

MASTERS Podcast Club, April 2020
Chalene Johnson
It's Not About Getting Your Body Right, It's About Getting Your Life Right



Chalene Johnson is a world-renowned motivational speaker, *New York Times* bestselling author, lifestyle and business expert, and top health podcaster with over 20 million downloads of her shows. Interviewed by **Winn Claybaugh** for the second time (the first was ten years ago), Chalene is a powerhouse mentor with strong messages for living a better, more simplified life. “Success starts by creating simple habits around your bedtime routine,” is just one of the many themes in this interview that will empower every listener to make immediate, simple changes.

Winn: Hi everybody, Winn Claybaugh here. Welcome to this issue of MASTERS and this beautiful woman and I have been sitting here chatting before I actually started the recording because we have a lot in common. We have built this beautiful friendship, which I think that the very first time you and I met was the very first time that we did a recording, which we just realized was in May of 2010; so almost 10 years ago was the first time that you and I got to sit down. What a great day that was for me.

Chalene: And me, too, and you look younger today than you did then. You're Benjamin Button.

Winn: Oh my gosh! Gosh, I hope so. I saw that posting that you just recently did—

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: —comparing your 50-year-old body today to what 50-year-olds used to look like many, many years ago.

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: And it says—

Chalene: —believed our idea of what we thought 50 was supposed to look like.

Winn: Yeah, back then you were done.

Chalene: Right. Yeah.

Winn: You were an old lady living with the Golden Girls back then at 50—

Chalene: Exactly.

Winn: —and not anymore.

Chalene: Yeah, it's kind of interesting.

Winn: Congratulations.

Chalene: Thanks. I think we should talk about our age in terms of fitness years or health years versus calendar years because there are people who are—whatever age you are, you're actually much older than that because you're not taking care of yourself.

Winn: I've had people come up to me at the gym saying, "Gosh, I hope I look like you when I'm 60." I'm like, "You don't look like me when you're 30 [laughs]—

Chalene: [Laughs]

Winn: "You think it's just going to magically happen one day? You've got to do the work." Right.

Chalene: Right.

Winn: That's funny.

Chalene: It's true.

Winn: Well, this is actually a topic that you're very comfortable in talking about because you are the fitness guru. Is it true you've sold more fitness videos than anybody on the planet? Isn't that true? If it's not true, I'm making it true.

Chalene: [Laughs] I don't know if that's true. I am in the *Guinness Book of World Records* for having starred in the most exercise DVDs.

Winn: Really?

Chalene: Yeah, it's just kind of crazy because it was something—originally when I first started teaching fitness classes, moved to southern California, I couldn't get hired because I sucked at it. Like I just—but I wanted to be good at it. And you know, sometimes you do something, you're like, "I'm never going to be good at that I just need to—basketball's not going to be my thing." And then there are things you do it and you're like, "Yeah, I know I suck but I also—I know I could get good at this." And I felt that way about fitness so I just studied and hired people to help me and so it's just weird that the thing that I couldn't get hired for, eventually I end up being in the *Guinness Book of World Records* for.

Winn: That is just so amazing.

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: Have I said your name yet? You guys—

Chalene: Oh.

Winn: —I'm sitting with Chalene Johnson.

Chalene: Hey.

Winn: The amazing Chalene Johnson. You've been in the fitness world for a number of years—

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: But then you took a turn. Not that you're still not doing the whole fitness—

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: —message, because you are and you're great at it, but you've diversified as well.

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: Which I love and we're going to talk about all of that. I do invite people to go back and listen to the interview that you and I did 10 years ago. I listened to it in the last couple of days. It's so good.

Chalene: What did we talk about? I don't even remember.

Winn: Well, get this. At the time that we recorded that, your kids were ages 10 and 12. How old are they now?

Chalene: They are 22 and 19.

Winn: Isn't that great?

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: Yeah. We talked a lot about fitness. In fact, one of the things that you said was, "It's not about getting your body right, it's about getting your life right."

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: I wrote that down. I made it a mantra, made it a message of me because I think a lot of us think that it's only about what our body looks like. It's, "We like this, we want to improve this, we don't like that about ourselves," and sometimes we put more thought and energy into that than we do in other things that need to be part of the plan to make us right.

Chalene: Amen. Yeah, because we see that in the mirror and oftentimes that's the pursuit. Like, "If I look better, then everything will fall into place. If I lose weight, then I'll feel better about who I am, I'll be more confident, I'll put myself out there, I'll go for it. My husband will be in love with me. I'll find the guy." Whatever it is. But that's not true. I mean, certainly you and I both know people who are super-duper fit and still not happy.

Winn: Right.

Chalene: I mean it's a piece of it and that's why when people say, "Oh you're doing the fitness thing and now you're kind of doing this other thing." I've always done life. Fitness has been one-tenth of that. It's just what people happen to know me for, but it has never been my sole focus. I look at all the areas of my life and I figure out—not that each one has to be balanced exactly, but balanced for me, like what's most important for me. And fitness is one piece of that because it's—it's not even fitness, it's health.

Winn: Do you get tempted to fall into that trap, though, too? Do you get tempted to look in the mirror and think that, "*Ooh, there's a wrinkle here that shouldn't be there, or I look a little bulgy here?*"

Chalene: [*Laughs*] Sure.

Winn: Do you get tempted to fall into that?

Chalene: I think so, yeah. I'd be lying if I didn't think that or just notice, *Oh, my jeans are tighter today*, but I don't fall into the trap of thinking, *If I fix this, it's going to fix these other things*. I know that it relates to my health and more so I know it relates to my habits. So my health is always a reflection of what's going on in the other areas of my life. If I'm under a great deal of stress, if I have allowed things to slip out of balance, that's when it shows up, for me, in my health and fitness. It shows up in our hormones.

Winn: Well, I have a lot that I could say about you in introducing you more to our listeners but when your assistant sent me over this little bio I'm like, "Oh it's two short paragraphs."

Chalene: [*Laughs*]

Winn: Which it could have been 10 pages long.

Chalene: Ahh.

Winn: And I liked it that it was just two short paragraphs—

Chalene: Good.

Winn: —because what it told me about you and all these years that I've known you, is that other stuff, *Uh I'm in the Guinness Book of World Records; oh well.*

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: That's not really what's important for you.

Chalene: Right, yeah. This is true.

Winn: Okay, so I'm going to read this. Chalene is a *New York Times* bestselling author of a book called *Push*. You are a lifestyle and business expert, motivational speaker, and podcast host. You and your husband, Bret—20 years you've been married?

Chalene: Twenty-five now; 23.

Winn: Congratulations. Oh, I said 20 years here and your daughter is—

Chalene: Wait a second it would be, yeah, we're married 23; it will be 24 this year.

Winn: Congratulations.

Chalene: Thank you.

Winn: You have a business called the SmartLife movement; you and Bret together have that. You have this fun-loving, collaborative team focus on helping others live a healthier, more simplified life, which we're going to talk about. People are thinking, *How does my life get simplified?* You have online academies, membership sites, sold-out seminars. Chalene, with the help of top dietitians, doctors, researchers, and experts, founded the 131 Method, a nutritional coaching program that's turning the diet industry upside down. Chalene's new book, *The 131 Method*, just came out in April 2019. She hosts two top-ranked podcasts: The Chalene Show and Build Your Tribe. *Huffington Post* named Chalene as one of the top 50 female entrepreneurs to watch. Congratulations for all of that. What's your followship on your podcasts? The Chalene Show, Build Your Tribe; how many people are connected to you?

Chalene: I think we're at like 40 million downloads.

Winn: Oooh!

Chalene: [*Laughs*] I've been doing it for a while. We'll get like maybe 100,000 downloads per episode in the first month. Some grow accumulatively; some are like classic cult favorites so people go back to them, back to them. I love, like you, I love podcasting because first of all it's an opportunity to get to know people, to dig deep to—it's an opportunity for self-exploration, like I'm a better person because of all the guests that I have had an opportunity to meet and so much of my idea to start podcasting really came from that moment when I

met you and we did the first interview for MASTERS and you gave me all these other—I think they were on CDs back then.

Winn: They were [*laughs*].

Chalene: Right? Now we don't have—

Winn: Maybe it was eight-track; I don't remember. It was a long time ago.

Chalene: It's embarrassing. But that really inspired me. I'm like, *What?* You know, I'd been doing this thing called CarSmart, where it was just me. And I'm like, ahh, what a fascinating thing to sit down with amazing people and understand their genius, their system, their methodology, and in the process help other people and, for self-serving reasons, that would improve my life and it's probably been the most rewarding thing I've ever done.

Winn: Name some of the people that you've interviewed and some of your favorites, which by the way is a great way to connect to these people.

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: If you called up and said, "Hey, can we have lunch? You've never met me, can we have lunch?" They're going to say, "Gosh, call my secretary, I'm a little busy for that." You say, "I want to interview you." They're like, "Cool, let's do it."

Chalene: I've got this platform, right. I love finding people who are not famous but have an incredible message.

Winn: Interesting.

Chalene: And they're not selling a book but I've just discovered them. I'm like, this person, I need to share my platform with them because their message needs to be heard. So that's my favorite thing to do is to find people. Like last week we did an episode on adult children of alcoholics and addiction and I searched and searched and searched for the right voice, the right expert to talk about this. And most of them were, frankly, like in their 70s and 80s and I just didn't think they would relate to my audience the same way. And then I found this woman on YouTube. She had had like 200 views but her message was just so profound and her voice and her wisdom. And I thought, *This is a God thing. I just need to reach out and see if I could give her this opportunity.* And she gave me the opportunity to share her message with my audience and she was a remarkable guest that will change people's lives. I've had super-uber well-known people. One of my favorites was James Altucher.

Winn: Who is he?

Chalene: Well, he's a writer and blogger and a financial analyst and a comedian and he's the host of his own podcast show and he's just peculiar and interesting and a thousand percent authentic and I loved that interview. I've cried in interviews. I've changed the way I think in interviews. It's just really a fun thing to do.

Winn: See, for me it was fun because, again, I had a documentation of a conversation that you and I had the day that we met.

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: That was cool to go back and, *Wow, I've known Chalene that many years and here's what we talked about*, because it was recorded and I got to listen to it in the last couple of days. It was great for me to have that.

Chalene: I have a friend—she and her husband started a podcast this year. He was diagnosed with grade four glioblastoma. It's a non-curable brain tumor and he's got a death sentence which he's fighting, but they started a podcast this year.

Winn: Wow.

Chalene: And it's just so uplifting to listen to it and it's all documented. Years later his children will be able to go back and listen to hear what a fun, inspirational man their father is; we'll say is. But I think everyone's starting a podcast right now so I don't want to tell everyone to start one—

Winn: *[Laughs]*

Chalene: —but know why you want to.

Winn: Right.

Chalene: Know why.

Winn: Again, I love the documentation of stories.

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: I interviewed my parents. My dad died, it will be six years ago, but before they died, because I thought this would be a great Christmas present to document these stories and so one of the interviews that I did, which I made a CD of it and gave it again to all my siblings, was how they met and fell in love.

Chalene: Oh!

Winn: The next one was all of your kids. They have eight kids, okay, so my oldest sister, Ann: "Why'd you chose that name, Ann? Tell me the circumstances of

when you found out you were pregnant and where did you live and where did you work and what was the house like?” And so they went through all of my siblings; stuff that we didn’t know about. And then it was my dad’s experience serving in the navy and so I had different topics and now—again, my dad has passed but I have this documentation—

Chalene: Mmm.

Winn: —of it. I love storytelling and the fact that we can record it is just such a gift.

Chalene: I agree. Awesome.

Winn: Well, I love the topic that we’re going to focus on and when I received this from you I was expecting 20 questions, 20 topics that we could address and you gave me one.

Chalene: Oh [laughs].

Winn: You gave me one and I was thinking about this, thinking, *How am I going to build a whole interview on one?* But then I thought, *Well, it’s Chalene, number one. And number two: she’s exactly right.* And the topic is: success starts by creating simple habits around your bedtime routine.

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: That is just so simple.

Chalene: Well, I hope so. It sounds simple. It can be simple. I think we overcomplicate that and the reason why I wanted to start with that is because this episode is really about improving every possible nook and cranny area of your life, by choosing the right habits and knowing the signs behind developing habits. Your life is profoundly better in every single area if you develop better habits or eliminate some of the bad ones, right? You can name an area. You can improve your financial situation, your romance, your environment, your physical health, your mental health, your spiritual health, all with habits. And that’s not something you have to be born into. We’re on equal footing because everybody has the ability to develop a habit.

Winn: When your kids were growing up—obviously we’re talking about habits with your kids.

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: So is it that there had to be a real strict routine with your kids? They go to bed at this time, they eat at this time, they do homework at this time, they wake up at this time. Was that how you trained your kids? Not trained—

Chalene: [Laughs]

Winn: I don't want to use that word. That's how you raised your kids, you taught your kids, you inspired your kids: by having a set routine every single day that then developed into a really good habit?

Chalene: Well, that's interesting because academia, the study of habits, has been misrepresented in the media and it probably has a lot to do with like headings and blogs and things that look salacious and sell newspapers, but it's not how often we repeat something that creates a habit. That can add to our likelihood that it's going to be easier for us, but it has nothing to do with how many times you repeat something. You can create a habit in as little as two days. When it comes to my children, I always taught them how I was creating my own habits. And if there were things we wanted to help instill in them, we didn't tell them they had to do it; that's discipline, right? And discipline doesn't create a habit. Motivation doesn't create a habit. It can keep you inspired to do it for a couple of days but motivation wanes and so does discipline and it can be affected by your mood and your memory and your commitment, and those things wane. A true habit, the beauty of a habit, is you don't have to think about it and when we don't have to think about something it frees our brain and we feel lighter and we feel more peaceful. We just do it. When we have to try to remember something it uses synapses, it uses energy in the brain. We use ketones in the brain and every single decision we have to make and everything that we're trying to not forget is a decision and that can exhaust our minds. That's why sometimes you find you can't fall asleep or you've had a day where you've had to keep track of so many things, you come home and you look, *I am exhausted but I didn't do anything physically*. Why? It's because your brain uses so much more energy than your body does to keep track of those things. The more things we can just do on autopilot, without having to think about it, the lighter our lives become, the more peaceful we feel, the happier we feel.

Winn: Just so I know I understand this, give us an example of it. So are you saying that if the habit is that I eat a certain way—

Chalene: Mm hm.

Winn: Then I don't have to think about it? When mealtime comes along I don't have to sit there and make the decision on choosing good foods or not-so-good foods. It's just autopilot: I've already made the decision in advance. I don't have to put a lot of brain energy into this. Is that kind of what you're talking about?

Chalene: Well, think of—yeah, think about something where you have caught yourself saying, repeatedly, "Oh okay I don't want to forget that tomorrow I've got to bring my camera to work. I can't forget that. I can't forget that." You keep saying that to yourself and you're thinking, *Ah I need to write that down*, and you don't and it just keeps bouncing around in your head. What we don't realize is that takes a lot of energy. Then there are things that just, like

grabbing your keys. You didn't think about that. It didn't take any energy from you. So what if we could take habits that improved our lives—behaviors, actions that would improve our lives—and we could make them as simple and as mindless as grabbing our keys, brushing our teeth, making the bed, whatever the habits are that you have, and we have a lot of them. If we could make the things that would improve our life that easy, where we didn't have to think about it, we didn't have to force our self or use motivation or discipline, it just was a habit, life gets a lot easier.

Winn: Beautiful.

Chalene: So with my kids, to answer—

Winn: Okay.

Chalene: —that question. For example, I never said, “You need to go clean your room.” I would say, “If we clean your room together, I want you to notice like, how does it feel? Do you notice that when your room is picked up, doesn't your brain feel so much better right now? Look around, isn't it amazing like how your brain feels?” And I would bring attention to what was the benefit for them. Otherwise, I'm just telling them to do something and they don't know what's the benefit for them. “Go clean your room. Go make your bed.” Why? And then I would say, “You know, you don't have to but notice—I want to walk in your room with you and do you notice how this makes you feel? Is it hard to do your homework? Don't you feel like frustrated and stressed out right now? I know you're seeing all this stuff and would you want me to clean it for you?” “Yeah, Mom, I wish you would.” “Well, why?” “Because I don't like it like this.” “Why don't you like it like this?” “Because I don't like it like this. I don't like the way it makes me feel.” So it's helping, from a child's standpoint, them to understand what is the feeling that's going to motivate the change in your behavior? Because habits are less likely to happen because of the number of times we repeat something and they are far more likely to happen when they are based in positive emotion. People change, you know this, when they feel good.

Winn: Right. And this can apply not just to raising children, but if you're a manager leading a team of people.

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: And by the way, you don't have to be the boss to be the leader.

Chalene: That's right.

Winn: But I like what you're saying: that discipline does not create a habit.

Chalene: Hm-mm.

Winn: And I think that that's what we were taught—

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: —is the discipline of telling our kids over and over and over and over again: “Clean your room, clean your room, clean your room,” that that's going to give us the result that we want and you're saying that's not the result.

Chalene: No. So let's break down the science of habit formation. In order for a habit to form, the brain—we know this from studying people and how they form habits and even when they have a traumatic brain injury and they come back and maybe they have amnesia and they can't remember their spouse's name but there are certain habits that they still have. How is that possible? What we've discovered is that there's a link between a couple of different factors and once you understand these you can go like, *Oh, I can create these links and then create just about any habit I want to.* It's easily broken down. B. J. Fogg, the author of the book *Tiny Habits*, describes it as the ABCs. And other authors—*Atomic Habits*, he describes it in similar terms but these are all people who just research habit. The first is you look at the behavior that you want to have, the action, the thing that you want to do, if you will. In order for that to happen it needs a trigger or the A; the A is the anchor. So you want to think of the anchor, and then the behavior, and then C stands for the celebration or the emotion, if you will. So if we look at something like brushing your teeth, the anchor is you walk—for most of us we walk into our bathroom and we see our toothbrush. For most of us it's next to our sink. Or you feel that gross feeling, slimy teeth in the morning and that is also an anchor. It's like that's a trigger so when I say anchor you can also think trigger like *[snapping her fingers]*. You've probably done this before when, like, for whatever reason I didn't brush my teeth first thing in the morning and I'm about to walk out the door and I'm like, *Oh my teeth, they feel gross.* That's my anchor; my trigger. The behavior is brushing your teeth.

Winn: Got it.

Chalene: The celebration: most people would think it's when you go to the dentist. It's not. It's that good feeling you have when you slide your tongue over your teeth and they feel clean and you know you have nice breath. It's recognizing what is the reward for me and tapping into the reward and really paying attention to that. I want to share with you a story. I, for probably 15 to 20 years, taught an early morning exercise class. I taught a 5:30 a.m. fitness class every day and when I drove home from that class my habit, for 15 years, was I pulled out my Push journal and I would make my plan for the day, the second I drove into my driveway. Now, I did it in my car because I had kids and it was quiet and it was peaceful and I needed five minutes of silence to plan my day. I did that every single—it was the most—I didn't have to think about it, I just did it every single day. As soon as I started to drive up to my house I would start to feel happy thinking about like, *Oh I—*

Winn: I get to do this, right?

Chalene: *I get these five minutes to do this.* Then I gave up those classes. I stopped teaching at that hour and I felt my life kind of unraveling and I couldn't figure out why. It took me like a month or so to realize, *Oh I haven't been creating my schedule. Well, I'll just go back to that habit.* I could not do it and I kept thinking, *Why am I not; I thought this was a habit. Was it never a habit?* What was going on? I needed a new anchor. It was like a boat floating in the ocean with nothing to anchor it to. I said, "Alright what is something I can anchor it to?" And this is a tip for anyone who's listening who wants to establish a habit. One of the easiest ways to establish a new habit is to pick an existing one and stack another one on top of it. So then I thought, *Alright, I'm going to lay my journal across the sink so that I can't*—it's kind of like anchored halfway across my sink where I can't brush my teeth—

Winn: Without doing that.

Chalene: —without doing that and it worked. But it took me a while to figure that out. You've got to play with finding the right anchor but if you find the right anchor, that's the first step. You already know the behavior; you've got to be motivated to want to do it. You can't establish a habit just because you think you should do something.

Winn: As you're telling this story, it's just occurring to me, like the days when I don't go to the gym—

Chalene: Mm-hm.

Winn: And again I'm not talking about the fitness side of it. There's something missing in my life and it's not that it's the exercise that's missing, it's everything else that happens as part of the ritual of going to the gym. It's when I'm driving in my car, I'm listening to certain things. Okay, that's gone.

Chalene: Yes!

Winn: When I get to the gym there's some people that I connect with; not at the gym but like on the phone, that I only call them when I'm at the gym. I don't know why that is, it's just a habit of mine and so, which means if I haven't been to the gym for two or three days I didn't call those people. Now that's pulled out of my life.

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: This is all now making sense to me of why skipping the gym means so much more to me than just missing out on the fitness.

Chalene: When you skip the gym you untether a whole bunch of things—

Winn: All those—oh my gosh.

Chalene: —that you don't have to think about and now they're back in your brain; you have to go like, "Why—shoot, now it's back." I have goosebumps, too.

Winn: I have goose bumps.

Chalene: I do, too.

Winn: That just made sense to me.

Chalene: We don't realize how peaceful our life becomes when we anchor habits to already well-established habits. And you want to do this in very small bite-sized chunks but once you've got one it's so much easier. Listen to what you just rattled through: your personal development, your social engagement, all of those things. When you don't go to the gym, it unhitches all of those things and now they're back in your brain—

Winn: Right.

Chalene: And you have to think about them.

Winn: Oh my gosh. What did you call it? Then you stack a habit on to another one or you anchor it on? How did you—

Chalene: You stack a habit onto one that's already anchored.

Winn: Okay.

Chalene: And that becomes the anchor, right?

Winn: The example you gave was you brush your teeth, now your planner is sitting on your sink so you had to do one because you were doing the other one.

Chalene: Yeah, so I've got one that's already established so that reminds me, it becomes the trigger for the other. I personally like a physical trigger as well, at least until a habit really becomes solidified and I'm not thinking about it anymore.

Winn: I think I know what you mean, but what do you mean by a physical trigger?

Chalene: For example, if I want to use my day planner first thing in the morning, I don't just think about, *Oh, I'm going to brush my teeth; I need to do that*. I need to physically see it or I'm going to forget so I literally have to lay it there. Let's say, for example, you say, "Every morning I listen to a podcast and that's just a habit for me. I do it every single morning, so I think what I'm going to do is I'm going to attach the habit of laying out my workout clothes so that when I'm going to listen to my podcast I'm laying out my workout clothes." Well, if you

don't physically have something to trigger you, then you're just trying to remember it and you can't just rely on your memory so then you want to create some type of a physical reminder. That might be a Post-it note. For some things I'll just use a Post-it note, so it's like, oh, I'm sitting here when I listen to my podcast. If I just put up a Post-it note reminder to set out your gym clothes then it's a reminder. Habits and triggers have a lot to do with our physical environment. I'm sure that you going to the gym, your physical trigger, your physical reminder, is when you get in the car. That's when you're calling.

Winn: That's when I'm calling, that's when I'm listening to this, that's when I'm taking care of that.

Chalene: But until you—

Winn: Wow.

Chalene: Like let's say someone wants to adopt that same habit. I would tell them to put a Post-it note up in their car just as a reminder that, okay, I'm going to attach this new habit to this already anchored behavior. I think the biggest mistake people make is that they try to make it too big.

Winn: What do you mean?

Chalene: Like they'll say, "Alright I'm not exercising so I'm going to anchor the habit of working out every single day for an hour to my habit of listening to a podcast. While I'm listening to a podcast, I'm going to exercise every day." That's too big. Let's just start small and let's just get your fitness clothes on.

Winn: [Laughs] Okay.

Chalene: Right? Let's just do five minutes.

Winn: I've done that a lot of times. I'm dressed for the gym. I didn't go but I'm dressed. I've been dressed for eight hours and I haven't made it yet.

Chalene: But I know you. That also makes you mad because you like to go to the gym. That's your treat.

Winn: But what you just taught me today, it's not just the gym.

Chalene: No.

Winn: It's everything. It's the whole ritual and the other habits that are tied to me going to the gym that makes my life feel better.

Chalene: I felt completely out of sorts when I changed that routine. When I was no longer teaching at that hour, there was a whole sequence of habits that I lost and I felt like I was going through a midlife crisis, like what's wrong with me?

Winn: [Laughs]

Chalene: Why have I lost my motivation and discipline? Because it was never motivation and discipline in the first place?

Winn: Right.

Chalene: I had lost my anchors. So all you have to do is create new anchors.

Winn: Got it. Give us other examples of that. You and I are talking a lot about fitness tied to our good habits and I don't want people to think that it's just about that part of our lives.

Chalene: Well, for me, I really—I love how much more productive I feel when I wake up early. I love waking up early. Love it, love it, love it. However, after spending some time at the Amen Clinic, I realized I had spent so many years with sleep deprivation, self-imposed sleep deprivation: staying up really, really late and then waking up really, really early. So I had to stop waking up really early until I could get myself in the habit of going to bed early.

Winn: Who was that? I was listening to some podcast and it was just like, uh, duh! The guy is saying getting up early is a really good habit but, sorry, you can't start your get-up-early routine unless you're going to bed; you gotta go to bed early.

Chalene: That's right and that was really hard for me. So I had to—some of these habits you can make in a day. This one took me some time because I felt a greater reward staying up late. It felt like a treat. It felt like now everything's quiet, I can get creative. I can mess around on the computer, I can create things, and that felt like a treat. It felt very rewarding so I had to start realizing—I had to start seeing the negatives instead of focusing on the positives, right? Like an alcoholic or someone who smokes, it's like it feels good to take that drag off a cigarette but then you gotta start noticing all the negatives—

Winn: Right.

Chalene And then you have to start tapping into the rewards: celebrating how it feels to have a better habit and I did know I felt so proud of myself if I could go to bed at a reasonable hour.

Winn: So how did you do that? How did you stop rewarding yourself and putting so much romance into the idea of staying up late, when you knew you needed to get up early? How did you make those switches?

Chalene: So the first thing I needed was a trigger. So I used an app. I used an app that would send me a notification about an hour before I needed to go to bed. The app sends me a notification around 8:30 at night and it says—and it has a quote about why I'm going to feel so good if I go to bed early and this is what smart, productive people do who care about their brain health.

Winn: Really?

Chalene: Yeah, so I—

Winn: What, you wrote the quote or the app provides it for you?

Chalene: Yeah, I wrote it. You can do either one. I wrote it and it's just a simple—you can go to the website. It's called If This Then That. IFTTT; If This Then That. You can say, "If it's 8:30 pm, then send me a text message that says this."

Winn: Interesting.

Chalene: So it sends me a text message and I get—and you look at your phone when you get text messages. It sends me a text message—

Winn: So what were kind of the messages that you had it send to you at 8:30 pm?

Chalene: Always about brain health. Always about like smart people do this, you'll look younger if you get better sleep, you'll be here. Look, everything for me was about the rewards I knew I needed to focus on. And so I would get that and that was my trigger to get up and start preparing for the next morning. So then I wanted to think about, *Okay, the reward I want is to feel early and prepared and ready when I wake up. Because I hate feeling, first thing in the morning, like, uh! I got to get everything done really, really fast. I like enjoying my morning. I like not worrying about forgetting something.* So I started attaching, when I would get that text, I would get up and I would start pretending that I was going to leave the house within an hour, even though I wasn't going to be leaving until the next morning. So I would get my water bottles filled. I would make the coffee so it's ready the night before. I would fill the dog bowl and cover it up. I would lay out my workout clothes. I would lay out my makeup. I would select my podcast that I'm going to listen to in the morning. I would find my keys. I would grab my purse. So literally if I woke up and had five minutes to get out the door—

Winn: These are all the things that you would be doing?

Chalene: Yes.

Winn: But trying to do it in 5 minutes, and that's certainly not a healthy way to start the day.

Chalene: No, I want to do this stuff leisurely but now I don't have to think about it; it's all laid out. And I started getting really excited about putting that bedtime routine together.

Winn: Mmm.

Chalene: And that got me excited to go to bed. Now, once I had done all those things it was like—while I'm doing all of those things, I'm not on my phone. I can't be on my phone, I can't be on my laptop, right? And those are the things that were keeping me up late. So when it comes to breaking a bad habit, you have to make it harder. The easier we make things, the more likely we are to do them. So if you want to stop eating junk, stop buying it.

Winn: *[Laughs]* Oh my God, this was a conversation this morning in my household.

Chalene: Right?

Winn: Right.

Chalene: You know, there are things that—I don't deny myself but there are also certain things where I'm like, *Oh girl, you don't even bring that in this house because you know you will not have one serving, you'll finish the bag.* So I don't need to rely on discipline or motivation. I have to rely on common sense and don't frickin buy it.

Winn: *[Laughs]* Oh, I'm just laughing because I know I'm thinking, *Wait a minute, I'm a smart guy, I'm successful. Why can't the cookies be in the house and I have the discipline to say no?*

Chalene: *[Laughs]* Right?

Winn: It's not going to happen.

Chalene: Right.

Winn: Don't have the cookies in the house.

Chalene: Right. I'll enjoy them when I go to someone else's house or to a party but if they're in my house, not.

Winn: You know people don't go to dinner with me because I wouldn't order dessert but I would eat theirs *[laughs]*.

Chalene: I love it *[laughs]*.

Winn: I have the discipline to not order myself but if you order it, can I have a bite, can I have a bite, can I have a bite? *[Laughs]*

Chalene: *[Laughs]* That's awesome.

Winn: I know. You said something about breaking a bad habit.

Chalene: A bad habit, yeah.

Winn: Can we talk about that?

Chalene: Yes.

Winn: Because I think somebody taught me that there are two energies that rule us, so to speak. One is joy and one is pain.

Chalene: Mm.

Winn: So we attach pain to the wrong thing and we attach joy to the wrong thing. You mentioned smoking. If I attach joy to smoking, i.e., it makes me skinny, it relieves stress, I look cool. And if I attach pain to quitting, then I'm never going to be a quitter.

Chalene: That's right, yeah.

Winn: So you need to switch the pain and the joy.

Chalene: That's right.

Winn: The pain of—and I've done that in audiences: stand up, and you nonsmokers, what was the joy of quitting?

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: "Oh my gosh, I could breathe, I was a better mentor, I'm a better mom, I'm a better dad if I'm not—"

Chalene: Smell better.

Winn: Exactly. "I smell better; I save money and attach a whole bunch of joy to quitting."

Chalene: Mm, exactly.

Winn: So could you just kind of talk us through that because I need a lesson in this?

Chalene: What you just said was perfect. Create a brainstorm of that thing that you know, like this not—

Winn: Brainstorm, ooh that's good.

Chalene: Create a list. Make a brainstorming list of all of the reasons why it would feel great, all of the benefits to it. Much as I explained in the example of me staying up late: I was just focused on all the reasons why I needed, like why it

was a benefit to me to stay up late and I wasn't seeing all of the downside. I wasn't seeing all of the positive that would come if I could change that habit so I literally had to make a list of all the reasons why I needed to do this. When you have a habit, whether it's good or bad, there's a trigger, right? So let's say your habit is you drink wine every night after you get everyone to bed and it's like your moment and you have a glass of wine and it's turned into two glasses and three glasses. There's a trigger, right, for good habits and bad habits, so what's the trigger? The trigger is everyone goes down. Now the next thing you have to look at is how easy are you making it then to engage in that bad habit? Well, if there's wine there and everything else falls into place, then you've made it really easy. Make it much harder and then consider replacing. So when that time, which is sometimes a trigger, or the environment—change it and try replacing it with something else. For me, I still wanted to let my brain just kind of decompress at night. That's what playing on my phone or playing on my laptop would do for me. But now what I do instead, when I get that message, is I put my phone down because I'm doing all these different things to get ready for the next day. They require my hands, so I can't be on my phone, I can't be on my laptop. But it allows me to just kind of like do mindless things with my hands and think and just process and think about the day and think about visualizing what I want tomorrow to look like. Your very best day starts the night before. We always talk about a miracle morning but I think it's that magic that you do the night before. So that, for me, has been a habit that's been lifechanging. But you have to celebrate. You have to stop and go, *Wow, this feels really amazing*. I don't know what that celebration is for each person. For me, I just feel so freaking proud. I literally feel like my brain is getting better. I pay attention to the fact: the next day I have more clarity. Because I'm not 100% at this. When I do mess up and it's a night where I do stay up late and I don't do any of those things, the next day I'm a mess. My brain isn't together. I feel like I'm running to catch up. Everything feels a little more chaotic because I don't have any of those anchors.

Winn: Well, what you said at the very beginning of all of this is how much time and energy it occupies of our thoughts because we don't have these habits.

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: You said this: "We feel exhausted even though we didn't really do anything, but we had a lot of thoughts to try to—"

Chalene: Any time—

Winn: —plan because there's no good habit there."

Chalene: That's right. So that's the benefit of having habits and the more you can have and teach your children, the better because then you don't have to think about it. All these things can be systematized and, yes, they're going to

change when you change your environment but if we can think about any area right now of our lives that needs improvement, you just start with that. Say, “Okay if I think about the areas of my life, it’s spirituality, finances, my romantic relationship, friends and family, my leisure, my hobbies, the things I do for restoration, my physical health, my mental health, my work, my purpose.”

Winn: Can you give us—first of all, I’m also picturing Bret. *[Laughs]* Does he just sit and watch you at night? Does he like sit and like, *Now what is she up to?* He must just get such a kick out of watching you.

Chalene: It’s not fair. He is so good at developing habits. Some people, it comes easy to them. I have attention deficit disorder. Do you? Did your brain come out that way?

Winn: Yeah, you know, thank goodness you and I have our good friend Dr. Daniel Amen, who has really kicked us in the butt to get us focused on the right things and to give us that awareness and clarity. Yeah.

Chalene: So I think for some people it’s easier; it’s really easy for them to establish habits. For me, I think that’s why a physical trigger—sometimes it’s a Post-it note—really helps me to start the habit, to remind myself. But, yeah, he’s so good at habits and he loves it and he will sometimes prompt me like, “Oh are you going to start getting ready for tomorrow?” Because he knows how happy it makes me when I am in that routine. Routine makes us feel normal. We assume that routine is going to feel structured and confining but routine gives us freedom.

Winn: Right. Right.

Chalene: So you can pick any area of your life. Like right now, when I mentioned each one of those areas, think about the one where right now you’re like, *Uh, I’m just kind of feeling not great about this particular area and it’s causing me some stress, or I feel I’ve got negative thoughts about it because I know it should be and could be better.*

Winn: Let’s name one. And before you do that, I don’t know if this is true or not but, you know, why let the truth get in the way of making—

Chalene: *[Laughs]*

Winn: —a good point here? Did you hear, because you said something like routine gives us freedom.

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: And people think that, oh, structure and habits and routine is going to take away my freedom; I just want to be able to flow.

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: And did you hear that thing, there was like an experiment done where they put little kids, elementary school kids, in a playground—

Chalene: Okay.

Winn: —that had no fences?

Chalene: No I've not heard this.

Winn: And they just huddled with each other. Meaning, without those boundaries of the fences—

Chalene: Oh my gosh.

Winn: —they didn't feel safe and they just huddled with each other.

Chalene: Makes sense.

Winn: Whereas when they put the kids where there were fences—

Chalene: Yes.

Winn: —then the kids were playing all over the playground. Some were playing with each other, some were off on their own, but because there were boundaries, so to speak, they had the freedom to then be who they wanted to be.

Chalene: So profound. That makes complete sense, yeah.

Winn: So I—

Chalene: I've never heard that study but it makes complete sense.

Winn: Well, let's just tell that story. We'll just make it true.

Chalene: Alright.

Winn: Whether that experiment actually—

Chalene: *[Laughs]*

Winn: —happened or not.

Chalene: Start it at recess today. Yeah, I think that is pretty powerful.

Winn: Because I think that that is true. I've always told people I'm a creature of habit. I go to restaurants and they don't even give me the menu anymore because they're, "Oh, the usual, Winn?" I'm like, "Yeah."

Chalene: *[Laughs]*

Winn: But I like that about myself and I like the fact that I do have that; I have that night routine as well. I want to learn more from you about that, of what that looks like for you, especially when it comes to some of these other areas. I have the physical routine and making the coffee and putting my keys out and my wallet—

Chalene: Right.

Winn: —and what do I need in the day and look at my little—this is made the night before, my little checklist and I like—

Chalene: Wow!

Winn: —to put the square and check it off.

Chalene: Oh my gosh!

Winn: So I have all—

Chalene: I need to get you one of these.

Winn: Okay. Yes you do.

Chalene: Yeah. This is my journal. It's the one that I use but I do that same thing. I make little squares, I'm just like you. So let's just pick any area of your life, right, like so let's just pick like one area. You pick one randomly and I'll give you an example.

Winn: Romance.

Chalene: Romance, okay.

Winn: Okay.

Chalene: So let's say that you decide, "I love my spouse or I love my partner but I just don't feel like we're connected right now. I'm not being a great partner or I don't feel like we're on the same page; we're two ships passing in the night and that area doesn't feel good to me right now." So then you just ask yourself, "Okay, what's one habit that, if I did it, I know we would feel more connected?" Maybe that is you decide for yourself, "Well, if I put my phone away at night, for like an hour, just an hour," and remember start tiny. "If I just put my phone away every night for an hour and sat next to him or her and asked a profound question, like something about their past or something about their day, would that make a big difference? It would. Okay so how do I make that a habit?" Well, now you've got to think about what is an already existing anchored habit you have, in the evenings when work is done? Maybe

it is you sit down and you grab food and you sit on the couch and you're also playing on your phone. You just now attach this new habit to one that's already existing. Go ahead and sit on the couch and eat your dinner, that's fine, but you're going to write yourself a note, maybe it's a Post-it note or maybe it's sending yourself a text that says, "Put your phone away and ask the question."

Winn: Ask the question.

Chalene: And you're just going to do that and then before long, every time you sit down you're thinking, *Okay, I'm sitting down. This is when I put my phone away; I plug it in over there.* Or you just start to remind yourself, *Okay I'm doing the anchor; what was it I was attaching it to?* And you'll start to feel the rewards immediately and that's how you can improve that one area. It can be something as simple as a date night or having a deep conversation or remembering to text. I know it's best to say these things in person but when Bret and I were super busy, he's so good at being thoughtful and I forget sometimes. Like he's the best spouse. He'll, in the middle of the day, say, "How's your day going? How did your interview with Winn go? How is he?" I'm like, why is he so thoughtful and I just forget until the end of the day? So I use that same program, If This Then That, and I have it start sending me prompts two and three times during the day and it would say, "I love you, how's your day going?" That would remind me that's what I need to text him and I know that sounds like so robotic like you have to send, but yes, you sometimes need a pattern interrupt, a prompt, and that would prompt me to do the thing that made us feel much more connected. It wasn't that I didn't want to. I really wanted to. It was that I didn't have the habit and so it was attaching it to something new. And then I eventually figured out I can attach all kinds of habits to my phone. Another example that I broke myself of: the habit of waking up in the morning and looking at email or social media.

Winn: Okay, let's talk about that.

Chalene: I don't look at email or social media until after 11 a.m.

Winn: Really?

Chalene: Yep.

Winn: Wait, what time do you get up in the morning?

Chalene: Four thirty.

Winn: That's when I get up.

Chalene: Ahh.

Winn: Let's call each other.

Chalene: We should.

Winn: Except you don't have your phone.

Chalene: *[Laughs]*

Winn: So then what are you doing?

Chalene: So what I used to do is I would wake up and the first page of my phone was filled with apps and the very bottom way my email and my Instagram. And now the very bottom of my phone, where's my phone? I tossed it. See, I got rid of it.

Winn: This is good news. See? She didn't even know where her phone is.

Chalene: The very bottom of my phone now is an app that plays a morning prayer.

Winn: Huh.

Chalene: And that's the first thing that I see. So now when I look at my phone, which is already a habit, it was already a habit was to pick up my phone and look at it but now the first thing I see is that morning prayer. So I play that or I play a meditation. I have two different apps there that I play those and that's replaced that habit. Then I just have become very good at realizing how it made me feel to look at social media and email before 11 a.m. and how good I felt so I started keeping a happiness journal; just voice notes to myself so that I could kind of keep track of when am I happiest? Just randomly. So I would open up my phone and I would record a voice memo and I would say, "Dear happiness journal. Dear happy diary. I'm really happy right now. I feel really, really happy. Why do I feel happy? Well, let's see, what did I do today?" And I would go over it and then I listened to about 10 days of it and I realized, wow, I'm happiest on the days there were very consistent things that were happening. I started my daily prayer, exercise, personal development; didn't touch email, didn't touch social media until like 11 a.m. or noon. And I'm like, *If that's the formula for happy; I need to stick to this.*

Winn: Wow.

Chalene: Really tapping into like—remember, we only change when we feel positive emotion.

Winn: Hmm.

Chalene: But we have to pause long enough to notice positive emotion, when we feel good.

Winn: Mm. And you journaling that absolutely helps you stay on track of that?

Chalene: It was just something I did for like 10 days.

Winn: Okay.

Chalene: Actually I probably did it for a month. But any time I felt like a surge of happiness, like you've had those moments where you're like—

Winn: Of course.

Chalene: —why am I so freaking happy right now? There's nothing special going on, why do I feel so good? And I would just open up my phone and record it. And I did that, not like I was going to do it indefinitely. I was just did it to see like where's the commonality on these days when I feel so good? And then when I listened back to it that's when I realized, wow, it's all about routine. Really grounds us.

Winn: Let's choose another one of these areas, then: finances. Because I know some people, their Achilles heel is romance. If their life is screwed up romantically then their whole life is screwed up. They can be in perfect shape and make a ton of money but if romantically things aren't going well, then that just overshadows—

Chalene: Everything.

Winn: —everything else. And for some people, it's finances. They could have the most beautiful marriage, incredible kids, but because finances are not in order—and they could be making a lot of money, but because finances are not in order it ruins everything.

Chalene: Right.

Winn: Including their family life.

Chalene: Well, our financial health is the same as our physical health or our mental health or any other health, right? It's a result of our habits. So when we are unhealthy financially, it's because we have unhealthy financial habits. Period, end of subject. So first you have to identify—

Winn: Say that again, because it's very—people need to hear this.

Chalene: Yeah. You can't point at anyone else or the economy or your parents or anything; it is your unhealthy financial habits. So you need healthier habits. With healthier financial habits you'll turn your financial situation around. Of course, it starts with your mindset but before even mindset, just start recognizing: I could do one thing every day that would improve my financial situation. Alright, what is that thing? Maybe that is cutting out a bad habit, like spending money you don't need, or maybe that is spending just 10 minutes every day going, "What could I sell in this house that I don't need?"

Winn: Mmm.

Chalene: You know, putting something on Ebay or Poshmark or Facebook Marketplace. If you did that every day or even three times a week, just three times a week, your financial situation's going to improve and so will your money mindset, right? But how do we make it a habit? Well, we need to anchor it to something else that's well established. So let's say something like listing a purse that you're no longer using. Listing that on Poshmark or an app where, you know, they resell these things. That's going to take like 15, 20 minutes, it's going to take a digital device. Attach that to some other digital habit you have, whether you say to yourself, "Every time I go to open up Facebook, I'm going to stop and I'm not going to give myself permission to go on Facebook or Instagram until I list one item" and *[snapping her fingers]* before long your financial situation starts to change. And it's also making your bad habits more difficult to access, right? So habits have to have—number one, we have to want to do it. So just because someone says you need to lose weight, if you're not interested in it, it isn't going to happen. Someone says you need to make more money, if you're not interested in doing it, don't bother trying to make it a habit because you're not motivated. You have to have the desire and then you have to have the ability and the ability is you have to—how can you make this so much easier? You make it so much easier to save money if you're not stopping at Starbucks, if you're not shopping online. Take those shopping apps off of your phone.

Winn: Oh my gosh! *[laughs]*

Chalene: You know?

Winn: Right.

Chalene: So it's identifying. Okay, first of all I want to start by removing a bad habit in this area or do I want to establish a healthier habit? And if you do both, you'll just get there that much faster. But here's the deal. Start small. Give yourself grace. If it doesn't work immediately it just means you picked the wrong anchor.

Winn: What do you mean by grace? Just forgive yourself? What do you mean by that?

Chalene: Yeah. We're—

Winn: Trust yourself?

Chalene: —too hard on ourselves. We're in this—I think so many people in our society are all or nothing. Like, "Well, I blew my diet. I didn't work out today so I guess I'm done on my exercise program until my next holiday." Or "I ate a bad meal. I guess I'm off the wagon." We think all or nothing, and the truth is, you're on a journey and you just want to be a little bit better and some days you're

going to be a little bit worse and a little bit better and a little bit better and a little bit better and then a couple steps back, but it's general progress in the right direction. An example for me was when I fell out of the habit of creating my daily plan. I taught that, so I felt shame, like what an imposter I am that I can't even do this and I kept trying to attach it—I was like, I'm going to do it in my closet. And I kept trying to attach it to new anchors and I couldn't figure out, like it wouldn't work. So I guess I'm just lame. I kept beating myself up mentally until I finally realized, *Oh, I just haven't found the right anchor. I'm just going to keep trying until I find the right anchor.*

Winn: That is such great advice.

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: I mean that is such great direction for us.

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: You mentioned several areas of our lives. So you mentioned finances, hobbies. How did you say hobbies? You said something when you were mentioning the—

Chalene: Yeah, I think of—

Winn: What did you call them?

Chalene: —hobbies as things that we do for joy—

Winn: Okay.

Chalene: —or restoration.

Winn: Okay that was the word—

Chalene: They're things that restore us.

Winn: Restoration.

Chalene: What's yours? What do you do that's just pure joy?

Winn: Music.

Chalene: Mmm, playing it? Listening?

Winn: Playing the piano.

Chalene: Oh!

Winn: But see I used to—there was one point in my life where I tried to turn that into a career, I tried to make money at it, and then I didn't like it anymore.

Chalene: Interesting.

Winn: So once I pulled that back and I play the piano just for myself, usually there's nobody in the house, so I'm just playing it for myself—

Chalene: Mmm.

Winn: Now it has, it's restoring for me—

Chalene: Yes!

Winn: It just brings me joy and it's not the pressure of, gosh, I've got to write a song to get paid to make money and now this isn't fun anymore.

Chalene: So interesting because they say if you turn your passion into your work then you can—everyone's financial situation will be improved. Like just take that thing you are very passionate about and do that for work; not necessarily.

Winn: For some things; other things absolutely not.

Chalene: Right, like I love snowboarding —

Winn: Because it took the joy out of it. Right.

Chalene: I love snowboarding. It's like my joy and—

Winn: Are you going to make money at that?

Chalene: Well, I thought about it.

Winn: *[Laughs]*

Chalene: I'm like, "You know what, we should start a snowboarding apparel company.

Winn: Really? *[laughs]*

Chalene: And I met with an advisor—

Winn: Uh huh.

Chalene: —who'd done it and he said, "Let me ask you a question. When do you snowboard?" I said, "Ah, it's what we do to get away, to connect with family, and we just love it so much, it would be perfect." He goes, "Okay, so you're telling me the one thing you do to escape work, you now, every time when you land, you're going to be thinking, *I've got to work, I've got to go visit this boutique, I've got to talk to these people, manufacture it.* You've just turned

your only thing that's very restorative and you're going to turn it into stress." And I'm like, "Yeah, you know what? Not interested. Thank you."

Winn: [Laughs] That's good.

Chalene: Meeting adjourned.

Winn: So you mentioned finances, hobbies, physical, romance, brain health. As a coach, you coach people and people come to you. What are the top three areas that people come to you with struggles? Is it finances—

Chalene: Yep.

Winn: —is it romance, is it physical; like what is it?

Chalene: Environment is very high for people.

Winn: What do you mean?

Chalene: That's an area where people—so I'm coaching a group right now for 30 days and I just asked them to go through this and rank each one of these areas: which one felt the lowest for them? And for most people it fell—the three that people ranked the lowest were environment, finances, and physical health.

Winn: Wait. Define environment, then. I'm not—

Chalene: Environment is—

Winn: —understanding that.

Chalene: Yeah, so environment is where you spend the most time.

Winn: Okay.

Chalene: So if when you walk into your home, it's cluttered and there's toys all over the living room and that's not where they're supposed to be, your brain sees them, it feels them, it's like, *Oh, these aren't supposed to be here*. Your brain has to make a decision: do I stop and pick these up now, do I just ignore them? So I feel stressed because I'm thinking about the fact that the garage needs to be cleaned out and my closet is a disaster and it's overwhelming and I can't sit down and do my work because my desk is cluttered and the house needs to be remodeled or it feels old and dark. You know, our environment has a lot to do with our mental well-being. I personally, last month when I did this assessment, that's the area I ranked the lowest, was my environment.

Winn: Wait, for yourself?

Chalene: Mm-hmm. Yeah.

Winn: Are you talking about your home environment?

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: Or your work environment or all of the above or what?

Chalene: All of the above. So I just knew environment didn't feel right for me. I knew that once our kids graduated and moved out, we got rid of our housekeeper. We didn't need a housekeeper for just my husband and I. It's like we can do our laundry, it's you know, we'll have someone clean the house once a week but we had—until then, we had someone there every day doing our laundry, organizing our clothes, pulling the house together, keeping things organized. But when it was just the two of us, it's like I got this. But then I didn't realize it's a lot, it still is. It's still a little bit of—and there's still—I love things so freaking organized and I—

Winn: You should have called me. I would have told you, "No, that's a bad idea, bad idea!"

Chalene: Which part; getting rid of?

Winn: Getting rid of.

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: My happiest day is the day the cleaning lady comes.

Chalene: Yeah. I needed it every day.

Winn: *[Laughs]*

Chalene: So that was low and then also I didn't like the gym that I worked, the space. So we built a gym many years ago and the style then was like really—

Winn: The gym in your home?

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: Okay.

Chalene: It was really like dark and dungeony; felt like a dungeon. I liked that at the time but now I was noticing it's dark and it—

Winn: So the environment—

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: Okay.

Chalene: Why don't I feel happy when I'm in this space doing this thing that I love? I need to change; this needs to be light and bright and white. So I realized, okay, that's where I feel the lowest. I need to fix these things. What can I do? What things can I establish? What habits can I establish and then what activities do I need to tackle to change how I feel in this area of my life? So we hired somebody again to come back in the house three days a week and we're remodeling the gym.

Winn: When you said that you're consulting with a group, is this a business group?

Chalene: Yeah, well, they're not necessarily business individuals but it's a group that we coach people for 30 days.

Winn: Okay.

Chalene: It's called Push Goal Coaching.

Winn: Okay.

Chalene: And we teach them how to create a 30-day goal and how you tackle it in small bite-sized pieces. Like, how do you build these habits?

Winn: So they were working on creating a better environment in their workplace?

Chalene: We didn't tell them what to do, we just said, "Okay, alright, everybody go through these areas and you can do that yourself. Give them each a score on a scale of one to 10. Then you look at your list," and it's usually quite surprising for people and you go, "Alright, which area did you score the lowest?" And the area you score the lowest is usually a subconscious area that you don't realize is creating this, like almost a cloud over everything else—

Winn: Mmm.

Chalene —because it's just hanging there; you don't realize it. So it could be finances. And I'm just saying of—we've got like 300 people this month and of the 300 overwhelmingly people's top three answers were environment, finances, and physical.

Winn: Hmm.

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: Environment, that would make sense to me even though I, had you asked me the question, I would never have named that but I'm absolutely very, very energy sensitive to my environment. So I'm the type that I need things to be in order, and clutter will just screw me up in so many other ways. You know, physical clutter around—

Chalene: Totally.

Winn: —the house will—

Chalene: Oh my gosh, yes!

Winn: —makes me feel stuck in my creativity and in other areas. I feel that when I walk into a restaurant. It can be the best food on the planet but if the environment doesn't feel right for me I'm not going to enjoy—

Chalene: Oh my gosh!

Winn: —that food, so it's yeah.

Chalene: Still the same, yeah. I wonder if everyone feels that—

Winn: [Laughs]

Chalene: I'm curious to know. But so, yeah, that was the common theme amongst all of them. We've got stay-at-home moms, doctors and lawyers and students. It's just anyone who wants to understand how to simplify goal setting and how to create habits so that it's—this stuff has to be simple or it won't get done. For us it's about helping people find peace and that means you have to uncomplicate things.

Winn: Right. I think that you said that in the very beginning. Oh no, I read it in your bio, that you're teaching people how to live more simplified lives.

Chalene: Yeah, we put way too much pressure on ourselves, we allow too many distractions to grab our attention and make us feel like, *Oh I should be doing this, I should be doing that*, and we really should be doing less and doing it better and focus on doing fewer smaller things, but the right things. And that requires space. It requires time to think and we don't give ourselves that. There's so much power to just being alone and being quiet and just going, *Alright, what's going on right now? What do I feel? What do I want to feel? What am I feeling that I don't like feeling and why? And what can I do about that?*

Winn: Hmm.

Chalene: We just plow through everything and forge ahead and survive, and I think to thrive we have to be still.

Winn: I love just this simplified life and as you were talking, we were talking about the routine at night. My little dog, I have a little Yorkie, he knows exactly the time of night of when he now gets to be carried upstairs to the TV room and sit on my lap. He knows it's after Sofia's in bed, which there's a whole routine to get Sofia to bed and sleep and everything. And if I go downstairs to get

something else, he's sitting there. He's not sitting there waiting any other time. He knows that that's the time.

Chalene: Tell me about—

Winn: Like he's on a routine.

Chalene: Tell me about a routine that Sofia, it's like second nature for her because she loves it and so she'll remind you if it doesn't get done.

Winn: Oh, that's easy. We got really, really good advice before she was born. Somebody said that sleep is one of the best things that you can teach your daughter; teach your daughter how to sleep because she will take that with her into adult life. And we all know little kids need sleep. Well, now the study is about how much sleep adults need for health and wellness and so the advice that they gave us was that her bedroom is only for sleeping; meaning no toys, don't play in her bedroom, don't send her to her room to punish her; meaning her bedroom is for one purpose and that is to sleep. Now, there's a part of that routine of sleep, which includes bedtime stories and reading and, you know, there's—

Chalene: If you forget—

Winn: —a sound machine—

Chalene: —to read to her—

Winn: —there's all that. She's not going to sleep. She won't sleep.

Chalene: Will she say, "Where's my book?"

Winn: Yeah, yes, yes.

Chalene: See, that's what's—so there's a reward in that.

Winn: Yes.

Chalene: And that's what we have to teach our children right away, is, how does that make you feel? The good things that they do when our kids—and maybe not everyone listening is a parent but you can think back on how this, because we're all adult children, think back on how those things that are very rewarding, we want to do them again and we will do them naturally without forcing ourselves without discipline, without motivation, but it requires being aware of the things that make you feel good. Just take a moment to pat yourself on the back and say, "Yeah, that's a big deal; like I feel really good." Brag about it, post about it in social media. If you post about something that you've done, a habit that you're proud of, in social media, you're going to get

praise. Post to it in your stories. You'll get that praise and that will feed the dopamine and you're more likely to repeat it.

Winn: Can you, because I know people are thinking about this because I'm thinking about it; not that I want to put a lot of energy or time into this, but just a little bit more about what your evening routine looks like and then what does your morning routine look like.

Chalene: Yeah, so I think about the night before—and I started by creating a list; I'm a list person like you are. I had to write down everything that needs to happen in the morning for me. So that meant everything I want to do and sometimes I forget. I want to take my supplements. I want to start with a prayer. I want to create my schedule. I want to put on my makeup. I want to drink a cup of coffee. I want to feed the dogs. I want to get dressed to go exercise. I want to go to the gym. I want to listen to a great podcast or an audiobook. I want to know where my keys are. I want to make sure that the house is clean. I want the kitchen to be clean. I want to make my bed. I want to do my hair nicely. I want to lay out my clothes that I'm going to wear after the gym. These are a lot of things. So once I had that list, I'm like okay, what can I start doing the night before? And I started small: I started by just laying out my makeup, my supplements, my water, and changing the app on my phone so I would see the prayer app. I started with that. This was really easy for me to stack all these other onto it because I just kept thinking it felt so good the next morning to wake up and go, "I didn't have to do that now, I did it last night." I'm doing dumb things now, like just to do one more thing so I don't have to do it the next day.

Winn: *[Laughs]*

Chalene: You know, but it's just sitting with a pen and a piece of paper; that would be my suggestion. We try to do too many things in our head and keep track of it and we know, you know, a Harvard Business School study reported that 48% of people who actually physically with their own handwriting—not in an app, with their own handwriting—make lists, are more likely to complete them and have lower anxiety than people who try to keep track of them or even keep track of them in their phone.

Winn: Interesting.

Chalene: Because from a neuroscience standpoint, as we form the letters, we put it into our subconscious.

Winn: Mmm.

Chalene: And that doesn't happen when we're using our thumbs on our phones. That's why you and I are both such big fans of your handwriting.

Winn: We write.

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: Yeah.

Chalene: You're doing half the work. By writing it out you're imprinting it into your subconscious; it's already being worked on.

Winn: Wow. And your routine in the morning, because that's all been done the night before—

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: So you already are waking up with—

Chalene: I step into my routine—

Winn: —some calmness and in joy and—

Chalene: I wake up—

Winn: —you're welcoming the day.

Chalene: I wake up excited because I don't feel rushed or behind and I'm not worried I'm going to forget something.

Winn: Okay.

Chalene: I'm not pressed for time. I wake up knowing this is going to be amazing because everything was done last night. I actually get to enjoy—I love my morning by myself. I love it. But I didn't love it when I was trying to not forget something and I was behind the gun. So I wake up excited. I wake up in the best mood and I get out of bed and I literally just follow my trail that I set from the night before. It's all just triggers. Like my clothes are laid out; I know to put those on and I go to the gym and my prayer is picked out. I lay my lashes next to the coffeemaker—

Winn: [Laughs]

Chalene: I keep my makeup in the kitchen. I do not cook; I do not cook.

Winn: [Laughs] But your makeup is in—

Chalene: My makeup drawer is in the kitchen. People die.

Winn: That's hilarious.

Chalene: Like the kitchen is Bret's domain; I have one drawer because I like getting ready in the kitchen while he's there cooking or having coffee. So I have a—

Winn: That's great.

Chalene: —makeup drawer in the kitchen. I put my lashes on, drink my cup of coffee, and enjoy my day.

Winn: See and I'm picturing like all of these little built-in reward systems that dopamine, dopamine, dopamine—

Chalene: Every one of them.

Winn: —because you made it happen.

Chalene: Yeah. It is like—

Winn: And what's happening—

Chalene: —a shot in the arm.

Winn: —between 4:30 and 11 o'clock?

Chalene: So that's a good question. So from 4:30 to 5:30 is me enjoying quiet. That's when I listen to a prayer. I put on my makeup. I know people think this is crazy but I don't care. I like to go with a full face of makeup to the gym; I sure do. Not like Dolly Parton but like, you know, a girl needs to wear some lashes. God bless you natural girls, God bless you, but I'm not going to the mailbox without lashes on; that's just me. And I enjoy it; it's like a hobby.

Winn: *[Laughs]* That's just—I love you so much!

Chalene: You like to play piano, I like to paint my face.

Winn: Right. Okay.

Chalene: And I like—it's very relaxing to me. It's fun, it's like a hobby and I do that while I'm listening to a podcast, after a prayer. Then I write out my to-do list. I drink 25 ounces of water before I drink coffee, I drink 25 ounces of water. I take all of my supplements, like my brain health and everything else that I take. I get dressed, obviously, in my clothes to go to the gym and then I leave at 5:30 a.m. I exercise from 6:00 until 7:30 and I usually do heavy strength training and then maybe 30 minutes of some kind of cardio or HIT. From there I will go back home and, so I'll say from like 8:00 until 9:00, I will eat and listen to an audiobook, write some notes, and I start going through my to-do list and kind of looking at my schedule, seeing what I'm going to do. A lot of times after I'm done eating, from like 9:00 to 10:00 is when I will prepare for interviews. So like knowing today we were going to meet, just refresh; okay what are we going to be talking about? If I'm interviewing someone that's when I'm spending a little bit more time looking over their book or something that they've done so I feel prepared for the interview. That's my prep. And

then from 10:00 to 11:00 I shower and get ready and then usually 11:00 am is when I start my day; 11, 12. That's crazy, I think, for some people who think, *Wow, you start you at that time?* But I designed it that way. And if you want your life to look a certain way, just with a magic wand, ask yourself what would be dreamy and then what do you have to do to make that happen?

Winn: Right.

Chalene: It's not an accident. You have to work at it. Habits make that possible.

Winn: I just love this whole message. And some people think that, *I have zero control over this because I have to drive the kids to school at 7:30 in the morning.*

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: Therefore everything that Chalene is saying does not apply to me.

Chalene: Right. Well, I'm glad you mentioned that because that's the season I'm in today with our kids being out of the house. But when we were in the season of raising our family, the schedule did look different.

Winn: Right.

Chalene: But not drastically different. The only difference was that the time from when I got home from my workout class, I would spend five minutes making my schedule in the car and then I would go into the house and from 7:00 until 8:30 it was kids.

Winn: Great.

Chalene: That's all. So I was making them breakfast and Bret and I together drove them to school and that was very rewarding. I would never trade that in the world.

Winn: Mm.

Chalene: But then they were in school so then I could push that personal development stuff, I would do later in the day. A lot of the same habits but at different times. Everything is harder when you have kids, period, end of subject. It just is. It's harder to get sleep. It's harder to have structure every single day so it's another moment where—place where you have to give yourself grace and know it will get easier but *nothing* is more important, nothing, than getting that right because you can't do it over. You've got one shot. And they say kids are resilient and they are until they're 40 and going to therapy, you know? Like, get it right.

Winn: [Laughs] Let's get it right. As we start to wrap things up, without getting into specifics, how much do you feel like the role that you play, because of who you are and the following that you have, and rightfully so, that many people look to you, how much do you feel like your role is to sell hope?

Chalene: Hmm.

Winn: To peddle hope? Because right now there's so many people that are peddling fear?

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: There's some crazy things happening and people just want to—they're so willing to buy into that fear.

Chalene: I never thought about that.

Winn: I remember the—remember the movie *Oh God* that had George Burns and—

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: —John Denver? Remember that one?

Chalene: Yeah—

Winn: Many, many years ago?

Chalene: —barely.

Winn: There was like this speech given in the courtroom that everybody was so willing to buy into the belief that there was a devil because that movie came out—*The Exorcist* came out and the girl had to just spin her head around and spit up pea soup and everybody—

Chalene: Yeah.

Winn: —immediately believed in the devil—

Chalene: Right.

Winn: —but nobody would believe in God; nobody would believe in hope.

Chalene: Yeah, yeah.

Winn: People are buying fear right now.

Chalene: It is what we choose to focus on and that becomes your reality. Everything you experience, how you feel in this moment, how you feel about your coworkers, how you feel about your opportunity, how you feel about your

relationship; it starts in your mind first, which should tell everybody there's so much control that you really do have. You make that your reality with your mind and you have to learn it's a habit to learn to block out negative and to not give it space or room inside your mind. I just—I don't have time or space or tolerance for fear, for pessimism. I believe in optimism and I protect it fiercely by choosing the people that I'll spend time with, choosing the things that I'll allow to take up space in my brain, the books that I'll read, the TV shows that I'll watch, the things that I allow to influence my mind. We talked just before we started about how there's a story in the news right now and I felt myself kind of like wavering like should I be freaked out? Should I not be freaked out? And then I always just return to knowledge, like okay, so what do I know? What is my reality? And let me protect that and let me block out anything that's negative. You know, one thing, because of my social media platform, you get lots and lots of praise because that's how social media works but you also get haters and you can get like a thousand positive comments you can get like two or three negative ones and if you give those space and time and respond to them, they win and they become your reality; not the other thousand attaboys or great job, I love you, kind of messages. So I had to get myself in the habit of, instead of defending myself or responding to those people, just deleting it.

Winn: Mmm.

Chalene: And you know, I could just leave them up there but if I leave them up there then I'm exposing other people to negativity.

Winn: To that, too.

Chalene: And it's my platform.

Winn: It's yours.

Chalene: Get your own damn platform.

Winn: I know. When they say it's free speech, I'm like, no it's not.

Chalene: No, this is mine. *[Laughs]*

Winn: Not on mine. *[Laughs]*

Chalene: Right, so it's—

Winn: You delete it.

Chalene: —being fiercely protective of it. We all have family members or friends who there's just like *wha, wha, wha, wha, wha*, and you can choose to love them and also establish healthy boundaries because you have to protect—

Winn: Protect.

Chalene: —your positive mindset.

Winn: You've used that word *protect* like five times in the last minute.

Chalene: Don't you feel like it?

Winn: Yeah.

Chalene: You almost have to defend it because people—it's more interesting, I think sometimes, to talk about the negative; it's more salacious. Sometimes people are just self-deprecating because they think it's funny or whatever and I'm not opposed to that but I am opposed to not seeing opportunity and blessings. Yesterday we were driving down the road, my husband and I, coming home from the gym and we got a flat tire and kind of pulled over to the side of the road and he said, "I'm so sorry. I know you had a lot to do today." I said, "You don't have to be sorry. What's the big deal?" I said, "First of all, think about how freaking blessed we are that we can afford roadside assistance."

Winn: Mmm hm.

Chalene: "That within 30 minutes someone's going to come and change your tire. That we can afford a car that—and it won't set us back. This is no big deal. What a blessing this is to just remind us that someone else could blow a tire and having to buy a replacement means it's going to be tough to pay their rent that month." And so it's just looking at—because no matter what your situation is there are blessings.

Winn: This has been amazing; you're amazing.

Chalene: Well, you're amazing.

Winn: And I think I've sent you these videos because this will happen, it's happened, because I see you on the monitor at—

Chalene: At the gym.

Winn: —the gym and don't I like send—

Chalene: *[Laughs]* [INAUDIBLE]

Winn: —you like selfie little videos but there you are behind me?

Chalene: I know. So funny.

Winn: Well, one morning it was, get this, it was you—

Chalene: Uh huh.

Winn: —and then the next one was a Marie Osmond commercial and then—

Chalene: Then Leeza!

Winn: —the next one was a Leeza—

Chalene: Of course.

Winn: So I got all three of you, *[laughs]* my three—

Chalene: That is so—

Winn: —power women—

Chalene: —amazing.

Winn: —in one morning. It was just like the funniest morning for me at the gym.

Chalene: Wow.

Winn: And I think it was like in Kansas City or something like that; it was hilarious.

Chalene: Wow, that's amazing.

Winn: So—

Chalene: Yeah. It's really awkward when I'm in the gym and that happens. I'm like, *Oh
hmm, well, this is awkward. [laughs]*

Winn: *[Laughs]*

Chalene: No one ever notices, though.

Winn: Wow, thank you so much.

Chalene: It's been my pleasure.

Winn: I mean, thanks for this message today but you know what? Thanks for—I'm emotional.

Chalene: Oh, I love that.

Winn: Thanks for 10 years.

Chalene: Thank you. You're such a sweet soul and the most amazing person.

Winn: You've brought a lot of joy in my life. On a personal level, I've reached out to you personally and the generosity that you give to my circle of influence; I have a large circle of influence and you've always said yes.

Chalene: Mmm.

Winn: And I just—

Chalene: It's such an honor. Thank you.

Winn: Thanks, sweetheart. This was perfect. I love you.

Chalene: I love you, too.