

Hardship, Resilience & Competing at the Highest Level | Ken Rideout

Perform with Dr. Andy Galpin · Episode 24 · April 29, 2026 · Transcript

Ken Rideout

I had tried the mediocre road, in life and it didn't pay very well. Meaning it wasn't very fulfilling. The only things that have been fulfilling to me as a person, as a man, has had come with suffering and struggling.

Dr. Andy Galpin

The science and practice of enhancing human performance for sport, play, and life. Welcome to Perform.

I'm Dr. Andy Galpin, I'm a professor and scientist and the executive director of the Human Performance Center at Parker University. Today, I'm speaking with Ken Rideout. Ken is an author, elite endurance athlete, and a tremendous storyteller.

In this conversation, you're going to learn a lot and probably a most be incredibly inspired. Ken's journey from really tough circumstances as a child to early career success, making millions of dollars, then falling into a decade long battle with drug addiction, and coming out of all that, breaking records in endurance sports and having a successful life is as inspirational as anything I've ever been a part of.

I was lucky to get an early copy of his book. I read the entire thing almost, I saved the last couple of pages till today in one sitting. Ken is different than anyone I've ever had on perform, and so you're going to learn a lot of tactical stuff if you're into endurance, racing, and running, but you're going to walk away entertained, I guarantee you that, and also incredibly inspired.

The lessons he imparted are valuable to all of us, regardless of whether you'll run a race in your life now or ever in the future, I found it valuable. I know you'll get a ton of this as well, so please enjoy today's conversation with Ken Rideout.

Mr. Ken Rideout, it is a huge pleasure to have you. This is a very special episode for many reasons. First, I've never had anyone even remotely close to you on the show and I think within about three minutes, anyone listening is going to understand exactly what I mean.

Ken Rideout

Well, thank you for having me. It's a huge honor to be on such a prominent show. And like I said to you earlier, I'm sure this will be the least technical conversation you've ever had on the

podcast because I'm going to disappoint everyone with my lack of information about heart rate, all my training metrics. But I can tell you perceived effort.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Well, you're going to give us a lot of information and a lot of inspiration for sure. I read your entire book except for the last five pages in one day.

Ken Rideout

The best.

Dr. Andy Galpin

I intentionally did not read the last five pages. I actually wanted to save it till after our conversation. So I don't know how your story ends.

Ken Rideout

Oh, my God, I love the-- I think the last five pages are the best like.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Of course.

Ken Rideout

I sent that last chapter when I was writing the book to my wife, a true story. And I'm sitting in my office, she's sitting on the kitchen, and I thought I heard her, like sniffing and sobbing. And I come home and I'm like, yo, what's up? Did you like it?

And she's like, Oh my God, I know how the story ends. And I was still captivated. And I was like, perfect. And I told my editor and he was like, well, if they cry, they buy. So you've obviously hit on something, so you're doing the right thing. But I loved the last five pages, really. To me, drives everything home. There's so many lessons in that.

Dr. Andy Galpin

I teared up many times reading your book. Like, very, very. You and I have an insanely similar background we'll probably discuss later, but--

Ken Rideout

In a lot of ways, I'm sorry to hear that.

Dr. Andy Galpin

No, no. In many ways it's polar opposite, and in many it's very, very similar. But I actually wanted to start today with my introduction to you. And so I'm going to tell you this story, and then I'm going to let you tell everyone else your side of the story.

So I remember actually probably sitting in this very room a couple of years ago or so, and our

mutual friend who's the third body in this room here, Rob, told me it came up somehow. He's like, I this crazy friend. And he goes, now picture everything I'm about to tell you in this, like, thick Boston accent.

And I'm like, OK. And he's like, I got this crazy friend. He's running 150 mile race in Mongolia. It's like 100 miles in, runs up next to some guy, looks at him, just goes, you know, the funny thing is? I never get tired. And then bolts off and the guy falls out and quits the race or something like that. So first of all, did Rob lie to me about that story or is that actual?

Ken Rideout

That's true. I was racing in Mongolia. There were two guys who were super competitive with me, one guy, a Swiss mountaineer guy, Reinhold Hugo or Hugo Reinhold. I forget how which one comes first, but just a superstar athlete.

And he was leading by about 12 minutes on a 50 mile stage. And then there was David Daniel, who was like a Israeli soldier, like just a real tough guy, little tiny guy, but just a savage.

And I just ran up next to David. Daniel, you're supposed to have headphones, but I had one headphone in that I had been squirreling away with a charge because I didn't have a charger or anything, and I was listening to music because I hadn't-- you had to have a phone with you in case you got-- I mean, there was no cell phone reception, but you had to have it for whatever reason.

And I was listening to music, trying to get myself motivated on super low volume, and I ran up next to him. I'm like, hey, David, you know something? I never get tired. And I feel fucking great today, like, let's do this. And we're friendly.

And he didn't drop out. But I looked back a few minutes later, we were running through and we were running through fields like pastures, like there was uneven footing. It was so hard in hindsight.

And I looked back and he was walking and he'd been he's a competitor. He came in second, I think overall in this race. And I look back and he was walking and it was just me and Reinhold off for the rest of the race, and then it was extreme. I mean, that day I won that stage by 90 minutes and ended up winning the race. But yeah, that's pretty much accurate.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Part of the story you just you just jumped over, 150 miles through Mongolia?

Ken Rideout

155 miles-- six day stage race self-supported, meaning you had to carry everything that you needed, plus some mandatory safety equipment. And they provided a tent every night and

water.

So the stages were predetermined. So it was like 21 miles, 28, maybe 25, 50, 26. And then the last one was like five or six miles.

Dr. Andy Galpin

So you do one stage per day, you sleep at night, you wake up and then everyone starts at the same time?

Ken Rideout

And to be honest with you, I think if it was straight through and just like a survival endurance thing, it might have been easier because I did not want to hang out in the camp.

And to me, I was just wasting time. I'm like, I don't want to hang out in this damn camp. I'm starving to death, I'm burning like 8 to 10,000 calories a day, and I only have 2,500 calories with me.

And you have to manage this every day, but it's like anything else. You learn so many tricks along the way that I didn't-- I just learned so many things that people who do these races regularly do. It was part of the racing the planet series, which they do a bunch of races across different deserts and different rough terrain.

So a lot of the people knew each other. It was funny, they all knew each other and people were-- it turns out some of them knew who I was, but they were still dismissive and not rude to me, but I definitely didn't feel like part of the crowd. And I didn't probably didn't say two words to people for the first day and a half.

And then once we got to the thing and people started saying, oh, that guy is-- he's this is who that guy is. And they started there was one guy, Kelly and Ryan, Irish guy, who was super nice to me. His family owns Ryan Air.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Oh, wow.

Ken Rideout

Just a total gentleman. And he was like, after the first day I got killed, I was fourth-- came in fourth place. And Killian said to me like, yo, those guys think that they're going to wear you down every day. They know you're a marathoner and don't have experience with this.

And I remember saying to him they're going to wear me down. No one wears me down, I'm killing everyone. Even though I was like, I'm going to get killed. But I was just trying to project and I was almost subconsciously trying to talk myself in to the place where I knew I had to get to

emotionally to like this was-- when I say it was hard, man, it was-- I know it's easy to be, oh, of course, it was hard and corny and cliché, but it was hard man.

Participating isn't hard, competing is hard. Trying to win is hard. And which is why the title of the book is everything he wants, on the other side of hard because it's like did, was it easy to get a PhD, was it easy to start your own podcast? Find guests, research the guests?

It's like everything in your life that's worth having is hard. And I wanted to win that race, and I knew it would be hard. And I felt foolish at times thinking like, why did I think I can win this? I'm an idiot. I'm going to be lucky to survive. And then eventually I did, but it wasn't easy.

Dr. Andy Galpin

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You wrote in the book about how when you did marathons, you would analyze every aspect of the track, the weather. You were hyper prepared. Pretty easy to tell from your personality pretty quickly, that's a big part of you. You didn't do anything for this race?

Ken Rideout

No, I knew--

Dr. Andy Galpin

Tell me about-- first of all, how many ultras had you done?

Ken Rideout

Zero.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Zero. You went from the longest race of your career being 26.2 and you 5x that?

Ken Rideout

Marathon a day, plus a 50 miler for six days.

Dr. Andy Galpin

And how many years did you prepare for that?

Ken Rideout

Four weeks.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Four weeks? You have to give me more. Why the hell did you sign up for 155 mile race on four weeks notice? And how were you with the lack of preparation and planning?

Ken Rideout

Great questions. I had one Tokyo the 50 and over race in Tokyo and had the best--

Dr. Andy Galpin

You're the-- you're the-- for the record, you're the fastest marathoner in the world over 50.

Ken Rideout

I won the world championships at that race for 50 and over. To say I'm the fastest would imply there's not another man in the world that over 50 that can run--

Dr. Andy Galpin

The fastest time.

Ken Rideout

On the race day, two guys that came in second and third had both run 225. The best I'd ever run is 228, but they did some things. I did some things, like all, all legal things, obviously.

Dr. Andy Galpin

You can look strategy wise. Tactics strategy.

Ken Rideout

Exactly. They did some things tactically and I did some counter moves tactically, and I beat them both by less than a minute. Anyone who knows me knows like I'm not a narcissist, I don't think I'm great. I don't think I'm special.

But I would say that what I did on that day was like someone else was executing shit for me. It

just everything went right. And believe me, I've had races where every single thing has gone wrong.

But when I heard about the race, Scott Giroux, who at the time was the CEO of Equinox, former dean at Michigan Business School and now the CEO at Ironman, just a friend connected me with him. Scott wanted to ask me questions about running in general. And I talked to him, I never met him.

And I'm talking to him and he's telling me about this race and for whatever reason, like when people ask me, what about badwater? What about western states? I'm like, dude, the race, I don't know why I'm not-- again, there's nothing special about me. It has to speak to me.

I heard about it and I was I'm winning that. I want to do that desperately, like the Ironman and I'm like, I have to go there.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Not, I'm going to do it. I'm winning that.

Ken Rideout

Ironman I was like-- Ironman I was like I want to do-- I want to qualify because that to me was the win is qualifying. But when I started winning races in my late 40s, I never did another race not thinking I could win in some way, shape, or form some capacity.

Other than-- whether it was the age group in a world marathon major or the-- Myrtle Beach marathon the day before I turned 50, I won the marathon in 230 flat, and we can come back to that.

So Scott's telling me about the race. And I'm like, dude, I think I can win that. And he was thought I was crazy. And he's email the race director, so I reached out to the American woman based in Hong Kong, and she was you can get in.

I sent her some news clippings and stuff and said, here's my background. I would love to be involved in the race. And she was like, we'd love to have you come on. And I signed up and bought the bat-- bought backpacks, and I started researching it extensively, trying to figure out, what the hell do I need? What do I eat?

I didn't even know camping food, like freeze dried camping food. I didn't know anything about it, I had no experience hunting. I had never been camping, and I wasn't looking forward to it.

I'm a big baby when I travel. I want to stay at the four seasons, I don't try to pretend to be a hard guy. I'm like, no, I don't want to rough it. I've roughed it my whole first half of my life, I'm done with roughing.

So I'm thinking-- I start running with a backpack trying different ones in Nashville, and I have water and towels in my backpack to simulate 20 pounds. And let me tell you something, 20 pounds is effing heavy.

I was running, and again, everything with me is never heart rate. It's all perceived effort. So let's say at the time, and I was in shape, and my rationale is to signing up for the race to come back to that part of your question.

I knew that there's no way that someone had cumulatively more miles run than me. Maybe they had done different training to prepare for this endeavor, but just on a whole, I don't know how much-- how many miles can your body absorb? If I run more than 22 miles, it becomes like diminishing returns. The recovery takes so long like running a race.

So my rationale was, well, I know I have endurance and I know I have toughness and I know I can acquire the knowledge about what to bring, what to do. And the rest is experience. And experience counts for everything in marathoning Ironman, you just don't know what you don't know.

And when people are like, I've never run a marathon, but I'm going to do it under three hours and I'm like, I don't care how good you are until you get out there and do it, it's two different conversations because when you do it, people are oh, man, I, I hit the wall here I all the things you're like. It's like people going to Hawaii saying, Oh, it's so hot and so windy. I'm like, yeah, no shit. Same thing every year. It never changes. Same thing you did exactly what everyone else did. Welcome to the fucking world. It's like that's what it is.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Welcome to Kona. So this is exactly what it is.

Ken Rideout

It's hard. There's a reason people like it's revered and respected and everything that goes along with it. I remember distinctly my wife driving me to the airport and being, yo, are you excited, Mongolia?

And the other thing is, I love exotic travel. I like doing random weird stuff where people are like, where are you going? I'm like, yeah, I'm flying to Ulaanbaatar and my wife's like, are you excited? And I'm like, no, I'm not excited.

I feel like I'm going to the electric chair. I'm like, what have I done? Like everyone-- I had some sponsors. I'm like I don't need this pressure, it's hard enough to go do it.

Now I know people are watching and she's like, you signed up for this? I'm I know, I know, just don't ask me if I'm happy about it, I'll talk. I'll be happy when it's over. And I remember walking

onto the flight in Nashville, walking down the jetway to start the journey from Nashville to Atlanta to South Korea to Ulaanbaatar.

And I had like, literally like a mindset shift that was almost subconscious where I was like, oh, my God, I'm scared. I wanted to cry. I had that depressing feeling, like my parents just dropped me off at summer camp. And I'm like, you guys are leaving me here?

And I'm like, walking to the walking the plank. And then I just had a mindset shift of you know what? F this, I'm no victim and I'm not going to get bullied around by anyone. And I always-- I was talking to Rob more this morning about this. I'm like, whatever you think in your mind is the truth. If you think that you're scared and you're going to get killed, then maybe so.

But if you think you can kill everyone else and you can go and dominate, then that might be true too. And it's much more fun to picture yourself the hero than the goat, than the scapegoat, or like the person who's going to get mashed up.

So I just remember thinking like it's time, let's go. It's like, get your head out of your ass and stop this moping around. And I didn't sleep, I just thought about the race for the next 20 hours. Got to Ulaanbaatar and slept in the like what was the most expensive hotel but was like your worst nightmare. I was falling off the shower and I'm just like, what the hell am I doing here?

And then the funny thing is, I didn't know very much. So they said, we're going to-- I thought that in the morning we'll get up and we'll start the stage race like out in the desert from the city, outside of the city, like, no, no, no.

Saturday night we're going to bus you-- Saturday morning, we're going to bus you out all day Saturday into the desert. And then you'll sleep in the tents, and then you'll get up in the morning and race. And I'm like, oh, my God, there's one extra day in the tent. I don't want to be in a tent.

Dr. Andy Galpin

The funny part is like growing up as a an outdoorsman. A little bit like sleeping in a tent is very normal for me. And what's funny for you--

Ken Rideout

You're with your buddies and you got your camping equipment and your stove.

Dr. Andy Galpin

No, no, no, no.

Ken Rideout

Just a backpack. I just had a sleeping bag.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Like that would be the part that would make me the most comfortable. And you're not-- you're not worried about the 155 miles you're about to race in right now, and in the book you're complaining mostly about the tent.

Ken Rideout

Even thinking about it now, I couldn't-- I couldn't get out of my mind. I'm like I can't believe I'm doing this.

Dr. Andy Galpin

That part of-- I'll leave that part alone. But that's the funny part. So not only you're flying halfway across the world, literally by yourself, going where, there's no cell service, for the most part.

You're going to go run 150 miles, which is 5 times longer than anything you've ever done. You have no preparation, you don't know the course, you don't know anything about it. And your biggest concern is probably waiting in line to board the airplane and sleeping in a sleeping bag?

Ken Rideout

100%. Can I get my bags on the overhead without getting harassed and hassled? And how is it going to be sleeping on the floor of a tent next to three other strangers, three women from all over the world?

Dr. Andy Galpin

Not the death that you're going to force yourself almost into? That part's OK.

Ken Rideout

No, because that was I'm comfortable with physical suffering. That part is there's almost like some salvation there, it's almost like a noble cause. There's nothing noble about sleeping uncomfortably. I'm a baby with sleep.

I need to be in a bed. Everything has to be aligned, the temperature has to be perfect. And dude, the first night it rained sideways. At one point I thought this tent was going to blow away. It was just-- just the rattling of the tent.

It felt like I was on the side of Everest and the thing was like just getting battered by rain. Rain was coming in the frigging tent, I was like, God, why are you doing this to me? And I got up in the morning again, no one's talking to me. I'm just going about my business.

And you know those crowds they all those people that know each other like, hey, what's up, Joe? How you doing? Haven't seen you all great and everyone's happy. Yay! We're going to go do an adventure. And I'm like, it's on. I'm fucking killing all of you guys. Like, I'm going to kill you guys.

And sure enough, the race takes off, dude, and we are on the gas. There is no strategy. I mean, matter of fact, typically, we get to the aid station, you stop, you load up on water, you do this. I rip into the aid station with like four or five other guys. And I'm like, as I run up, I go, yo, do we have to stop? And they're like, no, you don't have to stop. I'm later, right through the aid station.

Dr. Andy Galpin

What are you probably? eight, 10 miles in before that first aid station something?

Ken Rideout

Five or six.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Five or six. So you don't need that much water.

Ken Rideout

No, no.

Dr. Andy Galpin

But you probably should have because you got the next 150 to pay attention.

Ken Rideout

You want to be--

Dr. Andy Galpin

You can't get behind.

Ken Rideout

You want to be fueling early and often and not get behind. But I felt so good. And then because I didn't stop, no one wanted to stop. So was, oh good, I'm going to drag everyone into the deep water and then we'll see who can swim.

Dr. Andy Galpin

What pace are you out here? Are you running six?

Ken Rideout

We're probably just under seven minute miles. And the thing I lost my train of thought earlier when I was saying when I was training, if my normal pace is like at that stage, 7 minute miles would be like, not pushing it, but not taking it easy. It'd be like a sustainable effort what I can run that pace all day.

When I put that backpack on, like 8:30 was like the same effort that I was given to run seven minutes was like 8:30 pace. And I was like, holy shit, I am-- I'm working and I'm like, barely moving, relatively speaking.

So when we were running and in that first day, you're fully loaded, it doesn't get much lighter contrary to popular belief, the food doesn't weigh much. You have mandatory stuff, your sleeping bag, a sleeping pad which you didn't need a sleeping pad. But like, I had to sleep. I couldn't just not have any comfort at all.

And we're just tearing, tearing through these trails. We're running through rivers like your shoes are soaking wet. It just-- it's so hard. But I was like I'll relax when we get done with this stage. And then we get to about three to five miles to go, and we go up the literally up the side of a mountain.

And the other two guys, the Israeli and the Swiss guy, whipped out their poles and they're like, and I didn't have any poles. So I was like, damn it. And I mean, they would have beat me anyway, but I was in hell. I mean, it was so steep. I'm like, we're walking, but I'm like stopping and be oh shit, how much further is this?

And it's one of those ones where as you go up, you keep thinking, you see the peak, and then you get to the peak and you're like, oh my God, I'm not even halfway up here.

And then at the top, you run along a ridgeline. And I mean, this is when I was like this race is crazy. The ridgeline was so steep, I'm if I fall here, I might die. And it was dangerous.

And I remember getting back to the camp that night and saying to the person like, dude, how did you get insurance for this race? Someone's going to die. If you make a mistake here, I mean, we would end up doing much more dangerous stuff than the ridgeline.

So after we get up and over the mountain, along the ridgeline, I'm in third and I'm running, and we come down in a little-- in a little depression and there's like a dried riverbed. So I'm like, OK, no problem. It's probably 100 yards across dried riverbed. As soon as I step in it, it's basically a dried riverbed with like a thick layer of cake of mud. And then as soon as you step in it and go through, you're in--

Dr. Andy Galpin

You're gone.

Ken Rideout

Thick like clay, like mud and covered in mud.

Dr. Andy Galpin

That will not come off your shoes.

Ken Rideout

And I gotta tell you, I hate being dirty, I hate being wet. Everything about it, I hate. I hate being

uncomfortable.

Dr. Andy Galpin

City boy.

Ken Rideout

I'm like a baby crying with a dirty diaper. And I'm like, oh my God. So I'm like, I'm not going to fall down. I'm going to go slower. So I don't have to fall right down. Covered in mud.

And when I get back, I mean, I fell down a few times and was covered in mud. People came in like they were-- you couldn't even see them. All you could see was their eyes.

And I get to the finish and I'm like, oh my God, what have I done? This sucks. I can't even believe that I have to be here for five more days, and that's when the Kelly and Ryan was, yo, they said they're going to kill you. They're like super confident.

I'm like, don't worry about it, Kelly. And tomorrow's another day. But in my mind I'm like, oh my God, what have I got myself into?

Dr. Andy Galpin

You know Michael Easter?

Ken Rideout

Yeah. I mean, I know him personally. I know who he is.

Dr. Andy Galpin

I was with him a couple of weeks ago in Vegas, and he was on stage talking about how he spent a month or five weeks or something above the Arctic circle or some way up there.

And how he got back and got in the airplane and was washing his hands in the bathroom, and that was the first hot water he had touched in a month. And he was this is just the most remarkable feeling.

And he's typically, was complaining on airplanes about the food and all that. And he's like this is the most comfortable chair I've ever sat in my life, hot water, just completely. I have to imagine you had a similar feeling when you got back to those camps and you're just thinking, I don't have my four seasons anymore, but at least I have water to wash this mud off my face.

Ken Rideout

Well, the other thing is they gave you water, but they're do not waste this, what we have is what we brought with us. Do not waste the water showering, washing your clothes because I was like, get the hell out of here. There was some Italian guys there who I absolutely love.

Dr. Andy Galpin

You're good at following rules.

Ken Rideout

Oh, yeah. I'm a big believer in beg for forgiveness, never ask for permission. So one of the Italian guys, I was, hey, buddy, what the hell was his name? Felipe or something. I'm like, hey, hold this water bottle over my head while I quickly shower. I had a little tiny drop of concentrated camp soap.

So I would wash everything with my clothes on. Then I would take the clothes, hang them up. So at least they weren't like standing up by themselves by the-- by the end of the week. And then I had camp clothes so I would hang those up.

So I tried to keep myself cleaned up and like a little bit comfortable. But the nice thing about finishing so far ahead of the girls is I'd get to the tent and I'd be, oh, I have the whole tent because the first night they were like, we set up the tent. Yeah, Ken, come on in. I'm like sleeping in the middle. It's like it was awful, and there's rocks underneath the tent.

We ended up really getting along well, the girls. So I'd get there first. I'd go underneath the tent, get all the rocks out because the people are just setting the tents up, they don't care. I'm like I eventually went over to the Mongolian guys, I'm guys, you don't see all these rocks underneath? At the very least, kick the big ones out of the way.

So I'd get it all ready. But the nice thing is, I'd get my spot set up exactly where I want it, right inside the door. So if I had to go to the bathroom, I could pop out of the tent. And it was just-- it's funny the little things that you start to appreciate when you have basically nothing.

It's like when I worked in the prison, you see the inmates would set up the cell and it would be like if you touched anything in their cell, it would be like World War III. They kept that thing like dialed in, and that's how I had my tent is like my cell.

And they call it the house in jail. Like don't someone-- who went in my house? I was, yo, don't let anyone in the house if I'm not here. That's what I would tell the girls.

Dr. Andy Galpin

So you're doing what pace for these 20, 25 mile stages? If your marathon is we'll just call it 230. What are these five hour?

Ken Rideout

Yeah, probably. But the thing is it's hard to even say a pace because some days where, one day we were like hands and knees scaling a rock giant rock structure that took an hour to get up.

There's pictures, I have pictures posted. If you just Google my name and Mongolia, you'll see there's one where I'm coming up climbing a rock. And there were race officials and I go, dude, somebody is going to fall here and die. It was so steep. And they were older people there too. And I was, I go, how did you get permission to do this? He's like, that's why it's in Mongolia and not the US because you would never be able to do this.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Do you happen to notice on that race if anybody else was following heart rate monitors, trying to use technology, was anyone there or was, do you have to just be intuitive on something like that?

Ken Rideout

I would imagine there was some guys that were super like tech and data nerds that were really into it. But I mean, what-- it's like I was talking to Normann Stadler, the Ironman World champion, one time, and he's I was talking about power and what's on the bike.

And I was like, what are you doing? He's like, no. I had a power Meter sponsor, but I put tape over it because at the end of the day, I'm trying to win the race. It doesn't matter what this says. If one guy takes off up the road, I have to make a decision of who is that? That guy, not worried about him.

That guy goes up the road, I have to go with him because it's like if he-- if I can't cover this move, I'm basically making my whole bet is that he can't sustain that. I don't know what he's done for training.

So when you're trying to be competitive, I think there's only so much you can do with data. I mean, there are certain athletes that they just hold the same pace and it works. And it's, but you're making a bet that the other person can't do what they're basically telling you they can do with their early move. And it's like, do I want to bet my whole race on my strategy or?

So there's a big difference in trying to survive versus trying to win. And when you're winning, you have to have some intuition to be I need to cover this. Or at the same time, like you'll see in the last five pages of my book, that one guy makes a move and I'm like, if that guy can run that pace and win big, be my guest.

He probably ran past me at like 520 pace at three miles. And I'm like, who is this guy? Like, he's in my age group, but I don't know who it is. And there's only a few guys that I know have a chance to win this, and he wasn't one of them. So I was like, oh, my God damn you.

But I'm sure some of them, everyone there was telling me about their ultra coaching experience and I'm like, come on, man. If you're coaching, you should be trouncing me, and you're finishing

hours after me. Come on.

Dr. Andy Galpin

I want to come back actually later and ask about how you find this balance between intuition and actually data driven and coaching and things like that. I know that's part of your things, but let's keep going with this particular story.

So you've smashed through, you've got through the lake. You're dried up, you got another 50 miles the next day.

Ken Rideout

So no. So the next day is 28 miles.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Oh, easy. Nice soft 28.

Ken Rideout

I'm like hurting. So I'm like all right, I'm not going to even look at those guys today. I'm going to just run my own pace because if I keep trying to push the pace, I'm not even going to finish.

Dr. Andy Galpin

You said this multiple times, I was really hurting. I've never run a marathon or anywhere in anywhere close. When you say hurting in a situation like that, I have to filter it. I'm you run 150 miles, you're hurting is not the same as my hurting. What does hurting mean at that stage? What is in your body? What is happening? What are you feeling that makes you go, I'm hurting right now?

Ken Rideout

Well, imagine running a 21 mile race. Your body is--

Dr. Andy Galpin

Not 21 miles, like racing it. Yes-- trying to win it.

Ken Rideout

Exactly. So like that first day, I was completely depleted. I hadn't slept, I was on a red eye. And then I slept in this hotel, and I ended up falling asleep at 4 o'clock in the afternoon and waking up at, like, 2:00 in the morning. Can't go back to sleep, my circadian rhythm is nonexistent.

So my body is just completely shot. Then I go out to camp the next night. I've been up since 2:00 in the morning the night before, and I can't sleep in the rain. And I'm anxious and nervous. By the time that first day is over, my body is just broken down and hurting.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Are you like sore?

Ken Rideout

Sore beyond words. My back hurts. I'm-- oh, and I'm chafed everywhere from the backpack because at this point I don't have any tape on or anything yet. I would eventually end up taping my whole body with kinesio tape, and like that tape, that's like cushioned--

Dr. Andy Galpin

Like pre-wrap or?

Ken Rideout

Not pre-wrap, the stuff that's thick it's like felt on one side. So I'm putting strips of this thick ass tape around my waist and on my shoulders because it's burned like burn marks from the raw.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Raw-- rubbed raw your feet, your knees.

Ken Rideout

The backpack is smashing against every step, against my lower back and creating swelling across like right above my waistline. And it's like I almost felt like it was like compartment syndrome looking.

It was swollen in a way where I'm it felt like the worst bruise you've ever had, and it looked terrible. I mean, to the point where I'm what the F is going on? My back looks like I have leprosy. And they're like, oh no, it's just a heat rash.

And I'm like, well, should I keep taping it? And they're like, I mean, in a perfect world, you should not put your backpack on again. But we've got five days to go. And I mean, it looked terrible.

Dr. Andy Galpin

So you're one day in. You've got blisters, rashes all over and burns. Sunburn?

Ken Rideout

No real sunburn.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Lips chapped?

Ken Rideout

Yeah, lips definitely chapped. But not like-- not like crazy. I've always had decent genetics. My skin doesn't really burn much. I don't get super chapped lips like some people. I was like-- but I mean, I looked like shit.

Dr. Andy Galpin

I hadn't slept, and when you said under fueled.

Ken Rideout

Oh, I mean, I ate 2,500 calories and I burned at least 7,000 the first day. I mean, I'm instantly I can see I'm losing weight, and hydrated perfectly well beyond because I only had the salts that I had there. I had LMNT with me and I had enough two a day.

Dr. Andy Galpin

You had like two packs of LMNT.

Ken Rideout

Yes, a day.

Dr. Andy Galpin

And you probably, I would have guessed, I don't know, dumped 7 to 10 grams at best a third depleted.

Ken Rideout

100%.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Not even close.

Ken Rideout

So when you start, you're like, oh my God, I feel like shit, this is going to be a long day. So I was saying, I need to be strategic. The other thing I was saying earlier, too, about experiences when people started dropping out and they started dropping out after the first day and they'd be like, oh, I'm leaving. I'm like, give me that food.

Whatever they had, it wouldn't help me to carry more, so I would just eat anything. I could find people. If people weren't eating the rest of their food, I had no pride. I was are you going to eat the rest of those noodles? No, I'm going to throw them. I'll have those.

I was I'm in combat mode, I'm I don't care if what germs you have. Give me those damn noodles I was eating. I ate a pack of, I don't even like sardines. I was like I'm throwing these sardines away. I'm I know sardines are rich in calories and fat. I was give me those damn great, great strategy. Oh my God.

Dr. Andy Galpin

So you didn't put anything into the preparation for that stuff. You didn't think about the fueling.

Ken Rideout

I just knew I needed like three meals a day. So I grabbed three packs of these-- what is it called? Backpacker's friend or one of those brands.

Dr. Andy Galpin

That was it you didn't have any strategy for macronutrients.

Ken Rideout

I was a complete idiot. I didn't know anything and I didn't really care, I was just I'm going to grit it out.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Do you remember what you took food wise? I actually want to know.

Ken Rideout

Yeah, so like in the morning I would eat like to-- it was like an MRE, so it had like scrambled eggs and sausage in it, let's say. And you pour hot water.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Maybe some potatoes or something.

Ken Rideout

Yeah, exactly. So it would be like some breakfast thing. Then for lunch, it might be like Thai noodles with freeze dried chicken. And it was actually good, I liked them. It was just like you wouldn't eat them normally because they're loaded with sodium and all this other shit, but--

Dr. Andy Galpin

It's intentionally.

Ken Rideout

And then for dinner, it might be like macaroni and cheese or beef stroganoff I don't know, you grab a pack.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Yeah, I got it. So basic, I mean, these are-- I've eaten more packs of these in my life than I can count. Like this is what you do when you go hunting.

Ken Rideout

That's exactly right.

Dr. Andy Galpin

So you didn't take anything else besides those?

Ken Rideout

No. Oh, no, sorry. I might have a few bars, random like.

Dr. Andy Galpin

It really no 150 calories is really.

Ken Rideout

Exactly. I had a couple meal replacement bars and I forget the brand, but they were very, very dense. And they didn't taste good, but I would force them down during this stage.

Dr. Andy Galpin

And then you're just relying on the aid stations to just grab?

Ken Rideout

All they had was water.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Oh, no.

Ken Rideout

Yes.

Dr. Andy Galpin

You don't even have-- OK.

Ken Rideout

It was just water.

Dr. Andy Galpin

So traditional ultras, they're going to have peanut butter and jelly and--

Ken Rideout

Oh, no, this is a survival race, man. They didn't give you anything except water.

Dr. Andy Galpin

It would have been impossible for you to run with enough water that you needed.

Ken Rideout

Exactly. So the aid station would be so you could load up with water. So and even that I had like two, I had a flask in the back with the hose on it or whatever that's called. And I know-- when I tell you I know nothing about ultrarunning or camping, nothing.

So I had the camelbak, and I had some collapsible little water bottles, two of them that would fit right here. They were small. They were 12oz. So I would run through, load up, and be in and out. I was never at the aid station like hanging.

Dr. Andy Galpin

So these are every five miles?

Ken Rideout

Five to 10, they were really spread out. On the 50 mile stage if you covered that stage in the book, if you read about that the guy-- the guy who was leading with me, the Swiss guy, he almost dropped dead.

He had to stop and sit down in the desert. And I was, man, we got to get to the next aid station, and they were just so far apart. And he couldn't make it and have an aid truck, a truck came and eventually gave him first aid, and he eventually walked into camp.

Dude, it was like a movie. I've been in camp for like hours, chilling, eating, relaxing. And here he comes, walking in the dark. I'm like, dude, I can't believe you made it. 15 miles ago, I thought you were dead.

And he was, he wouldn't let me help him with his pack. Nothing he's I don't want to drop out of the race, and I gotta finish this dude tough.

Dr. Andy Galpin

What a tough, tough guy.

Ken Rideout

Stoic never talked to me.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Somebody had died the year before or the race before?

Ken Rideout

And had to get-- I had to get him out of the sand dunes with a camel. They couldn't even get the truck in there, it was so treacherous.

Dr. Andy Galpin

This sounds like an amazing race to not prepare for. So for weeks and no strategy--

Ken Rideout

I think if I knew what I was getting into, I might have talked myself out of it.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Of course.

Today's episode is brought to you by true medicine. Lately, I've been thinking about what actually drives performance. It really comes down to two things. The quality of your training, and how well you recover from it.

And both sides of that equation matter, and the tools you use to train and the tools you use to recover high quality fitness equipment, sleep support, recovery tools can get expensive. And that's why I love what true med is doing.

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I always thought HSA and FSA funds were only for doctor's appointments and certain medical products. What's amazing is that you can use true med to pay for eligible products that can improve your health as medical expenses under IRS guidelines, fitness equipment, sleep support, recovery tools, and more.

Go to [trumet slash perform](#) and check what qualifies. It takes just a couple of minutes. This is hands down the best way to make the most out of your health dollars. True Med is for qualified customers, HSA, FSA, tax savings vary.

So you run through all that thing and you got 50 and change the next day. And then it finishes on like a five mile, you said?

Ken Rideout

Five or six miles like a ceremonial stage. And that's where the guy Kelly and Ryan said to me, oh, you're winning, man. Are you going to let someone else win this stage? Take it easy. You got a 90 minute lead. You're going to have a fun day relax, I was, dude, are you insane? I will die before I let someone win. No chance. This is a race to the death.

Dr. Andy Galpin

You're going to bury that thing.

Ken Rideout

Are we're racing? I don't care who it is. And sure enough, the Swiss guy was, not going out without a fight. I mean, he couldn't win the race at that point, but he's I'm winning this stage. And I'm like, no, you're not.

And we were drag racing and it finished into a little not a city, but into the first civilization that we've seen in a little village, and it's like going through the, I mean, the streets, but it's like bombed out, tar roads.

So we're racing through and then it finishes in this big old Genghis Khan fortress, like a big walled--

Dr. Andy Galpin

Legitimately.

Ken Rideout

Fortress. Yeah, oh, it was gorgeous. And I just came in there like, oh, my God, I did it. I won like it's a stage race. So I knew I had won. But crossing the line first into the fortress was like, yes, thank you, Jesus.

That one I was pretty happy. When I won the World Championships in Chicago in the age group, I mean I was almost emotional, the relief was-- I can't imagine winning a gold medal or something.

And just like I've done everything relatively speaking to get ready for this, and then you win and I called my wife and I'm like, I did it. I won, I won by less than a minute.

And she's like, oh, cool. I had won a bunch of age groups. I won four of the six world marathon majors, it wasn't a big deal. I just won Tokyo, I'd already won Mongolia. She's like, I've won some stuff.

And she's like, oh, good for you. I'm like, no, no, no, this was fucking huge. I won the big one, I won the age group world championships. She's like, what? Oh my God, I didn't know. And I'm like, I, I didn't intentionally not tell her. And she's like, how happy are you? And she starts crying.

And I'm-- and I almost started crying. I'm almost crying now thinking about it I'm so relieved that it's over. Like I did it. And I know people listening again, it doesn't matter what you think about me, it doesn't matter what other people think of this endeavor. It only matters what I think.

And to me, this was my Olympics. I was never a runner, as a kid. 10 years, 15 years before this, I was like a dead dog, loser, degenerate, drug addict. And now I was a world champion at something. It was just the age group, I get it. I know it's not the Olympics, but to me, it mattered more than anything in the world athletically at that point.

Obviously, not more than my family, but to me it was massively important. I poured my heart and soul into doing this, and now I had done it and I was I can't believe I did it. It was just the relief, I mean, I feel it now. It's like, oh, thank God.

Dr. Andy Galpin

You'll hear this really consistently with people that have broken world records, won world championships, win gold medals. Very often relief is the word. It's not joy, it's not anything else. It is cool. And then what typically happens is what we call post gold depression.

Ken Rideout

That's it.

Dr. Andy Galpin

And you come hammering down off that thing. You're never-- you just don't see that thing you thought you were going to feel.

Ken Rideout

That's right.

Dr. Andy Galpin

It's there and then it's gone. Why do you think for your experience, that's a worthwhile endeavor. If we know that's the end, why do we even start?

Ken Rideout

That's a good question. But I had tried the mediocre road in life and it didn't pay very well, meaning it wasn't very fulfilling. The only things that have been fulfilling to me as a person, as a man, has had come with suffering and struggling, getting sober.

Being a dad is not easy, that comes with struggle. And people could say, some people seem to be on a frigging pleasure cruise and they're just I'm the best dad and I love it.

And they look like they're doing it right and I'm, I'm jealous because to me, it takes work. My default setting sometimes is to be selfish and lazy. I'm the kids will be on a Saturday afternoon I did my run, I'm hanging-- sometimes after a long week, I'm I know my wife will be like you just wasting time in your office. I'm like, I'm not wasting time in my office. I'm doing what I want to do, nothing. I want to peruse the internet, look at Twitter and be lazy.

The kids are, dad, let's throw passes, let's run routes. And nine times out of 10 I'll be like, yes. Once in a while I'll be, guys, I'm sorry, I have got to just sit here and be quiet. I'm on full speed all the time, I don't want to be.

That's the only speed that I have found that I can be successful at. When I tried having balance and doing the things that I wanted to do and left to my own devices, I found drugs as a way to cope with the emptiness and the void that was missing in my life which was having a worthwhile endeavor.

So left to my own devices, I never found peace. When I started living a life of discipline and goal setting and enjoying the suffering, I was able to find moments of peace. And more importantly, I didn't turn to drugs to find that peace. I found peace in suffering.

So to me when I-- and again, I don't profess to have all the answers, this is not what I would

suggest for anyone. I'm in survival mode, I'm flawed, troubled, trying to find the answers myself. But if you don't start the journey and get on the road towards where you want to get, you don't have to know where you're going. But it all starts with discipline and hard work.

You're not going to get to where you were-- the easy road never pays well, and the road to heaven can feel like hell. And the road to hell always feels like heaven in the beginning but where they end are very different.

Dr. Andy Galpin

I want to ask a few more questions about pain. You said suffering, you mentioned this multiple times. It's very much a part of your ethos. It's my opinion of you that is a grounding feature. You feel safe there. You know what to expect, and so the rest of the world gets shut down. And when you're suffering, and it is a pretty common thing.

I've heard similar language from other people that do ultras and other friends campaigns is like this too, that's like it's a grounding feature of your life to have that. It doesn't make any sense though this oxymoron of enjoying pain and/or enjoying suffering.

And I don't necessarily think you're saying you enjoy it though, correct me if I'm wrong there. But I would love to know more specifics about when you say that's an you're in pain. What are you exactly talking about? Because it's hard for me to relate to you saying you're in pain or you saying you're suffering.

To me the things that bring you joy sound like suffering. I don't want to do that. You gave us a couple of examples earlier. You're chafed, you're rubbing raw, you're sore there.

When you are in a race, whether it's Mongolia or your Ironman or any of the other ones you've done. When do you start hurting? And what does that hurt feel like to you when you're saying you're suffering?

Ken Rideout

When I'm suffering in a race, it's I'm really depleted and it feels like I don't know if I can keep going, but I'm going to keep pushing. Now, there's a difference where you're, OK, obviously if I sprint as fast as I can the first mile in a marathon, that's not sustainable, but I want to get to the point where I'm as uncomfortable as I can possibly be with the pace and still think there's a chance I can make it to the finish line. Because I can't run fast in a marathon relatively speaking, if I don't start running fast in the beginning.

But I will tell you that if you look at any world record or anyone that's won a big marathon, they're either a negative split or very close to negative split. Meaning if you run the first half and it's something about us, we always try to convince ourselves that if I can just bank two or three

minutes in the first half, I can hold on for the back half.

But what I've come to realize, and what people should know, is your survival pace, where you're just trying to survive to the finish is so much slower than your conservative pace early because conservatively you run a 20 seconds. Surviving, you're running a minute mile slower.

So it's very difficult. And this is where you get experience, and this is where intelligence comes into play in a marathon. If you're trying to run 540 pace for the whole marathon, then you should be able to run 520 pace for a first 10 miles.

But how do you rein it in and hold back when you're like, oh, I feel like I can do this at mile one, then I can do this at mile 25. You don't know until you get there, but that's where experience comes in.

But I would say that the suffering is like all encompassing. It's emotional, it's physical. You just like when I say emotional, I mean you're agonizing over am I going too fast? Am I going to make it? I'm trying to calculate everything in my brain.

And then eventually, 15, 20 miles in the brain isn't really working clearly. You're trying to calculate distance and pace. If I run six minute miles and I always default to like, what's the worst case scenario?

If I run seven minute miles for the last three miles, that's 21 minutes. I'm right now I'm at 210, can I get to two? And you're doing these things and very quickly, your brain stops working accurately because it's depleted from glycogen. You're trying to balance everything from caloric intake, hydration.

And in a lot of ways, that's is like emotionally distressing because you're it's so much poured into this. This is the big day, and it's not fun. And the suffering is just the physical pain that you would feel if someone went out and ran 1,500 meter sprints with 20 seconds rest in between.

It's that pain but it's not that I enjoy the suffering in the moment. When I cross the finish line and it all ends, the relief and the euphoria that I feel is like magic. Even when you've killed yourself and you collapse at the finish and need to go to the medical tent with IVs, and there's something rewarding like that where like I did it, I did every single thing that I could. I drained myself as a test of like the human spirit.

And I get it to people that aren't into that. They're like this guy's an idiot. Why would anyone do this? I get that, I'm not talking to you. Fucking scroll on, scram like I don't-- I'm not trying to convert anyone.

But to the people who are like minded into this, I don't have to explain it to them. They're like,

there's something magical about testing the human limits and the spirit. And like I said, I can tell you when I didn't have this mentality, when I was happy to be comfortable all the time, and I was making money and--

You know what, to find the void that this provides for me, suffering provides me, I found that in drugs. I found the euphoric feeling that I liked in getting high on opioids, where I was like, man, nothing bothers me right now because I'm using those drugs to mask some pain and unresolved trauma in my life.

And guess what? prior to the drugs, I had this trauma that was unresolved, and I'm in like this, I'm in a hole. When I take the drugs, the hole gets a little deeper, and the first thing you have to do to fix this is number one, stop digging. Number two, start addressing. Why am I using drugs? Fucking happy, healthy people don't do drugs.

Happy people aren't like, I can't wait. I'm going to get so high this weekend. No happy people have outlets to make them to create that feeling. And when you're doing those drugs, you're really, like sabotaging your own dopamine and mental and neurological reward system.

Nothing in life makes you as happy as some of these drugs. It's completely unnatural to get this huge spike in dopamine and serotonin and all the things that go along with it. And all you're doing is completely F-ing this system up, so it's completely haywire.

So now, the feeling that you're trying to get of like sitting on-- the best vacation I ever took was in Bora Bora with my wife, one of those overwater huts. And it's gorgeous. And you sit-in there and you're this is it, man. This is heaven. That feeling is like what drugs provide to a certain extent.

The problem is when you've hijacked your system with this artificial reward system whenever you want it, like, oh, it's raining and it's sunny, let me get high. Oh, I'm in the happiest mood ever.

Now, your system, when it actually when you get off the drugs and you get to Bora Bora again, you're like, everything's dulled, nothing's the same. And you can't explain this to someone until they've experienced it.

And if people can learn anything from my experiences like don't get into that position in the first place because of all the things I've won, getting sober is by far my proudest accomplishment because it was so hard.

It would have been so much easier to just keep doing what I was doing. But that two, three, four week period of like getting off the getting those drugs out of my system and getting back to a baseline of acceptable mood where I wasn't manic, depressed, and suicidal was hell on Earth.

It was so bad that I put it off for 10 years by continuing the addiction. And I was never like using

drugs thinking like, this is awesome, I found my answer. I was always dude, I have got to get sober. But I was too weak to deal with the consequences of withdrawals and detox.

And eventually, when I started running as a form of penance to deal with my withdrawals and I was like, I'll fucking kill myself running because I want to be dead anyway, I don't want to live like this.

I eventually got better at running and then, thank God, I found suffering as my salvation and a way to cope with the feelings that drugs provided for me. I found a worthy cause in suffering. And again, to someone who hasn't gone through this and doesn't understand, they'll never understand. I'm not trying to convince you of my way of life.

Dr. Andy Galpin

It took you 10 years?

Ken Rideout

To get off drugs, yeah.

Dr. Andy Galpin

And 15 attempts?

Ken Rideout

Oh, at least multiple attempts a year. Half assed, sometimes half assed, sometimes sincere. I mean, I got off them for here and there for a month, two months, and then I would be on Subutex, which is like methadone. It was like--

Dr. Andy Galpin

Stops the opiates from working.

Ken Rideout

It stops the cravings for the drugs, but it's also highly addictive. You don't really get high from it, but you can't just take that for-- if you take it for a week and then stop taking it, you'll have some mild withdrawals, but that's the way it's intended to be used.

The problem is people take it as a maintenance drug, and when you're on that for months at a time, getting off that is just as hard, if not harder than getting off the opioids.

Dr. Andy Galpin

I don't get the sense that you're in running specifically has really been self-punishment per se.

Ken Rideout

Not anymore. Initially, it was a little bit.

Dr. Andy Galpin

It feels like it's more of a altered focus. If I can pour myself into that. Not only is there like physical time away from anxiety--

Ken Rideout

Myself.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Yourself, like it's hard to have thoughts when you can't breathe--

Ken Rideout

That's right.

Dr. Andy Galpin

For six hours or whatever the case is. But it also feels like it's a target. And at some point you're winning races, you're still using drugs. You're you've found international success in a sport that you never started until you're, what, mid 30s, late 30s?

Ken Rideout

Using drugs while I was running or having success.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Never.

Ken Rideout

No, no, no. I mean when I was using drugs initially I was like I would exercise, but when I started competing in any capacity, I never like. In 2010 when I got sober, I had done like a couple triathlons, but just as an experiment, I didn't race competitively. I just showed up and did a race without knowing what I was doing with a road bike.

Once I got sober, then I started to focus on racing. Not competitively, but I started to set goals for myself. But never when I was using those drugs, I couldn't. My heart rate would get too high. It just like it would cause complete chaos. It was not sustainable.

Dr. Andy Galpin

You're obviously a competitive person. That's clear. I don't think that you're the same type of competitive as other people, though. Myself, as an example, I'm beyond obsessed with competing. I actually really don't care that much about winning though.

Winning is very obviously a driver to you. Like you, in fact, the first thought in your head is very clearly if there's competition. Like if I can't win this damn thing, like, well, then I'm going to win it. That's the only option is you're winning.

I actually am weirdly not worried about winning very often. I want to compete as hard as humanly possible, but I'd winning or not is a little bit less relevant for me than it is for you. Why have you-- and it seems to be this way from your book, why have you cared so much about the winning part?

Ken Rideout

Well, I think that that's a big part of my unresolved trauma and insecurities. I have to be recognized to a certain extent, less so now than previously. But I feel like because I had done the things I had done with the addiction, I felt like I had wasted so much of my life that I had so much time to make up for that.

In my mind, I was such a loser and I didn't want to feel like that anymore that maybe the winning filled some of that feeling like I was a winner made up for some of those insecure feelings that led me to my addiction in my first place.

And like I said earlier, this isn't a tutorial on how you should live your life. I don't want to feel-- I want to be able to feel like I can go and have fun and not have to try to win. But there is something about my own flaws and insecurities that for a long time was like, no, you have to win. If you're not a winner, you're a loser which is not the right mindset.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Sure, I understand that there's also a huge superpower. You've had a wild amount of personal success. You got an incredible family, financial success, professional success, all those things. So wanting to win really bad is a good thing. There's obviously limits to everything.

You and I share a trait, another set of traits actually, that are oftentimes the same thing that I was like obnoxiously ambitious from the time I can remember. And borderline with that is I would say I will use the word confident, other folks maybe would choose a different word, but the ambition and confidence and arrogance is like we're talking about first cousins in this thing.

And what I've come to realize is it's my estimation. If I asked you personally what your single best human trait is, you'd probably say toughness. And reading your book, I don't think that is you wanted to win, you wanted to be better. And from the sounds of it, other folks in your family maybe didn't want to be better.

And I don't know if you're any tougher or less tough than your family is, but it seems the ambition part mattered. I was fortunate, I've always felt fortunate that I was born with that or as much as I can remember.

My brother was born with that, we're just born and wildly ambitious, wanting to get out of the spot we're in. Is that something you think people can cultivate? Do you feel like you were just

born because either of your circumstances or your genetics that made you want to get better?

Ken Rideout

I think that I was born with the ambition, but I definitely taught myself toughness, I wasn't tough. Like you read about in the book about getting bullied when I went to Alabama, I was scared all the time when I was in high school. I grew up in a violent place, man. There was always fighting, was ever present. And I didn't want to fight, I was scared. I mean I would fight, but I wasn't-- it was-- it was like death defying.

And I took practical steps to address these things. I went to the somerville boxing club and said, I'll just have to learn how to box. I don't like it. I don't want to be here. I wouldn't say I learned to like it, I got comfortable with being scared and uncomfortable.

And I turned that into a superpower by being I'm going to be so tough that no one will even want to test me, and I'll never have to show them whether I'm really tough or not, and it became true.

And I tell that to my kids, now, one of my sons, my middle son, he's very-- he's a very good athlete, but he's very timid. He doesn't want anything to do with contact, even in basketball he's like, I tell him, I go, I can see that you're pretending to play defense.

You're trying to not-- you're looking like you're trying, but are you letting a guy go right by you? I go you got to get your body in front of, his body. He might bump into you. And he's like, yeah, I am scared. I don't I don't want it. I was like, buddy, I hear you, but you're going to have to learn how to do something scared. I'm scared, too.

But at some point, what I realize is that when you start like the story in the book where the coach, I was playing quarterback, he's like, dude, you're just out there taking hits when you're running the ball. Did it ever occur to you to deliver the hit and run hard? And that was a huge turning point for me.

The next time I ran the ball, I tried to run the guy over like I was going to kill him. And what you realize is in life, whatever it is, any conflict, any physical interaction, if you're going to get hit, don't wait until someone hits you, do the hitting.

It's like I tell my kids, if you think someone's going to fight with you and wants to hurt you, this isn't a tickling contest. You not in an arm wrestling match, if you think someone's going to hurt you, don't wait for them to you-- don't wait to confirm your suspicions. Start firing punches.

And I tell the little one, Cameron, what do you do when you throw-- when you punch someone? Punch him, again, exactly. And then keep punching him. And he's like--

Dr. Andy Galpin

Oh, the wife, I'm sure loves that.

Ken Rideout

Oh, she's like, why are you telling him that? There's never been a fight in this town since, like the '70s. We live in Brentwood, Tennessee. I'm like, well, if we get in a fight, I want to make sure we're on the right side of it.

And I think that also stems from my own childhood and my own insecurities of being like it's like you want to impart all of your experience on your kids and be listen, this is how you handle this. And they're like, their brain can't even comprehend. They're like, what are you talking about, dad?

But the littlest one, he's so full of confidence. He's like, dad, I don't have to punch anyone like he wrestles. He does jiu jitsu. He's like, what good would it do for me to hurt someone there? He goes, I know I can do whatever I want to them.

And I was like I said to my wife, I'm this kid is so mature. He gets it. He's just-- he's such a nice kid. But I think if any, if I'm proud of any of the things that I've imparted on my kids, and I do think this about myself as far as tough as I might come across, I think I'm very empathetic, and I think Rob Moore and the people that know me would tell you that it's like I'm a very sensitive person, I genuinely care about people.

And I say in jest, I want to kill everyone. Not physically, I don't want to hurt anyone. And the minute the race is over, I'm like everyone's best friend. I'm like a huge nerd. I just want to-- I like interacting with people.

But until this the pressure is released till after the race, I'm just-- I've done so much to get ready for a race. I'm just like a pressure cooker. I'm like everything is bottled up inside of me. And I'm like dying to get let the pressure out of the race, stop the suffering, get the suffering over with so that I can enjoy what I just did.

And that's the only way I know how to do it. And again, this isn't for everyone. I wouldn't suggest-- for me I can't have one without the other. I have-- or I haven't figured out a way to show up, be loosey goosey, everybody's pal. Go out, empty the tank, and then be happy with the results if I didn't go through the process that I have to go through.

Dr. Andy Galpin

You'll see this you and I have been around enough professional fighters that when they're backstage and they're about to walk out--

Ken Rideout

Oh, my God.

Dr. Andy Galpin

They're not the same human you've ever known in your life. And when you say, I really want to hope this lands for people, when you hear these athletes say things, I was ready to die that day. They're not that far off from that.

Ken Rideout

No, I can tell you from my own experience, in my mind, there is a part of me that's if you die, you die, and I don't want to die. But I've also been suicidal as a result of my addiction, and I know the pain that it caused me.

And I know that the pleasure that I get from getting the most out of myself physically now, and there is a huge component where I do feel like no one wants to die. If you did, you would have-- you would be dead if you wanted to die bad enough.

I don't want to die, but I also don't want to leave with the feeling of having given up because the first time I qualified to race in the Ironman in Hawaii, I quit, just-- I felt quit the race.

I just stopped on the run because it was getting difficult and at the time, the most humiliating and embarrassing thing ever, my wife's like who are you embarrassed in front of? I said myself, I feel terrible, in that feeling and that the void that left in my life changed the course of my endurance career.

Because once I felt that, and all I can tell is like I tell people is unless you've experienced, you just don't know. But the emptiness that I felt inside when I didn't get the most out of myself, when I just took the easy way out, was like the way I think of everything in life.

And I've given up so many times with addiction and everything else that I would-- I just didn't want to be that person, and it hurt me. And I said, I will never feel this feeling again.

And to keep going when you want to stop, when you're completely depleted, it takes a lot of toughness fitness. And that's where that mentality all stemmed from is, and those fighters know that feeling, especially in fighting in MMA you know the minute that guy is getting pummeled on the ground, he doesn't surrender. But he like strategically lets the guy choke him.

He doesn't offer the resistance, you can even hear the announcers. He's not defending this choke at all. He's not doing the right things. Oh, he's, oh, it's over. He tapped or he got choked out. And it's like your heart breaks because you could see what he's doing, but he just refuses to say it out loud but he's going to have to live with knowing that surrender.

And it's not fun, it's not easy. But if you don't put yourself in those positions, you'll never learn that feeling. You'll never learn how to deal with that feeling more importantly, how to avoid that in the future.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Today's episode is sponsored by LMNT. LMNT is an electrolyte drink that has an electrolyte ratio of sodium, potassium, and magnesium, but no sugar.

Hydration is critical to performance, both physical and mental, and countless studies have shown that even a slight degree of dehydration, even as small as 1%, can lead to decreases in physical output and mental performance.

We also know that electrolytes are critical to proper hydration, which I've been harping on for years. But you can't do that proper hydration by only drinking water, especially if you sweat a lot.

You need to get the right amount of electrolytes in the right ratios, and that's why I'm a huge fan of LMNT. In fact, many of you might remember that I featured LMNT in my YouTube series on hydration nearly six years ago.

I featured LMNT in these videos because they're a blend of 1000 milligrams of sodium, 200 milligrams of potassium, and 60 milligrams of magnesium really is unique and different than any other electrolyte on the market, and it has great scientific support.

I use LMNT on nearly a daily basis, especially when I'm doing really hard training in the heat, and I'm sweating a lot. If you'd like to try LMNT, you can go to LMNT.com/Perform to claim a free LMNT sample pack with the purchase of any LMNT drink mix. Again, that's DrinkLMNT.com/Perform. To claim a free sample pack.

You had two things specifically in the book, and I didn't write the exact quote down, but one of them was to the effect of everyone can say they have this idea that I'm going to win or I'm going to die trying. Until they start to get to the die trying part, or something--

Ken Rideout

That sounds good until you get to the dying part.

Dr. Andy Galpin

And then you also wrote down, and this is actually, the direct quote that I've quit many races in my mind and then forced my body to keep going until I broke the tape. Walk me through that process. Maybe take a marathon, take whichever one--

Ken Rideout

I've got a good one for you.

Dr. Andy Galpin

When you say your mind broke? And then what the hell-- how do you get yourself past that?

Ken Rideout

So I was running the Malibu half marathon. And again, these things are all like minor little races, little experiences, but the-- but I'm sure a lot of people are going to be able to relate to this, to the thought process, to the event that takes place.

We take off in Malibu half marathon, I get out in front. I think I won it the year before, and I'm leading-- in the turnaround, I'm leading by-- it goes out in back 6 and 1/2 miles.

Dr. Andy Galpin

And what's your best half time?

Ken Rideout

110.

Dr. Andy Galpin

110.

Ken Rideout

It's 522 pace. So I get to the halfway point at this race. I think I ran 112. It's a tough course, but funny thing is when I moved out of LA-- when I moved to Nashville from LA the year after I left, Rob Moore won the race. So him and I dominated the race for so many years, and he ran the same exact time.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Did he really?

Ken Rideout

Yeah. And then one time I ran the Huntington Beach marathon in 230 flat and got second. And I think the year after I left, Rob went down ran 230 flat and won it. So--

Dr. Andy Galpin

That's embarrassing because you're a lot younger than Ken. That's, that's pretty embarrassing.

Ken Rideout

Rob's a savage. He also did a sub 9 hour Ironman, so he's definitely has nothing to be embarrassed.

Dr. Andy Galpin

They were telling me earlier, I think something about the first time you guys met and you were like not giving the business a little bit.

Ken Rideout

I typically don't like anyone when people are, hey, you want to train, you want to hang out? And someone introduced us. And very quickly, though, I was like, I love this guy.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Like you wrote hundreds miles or something, you're like, oh, OK.

Ken Rideout

Let's get serious. He's like into it. He's like savage. So I'm running the half marathon, I get to the halfway and I probably have a minute lead, which is pretty significant. Between nine miles and 11 miles, I look back and the guy's on me.

And in my mind in that split second, and I'm sure a lot of people can relate to this. I was, damn it, I'm going to get second place. My God, I thought I was going to win this.

And in that split second, when that guy didn't go by me and pass me like I was standing still, which is what you should do when you catch someone in a distance race, I had surrendered, I was, oh, I'm going to get second. I'm already running as fast as I can. And now the guy caught me, he's going to go past me. He must be feeling good.

But in a split second, I was like or he could have just emptied the tank from 9:00 to 11:00 to try to catch me because he caught me too fast from where he was. And I was you know what? Let me put it-- let me step on the gas for a second.

So he ran next to me-- and the funny thing is his it ended up being his dad, but someone on the side of the road, I didn't know who it was at the time ended up being his dad, handed him a bottle of water, which you're not technically supposed to take outside assistance just from the aid station, but it's a small race. It's not a big deal.

So he takes the water and I'm running next to me, and I was, hey, buddy, give me that water when you're done. I've done this so many times in race of just like barking at people and they're this guy's crazy. I'm give me that water. And he's, Oh, he starts trying to tell me what's in it.

And I'm, don't worry about it. If it's good for you, it's good for me. So I drink as much as I can and then throw it away. And he took some, I took some and then threw it. I don't know if he wanted more, but neither of us was getting any more.

So he caught me between 7:00 and 9:00, and 9:00 to 11:00 we're running together. And then I was I can't get into a sprint with this kid. He looked Prefontaine, he had little shorts, a little mustache, he was young.

At the time I was like maybe 50. And so I was let me put in a little-- No, I was like 48. Let me put

in a little surge and see if he goes with me, and I put in a little surge, and I opened up a small gap, and anyone who knows distance running knows once you get that gap, you're all in, I don't have the gas tank to keep putting these surges in. Like, I know how I'm feeling in the moment. So I'm I put in a surge, he didn't go with me. He didn't cover it.

So I was F it, I'm all in now at 11:00. And I sprinted the last two miles as fast as I could. I mean, I was hyperventilating, I was hurting. And I got there, I beat him by 10 seconds.

And when he crossed the finish line and his dad came rolling over and they're, oh, it was a great race. And I'm talking to them, I'm listen, dude. Because again, I'm, Hi. When I finish the race, I'm like everyone's best friend. I'm, hey, buddy. Had you gone past me like you meant it, I was dead, I had-- mentally, I was tapped out. I was I can't keep running like this.

The minute you didn't, you gave me new life and you basically, sealed your own fate. You had me. You should have ran past me without thinking, and I would have not chased you because I couldn't go anymore.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Because then literally the opposite happened.

Ken Rideout

But when you didn't go past me, I realized you were hurt as much as I was. And I was, no one can suffer more than me. And I took it upon myself to out suffer you.

And the dad was, are you listening to this? You just cost yourself a win. And I'm, so didn't mean to get you in trouble with your dad, buddy, but yeah, you did. You could have beat me.

Dr. Andy Galpin

When he passed you, you're at mile-- you said 7? Or--

Ken Rideout

Nine.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Nine.

Ken Rideout

He didn't pass me, he caught me, but he was way behind.

Dr. Andy Galpin

What are you telling yourself when you're going, maybe your confidence is back, but you said you're hurting. We 10 out of 10, are we nine out of ten? And then what are you telling yourself to not go sliding?

Because in this case, if you slide down the smallest thing, I wouldn't even know. If I was watching, I wouldn't be able to tell really? And that would lose you the race. What are you telling yourself, what's your either internal talk or physical talk or what are you doing to go? I have to run at this 520 pace, not this 524 pace or whatever the number, which sounds like the exact same thing. But how are you convincing yourself that 99%.

Ken Rideout

At that point, I had done so much training with guys like Rob and like bike riding and running and knowing someone's half wheeling you, and they're just trying to stay ahead of you, but they can't get away from you but they keep doing that.

There's so many little tactics going into it. I'm running as close to him as I can get uncomfortably close. We're just trying to unsettle him. And I'm just-- a bit like running a bit like a bully. You're not doing anything dirty, but you're also not trying to be handing him water at the aid stations, which I-- which I have done and would do. I'm not a bad sport, but I'm also like a competitor.

Dr. Andy Galpin

You're trying to win.

Ken Rideout

Yeah. And the whole time I'm evaluating everything he's doing, I'm listening to his breath. I'm trying to get any kind of sense of weakness, I'm trying to see where he feels strong.

There's a million-- it's just like your brain's like a supercomputer. I'm analyzing every single thing. I'm looking at how he's holding his hands. I'm looking at his face where I can without being obvious.

Every step I'm is he step for step? Is he falling back? Is he coming forward? And I could sense he was hanging on. And it's a weird thing to say because I don't know how I would describe it other than I just got this sense that he was hanging and I was let me just push. And when he didn't cover that and didn't stay with me, I'm, oh, if he could, he would have. And I'm, OK, he can't do that. Let me see if he can do this, and he couldn't.

But it wasn't like he just faded away and gave up. He stayed within tens of me the whole time. And I was go away because I want to have-- the moment where I run across the finish line, yes, I won and enjoy the sprint.

But you saw that finish of the LA marathon where the guy's he's not looking back. And I'm this guy's coming like a freight train, and this guy's freaking falling apart like dives across the line and still loses.

I'm, man, you got to keep your head on a swivel. If nothing else, you could have at least tried to

run in front of the guy a little without breaking rules. You see it in track, the guy in the lead comes out and he starts to drift to the outside lane, trying to force people to run. It's racing,

Dr. Andy Galpin

It's racing.

Ken Rideout

There was no racing there. It was just completely collapsed.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Are you trying to avoid losing? Are you trying to win? Are you trying to--

Ken Rideout

It's a good question.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Remind yourself of technical stuff with your own mechanics? What is actually happening there?

Ken Rideout

All of it, there is a part of me that's I do not want to lose this. I said, when he caught me, I wasn't thinking I got to go with him. I was thinking, Oh my God, I can't believe I'm going to lose, I'm going to get second place.

And then I came back to my sense. I'm what are you-- literally, I'm talking to myself. What the F are you talking about? Don't you dare give up. And I'm also focusing on mechanics, I'm how's my form? Let me look at his form. I'm analyzing his form and it's all happening at once.

It's like a car race. You see a car race and you're there are so many things going on in a car race for people that are into it. You're coming into the corner, what line is he taking? Am I behind him on my slipstream? How I want to pass him so he can't then slipstream this.

It takes so much time to explain this versus what's being calculated in your brain. It's all being calculated. It's like when I've heard Tom Brady describe when he drops back to throw a pass, he's not like, OK, he's running this fast. I gotta throw it here. He just sees it and knows where to put it. And it's just there.

It's like your brain is a supercomputer, it's calculating. You don't have to tell me, have you ever done one of those online speed reading things where it's read this word and it's just the highlighted word and it's going super fast, ridiculously, fast.

And before you know it, you're I just followed that whole story, and I don't think I read one word. It was you fill the gaps and your brain calculates, that's what's happening. It's I'm not as much as bike racing, but nothing is like bike racing in terms of calculating decisive moves. That sport is so

much more strategic than non bike racers. No, it's crazy.

Dr. Andy Galpin

From the combat world, you and I have been around these people. We've done it ourselves. You'll hear all the times people saying things, oh, he saw that punch coming. You don't.

If you look at the actual time and speed and cognitive processing time with vision, you don't. You do not have the time to see anything and react. What you're looking at are patterns, and you're packaging things and you're seeing, in fact, you hear funny stories of all boxers and fighters who they're unskilled and they come in and they're actually really successful because they don't have the same tells.

Ken Rideout

They're unpredictable.

Dr. Andy Galpin

They're unpredictable, but not even on purpose.

Ken Rideout

And awkward.

Dr. Andy Galpin

That's the word you hear. You're awkward, weird angles. And what you're really hearing is the experienced fighter saying, I don't recognize this intentionally, but I'm used to seeing the hip move and the shoulder move then the head, and then this comes.

And this guy doesn't have that same package. All of a sudden, the hand comes in like you'll just hit guys all over the place. They may not win, but you're just they get frustrating, they're awkward, and they're of--

Ken Rideout

Nate Diaz was unpredictable like that.

Dr. Andy Galpin

You just-- it's just not coming in the normal patterns. And you're how are you doing this-- this weird thing. There was a lot of research, actually, a decade or so ago, a little bit more than that on eyesight in professional baseball players.

Ken Rideout

Yes.

Dr. Andy Galpin

And it's the same basic story. What you're seeing there is the reason why left handed pitchers

are so much more difficult to deal with than right handed pitchers, is nothing to do with really the angles, but simple fact that you've got 90% of your processing and packaging mental history is in that same slot.

And now, you have a very limited data set from the left side slot in this case, and it's more challenging. So you can't see the spin on a ball, in baseball it's too fast, but you can remember it afterwards.

The same thing is, I'm sure true with racing, you have this package of information that's coming in your brain, that is the breathing, the temperature, the sweat, like all that stuff. You know what? And you probably couldn't go back and gone, oh, his elbow started to flare. No, no. But like I felt it, it's this packaging.

When we talk to younger athletes and competitors and we say things like experience, that is exactly what we're referring to. When you have to have that set of stuff come in where you just felt it different, and it's impossible for the most part to simulate those things. That was just a monologue for the record.

Ken Rideout

No, I love it.

Dr. Andy Galpin

No question, but here's the actual question on that. I think you called this earlier, Rob clean versus dirty fuel. But I want to double dip on that because I think the way you phrased it is you train like you can't possibly win. And then you compete like you can't possibly lose. What is that?

Ken Rideout

When I'm training, I'm training as much out of fear as aggressiveness. I'm like, I'm going to have to race here in the coming weeks. If I don't do this now, it's like not studying. If I don't study, I am not going to be ready for the test.

And in a lot of ways I always tell my children, pay me now or pay me later, but you will pay. And that means if you don't pay now, with the suffering and training and do the hard work now, you'll pay me later with the performance that you don't get in the race, and that sucks 10,000 times worse than having an uncomfortable one hour training session at the track which is very, very difficult. 800 is hell on Earth. Hell on Earth.

I can't stand doing them, but there's nothing more magical than when you're doing them and they're working and you're like, it's clicking. It's hard. Everyone you're hyperventilating, you don't think you can survive, but next thing you're ticking them off and you're like, dude, I'm doing this.

And that to me is the true test of fitness when I'm getting ready for a race. If I can do those 800

on the pace, I'm looking for roughly two 30-- two minute 30 seconds maybe a little bit faster. When I can do 10 of those with two minute recovery, I'm ready to throw down, and that's a huge test.

I think the actual workouts called the Yasso 800, you can Google it. It's very famous assessment tool. It basically says that whatever your time for those 10, eight, hundred or whatever the official amount is, maybe it's 12. Something like that, that should be your marathon time.

If you're doing them in two minutes 30 seconds, you should be able to run a two hour 30 minute marathon. But clean versus dirty is like the dirty fuel is I'm creating enemies, I'm telling myself everyone's trying to kill me and I'm going to kill them, and I'm not a victim, and I'm going to show you. I'm trying to show all my naysayers and doubters, even though I don't think I have any.

I mean I'm sure there's always going to be people, no matter what you do, that don't like you. If you walk on water, there's certain people that are going to tell you it's because you can't swim.

There are going to be people that just don't like you because you represent everything that they don't stand for, you're doing things they can't do. It's human nature. And I don't think I have a lot of them.

But in my mind, I create this whole universe of people that are trying to get me. And maybe it's from my childhood where I'm, oh, they're going to try and kill me. They're going to laugh at me if I don't win, which is completely irrational. But again, the only opinion that matters to me in that moment is my own. And that's how I motivate myself.

As I've gotten older now, I've started to find more clean energy that's racing out of let's get the most out of ourselves, let's represent ourselves. And more importantly, now my children and my family, represent them with honor and integrity. Go out and show everyone like what you stand for, empty the tank, give your best effort, and handle yourself with class, which I think that I've always done.

But that's how I think of like clean versus dirty fuel. And obviously, I think it's better for your mindset in general to have that to be training and racing in a positive state of mind and racing for the right reasons, and not trying to create enemies where there are none because at the end of the day, it just creates like bad energy.

And a lot of times your brain doesn't understand the difference between what someone's saying versus what you're saying to yourself. And a lot of times we talk to ourselves in ways that we would never talk to our friends or our even competitors.

The things that I say to myself are so harsh. And I said this to my wife the other day, it's funny. I

was on the plane and I was texting with her and I was, I'm trying to think of what it was. I yelled at her about-- Oh, I came out and I was the car was crashed up a little and I'm like, dude, did you smash into something with the car?

She's like, yeah. I'm like, what were you not going to tell me like you didn't think? And what I realized is because she's so close to me and basically like part of me at this point and almost like an extension of me, I catch myself talking to her the way I talk to myself.

And I was like, do you realize? And I go I never thought about this before, but I'm why would I talk to her like that? Because that's the way I talk to myself. Because that's part of all of my problems and all of my flaws and unresolved trauma stems from this incredibly unrealistic, harsh expectations of myself, where in a lot of ways I'm a failure and a loser.

At my worst, obviously, I try not to live in this space and like in a constant shame storm. But what I realize is when things like this happen and it involves my wife, I verbally talk to her the way that I would talk to myself because I'm almost viewing her as part of me.

If she let me down, I'm like, it's like I've let myself down again. Like when I was in my addiction, like you stupid. I would never say this to her, but to myself, I'm you stupid bastard, how could you do this?

I had a nail stuck in my tire the last week, and I said to her, hey, can you pick me up at the airport? Do me a favor-- She has an SUV, and I said, do me a favor. Take my car. I forgot that the nail was in there and the tire had gone down to seven.

So she's-- I go out the car and she's there, and I get in and I go, oh my God, the warning lights are on I go, fuck, I have a flat tire. I'm you didn't see the warning light on? So I basically start yelling at her, you don't see that I've-- and then I'm like, it's-- you know what? I said it's not your fault. I am an idiot.

And for like 10 minutes, I'm I can't believe I was this stupid trying to drive to a gas station. I get there, it has seven pounds of pressure in it, the tires basically on the rim. And I'm like, I am so stupid. And she's it was a mistake, let it go.

And that's when I realized I'm talking out loud to you the way I'm talking internally to myself, but I don't want that to be a reflection on you. I said, I'm sorry. I never thought about it like this. But in reflecting on how I was venting to her, it wasn't at her, I was venting at myself externally.

And I guess that's some insight into my good energy, clean energy and dirty energy. That was all my dirty energy of-- But at the end of the day, it was just a mistake. I should have been able to just be like, look, if the freaking tire is ruined, tires ruined. At the end of the day, even if the rim is

ruined, it's a little bit of money. I mean, I'm far from wealthy, but I can afford to fix the tire if I have to.

Dr. Andy Galpin

I have personally never been a big like rah, rah guy. I don't-- I don't watch an Instagram video or a song and be great, I'm going to go change-- I just never like it's feels cliché and I'm not really that. That's never been my motivation, though all it fine if that's anything that gets people to do positive things like I'm all in for, who cares? We're all have different personalities. That's great.

But what I have found so inspirational about your journey is just how candid and how raw it is? It's the flaws, it's everything else there. And I have found some useful things out of it personally. And it's not that, again, it's not that big stuff. But if people are listening or read the book and take that, that's great.

So I'm wondering if somebody who's listening and they're look, I'm never going to go do an ultramarathon. I don't have that extreme personality, so that part doesn't resonate with them.

But they maybe want to make a change or they're thinking that they might want. Are there some baby steps that you feel might be useful for that non-extreme personality? I'm not going to go from zero to an ultramarathon. I can't do this wild type of stuff. What are some things that you would recommend for a step one path?

Ken Rideout

Great question. I wouldn't even suggest that you do an ultramarathon. I wouldn't suggest--

Dr. Andy Galpin

I just want to make sure people aren't hearing that you're not recommending.

Ken Rideout

I'm not even recommending you run races. But what I am suggesting is that your health-- mental and physical health is your top responsibility in life. It's more important than your children and your marriage because without your health, you're useless to anyone.

Would you-- I couldn't think of doing something worse than neglecting my mental and physical health, and having my wife and children have to care for me before it's absolutely necessary.

You can get in an accident and something happens and you're married. Your family will do anything to take care of you, and I would expect and hope that would be the case.

But if you're out there smoking cigarettes, eating junk food, not exercising, and putting yourself in a compromised health position, and then you develop some ailment. Now, your children are like having to worry about you.

Just like for a parent, you're never going to be happier than your saddest child. Your children most likely are never going to be happy if they know that their parents are dealing with health issues that were totally avoidable.

So I would say to anyone listening, the first thing you need to do is A, take responsibility for yourself. No one can tell you what you should eat, no one can tell you have to exercise. But I can tell you that if you don't eat healthy and exercise regularly, you're not going to live as long or as healthy a life. Period. It's just impossible.

Muscle is the organ of longevity. If you don't have some, you're probably not going to live quite as long. Maybe you're a freak of nature and you can live to 100, but if you're taking care of yourself, you're probably going to have a lot more healthy, productive years, a lot more time to spend with your children.

And what I would suggest is that you start to institute some discipline, meaning it doesn't have to be running. How about this? Just get out if you're not an exerciser at all, how about you start with a one mile walk, 10 minute walk, and work your way into being able to walk for an hour several times a week. And if you can do that, maybe you add some weight and do a rucking backpack and you rook for an hour.

But I just think that for the people that don't do that, they're missing out on a key component in life because there's nothing to me, there's such a great feeling that's available to everyone every day, and that's the minute you're done doing something hard.

That's the key. It's like I was telling you I don't really get a runner's high while I'm running, but I get a runner's high every single day the minute I stop running. I walk up this little Hill to my house every day, I've never been in a bad mood walking up that Hill, never.

Even when I'm like getting emails and texts when I stop running, I look at my phone and I start walking up the Hill. Even when there's negative news, I absorb it so much better.

If I wake up and I look at my phone for the first time, and there's bad news, immediately, I can feel like a chemical shift in my body. I'm like the frustration and the chemicals that get released as the response to this negative news, it can throw me off kilter, which is why I try not to look at the phone for the first hour when I wake up.

But when I get that same message after a run, I'm let me just deal with this right now. And typically, if it's something that needs to be addressed, I just call them right now. I'm like, I'm a big caller. I'm not like I send some text, but anyone who knows me knows I don't hesitate to just call someone.

Which is funny because then I see my phone ring and I'm what lunatic just calls someone without texting for us? But that's me. And Rob can tell you I just like when I need to talk to him, I just call him.

Dr. Andy Galpin

I got you there. You wake up in the morning and run is the first thing that you do?

Ken Rideout

In a perfect world, if I'm in my routine, I wake up, have some coffee, deal with some work stuff, read the news, like read the online news, check the sites that I check. Look at stock stuff, a little bit of finance stuff.

And I'll try to watch a little bit of sports and I try to relax and get up, and I like slow roll. I do not get out of bed and just start running, I need to slow roll and so I'll have some coffee in the morning. I try to do the Huberman protocol and not drink it immediately.

Actually, the first thing I drink as soon as I wake up is I have-- and I don't have a partnership with LMNT, but I drink elements in 16 ounces of water and I just chug it down. It's not enjoyable, it's not fun. I'm this is just necessity. I need to rehydrate. And then I will have some coffee in like 30 minutes later, I'll just sit there, relax, and typically then the kids get up and I try to get them wait until they go to school at like 8:30.

So I'll go through my morning routine, talk to my wife. What's going on today? Like just like a business, I just work from home. So I'm like going through the morning routine, and then I'll run like 8:30 to 10:00, come home. Depending on what the phone call is like, a lot of times I'll take calls while I'm running. If it's someone-- if it's with my own business, my own agency, if I'm talking to Ben or one of my colleagues, I'll talk to them on the phone if I'm not working out.

And meaning if I'm just doing 10 miles, that's like my maintenance run. But when I'm training for a race, I'm doing like workouts twice a week, a long run. It's like focused.

And then I come home and I get into the work routine, start to get into my diet. I usually don't run, eat until after I run and have a very strict, regimented lifestyle. And I've just found peace in the discipline, man.

And I heard Eliud Kipchoge say one time that a man without discipline is a man with no freedom. Because when you have discipline, you're free to do what you want the rest of the day. When you have no discipline, you're a prisoner to your emotions. You feel lazy, so you take a nap. You feel hungry, you eat a piece of pie.

That to me is in freedom. Freedom is to know I'm doing what I know I need to do. And then when that's all done, I can do the things that I want to do. And to someone who doesn't have

discipline, would say, that sounds he's a prisoner to the workouts, I disagree.

Dr. Andy Galpin

You're maintenance 70 miles a week. That's baseline, you're going to run 70 a week. What's the highest? You would get up to 100?

Ken Rideout

100 yeah, hundreds would be a lot for me. Maybe a little bit more occasionally, but not much more.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Would you ever go to that middle ground 80, 85?

Ken Rideout

Many, many times. Like if I'm training for a marathon, it's typically 80 to 90. That would be average.

Dr. Andy Galpin

So you're going to do your 10 every day. And then occasionally, a few of those days you'll jump up.

Ken Rideout

And then the other thing I would just want to say is like I realized that a lot that it would probably benefit me more if I took a day off here and there, or if I did like three miles, I know that.

But this again, this journey for me, anyone who knows me, I've said this is as much about mental health as it is about physical. I'm not trying to prove anything to anyone, this is not for anyone else.

You could never do this thing for other people. This is not performative, I don't care what you think about my training. I'm not looking for adulation or congratulations from online coaches.

And there's a lot of them, apparently, there's a lot of people out there that know a lot about running. They all want to tell me how I should do it, but I have to stress I'm not trying to necessarily run as fast as I can, I'm trying to be the best version of myself that I can be for my family, and this is the only thing that I have found that worked.

When I left to my own devices, I found drugs. I found like cheat codes, and I like realized that again, the easy road never pays well. And I'm not looking to do not get paid well for my work.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Today's episode is sponsored by Eight Sleep. Eight Sleep makes smart mattress covers with cooling, heating, sleep tracking, and more. I've personally been sleeping on an Eight Sleep

mattress for more than three years now, and it's absolutely glorious. I love it so much that I hate traveling away from home because I can't sleep on my Eight Sleep pod five.

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The Eight Sleep has been a game changer for me because I run hot at night and/or as my wife calls it, I'm a furnace. If I don't have something like an Eight Sleep helping me cool down, I'll wake up in the middle of the night overheating and not feeling great.

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Heats or cools each side of the bed from 55° to 110 degrees Fahrenheit, and provides high fidelity sleep tracking. If you'd like to try Eight Sleep, go to eightsleep.com and use the code PERFORM to save up to \$350 off your Pod 5 Ultra.

You get 30 days to try it at home and return it if you don't love it, but I'm confident that you will. I certainly love mine and would never consider returning it. Eight Sleep currently ships to the US, Canada, the UK and select countries in the EU, and even Australia. Again, that's eightsleep.com/perform and use the code performance to save up to \$350.

Earlier in the conversation, I told you I wanted to come back to your coaching part of it, and I want to do that right now. You've told me before, 10 miles a day is that's the day. And if someone asks you, hey, can't you get your run in today? It's like, well, if you see me alive, I got my run in. It's just not a day, of course, you're not going to hit that in there. And at some point that took you from presumably never running a marathon to running a 2.5 hour marathon or something like that?

Ken Rideout

I had run a marathon in my 20s when I got to New York in three hours and 20 minutes, just without very much training or knowing what I was doing. So I had like I had some ability to run, but I wasn't-- I wouldn't consider myself a runner.

Dr. Andy Galpin

So actually I'll back up a little bit, that's interesting, you played every sport in high school like as a kid. You just played everything. Hockey was your main jam. Played college hockey--

Ken Rideout

And football.

Dr. Andy Galpin

And college football. And then you ran that marathon something in your 20s. And that was the first time you'd ever run over--

Ken Rideout

Any race.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Five miles?

Ken Rideout

Obviously, I started training and I had done like a handful of 18 mile runs in Central Park. But again, I was running in cotton gym shorts like mesh champion shorts, cotton t-shirt.

I was so chafed I didn't know about gels or anything else, I was fantasizing about food. When you're not in great shape, you're you get dehydrated quickly, you're starved for calories, your body's not used to running fasted. Now, I mean, I run 20 miles in the summer with no fuel, no hydration and no calories easily.

Dr. Andy Galpin

I think that's interesting here is you went from a very traditional sport background, where little success played some college stuff, that's great. And then your first marathon is 3.5 hours, which is good. But that's pretty normal. Most athletic young men are probably going to finish their first marathon in the four hour range. Plus or minus, and you obviously have some genetic endowments--

Ken Rideout

I ran two or three after 320 and 330. So just to give you context, it wasn't like, oh, my God, he's a natural.

Dr. Andy Galpin

That's what I'm getting at.

Ken Rideout

I couldn't.

Dr. Andy Galpin

You're a little bit better than some of us, but you weren't like a first marathon 245, anywhere in the stratosphere here.

Ken Rideout

Not even close.

Dr. Andy Galpin

You didn't come from running cross country as a five-year-old. You don't have-- hockey's a very fatiguing sport. It's a high anaerobic sport. That's right. It's anaerobic threshold. This is nothing-- it's not even running. It's a different movement pattern entirely.

And football is, especially at quarterback, it's far from that thing. I hope people are connecting with that a little bit because that's a pretty normal thing. And then you start packing on 70 week, and that gets you an hour off your time.

Ken Rideout

I mean, I did that in 1996. I don't think I ran a marathon again until 2012.

Dr. Andy Galpin

So that was--

Ken Rideout

Yeah, you're talking crazy. I did that on a whim. I trained for several months and ran a marathon. And after that, I was that sucked, I don't want to ever do that again. And then I didn't--

Dr. Andy Galpin

You like running initially.

Ken Rideout

No, I don't like running now. I don't, I'm like I'm not like, yay! I can't wait to go for a run. I'm like, Oh my God, I gotta go run. Just like I gotta go to school or I gotta go to work.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Gotta take out the trash.

Ken Rideout

Yeah, that's it. I'm yeah, what do you want to do today? Let me just get this run over with. I'll be right back. I got involved with drugs, when I got sober in 2010 I started doing triathlon. And through that, I was running.

And as I was running in triathlons, I'm my running is pretty good. I wonder if I do some open races, and I did like a 130 marathon. Then I did a 124 marathon, then I did a 117 marathon. I was like, holy shit, I'm really getting faster. Half sorry, half marathons.

And I was, wow, I'm getting pretty good. And my wife's coming to the races, we don't have kids and it's fun. And then we had our fourth child and I moved to LA in January 2016, and I lived in

the Palisades. I met Rob, trained for-- I had already qualified for the Ironman 2016 in Kona.

In 2015, right after I had my fourth son, I did the Ironman Wisconsin and I finished like sixth or seventh overall. I smashed it, I did like 9:30 ish and I ran fast. I rode my bike under five hours and I did terrible in the swim. But we had my first son and I was living in Westchester County, so I'm driving back and forth to work in the city. It's driving me crazy, mad anxiety, road rage every day.

So I just abandoned the swim. I'm like what, F it, I'm going to either swim. If I train obsessively, I can swim close to one hour. If I do no swimming, I can swim in 110. So I was like--

Dr. Andy Galpin

You're going to make up that difference in the run and the bike easily.

Ken Rideout

Well, so I gave up the 10 minutes in the swim, and I probably missed second place by 10 minutes. And I was, damn it, if I swam, if I did this, if I did that, and then I was, if my aunt had balls, she'd be my uncle. Like what's the difference?

Like people always like, if I didn't go so hard on the bike, I had the fastest bike split. My run was shit, but I'm it's a triathlon. It does not matter if you ran one mile fast or you did the bike fast, or you had a great. I don't care if you were the first out of the water, you were last in the race after the run, so that's all that I care about. If it was a swim race, you'd be the best. But it's triathlon, you're the worst.

Dr. Andy Galpin

It's a swim, bike, run.

Ken Rideout

Two and 1/2 mile swim in the ocean in Hawaii. 112 mile bike, which is so much harder than it sounds.

Dr. Andy Galpin

On pavement and--

Ken Rideout

Up to Harvey up this long ass climb and just-- I'm telling you like dangerous crosswinds. So when you're coming back down this Hill at 40, 50 miles an hour and you're getting battered by crosswinds on the bike with your arms extended on these arrow bars, and you get blown up.

People get blown right into the lava. And newsflash, getting thrown into lava is like getting thrown into sandpaper. They're just they look like they've been thrown through a meat grinder. And it happens. So you're like, holding on for dear life and you're trying to make up for time

because you've just been riding uphill for six miles, it's so hard.

And then you start the marathon around 1:00 or 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon in the Hawaiian heat. And people, it was so hot on the run. I'm like, yeah, no shit. It's Hawaii in the middle of the day. Of course, it was hot.

Dr. Andy Galpin

I appreciated that context in the book, especially because having done the things I've done, it's not the running, it's not the hiking, it's not that stuff that is the suffering part. It's the fact that you got the chapped lip. It's the blister.

Ken Rideout

That's right.

Dr. Andy Galpin

It's the fact, you haven't had a normal bowel movement in 3 and 1/2 days, and you're just. It's that stuff that grinds on you mentally and you're just like, I just want clean socks.

Or I just want this blister to go away, it's driving me nuts all day. It's not your muscle glycogen, it's not your pace. It's none of those things. It's that little discomfort stuff, and you don't plan for it.

You don't know what's coming. It's the wind. Like the thing I always say about hunting in the cold especially. You put the temperature at 0, I don't care. It's not that bad. But if the wind is blowing in your face, oh my God, that's the fastest way hunters are back in the truck.

Ken Rideout

That's exactly right.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Like you're done. You can't handle that wind in your face, it's just so horrible to be with.

Ken Rideout

That's what I'm talking about, about the suffering. It's like--

Dr. Andy Galpin

It's so it's every second to--

Ken Rideout

Physical suffering, of course, you're hurting, but it's the mental suffering. It's like I so badly want to stop. So just imagine in a marathon, 1,000 voices in your head telling you, dude, just stop. This is stupid. No one cares. You're not going to win the Chicago Marathon, you loser. No one cares, you're not even going to be in the top 100.

But there's that one other voice in the like corner like, fuck you guys, we're winning this race.

Keep going. Don't listen to these guys, they're losers. Keep pushing. And it's which crew do you listen to? The loud like peanut gallery, or the one guy who's just desperate to win?

And that's literally what goes on? It's like everyone's screaming to stop all systems are stop. Hyperventilating, dehydrated, legs are sore, calf is killing you. And then there's the one person who's like, do something different. Be a champion. Fight through this. There's like a million stories of guys that have overcome guys and girls that have overcome incredible discomfort and displeasure to be like to go on to do great things.

Dr. Andy Galpin

49/51, that's how you wrote it in the book. 49% of you wants to quit. I don't need it to be 99%, I just need 1% more says go, keep going. Then the 1% that says stop going.

Ken Rideout

That's right.

Dr. Andy Galpin

How do I build that 51%?

Ken Rideout

You just have to make the decision that you want. Do you want to win or lose in life? And I can tell you this with certainty because I've chosen the losing path many, many times. And it was not fun.

And I was talking to Rich Rolle recently and he was maybe you traded one addiction for another. And I'm yeah, guess what? One addiction had me suicidal and the other addiction has me here talking to you about my new book. I'll take this addiction, I wouldn't suggest anyone else does this. I'm not-- I haven't figured it out. I'm not in a--

Dr. Andy Galpin

Oh, this is survival mode.

Ken Rideout

I'm not in a state of bliss. I'm telling you, hey, I'm deeply flawed. I did some cool things along the way, but here are some things that you might be able to learn from.

But I wouldn't suggest that you want to be like me, but I would say that could take some of the things that I've done and some of the tricks and things that I've been able to do and convince myself of you might be able to take something from this and apply it to your own life, and maybe you can become the best podcaster, the best sports scientist, the best trainer.

You don't have to run, I don't-- like I said, I don't like running. I'm not-- I'm not an advocate for, hey, come join the running community. I'm trying to build a tribe. I'm not. I'm telling you running

happened to be the vehicle that I use to get to where I am today, but it was just by happenstance that I was running a lot, and I just started to get good at running. But I was not trying to be like a winning marathons and be a great runner.

But I hope that people listening can apply that to whatever it is. If you run a hedge fund, be the best hedge fund manager in the world. Typically, the guy who tries the hardest, puts in the most work, typically, will win.

And occasionally, you'll get people that are like savants and they're maybe on the spectrum. And they have some natural ability where you're like Elon, where you're how does this guy's brain work like this? And he'll tell you, like, I've heard Elon say, you don't want to be like me? You think you want-- people just want the prize, they don't want what comes with it, and you can't get one without the other.

I've heard Kobe Bryant and Tom Brady talk about the process that it took them to get the most out of themselves, and it doesn't sound fun. That doesn't sound appealing. I heard Tom Brady the other day say I was a psychopath, Monday to Friday on the practice field, I was a lunatic. I wasn't fun to be around. All I wanted to do was win.

That doesn't sound like fun, but do you want seven Super Bowl rings? I do, I'm willing to do that. I can do that. And most people think they can do that, and they want to do that. They believe it.

But the minute the shit gets hard, you find out how badly you want it because what I've done is available to everyone, I'm not a good runner. I mean, I'm a decent runner, I'm a decent athlete, I know that.

But I wasn't-- no one was looking for me in division one sports. No one was seeking me out to sponsor me to run races. I just tried harder than a lot of other people in a sport that where you try-- when you try hard, you're rewarded with results.

But I would argue that that's available in every profession in the world. The person who's into AI coding or whatever the technical term for AI engineering is, the guy who spends the most time obsessing over that is probably going to be like the guy who gets those \$100 million contracts to go to ChatGPT or Anthropic or whatever the competitors are, XAI. You studied more than everyone, you know more than everyone else. He has \$100 million, we need you.

Dr. Andy Galpin

One of the questions I've got the most in my career is having dealt with and personally coached some of the world's most decorated athletes, many of them actually. What's different about them?

Having done this in baseball players and football across all these different things, one thing that is consistent across all these people, when they get tougher, it matters. Tough always translates. Skill practice doesn't always translate more diet-- those things don't always translate. They generally work for most people, but always we've found when people try harder, it translates into more. Which is the wildest thing to say.

But even the best in the world, try harder. That is your quickest, most consistent path to getting better. You call it the other side of hard, we call it try harder. It will deliver. It's the one consistent thing that I can say, if you're going to roll the dice on something and-- just try it like more effort tends to win.

And there's the exceptions when that's like, hey, you're burying yourself. And we got to back off and like we got to maybe pull some flying. But let's start with figuring out what hard really is, and let's get there first.

Ken Rideout

Through all the training I've done, I've never felt, oh my God, I've done too much this week. I've never. I mean, I feel like I'm exhausted, I'm destroyed. But I never felt I can't get more out of myself in a weird way.

And it's a strange thing to say now reflecting because I'm trying to think when was the time where I really needed a break? I would say after those endure, after the Mongolia race, I knew I needed like a couple of weeks to feel normal again. I was run down.

But you're talking a week of like extreme racing every single day. But to your point about try harder, I tell my own kids, and I know that for my children. I feel bad because I know it ain't easy being my kids because they see the intensity that I bring to everything. And it's like I get-- I understand the reputation that I have.

Dr. Andy Galpin

That's not everyone's personality.

Ken Rideout

But I try to convey to them, I'm guys, I don't care if you're good, bad, or indifferent. But the one thing I do care about is who's trying the best because I said, if we're at football or soccer game, any sport, I said, we can all sit here in the stands, and we can watch the game, and all of us can say which kiddo there is a savage, who's trying the hardest. He's not the best, but he's trying the hardest. He cares, you can see the emotion. He's I go, that's free for everyone. Any of you can be that guy.

So anyone listening, like you can be the guy in work who comes in a little bit early, stays a little

bit late, and you can fake your way through that for a week or two. But you can't be that savage every day, all day. Someone is, but you can't force your way through it unless you truly believe that that's who you are.

And in a lot of ways, that's what I've been able to do, is convince myself. Because there's many days I don't believe anything about myself. I'm not that tough, I'm just trying to get through the workout. I'm just trying to get through the day.

But by showing up every day, and even if I don't believe it internally, I'm that's the external-- that's what I'm reflecting to the world. And that's the other thing to know that the world is a mirror, you get back exactly what you put out there.

So if you put out like, I'm tough, I show up every day and you put it out there enough, people will believe you and you'll start to reflect back to you. Like in my case, where people are, wow, you're really tough guy. I'm scared shitless all the time, but OK, I'm tough, if you believe, I fooled you, but OK.

And so that's what I try to reflect to the kids is guys, pretend that you're not scared. Pretend that you're like you want to try the hardest. At the end of the day, I don't care what you think. I only care what you do. And if you're doing it, if you're out there trying super hard, everyone will see it and be I want that guy on my team.

At the same time, when they see you pretending to do a tackle and the guy runs right past you, everyone knows you didn't want that, and I that sucks. It's much more rewarding to stick your helmet in there and maybe feel a little bit uncomfortable and have, get a hard hit than to feel that emptiness of being you didn't even try. You let him run right by you. I try not to tell them that, but I mean, everyone can see what happens, and that's what I try to tell them it's like you're not fooling anyone.

Dr. Andy Galpin

I had a really big revelation when I was working with a UFC fighter, and he had won seven or eight in a row. He should have gotten a title fight, he was right there. And just-- he was bad luck, bad timing, injuries, and those things go and whatever. And soon after that his career was over.

Still as a young guy, still hyper competitive, he just had some, honestly, super bad breaks. Winning World championships hard, he's like really, really hard.

Ken Rideout

Gets harder every year, guys are so competitive.

Dr. Andy Galpin

So the lesson I learned from him was the last couple of fights in his career, he would come back

afterwards and we'd do these deep dive analyzes after competitions because I need feedback and lots of stuff.

And he was like, man, the hardest part was actually like getting hyped up for the fight. And I'm like, whoa. And this was a enormous red flag for him. Some people are not that way, but he's just I just didn't care.

And I was like, oh, and he's the guy who's in the back and he wants you to say the most vulgar things. Probably, some of your self-talk would land like that's the stuff he wants to hear about this is life and death and this stuff.

And he needed that mindset to get in there. And he's like, I just like-- I just couldn't, and I was like, oh no, because I knew that was part of his process. I don't know, three fights later, he's retired. I was like, oh shit.

The revelation I had there was, I don't think for a minute he ever got comfortable being uncomfortable. I don't believe in that at all. One of the other conversations I had with a guest this year, Dr. Lenny Wiseman, the sports psychologist, he hates that saying.

I'm not fully convinced people ever get comfortable with that because when you talk to these athletes, they're still scared. They hate the thing. You hate the race, you're scared every day you don't want to do it.

I'm not fully convinced people get more comfortable because in my life, I'm like waiting to get comfortable with those things. I'm it's never here, what am I going to get this thing that I'm like, I'm comfortable. But I think what people can develop and I would love your thoughts here is just a willingness to do it anyways.

Ken Rideout

That's a great point. I'm not comfortable like, Oh, I'm so comfortable with the fact that I'm about to feel like I could drop dead at every step. It's not that it's being comfortable knowing that it's coming and doing it anyway. That's what I mean. It's like you're comfortable with the fact that I know that I'm going to wake up and wish to God that, the race would be canceled.

There'd be a fire downtown, and no one can race because the fire or going walking into a boxing match. When I was boxing for the New York Athletic Club, I would be praying for the lights to go out. Please, let there be a power outage like crazy thoughts, but you go anyway.

And what I mean by being comfortable with discomfort is like, I'm comfortable, meaning I'm still going to go. I have all these thoughts, but I'm comfortable with the fact that I believe-- I know I'm going anyway.

I'm comfortable knowing I'm still going, but I'm scared. All these things are happening, all these thoughts are there for me, I'm scared. I have all the insecurities, but I have comfort inside knowing I'm still going to go, but I'm going to go through this process.

So it's not that you're I'm so comfortable with the fact that I might get knocked down in front of everyone, no. But I'm comfortable knowing that I'm going to show up no matter what happens here. I'm going in, I'm getting in that ring, and I'd be comfortable betting on myself to show up.

Dr. Andy Galpin

How do you get that comfort?

Ken Rideout

Experience. You have to put yourself out there. It's that's why I can't understand why people aren't involved in any competitive process. If you're just going to work, coming home and not putting yourself in those positions, I just feel like you're missing a lot of important lessons in life.

Because what do you do when you're faced with real adversity? My wife was diagnosed with cancer earlier last year and that was man-- it's hard not to get choked up to thinking about it now because it was scared the shit out of me. It scared the shit out of her. It scared my children and I was like.

And we had a moment after like a week of several days of crying and feeling like victims and feeling like, you know, we have the death sentence that I literally said to her, like, enough of the bullshit.

We got to suck it up and lean into this and get ready like someone's coming to fight us, and we can either get the shit kicked out of us or we can fight back. That's how I looked at it, and I convinced she was like you know what? You're right. And my wife doesn't have the same, obviously, the same mindset as me. She's a normal person and it mattered.

And thank God she had best case scenario. She had her she had the mastectomy surgery. It all went well. She didn't have to do any like really harsh chemo treatments or anything to that effect. And now she's like on the road to recovery.

But the point is I believe, would we have gotten through it if I wasn't doing the crazy shit that I was doing? Probably, but in a lot of way it made it easier to cope with and deal with because I honestly think that my mentality rubbed off on her.

She's tough. Anyway I'm not trying to take credit for any of her toughness, but that talk made us sense. Like I'm not a rah, rah guy. I don't you don't have to yell at me, you don't have to cheer me up. I know there's nothing you can say to make me try harder than I'm about to try.

But what I would do is even with my kids, I would like lean in and get close to my children. I'm like, hey, when shit gets hard, show them who you really are. Be tough out there. And no matter what happens out here, we're going to leave, go get donuts. I'm still going to love you and it doesn't matter, but we're going to have much more fun if you try your hardest. And it's like, all right, let's go.

And you see them and you see sometimes they respond to it and sometimes they don't. And they come back defeated, especially, like the little one who wrestles. It's man, he gets pinned twice in his first like competitive tournament.

But I'm like, buddy, those guys have four years of wrestling experience. You've been to one wrestling tournament in your life? I'm like, you have to get comfortable with losing to in the sense that don't view them as losses, learned something new. Did you learn something when you did that? And the guy, like, cradled you and rolled you over? Did you-- you see what you did wrong there? You had him and then you did.

And he's like, Yeah, I was like, the Champions realized they can process that. Everyone hates to lose, all the kids cry when they lose. It's OK because it means that you care. But what you can't do is let that define you to say, that's who I am. I lost, I'm a loser. You're not a loser.

The world champion has lost in there in tournaments. When especially when they're kids, you have to go through this. It's like jiu jitsu is the perfect example. There isn't a person alive who goes to jiu jitsu who didn't get tapped out multiple times every single training session because how can you get better if you don't train with guys that are better than you?

And when you train with guys that are better than you, they dominate you. Ask anyone who's gone through any jiu jitsu and you're a white belt, and you go with a guy who's a blue belt or a purple belt. You can look at him and be like, I'm going to twist this nerd in a pretzel. Look at this guy. He's a geek.

And the next thing you know, he's got you in like a friggin' a twister. And you're like, how am I stuck in this position? But it's all technique and it's, and it's being calm. Now, I think that jiu jitsu gives some of the best life lessons today.

And Cameron, my youngest, he goes to jiu jitsu and his little girls there who are just their technique is so flawless. And I'm like, and you-- he goes there, the girls get the better of him and he's like, he comes out. I'm buddy, you did pretty good. He's like, did you see I got that girl and I did this.

And I'm like thinking to myself, I'm I love the fact that he realizes the gender doesn't matter. The technique is there, it's for every-- it's available to everyone to learn. And when you understand

staying calm in a calm environment and it's like physical chess.

I'm when you did that, she basically reversed you. It's not about being stronger than her because he would say to me, he'd be like, dad, it's crazy. I'm so much stronger than her. I can pick her up, I can take her down, I can do anything I want.

And then the minute we get on the ground, she's on her back, and the next thing you know, she's got me in a triangle. I can't her-- and I go, yeah, buddy, you have to learn what she's doing.

And this isn't about physical strength, it's about intelligence. That's what I like about jiu jitsu is you can apply strength and intelligence, and one doesn't beat the other. It's like, which one's more important? I don't know, but they're both critically important in jiu jitsu.

But for parents out there, I can't-- of all the sports that my kids do, jiu jitsu is the best for all kids because you can be the worst athlete, the nerdy kid who just wants to be studious. And you can apply that intelligence to that sport and be really good.

But the worst sport is wrestling. Wrestling if you're not comfortable being uncomfortable, wrestling is a hard sport. It's hard to watch. It's hard for the kids to do it. It takes so much effort and man, it is painful when it doesn't go your way.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Oh, it's full peg the whole time.

Ken Rideout

Oh, I it's so physically demanding.

Dr. Andy Galpin

You guys hate wrestlers. You're like, well you just calm down.

Ken Rideout

Exactly.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Just calm down.

Ken Rideout

Calm down. Let me put this move on you, and the wrestlers just like sweating all over you just like a savage.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Every muscle in your body is doing something different at different times than jiu jitsu is like, whoa, you mentioned failure several times. You'll hear these cliches, these tropes, either you win

or you learn, and you learn more from your failures and your successes, all those things are true.

I rarely hear people give actionable insights off of that, though. You just gave a bunch of them. I would love to know more. You've had so many failures in your life thrown out of your college team, and you've mentioned the decade, drug addiction, and failures and failures.

Ken Rideout

And I got fired from my first job on Wall Street.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Fired from your first job, and then your second job was--

Ken Rideout

Thank God, I did every single setback that I've had in my life, including my addiction has become a strength. Every one of them, and they all sucked. I didn't want to go through them, I don't want to go through them, I hate that I had to go through them.

But I got fired from my job for slapping a guy for bullying harassing me. Like I was like the young guy, and I was no one's bullying and harassing me. I'd rather get fired, and I did.

But when I did, a couple of guys heard about it. Bigger traders in the market at Enron. This guy's crazy he slapped the guy. They were I want him to be my broker. That guy's a nut. I want him protecting my orders.

Within a year of that slap, I was making over dollar million a year living in London, flying on the Concorde, driving a brand new Porsche, had a beautiful house in London. I had everything.

And at the time when I got fired, I was I can't believe I've been fired. I can barely pay my rent. I'm making 40 grand. That was on a Thursday, on a Monday I had a job making 80 grand. This is 1996 or '97. That was more money than anyone I knew of, including my parents and their friends.

Dr. Andy Galpin

I mean, you're making more a month than probably your parents made in a year your whole life.

Ken Rideout

I had everything. I had--

Dr. Andy Galpin

Single, no kids, all the stuff.

Ken Rideout

But one thing that I realized with having stuff and going through that, and I've talked a lot about this before about money doesn't make you happier. And it really doesn't. It didn't it didn't change anything about me, I took myself with me everywhere I went.

And I had all the same insecurities, I developed the drug problem. And no matter what suit I had on whether it was a green suit from Filene's Basement or a cashmere and wool Armani suit from Sloan street in London. I was still an insecure idiot inside with a lot of unresolved issues that had to be dealt with sooner or later.

And I was poor then I was rich, and then I was a drug addict because none of it made me comfortable, none of it was the answer. All the things that we're looking for are internal, all the best things in your life are free.

You think that money would make you happier than going home and hugging your children and being with your wife, and having dinner together and having the kids all clowning around and teasing each other and just all the fun of having a family?

Like we go around the table anytime we have family dinner and my wife asks him, what were your roles in thorn for the day? What happened good and what happened bad? And then we talk about them like, oh, I had a lot of times the kids, they're very positive kids.

They'll be like, oh, here's my roles, I did this, I got a good grade and I didn't have any thorns. I had a great day. So then I always make a big deal. I'm like 10 say, I had a great day. When they were kids they had plates that said 10 they had a great day, a dinner plate that she would use for them. And I'd be like, now they're teenagers. I'm like, she'll get the plates, get the 10. They had a great plate day.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Teenage daughter hates it every second of it I'm sure

Ken Rideout

They've become different people. She's like, dad, just for a long time she'd be like, if I was dropping him off like, dad, you can just drop me off here. I was like 10. I know exactly what you're doing. If you think that I'm not going to drive you right up to your friends.

And if I've done anything right in my life with this book coming out in, some of the attention that it's garnered has been-- I'm not going to get choked up here, but it's been the greatest gift that I've ever given to myself and to my children. They're so proud of me, I can't even put into words.

They're dad, can you sign books for all my friends? Dad can you sign books for my teachers? And I'm like, are they asking or are you just offering? They're like, no, no, no, they asked. Mr

so-and-so, so who's one of the I coached the local cross country team. I was the assistant coach on us which, by the way, we destroyed.

There's two-- there's two high schools in my--

Dr. Andy Galpin

What? You guys what we?

Ken Rideout

There's two high schools in my town, Ravenwood and Brentwood. My kids go to Ravenwood, they're both great schools. Brentwood is-- another mile away from my house, but their girls cross country team was I mean, four of the girls would go in Division I on scholarships, which in cross country is a big deal. So the guy who was the coach, I just knew him from running in the neighborhood. He's a really good runner.

And he was like, hey, man, do you want to come help out coach the cross country team? I was I would love to. I had to go through the whole process of getting like fingerprints, it was tons of training to be work with kids. It was involved, which is a good thing.

And so I started helping them. And I go down there and it's like the kids are from the suburbs and they're a little bit more conservative. And I come in like with more a fighter's mentality. And I'm, guys, don't give these kids anything. You got to get out there set the tone, be aggressive.

When you're in those turns, give nothing. Hold your lane. Don't be afraid to be physical. This is racing, racing isn't about we're not trying to win a tinkling contest here. Show them who you are.

I said these, they were like, oh, we might be late tomorrow because there's the homecoming football team. I was never mind this, we might be late. Do you think that those football kids are going to come watch your damn track meet? Then don't you dare to condescend to those guys and let them or defer to them and let them set the tone for you. Your race is much more important to you than anyone else is to theirs, you have to believe that.

And I would just get fired up and I'd be like, don't you effing give these guys anything? And the other coach would be because he'd always be can you want to hype him up? And I'd be like, I'm not a rah, rah guy, but I would just talk to them and I'm like--

Well, I wouldn't be like screaming, yelling. I'd be talking to them firmly like, guys. You think you think you're a runner, you think you're a nerd? You think these guys are tougher then let them beat you? But if you believe that you're tougher than them and you can-- you can kill these guys. Then go out there and do that.

And do they did-- they were so good. I never been to a cross country meet in my life. There was

one girl like she was a sophomore, she finished like, I don't know, fifth in the state, and we had like the top three finishers twins going to Georgetown and Dartmouth because actually I think Rob knows Ben True, who was married to Sarah Groff, who went to the Olympics.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Oh, sure.

Ken Rideout

Sarah Groff, who's my friend, I'm really close with her husband, Ben True, who finished fourth at the Olympic trials.

Dr. Andy Galpin

In the 10K and the 5K, it was heartbreaking.

Ken Rideout

And then Sarah goes to the Olympics and finished fourth in the triathlon at the Olympics. So devastating. But Ben was a nasty runner, like sub 60 minute half marathoner.

And he was obsessed with the NASCAR. So a friend of mine, Landon Cassill, drove in NASCAR. So one day and Ben's like very introverted, he doesn't socialize. He's like very rarely on social media. So I bring him with me to a NASCAR race in the pits in like where full access.

And anyway, long story short, the girls are getting recruited and she says, oh, I met your friend Ben True. He's one of the coaches at Dartmouth, and I text him a picture of me and the girl. I'm like, yo, are you trying to recruit my girl? And she's like, Oh, you like Ben? And she decides to go there. And I was like, I got you an athlete.

My decision didn't matter. But it was just fun to see this connection in the runner world, that all of a sudden I was like, oh my God. I'm like, actually, in the running world to a certain extent. I never felt like I was a real runner.

The girls win the states, but this girl's coming in a big track in one of the regional track meets, and she comes around and I want to say she might have been in second or third in the race. And she looks at me really nice, so mature. Like these girls were like young women in high school.

She looks at me and I go, don't you dare give up. There was like 100 to 200 yards to go. I go, you go get her right now. She's fading and I'm like, the girl looks fine. I go, don't you dare let her beat you. You can catch her. And she's like, had 10 yards. She looked at me and she's like, I got it takes off and wins.

And I was like, dude, I was ready to cry. I was I come run over, I give her a hug. I'm you did it,

I'm so proud of you. I just-- I love these kids. It was so much fun. I had the greatest time ever.

But anyway, all that to say, the coach-- some of my kids teachers are the coaches at Ravenwood, so they know me and I'd see them at the thing. And of course, all the parents are, man, you're a traitor. Why aren't you at Ravenwood? And I would say the same thing I'd say to them same thing I'd tell everyone else because that guy asked me to help, and no one else over here asked me. I'd much rather be at my kids' school.

Dr. Andy Galpin

I was at Cal State Fullerton for 13 years, I didn't work with a single athlete there.

Ken Rideout

Why?

Dr. Andy Galpin

No one asked me.

Ken Rideout

Perfect.

Dr. Andy Galpin

I mean, I had a very famous Major League Baseball player. I can't remember who it was. And Cal State Fullerton was very good at baseball, several national championships, very, very good there.

And I had a pretty good roster of Major League Baseball players at the time. And they asked, they're like, oh, are you doing all the stuff for the baseball team? And I was like, no, literally none. And then they asked it and like this came up and he was like, why? And I was like, no one's ever asked. And I'm like, I'm right here in your hall. I'm just in the same hall as you.

Not to sound as arrogant as possible, but I'm like, I don't know, we got we got to get a pretty good track record in Major League Baseball players, and then not a single one, nobody ever asked.

Ken Rideout

Not that I mentor people or I'm not looking for mentoring. I love everyone, I have four children. I have all the men to mentees that I need. But being able to impact other people out there and having people follow me on social media and like the messages that I've received, I was telling my wife, I'm I would never take someone's message and just post it and be like, look at this.

But the book does messages of support and everything that I have received with regards to the book has been like, I mean, I've cried multiple times, I send them to my wife and she's like, we have to make a book of these things where people man, this really changed my outlook on life.

It's been so impactful, it's been just a dream come true.

But I'm sorry to get sidetracked on that when we were talking about coaching and mentoring, but I absolutely love being able to help young kids like I've spoken to a number, all the different local football teams, and it's always funny because I'm I can't tell if this is resonating because I think some of the parents might be like this guy from Boston is down here talking to these kids from Tennessee, and he's got a different attitude than a lot of other people. It's not screaming and yelling, there might be a few curse words.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Just accidentally mixed in.

Ken Rideout

But I'm telling them stories of resilience and addiction and what being a loser looks like, and like how close-- I say to them, dude, no one here is going to look at me or research anything about me and be that guy's a loser.

But I can tell you, I spent 10 years ideating on suicide because I was in such a desperate state. I was so in need of help, and I didn't know how to get it. And instead of asking for help and doing the hard thing, I spent 10 years trying to fix it myself, and I got news for you.

A lot of times we can't fix these things ourselves, and my son was struggling with school. My oldest son and I was, hey, buddy, just like they would tell you in addiction treatment. I said, you can't do this on your own. I said, you're having a hard time figuring out I was he was like, yeah, I can't do it. I go, it's OK. I couldn't do a lot of things by myself.

And in a lot of ways, I've started this like faith journey recently. And what you realize is like, no matter how much success I've had, no matter how many things, if there's still a void there, the outside opinions and the outside world doesn't matter. What matters is what's inside.

And if you feel a void, and I've tried everything from drugs to endurance and everything else, and I have finally, I'm watching people on their faith journey and I'm they seem to have something that I don't have, but it looks like they have peace that I don't have.

So I've started to explore this and talking to a pastor and to bring it back to what I was saying to my son is when you realize you can't do something on your own, and I think that this is an important message for everyone.

Sometimes you just have to reach out and ask for help. And if you're in a position to help, to me the greatest gift that I've received as a result of my experiences winning, overcoming addiction, the greatest gift that I've received is the ability to impact other people, and to be of service to other people.

And listen, I'm not out here campaigning for Mr. Nice Guy Award, I don't care. If you don't like me, you're never going to like me, I don't care. But I will tell you that there is no greater reward than being of service to other people. It's not just words, it's truth.

Think about giving Christmas presents. When you see your kids get the presents that they want or you're able to give your wife or a friend something that they just look at, and it has all meaning. It's not monetary value, it's meaning versus the feeling you get when someone gives you something you really want. Like, hey, here's a brand new \$100,000 Rolex. You're like, wow, that's awesome. And two weeks later you're like, I have a cool watch doesn't really-- my life's the same.

But when you can impact someone else by doing something either of service, providing a service for them, giving them something that means something in their life that is the greatest gift in the world. And if I've learned anything through this process, it's that being able to help other people is much more important than anything you could win or do for yourself.

So for what it's worth, know that this all comes back to the suffering. It's not winning the race, it's the process of preparing for the race. It's race day itself. When we adopted my daughter, I said to him, I complained the whole time when we were living in Ethiopia, my wife lived there for two months. I was there for a week. We stayed in a guesthouse. The bed had no mattress, it was just a box spring, basically, hardwood floor.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Oh, this is your nightmare.

Ken Rideout

I was like, this is terrible. My poor wife. I had to go to a local--

Dr. Andy Galpin

We'll find out who's tough real fast.

Ken Rideout

I had to go to a local hardware store and buy an egg crate thing in Addis Ababa and put it on the mattress. But now, we'll be walking and I'll smell like a campfire or like wood burning from a fireplace. And I'm like, oh my God, you smell that?

Dude reminds me of Ethiopia, it's so romantic. It just brings back such good memories. She's you complained every freaking day we were there. And I was like, yes. Just like I would complain about getting ready for a race, just like I would complain about how hard it was.

But when you have that experience, no one can ever take that away from you. And there's something romantic about the suffering you went through. When I think about the race in

Mongolia, it was miserable, I hated every second of it.

But now, I can laugh about thinking sitting around the campfire at night with all the people trying to get warm and talking and the funniest story from that whole Mongolia. You could volunteer for the race and then get in the following year. So you would-- it was like a big caravan that would travel from camp to camp.

So there was a group of Italian guys that were frigging awesome. I wish I could remember the names of everyone, but they were awesome. And one of them had an adult son, who was in the traveling caravan who was like race support.

One night they were sitting there like, Ken, do you want a piece of Parmesan cheese from Italy? And I go, can we swear on here? I mean, I swore already.

Dr. Andy Galpin

We're a little past that point.

Ken Rideout

I was like, you motherfuckers brought a Parmesan wheel? I'm like, who's carrying this? Who's carrying a wheel of Parmesan cheese? It wasn't like a crumb. It was like a chunk of pine. And I think that-- and then--

Dr. Andy Galpin

Freshly shaved.

Ken Rideout

And then he goes, yeah, put some olive oil on it, and he pulls out like a mini bottle of olive oil. I'm like, you brought olive oil? You even brought the bottle? You didn't think to put it in plastic. I'm like, none of this makes sense.

Dr. Andy Galpin

You're not supposed to have outside bending the rules?

Ken Rideout

I think that the son. But again, they weren't trying to win, so they were just there for the experience. And then after the 50 mile stage, we stayed in the most picturesque little camp, and there was a Creek, but there's livestock everywhere.

So I come on, I'm like, I'm getting in that Creek. I get in the Creek, wash my clothes off, and immediately I'm like hives and rash everywhere. I'm like, Oh my God, this the Creek is polluted, but it looks good.

I come back a couple hours later and the Italian guys are in there. The guys-- It's a co-ed race,

the guys completely naked in the Creek, soaping up. I go, Yo, dude, I think that there's bacteria and shit in that-- in that Creek. He couldn't care less. Next day everyone covered in rashes.

But the way that those guys were just so carefree and having fun, they were all from the Dolomites. And it was just so refreshing to be like-- to laugh with those guys every night about the Parmesan cheese. I'm like, if one of you guys has a fucking pizza, that's where I'm drawing the line. I'm calling the race officials because that's what I was waiting for them. It's like pull out a frigging meatball hero or something.

After the fact, I romanticized the suffering, but in the moment it's like, but it's like getting your PhD. I'm sure there were days where you're like, I'm never going to be able to. I'm never going to do this dissertation, I'm never going to pass. Like you have these moments of doubt.

And then you reflect back on it and you're just like, yeah, it was something that I did. But at the time it was probably the most difficult thing, and that's reflective of everything in life the best things are going to be hard, but if you can do them, you'll have a life of memories and experiences that can never be taken away from you.

Dr. Andy Galpin

It's a weird part of the psyche, this camaraderie thing you hear from military people. In your world it's the time in between the races or on the race. It's probably when somebody beat you that you like, gives you the biggest smile.

For us it's the campfire, it's not even necessarily the-- you got an animal or you didn't right, it's just the fact that you suffered all this time. That's the part you laugh at 10 years later. Remember when this thing broke and we had to walk this whole damn thing?

Ken Rideout

Well, the training that you do with the people and the amount of things that Rob Moore and I have done together, it's if you told me, Oh, we're going to go here and you and this guy are going to share a hotel room, I'd be like, there's not a chance I'm sharing a room with a guy.

Rob and I have shared hotel rooms like hundreds of times. We've suffered through so many things. We've been in crazy races, delayed flights. We've been in some scenarios where we like it, I love.

I mean, you were at dinner with us last night. I never laughed so hard as when I get together with Rob after a while because of all the suffering, and complete oddball things we've done like Iron Man's all over the world.

Dr. Andy Galpin

And it's the same thing with my friend Dan because we've done such wildly irresponsible things.

Just like objectively, idiotic maneuvers. And 90 plus percent of the time they paid off. It worked, and then there's 10% where it just was pure suffering and just delusion.

Ken Rideout

No one can take experiences away from you. I really hope that people listening take this away. It's not about going to Mongolia and winning, it's about having the balls to go to Mongolia and try to do that.

I did a race in Kenya the following year that I came in third in running and like seeing giraffes while I'm running. And elephants, it's like those experiences are mine forever.

When I think back on my time in London, I made millions of dollars. I had all this fancy shit. The stuff cool, it comes and goes. No one can ever take away the fact that I was in landed in a helicopter on that crazy hotel in Dubai, the Burj--

Dr. Andy Galpin

When it was brand new.

Ken Rideout

Landed on the helicopter landing pad. That I went to Venice and stayed at the Cipriani hotel-- I was like whacked out idiot on drugs and spending money like a drunken sailor, but you can't-- I stayed in every hotel every four seasons in Europe at one point.

I was I just loved it. I loved experiencing life and making up for what I didn't have as a child. And I look back with such fondness, I had incredible experiences.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Do the name Henry Rollins?

Ken Rideout

Yeah, of course, heavy metal, like Black flag music awesome.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Few people know he's actually a huge, weightlifter.

Ken Rideout

No, no, he's super fit. I mean, all you do is look at him and be this guy's a freak.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Strength training this huge lover of it. He wrote this essay probably 25 years ago called The Iron, I love it. But after that he put a little thing out where he talked about how he doesn't have talent, he has tenacity.

Ken Rideout

That's it.

Dr. Andy Galpin

I hear you say things like you just said, and it resonates with me a lot personally because we share many things in our past that are similar, including like, I was not a good student. And I tried, I was there, I was not on anything else. Like just there's just not that much.

Ken Rideout

I hope people are absorbing that, that a guy who's like a well respected, world renowned, like sports scientist, PhD, trainer to stars, like realized, I wasn't a good student and I wasn't a good runner.

And a lot of the things that we weren't good at. But at some point I was like, I'm going to be the best, and you can't stop me. And I don't know what you have to create enemies or you have to create this impression of yourself, but I think that we're both, and I'm sorry to interrupt.

An example of the only person that can tell you anything about you is you. And if you believe that, you'll understand. And if you don't and you dismiss me like, F this guy, he's just talking shit. Cool, you can do that too. There's all we all-- we need people to be in second place.

So keep having that mentality that it's all bullshit. But we're here to tell you both of us are an example like it's very hard. Talent cannot beat grit when grit keeps showing up every day and talent just takes days off.

Dr. Andy Galpin

You're going to fail, you failed, I've failed tons. I would often get lost in that personally, the fail is the end of the road--

Ken Rideout

100%.

Dr. Andy Galpin

And you hear those things. And I would always misunderstand what failure meant. To me it was the expectation that you're going to fail, you lose. Fine, where I grew up, no one was that worried about failing.

But I was fortunate, the community I was around was you would never steal. That was an unacceptable thing. We would lose all the time because we just weren't a bunch of middle road people. We want a lot sports wise, but you know what I'm saying.

But those things were there. It's like you don't steal. Why? Because that's the shortcut. Like you don't take from people who can't-- like all those things. So I had that, and then I had the tenacity

piece, which is if you want something, it's never going to happen unless you outwork all those city kids.

Because those city kids have all the advantage, and that was our enemy. Real or not, we created that enemy. That's what you have to do to get out. Like that's how we're going to get there. That tenacity. I think that's true.

Personally, I can think back to a billion lessons I learned in sports that gave me any shot of being a professional because I had no concept of the real world. I had never met a lawyer. I didn't know what a PhD was, but I had no clue what those things were.

I'd never met anybody famous, I never met anybody who'd met anybody famous. Like I had no idea. Everyone where I'm from is just like, that's just not now. I probably knew somebody that was a lawyer, but, I didn't know. Right I had no idea of knowing that.

So as we wind down here, what I'm trying to transition into this is when you have that lost feeling, you don't even know where to get going and where to start, you found that in certain paths. I found that in a certain path, the path doesn't matter. But any advice, any help you could give for someone who's even pre that step? I don't even know where to start this thing. Where do I how do I get going?

Ken Rideout

That's a great question. And like a great place to wind down is to say take everything that I've explained here and that I explained in the book and recognize, like I had no plan. I just tried to show up and represent myself with the attitude that I was someone to be respected.

I almost commanded respect to a certain point I didn't always get it, it wasn't always easy. But if you're expecting things to be easy, like you're setting yourself up for disappointment. It's like I said earlier, the road-- the easy road never, ever pays well.

Everything you want is going to go down the path of least resistance, the path of maximum resistance. Because if it was easy, what you were trying to do was easy every asshole would already have done it. It wouldn't be novel.

It wouldn't be novel to win a race if anyone could do it, it wouldn't be novel to get your PhD if you could just decide you want it, I want a PhD. OK, here you go. For sale. No, it takes an incredible amount of grit and determination.

I studied sociology in college. I ended up becoming a finance guy working on trading desks. I made a lot of money in finance. I wouldn't say that that's the answer. But my point is, stop worrying about being perfect right now.

The same thing goes with running like you prescribed these workouts for the week. Dude, don't agonize over whether you hit all the splits or did show up and do all the workouts. Some days you're going to have days where you're dude, I couldn't run two 100, two 800. I couldn't do the 10, I had to put it off to another day.

I've done that a lot. One thing that my coach and I, Mario Fraioli, got really well at us he provided a roadmap. I have to get from A to B. Guess what? There was a detour over here, so I had to go a long way around. I couldn't do my long run on Saturday, I did it the following Monday. So we adjust some of the little workouts.

But the point is in life, you're never going to get-- there's never going to be a straight line from where you are to where you want to go. Don't stress that, just make sure that you're continuing to move the ball down the field meaning.

Are you taking steps this week? And I know people get it can be like I got 1% better today like fucking be realistic. You're going to have bad days, you're going to have days where you're just you know what? I'm checking out. I need a mental health day. I mean, I don't do this very often, but I wish I could is to be you know what? I just need a day by myself.

The time that I spent in on site, which is a trauma healing center that people can read about in the books, was one of the most important weeks of my life. I hated every second of it.

I was joking with my roommate, who was Eric Decker, the NFL receiver. I had the schedule hanging on the wall, and I'd crossed the sessions off that we'd do like I was in prison, and he and he thought it was hilarious. And I was like, dude, we're almost out of here. But I but I paid \$10,000 to go there.

So it wasn't like I was trying to avoid anything, I was just trying to make light of it. But the again, to summarize in the point that I'm trying to make is like, just take responsibility for yourself. No one is going to do for you what you have to do for yourself. And if they did it, wouldn't be-- it wouldn't be a noble cause.

And it wouldn't really matter. Anyone that can do the work for you than what you're trying to accomplish isn't that important. Because all the things that I did and all the things that you did, no one could do those things for you, that is what you have to realize is no one-- you cannot fake your way through certain things.

You can show up and pretend, but if you're giving your best effort and if you're advancing the ball, like I said, down the field a little bit every week, none of this happens if I don't take responsibility for myself. Get sober, show up every day.

You can't imagine what can happen to you if you just deliver your best effort. And it might not take-- it might take longer than you think or longer than you hope. My story was the longest overnight success anyone's ever heard of. I toiled for years in darkness and anonymity until someone was like, wow, that guy's a pretty good runner.

And then when people thought I was a good runner and rich roll had me on his podcast and people started to hear my story, they were like, Oh, this guy's got an interesting story too. And I started to get better at running, and the story started to like, get in front of more people. And I got a book deal. It's just, I wish that I could tell someone, this is how you do it.

But if you're hearing anything in this, recognize there is no roadmap for success. There is no straight line, everyone's on their own journey. And the only thing that you can control is your effort.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Couldn't think of a better way to end, I want to summarize some of my biggest take homes. And this was not a direct theme in your book, but this is what I pulled. I actually wrote this note down and sent this to everybody that I work with.

It was very clear and when we started getting into this, but you got from this 330 marathon, which doesn't matter. It's the point is average. You were as average and you spent the first, I don't know, 25 years of your life, well below average, in life, in circumstances, in all those things.

So a fairly average start 330. And then you got just with grit and just with effort and consistency you got to 230 pace. Well, just 233. Cut an hour off. Anyone can access that with any phrase of their life, as you've said many times now, but it did take you to bring in Mario, to go from 233 to 229. And so I think 228, deepest and sincere apology.

Ken Rideout

The effort it takes to get from 29 to 28, that meant we need to make sure we-- it took a shitload of effort.

Dr. Andy Galpin

The story for me out of that was you can probably get the first 90% there.

Ken Rideout

Definitely.

Dr. Andy Galpin

But you probably do need extra help to finish?

Ken Rideout

You don't need help doing your dissertation for your PhD until you've done all the work leading up to it, which no one could do for you and no one could help you.

The amount of work that I did to get to 233 was essentially 10 miles a day, and once a week for 12 weeks, I'd run 18 to 22 miles as a workout. I would structure it as a progression run. I'd start running. I know I got to run 20 miles ish and I'm going to go faster each mile.

Not like super diligent. Some days it didn't work out, but as a theme. And when I felt good, I ran as hard as I could on the 10 miler. Sometimes I'd run 15, sometimes I'd run 12, nevertheless. And when I felt terrible and I needed recovery, I'd just run slower.

And when I hear people like, I need a coach. I've never run a marathon, I'm you don't need a coach, you need to run. People ask me all the time, what should I do? I'm trying to get from 250 to 245. I'm like, you run more. That's it.

And people would like I'd read articles on slow Twitch, to get to this level of marathon, you need to be at the track. You need to do this work. And I'm like, I never comment and talk shit on the internet. But I wanted to be like, no you don't. You need just to show up and put in volume. It's like getting a PhD, you need to study a lot.

Don't worry about how you're studying, what you're studying. Just study a lot, absorb a lot of information. And I hope that that's what people recognize. I got to 233 and then I couldn't break through. 230 I was getting better, like 258, 245, 240, 230 over a few years. And then it was like 234, 235, and I was exasperated. I'm like, I can't do this.

Brought in Mario, went right to 228 and then ran under 230 like four or five times. After I turned 50, I ran 230 flat three or four times. In Boston, I ran 230, 225, and then I win the age group. Call my wife, I did it, I won the age group. She's like, great job. I'm like, yeah, but I ran 230, 25.

I'm like you know how pissed I am? She's like why didn't you sprint the last section? I go that was me sprinting from 20 to 26 miles. That was me sprinting for a long time.

Dr. Andy Galpin

So again, I hopefully that story is accessible. We keep using that phrase because it is you can get don't let perfect be the enemy of good when you're starting like the most. Don't worry about the perfect diet or business plan, or the way you're going to have the conversation.

Whatever it has to happen, just move and we can get precision later. And we probably want that sooner than maybe, you jumped in on coaching.

Ken Rideout

That's fair.

Dr. Andy Galpin

We would have done that earlier. We would advocate probably for a little bit of a different strategy than you're currently using.

Ken Rideout

Agreed.

Dr. Andy Galpin

But I don't want people to think, Oh, throw out all the stuff and just go on instinct. That's not the messages, don't let that little stuff get in the way of moving the mountain. Like the thing first, and we can polish this thing up a little bit later.

So I have to ask at the very, very end here, I want to know I'm going to go run my first marathon. Besides all the things you've covered and all the wisdom, any specific tiny little trips because you've said this several times, you don't know. You don't know.

Ken Rideout

I got you.

Dr. Andy Galpin

What should someone think about or pay attention to when they're going to do their first ever marathon?

Ken Rideout

Great question. I would say fueling early and often. Don't wait till you're hungry to eat something, don't wait for your thirsty to drink something. I would take water at every single aid station I do. Depending on how hot, it is the hotter the it is the more you drink. If it's freezing cold, you don't have to be as diligent.

But water Gatorade, water Gatorade full hydration strategy, and I would make sure I'm getting calories at least every 30 minutes. Like I like Morton's gels know sponsorship with them or partnership is there like it's great. They're great.

Dr. Andy Galpin

They're made for runners, but for distance people like engineered by that.

Ken Rideout

And I would also say I have a little caffeine in the morning to just stay on my routine and to get like bowel movements going in the morning, stay, keep everything normal and consistent with my training. Keep everything consistent just like a training week, and then hitting calories every

four miles, 30 minutes.

And then around 2018 to 20 miles, I start introducing caffeinated gels. You will notice a big difference if you can cut down on caffeine the week leading up to the race, and you start hitting big caffeine at 20 miles.

The halfway point in the marathon, no matter what anyone thinks, whatever. Throw away every preconceived notion you have. Halfway point is 20 miles. When you get to 20, you're halfway there because that last 10K is difficult.

Dr. Andy Galpin

If everybody says it's 19, it's about 19 to 21 is the death.

Ken Rideout

It's the truth. It doesn't have to be the death, there is nothing better than racing the last 10-k of a marathon, meaning you are drilling it. As a matter of fact, when I ran, the Tokyo marathon was one of the best experiences of my life.

When I finished the race, I was looking at Strava and for one of the last two or 3 kilometers at the time, I had the KOM, fastest segment ever. By anyone who's run through that, you have to be on Strava and a lot of the pros are.

I ran faster one of those last three kilometers than anyone else had ever run in that marathon. I was like-- I don't know what my time was, but one of those kids was probably close to 530 pace at the finish of a marathon and it was crossed the finish line, I'm like jogging back to the hotel versus a 235 in Berlin, and I was like, basically in an ambulance.

So the races that you execute perfectly, you're not destroyed at the end. So and trust me, it is so much fun racing the last 10-k versus surviving. So that's my advice.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Hydrate early, fuel early before you and then save stimulants until that 18 to 20 mile mark and then full send.

Ken Rideout

And then just block everything else out of. Yes, of course, it's hard. Yes, Yep. You probably have a blister, no big deal. You're not going to die. And I always say like, win or die trying? I'm I don't think I can die from running a race. I just don't think so. I really don't.

And I also say this his medics all over the course, like if you go down, they'll help you. And if you were going to die from running, you might be-- probably should die anyway. You probably have health ailments that were undiagnosed and like let's expedite the discovery of said problem. But

no, I'm kidding. I don't hope that no one dies like it's not a joke. But I would say get out there and push it. Your body can take a lot more than you think it can.

Dr. Andy Galpin

I have a complete inability to scroll past any of your Instagram posts without watching the whole thing, like I can't.

Ken Rideout

You have no idea how happy that makes me know how much I agonize over Instagram posts. I have to give a shout out to my man Raphael Voegtli. He's a sweet young Swiss guy. I met him, he's like, hey, I want to make content for you like everyone on Instagram, I can't stand solicitations on Instagram.

And I said to him, listen dude, I'm not spending money on like a thing. You want to make some videos for me? Be my guest. He made the videos, probably would have charged me x, I paid him x2 because I was like, this is quality work. If you can help me with Instagram, I'm happy to pay for services.

But again, an example of someone who's willing to lead with service, lead with let me show you what I can do, and then you decide what it's worth. If you're not afraid to lead with service and show people what you can do, they're never going to come in and just be like, OK, I'll pay you a shitload of money for something that you say you can do. I like paying for results, not effort.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Fair enough. Well, you've clearly given an enormous amount of effort in your life and today. I actually have a bunch of more questions I want to get into, but you got to get to a book launch, man.

Ken Rideout

Hell, Yeah. You gotta get out of here.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Thank you so much. The story is incredible. I actually legitimately, I think I honestly can say this, it's the only memoir I think I've ever read in my life.

Ken Rideout

Oh my God.

Dr. Andy Galpin

I don't read them. I'm just like, whatever your story, I get it. But I couldn't put it down. Literally, can't wait to get out of here and tomorrow on the plane, I'm going to read the last five pages and see how the story--

Ken Rideout

You have to tell me what you think.

Dr. Andy Galpin

Thank you so much. The book is incredible, you're awesome. Great.

Ken Rideout

Thank you for having me. I appreciate you guys. And thanks to everyone for tuning in-- I love to be of service to anyone who needs help, so don't email me crazy shit and ask me to have a phone call with you. But if I can help with anything, please let me know. Boom.

Dr. Andy Galpin

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