

**EPISODE 201**

*“LW: “My personal health had severely degraded. I was traveling nonstop I was suffering from wicked insomnia. And then all of the knock on impacts that came with that, chronic fatigue, irritability, the inability to focus and concentrate. I gained quite a bit of weight. I was tipping at like 210. And just the quality of my life had really degraded. I kind of considered myself the insoluble fiber for wanderlust. I kept the company regular, but eventually it had expelled me out of its anus. And I really had to take a pretty, significant inventory of my health. And I finally put on this little device that I wear on my triceps now called a continuous glucose monitor, and I stared into the app. And I had fasting blood glucose levels of 125 milligrams per deciliter, which is essentially diabetic. I went to my primary care physician, I'd canceled probably 5 or 6 of my annual visits in a row. And sure enough, I did my Hemoglobin A1C, and it was like 6.5%. It's diabetic levels, borderline prediabetic, diabetic levels. And I had to wake up to the reality that I was living in the nightmare that is modern American society.”*

Hey friend, welcome back to The Light Watkins Show. I'm Light Watkins, and I have conversations with ordinary folks just like you and me, who've taken extraordinary leaps of faith in the direction of their path, their purpose, or what they've identified as their mission in life. And in doing so, they've been able to positively impact and inspire the lives of many other people who've either heard about their story or who witnessed them in action or people who've directly benefited from their work.

And the goal of the podcast is to expose you to as many people as possible who found their path and to humanize them. And after hearing story after story, hopefully you give yourself permission to move further in the direction of whatever feels like your path and your purpose. Because what you'll see is that anyone who does that has to overcome many of the same obstacles that you might be facing right now.

And this week I'm in a very special conversation with a return guest, Mr. Jeff Krasno. So Jeff came on to the podcast way, way back in episode 10 and that's when he talked about his superhero origin story when he was dreaming up the wellness festival that we know and love called Wanderlust and how he grew it from one event that took place at a ski resort in the summertime to several dozen events being hosted around the world concurrently.

In this episode, we pick up where we left off in Episode 10, because over the last few years, Jeff has exited from Wanderlust and he created a new platform, an online course platform and

community called One Commune. And Jeff's most recent course on one commune is on the topic of what he calls Good Stress.

So in a way this episode is kind of like a twofer. The first 40 minutes or so we go really deep into course creation. So Jeff gives basically a masterclass and what it takes to create a successful online course because I'm asking him these questions. He didn't necessarily come onto the podcast to talk about this, but I'm super curious as someone who creates courses as someone who's taking courses. And this is based mainly on a story that he told where he collaborated with Oprah Winfrey on a yoga course.

You know, Oprah is known for her popular meditation challenges that she's done with Deepak Chopra. And in the online course world, those challenges change the landscape of how to create an online course.

So if you're a solopreneur, if you're an entrepreneur or if you've just been dreaming of creating an online course for your own services or for yourself, you're going to get a ton of valuable insight in the first portion of this interview as Jeff gets very specific into the details of what it takes to make an online course successful, and how you can grow your email list to promote your course very quickly and other practices for attracting collaborators with luminaries. I mean, Jeff is not talking about theory. He's done courses with everyone from Deepak Chopra himself to Marianne Williamson, to Dr. Mark Hyman, to Gabor Mate, to Reverend Michael Beckwith, Byron Katie. I mean, you name it in the wellness space, Jeff has likely done a course with him for One Commune. And he's giving a ton of real world practical tools and advice and considerations for helping you to create a phenomenal online course.

But in the event that you could care less about creating an online course or just learning about how online courses work, you can skip right to minute 40 ish. And that's where we get into the principles of Good Stress and why you actually want more good stress in your life. And this is applicable to pretty much everyone because we live in a world where most people are striving for more comfort.

Comfort equates to success, or I should say success equates to comfort and people want more comfort. They want more predictability. They want more convenience. And what Jeff has found in his research as a podcaster, he's spoken with 500 plus doctors over the years. What he's discovered is that all of that comfort that we try to achieve is really bad for our health. And what's better for our health are things like meditation, squatting, cold exposure, navigating difficult conversations, having to adapt to change, things like that.

And so Jeff goes on to offer some very practical suggestions for adding more good stress into our lives and mitigating the bad stress so that it doesn't create downstream issues That can lead to 90 percent of the illnesses and diseases that we've basically normalized in our society. So this was an extremely informative and actionable episode.

I think you're going to get a ton of value out of listening to both the first part about creating a course and the second part about Good Stress. And you may even get inspired to enroll in Jeff's new Good Stress course on One Commune, which also happens to feature meditation challenges with yours truly.

In any case, I'm super excited to reintroduce you to my good friend, Jeff Krasno, so that you can hear his latest findings on good stress. So without further ado, let us get into the conversation.

[00:07:09] **LW:** Jeff, man, welcome back to the podcast. It's good to see you again.

[00:07:14] **JK:** Light, thanks for having me back. I just so appreciate the opportunity to connect with you and exhort to your community. So thanks, man.

[00:07:23] **LW:** You were on the show originally, you were on episode 10 and we are now approaching episode 200 weekly episodes. So we're going on 4 years now. And so back in episode 10, if you guys want to go back and listen to that episode, we talk a lot about Jeff's superhero origin story and the rocky path towards starting wanderlust. And then we kind of left off, ended the episode with you forming a commune. And so I kind of wanted to pick up at that junction point where you moved on from Wanderlust and you had this other idea, or maybe you had the idea first and then you moved on from Wanderlust. So let's start with just that.

Let's start with talking about that transition point. And this was pre-pandemic. So how did you know that it was time to make a change? Because I think a lot of people would have considered you, Jeff Krasno is living his dream. He's got this thing that he personally created. And he's seen it evolve, it was on paper, from our vantage point, successful.

Lots of great participation. I personally participated in dozens of Wanderlusts. But you had some internal cues, I imagine. So what were those internal cues? What was the internal conversation around that in case anybody else out there who looks like they're living the dream on paper is also feeling same way? There's some shift that's happening. How do you know, when to take that shift?

[00:08:53] **JK:** Well, you can't judge a book by its cover, can you, Light? Appearances can be deceiving, I guess I would say is that Wanderlust was just a tremendous undertaking for me, personally. I assisted in delivering X chromosomes, three of them during that period. So I had three daughters during the time of Wanderlust at its peak in 2016.

We're a time where you were very involved, I believe we had 68 events in 20 countries. I couldn't even go to all of them, obviously. But my children essentially grew up in the Wanderlust environment, that is the source of a tremendous amount of gratification and the community that we were able to foster there.

But even though from the outside, this was an adventure in health and wellness for everybody else, I would categorize it as a foray into what became wealth and hellness for me. I guess I would just say by the time 2017, 2018 rolled around and I've been doing it for 10 years, my personal health had severely degraded.

I was traveling nonstop. I was suffering from wicked insomnia. And then all of the knock on impacts that came that— chronic fatigue, irritability, the inability to focus and concentrate. I gained quite a bit of weight. I was tipping at like 210 and just the quality of my life had really degraded. I kind of considered myself the insoluble fiber for Wanderlust. I kept the company regular, but eventually it had expelled me out of its anus. And I really had to take a pretty, significant inventory of my health. And I finally put on this little device that I wear on my triceps now called a continuous glucose monitor, and I stared into the app. And I had fasting blood glucose levels of 125 milligrams per deciliter, which is essentially diabetic. I went to my primary care physician, I'd canceled probably 5 or 6 of my annual visits in a row. And sure enough, I did my Hemoglobin A1C and it was like 6.5%. It's diabetic levels, borderline prediabetic, diabetic levels. And I had to wake up to the reality that I was living in the nightmare that is, modern American society. 60% of everybody else in this country, I know you're not in this country right now, but, this is a phenomenon, not just confined to the United States.

But, I had metabolic dysfunction like 90% of other people here. I was diabetic, pre-diabetic, like 50% of the other people in the United States and 60% of the other people in the United States had a chronic disease.

I had to really pay very close attention and align what I was doing in my life with, the principles. And so Commune in many respects, was a tool for me to amplify, the teachings and lessons of great thought leaders and integrative and functional medicine doctors and yogis and meditation and spiritual leaders. But it was honestly also a end of one experiment for myself.

Like I jumped into the petri dish of my own life. I interviewed 500 doctors and mystics and sages over the last five years and began to finally apply the wisdom that I had been able to glean to myself, and have been lucky enough to have a significant transformation or being in the process of a transformation.

[00:12:23] **LW:** When Elon and company sold PayPal for hundreds of millions of dollars that he personally got, he immediately re-upped into some other projects. And I'm not sure how fiscally rewarding your Wanderlust exit was, but was that something that you also knew that you were going to do? Were you actively looking for another project?

And what was the genesis of One Commune? Because you guys were doing online courses and stuff with Wanderlust, you'd started doing that. So I'm just curious what was that inflection point?

[00:12:56] **JK:** So I was really keen at Wanderlust to create an online course business as part of it because Wanderlust was this incredible celebration of community at these peak moments.

But then, Sunday night, everybody went home and I felt that the digital content, while sometimes not as like fully transformational as the in real life immersion that you get from an event was also really useful because it provided a form of glue between maybe one peak experience and the next. It was a way to bring your practice back into the quotidian. So I had experimented with a number, obviously, we did a 21 day meditation challenge together. I think it really started with my wife, Skylar. She was a yoga teacher and I had developed this relationship with Oprah and the Oprah Winfrey Network.

We, I basically, I started literally like at the mail room man. I was like, we opened Wanderlust at Hollywood and the Oprah Winfrey Network, the OWN building that was about three or four blocks away. And I was like, God, Oprah, she's right here. I can basically on a good day, hit a tennis ball to her, to her office. How do we get them involved? I was like, so we printed up some passes and we said okay, we're going to bring them over to the Oprah Winfrey Network. We're going to give the staff passes just to get on their radar. And it literally started like that at that level. And of course we walked over there and we're like, oh yeah. And then the security was like, what do you guys get the hell out of here?

But eventually we penetrated the Death Star and we got in and we found the human resources person and be like, hey here's some passes. And that just slowly bubbled up to different people.

And, pretty soon like Sherry Salata, who was the president of OWN and I connected. We did some workshops together. They were like bringing some of their people over to Wanderlust Hollywood to practice and to have lunch on the patio, et cetera. And then, Sherry was, we developed a relationship. This is a long answer but she was kind enough to put me on this list, which was the SuperSoul 100 list.

[00:15:03] **LW:** That's how you got on that list, just from from taking tickets to and getting on their radar that way. I mean, that's how you got on their radar, I should say.

[00:15:10] **JK:** Yeah, that's how I got on the radar. I was old school. I was music business style. Like I was the dude on the corner being like, come to the show, you know, handing out handbills, And so Sherry and I developed a relationship. She saw what we had done at Wanderlust. She was like, wow, this guy's a real deal. She put me on this SuperSoul 100 list. I just started to get invited to stuff because I'm on that list, I consider myself number 99 on that list. This was the top 100 entrepreneurs in the United States. The other people on that list, are like insane. You know, we would go to these events and there's George Lucas and Ariana Huffington and Julia Roberts and Lin Manuel Miranda. It was insane.

But because I was on this email, I was in. And so we did one event at her lot. And there was brunch and I'm sitting there with Gabby Bernstein, Marie Forleo and Danielle LaPorte. And we're sitting at the table and there's one empty seat at the table and I see Sherry kind of scurry by. I'm like, Hey, Sherry, come sit with us. She's like, no, no, that that seat saved, whatever. I'm like, all right.

Five minutes later, she seats Oprah right there right across from me, and man I've been fortunate enough to meet plenty of famous people, over the course of my life, whatever, that's not a brag, it's just you live in New York and LA long enough, you do enough things, you're out there in the mix, you just meet people. But I was nervous.

[00:16:32] **LW:** To have something important to say when Oprah's sitting across the table from you, right?

[00:16:36] **JK:** Funny that you should say that because I had something saved up that I said, if I ever meet Oprah, I've got something up my sleeve. So she sat there and she was like heavy on the Weight Watchers tip at that juncture. So she was funny. And she was like pointing at things on the plate, like two points, one point, three points. I don't know for Weight Watchers, but that's, she was assigning points to all the food on the table. But it was fun. It was lighthearted. And so finally I got the gumption up and I said, Hey, Oprah, I did all those meditation challenges with Deepak, and I think you should have married Deepak. She's looked at me like with just a really cross face. She's like what are you talking about? Why?

And I said, because then you could have been Oprah Chopra.

[00:17:20] **LW:** Yeah. (laughs...)

[00:17:23] **JK:** And I can't believe that she'd never heard that before. She must've thought about it at some point, but that was enough to break the ice. I was like, you've done all these meditation challenges, why don't we do a yoga challenge? What do you think about that? And I was like pitching her, can you imagine how many times she gets pitched?

But there we were. And she's like, young man, this body does not do yoga. No.

I'm like, I'm not talking about some lycra clad, blonde, ponytailed, whimsical things get pushed up into a handstand. I'm talking about yoga, like really elementary yoga. It's for everyone. We need to make the biggest possible tent for this practice and you have such an incredible reach. I think we could really work together, and she heard it.

And that next week I got an email. And they said, yeah, we heard this thing from Oprah. You want to do this yoga challenge. Will you come over and tell us what it's all about? And there I was in the boardroom with all the decision makers. And I was very well prepared. And I was like, listen, this is 21 day yoga challenge and it's all online. We're going to make it free. We're going to make it accessible to as many people as we possibly can. We're going to democratize the practice, bring it to the people that need it the most. And they were in, and then they called me couple of days later. They're like, we like it. We're in, but you're the yoga guy. You're going to host it on your platform and we'll market it. We'll market it hard. I'm like, I'm in, Oh my God, let's go a hundred percent.

I hung up the phone. I'm like, I don't have a platform, but what are you going to say at that juncture? So we had to build a platform. And that eventually became One Commune, essentially, and/or the idea, and they were very generous. They basically spoon fed me this model of making a certain amount of content for free and available, and then eventually locking it up and selling it to people that could afford it.

And we registered about 120,000 people in that program in the first five days and we launched it and it was an amazing success. And the online community that it built and the stories that we're told between people going through that course were just unbelievably moving and powerful. And that was the genesis of then what eventually became One Commune and what informed the business model.

[00:19:42] **LW:** Wow, that's a great story. I didn't know Oprah was involved in the inception of this platform. So a couple questions just going back to fill in some of the gaps was your initial idea for Oprah to be the one that's like, sort of guiding the yoga or...

[00:19:58] **JK:** No, it was always Skylar was going to teach it, at least in my mind's eye. Obviously, Oprah and Deepak had collaborated on those meditation challenges where she would often do the foreword, but it was all audio. So she'd get on the mic and she said, this is Oprah Winfrey, I learned about meditation through my friend Deepak Chopra and I've made it a regular part of my life and it's bent the arc of my life in this way. And here's Deepak.

So I was hoping that maybe she would preface the program in some fashion. But she didn't, but that's okay. She gave it kind of her stamp of approval and and marketed it, with vigor and it was a big part of the success.

[00:20:44] **LW:** Okay. And when it came to, you said you had 120,000 people who enrolled in the first five days, was that a result of her marketing as well? Or was that just straight through the Wanderlust list?

[00:20:56] **JK:** No, that was really a lot of her marketing because they had such a big list and such tremendous reach and, she was tweeting about it.

[00:21:05] **LW:** Yeah. And they'd already done several rounds of the Deepak Oprah.

[00:21:13] **JK:** 100%. Basically, I went over there. I spent a lot of time over at those on at the OWN offices. They had a TV network. So they were doing scripted and Tyler Perry got involved, etcetera. They were doing all that stuff, but they had a small component of the business that was really focused on this kind of learning and spiritual platform, et cetera.

And they had done courses with Brené Brown and with Brendan Burchard and some other folks. And so they had really perfected this model. And I went over there and they were just, they basically just spoon fed me the model. They're like, here's how we do it. And here's the best practices. Now, off you go and, do the best job you can, young man.

[00:21:51] **LW:** Would you mind just giving us just a broad strokes sort of overview of what some of those best practices that were insightful for you, that wouldn't have guessed going into this.

[00:22:03] **JK:** Well, a lot of these are relatively tried and true and fairly well known at this juncture. But when we first started they weren't as omnipresent like, I think Covid really accelerated this kind of online summit world and digital courses, et cetera. But she was doing this very early day with Deepak and essentially you would create an episodic program. So that could be about yoga or personal development or meditation, etc. It could be 14 days, it could be 10 days, it could be 21 days.

But essentially it was episodic in nature. So they advised on the amount of attention span that people had kind of day to ingest content. So they said, okay, make this thing 21 days in our case but could be 14 days. A lot of the Deepak meditation challenges were 14 days, for example make them 10 to 20 minutes each episode, so people can ingest them make the registration period free. And you market the program and then you email gate it, but people can take the program for free through entering their email. So really what it is from a business perspective is a very robust lead acquisition engine is what they call it where you're offering a tremendous amount of value because you're offering this whole program for free in exchange for someone's email, and then you build this database of people who have registered for the course.

So they were very insistent that we launched this course at the top of January, which, of course, makes sense. We didn't have much time at that juncture because I've gone to them maybe in November or something, so we had to hustle, hustle. But they're like, listen, if you want to do this, get it out early January because that's renew you, et cetera. Right? So makes sense and launch the registration period two to three weeks prior to the program starting. So you have a very, concentrated period of time to register enough people with their emails. And then the course begins and it's not way off in the distance and so there's an immediacy.

Now, I will put the caveat proviso here that we've initial master class, if you will, we have refined how we do things, and there's lots of different nuances in terms of the creation of online courses and marketing them. But this is the way that they were initially had advised us to do it. So those were many of the components. And then, we would create short form content that would go out on social media platforms at that juncture, advertising on. You know, Facebook and, using Google for advertising to register emails into an email gated kind of platform, it was incredibly cheap to acquire leads that way that has significantly changed since that time.

But essentially, like we spent maybe \$6,000 to get 120,000 leads that would never happen anymore. You have to spend probably 250, 000 to get that many leads today. And that would be on a on with a really good campaign. So we hit it at a good time.

What I learned from that experience was that you could build a massive email database. And of course, after the first one that we did, the light bulb went off above my head. It's like, I had



developed a lot of relationships with many teachers that had significant audiences, we could essentially build this massive internal email list by doing courses with all of these people ingesting part of their audiences into a centralized list, and more or less, that is the business model of One Commune open kimono is that, we've got 5 million people through some course at this juncture. All of those people at one point or another had to enter their email.

Now, of course, it's "leaky bucket" in this world of online courses. So people leave and unsubscribe and you're always filling the top of the bucket, so to speak. But all in all, I think it provided that you continue to offer a lot of really valuable content. You can build a really significant community that way and have a nice little sustainable business. And that's all I really wanted to do post Wanderlust, candidly. I was kind on the growth trajectory addiction with Wanderlust. I was bigger is better all the time, let's do more and okay. Now we need more sponsors to do more, but now those sponsors want us to do more. And it was, just like this, you know, vicious cycle.

With Commune, I was like, no, we are going to balance growth with cycles of repair. We're going to try to mirror the function and behavior of nature in some way and create a more sustainable business that wasn't based around any sort of hockey stick growth. And that's what we've done.

[00:27:01] **LW:** You also have attracted some incredible talent co- create courses with you. Michael Beckwith, Marianne Williamson, Deepak Chopra, Gabor Mate, Dr. Hyman, Paul Hawken, Jack Kornfield, obviously your wife Skylar. What are some of the best practices for making possibility of a course appeal to someone who's got a massive platform of their own. Why would they come and do something with you?

[00:27:29] **JK:** Candidly, I've again, been very fortunate enough to develop a really unique network of relationships with a lot of people. And a lot of that was based around Wanderlust. I had the good fortune to send out offers to virtually all those people that you just listed and bring them to some far flung mountainside and put them in front of a couple thousand people in a really unique environment. And I think it was very enriching for those people. And through executing well around that, I built a lot of trust. So that was one side of it.

The other piece of it is that, I've really spent significant effort in my own life to become fluent across a number of topics, that are germane to both my physical and psychological health, but are also very helpful when attracting talent. Like I honestly, can get on the phone with an integrative or functional medicine doctor and hold my own on the immune system and metabolic function and cardiovascular health, et cetera. And through that, again, I think you garner the trust of people because, you present yourself as someone who is rigorous and really cares about the subject matter. And I do. There's no kind of imposter syndrome, although sometimes I feel that way, but this is true. And you build trust by being authentically interested and grounded in the work.

I remember one time I met Wayne Dyer and. He really bent the arc of my life or my spiritual path. He came to Wanderlust and I came backstage to meet him, and I have these like tiny little piano hands, like delicate little hands, and he had these kind of big like catcher mitts. And so, he kind of enveloped me as I went to shook his hand, he brought me in and he whispered in my ear, he says, Jeff, stay close to the work, stay close to the work. I really heard that. And from that time on, I really have stayed close to the work. And I think that matters.

[00:29:36] **LW:** You've told that story before. I've heard it before. I'm wondering why did he say that? Did he observe you not staying close to the work? Or is that just something he says to everybody? Or what do you think that was about

[00:29:47] **JK:** It's funny, I've heard a lot of stories about him. The Hay House community, for example, they would have these big events and he would never go to the social events or the dinners. He was always like in his hotel room writing and reading. And then obviously he would show up for, his talks and whatnot. I think he was someone that didn't really put a lot of stake in the limelight. He put much more stake in kind of being authentically connected to the work. It might've been just like a trope, something that he advised everyone. And I don't know, but I think, he might've had some intuition with me that at that juncture here I was but maybe not walking the walk at that juncture.

[00:30:28] **LW:** Well, you've been around a lot of these people over the years and especially when it comes to course creation. You're there. Jake is there for hours and hours on end and you're having help people streamline their knowledge base to make it accessible for people. Who have you all been really impressed with in that regard?

[00:30:51] **JK:** Yeah. That's a good question. We've done 150 courses, 155 or something like that at this juncture. So the experiences are all different. And some teachers come in and it is fully teleprompted, and every word is prescribed and the pre-production is all there and they're just reading it down. It's funny, like we work with Mark Hyman he's done it both ways. The first course we did with him, he delivered it in basically half a day. Because it was teleprompted. We did another course with him, which was completely extemporaneous. And obviously he's got some bullet points to keep him on track. And they've both been honestly very successful. Sometimes teachers want other people in the room to have that kind of energy or that vibration of being around people. Sometimes other people don't want anyone in the room. So it really depends, different people's comfort levels.

And we just recently shot a course with a very good friend of mine, an exceptional doctor a woman named Dr. Casey Means, and she split the difference. She had a lot of stuff very organized and slides, et cetera. But she didn't have to stick to a prompter. What we find is kind of the best, honestly, is when there is a general path, a general guidebook, a series of bullets, but there's such fluency with the underlying material, that the delivery is more extemporaneous.

It's honestly just like a piano player, man. It's like you practice your scales all day long, eventually you just trust yourself. You go on stage, you forget about the technical... Well, the

technical well is there, you just trust yourself to summon that, and you try to tap into the spiritual well, if you will. And that's honestly what I try to do as well.

[00:32:35] **LW:** So you don't use teleprompters for your courses? I used a teleprompter for mine, for my 21 day challenge. I loved it. But what's interesting about that is I actually wrote it out. It's like first draft. I wrote it out like the day before it was due. I channeled it or something like that, but I just tried to write it as I like to speak and I felt like it worked well, but I've done off the cuff as well with just bullet points that has also worked well. But I think given the choice, I would rather teleprompt it just because it's just efficient.

[00:33:06] **JK:** It's very efficient. I think, teleprompting versus non teleprompting I think, is like, for example, when I'm in a live setting or in a podcast setting, I really want to just trust myself, and because I'm not under the microscope to turn every phrase just perfectly. And it's like when you trust yourself as nature, nature will let you down, from time to time, right? Nature is not perfect, but you want to trust it because otherwise, you end up with the old bogey in the sky with a cudgel over you. It's like, oh well, you know, if I don't, you know, follow the scripture, then, you know, I'm going to rape my grandmother or something.

No, we have to trust nature on some level that we have some form of moral intuition or some intuition to be able to summon some sort of guidance such that we deliver a message with vibrancy and passion and authenticity, et cetera. So more and more, I'm trying to walk into situations and just completely trust myself and have faith.

Faith more as, eternal reliability like nature, you nature has a reliability to it. It'll let you down, but it's reliable. So anyhow, that's how I'm trying to go into it. When I look at myself when I've teleprompted things, and I've often done it, candidly, it feels a little phony to me.

[00:34:25] **LW:** Yeah, I mean, speaking of which, when I do my solo podcast episodes, which are all like an hour and 15, I just kind of speak them extemporaneously. And those are my by far my most popular episodes, even though I'll get to the end and I'll think I don't really like that. And I'll just put it out there anyway, and people love it.

[00:34:41] **JK:** So funny because I just listened to the one that you did on abstaining from alcohol and I loved it and I was wondering that very question, I was like, did he write that out or did he just deliver it extemporaneously? Because you don't stutter at all. You're never searching for words.

[00:35:01] **LW:** Well, we edit that. We edit out the pauses the double talk and stuff like that.

[00:35:05] **JK:** Okay. Yeah. Fair enough then. Because when I do these monologues or whatever you want to call them I tend to try to do them that way where you know I have maybe a few notes or just chapter headings in my head, but then I'm, extemporaneously speaking and and trying to get all the points across, but I find myself searching for words and finding terms of

phrase or uttering terms of phrase that don't always make sense. Just like right there, you know, so well done on that one. But I really, really enjoyed it, by the way.

[00:35:35] **LW:** Thank you. Thank you so much. Yeah I kind of feel like I have a tendency to go off and tell stories a little too long. But anyway, it's fine. It's all good. So that's really about the course creation, right?

From the perspective of the creator. What have you noticed nowadays about how people take courses?

Because I read the statistic that only about 3% of people who start an online course will finish the course, that's the industry sort of average. Obviously anyone who's creates a course wants everyone who takes the course to make it all the way to the end. So they get maximum value out of it. And what are some of the things that you all have implemented even after the Oprah, tutorials that have helped to increase that average of people who make it to the end of the course.

[00:36:23] **JK:** Yeah, we've iterated a lot. I've seen very intriguing business models where that essentially offer the course for free. If you make it to the end, otherwise you're charged.

[00:36:35] **LW:** Wait, so do you pay first and then you get a credit back?

[00:36:38] **JK:** That's right. I've seen that model which I think is actually fascinating. We've never tried it. I mean, there is a functionality within, our platform, which we use Kajabi where, we can see if someone has taken a session or not. So we obviously we can see completion rates, et cetera. But we've never tried that particular business model. It might be interesting to do it because then you're really incentivizing someone to finish. Of course, they could cheat and make it a data, but we've never tried it. Yeah. I mean, listen, man, like the persuasion economy or the attention economy, whatever you're going to call it. I mean, you know, people are uncommonly distracted, time and attention are the most valuable commodities, right now, and everybody's vying for your time and attention and how you distribute your time and attention is probably one of the most important things you could think about. And certainly meditation comes into play here in many ways.

[00:37:31] **LW:** So in anticipation of that, people not having a lot of attention, do you shorten the modules now to even more than you did earlier? Do you use quick cuts to keep people engaged?

[00:37:41] **JK:** Yeah, I mean, in some cases, but candidly, not really that much. What we do well is create long form content that is geared around delivering a tremendous value for people that are really wanting some form of transformation in their life. And candidly, if you want that transformation, you need to put some time in, man.

In some cases, if someone's prattling on for two hours, we'll say wait a minute that's not going to work. But we're not necessarily always designing for like optimal consumption. We're designing for how long does it take to make this point? Well, and to be thorough and rigorous and in some ways that's a lonely path. Of course, you know, it's different on on social media. We're trying to optimize there to some degree. But we are making some of the courses shorter or at the very least trying to sell the courses prior to like a 21 day window elapsing.

For example, it's if you have a 21 day course and you're hoping that someone stays with it the entire time and you're not offering any ability to buy that course until the 21 days are over. That's a tricky business model at this juncture. Let's say you've launched a course and you've got 25,000 people in it you're best off trying to sell that course, towards the beginning of that cycle while you still have people's attention. And so, we will do these kind of sales sequences after the 1st, 3 or 4 days or something, just to give people the opportunity to buy in earlier.

But, the other I think, significant change is that, we were running these for many years, kind of using the challenge or the summit model where essentially everyone is going through the course. It's not asynchronous. It's like everyone's going through together at the same time. And there was something very community building about that model. Obviously, we're called commune. So we believe in the community. The notion of putting 100,000 people through a 14 day program simultaneously creates a community. It creates a vibration. People are sharing amongst each other. They're posting as they're going through. People are providing accountability. People are helping each other with tips and hacks through the program. And that's wonderful. But it's also very limiting because you only have one chance to enter that program and then if it's passed.

So now we've changed that model where sometimes we will launch where everyone is linearly taking the course at the same time. But there's also sort of an evergreen funnel, more or less is what we call it, where you can, maybe you didn't see the course until three weeks later or five months later, you can always enter that course at that juncture, and it just gets dripped out. And, you're not taking it with 100,000 people at the same time, but you're still being able to avail yourself of the information. So that's one way that we've iterated some in that. I think that's fairly common.

[00:40:47] **LW:** One Commune is, and I implemented this, you preview the first couple of modules on your on your podcast, which I thought was really cool and innovative to give people a taste of what it's like. And I did that with a couple of my online courses. And also I do this thing where I will, offer someone 100% credit back after they complete a particular challenge. So let's say they take 108 day meditation challenge and it costs \$108. I will give them \$108 credit at the conclusion of that, and I've noticed that my completion rates jumped up to 80% when I started doing that. And the credit is used for another challenge in the community. So I keep them in the community. They're now familiarize themselves with how it works, marking themselves complete every day. I use Mighty Networks. That's my platform and they end up doing, maybe 1 or 2 other challenges, if not more because they now have the excitement of what it feels like to have any and we love that. We love completing something and then using that credit to basically choose our own adventure. And I got the, name from

vision from Mindvalley he just calls it an accountability fee. So we just call it an accountability fee right now, which I think it's really, even though we know it's a payment, just psychologically, just knowing it's an accountability fee. I think it fits better from the user perspective, because it helps them show up.

[00:42:27] **JK:** Sometimes what we do along those lines is if someone has bought a course, we'll go back to them and say, hey, you can apply whatever you have already spent, towards a lifetime membership or towards another higher priced items. So they feel like but the way that you're doing it, I think is very compelling. I think one other thing that we've started to roll in our assessments. And so people can actually track the value that they're getting from the information.

So let's say it's a yoga course for for sake of just conversation here. We might send out an assessment at the beginning. What is your strength level? Your self reported strength level or your self reported flexibility level or etcetera. It will where we'll delineate indicate sort of the value points of the course. And at the beginning of that course, they might say, oh, my strength is like a 3 and my flexibility is like a 4. And then, you know, after 7 days or 10 days, we'll go back with another assessment.

Now that you've taken 10 days of this yoga course, where would you rate your strength level or your flexibility level? And then they say, okay now my strength is a 6 and my flexibility is like a 7. And then we go back to them and say look where you were and look where you are now.

And I think that grounds, you measure you can improve. When people actually witness those metrics of transformation in their own journey I think that they ascribe more value to the experience.

[00:44:00] **LW:** Is that done through Kajabi or is that a Typeform that you guys integrate into Kajabi?

[00:44:05] **JK:** You can do it in Kajabi but you can also do it with a, I think a Google Form.

[00:44:12] **LW:** One more thing about this and then we'll move on to talk about the course you're creating now. We just incorporated a syllabus as well. I literally went through because I have probably not as many as you have, like, a few dozen master classes and challenges, but they're all just sort of individual challenges and you take one and maybe that's the only one you've ever heard about.

But I sat down and I said, you know, if I wanted to work on mental health, what are the challenges and masterclasses I would recommend someone take in what order or if I want to work on my relational health or if I want to work on my physical health and just sat down and created like basically a college curriculum that will last a year where someone can go from one to the next and they get a little bit more guidance in that way.

So I become a de facto guidance counselor for their spiritual work, which I found to be very helpful to that's got a lot of great response from that as well.

[00:45:02] **JK:** I think that's great and I think, you know, you are very well equipped that kind of structure because you are an individual and obviously of provide significant value for people over time, and people can become very invested in you as their guide or as their teacher, obviously, for us, we're bouncing around between a lot of different topics and a lot of different teachers and that has its upsides and honestly it has some downsides, to try to be all things to all people is sometimes very tricky. But that's the net we've cast, we're not like Calm or Headspace, is very pinpointed platforms that are like, we're going to be your meditation app period. And sometimes I'm like jealous of those platforms because they know what they're gonna do. That's it. We're doing this like regenerative agriculture and then it's like civics and then it's like metabolic health and then it's meditation. Then it's yoga. But that's really, it's a kind of more honestly, a reflection of the things that I'm interested in. So take it or leave it.

[00:46:08] **LW:** I bet you there could be some connective tissue, though, you know, like, if you're going to be a liberal arts major, you may find yourself taking archaeology. And then the next class, you're taking English lit and the next class you're taking Spanish, you know?

[00:46:21] **JK:** Yeah, where I've actually gotten, very interested and honestly, Jake is a much more proficient operator of the platform. I just get to float around and talk to interesting people. But what I'm really interested in, as it pertains to Commune now is actually connecting mechanism and science and empiricism with praxis and being that bridge between the two things.

So like, you know, we have like a huge library of functional medicine now, so we have, all of the top teachers, Mark Hyman and Casey Means and Sarah Gottfried and Jeffrey Bland and Austin Perlmutter and David Perlmutter, etc. And many of these they're addressing different things. They're addressing neurological health or cardiovascular health or metabolic health, but oftentimes the prescription is many of the same lifestyle prescriptions. It's meditation, it's yoga. It's, healthy diet, it's proper sleep, hygiene, et cetera.

But where we get to really, I think, play a unique role is that we get to say okay, now you understand the physiological mechanism through taking this course with this doctor, but you don't have to then go find some yoga teacher, some meditation teacher out there in the world, you can just go right on the same platform and we've got all the best teachers right there to help you actually instantiate those practices in your life.

That bridge from learning to practice is something that, I'm really excited about building within the platform. And I tried to do that a lot in my own courses that I'm starting to develop now.

[00:48:00] **LW:** Yeah. Okay. So that's a great transition. You mentioned that you're not really there on the ground when these things are being created. But you're starting to create more things yourself and something you're really excited about right now is Good Stress. So I know

you, you are very well read in biology and physiology and all of that, but just talk about stress in a very practical, every man way so we can understand what you mean by good stress versus bad stress. And then also relate that to your experience, which I think a lot of people are having insomnia. You grapple with insomnia for a long time. What does stress have to do with insomnia?

[00:49:07] **JK:** So I think the way that we predominantly experience stress in our culture is bad chronic stress. And this could be, through kind of overwork, through constant sort of self comparison or comparison to the outside world, through neglect through pressures related to, economics and financial pressures, et cetera obviously, then there's just the barrage of just information that our brains are trying to manage particularly as we hurdle into like a, another presidential election year, et cetera. So this is how we normally experience stress, right? It's chronic. It's sort of this IV drip of stress. And we know that the body has a psychological and physiological response.

Stress now, that's actually adaptive. A stress response is adaptive, but it becomes maladaptive when it is chronic when it's happening all the time. So when you're experiencing this kind of external stress that's leading to this kind of endocrine cascade where you're like a lot of people know about the glucocorticoid like cortisol, right?

So cortisol keeps you in this constant state of stress response or sympathetic overload that has all sorts of impacts on your body. It degrades your immune system. So if you're producing chronically high cortisol levels, you're not producing a lot of that. The innate immune system cells like neutrophils, etcetera, things that really help you stay healthy and ward off disease.

Cortisol is also like triggering. And this is what happened to me because I was living in the constant bad stress. It was triggering all sorts of glucose response from your liver, into your bloodstream. And again, this is very adaptive. We evolved over 10,000 or hundreds of thousands of years, and then hominids over millions of years, to have these responses.

It's the classic example is like the saber toothed tiger or whatever, the lion chasing you on the savannah or whatever. You're going to have a stress response. You want your, in that situation, your liver to release glucose because and send it to the extremities of your body because your muscles need that glucose for energy to get the hell out of dodge, so it's an adaptive response.

The problem is that when it's chronic, then you develop is high blood glucose levels all the time and that translates to where I was pre-diabetes or diabetes and downstream from that is like kidney disease and liver disease and cardiovascular disease and even cancer.

[00:51:24] **LW:** What percentage of people have have high cortisol levels?

[00:51:27] **JK:** That's a good question. I don't know. Right now, what we're looking at is about 50% of adult Americans have prediabetes or diabetes, and I think that's obviously related to food, but it's very related to stress 100%. Of course, when you then disrupt it your cortisol



melatonin seesaw. This teeter totter between those two key hormones, you're also setting yourself up for insomnia because those are the two counter regulatory hormones; cortisol that makes you alert and melatonin that induces grogginess and sends you off to la la land.

And we have a circadian rhythm again that is the product of hundreds of thousands of years of evolution. But our modern culture many times hijacks that biology. For example, when we intake blue light at all certain times of day, we're going to disrupt that hormonal balance such that melatonin is not secreted by the pineal gland at a certain time of day, and then you're getting insomnia. And that's, again, what was happening to me.

What are the downstream impacts of insomnia? Well, we sort of think that we know, but obviously, our memory suffers. We don't have the opportunity for restoration, both in the physical and psychological and emotional parts of our body. We don't stimulate this part of our brain called the lymphatic system, which helps to clear out all these kind of dysfunctional proteins that are sometimes associated with dementia and Alzheimer's.

But for me, again, when you sleep well, you become very insulin sensitive, which means your cells gobble up glucose for the use of energy. When you don't sleep, even one night of bad sleep, you become insulin resistant. And that means your cells basically stop accepting glucose efficiently and glucose stays in your bloodstream. And when it stays in your bloodstream, there's all sorts of negative downstream impacts there. It can get glycosylated, but mostly it gets stored as fat as triglycerides in your adipose tissue. And that's where I was, I had dad bod jelly belly, like all this kind of like jelly fat around my midsection and, visceral fat, ectopic fat, which is even worse in your organs.

And so this is where most people are, I think 10% of Americans are now chronically insomniac. I think 50% of Americans struggle with sleep on a regular basis. As I took harder look at myself and I went out and interviewed hundreds and hundreds of people, doctors and people all over the wellness landscape, I started to try to understand why are these diseases so prevalent?

Where I landed after trying to distill all these conversations and then squeeze that sponge, was that really chronic disease is a result of chronic ease. It's like we have built our culture, particularly in the last 100 and 150 years for comfort and convenience.

[00:54:54] **LW:** That's what success is. Success is being as comfortable as you can possibly be, right?

[00:54:58] **JK:** Yeah unfortunately, that's what sort of an external snapshot of success might look like, but what that's leading to is distension of morbidity where the last 20 years of our life becomes sort of a limp, dominated by cocktails of pharmaceutical drugs that are treating the symptoms of different chronic diseases and that's not the dream that I have for the last 20, 30, 40, 50 years of my life.

I want to walk off, into a cabin with Skylar on our 100th anniversary, cook amazing salmon and sip Chateau Margaux and have her read me the New Yorker and pass off together in the night. That's my dream. I want my lifespan to be equal to my healthspan, and that's not what's happening out there.

[00:55:47] **LW:** It's like Esther Perel says like, in order to have a thriving relationship, you need a little bit of tension. People think no tension is the secret to having a thriving relationship. She's actually suggests you need some of that tension. And you're saying the same thing for health. You need some, you need to build in some tension into your life. It can't just be on easy mode all the time.

[00:56:07] **JK:** So let me give you an example. You came up to Topanga. I don't know when that was. Maybe last spring. And you taught me how to squat. Okay, let me give you an example of modern comfort. We sit around in chairs and couches and sofas all day long. This is not how we were evolved to be. As you know, our hunter gatherer ancestors for generations, thousands of generations squatted.

And what did squatting do? It develops all those muscles and balance that then maintains good back health, good knee health. So you came up to Topanga, I'm like lying there, like slumped over on the couch outside, right? And you're like sitting there squatting. I'm like, what's up with that shit?

And then you're like this is what I do. And so then I got into this whole world of rewilding. It's part of my Good Stress protocol, to be honest. So now in the last six months particular, I'm like a chronic squatter. And over the last six months, my whole movement, my whole center of gravity, my whole mobility, my sense of balance completely shifted by just simply aligning the way I live with my engineering, with my biology. And part of that was squatting. It was like getting off the couch. I still like watch Curb Your Enthusiasm, you know, whatever, but I'm squatting. You know, like, my kids are like, Dad, you're fucking nuts.

[00:57:43] **LW:** How long can you hold your squat now? Have you tracked how many minutes?

[00:57:45] **JK:** A long time. I can just sit there regular, like just squat for just comfortably for a long time. And you know, one of the things that I'm doing is that I, when I'm actively like doing air squats, I do it on one of those half balls, that and so you're working all the helper muscles and I get really quiet and centered. And I just pull down, stay, I hold that position, come back up, I'll do that maybe 20 times, and I'm burning, man, it's burning. But that's good stress. And there's no greater example of good stress than you're doing reps, you're overloading a muscle.

Let's say, you're overloading your biceps, those fibers, those microfibers in your biceps tear, you give it rest, they heal, they grow. That's hypertrophy, so essentially building muscle mass is the most obvious, straightforward example of good stress. We know that, right? It's what doesn't kill us, makes us stronger. So then what are all of the different ways in our life that convenience is upending our real health is convenience is hijacking our biology.

There's so many different ways. We have a nice little handy, digital thermometer on the wall of the bedroom that keeps it set a nice, snugly little 70 degrees or whatever you set it at. Guess what? We also have an internal thermometer. We used to completely rely on that internal thermometer. Our ancestors didn't have that digital thermometer.

[00:59:26] **LW:** Nor did they have pillows and comforters and quilts and all that stuff.

[00:59:32] **JK:** And when you push in the right dosage, right? The dosage makes the poison, right? So in the right doses, extreme cold and extreme heat adapted were health conferring. They stimulated all and they activated all these resilience pathways, all these longevity pathways, obviously too much cold led to hypothermia, too much heat led to hyperthermia. You don't want that.

But the amazing thing about the body is that it's designed for homeostasis. It's designed for equilibrium. This like when you go out and you do a vigorous run, I remember you used to do like the sprints up the hill and stuff like that. I'd be like, Light, man. It's crazy.

Now I'm like sprinting up the hill, how long does it take for then your breath rate and your heart rate to come back to homeostasis, right? To come back takes a few minutes, right? Or 10 minutes, five minutes, same thing is going to happen with temperature and temperature regulation.

So you get yourself into like an ice bath, for example. Now I've become like a very regular. ice plunger. I fucking abhor the cold. I hate the cold. I hate it. But what it's done for my psychological resilience, but even more for my body, for my metabolic health, is just like transformational. That you get into that ice. Your body is going to have a thermoregulatory response where, you want to get up back to that Goldilocks zone, back to homeostasis, back to 98.6. So your mitochondria, in your brown fat goes oh, we got to get going. We got to go into thermogenesis and heat the body back up. We need some energy substrate. What's around? Maybe no glucose. Oh, we got to oxidize fat. We're going to use the fat. In your body, in your tummy to heat your body back up to get yourself back up to 98.6. And then you're like, whoa, I just lost 50 pounds. That's what I did. And it didn't happen in one ice plunge, but by doing that, like building and stacking these adaptive habits, aligning ourselves back with our biology and our engineering, we can bring back, bring ourselves back into this balance and homeostasis.

And what I found is balance in all of its forms; political, economic, psychological, physiological, health in all of its forms is a reflection of balance. It's a reflection of the ability to bring ourselves back to homeostasis. In meditation, it's centeredness. In your body, it's balanced immune system, balanced blood glucose levels. In the economy, it's like a balanced economy with a thriving middle class in politics. It's like cooperation and common ground. It's always the middle path. It's always like, how can we find that sensitive, tenuous equilibrium on that seesaw? That's it's always the porch. It's always the warm porridge every time.

[01:02:38] **LW:** This is interesting. So you created this course called Good Stress, which I'm now imagining is sort of like one of those Spartan races, you know, like obstacles that you have overcome. And it's something that I'm actually creating myself. I'm creating this thing called The Year of Transformation, which also has activities. But one thing that I'm still trying to solve for, and I'm sure you've also faced this speaking of course, creationists, how do you make sure that, cause this isn't just like sitting up watching Deepak talk about spirituality. You want people to actually do this stuff.

[01:03:14] **JK:** 100%.

[01:03:15] **LW:** How do you solve for that? How do you make sure within the course creation that people are actually going to expose themselves to cold plunges or squats or do whatever you have going on. I mean, it's hard enough to do it you, when you have someone standing there pressuring you to jump in the cold water. But if you're by yourself watching Jeff on your phone and he's telling you to go stand in the shower and just turn the cold water on, like, how do you make sure they do it?

[01:03:43] **JK:** Listen, I can't nanny state anybody. It's just like you did this unbelievable monologue on abstaining on abstinence from drinking. You can't make someone abstain from drinking. But what you can do is you can lead the horse to water, in this case very cold water. But listen, and part of it is just I feel like I have a certain amount of authenticity and validity to be dealing to delivering this information because I lost 50, 60 pounds. I gained, all of this muscle mass. I reversed my pre diabetes. I really did find ways to transform myself through doing these things.

And I'm a work in progress. It's like my daughters listen to this be rolling their eyes right now and be like dad, that's got a long way to go. Yeah. You know how many books I read in 2017? Guess.

[01:04:31] **LW:** I would say probably at least 50.

[01:04:33] **JK:** This is before I started my podcast. This is 2017. I read zero. Zero books. Zero books. The notion of reading a book was anathema. Now I'm writing a book what I've been able to do to extend my ability and my capacity for focus and concentration in a world that's designed to distract us. That is good stress. Sitting and meditating, of course. I love the Alan Watts idea of just meditating, it's just like grooving with the present, man. It's just oh man, this is fun. It shouldn't be dismal. It shouldn't be this dirge. We got to just make meditation fun. It's just like being here and like checking shit out, or whatever, however you want to.

But candidly, meditation in this day and age is stressful. I categorize it as a good stress because you have to have the discipline to sit there and witness your thoughts arise and subside. Come back to your breath, come back to your single pointedness, your drishti, your mantra, whatever your approach is.

And candidly, I meditate just to meditate the benefits become just self evident in your life. But one of those benefits, what I've found is like the ability to actually focus and concentrate on a task. And this is like where I'm trying to go as a human is to basically be like, Hey, listen, you can do this too. You can step into the better version of yourself slowly day in and day out. And I can't make you do that. But what I can do is I can, give you some general principles that work.

Now, everyone is bioindividuals. So I'm not saying everyone needs to be on like a 16/8 intermittent fasting protocol, certainly if you're a woman and you're menstruating or you're pregnant or you're in menopause, maybe not, but what I am giving you is like the notion that we shouldn't be eating 20 out of the 24 hours of the day. The way that most people are right.

Like I went to freaking Denny's a few years ago, I ended up at a Denny's and I looked on the wall. And there was four meals per day now, not three meals, not breakfast, lunch, and dinner. There was breakfast, lunch, dinner, and late night, you know? We're eating nonstop. So what if we give our bodies the opportunity to go into restoration and repair through not stuffing our face, 24 hours a day.

So in my course, I lay these I lay out a lot of the physiology and the science around like fasting, deliberate cold therapy, deliberate heat therapy, resistance training, light therapy, and then I match that or I bridge that to the very specific protocols. Here's how you do it here's the right dosage, here's the right duration, play around with it a little bit, and this is how you stack them together to have the most appropriate response. And then I think one of the things that I'm excited about is actually taking some of these. The principles behind adversity mimetics are these good stressors that are generally physiological and bridging them into the into social wellness and psychological wellness and like having stressful conversations.

So I have a whole chapter in the book that I'm writing, and it's also in the course about how to actually engage in stressful conversations.

[01:08:14] **LW:** If someone was going to have that conversation with their friend or someone who disagrees with them, what's the example of how they could have that?

[01:08:22] **JK:** Yeah, so we were, this is just by dint of my own experience, 2020. I started writing this this essay every week that I put out on the newsletter every Sunday, Commusing. I was addressing like the pandemic and the reckoning for social justice in the wake the murder of George Floyd and, the election controversy and all the other emanations of Trumplandia and whatever.

And so I was putting out this article and I was connecting my personal email to it and I got like most of the emails I got back, encouraging and thankful, but I got hundreds and hundreds of emails from people just filled with expletives, derogatory, critical, tearing me apart on one thing or another, and I vowed that I would respond to every email and so after two or three emails with the more thoughtful detractors, I invited people to have a Zoom call.

At that point, that was a David Copperfield routine because most people disappeared at that juncture but I had 25 or 26. hour long zoom calls with people that didn't agree with me. And this was in the August, September of 2020. And at this point, man, the world was triggered, triggered. And I didn't have any training at that juncture in nonviolent communication. I was just going by instinct, but I was dead set. I was like, I want to find some area of common ground, and honestly it was from all sides, man. It was like, full on like rural white Trump 2020, full on people from queuing on folks on the right. And then it was like a lot of people on the left full on defund the police. White incrementalist, how dare you center yourself right now, you know, dah, dah, dah. So I was, it wasn't just one side, it was people on all sides, and man it was crazy. These conversations basically took on the exact same pattern every time. We'd get on a Zoom, there'd be like a couple of pleasantries.

And then very unlike this conversation, they would just talk the entire time and they would tell me their entire life story, basically. And then, you know, after 45 minutes, they'd be exhausted and during that time I would be like taking notes and be like, Oh yeah. I've got daughters too.

Oh, yeah. I was born in Chicago. Oh, yeah, too. Yeah. Yeah. Oh, yeah. I drove cross country and my car broke down. Oh, yeah. Like I was just basically notating every place where there were convergences in my life with them. And then by the time I had a chance to speak, I would just focus on those convergences. And what I learned subsequently, I got into Marshall Rosenberg and all this nonviolent communication stuff. But what I learned was that, the key to having stressful conversations, the number one key is seeking connection and not seeking solution, not seeking agreement, just seek connection, and identify the places of common ground, that was like an amazing opportunity for me.

Also, through that process, I built what I call my psychological immune system. It's like we build our physiological immune system through exposure to, low grade exposure to pathogens. I have a lot of psychological pathogens coming in and I built my kind of stoic resilience in that process so that I felt when I entered these conversations, I wasn't coming at it from like an amygdala hijacked perspective. I was coming at it from like a place of euthymia, just like unflappable okay, I'm cool. I'm here to listen, to understand. I'm not going to be sitting here, like trying to form some rebuttal in my head while you're talking. I'm just listening to understand, and I'm trying to find the places of convergence.

And so you know, I write a lot about that in this book and, in the course that's coming up of like how you conduct. These stressful conversations, because if you can have a stressful, productive conversation, hard to do on the Serengeti of Twitter or X or Instagram, but if you can find the set and setting to have stressful conversations with people that you don't even know. Think about what that could mean in your life to have this stressful conversation with your parents or with a sibling or like a loved one.

[01:13:08] **LW:** I was going to say, did it translate to you and Skylar and the kids? Are you able to hold that space with them as well? People you're really close with?

[01:13:16] **JK:** Just the way meditation punctuates your regular quotidian life, you notice that you become more aware of little things, that you're less addled, that you're less irritable, training yourself in stressful conversations. The next time you get in one, you're like, okay, I can listen.

[01:13:38] **LW:** What's great about this too, is a lot of times in my past, I felt like, why do I have to be the one that always be the bigger person to always like hold that space to always be the one that's trying to seek to understand. And then I realized, you used the term hijacked before. It's better to at least be aware that you have the choice than it is to be completely hijacked by your amygdala and your whole prefrontal cortex is shut off and all you can do is fight or flee, and so you have no choices. And it's much better to be the person with the choice, who's frustrated because they have to be the bigger person.

[01:14:15] **JK:** Dude, you basically just nailed it. It's it doesn't really matter. If you're running into like an argument or running to the refrigerator, it's all how conscious can you be. How much space can you cultivate between stimulus. That stressful conversation, the hunger, whatever, fill in the blank, and the response, the stuffing of your face unconsciously, the vitriolic barb that you're sending back to that person who just insulted you in that space, of course, that's famous Viktor Frankl is your liberation, right? But it's also your ability for cognitive reappraisal for assessment of like, is this reward system really adaptive? If it's like basically stuffing these chips down my gullet, is that a really like an adaptive reward? Even though it makes going to make me feel it's going to set off my kind of stimulate my dopamine receptors in the moment, and I think really what it comes down to so much of the time is mindset.

So, for example, when I started to apply some of the byproducts of meditation to fasting, for example, where I would witness the sensation of the hunger arise within me, instead of just unconsciously floating over to the chip drawer, I would say what is the origin of this sensation? What is it? Let me just examine the origin of this sensation. Is it a biological need? Or is it a psychological desire? Is it an emotional desire? And most of the time, it wasn't a psychological desire. It was like, oh yeah, I don't really need, biologically, to eat these chips right now. And the more that you can cultivate that ability, then you can begin to apply it to other areas of your life, not just food consumption, but technology consumption, Instagram, retail therapy. Drugs and alcohol? How much do I need this external agent right now? What need is it serving inside of me at this very moment? I think it is about cultivating that ability to witness that awareness. Honestly, you talked about it brilliantly and in the monologue episode that I've referred to a couple of times.

And there is so much opportunity in our own lives to step into the better version of ourselves.

[01:16:54] **LW:** I also advocate for just to meet people where they are. I say, okay, look, go ahead and write out everything you want to say to that person. Every nasty thing, call them every name you want, but don't send it to them. Just put it on paper, get it out of your psyche. And then go and just sit down and close your eyes for like 10 minutes. Don't even try to meditate. Just sit and close your eyes for 10 minutes and then come back and reread what you think you want to send to that person, what you think they need to hear. And I guarantee you

now you had a little separation from it. You see that that's not coming from your highest self. It's not coming from your best self. Sometimes you have to run these kinds of experiments.

So I get the sense that that's what your course is about. It's like just helping people have the ephemeral experience of what it's actually, this is not. This is not about intellectualizing anything anymore. It's not about theorizing about stress. It's actually go and have the experience.

[01:17:54] **JK:** Yeah. A hundred percent. I mean, sometimes, this is not a very attractive turn of phrase, but sometimes I'm call it the protocols of inconvenience, like experience what inconvenience is like for a moment. And see what the knock on impacts of that can be. And of course, like we know this out of the most anodyne level, take the stairs and not the escalator, right? This is what I always do, like when I get off an airplane, I've got my my carry on, everyone's taken the escalator. I always take the stairs. This is obviously, I've been sitting in an airplane for five hours or whatever, but how do you apply those things across your life in a ways that in the end really lead to greater vibrancy lead to greater balance, et cetera. These are the things that I'm constantly experimenting on in my own life and yeah, I'm excited to, to share it with people.

[01:18:56] **LW:** Well, I'm excited for people to experience it. Where can they go from here to get the quickest access to it?

[01:19:03] **JK:** You can go to One Commune, which is [onecommune.com/goodstress](https://onecommune.com/goodstress). And the course launches April 4th, but it will be available forever after that. And I have a little like not imposter syndrome associated with it, but there I am, like, next to Gabor Maté and Mark Hyman and Marianne Williamson and you and Byron Katie, and so I'm just sitting in that space and trying to get comfortable moving in front of the camera versus, just being a business dude.

[01:19:37] **LW:** That's good though. You have to face your own. That's your resistance, right? That's what you have to hope. That's your discomfort that you have to face. And we all want to find our own versions of that. So for some people like Byron Katie, that may not be a big deal for her, but, you know, maybe something else is for her. We all should be looking for that.

[01:19:53] **JK:** Yeah. 100%. I'm going to say this, I guess, so then I'm going to go do it. I'm going to go do a bunch of like theater shows where I'm reading from my book. And part of that is like an exercise in what I'm teaching in the book. It's just there's a postmodern component to that. But like I'm a good public speaker, I think, or people have told me that. But I have a tremendous amount of fear caught up with it. Fear generally really of judgment. I get very anxious around it. I generally don't sleep and all of that kind of stuff, so I'm just gonna go do it and confront it.

These are some of the low grade exposures, whatever, what's the worst thing that could happen? Maybe I like, run off the stage and puke. I don't know. I doubt that's gonna happen.



What's the worst thing? So it's not like I'm running into battle or something like that, but whatever I'm, trying to confront my own fears and anxieties.

[01:20:51] **LW:** Love it man. Well, Thanks so much for coming back on and, looking forward to more from you facing the camera and yeah, we'll put the links to everything in the show notes so that people can find, find the course, Good Stress.

[01:21:05] **JK:** Thank youm, Light. I really just appreciate you and everything that you do in the world. We connect on a fairly regular basis, but I keep tabs on you in my life, and you've got me, if nothing else, you've got me squatting.

And if you remember like, I couldn't get my heels anywhere near the ground. Let alone hold the squat. And I remember you put a piece of wood. underneath my heels, right? You're like, use this until you know, your body can adapt. And that was really helpful. And I can't get them like flat on the ground, but they're pretty close now. And my hip flexors are like wide open. And that's amazing for me because I have a hip replacement. And so that's just one small example of how you've instituted good health, a good stress in my life that has actually really had an adaptive advantage there, so thank you.

[END]

Thank you for tuning into my interview with Jeff Krasno. You can follow Jeff on the socials @jeffkrasno, K R A S N O. And the information for his Good Stress course, you can find that in the link in his social media bio. And of course, I'll put the links to everything that we discussed in the show notes as well, which you can always find at [lightwatkins.com/show](http://lightwatkins.com/show).

And if you enjoyed our conversation and you found it inspiring and you are now thinking about other people that you would like for me to interview, feel free to shoot me an email with your guest suggestions. You can find me at [light@lightwatkins.com](mailto:light@lightwatkins.com).

And in addition to that, one very simple request that I have which can actually help me directly get that guest on my show is for you to also leave me a review. That's why you hear podcast hosts like me always asking people to leave reviews and rate the show. It's because that's how a lot of bigger guests, especially will determine whether or not they come on to a podcast is they'll look at the podcast page on Apple and they'll see how many reviews does this podcast have? And if it has a good number of reviews, I would say between 500 and a thousand reviews, then they'll think, okay this podcast has a lot of listeners and a lot of engagement so I'll do it.

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Alright, so I look forward to hopefully seeing you back here next week with another story about someone just like me, just like you taking a leap of faith in the direction of their purpose. And until then, keep trusting your intuition, keep following your heart and keep taking those leaps of faith. And if no one's told you recently that they believe in you, I believe in you. Thank you very much. Sending you lots of love and have a great day.