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ACCELERATING ENTREPRENEURIAL SUCCESS PODCAST

EPISODE
61

Chris Johnson

Show Notes at: <http://www.aesnation.com/61>



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Best of success,



John Bowen
Co-founder, AES Nation

John Bowen: Entrepreneurs, the most established ones, we're all getting older, and as we're getting older, the Baby Boomer generation, there's so many of us, and above the Baby Boomers, who have great businesses. Well, to have great businesses though, we've got to have great energy. It's so important to really make the time to be successful on purpose. Not only in our business, but in our lives, so that we can have the energy to inspire our teams to really accomplish tremendous opportunities.

Well, I've got a great speaker for you. He is a top coach to some of the most successful entrepreneurs, and CEOs, and executives out there, and Chris is going to share with us how you can harness that energy and be so much more successful by taking care of yourself.

I'm John Bowen at AES Nation.com. Stay tuned. You're going to be glad you did.

John: I really appreciate you making the time to join us today in your busy schedule via the magic of Skype here. First of all, thank you.

Chris Johnson: I'm happy to join you, John. Absolutely.

John: One of the things we're going to get into how you can really harness all the energy, and make sure that you're going to be very successful, so you're on purpose. What I want to do is get a little bit of the back story. How did you get involved? You're helping all these entrepreneurs, CEOs. You're writing books about it. You're designing programs. You're doing all this and that. What caused you to be so focused in this area?

Chris: Well, I think everybody has to connect the dots in their life. I was raised by wolves. Like you, I'm fifty-seven, and I didn't have a lot of guidance growing up, and I had amazingly bad skin from about age three to about twenty. Every time I went to the doctor, the doctors kept coming back to my parents whether I was taking oral medications or topical creams, "Your son has sensitive skin." I grew up on Beefaroni, and Spaghettios, and baloney sandwiches. I think that slowly over time when I was an economics major in college I had a professor that really opened my eyes that being curious about certain things, and one of them was about nutrition.

A long story short, I went to graduate school, and then worked for a large health club. Prior to that, I worked for Frito Lay and Butternut Bread, so you have a crazy connect the dots, and that's all I've been doing for the last thirty years is being in this business. I think everybody has those connect the dots moments in their career, and how you start and where you are today completely is not where you began.

John: I know that in my situation, I'm fifty-nine, and I've become much more interested in health. I had walking pneumonia earlier this year, and I'd never been sick. Two years out, and

all of a sudden, I'm knocked out, and what really happened to me is I had the good fortune of having a number of advisors around me, health and nutritionist friends, and trainer, and all that.

I was working and I was in good shape, but I was really not paying attention to nutrition at all. I got to tell you, it's changed my life. I want everybody as fellow entrepreneurs to really pay attention to the insights Chris has, because what I don't want you to have is the fat smoker's strategy. When you have the heart attack, we deal with this stuff, and that's what so many of us do. I kind of feel like I'm glad I only got that little push, Chris, but how in a busy life ... I mean you've worked with so many busy executives. They're charging ahead, all that. How do you get them started and really leading intentionally to much better health?

Chris: I always start some behavior change. I set them down, and self-awareness ... I think everybody has to come up with that self-awareness, but sometimes they're not aware, but you have to make them aware. It could be their blood work or some episode, but if you really dig deeper, really what is their wealth in their life. Now you start getting into the emotional piece.

A lot of people, when you think about entrepreneurs, what do they really love about what they do? They like the freedom. They like all this different stuff. But at some point in time they're balancing a lot of balls. They got to make sure they're taking care of themselves, because that's the number one resource.

When I really start talking to people that are really good at what they do, I got to talk about them, because they're the resource, so if you're not taking care of you, generally your business is not going to be doing too well down the road.

That begins with behavior change, and then you dig even deeper and find out specifically what they want and what's possible in their life, and then move them in that direction. Then we start building habits and strategies with what's your sleep look like? Do they have any downtime? What's your daily eating plan look like? Are they getting enough movement? We systematically build on that plan, and that's how it begins, but if they're not willing and ready, and don't have a powerful why, generally you're not going to see a lot of traction long term.

John: Yeah. I'm going to echo this, because I think I've lost over a thousand pounds in my life. It wasn't that I weighed one thousand two hundred and twenty-five. I'm up and down again. We get powerful why's for short periods of time, and what I'm going to encourage everyone to do is before you need to do it, is really today the ability to have great health, use that energy effectively, and particularly with all the new changes going on in health care, and medicine, and so on, we have the opportunity to live a fruitful, long life, much longer than our parents and our grandparents, but you got to take care of yourself along the way, and be

really in good shape for the next fifteen years while all these medical advances are coming in.

Chris, let's talk about then you have a saying, "Rest, eat, and move." I want to take each of these areas and dive in a little bit deeper.

Chris: Sure.

John: Rest. I mean this is one ... I'm a hard charging entrepreneur. I've got all kinds of friends. Sometimes people are so proud of how little sleep they get. I'm in Silicon Valley, and pulling all-nighters working on this stuff. It's great, but how should they be designing ... A successful entrepreneur, our listeners and our viewers, how should they be conscious of designing ... If they're going to be successful on purpose with their health, dealing with the issues around rest?

Chris: Well, I think you just said the word, on purpose, so the first thing we have to do is when I'm sitting down with your audience, I got to make it why is rest so important? I got to build a case. Number one, it's going to help them have a greater range. That's why people work out. You have a greater range. You have more stamina. You can perform better.

But I can take anybody and give them a set of push-ups to do. I have no problem. I can do five push-ups, but if I don't let you rest, you're going to fall apart on me very quickly, and that's what I see more and more, is I can charge, charge, charge, but really that's not going to work long term.

Then from a health standpoint, you see it every night. Low testosterone for both men and women, so your hormones are the first thing to get out of whack when you're not getting enough rest, and then your immune system starts to shut down.

A lot of people say to me, "Hey, I'm exercising. I'm eating." Well, step number one is what your rest is like, so we look at sleep. How many hours of sleep are you getting on a consistent basis? What kind of downtime strategies do you have? Like I have a foam roller in my office that I lay on for two minutes. You create some really easy strategies for people to do without upsetting the apple cart. People say, "I sleep five hours a night, and I'm not going to go to eight." I'm not asking you to go to eight. Go to six. Because you're probably not getting much rapid eye movement.

Then we get into really finite strategies, like magnesium, like cacao nibs or Epsom salts, things like that to the table that allow them to sustain their sleep.

That's where you begin is help them understand the power of recovery and rest in their life, and then once they believe in that and they feel like, "I'm ready to do a little bit more of that," then you implement small steps to build on those. That's how we begin.

John: I find it to be so important to do. My own situation, I've never slept that much until more recently, because now I've learned the power as I'm doing it.

Chris: Right.

John: Yeah. Part of it is we think we got to fit so much in. Everybody's got twenty-four hours a day, a hundred sixty-eight hours a week. That's it.

It's not time management. It's energy management. What I look at is having that energy to be fully present in anything I'm doing. One big part is having the right amount of downtime rest, sleep, to make that happen.

Let's go to ... Well, go ahead, Chris.

Chris: One last thing here. I had a CEO of a large Fortune 100 company, and he called me up one day and he says, "I heard you speak. I heard you on stage. Your energy is out of this world. How do you improve your energy?" When I sat down with him, I said the number one thing I control my energy is with rest and rejuvenation. I have to have enough rest, so I'm always paying attention to my rest.

When I first got out about graduate school, it was all about how I was eating and moving my body, but as I've aged, I've realized that rest is much more ... It's the foundation is the bed rest. That's where it begins.

John: It really does. I want to go to fueling ourselves, eating. There's just so many good things out there that aren't good. Give me a little bit of your thoughts, Chris. I remember one time when I first starting going to one of the executive clinics. I decided I've been successful. I've sold a number of businesses, and I said I've got the money, I should go the extra mile, and I went to one of the top clinics in the country. They did all the tests and everything. I was overweight, and basically I paid them a lot of money to tell me I was overweight.

I was describing my life, and at that time I was flying all over the world giving all kinds of presentations, leading different things. We were acquiring companies, all that type. He's trying to coach me and he said, "John, basically you're shit out of luck. You're going to be all the restaurants all this time, and there's nothing you can really do."

I've learned since then there's a lot of things I can do, but maybe, Chris, from your perspective of busy executive, charging real hard, how can they make sure they're getting the right nutrition so they have the full energy, whether it's weight loss that's important or not, it's really the energy, so you can really perform at the highest levels, both when you're at work, when you're with your family, and then be fully engaged for resting as well. How do you do that?

Chris: I think the big one in the very beginning is intentional. You have to start being a little more intention. I've been in thirty-eight states this year, and I'm on a plane every week. I'm traveling all over the country. I'm really intentional about what I eat and how I plan. That doesn't take a lot of time, but I have rituals that I do. Like I have oatmeal on the run in the morning. I do frozen wheatgrass ice cubes. I'm a big fan of cod liver oil. I travel with flax seeds, chia seeds. I take spirulina chlorella, so I'm a huge super food guy. I don't supplement at all. I don't take a multi-vitamin.

Then I try to eat the eighty twenty principal, eating frequently. I don't get rid of any food groups. I'm not a fan of get rid of potato, or banana, or even gluten. There's this big gluten craze. We really don't have a gluten epidemic. We just have a digestion epidemic.

Once people understand those concepts, then they can have a sustainable eating plan, and I think that's the key. For me, my body weight's 175. It's a 175 pretty much all year long, and that's the challenge I try to give a lot of these executives. Let's get a plan that you can sustain. I can go out to dinner. I can make better choices. I'm traveling. I'm in the hotel, whatever it might be.

But I have this food target I designed in 1993, and it's basically on quality of foods, and people recognize it right away. The red area is processed foods. The green area is whole foods, and all you try to do is upgrade. We're a big fan of teaching people how to upgrade, whether it's their peanut butter, or their ketchup, their pizza, their crackers. As long as you start upgrading, that's where people can sustain it, and they like that, because then they don't really have to give up a whole lot.

That's kind of our philosophy. From the of living standpoint, we really want people to create sustainable eating habits.

John: What I like is if you just simply get away from all the processed food, just the damage that can do. Then the concept that I love that you do is that upgrade. Really, there's great food out there. It can be very nutritional, but, also, you can enjoy eating.

Chris: That's the key. For example, when you think of things to upgrade, I tell people focus on exactly what you eat the most of. For example, if your kids like macaroni and cheese, get a better macaroni and cheese. Whatever you like, if you drink coffee in the morning and you

put a creamer in it, get a better creamer. Whatever you do, that's how you begin. You just upgrade it, and then upgrade leads to another upgrade, and that's how the path begins.

John: Yeah. It's really taking those steps that are important. I know everybody is different on this, but there's just so many tools and so much information. We'll go to your website as well later, but the key part is we keep on saying intentional, getting starting intentional.

What about movement? Having energy, I mean it's just so critical when so many executives, it's so easy. I'm sitting at a desk now. You're at a desk. We're sitting here. It's easy for many people to sit at their desk all day. How can they make sure they're getting the proper amount of movement so that they're maintaining their body. They're going to have energy. They're not running into back problems and all the other assorted ailments that guys like you, fifty-seven. I'm fifty-nine. I've got so many of my friends who are just really not in great shape at all.

Chris: Well, really around age fifty to sixty you see rapid decline in the body. You really have to think about ... I tell people it's your job. Once you start turning around forty-five, it's your job to move regularly and start taking care of yourself, because if you don't it's a slippery slope. But from a movement standpoint, I treat it like compound interest. I think all your listeners are familiar with the compound interest. You have to deposit on a regular basis, not a three time a week exercise program. It's daily.

But a big roadblock for a lot of people is they don't have enough time. I'll just challenge them and say I've got a five minute routine that you could do every day, and if you did it every day you'd have better flexibility. You'd have less back pain.

That's the key. The key is to get people to move daily. For example, in my office right now ... My office is at my home. The rest of our team is over at our traditional offices, but I have a foam roller right here. I'm stretching. I do a ninety second stretch. We have that on our website. There's really no excuse. Every two hours you need to get up and move your body, and many times when I'm doing a lot of my calls, I stand up, and move around, and stretch, and so forth.

You need to move daily, and then you need to think about strength training, and get some of these things in your program on a weekly basis. It doesn't really have to be more than bands and your body weight, so you really don't need a lot of equipment to do a lot. But exercise is one of the number one things I have people ... If you could put exercise in a bottle, it would be the most prescribed medication on the planet. It's magical. You just need to move daily. You don't need to move a lot.

John: I think that's the mistake. I think some of us think we have to go out and do an unbelievable amount of exercise. What I've seen, Chris, you have some of the most successful entrepreneurs I have the privilege of working with, who are, also, in great shape, is that they're very disciplined, and they make time for exercise, but it's not anywhere near the massive amount that I assumed they were doing. They're not all tri-athletes.

Chris: I see every day ... I mean I was at the gym a little while ago, and I was talking to a couple of these young guys and they said, "How long are you in the weight room?" I said, "Oh, about twenty-five minutes," and they're like, "Twenty-five minutes? That's all?" I'm like, "Yeah, I'm in and out." That's the myth out there, that you need to spend a lot of time. They key is you cannot train a bad diet, so the key is moving your body regularly, and it's not only for my body, but it's more for my brain. Any entrepreneur out there, you need to wash your brain every day, because you got people tugging at your shirt tails, beating you up, and I need that recovery, moving my body.

It's amazing how I can have a bad day, and then all of a sudden, I move my body, I feel pretty good.

John: I agree. I mean I schedule ... I like doing trail jogging. I'm out in California. We got some nice hills. I'm going to do some elevation and it's so ... Running through the redwoods, it's just mind expanding. It doesn't even feel like exercise at all.

Chris: Yeah. I think one of the things that you said, too, is give yourself permission to do a short exercise routine. You don't need to spend all day. Some days I'll just plan ... I'm busy in the airports. I don't have a lot of time to move, so maybe ten minutes, it might be fifteen minutes. Many times entrepreneurs out there, they're really demanding on themselves, and sometimes you have to give that all pass that I need to move daily, and even if I can't get in my hour or whatever it is, I can move my body for a little bit.

John: Chris, help me out with we've talked about rest, eat and move. That's the magical formula, and it's not like you and I are the only guys that know that. I mean everybody seems to know that, but one of the things that they struggle with, okay, I've got clarity of purpose, and I've found my why, and I'm intentional in the sense that I'm going to go ahead and get started, but, boy, there have been so many health programs that stop. How do we build the habits, the rituals to have success long term in this?

Chris: I think the big one is you got to build one step at a time, and you got to feel like you're drilling oil. You got to go deep. I think a lot of people start drilling all these wells and they don't go deep enough. Instead of doing a bunch of wells, do one well.

For example, my intention for the next two weeks is I'm going to drink ten ounces of water first thing in the morning, or maybe I'm going to add a lemon or a lime to my water to make them more alkaline, or maybe I have a little mineral water a couple of times during the week, but I'm going to focus on hydration, because it's huge, right?

The second thing is I got to somehow bring some omega 3 fats to the table, whether it's cod liver oil, flax, or chia. After I'm doing the water thing, now I'm going to add that. Or maybe my posture's not good. I have a rotator cup program. Well, that guy said all I need to do is lay on that foam roller for a couple minutes a day. I'm going to do that.

Then you just start doing these ... In the unconscious now, you're doing this stuff, not even think about it. I get up in the morning sometimes I can't remember if I've taken my wheatgrass or not. Yeah, I see the thing on ... Yeah, I've had it, so that's the magic. The magic is that you're upgrading, and you're having slow habit building strategies in place.

I started doing wheatgrass fifteen years ago. I started doing flax seeds thirty years ago. Forty years ago I was doing macaroni and cheese and Beefaroni, so these are all steps.

John: I think I like ... As a matter of fact, just recently I started cooking my own breakfast in the morning. I like a warm breakfast, and make a really good, hearty one, all very nutritional. But it was just simple. Somebody had suggested, because of hydration, it's just while you're cooking, drink a bottle of water, like a liter of water. Yeah. I've now made that part of the ritual. You just add on a little here, a little there, and with some good coaching and some good advice, it's amazing the progress you can make.

It's not trying to do everything at once. You just can't.

Chris: Yeah. At once won't work, so that's a thing with an entrepreneur, you have to make mistakes, but you, also, have to get some good mentoring or good coaching, so you're really cutting to the chase.

What I do is we teach certain principles that people, they can't really argue about. Like hey, this is it. It doesn't have to get crazy. The human body, we know how to make it super healthy and super energetic. The challenging piece, how do you implement that slowly enough that people build habits that they don't think it's so overwhelming.

John: I want to go to the next segment, because you've written a book on this.

Well, let's go to the book of the day, and I'm going to pull up your book here, your latest book, *On Target Living, Your Guide to Life, of Balance, Energy, and Vitality*. Chris, what do you have in the book? What's it about, and why ... And I'm going to recommend to everybody that

they should get it, and we'll have it in the show links as well. But, Chris, what are you sharing in the book that's going to help people really get that energy level?

Chris: I'm going to share that I've done over twenty thousand training sessions, which is a lot of face time with people, and I'm going to share with you how do I slowly build traction with people, and that's what really led into my speaking career. I came in and people were like, "Man, this is fun and exciting, and more than anything else it's doable." The book will open up with behavior change, give you some history on myself, show you what a mess I was, what's possible. I have a woman that's lost over two hundred and ten pounds at age sixty-seven years old. I have a woman that went from twenty-six meds to two meds over a four year time frame.

People see that, and get into the principles, and then we go onto the rest, eat, and the move, and then we talk about your numbers and your body's talking to you, so now you learn about blood work, how you can improve that.

It's a very thorough book. It follows my seminar, but in a lot more detail, a lot more depth.

John: Yeah. It's great. There's some of you who are already ... Probably ten percent of you who are watching this are in great shape already. You're doing fine, and you're just looking for those little nuggets. We're going to salt those throughout here.

But then there's a pretty good percentage ... Chris, I had one chance ... I mentioned before we started the recording that I've grown up in the financial services industries. One of the most profitable industries in the world, and I was coaching some top financial advisors. I mean some of the most successful in the world. To be in this one program you had to make over a million dollars a year for the last three years of net income.

There were a hundred advisors. As part of the program, and this wasn't our part. It was someone else that was brought in to do this, but they did the blood work, and they did an exercise assessment on these hundred very successful, and it was about ten percent that were really doing well from a health standpoint. There were so many people who were diabetics that didn't know they were diabetics. There were so many borderline cases. It was all during the 2008-2009, where the company was so concerned on the stress level.

That was really my wake up call, because I mean all these successful individuals. They're at the right place and the right time from a financial perspective. They're under a lot of stress though with the downturn, and they didn't know how bad a shape they were. Probably fifteen, twenty percent actually rose to the occasion, and started putting the rituals and habits in, and had huge ... I mean some really big success. It was written up in our industry trade publication just how big.

What I want to encourage all the entrepreneurs that are watching this, if you're not at the energy level you want, just getting started is ... Boy, you can make a huge difference.

Chris: Not only they can make a huge difference, but everybody can always upgrade. If I look at my program or a person I'm working with, you always can make it better.

The other thing, too, a lot of you ... I see a lot of entrepreneurs out there. If you're fifty years old and a male, your testosterone level should be over five hundred, and most of them don't even know their testosterone level. If you're a woman out there, your testosterone should probably be over forty.

They don't know this stuff. How many of you know your high serum c reactive protein level, or your homocysteine. There's a lot that people can learn about risk factors, along with just improve their energy and their health and things that go with that. There's a lot that people can learn, whether you're just beginning or you're very advanced, everybody can take that next step.

John: Let me go to the next segment, Chris.

It's resources, and I'm going to pull up your website. You've got a lot going on. Share with the viewers, It's On Target Living.com. If you're listening to it, again, all the show notes will be at AES Nation.com.

What do you have on the website now that would be some resources for successful entrepreneur getting on track on the rest, eat and move?

Chris: Well, we have the book that you mentioned earlier, *On Target Living*. We have a brand new cookbook that comes out in the spring. It's called *Target to Table*. It's written by my twins. I have going to be twenty-nine year old twins, boy and girl. They wrote the cookbook, which is really going to be a lot of upgrades. I have a Lebanese wife, so it's all really high quality, amazing tasting food that's pretty healthy for you.

We have exercise DVDs. We have the food target, and then we, also, have a very vibrant website where we have consumables. We have wheatgrass, spirulina chlorella.

Check out the website and see, but we almost have a selection process to what items we sell on our website. For example, we are only going to sell the highest quality soaps, and shampoos, and toothpaste. People are like, "Well, I don't even care about that." Well, you kind of do, because whatever goes on your body or in your body has an impact in your health.

That's what the website is. We have resources from education. We have coaching. We have three speakers, and then we have the consumables and educational materials, so it's pretty vibrant, and we have a newsletter that comes out once a month. Lots of good stuff.

John: When you think about all this, Chris, what would be the one ... If somebody is coming to you right now, and I can remember when I was interviewing coaches, and we got a trainer now locally here, but finding someone, how can they find the right person they're going to match up from a chemistry standpoint, entrepreneurs, because I actually think most of us can't do it alone. There's a few people, like yourself, this is your niche. This is what you're really good at.

But most of us need help, outside help. How do they find the right one with how busy ... There's so much information on so many different things. Selecting that right person that's going to help coach them and guide them along the way.

Chris: What we do, what we recommend, you contact us and then we call you, and we interview you and see if there's a good match here. Then we have three online coaches, and then generally they have different expertise, but most of the time it's either my son or myself that will make that phone call and have that couple questions here and there, and see where you are. If they're a complete train wreck, and they need lots of medical stuff, and that might be me. I don't do a lot of coaching, but I do a lot of coaching to our coaches, so we do have those coaches available. We have a gentleman that's sixty-five. We have a gentleman that's twenty-nine. We have women coaches. We have five of our coaches, and they have a variety of skill levels and focus points.

Normally, it's the call, and we make it very accessible to people that we want to talk to you and help you, and then give you the resources to help you be successful.

John: Yeah. It's so critical to have that ongoing ... There's got to be chemistry between the coach and the coachee, if you will. I encourage people to reach out, to really do some exploring to make sure that you have somebody along on the journey, because, boy, it is so important to have your health.

Let me go to the last segment here, where I'm going to share some of the key takeaways I have.

Chris, I'm just going to go over ... I took a bunch of notes, and what I see here, number one, is we've got a clarity of purpose. As entrepreneurs, we're driven. We understand our why's, and if we don't, we need to get clarity. But we can see how important it is for us to have the energy to lead this great life. I mean we're in business, not for more business, we're in

business for a great quality of life. Well, we've got to take great care of ourselves. Number one is understand our why and the alignment with us as a person.

Second, live it with intention, and this is such an important one, because in health, at least in my experiences, it's so easy to start a program, but you don't maintain the intention. There's not that drive. There's going to be a reason, but the reason shouldn't be the heart attack. It shouldn't be the major health issue.

Really think of the difference that you can make in the world and your own personal quality of life. It's in your enlightened self-interest to take really good care of yourself.

Lastly, building habits and rituals. All top athletes, all top entrepreneurs build habits and rituals. Chris, you have us some great examples on this.

I want to thank you for spending the time today. It's been great. With that, I'm going to wish ... Make sure that you take these insights, and no matter where you are on your health, your energy, let's go out and execute. Be intentional. Your clients, your future clients, your family, everybody who loves you, is counting on you. Don't let them down.

Wish you the best of success.

A Second Opinion on Your Finances

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Best of success,



John Bowen
Founder and CEO
Financial Advisor Select