The girl I was dating, I worried about that. Now, I'm going to hear you worry about that. And she had a point. But after that, there was a moment that was really big, while I was obsessing over it again, and I was like, I'm going to go get anxiety medication. I remember being at the beach before that and really picturing going to a gun shop actually, and just ending this because I was

so miserable, that all the opportunities I've wanted are finally showing up when I'm not ready for him them of a sudden.

Yeah, I was like, I will go to – I guess I won't kill myself. I'll go to the hospital. And I signed in and the waiting took too long. I sat in the waiting room for 45 minutes and I heard a voice go, "Get up." This was a big moment in my life. Because I wonder if they were on time if I would be alive because I might have been addicted to pills and not actually ascended myself and learn what this was. But I felt a voice go, "Get up." And I just was like, "Okay." But I had all the, yeah, but, they'll be mad at me if you go, like everything. But I just got up and I walked out. I can't remember calling my mom. I'm going to face this thing, I heard a voice. My mom was just like, "Why do you have some weird anxiety thing?" It was just this, "Never mind. Okay, I'll figure this out myself."

I went to a Borders Bookstore and I typed in anxiety into the search, aside from fixing anxiety books, the whole self-help section was where they were located. So, I found Tony Robbins. I'm like, "I've heard of that guy." And I got a Tony Robbins book. I got *Awaken the Giant Within*. This new level of Hope started showing up. There was a thing he said, "It's true you can't not think about something", which addresses the thing I was worried about. But he goes, "You also can't think of two things at the same time." So, I thought, what if I replace something that's exciting and challenging, but is beyond what I'm used to. So, instead of me being like, "Don't faint on the Comedy Central half-hour special." I thought, "How can I have the number one Comedy Central special?"

I started spending every day, with full anxiety, waking up jumping out of the bed, and saying out loud, "You have the number one Comedy Central special." I'm like running around the house. "You're the best comedian ever. You're the blah, blah, blah." I'm saying this to myself. I remember the first day, getting 10 minutes in and feeling the anxiety not having as much of a hold. And me being like, "Holy shit that was just 10 minutes in. What if I keep going?" So, I got excited about like, that was like the first day at the gym. What if I did 100 days? The special was going to be recorded like 90 days down the road or whatever.

So, every day I did this hour picturing it was number one thing. It's funny because where I live now is that such a different consciousness than this story. But it's really the beginning of just the

changing your thinking level, and I got to the special, and I was excited about it and free of the anxiety, probably 90% free of it. It was the number one special. It was the most played special in 2006. I got a major standing ovation and it was great. And this was the beginning of this Tony Robbins, Make It Happen achievement phase that is a great stage in my life that was totally needed.

It's funny because Michael Beckwith has a book called *Life Visioning* and he talks in the book about four stages of awakening. This was the beginning from one to two. He talks about the first level is called To Me, where you're in this victim mentality of everything is happening to me. It's because of my mother, it's because of the economy or my ex. That's why my circumstances are this. The way I also phrase it is eventually, to me runs you into the ground, you become addicted, you become suicidal. Or you go into a second stage where you learned how to change your circumstances, which is that second, make it happen, motivation, by me stage, right?

It says in Michael Beckwith's book, "You get to each stage by releasing something. First, the second happens when you release blame." Now, you'll still have times where you have blame, but it's not the main running only thing. You start to get there as a you. You can change the circumstance or whatever.

So, the second of the four stages is By Me, and that's the achieving world. That's the people that have a million Lamborghinis and are building the businesses, and number one. My opinion is, eventually that also can run its course, because you're still under the illusion that you are these things you're achieving. And even though you're not run by your circumstances anymore, you're still a victim too if they fall apart. So, you're still very control based. So, I went through a few years of through massive effort and force and making it happen, having really good Comedy Central stuff, having a good comedy career, and Tony Robbins-ing my way through everything. Making it happen, achieving, and it was great. That's kind of how I got to the second stage.

[00:46:32] LW: I want to just go back and talk about one thing. You said that voice that told you to get up and leave, right? That voice plays a prominent role in your life later on. I'm curious, was that one of the first times that you followed it, or is that something you were used to doing at the time?

[00:46:51] KC: Yeah, I think that there's a level of volume based on what you're following. In other words, if you're following a lot, the more you follow, you're screwed, life isn't that easy, then that voice is really loud. By the way, this is not – I sure don't recommend this method to anybody. But I noticed, I always hear that new voice right after my edge of suicide, because it's actually the literal death of an old story happening. And I believe that it's not us that suicidal. Our stories are trying to die. Our ways that we were we're trying to die, and a belief system, a relationship, identity is trying to die. If you start to get your just this moment, and what you used to be is trying to die, this is going to be amazing, right?

But if you think that's you, you're trying to stop that voice that is needing to die from – thinking you're the skin cells that are dying all day, and trying to trap them on and negotiate this. It's like, "Let's not you fall off." But I had that moment at the hospital where I'm in the waiting room, right after I was at the beach, figuring out if I should go buy a gun, and feeling the motions of really considering suicide. And finally, just feeling through that and crying a little bit and being like, "What do I do?" And then after a little bit of surrender, and like I'm lost, I don't know what to do, there's kind of an opening for asking God for help. There's kind of an opening for, I don't know – the old story of Kyle can't fix this. A higher level of Kyle that I've never seen before can. And I think that because I really felt through, I give up. I suddenly heard a new voice, because I wasn't fighting from the old voice anymore. And this voice was quiet. But I remember hearing it and following it and it got louder. Because I said yes to it, it could have been a passing voice. But I just was like, "I don't know what to do. I don't want to have an anxiety forever. But I don't want to just numb it and just have a bunch of pills too. I don't only want that." And I sure don't have any problem with what everyone else chooses. But for me, there was something about that that was like a kind of a numbing giving up versus a good giving up.

Sometimes giving up is good, if you replace it with the universe, if you replace it with God. If you really let everything fall off that needs to, your giving up can be a real gift. Because then you can hear higher voices, and you can hear next steps, and you can hear permission, and you can hear synchronicity and miracles, and all of that's here. It starts to be normal when you follow it, right? So, that voice was really a big voice in my life. Because I do think if I had ignored it, I don't know if I would have stayed a comic. If I just be on pills my whole life, if I would have never

transcended it. Maybe I would have still had the same awakenings later. I don't know. I don't know what would have happened.

[00:50:08] LW: I imagine that voice was the thing that guided you to the Tony Robbins material.

[00:50:13] KC: Totally.

[00:50:14] LW: So, once you started absorbing that, as a student of life, like most comedians are, did you start working that into your comedy? When did the spiritual content start to make an appearance in the bits that you were doing at that time?

[00:50:30] KC: There was a subtle desire on both ways, for the comedy to have a little bit of positive permission. But also, I was just becoming also a coach and motivated. So, there were a couple things. There were bits that I did. I did a bit where I said, "It's so weird, because you can make anything fun." Like, "I'm going to make my death fun", like I say on stage. We're all going to die. Why not have fun with it? Why do we worry all the way until the death, and we're like, "You guys, I'm going to die." And then we die and we're like, "See, I told you, I'd die." And you're like, "How are you talking to me?"

I said, the last 10 seconds when I have everyone gathered around in the hospital, I'm going to get my body into a very nice, tight, entangled, yoga pretzel position, just like a really stiff not. Because I know that your body gets stiff when you die, and I want to make it very hard for my family to unscramble me. This whole bit formed from that, and then there was a great bit about the news is just trying to make you depressed. Can you imagine how not scared of flying we would be if the news just told us about the 30,000 flights a day that made it?

[00:51:36] LW: And people walk off –

[00:51:38] KC: With the same with the same breaking news intensity, because that's also news. A plane took off and landed. That's way more news to me than the planes that didn't make it. So, I think every time a plane lands, they should interrupt whatever or whatever show you're watching and interview every person as they're getting off the plane. You'd be like, "Oh, I want to try flying." And then I say something like – and then they don't. They scare the crap out of you.

And then they list all these pills that have all the side effects in the commercials for anxiety that they just gave you. And I realized I'm kind of coaching them through stand-up, but not point blank saying it. I'm not preaching, but it is an angle that was feeling really positive and good and calling bullshit on darkness and making death okay. These are good spiritual principles, but made comedic.

So, in 2009, the Act started getting there. It had a combination of regular stand-up and observational stuff, but that too. I really went through a phase that I am letting go of, that I know I'm sure you know what I mean, that when you have your first awakenings, you want everyone to know about it, and you need everyone to know that they can have this thing. Because I went from suicidal anxiety to number one Comedy Central special through Tony Robbins and changing my thinking. And that same me that was oblivious to what everyone thinks, would just get in everyone's face and be like, "Dude, you can have everything you want. You're going to have an amazing" – and now I'm looking at me like, I might as well have knocked to their door and said, "Have you found Jesus or something?" I'm just coaching everyone uninvited, thinking that what I'm offering them they'll want. But really forgetting and not knowing until way later that a factor in my shift was my fall apart, my depression, my lostness, my need for it and not every – if I had coached the me in 2002, that me would have been like, "Get the hell away from me." You know what I'm saying? Like the me that was showing everybody is just thinking they got to know about Tony Robbins and I'm going through this thing that I'm sorry, everybody, I get it now. You don't have to force everyone else to do that. But it was a given to me, they wanted that, and learning later. maybe not everyone does.

[00:54:00] LW: I went vegan, raw vegan, years and years and years ago. During that period, I relentlessly decided to follow my heart. I made a decision to move from New York to LA. I changed my name to Light. So, all kinds of shit can happen when you go raw vegan.

[00:54:17] KC: Yeah. Are you still? If you don't mind me asking.

[00:54:19] LW: No, I'm not. I'm not. But I'm curious, I know that's a big part of your story and it supposedly happened spontaneously. But what happened prior to that?

[00:54:30] KC: I would actually say this is how I went from stage two of Michael Beckwith book of the second stage of *By Me*, to the third stage of *Through Me*, which is where you have to release control. Because you actually came in right because that's where I left off and my journey is the next thing. Because I became this Tony Robbins in the comedy scene and wanting everyone to know they can have the life they want. I got very passionate about as a headlining comedian, showing aspiring comedians that they could have this life too.

So, I started doing this thing where I was coaching – I would do events where I wanted young comedians, open mic-ers, whatever, to know they could have this, and I created this thing called Stand-Up Bootcamp. And it was like this boot camp for aspiring comedians or people that just wanted to bring comedy into whatever their life was, or whatever.

It's kind of combining my massive life experience as a comic with some of my version of Tony Robbins principles. So, there'd be this kind of motivational point, plus all the lessons I learned from the road, and some big comics came and spoke at it. One was Louie Anderson, the late great Louie Anderson, and he and I ended up partnering together. And we were teaching people this. I went through this kind of six months, maybe or so, of us doing these events on the road, and the audience was either aspiring comics that liked it, or there were other comics that knew about it, thought it was cool. Or there was also a wave of people that weren't going, who comics are about calling BS on everything. And I would hear through the grapevine comics that were peers of mine, were talking crap about me like, "Kyle went off the deep end. Is he a Scientologist now? Is he a cult leader? What's going on?"

I remember one very big day, this is the big week of the next level of my shift. I met breakfast with Louie and I'm telling him, "I really want to get over what people think about me." I go back to my hotel, there's a car that's supposed to take me to the airport. I get this email and it's like, "Hey, you con man. I read this blog, this comedian wrote about you." And I clicked the link. This is like 2010, and a comic that didn't know me and wasn't there, wrote a blog spelling out how I must be doing this for the money, which I really wasn't making – it was so funny, as a comic, which I stopped doing to do this for a while. I was making 5,000 to 10,000 a show. And this, we're developing it. It was like \$100 to \$200 for the weekend. And this blog was written, spelling out that I'm this guy doing this for the money. You can't teach comedy. Anyone that says you can is – I also had a belief that I get some of their points and sometimes I still believe what I believe,

which is, I believe everyone can be funny. And this is the thing that really pissed comics off. Anyone can be a comedian.

An example I give is, if you've ever said anything headliner-level funny, like you're just at a dinner with someone, you're riffing about an ex or politics or something, and it comes through funny, that you have that in you. Right? That's there. Maybe you didn't channel it, or use it or harness it. But that was a huge argument against me, that Kyle just thinks anyone can be funny. I've now seen some comics that have worked 10 years that are not funny and have continued to be not funny. So, I'm like, I get their point, too. But they're working comic. So, I don't know. I'm not trying to shit on them. I'm just open to maybe not everyone is supposed to be a comedian also. So, I get that point. And I think there are some people that have insane comedy potential, that think they're not funny, that aren't tapping into it that could. So, there are arguments to both.

I read this blog this guy wrote, and they get shared among the comics, like tons of them share it. All of a sudden, it's this viral point that I am scamming people as like a cult leader for money. I was too young to handle that the way I – like something in me needs to die to handle this. Because it was so overwhelming and I got so much hate and I felt so horrified. But I had enough Tony Robbins in my body to know, I'm about to learn a new thing.

So, I told the car that was going to take me to the airport to go without me. I canceled the next week's tour and I stayed in the hotel for six days. I just watched as I had no idea what to do. For the first four days, my body kept coming up with all these solutions like Karate Kid. I'll show them with another number one special. I'll prove it circumstantially, right? And I would feel these triggers in these fears and see myself on the other side of them. And on day four, I had this moment where I noticed, wait, it's been four days of me safe in a hotel, saving my life, but I'm safe. I've been in fight or flight based on my thoughts of the future versus the circumstance. And this moment happened where my thoughts were over here and they're just, "Do this, do this, do this." And I'm looking at them and I just feel this moment where like, I'm not my thoughts. These thoughts that are going crazy aren't me. They're saving their life.

There was some separation where all of a sudden, I wasn't my problems, I wasn't my accomplishments, I wasn't my history, and everything just collapsed, and I was just a dude staring at the wall, and time changed. There wasn't time. Like, five hours passed, so I'm just

staring at the wall and it felt like very quick. I don't know. Everything was suddenly different. This whole shell of all my fears and everything just collapsed. This was suddenly – I'm not against motivation. I love it. But this was the end of the motivational phase of my life. The reason is, because when I got back, I had these things I was actually hearing myself say at these boot camps and teaching and stuff. And I heard this calling me that goes – and this, by the way, isn't a pitch for raw veganism as much as that's the story of the lifting of the thing. But I heard this calling and my body go, "What if you went raw vegan for 90 days?"

So, I decided to leverage myself to for sure do it. And I announced to the public, I'm going to go 90 days, eating raw vegan. If I eat anything cooked or animal product, I'll give away 10 grand. So, just like put me on the island and burn the boats. Like someone walks by with a cookie and offers it to me. It's a \$10,000 cookie, I'm not eating it. So, for 30 days, I remember getting really healthy and doing this with my friend Diego. He was doing it with me. He was also – does good filming of stuff and everything. We get to day 30, I remember this moment where someone walked by me with a hot dog, and I smelled it. All I smelled was chemicals and metal. I noticed that my taste buds just changed. It blew my mind that like 30 days ago, a hot dog would have been an amazing craving. Now, it felt like it fell off of me and just feels ridiculous.

So, I started going, "What else feels heavy and getting excited about letting go of other things?" It's like, "What if I got off Facebook? What if I didn't date for a while? What if I, whatever?" This began this principle that was really big, and this moment I said to Diego, he said this quote, I said, "What if I canceled Facebook?" I didn't cancel it. But I said to him, "What if I did?" And he said, "The only thing I know", he's in the car with me. He goes, "The only thing I know is if you do, your stress comes from, you'll only be able to measure what you'll lose. You can't see what you'll gain." This became the essence of how I lived. If it's heavy, let go of it. If it's heavy, you're keeping it because you don't trust and there's a higher thing.

So, we get to like day 45 and I was going to go do stand-up at a comedy club, and I remember thinking I don't want to do – I was just literally going, "Uh." I had this moment. I'm like, "Oh, shit." So, I went up in vibration and now my dream career comedy is heavy. This was a big moment because I was like, I have to honor the thing. If it's heavy, you can only measure what you lose. You can't see what you'll gain. So, I tell the clubs I'm not coming. We're not going to go to stand-up.

The next week was a big week, because I'm now someone who's not doing my old dream career and I can hear what's here. In fact, I would even say, and this is something that should be exciting for people. I've realized I'm even bigger than my dream career, because I'm letting go of it. I'm not these external have tos anymore. I'm bigger than it. So, we get to day 45, I let go of it. It's a week later and I hear my body go, "What if you combine comedy and transformation?" I hear my ego go, "Well, no one's ever done that." Like, at least the way I want to do it. I know there's comedians that make points, but no one's ever done that. And my soul was like, "No one's ever done that. It's your own field. It'd be like your own thing."

So, I said to Diego, "What if we film videos for the colleges by name?" And I literally make a video and we shot hundreds of videos where I'm like, "Hey, this is a video for Diane Johnson at North Idaho University. This is Kyle Cease." Many of those people had had me as a comedian there. So, I said, "I'd love to do the lecture circuit at your school." I remember comics that give me shit, like, "Why aren't you going to do a club?" And then a ton of those colleges said yes at a way higher price, like around 10 grand a pop. And instead of me doing a week at a comedy club, doing morning radio at a club next to an Applebee's for three to five grand, I'm now flying out hitting one college saying exactly what I believe flying home for 10, and getting a ton of those. All of a sudden be making the best choice for lecture circuit, as it's the guy from 10 Things I Hate About You and these movies they know, and I'm their age more and everything, and just getting all this work for so much more money. I had a huge agency. I had a really big agency and they wanted 10% of these gigs. But they also wanted me to stay a comic. They didn't like this weird, transformational person I was becoming.

So, even though they were a huge agency, they were becoming heavy, right? They were out of alignment. Even though they handled household name people. They want me to stay a comic, and they want 10% of this stuff they have nothing to do with it. I'm getting more gigs on my own anyway. So, they're out of alignment, they feel heavy. This was a scary let go. I was justifying keeping them, because they get me auditions for movies and stuff. And I have a big rule that if you're justifying keeping something, you have to let go of it. This is really big. Because wouldn't it be weird if you're on a date with someone and they go, "I guess I like you because I like your clothes." You know they don't like you, right? Wouldn't I be a crappy dad if I was like, "I guess I'll keep being Vivi's dad because she gets good medical coverage." And I don't justify what I do for

a living. But we do have things in our life we do justify, like, "I hate this job. But I know I'm getting a promotion later. I don't like this person, I don't feel safe with them. But they took me to a nice dinner that one time."

When we justify something, this is what that is. That's your ego explaining to yourself and making sense out of why you're ignoring your heart. If you keep that thing, you ignore your heart more and more until you just bury it. So, people that are in jobs they hate for 30 years, they don't even know there is a calling or a heart. They've just ignored it so much, I don't say that with judgment. I understand why too. But when you're justifying something, you have to be explaining why you're not doing what your soul wants you to do.

[01:07:02] LW: You can bury it or it'll bury you. But something's getting buried.

[01:07:06] KC: Right. And I want to reiterate, I don't mean this with judgment, because we all just come from different consciousnesses. In fact, this makes sense. But you notice how there's a lot of people that were born in the 20s that have those like 70-year relationships. But if you ask them anything emotional, they don't want to say anything. They don't talk emotions. They don't talk about what it was like in the war, or whatever, and you start to also hear in a lot of those relationships, really dark crap that happened. Like, "Oh, my grandpa, was this raging alcoholic, and we were all abused." It was just normal. Why is that? Because you weren't listening to your soul's unfolding.

In fact, back in the '30s and '40s, no one even knew that was a thing, I think. But it's just like you're in this long thing and you just end up being identified as the relationship that you're in for 30, 40, 50 years, or the job you were in, and you lost your calling, your soul. I don't say that so anyone feels guilt. In fact, I'm hoping it's just permission for people right now, that feel in certain circumstances that they're buried in, that they can let go of them. But isn't that weird? When you ask grandpa about what he felt? If they're in a thing for 50 years, they don't talk about themselves. They just kind of become shells. So, you do bury you when you ignore that calling.

I let go of this agency. And then right after that, I get this call, this event called GATE is Happening. Global Alliance of Transformational Entertainers. It turns out, Jim Carrey and Eckhart Tolle had paired up and created an event and they saw me and wanted me to speak at

it. That is the most Kyle combo. And by the way, they're the most opposing energies on the planet. You might as well say, on a scale, from Eckhart Tolle to Jim Carrey, how excited are you to see me? Because their energies are so opposite and that'd be the least likely pairing at the time, and it felt like this mirror of me letting go of all the have tos. From my perspective, it's just like, right after I let go of this huge agency, and prove to the universe I trust it, this bizarre, Kyle combo has formed an event and wants me to speak at it.

I did it and I performed. And when I went to that stage, there wasn't a me that was Kyle, the unworthy guy who's so lucky to be here with these people, or they're higher than me or anything. I'm the guy who has let go of eating crappy food. I'm the dude who has let go of the top agency. I'm a guy who's let go of my career and found an even higher connection to source, and I just so was the moment, and I went on stage with nothing prepared. I see Jim Carrey, Eckhart Tolle fourth row, and I go, "This is so weird. I'm told what would happen if Jim Carrey and Eckhart Tolle had a baby." I said, "I don't know if you guys are picturing that. Eckhart, I know you're not because it's a thought and you don't have those." And then I said, "Some of you guys might think that jokes offensive, but it's in the past so Eckhart doesn't even know about it." Spiritual comedy just was suddenly born and the whole place was screaming and awesome and loved it and I did like this eight-minute set doing –

[01:10:18] LW: Complete improvised?

[01:10:20] KC: Completely off the cuff. I mean, for me, that's easier. Because when you go to dinner, you don't have a setlist. It'd be weird if you did. If you're just sitting there, like, "Do you have any pets? Do you like ice cream?" For me, that was easier. I mean, all my stand-up experience, my transformations were all coming into the set, and I was just was in the moment, and this thing came through and it was cool, because it was headliner-level comedy, delivering things that the spiritual community would get, and that was so fun, because it wasn't like when a spiritual speaker has, I thought I'd start off with a little joke I heard on the way here. This was like real comedy coming through.

So then, after that, all these people in the audience were like producers from different things, and offering me little appearances and things or shows or their seminars or their events. I was suddenly getting all this work all over the place after I let go of stand-up. It was so ironic

because I let go stand up, I had no idea what I would gain, and all of these doors opened on the other side. I'm just thinking of, if I had been not performing as the spirit, the video that the Jim Carrey, Eckhart Tolle people saw was me on the college tour, delivering the spiritual comedy. So, because I followed that I made a demo of it, and then they saw that and invited me. I mean, that was the awakening of this whole new world. What stemmed out of that is Evolving Out Loud, which I've now done for 12 years, I guess, because it was 2000 – maybe – yeah, 2011 to '23, probably. So, 11 and a half, something like that, which is these huge events that are in big theaters and stuff in there.

This thing that I know, as I do this work, is that everything everyone feels that's a limitation is an illusion. When someone's feeling pain about something, the usual causes, it's triggering something from under it that's not seen. I spent the last 12 years helping people see that, and releasing whatever the trauma is that's in there. And seeing the illusion therein, because I'm kind of speaking from the other side of that shift from two to three. Does that make sense? The shift from two to three, if you want to go back to the Beckwith book is from that achiever state and to, letting go of control, because that's what I let go of when that guy wrote the blog. By letting go of control, that put me into three. And in letting go of control, so many miracles started happening around me. It got so synchronistic, and weird, I'd go anywhere, I'd know what song is coming on, or I think of someone I'm like, they're going to be at the store. It started becoming this kind, of course, in miracles life, and life still challenges you and it's taking you even further. But you go from the second stage, you release control, and you go to the third stage, which Michael Beckwith calls through me. And that's where you're more about high and low vibrations.

I kind of see Esther Hicks and Abraham Hicks as teaching three, follow vibration, go to the vortex that kind of thing. And I think four is oneness. I think four is moving to the as me state, which is where you remove the illusion of separation. I get that right now, I'm being interviewed by myself. Like myself, in the illusion of the story of Light Watkins. Light Watkins is interviewing himself right now. Anyone watching this is hearing themselves talk be interviewed by themselves, we're all one, and the only thing that creates the separation is the mind, and the more I do this work, I noticed the mind can dissolve because most of our "I" is just a collection of traumas.

So, you got this kind of I you created that sitting on top of a trauma, right? Does that make sense? If you didn't get straight A's one day and you got beaten for it, you might create some major achiever that doesn't want to get beaten. But then you do that enough that you call that you. But what you are is this character that's just avoiding getting hit. And then you bring that to when you're an adult and your dad's not there, but you're still doing it. I'm able to see that in people, right? Because I am seeing that in me all the time. So, I bring people on calls and shift them and can identify the illusion that they're in.

[01:15:04] LW: I think a great way to wrap this up would be to give an example of what you're talking about, from your own experience. You mentioned that you guys do Evolving Out Loud in huge theaters. But it wasn't always like that. I think the conventional wisdom is, when demand gets to be enough, then we'll be able to grow into a slightly larger arena than what I'm doing now. But you kind of took the opposite approach. So, can you just share that, as a sort of grand finale of this conversation?

[01:15:32] KC: Sure. So, one time, this is a really interesting thing. I had a manager for a long time, that really was amazing at challenging me to be more than I could see, which was amazing, because I could see big. But this guy could sit outside of me and reflect even bigger and took me to places that were scary, but true. And I believe that's a great purpose in relationships. If you're going to be in a relationship, whether it's romantic or friendship, having people that can shine on you a level that's past, what you can see, is really big, because that creates the space for permission that's bigger.

So, when I started doing Evolving Out Loud, the first way I did it was by doing like a hotel ballroom that would be maybe 200 seats, 150 to 200 seats, and I would invite other speakers to come speak on the stage. I had big different speakers. I had Marianne Williamson once. I've had Beckwith before I had Bob Proctor, and I do these kinds of 200 seaters. And they were great, and I would do these two, three-day events. One day, my manager Norm goes, "Yeah, they were great. That was good." I'm going to dare you to do one by yourself. My fear was like, how do I sell that? It was so easy to sell, "Hey, come, you'll see Marianne Williamson talk." It's weird to be like, "So, it's me." He goes, "I'm going to challenge you to do it." I remember one day, one of my friends saying, if you did do it, how big of a theater would you want to do? I just went into fantasy world. And I said, like 1,000 to 2,000-seater.

We went with, say yes, and figure out how then make a leap energy. So, the first theater we rented was the Alex Theatre in Glendale, which is 1,400 seats. I rented it blind. I rented it, having no idea how I would fill it. But once I rented it, I went from being the person who wants to do that theater energetically, to the person who does that theater. And something in my paradigm shifted, where it went from being a goal or a dream to normal. And your awareness changes when that happens. You're just open to everything's away. A week later, I went to go get dental work done, and I'm in the waiting room at this kind of holistic dentist, and she introduces me to the lady that's sitting next to her on the couch. She goes, "This is Christine Blsdale. She works at KPFK. Kyle's, a speaker and transformational whatever", whatever the hell I do. And Christine said, "Oh, do you have any events coming up? Because we do a radio drive and we're going to offer it to people. If you want to sell any tickets, like we take the money, but if you want to fill any rooms, and I was like, "Yeah, yes." And I said, "I'll give you 1,000 tickets."

The next day or so, she has me do this hour transformational talk on live and it went really well. They ended their pledge drive. And they sold all 1,000 tickets. They might have re-aired it a couple times, but it was like they sold them all. So now, I only have 400 tickets to sell. I gave him a few more. That was like a couple 100, something like that and that was easy to sell, because I'm literally telling everyone we're in this new huge theater, you got to see it, boom, sold out event. The goal my team and I had at that event that I ended up transcending that was we had this goal of, what if we offer these packages where they can work with me for a week in groups of eight, and then we'll spend a year doing like a week with eight people, and then take a week off, and then another eight, and it'd be like \$10,000, or whatever it was. And we got excited about the people in the 1,400-seat audience buying something at the end where they could do a more intimate thing with me, where they could work with me for a week or whatever. And that the plan was going to be, we would bring in a ton of money and do these retreats for a year.

But I'm on stage doing this event and I'm hearing my content. At one point, that sounded really heavy to me. So, I walk off stage, and I get done with the event. I'm like, I was going to go out there and meet everybody and sign them up to come do the event. And instead, I walk offstage and I tell the team, "I don't want to go out there and I don't want to go meet them and I don't" – I

knew I was sitting on probably a million dollars if I went out there. I could see, but I also don't want to go work and do retreats for a freaking year. I felt myself go, it's not a 10 in my heart to do a retreat for a year.

So, the team goes, "Okay, we'll go try and sell them." And I'm like, "Okay." But I kind of was a little bit hoping it didn't work. And it didn't. One of my teammates goes out and there's this rush of people that are asking where I am and then she just got freaked out and ran away. I remember going to the back room and seeing her sitting on the floor. She goes, "We didn't sell any." And this was the first thing I said, "Do you realize how big we're about to be?" And she goes, "Did you hear me? We didn't sell any." And I go, "I know. Something bigger is trying to happen." And I just knew that's what was trying to – I just heard my content that was delivered through me the whole weekend. Something bigger is trying to happen, than us just doing this at the level of making a ton of money and working our ass off.

So then, all of a sudden, we weren't stuck going to Big Bear and doing retreats. I was just off the next week, and I realized we film the event. And I was like to one of my teammates, I was like, "Come out and why don't you make a trailer with me of our events?" So, we made this beautiful trailer of our live events, and you see this enormous theater. And then we rented the theater again, for a few months down the line and that trailer did really well. This was kind of this new cutting-edge trailer, I don't know, like a million views, and we sold that freaking event out. And then we're like, "Let's make more videos."

One day we're at dinner and someone on my team says to me, "What do you think ghosts are?" And I jokingly said, "I think ghosts are people that aren't letting go of their old house. If they would just learn to let go." And someone said, "You should coach ghosts." So, we made a sketch, Life Coaching for Ghosts and it came out on Halloween. Then we made a Thanksgiving sketch where we did the sketch that I don't know if you've ever seen, but it was how enlightened families argue. It was just a family all talking to each other. But from like these Byron Katie, this family is crazy. But the real problem is my resistance. This family is crazy and we're all saying this thing. That got 11 million views. And all of a sudden, my Facebook skyrockets, I'm offered a book deal, that becomes a New York Times bestseller. Had I chased the money in the short term, I wouldn't have built this foundation.

So, this was what the big teaching and that was for me. Every second you have a calling that's trying to show up, it's a very open-ended calling. That's the calling that says, "What if we left this company? What if we ask that person out? What if we go to Italy right now? What if we wrote a book?" It's this kind of new portal to a new world. And when it shows up, it's always met with the ego freaking out coming up with why you shouldn't.

The first thing is this calling, that's like your opportunity, and it's met with a counterbalance of fear. Yeah, but if that happens, right? If you listen to the opportunity, the fear dies. If you listen to the fear, the opportunity dies. Every second you're here to follow in my eyes that higher thing. So, when we were seven sold-out Alex Theatre events in, we did seven times the Alex Theatre sold-out events, made video products that are all on our membership site. Amazing stuff. There's last one we're about to do. I had this calling and made it go, "What if we did the Dolby Theatre?" That's a 3,400-seat theater. That's where the Oscars are. I was like, I know how to follow this thing now. It's like, "Go call them."

So, we call them, and turns out the Dolby Theatre wants this crazy six-figure number to do a two-day event. They're all like, you have to use their union people. It's a lot of money. And it was way beyond our budget and what we're used to, but I wanted to do it and that's the only thing that mattered, the yes. I said, "Here's a lot. Here's the whole thing." And I went from a guy that wants to do the Dolby Theatre, to guy that does the Dolby Theatre. That weekend, I still had one last Alex Theatre event left. When I walked on that stage, I was so in the pocket that I started just riffing about that we got, the telling the story kind of like this, that we got the Dolby Theatre. While I'm doing it, a dude in the back of the room gets up and runs to the back. And then someone else does and someone else does. I was like, "Where's everyone going?" It was almost like God put this person in there. Someone from the back of the room yells, they all want to be the first to buy tickets to the Dolby Theatre. Now, we didn't have anyone in the back selling, right?

But when that person said it, the whole audience gets up and runs to the back of the room. There were probably, in that moment, 1,250 people in the room because some people were in the lobby or whatever. 1,250. We sold 1,700 tickets. So, I immediately got the money back for the theater two days later, and now I had this other opening for another whatever, another 1,700 tickets to sell which was easy. And that moment was so crazy because to 1,250 people, we sold

1,700 tickets with zero planning on a pitch. There was no pitch. In fact, there was no one there to sell. I just went to the back of the room and my team ran after matching the audience and then sold them the tickets. I'm in the back of the room watching sales come in and I just saw that as the match to the leap.

So, that's kind of how the third world works, in my opinion. When you follow the higher frequency, you're only stressed because your mind can measure what you lose. You can't see what you'll gain. But at the same time, it's almost giving you permission to a new portal, and it wants to flush out the old life you are living. If you don't honor the old life, yeah, but, and it's a paradigm busting thing. You move into higher frequency. So, it's just heaven.

That's how the third level works, and I spent the last 10 years doing that, whatever it is, 11 years. The ironic thing is now, where I'm at, is in a place of a lot of introversion. I actually think Evolving Out Loud is capped at me evolving out loud and telling everyone about it, and that I'm getting their approval for my revelations, and I hear God telling me or a higher man telling me, these revelations or for you now. I want you to stop having mom be proud of you via your audience about what you're realizing, and you need to have an insight and have it. The amount of times that I've had an insight and want to tweet it and the insight to be like, "Dude, this is for you, not for you to just reiterate it to someone else. You'll just create a world where they're all reiterating someone else and no one's actually living the freaking principle." It's going, "I want you to live the point I'm making versus just share it." And I'm not saying I can't share things sometimes.

But I really noticed that the absolutely everything pass, our membership site that I'm so proud of, needs to be much more now just me answering their questions. Because in the oneness world, I noticed those speakers don't tell much of their stories, their revelations. You know what I mean? The Rupert Spira, Eckhart Tolle, Mugeez are just kind of in this oneness, answering questions. I hear the universe telling me, "You got to stop getting love for your insights, because I'm the love for your insights." So, I'm losing my attachment through my moves to the external in order to ascend. Otherwise, I'm stuck at does everybody see how great I am, and give me approval for this.

So, it's going, "I really need to do this inner work with you alone now." So, there is a letting go happening, and still, I'll do my work. But it's a different frequency now, that the out loudness is for me to go internal now.

[01:27:42] LW: Beautiful, well, you've left behind a couple of really amazing books. I'm sure these are not the last books you're going to write. But even though the books on the surface appear to be about things like money, or *I Hope I Screw This Up*. Really, I think the central message in both and in this conversation and in the Evolving Out Loud events is just living with more alignment. What would you say is like a final message? Say someone just found out about you through this conversation and it resonates. What's like a next step. I know you meditate, I meditate. We follow the inner guidance. But what's the next step for somebody who's literally just found out about this 90 minutes ago?

[01:28:25] KC: Well, here's a really weird-sounding one. But we're in a time consciously, where as long as you stay alive, you're ascending. Meaning right now, life is making it impossible for you to not ascent. Life is taking us from our addictive patterns from each other, from attachment, from all of these things, because it's trying to get you to meet yourself. And under your constant, do I have enough friends? Do I have a relationship under that, is an inner child that needs you to spend some time with it. What you can know is that we're all doing that right now. I really believe the collective is massively awakening to reality was not what they thought, we're discovering this kind of matrix, you're learning the way life was. It's not just, go achieve something and retire. It's not you are what you do. And life was working really hard to help you remove the patterns in your body.

We had the old paradigm of think positive. Well, just so you know, there's darkness in the body, that's just unseenness, that just needs to be seen. For us to move forward, life is opening us up and it's making it impossible to see what our next steps are, which is fine. And it's going to remove what doesn't align with you. What was a part of you, but no longer – I actually feel like the universe is collectively purging our traumas, our ancestral history, our old stories, our limitations, and it's creating room for holy crap synchronicities and moving us from the third to a fifth dimension, and it's a gift and we just have to stay alive, because you'll just have days where you want to cry and that's you purging an old identity. As long as you're alive, you're growing. So, don't ever think that you're there, like that you're done. You're always growing. When you

have that moment, “I thought we were through this already”, well, it's got more. Life is just melting the ice that you thought you were to move you into the true water that flows that you are, and you're just love. And everything that's not love is being seen with a big light right now and dissolved into the oneness that you are. So, it's an amazing time, if you understand what's going on.

[01:30:43] LW: Beautiful. Well, we'll put link to your online community, and your books, and your social media and all of that wonderful stuff. Because your messaging, this stuff you've already created, is just, I think it's an asset. I quote you all the time on my socials. I'm honored to be able to call your friend, man, and to have you on the show and to talk a little bit deeper about your story, and to be able to broadcast this to people who may or may or may not be familiar with your work, because they absolutely need to be. So, thank you very much for coming on, and for being so open and transparent. I look forward to seeing you at some point in person, very soon.

[01:31:24] KC: I feel the same with you, man. You have a huge heart. I remember really appreciating the couple of times we got to hang out. And when I heard you were asking about doing a thing with us, I was so excited about it. And I was, a whole yes, instantly. You do great work, man.

[01:31:39] LW: Beautiful, man. Thank you so much. Appreciate you.

[01:31:42] KC: Thank you, bud. You too.

[OUTRO]

[01:31:45] LW: Thank you very much for listening to my interview with Kyle Cease. For more inspiration, make sure to follow Kyle Cease on social media. He is @evolvingoutloud. And then of course, we'll put links to everything else that Kyle and I discussed in the show notes, on my website, at lightwatkins.com/show. And his books, you can get those obviously anywhere books are sold. *I Hope I Screw This Up, The Illusion of Money*.

And if this is your first time listening to The Light Watkins Show, we've got an incredible archive of past interviews with many other luminaries who have also shared how they found their path, how they found their purpose, how they took leaps of faith. So, you can search interviews by subject matter if you only want to hear stories about people who have overcome financial struggles or people who had to expand their belief system or people who had to navigate health challenges, et cetera. All of that is also at lightwatkins.com/show.

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And then finally, to help me bring you the best guests possible, it would help a lot if you could take just a few seconds to rate this podcast. I know every podcast host says that. But what I want to do is I want to actually show you how to do it, because it's not obvious how to rate a podcast. So, you have to go to the Apple podcast app, which you probably are listening to this podcast on. Just look at your screen, and click on the name of the show, which is the Light Watkins Show which is in purple, and then that'll take you to a list of episodes. If you just scroll down that list, after about seven or eight of the past episodes, you'll see a space with five blank stars. If you really like what I'm doing here, then go ahead and click the star all the way on the right, and that would leave a five-star review, which would help me help you bring better guests and big guests and all that to the show.

If you want to go the extra mile, I'm all about the extra mile. I think you can't really make the impact that you ultimately want to make in life unless you make a habit of going the extra mile as often as possible. Leave an actual review of what you like about this show, how it makes you feel or maybe an episode that you think a new listener should start with as an introduction to the podcast. That is greatly appreciated as well.

So, thank you very much in advance for that. It really does go a long way. I look forward to hopefully seeing you back here next week with another story about someone just like me and you taking a leap of faith in the direction of their purpose. And until then, keep trusting your intuition this week. Keep following your heart as much as you can. Keep taking those leaps of faith whenever you feel called to do so. And if no one's told you recently that they believe in you, I believe in you. I really do. And I'm always wishing you the best. So, thank you very much. Have a great day. See you next week.

[END]