

*“What pushes you forward,
is holding you back!”*

Why Can't I CHANGE?

The Secret Reason Why Trying Harder
Doesn't Make You Any More Successful,
And How You Can Become
Naturally Successful Instead

An Informal Conversation with

P.J. Eby

(As interviewed by Matthew White)

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Introduction

Dear Friend,

For most of my life, I've been what you might call an "ambitious loser". I had big goals and dreams, but I hardly ever *did* anything about them, and even when I *started* things, I had a lot of trouble staying focused and *finishing* them. I was frustrated, and I didn't know what to do. I thought something was wrong with me, and that it was **all my fault**.

And then, I made some surprising discoveries about how the brain works, and more importantly, **why** it works the way it does. These discoveries changed my life, and I went on to teach them to others, so they could change their lives, too.

Now it's **your** turn.

The secrets you're about to discover are not widely known. In fact, many of them are the exact *opposite* of currently popular ideas in self-help. So don't be *too* surprised, if you find out something you've been doing to try and change, is actually making things **worse** for you!

This short e-book is a transcript of a conversation I had a few months ago with Matthew White. Matthew is the author of the "Confidence Bible", and he was interviewing me for his "Conversations With Confidence" audio series.

Matthew had a lot of questions and challenges for me, because he wanted to see if my theory of "natural success" would hold up to scrutiny. As an "adventure coach", he works with a lot of people who get stuck, don't know what they want, or just plain **freeze** when trying to go beyond the boundaries of their humdrum everyday lives.

But as you'll soon see, I was able to explain the **real** reason that they do that... and how to **fix** it.

So if you've been struggling to change, and blaming **yourself**, read on. Because this just might be the most important thing you'll *ever* read about using your brain... for a change.

-- PJ

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Why Can't You Change?

MATT: Hi, and welcome to another "Interview with Confidence". These are interviews with people who have confidence and can show you how to get it. People who can show you how to live your life of your dreams, discover your passion, and get rid of the stuff that is holding you back.

And today we've got a really special interview for you. I am interviewing a person who is like me, in the sense that we've both got an IT background. Now, I am going to warn you right up front: when PJ and I get together it's high energy, there's a lot of stuff going around, there is a lot of great content; lots of information. You're going to want to have your pens ready and you want to be able to write this one down.

You see, what PJ does, is he has a different approach to the way that most people would call personal development and self-help. You're going to be hearing a lot of his views about that. The way he does that really changes the view of how you actually use personal development, how you improve yourself, how you can get more confidence, and how you can actually start having the life that you really want.

He's taught a number of different sorts of people, a wide spectrum of people. For instance a musician who is pretty much now a rock star [in terms of his confident stage presence] as a result of it. Some other people have been able to take his work and have lost weight from it. Another guy, he was about to be laid off, and in the space of a month actually ended up becoming a manager.

These might sound like dramatically different sorts of things, but they all come from the same root. They come from the sort of thing that PJ is able to do to help people. The way he describes himself is that he is able to help you change without willpower, to succeed without struggling. And I wanted to thank him for coming along. Thanks very much for being with us tonight.

PJ: Thank you, Matthew. It's great to be here.

Change... They're Doing It Wrong!

MATT: One of the ways that you describe yourself is as a “mind hacking instructor”. I just want to clarify one thing, when most people hear hacking it usually has negative connotations. Can you just help out by explaining a little bit about that?

PJ: Sure thing. The word “hacking” - at least among people in the computer field - the roots of the word basically mean “someone who learns by experimenting”.

Now in the old days when computers were first invented, there was no one else to learn from. The people who created computers had to learn how to program them. And they could only do that by experimenting.

And really, in the same way with the mind, nobody has really known how to get the best use out of the mind. You could almost say that anyone who teaches self-help, in a way, is teaching mind hacking in the sense of learning how to *understand* how your brain works and how to control it... by experimenting.

And so what I do is a very literal translation of computer programming techniques to the brain. Although a lot of self-help gurus and authors and what-not talk about reprogramming your brain, the truth is they are not computer programmers and the things they describe make me absolutely *cringe* as a computer programmer.

Because you know, they tell you about repeating affirmations like saying “I am successful” and all these things, and visualizing and whatnot, and they tell you to do it over and over again. But any programmer will tell you, that if you have to do something over and over again with a computer, either the computer is broken or you're doing it wrong! And in this case, they're doing it wrong.

Why Doesn't Self-Help Help?

MATT: Cool, now, one of the things is - what I am curious to know - and I'm sure some of the other people that are listening to this as well - for you to be able get the sort of results that you have been getting with your clients and customers, what led you to where you are today,

doing what you're doing? How did you come to this point?

PJ: Well, basically, because I needed self-help, and traditional self-help failed me. I have over 200, maybe 300 self-help books in my library at home. And the thing is, not **one** of them is written from the point of view of someone who is *struggling* to be successful.

They are all written from the point of view of someone who is *already* successful, people who are what I call "naturally successful". People who are naturally successful - well, let's look at it this way: have you ever read or seen a product about exercise that was written by someone that *didn't like to exercise*?

MATT: Well they wouldn't really **show** it, if they did... or they'd pretend to have these big fake smiles on when they.... Heh heh.

PJ: Right, right! And the same thing is true about other self-help books. Let's look at it another way, have you ever, or do you know someone who's read a book on motivation but couldn't get themselves motivated to **do** anything that was in it?

MATT: [ironically] No, no... in my experience I've found that everybody who reads every single book, they get the pure benefits that.... Haha, no, of course not!

PJ: Right! Exactly, so that really is the problem. Sometimes I describe it as being kind of like the whole "Men are from Mars, Women are From Venus" thing... except that self-help authors are from another planet altogether!

The thing is that these books are written in a language that is understood by people who are in the state of mind that I call "naturally successful". And when *they* say "just do it", or "no pain, no gain," or "you just gotta get tough" or any of these types of phrases, that's a language that means one thing to them, and it's a completely *different* thing than what the rest of us **hear**, when we hear them say that.

And when I discovered this, when I realized finally that that was what was going on, it just completely blew my mind. It just opened up a whole new avenue to me. Some of my clients have told me that this has been like the Rosetta Stone for them, because they can go back

to that same stack of a hundred self-help books and now understand what they're saying, now that they've had the experience of what it **feels** like to be naturally successful.

Then all of a sudden, these tired self-help sayings suddenly make sense and are something they can actually **do**, instead of just beating themselves up about *not* being able to do it.

MATT: Yeah, that's something which I've noticed in my own life as well, using like for instance, the "Confidence Keys" in one of my recent books. But, I've also had some of my own customers... I find that once they actually **do** something, they get a different experience with that.... They understand things better.

Is this something what you're talking about, like where you're pretty much saying that the *words* that these gurus use, have a different meaning to the people who *hear* those words. Are you saying basically people need to go out and **do** stuff to get the meaning from it, or is it something other...?

Why Can't You Control Your Own Brain?

PJ: No, no. You see, here's the thing, even if you understand the meaning - and I understood the meaning **before** I was able to actually **do** any of it... [laughing] Even if you understand the meaning, it doesn't necessarily mean you'll be able to do any of it.

What happened was, a few years ago I made a discovery - and strangely enough, it was by reading about an experimental computer game created by some students at a university, that was where you sort of taught these artificially intelligent robots how to do things.

And, studying the game, I suddenly had a realization that this wasn't actually all that different from how humans worked. And it gave me an insight that caused me to realize just **how much** human beings are like computers... but *not* in the way we usually think.

You see, we usually think of ourselves as *being* the computer, like you know our mind, our thinking process, that that's the computer. But in reality, our thinking process is a **tool that the computer uses**.

We're **not** the user of our brain. We're not like the user of the computer: our brain *uses us*.

MATT: Interesting!

PJ: And that leads to some really interesting paradoxes when you try to "just do it", because **you** are not the *doer*. At least, it depends on your state of mind. That's where this whole "being naturally successful" thing comes in: the people who are in a "naturally successful" state are able to do this, because they basically have access to levels of the system that the rest of us don't.

MATT: I'm going to see what you think about this, because I have come across a particular teacher who says the elements of consciousness are a viewing facility, of something that you are able to watch what is happening. But all you're doing is watching stuff, under the illusion that you are actually running stuff. Now are you going that far and saying that sort of thing?

PJ: There actually is scientific evidence regarding that. There are a lot of experiments that have actually been done recently using brain scanning equipment to find out how and when you actually *decide* things, and your brain can know several seconds ahead of time...

MATT: Yeah, seven seconds, is that...?

PJ: Yeah, seven seconds ahead of time your brain can know what you're going to decide before *you* actually know.

MATT: Before the awareness or the thought that you're actually doing or deciding, yeah.

PJ: Yes and the reason for this is that... Okay, if you think about evolution, and you imagine some ancestor of humans that's not really human, right? That doesn't really think of themselves the way we do. So they're just like animals that happen to walk upright and kill things for food, and hunt in packs or whatever. Well, if that was our ancestor, then obviously they were able to survive without having our degree of consciousness!

So, what is consciousness **for**? It's very easy for us to think that somehow because we're the most *recent* development, we must have been where the *goal* was. But evolution doesn't *have* a goal,

evolution just says what survives and reproduces, you get **more of**. That's just like stating the obvious, [because] there's no *goal*.

The fact that we have consciousness doesn't mean that that's somehow *better* than the previous model, except insofar as it allowed us so far to out-compete and *kill off* the previous model!

So consciousness is **optional**. We, who think ourselves the top of the food chain here, as far as our body and our brain are concerned, our personality is like this **optional add-on**, this recent add-on on top of this stuff! It's extra, it's there for the convenience of our *body*, not the other way around! It's there to help our **body** survive and reproduce, it's not there for us to have self-actualization and enlightenment and get what we want.

Our brain doesn't *care* if we get what we want, it wants to get what our **genes** want, which is for us to survive and reproduce... and to a large extent, that means *getting along with the rest of the tribe*.

And that's where our problems come in. That's where we start to have trouble being naturally successful, because we have all of these "image" criteria that we have to maintain in order to stay as a viable member of the group, as an accepted member of the tribe

And that's why some people - as a result of their circumstances - grow up to be naturally successful people. Because they did not learn any **restrictions** on *who they needed to be* in order to fit in.

Does Free Will Really Even Exist?

MATT: Well, there are a few points that I wanted to just highlight that you've said there, because like I mentioned at the start, it's definitely worth people getting their pens and writing some of these things down.

One of the things that I wanted to throw at you - and this is very important for change and personal development... If our experience is only like a passenger on a bus, not the actual bus, or not the engine nor anything like that, then that's basically getting back to the fate versus free will [thing].

But the other way of saying it is that if we're all predetermined, then why bother trying to change? Why should we even try to change ourselves?

PJ: Okay, well, basically because you can *improve your ride*... [laughing] depending on what part of the bus you're sitting in! [laughing]

MATT: Good answer! I was wondering how you'd swing that one!

PJ: So, and the truth is - I kind of got sidetracked there, earlier - we **do** have free will; the problem is simply that we [only] have a free choice of *the options that our brain presents to us*.

If we don't *think* of the choice, how can we *make* that choice? Right? Or if you think of something and your brain says, "That's not really me" or "I can't do that," or something else, and you *believe* it, then you don't think you have that choice.

So, really, what this is about, what I help people to do, is to **change** what choices are on the menu and what seems like the natural thing to do. Your brain basically picks your options based on how you feel about them. And the feelings come from previous experience with those options, or with what you've been taught is the way that people should be, or how **you** are supposed to be. And so that basically creates what other people refer to as the "self-image".

MATT: Okay. See, I would've probably said things a little differently. We've got evidence of people setting out to change - and they actually do - and most people have an example of where they've wanted to change something in themselves and have improved, and they have their own experience of having done that, but I like the way that you've put that.

High-Conflict And Low-Conflict States

PJ: Well, here's the thing, you certainly **can** change things about yourself. When I'm saying that there are people who are naturally successful, that's sort of an exaggeration. If you want to get the real truth about it, there's a difference between what I call a "high-conflict state" and a "low-conflict state".

And what that means, is basically that a person who is in a low-conflict state, has very little trouble getting their brain to do what they want, because there isn't any higher priority conflict going on in the brain that is interfering with them. In other words, the brain is not overriding them, because the brain doesn't sense that there's a conflict. Like, "Well, yeah, I know you want to do this, I know you want to be all confident and self actualized or whatever. But I think that if you do that you're going to get the crap beat out of you by the leader of the tribe for going and talking to his woman," or whatever.

If your brain has a priority survival override going on, it's **not** going to let you do that stuff. It's going to make you feel **fear**, it's going to make you feel like you **can't move**, it's going to do all of this stuff to shut you down, if it thinks you're going against a priority, a survival-priority override.

Why "Fitting In" Was More Important Than Life Itself!

And oddly enough, this was one of the weirdest things for me to realize, is that it's actually these *social* factors - these, how you think other people will think of you - that are **survival** overrides. And it's not really obvious at first, but if you think of how people lived ten, fifty thousand years ago in wandering packs of hunters and gatherers, you know, if you got kicked out, if you got voted off the island that's a **death sentence!**

MATT: That's a *big* issue, yeah!

PJ: That's a **death sentence!** Worse than that (from evolution's point of view, from your genes' point of view), you're not going to reproduce. So you're not going to have any offspring. So anybody that didn't learn to fit in, went extinct. They wouldn't have been your ancestors, unless they learned how to fit in.

So fitting into the group, from your brain's point of view, is **more** important than almost anything, even (potentially) life itself! After all, there are many cultures in which it's better to commit suicide than to bring shame to your family or your social group.

MATT: Yeah, one that springs to mind straight off the top of my head is the Japanese.

PJ: Yeah, but also there are many “honor”-based cultures where there are things like honor killings and other rituals...

MATT: And Klingons! [laughing]

PJ: Well, I don’t think that actually counts! [laughing]

MATT: Well, from a story point of view, it’s derived from anthropological stuff anyways, because these sorts of myths and legends hang around in the culture, and people can identify with it. But facetiousness aside, yeah, I certainly see where you’re going there with that, it’s an important thing...

So what I am going to ask is where, then, if society and tribe aspects are important... Where then does the elements of basic morality that comes in to, and I mean morality in the sense, not of like a religious one, of what you do to somebody else, but rather, the form that says, “Do I eat poison, or do I not?” “Do I do something that’s healthy for me, and do I not?”

These sort of basic choices, then... Does that relate to - and this is directly relevant to personal development and making themselves better in their lives and so forth - where you get the “Do I eat the fatty food or not?” As compared to tribal aspects, where does this sort of thing fit in with what you’re talking about?

The “Pain Brain” vs. The “Gain Brain”

PJ: Sometimes I refer to the high-conflict and low-conflict states as being the “pain brain” and the “gain brain”, because there’s actually a difference in how our brain functions, when we’re in a high-conflict state versus a low-conflict state. (It might not sound at first like I am getting to your point, but I am!)

High-conflict morality and low-conflict morality are very different, just as everything else about a high-conflict person and a low-conflict person are different.

A low-conflict person seeks the greatest pleasure. Now, most people - or most religions and so forth - look down on this because they say it leads to evil, but this is actually **not true**. Being nice to people feels

better than being a jerk: people who are being a jerk are doing it are doing it to *avoid the pain of feeling socially inferior*.

MATT: It feels bad, but not as bad as the alternative.

PJ: Right. So I often refer to these as the “pain brain” and the “gain brain”. This is why you hear people who like to exercise, for example, saying things like, “No pain, no gain.” What they really mean is, is “there’s no pain!” [laughing] “...because I’m focused on the gain!” They are focused on the gain.

In fact, recently in one of my workshops I was interviewing one of my students who is one of the most naturally successful people - and I don’t even take credit for him being naturally successful, because he came to me that way. He’s just looking to amplify his abilities and also to take some of this training for [the] less naturally successful people in his own coaching practice. And I have a fun time with him because I love using him as an example on my calls.

Because I will just ask him for his opinion on something, before I’ve explained what point I’m trying to make, and he’ll make my point perfectly! And the last time I did this I asked him, “So Josh, what’s your attitude towards losing, or failing? What happens if you don’t achieve your goal?”

And he started talking about what he would do next, what goals he would go after **next**. And then I kind of laughed, and pointed out to the group and to him, I said “Did you notice that he didn’t even answer the question? He can’t even... He is so focused on gain, that he couldn’t even stay focused for more than a fraction of a second, he was already off... on to something else.”

He was like, “Oh God, I’m so embarrassed, I didn’t even *see* that.” He couldn’t even answer the question because it’s just not ...

MATT: It just doesn’t even fit in...

The Fundamental Reason Why You Procrastinate

PJ: It doesn’t resonate. Right. And that’s what your brain does when you’re in a low-conflict state. When you don’t have any survival priority overrides going on, your brain is like, “Well, let’s go after

what there is to **gain**.”

But when you're in a survival - I kind of describe it like this. Suppose that you're in the jungle and you get chased by a tiger, and you climb up a tree to get away from the tiger, let's say. Okay, so the tiger's down there. Now...

MATT: You gotta climb pretty well, because tigers climb!

PJ: Okay, hypothetical example, I'm not an animal guy, so... [laughing]

MATT: Sorry, yeah... [laughing]

PJ: Right, right. So hypothetically, you find some place where you can sort of stay away from the tiger...

MATT: A flagpole! [laughing]

PJ: Yeah! Or a bamboo tree, I don't know, right? Okay, so you're up the tree. And now, if you're up the tree and the tiger is down there waiting for you, does it make sense for you to start looking for a better spot to sit in... Where you'll get better sunshine or shade or where there's, oh, there's some fruit over there? Should you be seeking to **gain** in that particular moment?

Hell no! Right? Because you don't want to take a risk of falling or getting into a spot where the tiger can jump up and get you or anything like that. Your brain wants you to sit tight, stay put, shut up, don't rock the boat... *until the crisis is over*. It wants you to sit tight. That's the "pain brain".

In the "pain brain" mode... this, by the way, is the main reason why people procrastinate, this is the fundamental reason why people put off **doing** things... because once your brain has one of these crisis overrides it will go, "Okay conserve energy: *don't do anything*." Right, that's why it'll wait until...

Now, if the tiger comes up the tree after you - see, you messed up my story here! [laughing] Now if the tiger comes up the tree after you, now it's **worse** to stay put, and you'll move.

But, the thing is, in the "pain brain" you will only move when you have *enough* pain going on to make you move **immediately**. That's

why you'll put things off to the last minute, until it becomes so *unbearably painful* that the pain is now worse than not doing anything.

MATT: So that's like the students who do personal development in the sense that they do something because their life **sucks**, and they hate it, and they are **sick** of having a life like that. They start to get some results, they go, "Yeah, this is good," and suddenly there's no pain there. So they don't have the motivation any more.

PJ: Yeah, there's that too. That's the flip side of it, that's sort of the long-term effect.

Fight, Flight, Freeze, Or Fawn

MATT: What about something else... Okay, we've seen examples of, for instance, anyone who's walked through a city where there's pigeons. They'll see the pigeons are eating, and you walk near them, they'll avoid you - which is what you're talking about, their pain brain will avoid that - and then they will go back to eating once it's all safe.

But what about the people who "lock up" - and I see this quite a bit with the sort of stuff that I do, where people will be **afraid** to do something. So not just a conservation of energy, or not just sitting there waiting till it goes. They'll actually be *locked physically*, like they cannot move their muscles: it's **preventing** them from doing something.

PJ: Oh, yeah. But that's part of what I call the 'Four F's'. You've heard of Fight or Flight?

MATT: Yes.

PJ: Well, really there's four F's, and it's Flight, Fight, Freeze and Fawn are what I call the Four F's.

MATT: Really?

PJ: And you know, like deer, for example, will **freeze**. [laughing] And if you've ever heard the phrase, "deer in the headlights", right? That is what you're talking about right there: it's a freeze response.

There are four responses we can have, and the fourth one, “fawn”, is basically what happens when you basically kowtow or you try to *please* someone else, right? This one is a danger... **within the pack** danger. It’s what you do, like when you’re talking to someone, and you really want them to like you or whatever, and you just start *fawning*.

MATT: Two dogs, one of them rolls over and shows its belly, or...

PJ: Yes, exactly! Exactly. Basically, it’s a submission response and that’s just as important, really... or it’s even actually as simple as, “No, you go ahead.”

MATT: Or, “After you!” “No, after *you!*”

PJ: Right! It’s like, “I am not going to take the resources, so I am submitting to the pecking order and allowing someone else to go before me.” And that’s also a fear response... You could say Fight, Flight, Freeze and Fawn are the four F’s of the Fear Apocalypse.
[laughing]

MATT: Nice! Gotta find a way to make ‘em ride on a horse or something like that. [laughing]

Just want to make it really clear for the people who are listening, though. Now, I know what you mean, but I just want to bring it out. The people who say “no, no, after you”, that’s very different to benevolence, where somebody genuinely *wants* to....

PJ: Yes, that’s correct. That’s right, I should have clarified that. It’s not the people who are doing that because they warmly *want* to do that because it’s a **pleasure**...

MATT: Yeah, and because they want to see growth in other people, or...

PJ: Or trying to do that as [part of] being a good host, but the people who, you can tell they’re tense when they’re saying it, they’re not **comfortable**.

MATT: Appeasement...

PJ: Right, it’s like, “I’m not worthy”.

MATT: False modesty, yeah..

PJ: Well, it's not false to them.

MATT: No?

PJ: No. If you actually feel that way - if you don't feel worthy, right?

MATT: Ahhhh... interesting.

Why You Feel Unworthy And Don't "Go For It"

PJ: That actually makes a difference. One of the things that I do, is I teach people how to access the "pecking order" storage system in their mind. Remember: we evolved from pack animals. And these pack animals had to have all the equipment to do what pack animals do before **thinking** came on the scene. Right?

So, you have hard-wired equipment in your brain to take care of this, because our animal ancestors had to be able to do this. So we actually keep *track* of our pecking order in relation to other people and it makes a difference to whether we will go after things or not, whether we will "go for it" in a given situation.

MATT: Which would also mean that symbols and identification mechanisms of pecking order would be ones that we may unconsciously be setting? As an example the "director of something or other" in a bureaucracy, "ooh, wow"... That engenders respect because they have a symbol; in this case being a directorship or wearing a sign, wearing a hat, wearing a something or other, some sort of clothing item... Is that something that people do on a day to day basis as far as realigning their pecking order distinctions? Or is what you're doing a lot more effective than that?

PJ: Let's look at it this way. Pecking order comes from studies of chickens and other birds and what they do...

MATT: Which is literally to peck, right?

PJ: Yes, exactly. And it means the **order** in which they get access to food. In other words, this one gets to peck first, and then whoever is at the end of the line gets the leftovers. And so, pecking order is about **who you have to wait for** before you will attempt to get resources.

It's not about... Yes, power certainly is an aspect, but basically, it's more like who are you *after*. And the thing is, is that's not something that's a function of the group you're in. Evolution is kind of a crude craftsman. It uses the simplest method to get the job done.

And in this case, in any pack of animals, you don't have people moving to new packs. You don't get to transfer, or quit your pack and go interview to join another one. So the pecking is actually extremely stable. Chickens don't fight everyday to see who's going to go first, right? And they don't do it by seniority.

It's basically if you get pecked on, and you realize you're not going to survive a fight, then you submit to a lower order in the pecking order, and then you stay there until and unless you feel like you can successfully challenge and move up.

And this creates a problem in humans because we no longer have... we don't live in little communities where the next place is like a day's ride on horseback away, and they're not going to take in a stranger anyway. We don't live in that environment anymore, we live in an environment where we can change jobs, we can change where we live - we probably don't even **know** who our neighbors are...

It's a completely different world now, and our brain has not caught up to this. So our brain still is running off whatever your pecking order was among the kids in school, or the kids in your home. You get where you think you are in the pecking order wired in pretty early, and then certainly it **can** change, but unless you specifically do something to attempt to, it's going to be kind of random as to how that happens.

People who are tall when they are in high school tend to become leaders of corporations and other things later...

MATT: Yeah, I've heard that...

PJ: Simply because other people "look up to them" and that results in them getting signals that they have a high status in the group. And that causes them to advance in their position in the pecking order... in their own mental model of what the pecking order is.

Change Your Mental Pecking Order, Change Your Life

MATT: Can you give us a bit of an example of what happens to somebody or what sort of results would they see in their life if they were to reshape their pecking order mechanism?

PJ: Oh, a good example of that would be one of my members named Patrick, who earlier this year was on a call with our group and talking about a lot of problems that he was having in his workplace, and that they didn't have any funding to continue him working as a contractor, and all of this kind of thing.

And we went through some exercises of a process I call 'Claiming Your Territory'. And within a month, he's now like, he's actually, his title is something like the "Director of Engineering" or "Director of Development" or whatever, and he's practically running the entire facility there.

MATT: Cool! That's a pretty good change...

PJ: Yes, that's a *major* shift, because he was a contractor and now he is the **director** of all the software development taking place at that facility. [laughing] And so from a practical standpoint, yeah, changing where you feel you are in the pecking order makes a **huge** difference to how outgoing you are, how confident you are with interacting with other people.

And you know, this all just goes back to, this is just one aspect of the *social* mechanisms that we have built into our brains, that were designed for these pack animal functions. And one of these is what we call, we talk about your "self image" and your "self esteem" and all that, but... this finally gets back around to your point about morality...

How Grudges Keep You From Succeeding

One of the key discoveries that I made last year that's like really leaped my work forward in helping people deal with self-image and self-esteem issues is that, just like in the Bible where there's that whole thing about, "judge not, lest you be judged", and "with what measure you mete it will be meted unto you" is actually, I've found -

surprisingly enough - a metaphor for something that your brain actually *does*. Which is that your brain will only **store** one set of rules to live by, and what I mean by that is that... Maybe you've heard that what you don't like in other people is what you don't like in yourself?

MATT: Yeah, right!

PJ: It's *literally* true. Let me give you an example of how this affects people's lives. I used to think that people who liked to exercise were vain and shallow and jackasses and jerks, right? Because I had some early experiences with those people and got that impression. But because I had that judgment, I myself was never able to get myself to like exercising any time later in life because...

MATT: Because you would be a vain, shallow, jackass...

PJ: ...and a jerk. Exactly! I didn't want to **be** those things.

And I actually had a similar attitude about people who were successful. The people that I'm now calling "naturally successful", I used to think that they were all jerks too. (Largely because I felt that I couldn't be [like] that.)

But the point is that you only carry one set of judgment... you know, just like you have this one pecking order thing, in your head. There's equipment there for sort of like, judging a person. And, the way that we get **low self-esteem** is when we make judgments about ourselves as a person *on the basis of our behavior*.

Let's say for example... Well, I'll take an example from my own life. When I was about 5, 6 or 7 years old I wanted to walk home from this church that my parents, my brother and I went to. I kept telling them I wanted to do this thing, and one day I decided to actually go ahead and do it... or one night, I should say.

So I walked home and I was really proud of myself initially. And then, I started to get really worried and scared because my parents didn't come home. And so I was sitting there on the back porch of the house, in the dark, and it was a pretty traumatic experience.

Of course, it was a pretty traumatic experience for my parents as well, because they thought maybe I had run away or been kidnapped

or something. But for most of the rest of my life, I judged myself as having been weak, having been a coward... I judged myself, I made all sorts of negative judgments about myself from this, and many other experiences that had an impact on my self-esteem.

It was like I was unwilling to **go after** things, because I sort of had a belief at that point that, "If I go after what I want, that means *no one's going to take care of me*. I'm going to be on my own, I'm going to be abandoned, I'm going to be alone," and things like this.

And once you learn how to get rid of these... The judgment doesn't have to be about you, the judgment can be about somebody else in the situation. A judgment can be about, well, you know, the kids who would trick me, or tease me or beat me up in school... You know, I reached a number of judgments about them, like the ones about people who...

MATT: Like fitness people?

PJ: ...like to do sports or exercise whatever, right?

MATT: Yeah, Yeah!

PJ: You can have those kinds of judgments, but it still affects **you**. So, that's one of the things I teach people to do, is how to *pull those out*.

Why Change Can Be *Instantaneous*

And you know, a lot of people in the self-help field, it's like you get this idea that change is like this **gradual** thing. That you practice and you *slowly*, gradually change into somebody else. But the thing is, what they're missing is, is that the crap that screws us up... **only takes one time!**

How many times do you have to be scared by a snake to be scared of snakes for the rest of your life? **Once!** [laughing]

If it's the right circumstance, you only need to do it **once** to be scared by it - or be scarred by it - for the rest of your life! So **why** then, does everybody think... that in order to get **better** that it takes a *long time*? And people go like, "well, you know I've had this thing for twenty years and it's...."

MATT: I have a particular answer and it's... well, one of the things that I've noticed in the sort of work that I do is that you'll get three major types of ways that stuff gets into people.

Yes you'll have the snake... where it's a highly emotive single incident. But also... - more so when you're young, but certainly older as well - an authority saying something. So it may not be an **emotive** one but it's an authority saying this is what it is or "this is what it's not", so that sticks.

And the last one is also an *average* experience but done **often**. For instance, how many people had an experience that was highly emotive, doing up their shirt, the buttons on their shirt? But because they do it again and again and again and again, it becomes something that is a very learned procedure?

I say that because, removing it, you can do three different ways of removing as well, you can just do the same thing over and over and over and over and over.... Eventually.

PJ: Well, yeah, okay, if we're talking about something that is *not* emotive content, right?

MATT: Yeah!

PJ: Now we're starting to talk about low-conflict versus high-conflict again, right?.

MATT: Yeah, okay, right, right! Got it.

PJ: The other thing too is, is that even **beliefs** that we get? There's where like you have circumstances, like, let's say that something happens to you a few times and then you say, like, "this always happens to me". There's still a **point** at which you say, "this always happens to me."

MATT: Hence the judgment!

How You Demotivate Yourself

PJ: Right, right. But there's sort of a difference between a judgment and a belief. And the distinction has to do with, that it's a quality about

you, or a quality about people. And we seem to have - at least in my experience - separate equipment in our brain for processing that... for processing abstractions that are beliefs. Like the belief that "that always happens to me," is a different kind of belief, fundamentally, than you know, "I'm a failure" or "I'm clumsy" or "I'm...". It's processed differently by your brain.

MATT: Certainly the latter is an identity-based one.

PJ: Yes! And the mechanism for dealing with them is different. If you came to me and said... Let's say that you were trying to achieve a goal, and you were making a mental picture of that, that was demotivating you.

Because basically what's happening is, is you're saying, "Well, I'm too clumsy to achieve that. I could never do that." Right? "Because I'm too clumsy."

Well, one of the things that I would be checking for... there's two ways that you could be saying "I'm too clumsy." One is a *judgment*, because you had an emotional experience in which you **concluded** that you were clumsy.

Or, let me phrase this somewhat differently here. The **difference** here is whether the judgment about you is a reflection of a *quality* of yourself, and whether you are adequate to be a member of the tribe. [laughing] That's really the key distinction.

MATT: Can you give us an example?

PJ: Okay, so beliefs like: "I'm a loser, I'm a failure, I'm worthless, I'm not good enough, I'm unlovable, I can't take care of myself..." are different *phrasings* of something that is **almost** the same idea... in different clothing.

All of these things are saying, "I'm not going to be considered **fit** to be in the tribe. This is something that's going to cause me to get 'voted off the island' if anybody finds out."

MATT: Fascinating!

PJ: Those are fundamentally different, and fundamentally far **worse** than anything else that you can have. And the reason for that, is they put

you in a state of **priority conflict override** *all the time*. Because somebody could find you out at any moment, that you're this clumsy, worthless, unlovable, stupid klutz... right, whatever!

MATT: Ahhh.... Fascinating!

PJ: Those fears are **critically** paralyzing, because they will put your brain into... you'll always be trying to cover that up. Everything that you do, all of your behavior will be organized around defending against that.

If you think that, "oh, I'm a worthless, lazy slob," for example, then you're going to create a whole ideal of wanting to be productive and organized. You're going to **talk** the game of being productive and organized, because you don't want to... you instinctually want to **hide** this thing that you're afraid that you are; this judgment of yourself as being not any good in this way. So you will **strive**, you will push... and this is where we're going right into one of my key principles that I want to share with your listeners.

What's Pushing You Forward... Is Holding You Back!

MATT: Are these the eight principles by the way?

PJ: Yes, right. The Eight Principles of Natural Success.

MATT: This is one of these ones they need to definitely write down?

PJ: Yes. And here it is. "If it's pushing you forward, it's holding you back."

MATT: Okay, so that's number 1. Give us an example of that...

PJ: Actually that's number three. We'll go back and get the others in a moment. "What pushes you forward is holding you back." Any place where you find yourself pushing forward in your life **trying to be something that you're not**, that is an indication that you have one of these survival and replication fears, these fears that cause a **priority override for your brain**.

You will avoid *anything* that smacks of what you're afraid you are, because you don't want the rest of the tribe to **know** that you're not as good as you're pretending to be.

So, let's say for example that you feel like you're a loser, or... Well actually, let's look at it this way. This was something that I did with a client who had some money issues. And he had a fear that, if he were broke, then he couldn't take care of himself or his family. It was this fear. So, because of that, he couldn't do anything (financially speaking) that involved even the slightest element of risk.

MATT: Alright, okay.

Why The Right Thing Never Even Occurs To You

PJ: Because from his brain's point of view... if you're going to go do a business venture of any kind, there's always some risk involved. There's always something you're going to have to put in to get something out.

But if you have a **fear** on a deep level, that if you fail at business or you don't make money or you lose money or whatever, that that *means* you are this terrible person... or this essentially worthless person, to the group, that that will **expose** you, you will not do it. You will not even, in fact you won't even *think* of things that would violate that. The ideas won't even *occur* to you, to do something involving risk. Your brain will just filter that out before it even gets to you.

You know how... have you ever told a friend something that they should do and they all go like, "Yeaaaahh... well, it's really not that simple"? Right? You tell them, "Well, dump the guy," or "Why don't you go into business for yourself, you're good at what you do," and they go like, "Weeellll... you know, it's not that simple".

MATT: [They go] "Yeah, but... Yeah, but... Yeah, but..."

PJ: Right, they do that. And that's because, basically, **they** didn't think of that, and the reason **they** didn't think of that, is because it's something that leads towards that place that they *do not want to be*. Your mind wants you to stay the *hell* away from there.

Hell, sometimes the hardest thing... the **hardest** thing that I ever have my clients do, sometimes, is to admit - and this isn't true for everybody, a lot of people are comfortable with admitting the fact that they're afraid that they're a failure.

But for some people, like Patrick (the person I was talking about that went from almost being laid off to being the manager of the whole facility), it took something like half an hour to get him to actually... You know, of sort of questioning him from, "What's the problem, then? What is it that you actually feel **bad** about, here?" in order to get it to something where he could *admit* to what it was he was afraid of... in order to fix it. But then it only took **one minute** to fix! [laughing]. Once we **know**...

MATT: [ironically] What, he didn't have to repeat something every day?

PJ: No, no, you do not have to... [laughing] **Don't repeat yourself.** If you have to repeat yourself, either the computer's broken or *what you're doing isn't working*. And in the case of self-help, it's always the technique you're doing isn't working. If you have to repeat it, *you're doing it wrong!*

MATT: Okay, so the next one, point two, which if we can work backwards up to the number one... Point two, I kind of like this one. You want to let us know what that is?

Indecision Is Suffering

PJ: Well the second principle of being naturally successful is that "Indecision is suffering." And what that means is, is that any time you experience... Well, let's just put it this way. The difference between pain and suffering is that pain is something that's a normal part of life. You know how naturally successful people say, "no pain, no gain": you have to put out a certain amount of effort to get things done.

But suffering (or effort), is when you want to have your cake and eat it too. When you want to **not** pay the price, but still get what you want. And that's where most of us are stuck most of the time. We hear the gurus and the self-help people and exercise people saying, "no pain, no gain" or "just do it"... but we **can't** just do it, because

we have something else on the line. And this ties now directly in to the...

MATT: I'd call that a contradiction of values.

PJ: Yeah. You want to have two things. And the problem is, is that when you're in the "pain brain", when you're in a high-conflict state, you have a priority override going on. Your brain's saying "Okay, priority override: this is important, we **cannot** give this up. This is a survival priority, code red. We must not let the tribe know that we can't take care of ourselves or we're incompetent at stuff, 'cause they'll kick us out. So you **cannot** do this."

And at the same time you're going, "Yeah, but I *have to* do this. I really want to accomplish this thing," and now you have **suffering**, because in your brain you're going back and forth between "Yeah, but I want this... but I can't do this. I want this... but I can't do this".

Or, even something as simple as you're at home and you're thinking about work... and you're at work, and you're thinking about being at home. If you can't give up one or the other, you can't be where you **are**. And that's what causes the sensation of **effort**.

The opposite of this is **flow**, you know, if you ever get started working on something, and you're just in the zone, and suddenly you go, "Oh gosh, where did the day go by?"

MATT: No conflict, you're just flying through it, yes...

PJ: And that happens because that's at a time when you're willing to really *be there*, and you're not splitting your mind between two places. You are not being **indecisive**, in effect.

You know what? Tell you what, let's just jump [ahead] and go through the principles in order, so folks can write them down in order, because these three naturally lead into one another.

MATT: Yep, okay.

PJ: So, the first principle is simply that "In order to be successful, you don't have to be someone else. All you have to be is **you**, *without the emotional baggage*."

MATT: Right, okay.

The #1 Myth Of Self-Help

PJ: One of the biggest myths in self-help is that you should **copy** successful people and do what they do. It doesn't work! Unless you happen to be a successful person yourself, in which case you don't *need* that advice, because you **naturally** do those things.

Goal setting is something that naturally successful people do **because they want to**, not because it said in a book that it was a good idea! So any time that you are making yourself behave unnaturally in order to succeed, it's an indication of **conflict** in your mind.

You might get some **results**, but it's not going to feel natural to you, and you're not going to enjoy yourself, because, principle number two: "Indecision is suffering". A divided mind is **suffering**. And when you try to do something that is not natural to you, you experience a divided mind. You experience *suffering*. It is unnatural and it **hurts!**

And so, that's how we get to principle three: "pushing forward is holding back." When you push yourself **forward** trying to do these things, this creates the very conflict... it's pushing you toward the very conflict that puts your mind in the state where you *won't move forward!*

MATT: By pushing yourself forward ...

PJ: ...you are actually holding yourself back.

MATT: Well, another way that I would say it, is by pushing yourself forward you are actually pushing yourself into a contradicting value state, into a...

PJ: Exactly!

MATT: You're just making it even worse!

PJ: Exactly. And I want to tell you two stories about this. One of them... well, actually I've now forgotten what one of them is, so I'll tell the one I remember now... [laughing]

MATT: It'll come back to you.

How “Trying” Makes You Procrastinate

PJ: When I first created my course “The Procrastination Cure”, when I discovered a way of taking away the negative feelings that were holding you back from doing things. And I originally applied this mainly to the feelings that kept you from moving forward.

Like, let’s say that I was thinking that, “Oh gosh, it’s going to be a lot of work to do that,” or, “I don’t really know how to do that.” And I developed a technique that would take away those kinds of feelings, to let me move forward. And that was pretty good.

But it took a lot, because there would be a **lot** of those things to get rid of, like, “Oh, well, you know, I don’t want to do this part of it” and “I don’t want to do that part of it”. And taking away each of these feelings was a lot of work. But, it **worked**, and so that’s how I taught it.

But more recently, what I discovered when I realized that the true issue in procrastination is this “pushing forward and holding back” problem, what I found is that instead of eliminating the ten things that seemed like an impediment to actually acting... If I took away a person’s *original* motivation, if I took away the **reason** that they were pushing themselves to do the thing in the first place, that this was actually *much* faster and produced a *happier person*, than eliminating the ten things that they **thought** were holding them back!

MATT: Fascinating.

PJ: And you know Susan, one of my students who took the Procrastination Cure course earlier this year. She hadn’t actually used the course yet, but she called into one of my workshops. She had this product, this course that she was wanting to write but she was never actually taking the time to **work** on it. And I asked her, “Okay, so what is it that you’re trying to accomplish?” Well, she wanted to create this course, and get it finished.

And I said, “Okay, so what happens if you **don’t** get that, what happens if you **don’t** succeed?” Well, she said, “Well, I’ll feel like a failure.” And I said, “Okay, so that’s what you’re using, that’s why you’re pushing yourself forward to do this.”

So I applied the same technique that I used to use on the blocks... Before, I would have asked, "Well, when you think about working on your project, what comes up, what is stopping you?" And I would have used this technique to remove **those** feelings. But that would have taken me... I would have had to go through **all** of the different feelings on *that* side of the conflict.

But what I found is, is that if you take away the fear of whatever is causing you to push forward to want to **do** this, it's like a *miraculous* change, because the **person** becomes different!

What happens is, is that... if you're pushing yourself to become more organized, if you're pushing yourself to succeed, if you're pushing yourself to do something, it's usually because the back end of that is this **fear**, one of these personality fears, ego fears, as I call them.

"If you don't do this, then you're a failure, then that means you're going to be seen, you're going to get 'voted off the island'." So the problem is that your brain now has two... first of all, we have activated the priority override: "We **must** succeed! We cannot... we **must not** fail."

Winning vs. Not Losing

Really, it's not that you have to *win*. It's that you feel you *cannot* lose. You cannot afford to lose.

And what you will find, though, is that successful people, *they don't even think about losing!* Let alone not being able to afford losing! They can't even **think** about losing!

But the person who's pushing themselves forward, they're pushing themselves forward **not to win**, they don't really care about winning. They **hope** to win. They'd *like* to win, that would be **nice** if they won. But what they really, *really* have to have is, "I can't afford to lose! I can't afford to be a failure by **not** doing this thing." That's what's pushing them forward.

And when I take that away, I basically remove the fundamental fear of being a failure, then they are **free** to pursue success because they *want* to.

Susan emailed me a couple of days later and said that she spent the entire next day working on her project and **loving** it! She was having a great time doing it, because she really *wanted* to do it.

But when you're in this conflict mode, the survival priority of your brain, it takes precedence over everything else. It won't let you... just like we talked about, if you're up the tree and there's the tiger, you don't want to be looking for bananas. So even though you **like** bananas, and you would happily go after them if the tiger wasn't there... [laughing]

MATT: I've got a question then, and that's this... If you've got these two brains that are going for things, it sounds like the positive brain, the brain that's going towards stuff, is constantly active - sometimes not very strong. And occasionally this other one kicks into gear and takes over. Is that a fair saying?

PJ: Well, if you're **lucky**! The thing is Matthew, is that you exhibit in most areas that I've seen you, you exhibit the traits of a naturally successful person. So, no offense, but you probably aren't as familiar - at least not now, maybe you were in the past...

MATT: Certainly I'd say in the past, I was, yeah...

PJ: And I've found that a lot of people, a lot of self-help gurus, I mean, they go from being there, and through whatever luck or circumstances they end up **out** of it, but they don't really know, all they know how to tell people is like, "Don't do that!" [laughing] Right? Or "just do what I do now!"

MATT: Just definitely do it!

PJ: Yeah, "Just do it!" Yeah, "It's okay, it's easy, alright? Just stop making it so hard!" But you **can't**.

MATT: It's like the people who are always saying, "How are you?" are, "Not bad" and "Not terrible", and "Things are pretty crap", so it's like, what we would say is a negative attitude person, it sounds like they might be in a negative aspect or...

PJ: Yeah! This is also why you don't want to associate as much with negative people if you can avoid it, because you know, just that the state of... Once again, in a tribe, if things were negative, you'd want

to know about it, so you could be negative too. I mean, not just from a fitting in perspective, but also because...

MATT: Like, there's no food, or there's no water or something...

PJ: Right! So now you need to be conservative, you need to not take risks. So this is survival information for you.

MATT: Yeah, right.

PJ: And as soon as you get past the idea, as soon as you can get past the untruth, the myth of how we live, where we think that we're like the center of everything, right? We think that we're the whole meaning of life or whatever, and that we're here to be self-actualized and enjoy ourselves and all this other crap.

And our body doesn't... our body and mind don't **care** about *any* of that stuff. It's like, that's **optional**, that's great, it's fun if you can get it, but they have bigger fish to fry. Like staying alive when the tribe's short on food and you don't want to end up eating a bunch of it that you shouldn't. Or, if there is food, you *want* to eat it while there is food, so it can be in your body and be stored as fat...

MATT: Mmmm, okay. Yep.

PJ: But you don't want to be taking **risks** in that circumstance, because you want to *conserve* the fat that you've managed to accumulate!
[laughing]

MATT: So what are some of the things... this gives people a really good overview of the sort of things that you deal with. And we've covered a lot of good information in just the time that we've been spending here.

What I would be imagining if I listened to this for the very first time is how can I take this away and how can I use this, in my life specifically? Is there some way that this can be moved...?

PJ: Yes. And I remember what the other story was now... [laughing]

MATT: Ah, cool. [laughing] Told you it'd come back to you!

Why You Don't Know What You Want

PJ: Because this ties right into it. And what I did, even though I was teaching a lot of this material for a couple years now, late last year I finally got to the point in my own life, where I started to make this realization that what's pushing me forward is holding me back.

And I started to realize is that I didn't really want *money*, what I wanted was not to be at *risk* of not having an income. What I wanted was to **not be broke**, rather than actually wanting to make money.

And I discovered a number of these things where... you think... In fact, one of the easiest ways that you can tell if you are in a high-conflict state or low-conflict state, is to ask yourself if you know what you **want**.

If you know what you want and you have clarity about what you want, then.... Well, first of all, if you don't have clarity, you know *right there*. You're in the "pain brain".

If you don't know what you want, you are **definitely** in the pain brain. Because the pain brain is not about *wanting*...

MATT: Ahhh.... I like that!

PJ: ...it's about **sitting tight**, *until the crisis blows over*.

MATT: Can I say something here? I've seen this in some of my clients, that, when I say, "What do you want?" "I don't know!" And I'm thinking, "That's garbage. They know what they want, they're just not *saying* it."

PJ: Oh, no, no, no, no. No, no. That's the conflict, that's a conflict state, right? They **don't** know what they want. It's not they don't *have* anything that they want, but they don't have **access** to it.

MATT: Really?

PJ: Remember, the brain's crisis mode here, is, "Tiger's under the tree, wait it out. Wait till the tiger goes away. Then you can want things again. Right now, we shut down the wanting so that you won't **do** anything..."

MATT: Do they shut it down, or is there just two of them and it's bigger?

And so they have a little bit of what they do want. This banana would be nice, but there's still a tiger. Tiger tiger tiger... banana, tiger tiger tiger. You see what I mean?

PJ: It's shut down.

MATT: Is it *totally* shut down, though?

PJ: It is shut down. Here's the thing: you have to remember that thinking is **optional**. We survived from our ancestors in the form of animals: they had to do this *without thinking*. This is not a thinking process.

MATT: But that assumes that people have an attention span that's actually really **good** that they can think "tiger, tiger, tiger". Well, I've seen like a lot of people, as soon as they take their mind off something dangerous, or something terrible or dramatic, they sort of forget about it and then they're drawn back to it again.

Now okay, there's an emotional impulse, there's hormones and so forth which keep people in a certain state. For instance, fear - cortisol, things like that - flows through your body, it keeps you in that state. Which is why I was here drinking coffee, and it keeps you in that state of, um, unease for like 18 hours. Funnily enough, that is actually how long some of the hormones are stimulated for. So this chemical aspect keeps people in a state where their mind may be drifting off and thinking "ooh, bananas" when there's a tiger there. This is what I am getting at, you see, there's a back and forth aspect.

PJ: Yeah, now... right. To some extent that does depend on priorities. However, the thing is, there are a couple of things that I would ask you about in relation to that. It would depend a little bit on the person. A person who is naturally successful, right, who doesn't have - and I am sort of defining "naturally successful" as "does not have these ego fears" that I'm talking about. The ones where "I'm worthless" or "I'm whatever". Right?

It has to do with your judgments about whether you will **survive** the danger. Okay? So I'm specifically talking about something where your brain has judged that you *cannot afford* to lose. It doesn't matter whether it's a tiger or whether it's something else. It's, your

brain has decided that you **cannot afford** to lose something, then you will be in a state of not wanting.

Because that just shuts it out, you don't really know what you want. You can try to **make** yourself want things. You can think, "Well, maybe I *should* want this..." I work with a lot of people in this state and I have *been* in this state. And you really **don't** know what you want. So if you genuinely don't know what you want, then you are definitely in this state.

Now if you kind of think you know what you want, or you think you know what you want, or even if you're **certain** about what you want, then the next thing to ask is, "What happens if I don't *get* it?" And what's your response to that? Do you feel **bad** about not getting it? If so, **conflict**. You don't actually want it, you want to not have the thing - the consequence of **not** getting it.

Okay, and that's what I found out with me about money is, is that it wasn't that I *wanted* money. *Now*, I can want money to a certain extent, to the extent that I actually want it. But prior to that, I sort of think, "Well, I must want it, because I mean, why wouldn't I?"
[laughing]

But it was more about what happened if I didn't get it. So it *seems* like a want, and if all you've ever had are these kinds of "not wants", you might think that that's what wanting is. You might think that. And you would push yourself forward to achieve these goals and "want" things.

MATT: Okay, so basically, that's pretty cool in that sense, because it gives you that aspect of where things are going... So what I was wondering is, what sorts of ways can people really put this into their lives, and how can they really use this for something that is... that they can take away, look at some of the aspects in detail of their life, and work on these ones.

The Vow That Changed My Life

PJ: Okay. What I would say is this. What I did last October or thereabouts... September or October, was that I got **fed up** with going through this kind of struggling. And I made a vow never to **force** myself to do anything again.

To first find out **why** it was that I'm resisting something, rather than push myself to do it anyway. And that *really* changed my life. I mean, I'd already made really good strides, but this just like kicked it to an entirely new level. Because if you understand *why*, then you have a chance of doing something about it. But if you don't, then there's **nothing** that you can really do about it.

MATT: Well that's the thing is, is that all it takes is for, like that client you were talking about, to be able to change your job situation fairly drastically, it really only takes *one* idea.

PJ: Yeah. And you say that because **you're** a naturally successful... That's funny, because that's another characteristic of naturally successful people is that they say, "You know, if I only get **one good idea** out of it, then it's been worth it", and you're right! They're absolutely right. And you have to be able to take that attitude in order to do this.

And one thing that I guess I would say in summary of this, and you could almost treat this as being a fourth principle here, so you might want to write this down:

Why Some People Will NEVER Succeed

This fourth principle, and this is the **key** that got me started to doing all of this myself and that has set a lot of my clients on their way, is that if you don't **bet on yourself**, you *cannot win*.

And in order to bet on yourself, you have to be willing to *lose* something, you have to be willing to *risk* something, however small, even if it's spending some money on a product that you think is going to help, or to take the chance of being vulnerable and finding out what it is that you really are **afraid** of, that's pushing you forward and holding you back.

MATT: Excellent! Well, that has been really cool. There's been a **lot** of material here, I mean, I've got a huge page of notes already, and these are in my shorthand as well, so if I was to write this out it'd be huge.

I can't imagine anybody not getting a lot of value out of that. Now, the thing is that we've covered a lot of aspects and one of the key things I would like people to take away is this ability to be able to change it **once** and **forever** - like you said, the programming elements and so forth.

Is there anything in particular that you wanted people to be left with? Some sort of idea that, if they were to wrap it up, what it would be for them? You know, like a way that you could... I guess, um the biggest thing that would, they could say, "Ah, yeah! You know, I came across this thing, I've gotta get to the website, get some more about this", because of that aspect.

PJ: Okay, well as I said, the four principles that we've just given are key, but certainly if you have any doubt as to whether you can change something in an instant and change it permanently, people get **problems** that way all the time. And people get **over** their problems that way all the time!

You know, everybody has had the experience of believing something, and then having something that changes that belief... instantly! You suddenly realize, "Oh, crap, that's not really true."

MATT: And it changes straight away, right?

PJ: And it changes *immediately*. The brain is a very flexible computer that way. What really happens... if you want to know the reason why people **don't** change, why they *think* that stuff doesn't work this way, is because they're doing it wrong.

Jerry Seinfeld has a comedy routine that illustrates this point perfectly, where he talks about "night guy and morning guy". And he says you know, when you're "night guy" you want to stay up late and party or whatever, and you don't **care** about "morning guy" who's going to get up in the morning and feel like crap!

Then when you're "morning guy", you get up and you feel like crap and go, "Oh, I'm never gonna do that again!" The problem is, is it's *morning guy* who's saying that, not **night guy**! [laughing]

And the way most people try to change, is they change **after the fact**. They're trying to change from a part of their brain that is *not the part that has the problem*.

They are waiting until **after** they're angry or afraid or upset, and **then** try to be calm and relaxed or confident or whatever. That's why they then feel at odds with themselves, they feel *separated* from themselves, because they're now **trying to be something they're not**.

"Morning guy" is now trying to make "night guy" behave differently, and morning guy has no control over night guy: they're different guys. So, if you are trying to change and you're not being successful, it's because you're trying to change something **after** the fact, rather than trying to change the belief, or...

MATT: So you're doing it wrong, basically.

PJ: Yeah, you're doing it wrong. You're not changing the right...

MATT: And it can be very quick, and it **should** be very quick.... Yeah, I think that's great.

PJ: All morning guy is doing, is *practicing hating mornings*. That's all you do, when you're in the morning and you say, "Oh, I'm never gonna do that again," all you're doing is **practicing**.

You're not programming your brain to go to bed early, you're programming your brain to **complain about having gone to bed late!** That's *all* you're doing. And you're doing it very well. You can learn to do that in a day or two! [laughing] It's *very* easy to learn to do that, it's just not what you *want* to do! [laughing]

MATT: I think that's a really good point to take away, the ability that you can change it easily and people have done this as well. And that this is something that if - I love it - if it's not changing straight away, you're doing something wrong. And that's one of those key indicators that if you see that in your life, you definitely need to get... [inaudible]

PJ: So I urge you to take the vow. Take the vow, do not **force** yourself to do anything, because if you're *forcing* yourself, it clearly doesn't **fit**, and that means you're coming at it from the wrong angle. So that's why I said take the vow, do not force yourself, because then you'll find out what you actually *need* to change.

MATT: Excellent. Well that's been very cool. Thanks *very* much for talking with us today about that.

PJ: Thank you!

Where To Go From Here

If you take the Vow (to never force yourself to do anything), and you diligently apply yourself to learning what's stopping you, you will learn an amazing amount of things about yourself and the mind that you never imagined before. In fact, that's how I myself learned many of the things I've talked about here.

Unfortunately, Matthew had only a one-hour time slot for the interview, so there were a lot of things we couldn't cover... like the rest of the Eight Principles, or about my upcoming book, *Thinking Things Done*. In a way, this interview could be considered a prequel or teaser for *Thinking Things Done*, which is all about **applying** the secrets we talked about here, and providing dozens of specific tools, tactics, and approaches to change your life on the only level where it *counts*: the level of your brain.

In the meantime, however, here is some of my other work that you may find interesting and useful:

[Change Without Pain, Life Without Struggle \(Issue #2\) \[PDF\]](#)

This sample issue of my monthly newsletter for Mind Hackers' Guild members explains more about the differences between naturally successful and naturally struggling people, and gives some practical tips for living a life of **purpose**.

[Eight Principles That Could Change The World](#)

This is an early version of the Eight Principles of Natural Success, as originally posted to my blog at dirtSimple.org; a more up-to-date version of these will be included in *Thinking Things Done*.

[The Six Master Keys \(To Finding Your Focus, and Living Your Dreams!\) \[PDF\]](#)

This workbook lays out the six simple ingredients that create **consistent** success in almost every endeavor, and provides a series of simple checklists you can use to test yourself on each of the six keys. Print it out, fill it in, and get started NOW!

[Thinking Things Done](#)

The official site for my upcoming book, *Thinking Things Done: "The Effortless Way to Start, Focus, and Finally Finish... Everything You've Been Putting Off (Or Only Dreamed of Doing!)"* Be sure to check out the free training videos, like the one on *How To Turn Your Thoughts Into Action in 30 Seconds Or Less!*