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EPISODE
130

Dandapani

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John Bowen and Dandapani

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Episode #130



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Best of success,



John Bowen
Co-founder, AES Nation

John Bowen: As entrepreneurs, we all want to make a difference. We are all those who are charging ahead. We're working on the business. We are charging ahead, we're missing so much of what's going on in the life that can provide us the energy to be even more successful to make a difference. Today, I am very privileged and you are with me to have a remarkable entrepreneur who has been on a journey of gaining a great understanding of how we can be all that we're capable of being, of making that difference. He is a Hindu priest, an internationally renowned speaker, and a very successful entrepreneur who is helping some of the most successful entrepreneurs in the world, both large and small. Make a difference. You do not want to miss this.

Dandapani, I am so excited to have you here with me today. You are a truly remarkable individual and entrepreneur. I really want to share your message with our audience. First of all, thank you for joining us.

Dandapani: Thank you John. I really appreciate it. Thanks for having me in your show.

John: Well, you and I met at Johnson Gaignard's Mastermind talk. We're both at the event. You're on the top speakers there. We just had the chance to visit a little bit. You're sharing some of your back story and the difference you're now making. It's been both a journey to get to where you are. You've got some great lessons that you've been sharing with so many successful entrepreneurs that I wanted to bring to our audience. I got to tell you Dandapani, you're the first Hindu priest that I've had on Skype for this podcast. I'd love to get the back story because you are a monk for 10 years. You're engineer. This is not a now an entrepreneur. You're a really world renowned speaker, coach, making a difference. Tell us a little bit about this journey.

Dandapani: Well, thank you again for having me. Straight back right about myself, I'm Sri Lankan of ancestry and hence the brown. That's my DNA. I was born in Malaysia and my family migrated to Australia. I had wanted to be a monk since I was about 4, 5 years old. Ever since then it has been a quest for me to find the right teacher. To me, that was so important. I met many wonderful inspiring monks and gurus, and teaches along the way, but the biggest challenge I had with them was a lot of what they said was not practical and applicable in my life. They would inspire me. They would motivate me. I'd go home. I'd tell myself I'm going to do everything they said, and I would. I would do it for about 4, 5 days and then all the inspiration and motivation would go away, and I would default back to who I was.

After a while, I got frustrated and I said, "I don't really want to be inspired and I don't want to be motivated because I feel I'm quite inspired and motivated by myself." What I'm really looking for are tools, tools that I can apply in my life to make a difference and a sustainable change in my life. I finally met a Hindu monk who was actually born in America. He's American man that converted into Hinduism and became a Hindu monk, and decided to join his

monastery in Hawaii. After I graduated with a degree in electrical engineering in Australia, I left everything behind and moved to Hawaii to move in a traditional Hindu monastery. How it is in a monastery is it's quite strict. You literally give up everything and everyone. I only spoke to my parents twice a year on the phone. No emails. No phone calls and never stayed in touch with any of my friends and relatives. It was a true renunciation.

John: It really is amazing. So many of us don't understand that life and being removed from the world. One of the things that ... In doing a little research for the interview that became kind of interesting is that your monastery is a little different. Everybody had a MacBook. You look at and watch the news for 30 minutes every day. What I love is really taking the time. We're going to go into as entrepreneurs. There's so much noise in the world that isolating yourself, really giving you a chance to understand who you are, but then with those lessons that you're learning ... Unfortunately, so many monks don't share that with the rest of the world. You had a different order.

Dandapani: Yes. Every monk that came to the monastery got a set of ropes, a set of beads, and a MacBook pro. We have to learn how to program. Monks learn HTMLs, CSS, JavaScript, and we learn Photoshop and InDesign, and Illustrator. We can edit movies on Final Cut Pro. Just give us a Mac and we can do anything from there. I think we also learn finance. We learn how to create endowments to invest money. We have 2 endowments that grow from zero ... That started at zero and now has grown up to about 11 or 12 million dollars.

My guru was a very savvy entrepreneur monk. Rather than stay separate from the world, we realize that we're living in the world and the world is not a bad place. It's actually a beautiful place and we chose to look at all of these things, the Mac, the iPhones that the monks had, as tools, the same way that we have trained to look at our mind as a tool as well. That's one of the big trainings that we got in the monastery, is looking at ourselves and looking at ourselves as a tool. How can we understand this tool as well as possible, so that we can live the most effective life possible on this planet?

John: That is great. Tell me. You're a monk in Hawaii for 10 years. You have a MacBook Pro. You're learning all kinds of amazing things. You made the decision to go in a different direction. How did that happen?

Dandapani: Unfortunately, my teacher died 3 years after I joined the monastery. It was kind of a big changing point in the monastery and quite a few months left. I stayed 7 more years. At that point, I felt the monastery and I will go on a slightly different direction. When my vows came up for renewal, I decided not to renew them. Normally, there's a severance package for long-serving monks. They buy you a plane ticket home and then I did not want to go back to West Australia. My guru actually told me a long time ago, "A monk should never return to the place from which he came from."

I decided to move to the mainland and Los Angeles was the closest point of entry. My severance package was my ropes, my beads. They gave me a thousand dollars cash and a MacBook Pro, and a one-way ticket to Los Angeles. I landed at LAX at midnight, checked in to a backpack and motel in Santa Monica, roomed with 6 German backpackers in a few days. Those was the strangest thing. Six Germans and a monk in a room. It sounds like a joke. Then the next day, I went out and bought things that all of you have: Pants and shoes, and belts and got an email address and opened a bank account.

My goal was that I wanted to share what I had learned in the monastery. Also, I didn't want to borrow a single cent from anybody. I said I can do this on my own. I felt I had all the training and the tools I needed. My goal was to actually apply them now in the real world and create the life I want to create. I thought where better a place for next month in New York City? It's the perfect ashram. It's the perfect monastery in the world with all the tools into practice.

One of the big things, John, people would come to the monastery and we would share, these monks would share with them some of these teachings. One of the first responses to us is, "You don't know what it's like to live in New York. You don't know what it's like to live in London or Shanghai, or Berlin, to have a job, to have a family. You don't understand. You're a monk who live in this peaceful monastery and paradise in Hawaii." For me, I can leave these tools here in New York City and still create the life I want. My life is to be a living proof that these tools work.

John: I know you are doing it well. I want to get to the lessons, but for the benefit of our viewers who are watching the video versus the audio, Dandapani, you have 3 lines, white lines on your forehead. Maybe just share the significance of that because I think it's pretty ... It's an interesting story. It's important to you and it really leads in to life lessons that we're going to be talking about.

Dandapani: Yes, for sure. When I left the monastery, I'm no longer a monk, but, technically, I'm a Hindu priest. As a Hindu priest, I can get married. I can be an entrepreneur. I can work and earn money, and do all the things that all of you do. This is the traditional dress and makeup, so you could say, of a Hindu priest. The first line at the bottom of my forehead represents the ego and quite often the spirituality people say that you should renounce your ego and give it up. We don't believe that. We believe that everybody has an ego. The goal was to cultivate a positive ego, to be kind, to be generous, and all these possible qualities that a lot of people would like to embody.

The second line represents the karma which is the law of cause and effect. Simply stated, if you're able to control your actions and reactions, you can truly control how your future unfolds. Quite often people are overcome by the emotions and the emotions dictate quite often the actions and reactions to people that concern them. Having control over that allows us to

determine how our future unfolds. The third line represents maya the word of illusion which we take the perspective that quite often in my people get caught up with people and things that don't really matter and forget the people and things that truly do matter in your life. We get caught up with the celebrities and what they're doing and what they're wearing, as opposed to what's our children wearing and what are they doing, and what's our spouse doing. The people that we love, our friends that we love.

This leads into our next topic, one of the topics that we're going to talk about today, John, which is the concept on managing your energy. The premise that there's only a finite amount of energy each day and we want to wisely invest that energy. It's a limited resource and you want to wisely invest that energy in people and things. The third line: Knowing who and what's important in your life is so crucial and you only have a finite resource.

John: Well, let's dive into ... Let's go with the energy as the first one. You're out there working with so many CEOs, so many fellow entrepreneurs, and one of the things that you are so good at is coaching entrepreneurs on managing their energy and ... There is no lack of things that can suck energy out of an entrepreneur. I was talking with a good friend yesterday. He was an entrepreneur and he's got multiple issues going on in his family. They're a little challenging. He's got some business challenges, some health challenges. It's so easy to get overwhelmed, but we've all been there. How do we manage our energy so that we don't ... When you lose energy, your effectiveness is gone.

Dandapani: Well, for me, one of the first things to do, I think, as an entrepreneur ... I always tell entrepreneurs to take this perspective. Treat energy the same way you treat money. No matter how much money you have, you only have a finite amount of money, right? Nobody has an infinite amount of money no matter how wealthy you are. When you spend money, most of the time you think. When you spend \$10 on this and then you spend \$200 on this and a thousand dollars on this, you think about it before you spend.

I always ask entrepreneurs, "What would you think about where you're investing your energy throughout the day if you think of the concept that we only have a finite amount of energy today?" Everytime we engage with someone or something, we're spending a little bit of that energy. At the end of the day, you're not going to have any energy left. The questions I ask when I spend energy is, "What's my return on my investment on this energy?" If I'm going to get my energy to someone, I want to know what they're going to do with it. The same way if I ask all in the audience and I said to them, "I'm starting a new company. I need some investment money. I need \$2000 from everyone." If I had \$2000 from a hundred people, I'll have enough to begin this whole project.

How many people would write me a check for \$2000 without asking any questions? Most people will want to know, right? Where is the money going? What's the business plan? What are you going to do with it? All these questions. The same way -

John: Am I ever going to get my \$2000 back?

Dandapani: Right, exactly. The same way we should ask a question when we invest our energy in people and things around us. This is why because in our life, we have things that are important to us. You may have a spouse that you love, children that you love, and your business that you love. These things are definitely higher on the priority list, right? If just say Joe comes and Joe's an energy vampire, for example, who wants a bit of your energy, in order to give Joe, just say, \$20 Joules of your energy, you need to take it out of either your spouse, your business, your children, the things that you love, the people that you love.

When you're taking energy away from something or someone that you love to invest it somewhere else, you really have to ask these business questions on what my return on my investment is. I don't mind giving you a bit on my energy, but I want to know what you're going to do with it. If you're going to waste it, then I'd rather give it to the people and things that I love. Once you start taking that perspective, we're able to firstly manage your energy, not you'll find this that you'll have a lot more energy throughout the day. Making conscious choices throughout the day of where you're choosing to invest your energy.

John: Now, I think this is so important. As entrepreneurs, so often what we do is we don't really make that investment decision. What I find, Dandapani, so many entrepreneurs. They focus on managing their time. I'm not a big believer of managing time. I'm with you. It's managing of energy because –

Dandapani: Can I interrupt you and say like you, I'm not a big believer in time management at all, but truly on energy management.

John: Yeah. It is so critical. You talk about ... I bring up because I was in some of the reading ... These vampires that are there.

Dandapani: Yes.

John: Give us as little of what that is and how can we protect ourselves as entrepreneurs.

Dandapani: The number one target for energy vampires are entrepreneurs. They're like the number one food source for energy vampires. The 2 reasons for this: One is that entrepreneurs have the ability to take nothing and create something. Right? That's what entrepreneurs are. Another thing that entrepreneurs can do is actually perpetually solve

problems throughout the whole day. That's what energy vampires are looking for. They're looking for someone who can create something in their life from nothing and solve all the problems along the way in the process of creating that something.

IF you're an entrepreneur, you have to understand that when energy vampires ... You have to understand that energy vampires can smell you out in a crowd. They'll come straight for you and they will ask for your energy. There are certain tools that you can use or techniques that I use myself to protect myself. The one simple one that you can do ... As entrepreneurs, you probably know. A lot of people coming up to you asking you for advice if you're an expert in a particular field. My guru told me, a very wise monk. He said to me, "Never give free advice." That doesn't mean you have to charge for the advice, but he said when you give advice, at the end of your advice, always give them something to do. Don't just only give advice. Give them something to do. Give them a small simple task to do and tell them to go away and do this. Then if they come back to you 2 months later or 3 months later and ask you for more advice, the first thing you ask them is, "Have you done what I told you to do?" Ninety-nine percent of the time, the answer is no. They'll have some excuse and that's when you respond and you say, "I would love to give you the next piece of advice, but, unfortunately, it's totally dependent on the first part being done.

John: I love that.

Dandapani: Complete the first part. Come back and see me and I'll be more than happy to.

John: Now, I think all of us as entrepreneurs as you're telling that story, we could see the vampires that have been in our lives on occasion. I think that's an unbelievably great solution that all of us should execute, because giving them an action to move it forward is really ... Providing advice but an action. It's just so valuable and if they choose not to use it, then you can encourage them to use it if they come back. If not ... I mean if they do something. Most of us really love helping other people. Make a difference.

Dandapani: Exactly.

John: And then they will.

Dandapani: The question really is, right, John, how do you disseminate between those that are going to do something with your help and those that are not going to do something with your help? That's a big question entrepreneurs like me. You really need a measuring tool and for me, it's giving a task, giving a simple task whether they can execute it or not. Those who can execute and come back, go out on your way to help them because you know those are the people that are actually going to go away and do something with their lives, and do something with the energy that you invested in them.

John: That is great advice. I have never done it that way and I will do it that way going forward.

Dandapani: It works great.

John: I've got a bunch of people. I won't say any names that are going to be getting that the next day or 2.

Dandapani: You asked another question, John, sorry to interrupt you but I have a question for all of your entrepreneur audience. Okay, this is my question. How many of you have energy vampires in your life right now and what's the first name that's coming to your head when I mention the word energy vampire? Write it down. The next question is why are you keeping an energy vampire as a pet? People get dogs, cats, and hamsters as pet. Energy vampires don't make good pets. My question is, why are you having them in your life right now? Your energy is so valuable. As an entrepreneur, as a leader of your business and leader of your company and large group of people that are working under you, your energy is so precious that you need to be so conscious and wise about who and what you invested in. The first step is really eradicating these energy vampires out of your life.

John: Well, that really leads us to the second lesson we're going to talk about, is concentration and focus. I mean you're in New York City. I'm in Silicon Valley. There are plenty of parts in the world that are noise. The mere fact with electronics. You have noise everywhere and all the distractions. How do entrepreneurs really use this concentration that you talk about to be more effective? We heard that and we know multitasking hundred different things, having a million things going on, isn't productive. Boy, it's hard to stay focused.

Dandapani: This is my personal belief and opinion. I believe that people can't concentrate for 2 reasons. One is nobody has been taught how to concentrate. Second is nobody practices concentration. Let me ask you a question here, John. Growing up ... Did you grow up in the States?

John: I did, Upstate, New York. Small town.

Dandapani: Okay. Did you have any formal classes on concentration when you were growing up?

John: I probably have more classes on the lack of concentration than any ... No. I don't think I ever had. I've got a couple master's degrees, all kinds of other education along the way.

Dandapani: Did anybody teach you how to concentrate?

John: No.

Dandapani: Did anybody ever say to you, "John, concentrate on this, concentrate on that?"

John: I'm going to say the only time I was ever given a lesson, I was a pilot of the Navy. It is very important to stay focused on task during that time, so I had some pretty good start. Other than that, no life lessons on concentrate.

Dandapani: Isn't it amazing? Then I wonder why people can't concentrate. When I was growing up, people told me to concentrate all the time. Dandapani, concentrate on your homework. Dandapani, concentrate on eating your food. Nobody ever taught me how to do it. If you don't teach someone how to do it and they don't practice it, how will they ever be good at it? If I wanted to learn to play the piano, I need to take lessons, right?

John: Yeah. Definitely.

Dandapani: If I want to be really, really good, if I want to play in Juilliard, the top performances in New York, how many hours a day would you recommend I practice?

John: I have a couple good friends who went to Juilliard and I think the 10,000 hours that everybody talks about may be low to get there.

Dandapani: Just throw me a number that you think a day.

John: Well, I think probably an absolute minimum of 4 hours would be ... If you were one of the most skilled individuals in the world.

Dandapani: For an average, probably 7-8 hours a day.

John: Oh, yeah. Easily.

Dandapani: Seven to eight hours a day I practice piano. Just say 6 days a week. Do you think I would be playing at the highest level in a year?

John: I think you would be proficient.

Dandapani: Okay. Good. Thank you. That was the answer I'm looking for. Imagine this. Imagine if I practice distraction 8 hours a day, 6 days a week. I'm going for my Twitter, to my Facebook, to my email, to my text messages, answering my calls, doing one thing, another, all day and I practice at 8 hours a day. Six days a week. After 6 months or after a year, wouldn't I be proficient in being distractive? After a year and a half, I would be an expert in

distraction. After 2 years, I could write the New York Times bestseller on distraction. I could travel around the world. I could give keynotes on distraction. I'd be so distracted I won't even know what I was there to talk about.

John: I'm kind of chuckling, I have a good friend who is Dr. Ned Hallowell who I interviewed earlier in a podcast. He's written a book on distraction. He said it wasn't very hard to research at all.

Dandapani: Can people actually get through the book?

John: Actually, it's a bestseller. He's been phenomenally successful and did all the TV shows and so on. The reason for that is this is such a big problem for ... I mean it's not limited to entrepreneurs. It's just daily life, everyone, I mean we're seeing more and more people walking down the streets, certainly in New York with their smartphones, running into people, running into poles.

Dandapani: The way I recommend, the easiest way to learn concentration is to practice doing one thing at a time. You know it sounds so simple, but monks like to keep things simple and not complicate things. As simple that you can keep a lesson and a tool, the higher the chances of you actually putting it into practicing your life. What I do to practice concentration is I do one thing at a time. When I'm speaking with my spouse, I get my spouse my undivided attention. When I'm speaking with you on Skype, I don't have my phone turned on, it's actually on at plane mode. I've got all of emails and notifications turned off. You have my undivided attention.

Two things. First, you need to learn to practice concentration and, second, you need to practice it. If concentration is something you really want to develop in your own life, you have to understand that the only way and really the only way to get good at it is to practice it, to practice it in everything that you do in your life. Not just waking up in the morning and doing a 5-minute meditation or a 10-minute meditation, hoping that that 10 minutes of focus will spread throughout the day. That's like eating a carrot in the morning and then eating pizzas and hamburgers throughout the whole day and expecting to be healthy. It doesn't work.

John: It's interesting. This is something I've learned later in life how to do, and it's been really effective, because what I've gone ahead and done is I now have my calendar blocked 2-1/2 hours every day. There are different focuses. An hour and a half in the morning, I find that I'm really probably the most productive on my major goals. I have 5 major goals in life and I have a little black here so that I will stay focused. I flip it over depending on the amount of time. Normally, 15 minutes.

Dandapani: What is this? Can I ask?

John: Oh, it's a little timer really, but I just set it to the number that I want that I'm going to stay focused. Everything is turned off. I just did this and the reason why I'm bringing it up, there's so many distractions. The door is shut. The phones are off. Do not disturb. No email. My productivity has gone up dramatically, but also my feeling of satisfaction that I help my ... Really how productive, how I'm making things happen, the ability to provide leadership. I mean this is something as entrepreneurs that we just need to work on. Everything around us as you're saying is just trying to distract us.

Dandapani: You know, I would always tell entrepreneurs, "Adopt a policy of zero tolerance for distraction policy." A zero tolerance for distraction policy. I always ask the companies that I work with. I ask the CEO, "How many of your employees are distracted?" The answer is all of them. If you're working 8 hours a day in your company and they're distracted for 5 of those hours, why don't you just pay them for the 3 hours and tell them to go home the rest of the time. What a waste of money. I would never hire someone for 8 hours and have them be distracted for 5 hours. I would teach them to become concentrated, so they can be focused and effective and efficient in the business. I'm surprised walking into so many companies that I work with how inefficient they run the company because the one thing that most company owners don't teach the employees is the concept of concentration.

John: It's so much more satisfying for the employee as well. I mean that's the thing that's crazy about this is it's not that they want to be distracted. It's just they are. This is something that we can really do. Let me go to the next one though. I want to make sure. There's so much ... Any of these we could spend hours on because they're so important. The third point you and I are talking about, to me, is the most important. It's life purpose. Often we talk about it as why and ... Share with us what have been some of your findings in talking with entrepreneurs.

Dandapani: That's really interesting. Again, as I said with you, I speak to organizations like EO and YPO, and WPO, and a lot of different companies around the world. I remember once. It actually really dawned on me when I was in Australia a couple of years ago. I was sitting with a group of very, very successful entrepreneurs after an event. They took me out to dinner. It was 11:00 at night and we were on our fourth glass of wine, I think, by that time. I asked a very, very simple question to the 4 men that were seating there and even a couple of their spouses. I asked them, "What's your purpose in life?" Two people gave me a straight answer, "I don't know." One person rambled on for 5 minutes which told me he had no idea and one spouse broke down crying, and the other spouse said, "I don't know." Nobody at the table knew.

Simple question: What's your purpose in life? Nobody could give me a straight answer. That's something I help a lot of entrepreneurs figure out. I have one entrepreneur that I coached and he has created about 4, 5 companies, extremely successful. They're all running on their own. She has somebody reporting to him an hour a week on each company telling ... Giving an

update on what's going on. She said to me, "Dandapani, what do I do now? Do I start another company? I know exactly where I will be 2 years from now. We'll be having the same conversation. Somebody is going to be running it for me. It's going to be successful. What do I do now with my life?"

I think that's the question because once you know your purpose in life, once you know what you want in life, the greatest thing that you get out of that is you know what you don't want and you know who you don't want in your life. I can tell you, John. That's the most priceless thing in the world to know what you don't want and who you don't want because that goes back to the very first topic that we spoke about. That helps you decide immediately instantaneously where to invest your energy. People don't know where to invest their energy because they don't know what they want. Because they don't know what they want, they don't know what they don't want and then they put the energy in things, and then find out later on through trial and error, "That was not where I was supposed to invest my energy." Does that make sense?

John: Well, it makes huge sense. I look at it all. The clarity of purpose to me is just so important because when we look ... Today, I'm 59. I'm about ready to turn 60. With health and everything that's going on, I have an expectation that I'm going to be doing what I'm doing maybe at different levels, but for the next 25 years.

Dandapani: I lived up to 125. You're only halfway there.

John: We've got to stay healthy in the next 10, 15 years. The medical advancements that are coming are just unbelievable on human longevity. When you start thinking about this ... That's where I go and I say, geez, the whole focus, if I've got another 25 years of really being productive, what do I want to do? This is where understanding that clarity of purpose. What is that den as Steven Jobs talks about? The den in the universe that you want to make and then ... Okay. Who do I need on my team? Who do I want to be involved? How do I want to build a business that generates the quality of life for all stake ... In my own in line self-interest? My own.

Once you start getting this ... I'll tell you. I found this to be so freeing compared to when you're just running whether it's Silicon Valley, in New York, any major business center and you're running so hard. You really don't know why other than chasing money. Boy, I say this often that so often people will trade their health, their youth, for money. Then as we get older, we're trading our money to try to buy health back. It's a crazy life. When we look at this life purpose, it's really getting clear. This is something that's not ... It doesn't come to you instantly. It's a thought. It's a journey. It's so easy to get up in the entrepreneurial fog. How do you help your clients and then probably go through this and get clarity? I'm thinking it's not that fifth or sixth glass of wine. It all of a sudden shows up.

Dandapani: I wish it was, I'd have bottles of wine in my house. You know, before we touch that, I also want to bring up one point something you mentioned here. You said in the next 25 years you see yourself doing this, John. My question as well is what happens after that? Your life purpose should really carry through your entire span of your life. From the moment you're born until the moment you die, it should hold strong. I tell entrepreneurs, "Your life purpose should never be dependent on anything or anyone."

I'll give you an example. Last year, I took a group of entrepreneurs to the Himalayas. We did an 11-day retreat. We went trekking up in the mountains with Sherpas, we were camping up there. The whole theme of the retreat is, "What's your purpose in life?" At one point, I had this very successful man come up to me and says, "I have found my life purpose." Up in the mountains in the Himalayas. He said, "My purpose in life is my wife, my children, and my business." I said to him, "That cannot be a purpose." He goes, "Why?" I said, "What if someone came up to me and offered you X amount of dollars for your company, would you sell it?" He said, "For the right amount, I will." That's gone. Now, you've got 2 left, right? Your wife and your children. I said, "God forbid if something did happen to them like a plane crash or something and they were gone. Now what's your purpose in life?"

You don't have a purpose in life. I think what ends up happening to people... My grandmother is an example because I think this is a really important point to emphasize ... She's 90 years old. She just turned 90, in good health. She got married at 18. Had 8 children. I think about 21 or 23 grandchildren and great grandchildren and more. Her whole life was devoted to her husband. When her husband died about 14 years ago, it's almost like she lost her purpose in life.

This is what will happen to most entrepreneurs and their spouses. Entrepreneurs focus on the business, but they know they're not always going to be doing that at some point in their life that they're going to sell their business or stop because they must do this their whole life. Then what? Then what do you do then? If you don't have a purpose, there's no focus and drive in your life of all that energy. Here's the other thing that entrepreneurs should think about. It's your spouse. Quite often the spouse supports the husband, in case of where the man is the entrepreneur. She looks after the children. She looks after the husband, supports him as he develops the company. The company gets this in place where it's doing really well. He doesn't really fully need her support anymore. Their children go to college and all of a sudden, she's left alone going, "What's my purpose now?" I see this to be a huge problem in the entrepreneur world. I've actually met so many families where it's a train wreck waiting to happen in about 5 or 6 years when the last child goes to college because the wife has no purpose.

All of a sudden, she's not needed by the husband and not needed by the children. That's when the marriage starts to get affected and starts to fall apart. Not only does the entrepreneur need to have a purpose in life, but also the spouse as well.

John: It is. This is something that I'm going to encourage everyone to really spend some time on because it is so powerful. It does provide clarity because every day I'm looking ... I'm going to go back to your vampire. Does that fit my life purpose? No. Not at all. I mean it's so easy to make decisions once you get clarity of the direction you're going, and it's so much distraction and noise out there. Without that, you're going to set yourself up for failure.

Dandapani: I was very clear fortunately for me about 4, 5 years old knowing what my purpose in life was. That really helps me make decisions everyday in my life between choosing who and what I want to engage with. To me, that's priceless. I always tell entrepreneurs. Put it number one on your list. Figure out what your life purpose is and that will help you manage your energy and give you clarity on where to focus the energy as well throughout the day.

John: It is such a powerful lesson. Let me go to the next segment which is resources. What I'd love to do, let me pull up your website and how would somebody ... One of our fellow entrepreneurs if they want to reach out to you and find out about what you're doing. Well, we got a picture of an elephant here and some guys scrubbing it down. Tell us a little bit about these spiritual tools for our life.

Dandapani: Yes. Spiritual tools for life. I'll be launching an online course on meditation. It's called Introduction to Meditation. It's a 12-week course and you can discover that on www.learn.dandapani.org. Sir John will start out in the spring. The other place you can also visit is just main website which is Dandapani.org. That's D-A-N-D-A-P-A-N-I.org. On there, you can find out about these retreats that I do. I do a couple of them a year and they're called spiritual adventures. I take entrepreneurs like yourself to different parts of the world. We usually go to somewhere really remote where you can ... Each retreat, I should say, has a scene whether it's life circles or something like that. We spend 10 to 11 days out in the Himalayas and the jungles in India or Cambodia, or Indonesia focusing on growth and it's a home away from your phone, from your spouse, your family. That's an intense time and we call it Monk 101.

John: I'd tell you the one thing. I did look at the pictures of your previous ones and there looked to be an awful lot of happy people on that journey and they were having ... Not only learning but enjoying themselves very well.

Dandapani: One of the rules. We have one rule in the trip and that is everybody needs to have a great time. We follow the teaching that my teacher taught me that life was meant to be lived joyously. That's something I always keep in my mind that life is going to be lived

joyously. John that we can go so broke down in the work that we're doing and pursuing our goals and trying to attain them. We forget that life is meant to be lived joyously. If you're not living life joyously, all the money in the world that you make, you can never buy the joy back 20 years from now or 10 years from now.

John: To me, that's one of the most important points. You've made so many of them, but that's, to me, critical. As entrepreneurs, we are so privileged. We have so much to be grateful for. What a shame if we don't design our life to live joyously. It's just so important.

Dandapani: One point, I think, we should really be grateful ... I think the audience ... I had an entrepreneur ask me recently. "Dandapani, how much is enough? Is it one million? Is it 10 million? Is it 50 million?" I said, "You're asking the wrong question." The question should be not how much is enough. I truly believe in making as much money as possible because I believe with wealth, we can do a lot of good in the world. Make as much as you want to make. The question here is, at what point do you start compromising the things and people that you love in the pursuit of that extra? When you hit that point where you're compromising energy and time with the people and things that you love to pursue that little extra, that's when you know you've gone too far.

John: I'm looking down in my notes. I'm going to start with what we ended really. Life is to be lived. As entrepreneurs, so often it's easy with all the pressure and everything else that we focus on satisfying everyone else, but not living a life on purpose. This is critical. Number one we talked about was managing energy. Not time. Energy. Be very conscious. Download from the interview. We can go ahead and you can download at AES Nation the transcript, the show notes. All the links.

There's so many pearls of wisdom that Dandapani that is shared, and that we want to put in our life. Number one I'd tell you is managing energy. Second is concentration. I gave some examples of how I'm doing it, but this is ... No matter how you do it, you've got to make time for this because it's so easy not to stay focused. We know with this ... Having that, directing the energy that you have and other resources that you have, your teammates and so on. You can have so much success.

Big number 3 is that life purpose. Clarity of purpose. Why you're doing it. We're all on this journey together. It may change overtime. You can evolve, but what are you looking to do? How are you going to make a difference? Both why you're here and when you're not. We as entrepreneurs just have so many opportunities. The one thing I'm going to ask everyone to do is go out. Go to the show notes, AESNation.com. Make sure, if you're watching our podcast, subscribe to it. Any reviews would be great. The big thing is execute. Put these 3 life lessons in place. You will not be disappointed. Clients, your future clients, and your family: They're all counting on you. Do not let them down. All the best of success.

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