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Conversation with Jim Rohn

(Introduction)

Over the last 38 years, spanning almost four decades, this individual has influenced people that have trained a whole class of personal development students. People like Mark Victor Hansen, Anthony Robbins, and more.

He's the author of dozens of books and cassettes, courses on success, on living a life that is your potential, and realizing your dreams.

Tonight, I will bring to you, the one, the only, Jim Rohn. Author of many books I've talked about.

Tonight we're going to go A to Z on how you can live a life of success in business and in family. How do you do that?

Why is he the mentor for millions of people worldwide?

(To Jim)

Jim Rohn, my dime, your dance floor.

Welcome to *The Mike Litman Show*.

Hey, thanks Mike. I'm happy to be here.

Great. I know myself and everyone is very excited for you to share some wisdom tonight and talk about the concept of success and about the principles for achieving it in our next 57 minutes together.

I'd like to start out by defining the word.

What does 'success' mean to Jim Rohn?

Well, I think the ultimate success, which I teach in my seminar, is living a good life.

Part of it is income. Part of it's financial independence Part of it is objectives that you achieve, dreams coming true, family, children, grandchildren, good friends, productivity. It's a wide range.

It's all encompassing, the word "success".

It's not just your job, your income, your fortune. Not just your paycheck or your bank account. But everything. From all of your achievements during your life to trying your best to design a way to make it all give you a good life.

So, we're talk about design.

We'll get to ambition.

We're talking about goals. We're talking about planning.

You talk about something in your literature.

You mention that success doesn't need to be pursued. It needs to be attracted.

What do you mean by that?

That's true.

I was taught, starting at age 25. when I met a mentor of mine by the name of Mr. Shoaff.

He taught me that success is something you attract by the person you become.

You've got to develop the skills.

He talked about personal development: become a good communicator, learn to use your own language.

He talked about the management of time.

But primarily developing yourself, your attitude, your personality, developing your own character, your reputation. Then developing the skills. From sales skills to recruiting skills, to management skills, leadership skills, how to work with a variety of people. You know, the full list.

He taught me to work on myself, because I used to work on my job.

He said, "if you work on yourself, you can make a fortune."

That turned out to be true for me.

He turned it all around and said, "success is not something you run after, like a better job." Although that is to be desired.

You've just got to ask yourself, "am I qualified for doubling, tripling, multiplying my income by three, four, five?"

If I look at myself and say, "No, not really." Then I need to ask myself, "Who could I find? Where can I go that could pay me three, four, five times as much money?"

Then, you have to say, "at the present there probably isn't anyone. I can't just fall into a lucky deal."

But, if I went to work on myself immediately. Work on my attitude, personality, language, and skills. Then that begins the process of attracting the good job, the good people, and building a business or creating a career that could turn out to make you financially independent, perhaps wealthy.

Jim, so really what we are talking about is a change of mindset. Of changing our thinking and getting in tune with the universe.

Talk about something that you mentioned. Changing your language.

Describe what that means.

There is the language that can fit.

You can use careless language around home and around the community.

But, if you want to start stepping up, then you've got to learn the language. The corporate language. You've got to learn the sales language.

Then you've got to be careful not to be careless with your language in the marketplace. It can cost you too much.

You know, a guy that is inclined to tell dirty stories, inclined to use a bit too much profanity.

It might be okay in the inner circle and at the bar or whatever. But when you start to move into the world of business and finance where you want to be successful, earn a better paycheck, move up the scale, you just have to be careful. So, one of the major things is your language.

Not just that, but learning the language of success. Learning how to treat people with respect. Giving people inspiration when they need it, correction when they need it.

The same thing as learning to work with your children.

Language opens the door for fortune. It opens the door for help. It opens the door for better living. It opens the door for a good marriage. It opens the door for a stable friendship.

A big part of it starts with our thinking, our attitude, and then a major part of it is the language we use.

Okay, something that we are sharing tonight with people worldwide now, is we are talking about an inner change, then the outer result.

So many times people are trying to change the outer, without changing the inner. Is that what we are talking about?

Yeah, that's true.

The big part of it, of course, is to start with philosophy.

Making mistakes and judgements can just cost you so much in the marketplace, at home, with your family, whatever it is. Errors in judgement can really do us in. It can leave us with less of a life than we could've had.

We've got to learn to correct those errors whether they are errors in philosophy or something else.

My mentor asked once why I wasn't doing well.

I showed him my paycheck and I said, "This is all the company pays." He said, "well, that's really not true. With that philosophy, you'll never grow."

I said, "No, no, this *is* my paycheck. This is all the company pays." So, he said, "No, no, Mr. Rohn. This is all that the company pays *you*."

I thought, 'wow, I'd never thought about that.'

He said, "doesn't the company pay some people two, three, four five times this amount?" I said, "well yes." He said, "then this is not all that the company pays. This is all that the company pays *you*."

For your income to multiple by three, four, five, you can't say to the company, "I need more money." You've just got to say to yourself, 'I need a correction in my philosophy. I can't blame circumstance. I can't blame taxes. I can't say it's too far, too hot, too cold. I've got to come to grips with myself.'

That is really where it all begins.

It's corrections of errors in judgment and in your own philosophy.

We're talking about philosophy. Is it really like ironing down a purpose?

You're talking about the word "philosophy" to someone listening right now and they're trying to put it into actual practice.

Someone right now that's in a rut, lost, how do you go about the process of putting together a philosophy that excites you and that benefits others?

You start with the easy stuff.

Ask most people, "what is your current philosophy for financial independence that you're now working on?", and usually the person says, "Gosh, I never thought about that."

Unless you have an excellent financial philosophy that gives you guidance to correct errors, accept some new disciplines, and make some changes, you can forget being financially independent.

Ask yourself, "What is your philosophy on good health?" Is it to cross your fingers and sort of let it go and if something goes wrong *then* you fix it?

The answer is, no. You should try to learn up front.

Ask yourself, “what is your cholesterol count?” The average guy’s philosophy is, ‘I don’t know and I don’t care. If something goes wrong, I will try to fix it.’

But, by then usually it’s too late. Now it’ll cost you a fortune. It costs you time. Maybe even it costs you your life.

If someone can help you with errors in judgement, or help you correct your financial philosophy, your spiritual philosophy, your philosophy on a good relationship, that’s where it all begins.

We go the direction we face, and we face the direction we think.

It’s the things we think about and ponder. What are your values? What’s good? What’s not so good? What’s the better way? What’s the best way?

Unless we do some constructive thinking on that, we usually take the easier way.

Easy causes drift, and drift causes us to arrive at a poor destination a year or five years from now.

So, we’re talking about increasing our self-awareness. We’re talking about philosophy.

I want to transition to a concept of planning, but before I do, Jim, let’s talk about something you have been talking about for decades.

You give people options and you give people a choice.

You say, “you can either be in somebody else’s plan or playing in your own life.” Can you talk about that?

That’s true. Some people sort of resign to letting somebody else create the productivity, create the business, create the job, and it seems to be easier for them to punch the clock and let everyone else have the responsibility. Then they go home and try to make the best of it.

But, I think it is also good to start pondering and thinking, ‘how could I take charge of my own life? Or whether I qualify for a better position where I am. Or whether I might create my own business, start something, developing from my personal productivity.’

If we just sit back and not take responsibility, that is what happens. Then we fit into someone else’s plans, rather than designing plans of our own.

If you don’t have plans of your own to fill that vacuum, you’re probably going to fit into someone else’s plan.

Jim, what if you don’t know what the plan is?

What happens to someone when they’re at a job right now, 9 to 5, working the clock, they don’t know what they’re passionate about, they don’t know where to go, where do they start?

You don’t have to operate from passion to begin with. You operate from necessity.

My friend, Bill Bailey, said when he got out of high school he went to Chicago from Kentucky and the first job he could find was night janitor.

Someone asked him, “how come you settled for a job as night janitor?” He said, “malnutrition.”

So, the first passion is to survive. To somehow make it.

Then start to build from there with something that you could find to do even if it is distasteful.

You don’t have to love what you do. Just love the chance or the opportunity to begin the process. Because where you begin is not where you have to end a year from now, five years from now, ten years from now.

You just begin, first of all, to correct errors.

Find something, anything, it doesn’t matter what.

America is such an incredible country especially. The ladder of success is available for everybody.

If you have to start at the bottom and make your way to the top, who cares? As long as they let you on the ladder.

Then, if you study, and grow, and learn, and take classes, and read books, burn a little midnight oil, start investing some of your own ambition, I'm telling you, the changes can be absolutely dramatic.

That is what happened for me starting age 25.

At age 25, in a six-year period, you went from being broke to becoming a millionaire.

Obviously, you put this stuff into practice. You started your own, I'll use the words, "mental make over", changing your thoughts, changing your attitude.

It seems to me, and this is personal for me, Jim, this quote of yours influences me tremendously even today, "discipline versus regret."

Talk about the importance of that. Talk about how to live a disciplined life and stay disciplined so you can get what you want.

It is true. We suffer one of two things. Either the pain of discipline or the pain of regret. You've got to choose discipline, versus regret, because discipline weighs ounces and regret weighs tons.

Say that again.

Discipline weighs ounces and regret weighs tons.

The reason is because the regret is an accumulated affect a year from now, two years from now. When you didn't do the easy discipline.

It's like having a cavity in your tooth. The dentist says, "if we fix it now it's only \$300, and if you let it go someday it's going to be \$3,000."

So, the easier pain of the \$300 and sitting in the chair for just a little while takes care of it. But, if you let it go that's no good.

You know, the dentist says, "this cavity is not going to get better by itself. This is something you have got to take care of. You can't cross your fingers and hope it's going to go away. That's not going to help."

Whatever you see that needs to be corrected, you start taking care of it.

If you don't have a splendid diet, you've got to be incredibly thoughtful about how to change that.

If your kids don't have a splendid diet, you've got to say, "hey, maybe I should give some attention to my kids and their diet."

Nutrition affects behavior I was taught at age 25. Nutrition affects learning. Nutrition affects performance. Nutrition affects vitality. Nutrition affects decision making. Nutrition affects longevity.

My mother studied and practiced good nutrition and talked to me about it, an only child, and my father too, who lived to be 93.

The doctor told me that my mother extended her life at least 20 years by paying attention to nutrition and practicing the art.

The benefits are so incredible by taking a look at a few simple disciplines.

You know, if mom said, 'an apple a day', and the guy says, 'well, no. I'm not into the apple a day, I've got my fingers crossed and I think everything is going to be okay.', you've just got to say, 'this is a foolish person.'

It doesn't matter what it is. You don't have to take giant steps at first.

To have an incredible increase in self-esteem, all you have to do is start doing some little something. Whether it is to benefit your health, benefit your marriage, or to benefit your business, or your career.

You can eat the first apple of the new apple a day philosophy along with some other things you have decided to do. You could say one of these days I will never be healed again. I'm going to have all the breath I need. I'm going to have all the vitality I need. I'm munching on the first apple.

You don't have to revolutionize all at once. Just start.

But, the first apple you eat, if it's a plan to better health, I'm telling you, by the end of that first day your self-esteem starts to grow.

Say to yourself, 'I promise myself I'll never be the same again.'

It doesn't take a revolution. You don't have to do spectacularly dramatic things for self-esteem to start going off the scale. Just make a commitment to any easy discipline. Then another one and another one.

It doesn't take but just a collection of those new easy disciplines to start giving you the idea that you're going to change every part of your life: financial, spiritual, social.

A year from now, you'll be almost unrecognizable as the mediocre person you may have been up until now. All of that can change.

It doesn't change over night. But, it does change with a change in thought and philosophy.

Pick up a new discipline and start it immediately.

When you bring up action, like Jack Canfield on the show awhile ago talking about the universe rewards action, we talked about the concept of doing it personally. We can both concur on this, amazing things happen.

Those little baby steps create momentum. They create energy, force, and they create something that I want to steer back to.

You talk a lot about ambition, the fuel of achievement.

You talk about being ambitious.

I personally saw my life revolutionized when I found something that I enjoyed and made it a necessity to be ambitious about it.

Talk about the power of ambition. How do we build a life where we become ambitious?

Sometimes ambition just lingers below the surface.

All of the possibilities for ambition are there.

But, if you live an undisciplined life drifting on health, drifting on relationships, drifting on developing a better career, if you're drifting, it doesn't taste good at the end of the day. But, if you start something, I promise you, not only will you feel better about yourself in terms of self esteem, which develops self confidence, which is one of the greatest things in stepping towards success, it'll also start awakening a spark of ambition.

A person who has never sold anything in their life. Finally they get a product they can believe in. They make the first sale and all of a sudden they say, "gosh, if I did this once, I can do it again."

By the time they've made the 10th sale they say, "this could be the career for me. It could be the steps I need to become a leader. To become a giant in my field."

All of that stuff has the potential of awakening your ambition. To make the flames start to burn. It starts to grow.

But, it just doesn't grow unless you start the process.

You can't just say, "I'm praying and hoping that ambition will cease me tomorrow morning and everything will change."

Just start with some little something to prove to yourself that you're going to develop a whole list of disciplines.

Start with the easy ones first. It doesn't matter. Like making the necessary contacts in whatever business you're in.

If you make three phone calls a day, in a year that's a *thousand*.

Three does not sound like much. But, in a year it's a thousand.

If you make three positive calls a day, if you make a thousand positive calls, something *phenomenal* is going to happen to your life.

I also teach that the things that are easy to do are easy not to do.

If you want to learn a new language, three words a day, at the end of the year it gives you a vocabulary of a thousand words.

It's just easy *to*, but it's easy *not* to.

It's easier to hope it will get better than to start the process of making it better.

That is really the theme of my seminars.

(To the listeners)

On the topic of seminars, go to jimrohn.com to find out more about Jim's seminars.

When you go to jimrohn.com subscribe to his newsletter.

There are tons of people that Jim has influenced and you'll hear the information tonight.

(Back to Jim)

Talk about the power, simplicity, and importance of having strong reasons.

That's major. If you have enough reasons, you can do anything.

If you have enough reasons, you'll read all the books you need to read.

If you have enough reasons, enough goals, enough objectives, enough things that you want to accomplish in your life, you'll attend whatever classes you need to attend. You'll get up however early you need to get up.

Sometimes we find it a little hard to get out of bed. We want to linger. Part of that is not just being tired, or weary, or a little bit of poor nutrition, some of it is just lack of the drive in terms of having a long enough list of reasons to do it.

Then you've just got to let the reasons grow. Things you thought were important this year, you go for them, then next year you look back and you say, "I was a little foolish about that. Here's what I really want. That isn't really important to me anymore." Then you just keep up this process of what's important to you.

For your family, build a financial wall around your family nothing can get through.

I made that statement, about six years ago, to a young couple that have twins.

Fabulous. They now earn about five to six million dollars a year.

I remember the day they came to me and said, "you know that statement you made about building a financial wall around your family that nothing can get through? Well, we resolved to do that. Now we're happy to report to you that we have just crossed the line. We have now finished building the financial wall around our family nothing can get through."

I'm telling you, the power of something like that is amazing. That's just a small example of all the things that can inspire your life.

Where do you want to go? Who do you want to meet? How many skills do you want to learn this year? How many languages do you want to learn?

I go and lecture in the Scandinavian countries. They all speak four or five, six languages. In the school system you are required to learn four languages. Three they assign, and one you can pick.

I mean, there isn't anything you can't do in terms of language, skills, business, financial independence, or being a person of benevolence.

The famous story of Latorno, back when I was a kid, was an inspiring story. He finally got to the place where he could give away 90% of his income.

My mentor, Mr. Shoaff, knew the story and said to me, "wouldn't that be great for you, Mr. Rohn? To finally get to the place where you could give away 90%?" I thought, 'wow that would be incredible.'

Somebody says, "90%. Wow that's a lot to give away." Well, you should have seen the 10% that was left. It was not peanuts.

But anyway, those kinds of dreams, those kinds of goals are what really start the fire.

At first you just need the goals that start triggering activity immediately.

Say, "I want to be able to pay my rent on time within 90 days. I'm putting in a little extra time. I'm doing this, I'm doing that. I'm taking the class. Whatever. After 90 days, I'm never going to be late on my rent again. I'm tired of the creditors calling. What are my goals?"

I heard a knock on my door back when I was about 24. I went to the door and there was a Girl Scout selling cookies. She gives me the big pitch. Girl Scouts, best organization in the world, we've got this variety of cookies, just \$2.00. Then, with a big smile, she asked me to buy.

I wanted to buy. That wasn't a problem. Big problem, though, was I didn't have \$2.00 in my pocket.

I was a grown man. I had a family. A couple of kids. I had been to college one year. I didn't have \$2.00 in my pocket.

I didn't want to tell her I was that broke. So, I lied to her and said, "Hey, I've already bought lots of Girl Scout cookies. Still got plenty in the house."

So, she said, "Well, that's wonderful. Thank you very much," and she left.

When she left, I said to myself "I don't want to live like this anymore. How low can you get? Lying to a Girl Scout. I mean, that's about as low as you can go."

SO, that became an obsession for me.

From that day on I said, "I'm immediately going to acquire whatever it takes to have a pocket full of money so that no matter where I am for the rest of my life, no matter how many Girl Scouts are there, no matter how many cookies they've got to sell, I'll be able to buy them all."

It just triggered something.

Now, that's not a ranch in Montana. That's not becoming a billionaire. But, it was enough of an incentive to get me started.

Shoaff taught me that you have to carry money in your pocket. He said, "\$500 in your pocket feels better than \$500 in the bank."

I couldn't wait 'til the moment when I had \$500 in my pocket.

It doesn't take much to get started. Then the list goes on from there.

Then if you have enough of those reasons, don't tell me you won't get up early, stay up late, read the book, listen to the cassette, do the deal, take notes, keep a journal, work on your language, or work on your skills.

I'm telling you, it's all wrapped up there: dreams, visions, setting goals, starting with something simple.

When you talk about reasons, Jim, don't many of those strong reasons come out of a pain in one's life?

Sure.

Okay. Because I know from my own life that it can come from necessity and it can come out of pain and trying to get away from that.

The pain of not having \$2.00 was pain enough.

Nobody else witnessed it, but me and the Girl Scout. Of course, I'm sure she didn't notice it because she accepted my lie and moved on.

But, I said, "I don't want this to happen anymore."

It was such an incredible resolve and it was only over \$2.00. But it doesn't matter what it is. If it's something you want to correct, something you never want to happen again, that's the beginning.

You're well known internationally about the power of goals, the key formula for success.

Can you tell us about goals? The importance of goals, but more specifically, how do you set them? Do you think them? Do you write them down? Can you walk us through the power and the process of goal setting?

In my two-day leadership seminar, I go through a little workshop. It's called *Designing The Next Ten Years*.

It's really a simple process.

Start making lists of what you want.

I teach the simple, simple ways. Others have got some complicated ways of setting goals and deadlines and all that stuff. I don't do that.

I just say to make a list of the books you want to read. Make a list of the places you want to go. Start making a list of the things you wish to acquire.

What kind of education do you want for your family? Make a list.

Where are the place you want to visit? Make a list.

What kind of experiences do you want to have? Make a list.

Decide what you want. Then write it all down. Put a lot of little things on there so you can start checking some things off. Because part of the fun of having the list is checking it off. No matter how small it is.

My first list had a little revenge. Some of the people who said I couldn't do well. They went on my list. I couldn't wait to get my new car and drive it up on their lawn. A few little things on revenge.

It doesn't matter what it is. It's your personal list. You can tear it up and throw it away if you want and then get started on it.

Later you can say as you look back, "I was all hot on this idea. Now, here's something I know that is much better. I'm going to forget about that other thing." So, it's an ongoing, continual process.

But, I have discovered that if you think about the things you want" for you, your family, some goals are individual, some are collective, some are family, some are business, just start with that. Rearrange it any way you want to. You don't have to have any deadlines. You can look at the list after you've made it and start putting a 1, 3, 5 or 10 number beside each item. You know, "I think I can accomplish that in about a year. I think I can accomplish that in about three years. I think I can accomplish that in about five years." Something like that. But, it's easy.

Success is easy. Especially in America it's easy. Bangladesh, it's hard. Cambodia, it's hard. America, it's easy.

If you don't believe that, if you think easy is hard, then you are in trouble all your life.

We've got to teach our kids. Some of them have the concept that America is hard. They don't understand the difference between Bangladesh and America.

The average income in Bangladesh is about \$100 a year. That's what's hard.

If you understand what's hard and what's easy, you can say, "Wow, it ought to be easy here."

The only reason for not doing well here, is not applying yourself for some information to learn, and then start to practice right away.

You've got to practice. You have to do the deal. You read this book on good health, right? It talks about nutrition and it talks about exercise Then in the middle of the book the author says, "Now reader, set this book aside. Fall on the floor and see how many push ups you can do." Then, of course, you don't do that. So, you read on and the author says, "If you didn't set

this book aside and if you didn't fall on the floor to see how many push ups you can do, why don't you just give this book away? Why bother yourself with reading if you're not going to pick an idea and try it?"

That's such great advice.

Ok, I want to bring something up and see if you agree with me on it.

We're talking about taking action. We're talking about planning, ambition, and taking those baby steps.

It seems to me, in my own personal life, when you start taking the steps, start changing your thinking, start moving forward toward a dream or vision, it almost seems like the universe conspires with you to help you. Do you see that as well?

Absolutely!

A phrase in the Bible seems to indicate that whatever you move towards, moves towards you.

It mentions that God said, 'if you make a move toward me, I'll make a move toward you.'

If you move toward education, it seems like the possibilities of education start moving your way.

If you move toward good health, the ideas for better health, the information starts moving toward you.

That's good advice.

If you'll just start the process of moving toward what you want, it is true, mysteriously, by some unique process, life loves to reward its benefactors.

If you start taking care of something, it wants to reward you by producing and looking well.

If you take care of flowers, they seem to bloom especially for you and say, "Look how pretty we are. You have taken such good care of us. Now we want to give back to you by giving you our beauty."

I taught my two girls how to swim and dive. Of course, like all kids, they'd say, "Daddy, watch me. Watch me do this dive." It's almost like they're saying, 'You're the one that taught me. You're the one that had patience with me. You invested part of your life in this process. Now watch me. Watch how good I am.'

All of life wishes to do that. All life wishes to *reward* its benefactor.

It could be something like a garden that grows because you took the time to cultivate it, to pull out the weeds, and take care of the bugs. Now, the garden does extremely well for you as a reflection back to you Because you are the one that invested time, energy, effort, and a piece of your life.

Let's stay here, Jim. Talk about the power of giving and the word "tithing". Can we talk about giving and what happens when someone gives?

I teach a little formula for kids called seventy, ten, ten, and ten.

This formula is about never spending more than 70 cents out of every dollar you earn.

The way it works is that ten cents is for active capital, ten cents is for passive capital, and then ten cents is to give away.

Whether it's to your church, a benevolent organization, or whether you let someone else manage it, or you manage it yourself.

We've got to teach generosity right from the beginning. I teach that ten percent is a good figure to start with.

You know when you become rich and wealthy, it can be 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90. Whatever.

But, ten cents is the start.

If you teach generosity, I'm telling you, kids will give you a dime out of every dollar to help

someone that can't help themselves.

It's about what it does for you spiritually. Do it for what it brings back to you in terms of self-esteem.

Help to enrich the world by giving, and not only 10 percent of your money, but maybe some percentage of your time as well.

That investment is a smart investment.

It may bring returns to you immediately in ways you don't even know. It can do amazing things for your character, your reputation, and your inner spirit. It's all worth it!

Someone might say, "Well, I gave to this organization and they misused it."

It doesn't matter to you whether they misused it or not. The key for you is that you gave.

They've got to be responsible on their own side.

No matter what though, giving is a *major* piece. Then, the next step is giving somebody your ideas.

This mentor, I met when I was 25, Earl Shoaff is someone I have to thank for the rest of my life for taking the time to share with me a bit of his philosophy that revolutionized my life.

I was never the same again after the first year. No one has ever had to say to me after the first year I was with him, 'when are you going to get going? When are you going to get off the dime?'

I've never heard that since that first year that I met this man who gave me his ideas and he did it freely.

He did it with great excitement. Because he knew that if he invested in me, I would probably invest in someone else.

Sure enough, that turned out to be true.

Ok. It's been 38 years or so. You're entering your second decade of doing this.

Where does the continuous passion and inspiration come from for you? Why are you still doing this?

It's very exciting because it's made me several fortunes and continues to do so.

But, part of the greatest excitement is when your name appears in somebody's testimonial.

You know, someone says something like, "I was at a certain place in my life and I listened to this person and it changed my life.

Mark Hughes, the founder of HerbalLife, used to say that because he attended my seminar when he was 19 it changed his life. He said, "I attended Jim Rohn's seminar and he was the first person that gave me the idea that in spite of my background I could make changes and become successful."

You can imagine how that made me feel. It's amazing for me to have my name appearing in his testimonial.

But, whether it's Mark Hughes or someone else, it doesn't matter.

Imagine this scenario: You've got someone who says, "let me introduce you to the person that changed my life five years ago. We were sitting at Denny's five years ago and he recommended this book to me. He told me that it has really helped him. SO, he recommended it to me. Well, as I look back on it now, that was the beginning of some incredible life changes for me. Look where I am today. I'm telling you, it started five years ago at Denny's on a Tuesday morning when this person introduced me to this book."

So, you don't have to give seminars. You don't have to give lectures. You don't even have to write books to affect someone's life and to do it so well that your name appears in their testimonial someday.

You know, someone says, "Here's the person who believed in me until I could believe in myself. Someone who saw more in me than I could see at the beginning."

Let's stay here, Jim. Because there's something I want to get across to people. It's such a powerful a statement that you talk about. I've heard you talk about the concept of sure, we want to reach our destination. We want to reach our goals. But, more importantly, Jim, can you talk about the power in the being and the becoming?

Well, true. What we acquire of course is valuable. But, the greatest value is not what we acquire. The greatest value is what we become.

My mentor had an interesting way of teaching it. When I was 25 years old he said, "I suggest, Mr. Rohn, that you set a goal to become a millionaire."

I was all intrigued by that. You know, it's got a nice ring to it - millionaire.

Then he said, "here's why..." I thought to myself, 'gosh, he doesn't need to teach me why. Wouldn't it be great to have a million dollars.' Then he said, "no then you'll never acquire it. Here's why. Set a goal to become millionaire for what it makes of you to achieve it."

Can you say that again please?

"Set a goal to become millionaire for what it makes of you to achieve it."

He said, "Do it for the skills you have to learn and the person you have to become. Do it for what you'll end up knowing about the marketplace, what you'll learn about the management of time and working with people. Do it for the ability of discovering how to keep your ego in check. For what you have to learn about being benevolent. Being kind as well as being strong. What you have to learn about society and business and government and taxes and becoming an accomplished person to reach the status of millionaire.

All that you have learned and all that you've become to reach the status of millionaire is what's valuable. Not the million dollars.

If you do it that way, then once you become a millionaire, you can give all the money away. Because it's not the money that's really important. What's important is the person you have become."

That was one of the best pieces of philosophy I have ever heard in my life.

Nobody ever shared it with me like that before.

Another thing he said was, "beware of what you become in pursuit of what you want. Don't sell out. Don't sell out your principles. Don't compromise your values. Because you might acquire something by doing so, but it won't taste good."

An old prophet said, "sometimes what tastes good in the mouth finally turns bitter in the belly." Then, later we regret that we compromised or that we did something incredibly wrong to acquire something. It's not worth it. If we do that, then what we get is worthless.

If you use something like that to challenge yourself to grow, to reach a certain level, I think it's wise. Because then you know where the true value is and that is in the person you become.

I want to reverse back to about 90 seconds ago when you were talking about your great mentor, Earl Nightingale. You talked about the ability to express gratitude. To express thanks.

I feel, in my own life, an aspect of gratitude is very important.

So, number one, do you agree with that, and two, can you talk about the power of that word - gratitude?

Well, it absolutely is very important.

I made a little list the other day as I reminisced about the things that really made such an incredible contribution to my life.

Number one on my list, of course, was my parents.

I was an only child. They spoiled me. They laid a foundation for me that has kept me steady all these years.

The more I thought about it, I thought, 'what a contribution they've made to my life.'

A lot of it, at the moment, I couldn't see. I didn't realize. But, as the years began to unfold, I realized that what they taught me, the care they gave me, the love they shared with me, that no matter what happened to me, I always had a place I could always go home to.

They provided that kind of unique stability.

They didn't just say, 'son, you can do it.' It was also the advice they gave me and the prayers they sent me, no matter where I went around the world, cause I believe in that, the power of prayer.

Every once in awhile I get a letter and someone says, "Mr. Rohn, we are praying for you." I read it and think, 'Wow. This is some kind of letter when someone takes the time to say a prayer.'

My gratitude for that is just unending.

Talk about the power of prayer.

Who knows, you know, the mystery of prayer and God.

In the Declaration of Independence it says, we are created equal. But it says also that, we are endowed by our creator with gifts and rights.

It's a philosophy America believes in that we are a special creation. That we have these gifts based on a creator.

We open the Senate with prayer. We put on our money "In God We Trust." We are that kind a nation really.

When I travel the world, people ask me, "how come America does so well?" I say, "read the money." I think that is probably part of it. That kind of trust, that kind of In God We Trust, implies prayer and I think that it is so vital.

It doesn't have to be in a church, synagogue, mosque, or anywhere else. It doesn't have to be in a formal place. But, I think it's a tremendous power.

We're talking about the power of thankfulness, of gratitude.

Jim, I want to put on my world famous, internationally-renowned, two-minute warning with you.

All that means is we have about ten minutes left to rock n roll, and shake and bake.

Let's talk about the best kept secret of the rich, time management. Tell me about the importance of it and how we become effective time managers.

Well, first is to realize how precious time is.

There's not an unending supply of years in your life.

My father lived to be 93 and it still seemed very short. I kept asking for another ten years, another ten years, another five years.

Surely, Papa can live to be 100 I'd think.

I'd love to have him see the 21st Century, which was not to be. But, ninety-three years still seems short.

The Beatles wrote, "life is very short." For John Lennon it was extra short.

There is not an unending supply of the days and the moments.

The key is to utilize them to the best of your ability. Don't just to let them slip away. Capture them, like we capture the seasons. There is only so many.

In ninety years you have ninety spring times. If some guy says, you know, "I got twenty more years." You say, "no. You got twenty more times."

If you go fishing once a year you only have twenty more times to go fishing. Now that starts to make it a bit more critical. Not that I have a whole twenty more years, but just twenty more times. How valuable do I want to make these twenty times?

It doesn't matter whether it's going to the concert or sitting down with your family, or taking a vacation. There is only so many.

It's easy not to plan and do the details necessary to make them the best possible. Then I have other little ideas like, 'don't start the day, until you have it finished.'

Say that again, Jim.

Don't start the day until you have it finished.

It's a key for executives, a key for leadership. But it's also a key for a mother at home. It doesn't matter, whoever.

Plan the day to the best of your abilities.

There will be plenty of room for surprises and innovations and whatever.

Give a good plan, a good schedule for the day.

Because each day is a piece of the mosaic of your life.

You can either just cross your fingers and say, "I hope it will work out okay," or you can give it some attention and say, "here's what I would like to accomplish in the next twenty four hours."

Just look at it that way and do a lot of it up front or maybe the night before. Start the day after you finished it.

It's like building a house. If I asked you, "when should you start building the house that you want to build?" and you say to me, "well, that's a good question. When should I start building the house?" I've got an excellent answer for you. The answer is, you start building it as soon as you have it finished.

You know, someone might say, "is it possible to finish a house before you start it?" The answer is, yes. It would be foolish to start it until you had it finished.

Imagine if you just started laying bricks. Somebody could come by and ask, "what are you building here?" You say, "I have no idea. I'm just laying bricks and well see how it works out." They would call you foolish and maybe take you away to a safe place.

The key is that it's possible to finish a day before you start it. It's possible to finish a month before you start it.

I do business around the world with colleagues in about 50 countries. To do business around the world in 50 countries you can't imagine all of the preparatory planning that has to be done. Some things are three years, five years, two years, one year ahead in order to do that kind of global business.

But, if you just learned to be disciplined enough to start with the day plan, the month plan, your good health plan, I'm telling you, you will take advantage of time like you can't believe.

Jim, let's bring up a few topics and go 30 to 45 seconds on each, if we can.

You're one of the most effective communicators of the last 50 years or so. You've talked in front of 4 million people and you've influenced millions beyond that through your books and tapes.

What's the most important communication tip you can give us right now?

You just need a desire to be a great communicator and keep improving the art every day.

It's easy to be careless with your language in social areas, but that's going to affect your business.

You just have to start practicing the art of better language, whether it's social, personal, home, or family.

You can't say, "oh, it's with my family, so my language doesn't really matter." It really does matter because it's so valuable for them. But, also because it's so valuable for you to practice the art.

It's like this telephone conversation. If I thought, 'well, I don't have 35,000 people to talk to. So, I'll treat this conversation carelessly.' I just learn not to do that.

I want to give the most concise and best information I can, even though it's a telephone conversation and not a big audience in some auditorium.

So, we're talking here about being on purpose, about changing language, changing your mindset. When a person goes for something, there are roadblocks to steer away from. There are adversities. Talk about the power of resilience.

You've just got to be able to come back. Come back from a disappointment. It takes a bit of courage.

If you start a sales career and the first person you approach says, "no", you've got to have the courage to talk to the second person.

If you start a little business, set up the first meeting, and nobody joins, you've got to have the courage to say, "I'll set up another meeting. Because if one person says no it doesn't mean everybody's going to say no."

You've just got to have that ability to come back.

You've got to understand the law of averages. Not everybody is going to be interested in your project. Not everybody is going to buy your product.

You can't take it personally.

Then, if you get hit by poor health, you've just got to do everything within your power to get well.

If you face a disappointment, you've got to come back. From a divorce, you've got to come back. It's going to hurt for awhile, you've got to let it linger and do whatever it's going to do. But, then you've got to build back.

That's part of the game of life.

It's no different for you, me, or anyone else.

Resilience, we all need it. Whether it's health, marriage, family, business, social, or personal.

Talk about the power of enlightened self-interest.

Yes, life doesn't give us what we need. Life gives us what we deserve.

If you want wealth, it's okay to wish for wealth *if* you pay the proper price for wealth.

So, there is a price to be paid.

You can pay the proper price without diminishing anyone else. Once I learned that, I got excited about being wealthy in my own self-interest. Everybody wins.

What we're talking about here is coming from a position of integrity and creating wealth for the benefit of others.

I ask this question to a lot of the people, Mark Victor Hansen, Robert Allen, and a lot of the people I have interviewed. I always thought it was a melancholy question, but they have told me it isn't. We're all going to pass on some day. What do you want the world to say about Jim Rohn when that day does come?

That he invested his life wisely and as best he could to help as many people to change their lives as possible and that he blessed his own life. That's really it.

You talk about self-education. You talk about how it's the seed of fortune. Are there any books out there, in addition to your own at jimrohn.com, that you can recommend to my audience?

Well, sure. Shoaff recommended *Think and Grow Rich* to me when I first started learning.

What was the most powerful thing you took out of *Think and Grow Rich*?

Desire, determination, preset plans, never give up, persistence, it's got a wealth of information in it.

Anything else come to mind?

The Richest Man in Babylon helped me to become a millionaire by age 32. Simple little book. Easy to follow. Inspiring. *The Richest Man in Babylon*, by George Clason.

Jim, we're wrapping down the show tonight. Jim, it's been an absolute goldmine and a pleasure to share you with my audience. Jim Rohn, thank you very much for appearing on The Mike Litman Show.

It's been a pleasure, Mike. We'll do it again sometime.

We Hope You Enjoyed The Free Chapter From Conversations With Millionaires!

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