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ACCELERATING ENTREPRENEURIAL SUCCESS PODCAST

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142

Alex Charfen

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John Bowen and Alex Charfen
Episode #142

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Best of success,



John Bowen
Co-founder, AES Nation

John Bowen: As entrepreneurs, we want to make a difference. We want to make a big difference. Today, I've got a really remarkable entrepreneur who's going to be joining with us. He is going to share some life lessons. They're going to accelerate your success even more. I'm John Bowen, founder of AES Nation. Let me tell you about my guest. He was one of the top consultants in some of the largest firms, public firms in the country, not only to the companies, but to their leaders, and really "the" leader, some of the richest individuals in the world.

This wasn't spot consulting, this was decade long engagement and really accelerated their success, and some lessons he's going to share there, but it didn't stop there. Remember 2009-2009, how could you not? For me, in the financial services, and for Alex in the real estate industry at that time, we saw a real opportunity to help others. He and his wife created a product, really some advice and to accelerate real estate, to go through that 2008-2009. 45,000 real estate entrepreneurs went through that. His whole life has been around understanding entrepreneurs, their personality, and how they accelerate success. You are going to be so glad that you met Alex Charfen. I'll tell you, stay tuned. This is going to be invaluable.

I'll tell you, I'm so happy to have you hear. You and I met at the last Joe Polish Genius Network Mastermind Group. I don't know of anyone that's more high energy in delivering more value in that group. I think there were over 60 entrepreneurs, and you were the guy leading the charge. It's great to have you. I want to share you with our audience.

Alex Charfen: Thank you, John. I'm glad you brought Joe. That is my favorite place in the world, going in and hanging out in that room.

John: It really is. I've learned so much over the last 5 years being in that mastermind group. You have so many good connections. I want to do an ad for Joe. That would be something if you wanted-

Alex: If you have the means and the motivation, check it out.

John: Yeah, check it out. Definitely. Let's come back, because you've had an amazing career, a consultant and doing a whole bunch of things on real estate, and then now this whole new journey on helping so many entrepreneurs. Give me a little bit of the back story, because it's not overnight success. There's some bumps on the road that we all experience. Tell me a little bit about yours.

Alex: Yeah. No, John, I wasn't an overnight success. I was a consistent failure who get lucky every once in a while. When I was a kid, very young, from an early age, I know I was different. I felt isolated and I felt different than the rest of the world. The back story is when I was young,

the place that felt safe to me, the place where I really connected was going to work with my father. Like so many entrepreneurs, the first time that I was in a business with the context and rules of the business, the reduced options that the real world had, and the connection to exchange, knowing that if you worked, you can earn value, because I didn't know how to create value. I loved that place. When I was 8 years old, that business failed.

I was there the day my dad liquidated everything with his partner, and there was a drill press and a drinking fountain. We got the drill press, and that lived in our garage for a decade. From when I was a tiny kid, I thought about the question "How do you make business grow?" and it's been consistent. That's a great pivot, John. You ask it consistently enough, and you can make business grow, but what happens is you realize ... "How do you stop business from failing?" was my second question, and that's a quick pivot to "How do you help people grow?" I've had this obsessive quest for, first, how do you create business and make it grow. When I was in my mid-20s I could grow any business. They went out of business from growth, and then it became how do you keep them around. John, the most important thing in any business is the people.

John: It really is. I had a similar childhood. I had a very successful father who cast iron business, and then all of sudden it went under. He and my uncle ... There's so many lessons learned, and then there were so many mistakes made by made. It's one of the reasons why I became so involved in the financial services industry, because there's a lot of safety nets you could, if you have the right advisors and a successful business. That's really what we're here for, Alex, is that there's an opportunity that we all have as we're building businesses, to really make a difference. We were talking earlier, and some of the key lessons learned, these hard lessons learned. Let's start with number 1, momentum based being that as entrepreneurs we are momentum. What do you mean by that?

Alex: John, my career was super unique as a consultant. I think it was even unique among consultants, because when I ended up very quickly doing ... I was very young, and I gained the partnership of a reputable firm, so almost immediately, I was in the board rooms with the C level executives with the owners, with the entrepreneur who started the billion dollar business. Here's what I quickly saw, was that at the highest levels of success, we're all the same. In fact, the personality types were so similar it was predictable how we behave. Over time I started identifying the qualities. The single largest quality, the single most visible quality of the entrepreneurial personality type, which is unlike the rest of the world. I like the rest of the world, and there's the historians, the memorizers, the rule followers. We're not those guys.

The difference is when the world says, "Hey John, are you happy or sad?" we make up a translation for what we think is happy or sad, but it's bull shit. We don't understand emotions. You, me, every entrepreneur has been told you don't feel enough, you don't feel the right way, you don't feel often enough, like "How are you feeling?" The fact is I know the difference

between happy and said, but the difference between, happy, sad, frustrated, irate, pissed off, ticked off, confused, irritated, and all the rest of the shit, I don't know. Here's what I know. People like you and I, we exist in 3 states. One we're in momentum, we're going forward, and that's flow. That's when we're connected. You know what's weird about being in momentum, it makes us smarter. We get a cognitive boost. We get a physical boost. We get an immune system boost. We are better human beings when we are in momentum. Would you agree? I know for all of us.

John: It's amazing. As I'm thinking of momentum, Alex, from an entrepreneurial standpoint, what happens, the high-performance when we're in the flow, and then life comes along and whacks us.

Alex: You're right.

John: Then we bounce up. We want to get back to that flow state if we're going to be effective.

Alex: Well, let's talk about that, John. Here's what happen. I think we exist in 2 other states too. Momentum is flow, but the rest of the world doesn't know this, because they say stuff to us like its crazy shit. They say, "John, sit down. Calm down, take a break, take some time off, take a breather." All of that only raises pressure and noise for us. Right? The second state we exist in is what you just said. Life comes along, it knocks us backwards, but here's what's so crazy about our personality type. When we're pushed backwards, when we experience resistance, when we have that cognitive dissonance, it lets' us know we need to do something different, is when we show up. That's when we become amazing, that's when we change things. That's when we do things, as long as we have the support of people like us.

The third state that we exist in is constraint, when we are held place. Here's what I want everyone to hear, if you are an entrepreneurial personality type, a momentum based being, what I've said has made sense. Understand that when you are held in place, it affects you cognitively, chemically, and physically. We actually show the signs of disorders, we show the symptoms of issues when we are held in constraint, and we all know that. When we we're held in place, when pressure and noise goes up, when we can't see a way out, we go crazy. EPTs, people like us, will destroy their lives, change their businesses, and do all kinds of things, and John, up to and including suicidal ideation and action. The fact is, if we can get back to contribution, connect with an EPT, and move forward with momentum, everything changes. The rest of the world doesn't understand this, or they wouldn't tell us to sit still.

John: It's so powerful too, Alex. This is one of the reasons I think entrepreneurs hang out when they're not working, because they're driven, they want to get the momentum in the flow, but where there are so much value. We were talking Joe's Mastermind Group. I'm in 3 mastermind groups. Hanging out with other fellow entrepreneurs helps us stay in that flow

and really having the right team, as you do, it's amazing. Let me go to the second one, because really piggy backs on the lessons learned as why aren't entrepreneurs so misunderstood? We think of our friends who are not entrepreneurs, our family members who are not entrepreneurs. Particularly for many, the viewers and listeners, you out there, you've got successful business.

Really, this podcast is for people with 5 million or more of financial assets. You're out making good money, you've got probably a pretty good financial resources, if not great financial resources, and your friends look at it like, "Are you crazy? Why are you still doing this?" Alex, why are these entrepreneurs, why are we so misunderstood?

Alex: John, I think when you look at the qualities of an entrepreneur ... Let's list the qualities. What does it take to be a successful entrepreneur? Not the BS that the public talks about, but what you and I know. Here's what you have to have. You have to be restless, insanely motivated, driven, and myopically focused, able to pursue a single focused result for a long time. You need to be able to cut things off and change things around you, and be stubborn, really hold your ground, because here's what we do. Entrepreneurs stand up and say, "Let's change things." We say the status quo is not working, we say there's a better solution, we say let's move forward.

The problem is that the most of society clings desperately to what they know, to the status quo, and they fight us. As a result, every entrepreneur is crazy until they sell something. As a result, there's more entrepreneurs in jail, rehab, homeless, and in an early grave, than running business like you and I. Because when you're the kid who questions authority, has a different solution, says something different, is restless, motivated, you can't sit still. These days, we medicate you. The fact is 10,000 tries to make a fucking light bulb wasn't OCD. That was entrepreneurial brilliance. To call it OCD is insane.

Thomas Edison was sent home from school, because they thought he was addled which is the same as saying retarded, because he thought differently. The fact is it's been way too long that the system is broken. I want entrepreneurs to know there's nothing wrong with them. You're not broken.

John: It's pretty amazing. I look at, at least when I was in school, all they did ... They didn't give you drugs. They send you to the vice principal's office. I got to know him really well. As entrepreneurs, when you start ... I haven't thought about it, Alex. The best entrepreneurs, they struggle. They're restless, they're driven, they're focused, and they're stubborn. These are not attributes that most in society really loves. As a matter of fact, you're off to the side. If you're going to build a great business and make a difference in the world ... We think of the most highly successful entrepreneurs or written up in books that we've read, they're outsider so often. I'm going to go to the third point, because this is so important. You're not alone.

Some days as entrepreneurs, we've got all these responsibilities to our clients, our customers, our teammates, the banks, our strategy partners, this and that. Often times, even in our family situations and our friends, we really can't talk about these things. Alex, I don't know about you, but it's easy to feel alone as an entrepreneur.

Alex: John, I totally agree. The challenge is that we are accustomed to being alone. When you're in school and you're in a system that holds you in place, and basically the skillset to survive school is comply, sit still, and memorize, which all of us are terrible at. When I say that we're not alone, here's what I want you all to hear, especially if any of this is related to you. So many of us have felt like we were isolated, different, alien, a party of one. I want you to understand that the most successful entrepreneurs in history felt the same way, because in our lifetimes, we fail to see the simple connection that when you look back at the timeline of history and you raise up any name that is worth being remembered, any name you've ever studied, any name you ever respected in history, whether it was an explorer, or a philosopher, or a writer, or a screen writer, an actor, whoever it was that changed your life, that was someone just like us.

Not only are you not lone, but when we take in that context, what the entrepreneurial personalities have truly is, you're not only not alone, you're part of the most important club in history. If entrepreneurs can lower pressure and noise in their life, and learn how to ask for protection and support, their strengths and ability show, and they move on to make their greatest contribution. John, I want to be very clear with everyone, I'm a capitalist, but I know that capital flows to contribution. The shortcut is go to where we all already know we want to go, because if in the back of your mind, there's a voice saying there's something more important, there's something bigger, there's more to give, you can do more, then you're one of us, and you're not alone.

John: I am a big free market kind of guy, and capitalism works. This is what the podcast is all about, Alex, is it's how can we make a difference. We get rewarded by doing well by others, creating value. Many of the things that we're talking about, these are ... Society looks at ... we're different. Well, that difference is not a disadvantage, it's a huge advantage, but we've got to be careful. This is one of the lessons that you share, your number 4. Why most entrepreneurs are addicted to change, the shiny new thing, and really set up for failure, accept failure? We're entrepreneurs, we're having all this. We recognize that we're a little different. We're going to harness this energy and really focus it. Boy, we can set ourselves up for pretty big failures.

Alex: Yeah. John, when we share with entrepreneurs that we become addicted to change and programmed to accept failure, it's in this regard. I have worked with so many entrepreneurs that really passed the point of their career, where fail forward fail fast should be the daily objective. The challenge is that one of the entrepreneurial characteristic or

attributes, I think they're back here behind ... No, wrong list. One of the attributes is highly adaptable. We are adaptable. Entrepreneurs make through school 1 or 2 ways. You either game the system or survive the system. Usually it's a little of both, but its high adaptability. We adapt, and adapt and change, and adapt and change, and adapt in change.

When you get into market, and you'll do that for a while, and then you get purchase. Somebody buys something, you move forward, things go well. The problem is we associate doing everything to doing well. As a result, we do everything poorly. We get addicted to change and programmed to accept failure. We tell each other things like, "Oh, fail forward fail fast." Guys, at a point in your career, that's bull shit. You got to stop failing, put some pegs in the ground, get the foundation of your business down, and become a real entrepreneur building a team, moving things forward and evolving. The addicted to change is where we need to shift mind-set, because here's the biggest change for entrepreneurs.

The day we declare, "I'm an entrepreneur" we become insecure because we become a product and we're a commodity now, and so we stop asking for help. The entrepreneur's dichotomy is that, "I need more help than the average person to accomplish what I want to do because it's much bigger than the goals of the average person, but I'm scared to ask for it." Just like all of you. The way that we get to of this addiction to change is we slow down, we become transparent with those around us, build a team, set our sights on a large objective making a big contribution, and move forward. It gets us out of that shiniest penny mind-set.

John: Alex, this is, to me, one of the most important things. I've started a number of businesses. I had pretty big successes, as well as some pretty big failures. In Silicon Valley, fail fast is a motto in where I live. One of the things is we build the business. You've got to fail fast as you're starting up. There's so many success for entrepreneurs here, and the tendency to try new things and this. What has helped me, and has been a big thing for me, this concept of "Hell yes" or "No." You talked about ... Jim Collins calls it the BHAG, the big hairy audacious goal, the vision, your drive in it to the extent that you have that clarity of this vision.

All these shiny things, they're going to come. They're going to come faster and faster as you have more successes, more opportunity, unless it's aligned with your mission, your team, and what you want to accomplish. If it is, it's a "Hell yes, let's bring it in." If it's not, it's a "no." That has been so helpful for me, because I used to be one of those shiny new thing kind of guy. I got a great team. They're more than happy to point out when I go in that way. Let's go to number 5, which is there is nothing wrong with you. We've talked about all this stuff about us as entrepreneurs, and you know what? Some days it feels like we're wired wrong. What's that?

Alex: This one is important to me, John, because I think that the market preys on entrepreneurs. When you're the one who wants to change things, when you're restless, when

the status quo is what challenges you, it doesn't necessarily have to just be somebody coming at you. You're one of those people that walks into a retail store and starts rearranging it in your head. You're not asking that to happen, it just does. That restlessness, that drive, that innate motivation, that burning desire, you feel to do something, and maybe you know where you're placing it, maybe you don't, is what it should be. In the world today, there's a consistent message that is breaking entrepreneurs. It's making us crazy, and it's making us so that we can't find our greatest contribution.

The message, when you distill the pressure and noise, is buy this thing, get this crazy result with no behavioral change, or very little. The fact is that we all know that the vast majority of society can't find their abs in 6 minutes, much less build them. Behavioral change is how we create success. When you go out and read how you should be better in 90 days or how you should've done it in 30, or how should it just been a 7-day project, understand that all of those messages are breaking us. Entrepreneurs have been told for far too long, "You need to change yourselves, fix yourselves, learn more, do more, be more."

Here's my message. I don't care how you showed up in the world and how you look, what they've told you. For every diagnosis, disorder, time you've been told you are wrong, verbal test you failed, caught in the fallopian tube, not enough oxygen, cerebral palsy, whatever it is, it doesn't matter. I've had so many diagnosis. I could list them for you. The fact is when you lower pressure and noise, you ask for and you offer protection and support. Strengths and abilities just show up. I can tell you because I get new ones every day. You move on and make your contribution. The fact is that if you focus on every deficit you have, that's all you'll see. We live in a society today, in an environment today, where the most broken person can make a contribution, and it doesn't matter what anyone has told you. There's nothing wrong with you.

John: Yeah. I know. We see that over and over again. You and I have some mutual friends who we would never expect them to be extremely successful entrepreneurs. They have everything going against them, and they are very focused. They're using their strength. One of the things that ... I remember, at school you're taught to focus on your weaknesses to become ... I'm going to finish my career with real strong weaknesses, that's what I really want to do. I always go back Curly in City Slickers. You just got to find one thing you're good at, and as entrepreneurs, there's never been a more true statement out there that there's nothing wrong with it. You find that one thing that you can really add, you can create value. It's amazing, Alex.

Alex: Yeah. I think that ... The fact is, is that I wanted this equation, what I've been sharing. We call it the contribution equation. Lower the pressure of noise, increase protection and support, strengths and ability show, and you make your contribution. Its 4 parts. When we share it with entrepreneurs, we're serious that that's exactly how we grow. The fact is that

when you follow that path, you will find that you either join a team or create a team. You find an outcome that is compelling, and you can move forward, because life is not about how loud can you make it, and how many different things can you do, and how much crap can you add.

If you want to move your life forward as an entrepreneur, it's about awareness, breathing, thinking, and understanding what's happening. That requires lowering pressure and noise, asking people for help of what you need to do, because every entrepreneur, when I say ask for protection and support, you have strengths that need to be protected. You have outcomes. There's ways that you work in the world that we should protect. For everything else, there should be support. We think in entrepreneurship, build a company around who they are, so that it gives to them rather than take from them, and everyone moves forward, John

John: I totally agree, Alex. I always talk about it. We're not in business for more business. We're in business for moral life. We want to support the quality of life for ourselves and our own enlightened self-interest. I always think of the airline where they talk about the oxygen mask. You got to put it on yourself first before your child. Well, as an entrepreneur, we have to put that oxygen mask on first so that we can take care of all the stakeholders. We're talking about our clients, our customers, our shareholders if we have shareholders, our teammates, our partners, everyone. This just so important, and it's so easy to get distracted on all this stuff and get caught up on the negative parts of what's going on in entrepreneurship.

Boy, we are so privileged to be alive today. Individuals like yourself, Alex, who have really thought this through and can recognize, and now we can propel ourselves, we can create the environments that are ... I look at some of the cubicle set ups that I've had in some of my past businesses, how disruptive. Creating that environment, creating the team around you.

Alex: The pressure and noise environment, those old cubicles, and the way we used to do things. Now you can build a team and never work a day in your life.

John: Because you're playing. Set up your business to build the quality of life that you want. Inspire those around you, enroll your team members, or get the right people on the bus, and you can make a huge difference. Alex, let me switch gear, because we're making really good progress. I want to go to the next segment which is the book of the day. You're a well-read guy, you're out there. What would be the book that you would recommend to your fellow entrepreneurs?

Alex: I've read thousands of books, and there is one that I go back to over and over again, so much so that my wife actually bought me a first edition. Now I read it in the original print which feels really cool. It's Think and Grow Rich.

John: Let me put that up on the screen. Also, I'm going to just talk about it is one of my favorite books. I do not have a first edition, Alex. You're marking me a little jealous here. It's one of those. It's so inspiring. Why is it important to you?

Alex: There's 2 reasons, John. One is when I was really young. I thought I was totally not going to be able to be successful. I have had such a hard time finding purchase and figuring out what I could do and what I should do. From a very young age, I started reading a ton. So many entrepreneurs' books meant something to me. I like behind you, and how the books are double stacked, every book shelf in my house is overflowing. By the way, I could get a Kindle. I don't give a shit about a Kindle. I have to hold the book.

John: I do have 500 books on my Kindle too, and I got books everywhere. We were to build too many book cases in our home. We've got multiple buildings even, and it's just ... Alex, I do like the feel of a book. I got to go back to it.

Alex: Here's what that did for me. When I first read it, I ended up carrying it around for years, because as I was reading other books, I'd go back to that one, because it was a rule book on how to be successful, just like How to Win Friends and Influence People. When I had a mistake, I'd go back to it and say, "What did I do wrong?" You didn't tell the part of the story that in 2007, Katie and I had a huge real estate portfolio. Like so many other entrepreneurs, we went bankrupt. We lost everything in 18 months, but really it was fast. We lost millions and millions of dollars in about a 9-month period, like I told you before we talked about it. 225% of my net worth went away.

John: After 100%, it doesn't really make that much difference.

Alex: You're screwed. It doesn't matter. One of the darkest days, I remembered getting up and walking across my office, and there was a copy of Think and Grow Rich that I had thought out. It was all marked out and have my post it notes. I opened it to the line that says "every failure carried with it the seed of an equivalent or a greater advantage." It was the line I saw. I went back to my desk, called a friend, started planning, and that got me out of it. I've talked to Allen, and he pushed me to go, but I remember that moment, John. I still remember that moment. I know, like I've made it bigger in my mind that whatever everybody wants to say, but it was like the words jumped off the page and punched me in the head. I just lost everything, so now I need to go prove that it's going to be bigger than anything I've ever done.

John: It's really nobody gets out of life unscarred. As an entrepreneur, you're out there in the arena. You're going to get scarred. This is one of the reasons why I love working together with fellow entrepreneurs. It's also why I love great books with great lessons. It's just so powerful. We go back to this, because when we get scared, our character is not by that street

linear line. It's when we get knocked down, how we get up. Boy, as entrepreneurs, that is a big deal, Alex.

Alex: John, I took that to heart. I remember I went and sat down with Katie and I said, "Look, millions of people have bought this book, and I think Napoleon here was right, and it's worth our whole lives. Let's just assume this is true." 12 months after our bankruptcy was discharged, we had \$1 million liquid in the bank.

John: I started to tell you off camera too, my real estate adventures early on. I got to tell you, building with a couple of partners back in the previous real estate collapse. I'm a little older than you.

Alex: Got your point.

John: Yeah. Where 5 of us put up 100 bucks each and borrowed \$6 million to build our first office building. I personally guaranteed it because I had the largest net worth at the time, which was a couple of million dollars. I won't go through the details. I did end up going to bankruptcy only because the bank failed before I did.

Alex: Score.

John: We were able to buy. The loan package was purchased, and we were able to buy it for a song and I ended up flipping the building and making a low 6-figure, but it was the 2 worst years of my life. I can still remember being in a hallway. We say this kiddingly, but some of you may be at this point. I remember going back to my wife. I just met with the bankruptcy attorney. We just built this beautiful home which we're still in, I told my wife who was successful and high tech, but not overly interested in finance. I go "Jean, I think we may have to file bankruptcy." She goes, "What does that mean?" I said, "We lose pretty much everything." She goes, "The house too?" I said, "Yes."

Imagine how I'm feeling. This was devastating. My wife hugs me and says, "We'll do a better next time." We just celebrated our 35th anniversary. You know you married well when they can hang out with you through these trying times to celebrate the good ones. This is so important. Nobody gets out of life unscarred, and we've got to get back up. We've got to make it happen. You can do it just as your starting is better, but many of us do it along the way with some big dollars. We got to be careful.

Okay. Let's go to the next session, which is the application of the day. You've got, Alex, a strong feeling on an app that you like. What is it?

Alex: Yeah. I have a super strong feeling I think the best app that you can use today is a pen and paper. There's something sacred about writing stuff down, and there's something sacred about reading books. I watched this in my career. I think there's a math to it, because we've created all of these ways of absorbing way too much information too fast. Reading and writing are exactly the speed with which we think, and exactly the speed with which we absorb. When we pick up a podcast and listen at somebody else's speed or when we watch too much information or read too many letters, go and see condensed information in a different way, it affects us differently. I think that as entrepreneurs, the discipline of connecting mind and body with a pen and writing at the pace with which we think and working things out on paper changes the intention for our lives.

We teach a discipline called planning and solitude because we are so reactive today, John. When somebody says "What are your favorite apps?" I tell people, "I erase any I can," because we're so reactive. The woolly mammoth is no longer chasing us, but we all walk around in fight or flight. Low respiratory system responses, pain in the low back, pain in the feet. We are not healthy. We are extraordinarily cortisol high, we have too much adrenals going, and it's because we're constantly reacting. When you stop in the morning, make a to-do list and write it out, but then you write your intention for the day.

This morning I wrote I was going to be on this podcast. I went and read about John. I remember what I was doing. I looked at my notes. That meant that this was going to be better for me. I don't ever just charge into a day. Writing things down changes your life, it's the speed with what you think, and it connects you to where you're going in just a different way. If you're downloading the app so that you can remain mindful, you've already lost. Getting out of reactivity and becoming proactive with a pen in the morning changes everything.

John: It is such a powerful resource. Let me go to the next segment which is resources. Alex, you have some resources. Let me pull up the Facebook group that you've created to help fellow entrepreneurs. Why don't you tell us a little bit about this?

Alex: Sure. We wanted a low resistance way where people like us could find out who they are and talk to each other and have a place to get contribution and support, a place where you can come and say, "Yeah. I was called ADD." and have everybody say, "Yeah. Me too." so we all understand that there's nothing wrong with us and we're not alone. John, it's been amazing, what's happening there, because the amount of community support ... It's called entrepreneurial personality type, and you just search on it on Facebook, we'll add you personally. The amount of support that's there and the amount mutual encouragement and people sharing ideas has been amazing.

We're about to launch a project called The 500 Evolution where most authors want to sell tens of thousands of books, and they see that as starting a movement. At Joe's event, we are

putting out a limited-run single print edition 500 unites, never to be reprinted book, called the Entrepreneurial Personality Type. The point of our 500 Evolution Project is to show that you don't need 50,000 books to change the world. 500 books in the hands of EPTs will change everything. We're asking people to report when they read and who they pass the books to in that group. Beginning next month, we will be watching 500 books traverse around the world, beginning with the person that I hand them to, and we'll see. Can 500 books really change the world? You can watch it all there.

John: I'm looking forward to that, Alex. It is amazing. We all want to have a mailing list of a million, but if no one opens it up, it doesn't make any difference. We really want the power of the right people, that communication, and that's going to be extremely powerful. Let me go to the next segment, which is key takeaways. I took a whole bunch of notes here. This has been really good. I just want to go over life lessons. Number 1, momentum, momentum, momentum. We are momentum beings. That flow and recognizing yeah we're going to get knocked down, but get back into that flow with the right environment team, also understand that you are going to be misunderstood.

There's nothing that you're going to be able to tell the rest of the world non-entrepreneurs that's going to convince them that you are right. You're restless, driven, focused, stubborn, all those things. That's okay. That's what makes you who you are. It's your fellow entrepreneurs and you who are creating so much value in the world. You are not alone. Alex, and I, and others invite you. The reason I'm doing the podcast is I want to share all these great people. The remarkable individuals like Alex are just making the difference. Make sure that you surround yourself with fellow entrepreneurs. Most entrepreneurs have addictive personalities. We really accept failure way too quickly.

Make sure to protect yourself against that. Create some framing so that you don't fall into that trap. As Alex said, there is nothing wrong with it. You are a remarkable individual making a huge difference. Everything we talked about, all the links, the show notes, the transcript is all, again, at AESNation.com. Alex, this has been phenomenal. I encourage everyone to really take some time and think about this. This is a little more you got to think about. Those 5 key takeaways, those lessons learned, those hard lessons learned along the way are going to make a huge difference for your clients, your future clients, really, all your stakeholders. Take action, make a difference. They're all counting on you. With you the best of success.

A Second Opinion on Your Finances

A Complimentary Service from Financial Advisor Select for the Members of AES Nation

Dear Fellow Entrepreneur,

Like many members of AESNation, I'm a serial entrepreneur. In addition to co-founding AESNation, I'm the founder and CEO of Financial Advisor Select, a firm dedicated to helping successful people make informed financial decisions by introducing them to top financial advisors.

If you're like many successful entrepreneurs, you and your family already have a relationship with a financial advisor. You may even work with several financial advisors. If you are completely satisfied with these relationships and confident that your finances are on track toward helping you achieve all that is most important to you, we congratulate you.

However, you may not be entirely satisfied. You may be wondering if there's a financial advisor who is better-suited to address your family's very specific financial challenges. If so, you are not alone. In today's uncertain economic climate, many successful entrepreneurs are wondering if they have the right financial advisor.

To help you find out if you are currently being served well, Financial Advisor Select is offering a complimentary second-opinion service to all qualified members of AES Nation. Simply [contact us](#) to schedule an exploratory call with one of our personal financial concierges. We will introduce you to a financial advisor who we believe has the ability to address your particular needs. The financial advisor will then meet with you and provide you with a second opinion on your finances. There is absolutely no cost or obligation to you.

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Best of success,



John Bowen
Founder and CEO
Financial Advisor Select