

Rachel: Hello everyone. Today we're here with Derek Doepker. Derek is the author of multiple number one bestselling books, including [Why You're Stuck](#) and [50 Fitness Tips You Wish You Knew](#). In 2012, he founded the blog, Excuse Proof Fitness to help people who are busy, broke, or unmotivated, find simple solutions to any of their challenges. Derek is passionate about empowering people to discover solutions to their own challenges by using simple tricks to unlock the brain's creative problem-solving ability. He spent years studying the world's top psychologists and personal development experts to piece together the most powerful and practical tools for transforming anyone's life.

I actually met Derek a couple of years ago, we've both been in internet marketing. And what I really liked about him that was kind of different from other people in the internet marketing niche, was just whenever he introduced himself, it was just very nice, very much about not asking for something. You come across as a very cool guy, Derek and you were talking to me about what you could do for me versus asking what I could do for you. And it's just been really easy to be around you and so I'm really glad that you expressed interest in coming on the podcast and I started reading. I was just telling Derek before we started the podcast, I started reading *Why You're Stuck*, his book and it's actually really, really great. It's like a lot of unique information. It's written in a very clear and concise way. I think it's just phenomenal and I think this podcast is going to be great, so Derek thanks for being here.

Derek: Yeah, thank you, Rachel so much for having me on. It's my pleasure to be here and share anything I can of value with your listeners.

Rachel: Awesome, awesome. The way that I start out the podcast is just to kind of the intention of *Behind a Better Life* is to show people that if they have a choice, they can choose a better life which I know is something you're totally on board with and I love to just ask people, the guest, can you take a minute to share with us some of the things that you're most proud of in your life right now?

Derek: Yeah. Absolutely. So, I think one of the big accomplishments that I had early on was I'm actually a musician and a guitar player. So when I was twelve years old, I got into playing guitar and that was one of the early winds that I had, was I got really good at it and it taught me that I could put my mind into something, practice, be horrible at it when I first get into it, but actually really develop my skills and that taught me a lot about the growth mindset. And so I got my degree in music, graduated with honors from Belmont University and that was one of my big accomplishments was getting my music degree and a lot of the experiences I got there. Another big accomplishment that I'd had that I'm really proud of would be publishing books and some books that have become number one best-sellers at this point. And that's not something I would have ever expected myself to do or pull off. If you would of asked me five years ago, if I could of even done something like that, I don't think I would have even thought that was even possible. So going through that journey and doing that. And then through that, I think

one thing now that I wake up each day and I'm so grateful for as I think about it is that I basically have a lifestyle where I've managed to achieve a certain degree of financial freedom where I can wake up and I can do what I love for a living. Because I know just thinking back to the times in my life where I was working at a job and not that I've had the worst jobs in the world, but there's just something that's kind of unfulfilling when I knew that I had more potential and talent. I had something to offer the world and I wasn't really able to share that with people because I was kind of stuck in these jobs. So now that I get to wake up and have the freedom to do what I want and really hopefully help people and help transform their lives in the way that my life has been transformed from some of the coaches and the mentors that I've had. That's I think really the ultimate highlight for me and my life right now.

Rachel: Those are amazing. Thanks. You were talking about how you transformed them. One of the things I was reading in your book is just about where you were when you were 18 and I know that it's been like a decade since then, but I thought it was still just such a vast difference to where you are now. And I would love if you could just take a minute to tell people about where you were when you were 18 so people can see just how much someone can grow.

Derek: Yeah, absolutely. One of the things I guess, another point of accomplishment is with my health and fitness. Back when I was 18 years old, probably about 17, 18 obviously still in high school, and up to that point actually with my health habits, I was eating fast food every single night. I can still remember my Mom trying to like make me a healthy meal and used to have to go to McDonald's or something. I wasn't overweight necessarily, but I just, terrible shape and in terms of my performance at gym class and stuff like that so it happened where I read a book that opened my mind, expanded my awareness about the consequences that the different foods and my lifestyle choice was having on me. It was through that kind of started me on this journey of health and fitness which would later tie in to a lot of the other things I learned about psychology and motivation and personal development. And so at the age of 18, I went and I got into the gym, I was working out, multiple times a week, completely transformed my diet and got in, great shape and I kept that up for the past ten years of my life. So what that showed me was that I wasn't really stuck with this identity that I had or with my habits. I could go from hating something, hating exercise, hating healthy food, and I learned that there's simple things that I could do and reframing things and working with my psychology to actually embrace those things and love them and make it a part of my lifestyle. And when I saw that that was possible just in that one area of life, health and fitness, then it started getting me to think, can I do this with other areas of my life, with my social skills, with just developing the habit of being happier, or all these other things. As well as if I can transform myself like that, would it be possible to teach other people how to do the same? So that's been kind of the journey. I'm 28 years old now, so it's been about ten years of really digging deep into understanding how that transformation took place in myself. So that I could duplicate it in other areas in my life and being able to share those insights with other people, so they can have their own break through transformations.

Rachel: Awesome. So two questions, the first one is just a quick one. You mentioned the book that you read and in your book too, but you didn't say what it was. I'm so curious. What book was it that you read that had you change your habits?

Derek: Yeah. The book is called [The Wrinkle Cure by Nicholas Perricone](#). So kind of an interesting book to read at 18 years old. And I don't remember exactly how I first heard about it, but it gave a lot of the science behind it. And I guess I'm a little bit more of an objective scientific person. So reading about that really opened my mind to this idea and this is an important concept that it's not about the consequences that are going to happen to me when I'm 80 years old, if I eat a poor diet. It's realizing that my lack of energy, the fatigue that I was feeling, a lot of things that I was going through at that moment in time were a direct consequence of my diet. It made me realize that I didn't necessarily have 30 years that I could just keep eating how I was eating before it would catch up with me. I was doing damage to my body, right at that moment. Every time I chose to just indulge in terribly unhealthy foods. So that was the book and that's one of the big shifts that took place for me.

Rachel: That's awesome. Now the other thing I wanted to ask is you said that when you were starting change or habits around eating well, it was just matter of reframing and different things with psychology and then you mentioned you were able to apply it to other things to like, social skills and happiness. And just because I know a lot of people talk about diet and health and stuff I would love, can you tell us maybe with the social skills, what you did to change around, do reframing, and kind of change wherever you were, maybe tell us about where you were and then to where you are now and how you did it?

Derek: Absolutely. So in terms of social skills, I think, if there's one book I can recommend it would be [How to Win Friends and Influence People](#). So I think the first keyword there is even skill. And skill is something that can be developed. So before anything, any change took place in my life or if it was with my diet or my social skills, it took having a growth mindset. The realization that I'm not stuck at my current level. I can always practice these things. I can always learn new skills, work on it and get better. Because if a person doesn't believe they can get better, if they believe, "Well, I'm just I'm the way I am, nothing I could do about it," then, no change can take place from that mindset. So first of all, realizing, "Okay I can read this book, it's going to share tips and advice with me." And one of the things that helped me, let's say with that book is because I am very much an introvert, I still am. I embrace it. I love that quality about me. But I'm not one to necessarily talk about trivial things and I didn't appreciate it. And so reading that book taught me to appreciate, things like, taking an interest in other people, being more interested in them versus trying to get other people interested in me, the value of small talk and why we engage in small talk and how you can use that to lead to something else. So I had to understand it. I had to appreciate it and then in terms of the practical application, it was really just a matter of shooting for really small targets when it comes to developing these things. So for someone with social skills it might be, I'm just going to practice making more eye contact with people and that's all they focus on.

It's one little small step that might be uncomfortable at first and then, for me it'd be okay look people more in the eye in conversations. And then as I get comfortable with that, have a question that I can ask them about their life that would get them to open up about something they're excited about. And just taking little small practices that I could work on kind of one at a time where I never feel overwhelmed, then gradually those things improved. And also learning how to do it in a way that's congruent with my personality and accepting that I don't have to be, let's say if you're sticking with social skills, I don't have to be the life of the party. That doesn't mean I can't still develop these skills and find my own role in things.

Rachel: So you mentioned like the eye contact or certain things, so how did you get to even identify these little things such as the eye contact that you should do? Was it through reading the book [How to Win Friend and Influence People](#) and just identifying what some of the core behaviors are?

Derek: That's a really good question. And the answer is there's really two parts to developing a skill or developing yourself. And I consider it kind of like the internal and the external. So what the external would be, would be getting information from other people. Someone wants to learn how to exercise or improve their social skills, there's someone else out there who's figured this stuff out. Maybe they're in scientific research or someone's got the proven solution. So yes, reading books, hearing from other people, "Hey, here's something that you can do that would be helpful." That's part of it. But there's also the internal, and I believe that we really have a lot of the answers to our challenges within ourselves. So if I were to just simply ask myself, if there's one thing I can do to be a little bit better today or a little bit better in this area, what would it be? And there's a good chance I would probably have an answer for what that would be. So I'm going to jump quickly to a diet example, because that's the stuff that comes most readily to mind. When I was improving my diet, I didn't know what the best diet was when I first got started and I wanted to eat healthier. But I didn't have to read a book to realize that eating French fries is not going to be as good when I go to a restaurant as eating some steamed vegetables. So I'd make the choice to get the steamed vegetables. And I think a lot of people, a lot of us, we already kind of know those little tweaks that we can make, to make things a little bit better where we don't even need to read a book. We can start with the things we already know and as we're going through that process, then we can start to add in, piece by piece information from outside sources to help to take things even further.

Rachel: Awesome. And I am such a proponent of asking yourself the right questions, I've probably said that on like every other podcast at this point, but it's such a good point. It's just I think we all have this access to this universal intelligence, and when we just, the way I usually I do it, how can I make it inevitable that whatever, and it's amazing how easy it works. So another thing I'd love to talk about but I thought you covered really well in your book was just about, if you say you want to do something... Hey, we got disconnected.

Derek: Yup.

Rachel: Okay, Well, I'll just go on from what I was saying. So one thing that I think you covered really well in your book was just sometimes people feel like they want something, like let's say, they are very clear with themselves, they want to lose ten pounds. But then when it comes time to going on a diet, they don't actually do it. And can you explain just what you think that discrepancy is for people? Why people feel so sure, "Yes, I'm starting tomorrow. I want to lose ten pounds," and then the first thing they do is go for a doughnut or maybe it's the second thing they do, whatever?

Derek Doepker: Absolutely. Well, there's two key points that I want to address with that. And one has to do with the feeling that I notice a lot of people are dealing with this, especially today's day and age where we have so many distractions. There's so much stuff going on. And this one feeling will keep people stuck, possibly more than anything else, and that's feeling overwhelmed. They think about all the things that they need to do to get started on the journey. And so if a person says, "Okay, I'm going to change my diet," then there can be a lot of things with that. And so they see all these different steps at once, and that leads to feeling like it's too much. And there's a great quote I heard it from Alex Mandossian, I don't know if he's the originator of it that is "We can't do everything, but we can do anything, one thing at a time." So if I think about cleaning my apartment, I think about all the different things I know I've got to clean my countertops, I've got to move this stuff, I've got to go and clean the bathroom, I've got to put this stuff. It's too much. But if I think, "Okay, what's just my one next thing that I need to do?" And it might be, "Okay, just organize my desk." That's not overwhelming because it's one thing. So focusing on single action steps, where if person says, "I want to eat healthier." What's one step they can take to eat healthier and focus on that for the next week. And they ...

Rachel: Derek, you broke up again.

Derek Doepker: Can you still hear me now?

Rachel: Now I can hear you. The last thing that I heard you say was just about how it's about that one action step.

Derek Doepker: Okay. so what I recommend people to do is they focus on one single change they can make at a time that's so easy that there's no way they can't do it. So for instance, they might say, "Can I just make a smoothie for breakfast?" Is that easy enough to do? Not worry about the lunch, not worry about dinner, and not worry about all the other stuff. Just find one positive action to take and focus on that until it becomes a habit, and then work on the other stuff. And then the other thing and this kind of goes into this whole idea of what about the temptations? What about the doughnuts that are just too irresistible, or the cookies, or for me, it's the ice-cream? So when it comes to this stuff, a lot of times what people do is they use a certain type of language pattern with themselves, and that's like, "I can't have those cookies, alright. I'm on a diet. I'm eating better. I just can't have the cookies. Don't eat the cookies. Whatever it is, don't eat the doughnuts." And what happens is there's a term I learned in psychology called reactance. And what that means is when someone tells you you can't do something, we

don't like that. It feels like they're stripping away our freedom. Someone bosses you around, and says "You can't do that," or "Go do this. You need to do this." We don't like it. We feel like our sense of making a choice is taken away from us. Well, the important thing to understand is that we can do that to ourselves. So every time I say, "Derek, you can't eat that ice cream, don't eat it. Don't eat those doughnut," I'm basically bossing myself around and that actually creates resentment almost with ourselves and it feels like we're losing out on something that we love. Okay, so obviously if a person feels like they're losing out on something, then they're not going to want to be, very excited or motivated about it. So there's a really simple way to get around this. And what that is, is by creating a choice for yourself and understating the long term consequences for it. So if someone came up to me and said, "Hey Derek, do you want a doughnut or do you want a salad?" I'm going to say, "I'd rather have the doughnut." But if you say, "Derek, in five years from now, do you want to be overweight and sick and have no energy or in five years from now, do you want to have, a great body, totally fit and full of energy and healthy?" Obviously I'm going to choose the second option. Well the difference between these two scenarios, is one is we're looking at the short term, the other one we're looking at the long term. So when it comes to making better choices, we want to also consider what's going to happen a year down the road if I continue to make this choice. What's going to have five years down the road? So with the doughnut versus salad situation, I would ask myself, would I rather eat this doughnut and know that it's going to keep me from reaching my goals? I'm not going even to feel that good after I eat it. It's going to take me longer to lose the weight or whatever it is that I'm trying to do. Or would I rather eat this salad, feel good about myself and have the great healthy, fit body that I've always wanted? Okay?

Rachel: Yeah.

Derek: So by asking that question in making it a choice it's no longer something you're forcing on yourself. You're giving yourself options and recognizing the consequence of each option. And as a person gets more in the habit of asking themselves questions, "Hey, do I want to do this or do I want to do that," and here's what's going to happen either way, then we start to make choices. We have that sense of freedom restored whenever we're doing this stuff, and it's not this constant battle of will power, "Don't do that. Don't do that. Don't do that".

Rachel: Yeah, so I totally agree with you and I know that they say in studies for success, that one of the greatest indicators of success is the ability to delay instant gratification. So I'm totally on board with you. And I'm also curious, just to play devil's advocate, if I were to ask myself, let's say, I know in five years from now, or even like after this, I'm going to feel sluggish if I have this doughnut, whatever, and I decide I still want the doughnut, what would you in that? Like if you were talking to me and I was telling you, "I know all that, I still want the doughnut."

Derek: Okay, well, there's one thing and that is having the doughnut, and this is where it's important just as the disclaimer not to go to the extremes, having the doughnut isn't always bad. There's times when I'm going to have the ice-cream. I'm going to have the

cookies and stuff like that, because it's not necessarily about going like, "I can never indulge in something that I enjoy." Because really is a doughnut bad for someone? Well it depends, if it's in moderation, on occasion as a treat, it can be perfectly fine. But when it's taken too far, if a person is eating a doughnut every single meal and that's all they eat, well they're then going to have problems. So first thing is almost allowing yourself to have the occasional treats and recognizing things like that. Now if it's a person who's just constantly struggling and every time they ask themselves that question, they make the less ideal choice. Then it can be a matter digging a little deeper into what needs that a poor behavior is meeting. So one thing to understand is all our habits and all our bad habits are fulfilling us on some level. So if a person is in an abusive relationship, for instance, taking it in a different direction. Some people might sit back and look at them and be like, "Why in the world would a person stick around that relationship?" And the answer is, as much pain as they might be going through, it's fulfilling them on some level. They're getting a feeling of connection with another human being. That if they broke up that relationship and they got out of it, they would lose that feeling of connection. That doughnut, for some person, might be the only option they have to feel comfort and that might be their way of relieving stress and all they know how to do to relieve stress is eat doughnut. That's their coping mechanism. And if you strip that coping mechanism away from them, then they don't have anything else to take its place. So they're almost dependent on that doughnut or on that bad habit to meet certain needs that they have. And just real quickly, the human needs from the research of Cloé Madanes and Anthony Robbins: it's the connection, significance, certainty, variety, contribution, and growth. So you can get a lot deeper into all that, but if a person really has a hard time giving up something, there's a good chance it's because they need to find something else that's healthier to meet that need before they can get rid of that bad habit.

Rachel: That's such a great point. First of all, I'm glad you mentioned the six human needs because that was my next question. But before we get into that, I mean, just with the, "What need am I missing?" with the doughnut. It makes me think about I read from this person named Sarah Jenks. She has a program called Live More, Weigh Less. And she talks about exactly what you're talking about: how a lot of times, eating things, it gives us some kind of unmet need. And I know, like especially sugary things, it gives us like the quick rush of, I don't know if it's dopamine or just, we feel better when we eat this stuff. And so she said for her, whenever she would find herself wanting to have a piece of chocolate or something, she would ask herself what she was looking for and then she would go look to replicate it elsewhere. So the example that she gave was that she would go, and she would, on her lunch breaks, walk to this, like nail place and get a 15-minute shoulder massage like when she was on her break or on her lunch or whatever instead of going and eating the junk food. And she said it really worked for her really well. And she kept making these little things that would eventually have her lose a bunch of weight. So it's pretty cool. And on the six different human needs, you mentioned them. Can you tell us a little bit more about what each one means and how important they are for each person?

Derek: Yeah, absolutely. So let's start with the first need which I'll say is certainty. And certainty, another word for that could be "comfort". We want to be a certain degree of safety, security, all these things kind of tie into that. So I want to know that I can pay my bills. That's my certainty need. I want to know that the building I'm in isn't going to collapse down on top of me. That's certainty, right? And then there's uncertainty or variety. So with these two, they're kind of two ends of a spectrum. So on one hand we want certainty, on the other hand we want uncertainty or variety. Well, first of all, what does variety mean? Well, that's fun. That's excitement. That's, "I don't want it to be too routine and boring every single day. I like things to be a little bit different," right? So you can actually see just with those two needs, some people who are they do the same thing every day. They're on a set routine. They go to the same restaurants. They order the same foods, all that stuff, very high certainty needs. Someone who's always looking for something different, they get bored easily. They can't do the same thing over and over. They've always kind of got to switch it up. That's a person who really values variety. Now of course, we all want both of these to some degree. And the analogy I give with certainty and variety is like, if I'm going to go see a movie, I might read some of the reviews. I might watch a trailer or read a little bit about what the movie's about. Because I want enough certainty to know that I'm not going to be wasting my time. It's going to be a good movie, something that I enjoy. But I want to maintain a little bit of uncertainty because I don't want to get spoiled [inaudible 00:29:00] I want to remain uncertain going into the movie so it's like, it's still a surprise what happens. So we're kind of balancing those two different needs in different ways. So there's a lot of stuff that can go into that in terms of how we meet our certainty needs, how we meet our variety needs, but we have both and they coexist. So those are the first two.

Rachel: And, can I ask a quick question about that?

Derek: Yeah, sure thing.

Rachel: Thank you. How do like how much certainty and uncertainty each person needs?

Derek: Well, one thing to point out is that it's constantly changing and it's dynamic. So for instance, a person who's had a lot of certainty in their life, or actually, let's start out with this: Let's say a younger person, they might be going through periods where, let's say in high school, college, it's all about fun and excitement. Let's do crazy things and they're very much, their primary thing is, "Let's get some variety." And then maybe they get a little older and they get tired of that and they're like, "Well let's to more certainty now for this period of my life. I need more stability, a job and security." And then after a period of time, they could hit like mid-life and go, "Oh, things have just been so routine. Is this all there is to life?" And then they want to go out and have fun again or whatever. So it's constantly shifting. Some people might have a personality that naturally wants more certainty. Some people might want more variety. Some it goes back and forth. But as far as recognizing it in others and yourself, I usually look at, what are my patterns of behavior? What is my language? If I talk to someone, for instance, and they're always like, "I'm not sure. I hear all these conflicting things. I don't know what to do."



Sometimes, they even use the word certain, I'm not certain what to do or whatever. That at least for that particular situation, they really want certainty. If you hear someone go, "Ah, it's boring. It's routine. It's the same thing all the time." If they're talking like that or if that's what I'm saying to myself, I'm like "Oh, I'm looking for variety, I'm trying to get my variety needs." It's kind of a learned skill to start to explore yourself and how you're meeting these different needs. Another point while I'm still early on in the whole explaining the needs is that a lot of times the things that we really like to do are meeting multiple needs. If not all the needs at the same time. So once again, watching a movie can be certainty and uncertainty needs being met simultaneously.

Rachel: That's a great point.

Derek: Carrying on with the other human needs, we have connection which is our desire to fit in with people. If you think it's pretty hard wired into our biology that we want to be part of the tribe. It's important that people like us, and we have their approval. Then at the other end of the spectrum though is significance. This, I want to be special, I want to stand apart from other people. Just those two phrases: I want to fit in and I want to stand apart. They're kind of contradictory almost opposite things and yet we want both. But a person will usually prioritize one or the other. In terms of masculine, feminine type of dynamics, the feminine usually wants more connection. They want more collaboration with other people. They want peoples approval. They're not as likely to rock the boat and stuff. This is a generalization. This isn't man, woman. It's masculine, feminine. Then for the masculine, it's usually I want to be special, I want to compete and prove that I can dominate and be the best and stuff like that. That's more of the significance and even can be kind of controlling of other people and things when a person has high significance needs. If both these things get taken to the extreme, for instance, if a person has too much desire for a connection, they'll just be a doormat. They'll do whatever anyone tells them to do because they don't want to break that connection with people. For a person who has too much significance, and that's something that they've taken to the extreme, they might boss people around. They might try to be talking about why they're better than everyone else. They might try to control other people. Very sort of what we typically think of as egotistical behavior when that's taken to the extreme. But obviously we want to have a healthy balance of both. We want to fit in. We want to have that connection and collaboration with people. But we also want to have enough significance that we don't become a doormat, let people walk all over us and can maintain a healthy sense of independence amongst ourselves. Those are, how those two needs kind of work together.

Finally, there's contribution and growth. These are called the spiritual needs or the needs that we have to be fulfilled, truly fulfilled as people. I also compare this to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, if people are familiar with that. There's basically your survival needs, and food, shelter, stuff like that. At the top of the hierarchy is reaching my fullest potential. It's no longer just about me. It's about how can I share my gifts with the world. How can I help other people? That's contribution and growth is this desire that I'm better today than I was yesterday, or I'm better today than I was a year ago. I'm

making progress in my life. I'm not just at this point of being stagnated and stuck in staying the same. Those are the last two needs that, they're not really essential to survival, but they're essential to having a truly happy and fulfilled life.

Rachel: Would you say then if somebody was feeling depressed or unhappy that they could just look at these six needs and look at which ones aren't getting met; meet them and then feel happier?

Derek: Yeah, absolutely. That's a great starting point, now I always see multiple perspectives to things. In terms of being proactive, if it's a human needs deficiency then that would be, the depression could be explained by that. Now of course, I've got to give the disclaimer, there could be a physiological reason. There could be something messed up in their body that can be responsible for emotions so our physiology does play a role in how we feel. Even something as simple as not getting enough sleep, right? We can try to fight against not getting enough sleep by changing our attitude about stuff but a lot of times the best solution is to just get more sleep, right? And work with the physiology. So those are basically the two components. The internal stuff would be with the human needs. The external stuff or the mental stuff would be with the human needs. The physiological stuff though is another component.

Rachel: Okay, no that's a great distinction so people still listening have like a practical application for the six human needs. It's either a set internal or physiological. Awesome. The other thing that I was reading in your book, and there was so many points I feel like we could do 20 podcasts and you're so, I mean you so know your stuff, so well. This is awesome. One of the other things that I was reading that I really liked, is you talk about how believing a truth, such as being selfish is bad or being selfless is bad. Just believing that as truth can really hold you back, and that you instead do something called Four Value Logic. Can you talk about what that is and how you apply it?

Derek: Absolutely. I'm so glad you brought that up. One of the things that I say is the half-truth can get you stuck just as easily as a whole lie. Using the example of selfish versus selfless, here's how someone might get stuck. I see this, there's a woman that I know and she's always doing things for other people, she's being very selfless. Now, the problem is she does it so much that she doesn't actually meet her own needs and take care of herself as much as she could. This actually becomes not just detrimental to her, but she gets so drained that then she's not even able to help other people as much as she could. It would be like a person who's trying to feed the homeless, or feed the hungry and they don't feed themselves so now they starve to death. You're not going to be as good at feeding the hungry if you're hungry yourself. There comes a point where we have to value our own needs and be what might be called "selfish." That's one example. Now a person who's selfish can say, "Well, I've got to meet my own needs. I've got to take care of myself. I'm number one. It's all about me. We've all got to look out for ourselves. It's each man for themselves. Each woman for themselves. Survival of the fittest," right? There's that extreme. They can say, "In nature, each animal wants to fight for its own survival," right? People can go too far in that direction and it's like they have a practical truth. Yes, we need to take care of ourselves. Yes, we need to serve

and contribute to others if we want to be happy. We have both of these things that coexist. Just like it's one of the yin-yang balance. What happens with a two value logic system is that people say it's either or. It's either this or it's that. Either you're selfish or you're selfless. Either you take care of your own needs or you're trying to take care of everyone, all right? It's just one or better. I even had someone, I coach authors and I was trying to teach a concept about giving your readers what they want, not being so creative that people don't understand the message and what someone responded with is basically, "So what you're saying is don't write what you want to write about, or don't be creative. Instead just write what sells." My answer to that is no, it's not an either or it's you can do both of these things, and you can have a balance between these things. Going into the Four Value Logic System, it's something can be true, it can be false, it can be true or false or neither true or false. That might make your head spin a little bit so you don't have to really wrap, try to figure it out at this point. The take home thing is that it's not usually an either-or type scenario. It's usually a balancing act that takes place between two ends of the spectrum. You will notice, this ties into how our human needs work, right? We want certainty but we also want variety, or uncertainty. It's not an either-or. It's a both and it's a constantly shifting dynamic. When one person goes all the way to one end or all the way to the other end, they're right when they say that end is important. They're right when they say it's important to have variety, or if they say it's important to have certainty, but the whole truth is that you need both.

Rachel: That's a good point and it goes back to what so many things come back to, is it's just that we can't control everything all the time. There's not direct formula for everything. So I like that you have distinctions for people and I also just love operating on the belief that it doesn't need to be either-or. The end is a much more spacious option. Awesome. This has been great. One thing that I like to ask people sometimes, just because I'm interviewing you, you have all this amazing information and I don't want anybody listening to feel like any of us have it all figured out. I love to ask sometimes, what's one thing right now that you're working through, because I know we never stop evolving, and how are you getting through it? Just like a struggle that's going on in your life right now.

Derek: Yeah. The first thing that comes to mind, looking and what I've been thinking about a lot these past couple weeks is very disorganized. I've never been strong in keeping things clean, keeping things on track. I've lost things. I've had issues where even on some of my projects. I didn't double check things. And there are mistakes in there that I regret and picking up the pieces. Even though I'm a pretty cautious person, somehow some of that stuff slips by just by my lack of organization. My whole thing recently has been cleaning, coming up with better scheduling, being more effective. It's kind of a more practical productivity type of thing. Luckily I'm not going through any major emotional turmoil right now but just on a practical level I'm all about figuring out how I'm getting more organized in setting that stuff up. In terms of some of the steps that I'm taking, it's a big on to-do list. I have actually notepad sitting next to me. Every time an idea comes, it's something I needs to do, I just write it on the list and I'll prioritize it later. That's the second thing, write it all down and then go, what is let's say the three

most important things that I need to do today. The next step for me is probably getting some big calendar that I can stick up in my apartment because I keep things on my phone but it's not right in front of me. I've learned just through experience, okay. The whole digital calendar system that might work great for some people but understand that you might just need the visual thing that's planted on your wall or whatever. That just comes from time and experience and learning these things. That's kind of my big thing that I'm getting to work through right now.

Rachel: Awesome. I also like the writing down on the calendar. Something else that jumped to me when I was asking you the question what your struggles were, I was thinking that some people might say to me that they're not struggling with anything because they want to have the right language and stuff. I'm curious in your perspective is there such a thing as being too positive.

Derek: Absolutely. While it does help to change language patterns, one of the things that I talk about in the book is calling something a problem can be switched to calling it a challenge or a situation, or something like that. As far as though, the idea of being too positive, just like everything else. The positive is one end of the spectrum. The "negative" side is the other, and if we really want to move forward and get unstuck in life, we need to see both. For instance, something just happened to me. I was driving back a couple weeks ago and my car was making noises and it wasn't driving right. Now, if I stuck my head in the sand and, "Oh, no nothing can be wrong. I'm just going to pretend it's not there," Obviously that wouldn't be smart. I had to get out of my car, look at it, and go, "Oh, there's a flat tire. Okay, I need to get this fixed." The problem with the overly positive thing is sometimes we need to understand there are real "problems" in this world and it's serious and we've got to address it. We need to address it in our lives. I think that whole overly positive mentality comes from a fear of the truth because sometimes the truth is painful. When the truth is painful, it's only painful if we're not in alignment to it. If we're not living out lives in alignment to truth, that's when it becomes painful. Going back to a health fitness perspective, sometimes it helps to go, "You know what, if I keep doing what I'm going to do, I might not live long enough to be around for my family, or my kids or whatever," and that's painful. But that pain is a powerful motivator for change. And if a person refuses to look at some of the painful things then they're not going to make that positive change. Even on a more serious level, it's a very real possibility that if a person looks at the problems in this world, they get depressed if they don't see a possible solution but we still need to have the courage to say, "You know what, there's people out there that are dying of hunger. There's people that are in slavery right now." Still in today's modern age, there's some real problems and challenges in this world and we can stick our head in the sand. We have to have the courage to look at them, to maybe even experience a little pain but not get stuck by just looking at the problem. Go, "Okay, there's a problem, I see it." Now let's switch to a solution oriented mindset. We have to be able to look at both the problem and then get focused on the solution and we can't blind ourselves to any of these different things and just pretend everything is okay when it might not be.

Rachel: Amen. I love that and I especially love what you said about just sometimes how being too positive is a fear of the truth. That just like, "Wow, that's a really, really great point." Again, I can't say it enough, this has been awesome. You just really, really know your stuff. You're so great at explaining things. It's been just so good and I know that people are going to want to learn more about you. Can you let them know where they can go to find out more?

Derek: Yeah, absolutely. Well, my website Excuse Proof Fitness is at [excuseproof.com](http://excuseproof.com). You can find my books on Amazon and you can also find the book Why You're Stuck, an easy link for that is [excuseproof.com/stuck](http://excuseproof.com/stuck). S-T-U-C-K. You can also, I have my other books then on Amazon like 50 Fitness Tips You Wish You Knew, I the other best seller. You can find all that stuff through my website, [excuseproof.com](http://excuseproof.com) or alternatively [derekdoepker.com](http://derekdoepker.com). It's Derek as is D-E-R-E-K and Doepker, D-O-E-P-K-E-R.

Rachel: Awesome. Well thank you so much again.

Derek: Thank you, Rachel. It's my pleasure.

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With love,

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