

Ep 28 Jason V

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SPEAKERS

Francis Wade, Jason VanDervere



Francis Wade 00:00

Welcome to the Task Management and Time Blocking Podcast, episode 28. Are you someone who works really long hours not because you're forced to maybe you know, you could really love what you're doing. But you have an inkling that maybe if you put those hard, long work hours elsewhere, perhaps it could actually benefit your entire life, including, and maybe most importantly, for us... the quality of the work you're doing. If this resonates with you at all, join me and Jason VanDervere as we tackle this challenging issue, I'm Francis Wade, and welcome to the Task Management, and Time Blocking Podcast.



Francis Wade 01:13

And welcome back. And as you can see, I'm joined on stage by Jason VanDervere. And before I introduce him, let me say a couple of things to give you an orientation to the kinds of shows that we do here at the Task Management, and Time Blocking Podcast, because it's not like other podcasts. Well, I do have guests but actually don't interview my guests, I invite them to come on and to get their hands dirty as we try to solve a very difficult, tricky and sticky problem in the area of productivity. So Jason is our companion today. And while he while he, while he waits to be brought on fully and to be introduced, let me tell a bit about how the show works. We spend the first part of the conversation, going back and thrashing the problem out trying to get to the bottom of it, and how bad it is and awful. And what happens if we don't solve it. Einstein said this great quote, that if you give him an hour to solve a problem, you'll spend the first 55 minutes on the problem and the last five minutes on the solution. And that's a little bit of what we do here. Also, we're looking to achieve a serendipitous insight, or two or three. And when there's a serendipitous insight, it means that we've come up with something that we didn't recognize before, it's something brand new for both of us. When that happens, we'll ring a bell, a virtual bell. And if we get to the end of the podcast, and we haven't done it, you'll hear a buzzer. The buzzer doesn't mean that we fail, it just means that we didn't have any particular moments of serendipity that we could point to not bad just didn't quite hit the mark.



Francis Wade 02:51

So before I introduce Jason, let me tell you about Albert, to quick story. So Albert, he works 100 hours per week, on a good week. He loves his company, the demands of his customers, the needs of his people. And he's successful at meeting them all. He's always had a surplus of energy that leaves others in the dust. It's like his secret formula...a superpower. But he's missing a sense of fulfillment. And he believes... honestly believes that working more would fill this in a void. It's always kind of worked. When he was a student went to a demanding program at the top college. work then. And in fact, his fiancée told him that she admires him for his work ethic. She loves him for it. Also, his bosses said got some good news for him. His work, his hours, his dedication. It's been moved them to the top of the line for promotions in his company. And he's been rewarded for his sacrifice, let's call it that. But in the last couple of weeks his fiancée reschedule the wedding on her own this time, for the third time. Recently, she stopped wearing the ring he gave her every day. She said it's really squeezing my finger. But he kind of wondered, Is there something more going on? So it's bugging him? He's lying in bed. Most nights he doesn't sleep so well. Tossing and turning. He's wondering if she's asleep or is she giving him the cold shoulder? So he started the thing that working harder might not be the answer. And to be honest, the last time it took more than a week's vacation was college spring break 10 years ago.



Francis Wade 04:58

So let's welcome Jason VanDervere. He is an entrepreneur, real estate investor life coach and author of the goal crazy planner. Through his products and programs, he has helped over 30,000 set goals for themselves and take action towards them. Outside of business, He is a loving husband and father of a. This was written some time ago. So how old is your son.



Jason VanDervere 05:23

He's seven months old? Yeah. Thank you. Thanks for having me on. Yeah, getting old quickly.



Francis Wade 05:31

Congratulations. That's, that is your first and only is...




Jason VanDervere 05:34

Our first one. Yep. First one.



Francis Wade 05:37


Great. So what do you make of Albert and his, his dilemma? This just as we just as we sort of thought I would start off with a quick summary of what we know.

 Jason VanDerve 05:48

Yeah, it sounds painful. But I think there's a lot of people there that can they can fall into that trap, right, they might not have the feeling of fulfillment that they want. So they just keep working more they keep working more and slowly start to forget about the other areas of life. Right.

 Francis Wade 06:06


Right. And the truth is it worked in the past. It's kind of paid off, right? He Yeah, he has hard evidence that this approach to life and the way he's lived his life, using his energy to fuel the number of hours that he works. Got him a three point something GPA, let's, I mean, it's all made up. Yeah, yeah. Good GPA, probably got him scholarships, and it got him noticed by his fiancée, you know, she was really attracted. Look how hard he works. He's so cute. She probably felt comfortable that you know, someone who works that hard is someone who could she could kind of connect her life with for the long term.

 Jason VanDerve 06:46


And I think that's a pretty popular thing to I think, yeah, like a quality like that. It's easy for it to be attractive at first, right? They're really hard working, and they probably want that in a spouse. But then if it continues to the point where they start to feel less important than work, then it's not so attractive of a quality. Right?

 Francis Wade 07:05


It kind of comes back and bites you right?

 Jason VanDerve 07:09

Yeah, cuz, you know, that approach of like, he probably is somebody who says yes to everything, right? Like, oh, yeah, I can take that on. I can take that on. But eventually you just working hard and saying, yes, everything, just, eventually you're going to cap out on how many things you can say yes to?

 Francis Wade 07:24

And he has, he has a bit of evidence that something is capping out.

 Jason VanDerve 07:28

Yeah. And I imagine, probably, if you're at that point, you know, if you're working 100 hours, you're probably I mean, like you said, he's probably not sleeping very much. I mean, even if he's not really sleeping very many hours to be able to work that much. You probably also are

sacrificing the time for working out for, you know, if you're not sleeping, maybe now you're drinking a ridiculous amount of caffeine or, you know, these energy drinks. Maybe you're working so much. Yeah, you're not making healthy meals for yourself. So now your health starts to slip. And yeah, it just starts to snowball on itself. Right.



Francis Wade 08:03

Right. And turns into like, the beginning of a bigger problem. This is why people have heart attacks on Monday morning more than any other time, right?



Jason VanDervere 08:11

Yeah. I didn't know that...Monday morning. Yeah, yeah. I imagine. I'll say that one more time. He's very driven. very driven. Yeah, very driven. But yeah, if things start to slip, I mentioned that probably, you know, if your relationship starts to slip, if he feels like his spouse, or a significant other is starting to be a little more distant, it probably encourages him to even work more, right? If you don't feel really strong connection with your significant other at home, it's easier to justify Well, I'm just gonna work more, right. And yeah, and that just makes the problem even worse. That's his,



Francis Wade 08:53

.... his tendency to work hard and long is triggered by any kind of anxiety because he, he knows how to work himself out of a jam. So as anxiety about his relationship increases, his tendency is to let me work hard and I'll get us out of this jam.



Jason VanDervere 09:12

Yeah, yeah.



Francis Wade 09:14

Sp he's like, he's, he's a driven guy. He, he's also very ambitious. Obviously. He wants to be able to have this full life or he has everything he probably wants to have kids and probably wants to spend a lot of time with the kids as well, in addition to the 100 hours. But for him, you know, the enemy in all this is that he only gets 168 hours. And being pretty young because he's in his 20s, I can tell you're someone who has some gray hairs... that youth is wasted on the young. But when you're young, you know your body will bounce back after all kinds of long hours and abuse... You are a young guy Jason, remind us of what that's like!



Jason VanDervere 10:00

Hey, I mean, I can bounce back, but I definitely need my sleep. I really value my sleep.



Francis Wade 10:07

Okay, you're not one of these folks who can just keep pull a couple of all nighters and have no problem?



10:11

no. I tried that for a while. And it's like, you know, there's times where life is hectic, and you gotta be like, when you have a baby, you just gotta step up to the plate and make those all nighters happen, but as a long term, it catches up with you. And, yeah, it starts to get painful.



Francis Wade 10:30

I thought, yeah, I have a problem with all nighters. When I was 18 years old, freshman year, I tried one. It didn't, did not work. And I said,



10:38

Yeah, what happened the next day? Did you pay for it? Even the next week? Yeah,



Francis Wade 10:43

I said never again, it took it took nowadays, I can't do that nowadays. Nowadays if I go to bed at midnight, I'm a wreck for the next couple of days. But back then, I probably bounced back after sleeping an extra couple of hours. But I said never again. I said, I don't know how they do it. I don't want to know. And I'm not going to find someone to arrange my life so that they never have to do one of these things ever again. And I was able to keep that promise. Yeah, I just couldn't.



11:09

That's good. Imagine, you know, now that you're a married man. And you know, for Alberta, it's like, if he stays up a really long time, and if he's tired, he'll probably find the strength to get through the workday. Right? He's got the drive to do that. But probably when he gets home, then it's just like, you know, his, his significant others / his fiance wants to hang out and do fun things probably like they did when they were first starting to date. And he's like, look, I'm like cash out for the day. I've been, you know, I slept for hours last night. I've slept for hours for the past couple nights. So we got this big project. He's exhausted. And it's Yeah, it starts to eat at that spark. And what do you think for Albert, what do you think is the worst part for his fiancee right now, as he's going through this. If you were to paint that picture,



Francis Wade 11:49

She's pretty young. They're both pretty young. So they're not, and they're not used to it. They're not married yet. So they're still in that honeymoon phase. Okay, so I remember being in the honeymoon phase, and justifying all kinds of things that they would eventually work out. Yeah, cuz I didn't really have enough experience to know that some things don't work out like that. So I suspect that she's telling her things like, he'll grow out of it. I won't stay upset with him.



12:21

It's all phase. It's just a project at work right now. One time Yeah.



Francis Wade 12:26

It wouldn't always be like that, that when he gets promoted, it'll get better. We all know that. That's not that doesn't happen that way. But yeah, you you, you kind of forgive a lot of these things, because you don't see them continuing forever. You cannot tell yourself, this will change when a baby, when I get married, and we have a baby, then he'll, he won't spend so much time at work. Just she's probably telling herself these kinds of things, is what I'm guessing. She's fooling herself. Yeah, absolutely. And him too, you know, because the truth is, if he doesn't get his sort of head around this quickly, the anxiety that he's feeling is only going to increase, you know. He's not going to be, he's not going to be effective, he's going to feel more a sense of a sense of unease is not going to go away. It will take him through the wedding and through the baby but it won't go away, it will only increase because he's not really dealing with the source of it. He may just hope that you know, he'll keep making promises and hope that she keeps being patient and keeps being forgiving. And that'll probably be enough. You know, internally, he's probably just barely feeling the beginning of anxiety. But, you know, as someone like him, though, you know, given how driven he is. And he's just, you know, I imagine he's a smart guy. He, he thinks that there should be a way to have it all. Yeah. You know, maybe he's, you know, he reads like positive literature positive thinking of it says, basically, yes, you can have it all.



Jason VanDervere 14:17

Yeah, hmm. Do you think now that he's trying to grow? Do you think he's feeling stress? Like, is he is he buried with stress? Or is his excitement? You know, kind of knowing that out? I see, what do you think? Is he in his constant state of overwhelm?



Francis Wade 14:32

We would ask, those questions because we're a bit older. Yeah. But in in his world, it's, he's never felt these feelings before. Yeah. And he, whenever he's felt anxious, he didn't able to work himself out of it. But you and I know that he's probably feeling 10 different kinds of new feelings. Yeah. Maybe problems like Oh, well. Yeah, like his health hasn't started to go yet because he's your



14:59

Oh, yeah, he can bounce back. He He's



Francis Wade 14:59

leaving, he's losing sleep. But you know, he's lost sleep before because he's when you're young, you're like Superman, you know, your 20s you're like, Dude, I can do this.



Jason VanDervere 15:17

I can save a couple hours. I can sleep on the floor for a couple hours and wake up feeling great.



Francis Wade 15:23

Just keep going. You probably had a few, a few all nighters? No,



Jason VanDervere 15:28

I've had a few. Yeah. And hey, I know the pain that you pay the next day. It's, it's real. But yeah, I also think probably like in that phase, having lots of demand for your time. Right? Like right now he's super busy. He's probably in his head feeling like, this is what success feels like, right? Like, all these people need me. And he might not even realize yet that it's a problem, right? It's like, well, I'm so needed here. I need to do all these things. It's the illusion of a lot of growth. Do you agree with that?



Francis Wade 16:01

Yeah. He probably had one of those big posters on his wall that says something like, great. The more you work, the more you get.



16:09

Yeah, I'll sleep when I'm dead, 24/7. Yeah,



Francis Wade 16:12

that eagle flying over something, you know, something like "Your outputs are only as big as your inputs" are something that makes him just want to drive more and more, because he's, you know, he's in that he's in that kind of energetic, you know, drive for results. He's not very, at this point, not too reflective, because he hasn't had any major catastrophes. It's just like the

inking of something. She hasn't quit. She hasn't told them you're spending too long or not spending enough time with me? I'm off. The wedding is over. So he's not had any catastrophe related to his long working hours.



16:55

Yeah. So it's really just like an evenings when he's laying there at night, he kind of gets those feelings. It's during the day, he's so focused on work. When home, he's like, oh, yeah, I have this relationship. And that's when he starts to think about it.



Francis Wade 17:09

Right? Because I think that's most of us most of the time. You know, we push aside those kinds of anxieties and concerns. And, you know, we try to just kind of, you know,



17:21

Maybe we want to ignore them, right. We know, they're probably something to address, but it's way easier to ignore. I think things are fine. Why stir the pot with a question of, you know, how are we? Good?



Francis Wade 17:31

Exactly what how would you ask that? We're good. Right? Good. Great. We're out the door. We're good, right? Oh, yeah. Great. Gone. Oh, yeah. She said, Our girls are obviously good. So you know, but I think ...we don't want the bad news. Yeah, we don't want that. We don't want to delve into these sort of anxious feelings in the beginning, we want to just kind of have them go away, in the natural course of things. And for someone like Albert, they always have gone away in the past. There's never been a real catastrophe. As I said, from his really working hard. I think we're, you know, we're always kind of grappling with this question, you know, how much is how much do the early warning signs? Or do they mean anything at this point? Or is it just my mind playing tricks? You know, if he, he probably at some level is thinking that if I keep this up, I'm going to lose this engagement.



Jason VanDerveer 18:40

And he's probably has had some of those thoughts. Yeah.



Francis Wade 18:42

Yeah. But but they're deeply buried. He's not definitely not probably even in his conscious mind. He's just kind of, I don't know, dismiss them as soon as they've come up and it's a real battle.



18:58

Probably the success he's having in his career might numb that a little bit like, well, what why would this fail? Like, I'm super successful, right? Like, look how successful I am. The business needs me or my organization needs me 100 hours a week or things would crumble. Right?



Francis Wade 19:13

He probably has some role models. Some guys were saying, Don't worry about it. When you get to manager you won't have to, but it's kind of like your internship if you're in medical school, you know, you live you have no life for like a better part of 10 years or whatever it is, but at the end, when you're driving your whatever your BMW. Yeah, and you're making the mega-bucks it would all have been worth it. He's probably you know, Yeah, it's horrible now, but when I reach the promised land, it'll all be worth it. And my wife will be happy with me and, you know, this probably is gonna go for a while.



Jason VanDerveer 19:55

So lots of their relationship is being held together by promises for the future, right? Write this in the future, we'll have this in the future, we'll be able to do that trip in the future. We'll have that time it's Yeah.



Francis Wade 20:06

But we do that too. You know, it's not it's not only an Albert thing, we all do that, right? We all, we don't really, we're not taught that we don't really know the early signs of trouble, capital T trouble. You know, the 100 hours is not by itself, a bad thing, maybe or 60 hours a week, or haven't taken a vacation. Or I'm too busy to go to get my annual checkup, or, you know, all the ways in which or exercise. Yeah, once a week or so, all the ways in which we can shave off a corner here and there, and we just have faith in our minds. We're all Albert. He's just a younger, more extreme version of where we are all that. Because we're always kind of mulling this over and thinking, and we're always trying to push them into the back of our mind saying, Oh, no, I exercised last week, right? Yeah, that was enough.



21:06

Yeah, probably similar. It's those promises for the future with himself, right? Well, I'll work out more. Once I become a manager, right, then I'll have the the budget or the time to go do those fitness things. Or once I write, he probably makes those. Well, once I finished this project, then I'll start eating healthier, right, I'll stop eating fast food on the road.



Francis Wade 21:28

Once we get married, the fiance will settle down, you were hurrying every day, we borrow from the future and think that the problem went... we don't think of the problem. We don't think of it

the future and think that the problem won't...we don't think of the problem. We don't think of it deeply enough. But, you know, he'll continue to create this problem that he has, why? Because he's so ambitious. And there's something in our in human nature of especially among ambitious people, I would say. And most people who listen to this podcast, I think, are pretty ambitious, because you know, their productivity people,...productivity, people tend to, folks, if you're listening...tell me if this fits or not. You can't tell me but thinking to yourself. Does this fit that you're a little bit type A, you're a little bit driven, and maybe you really, you really like to produce great things in your life, you have aspirations, that are pretty serious to you, in a sense that you want to accomplish them. And you take, you know, you take your productivity seriously, you wouldn't be listening to this podcast, you know, even though my Jamaican accent makes you think of the last vacation you had. You're here listening to a podcast that you know, tried to improve your productivity. And those of us who are in that kind of realm. It's easy for us to become like an average, we just don't pay attention to the balance. Our optimism and our ambition and our positive thinking just pushes us in a particular direction. For a long, long, long, long time. And slowly we don't really solve the problem that he's talking about and he's experiencing until, until life delivers us an unmistakable wake up call.



23:20

Yeah. Yeah. What do you...could you paint that picture of you know, of Albert, staying on this path? What do you think are some potential situations that would be that wake up call that that he could experience?



Francis Wade 23:31

I think he would get married? I think that's somewhere after the second child....I had a friend who, whose son called someone else Dad. That was a wake up call for him. Yeah. You know, but I've had I've had I've known people to get to where their kids are now 19-20? Now, they are retiring. And their kids are at 18,19,20. They're leaving home. And you're saying "Great, now I can spend more time with you.!" And the kids are like, who are you? It's too late! Basically, it's no...I don't want to spend time with you. Yeah, you had no time for us when you know, when we really wanted you. And now, now, you want to make up for it...really? And it's gone. You know? So that's a that's not a wake up call. That's that you? You already fell asleep. That's yeah. Or you know, your wife looks at you and says, I'm just staying in a marriage for the kids. And when they get to the age when they can be on their own, I'm gone. Then the whole gig will be up and you are like, But what did I do? And all you get is this kind of look. And that's it. So there were wake up calls that probably happened before that. But by the time these things happen, it's kinda too late.



Jason VanDervere 25:03

Yeah. And I think you brought up kind of a good thing. If you have that inkling, I think you keep calling it right, you, you probably would have that gut feeling like, I'm, I know, my relationship isn't where it should be, right? Are those people who they have their kids in that situation? Like, they probably know, right? There's things they know they should be doing. And they have that gut feeling. And it's, you can keep ignoring it. Or you can, you know, say, Hey, I'm gonna, I'm gonna make a change.



Francis Wade 25:29

But they just don't make it. They don't. They don't catch the signal. They don't, see the the defect, kind of like in programming and you're doing the kind of things like not not making comments, putting comments in your code, for example. You're not doing the things that would prevent problems later on. But there's no cost to not put in the comments in your code right now. So you're coding really fast? Because there's no commenting going on? You know, I'm assuming comments are still a part of code, right?



26:07

I haven't coded anything for a while. But it's, if you have a problem makes it a lot easier to find where you put stuff because rereading through code, if you wrote it a couple years ago, or even months ago, it's like, what was I thinking? How was this train of thought all connecting together here? And it's, yeah, you gotta basically relearn yourself the whole thing? If you don't have those comments of like, here's this. Yeah.



Francis Wade 26:28

In that world there's very clear costs for putting stuff off and in the world, that the regular human world, and in the world of devoting a lot of time to work, there are these very weak signals that tell you that something is wrong. Something's going on.



Jason VanDervere 26:47

Yeah. What do you think are some of the main ones that he's receiving? I mean, his fiancée, you know, her ring is getting too tight, cold shoulder, what else do you think might be small, little subtle signs that he's working too much?



Francis Wade 27:00

I know, when I, the older I got, the more I noticed. So I will, you know, think of myself as pretty ignorant, young guy. Yeah, that if I saw anything, I would dismiss it so quickly. That didn't register. But no, you know, it doesn't take much my wife doesn't have to do much for me to go, Whoa. What's up? Just, you know, just look on her face. Tone of the voice, a text that can look a little short. In terms of the words. It could be any, any one of those.



27:43

Other subtle ones, like, you notice them, and you have the option to like, okay, we can sit down and have this conversation, right? But it's gonna take time. Or you can just be like, well, she says everything's fine. Or she didn't say there's a problem, right? It's, and just kind of ignore it. But there's, there's been those little, those little subtle nudges that there's something going on.



Francis Wade 28:05

Yeah, maybe maybe the, the, for an ambitious person. Maybe. If, if there's a back and forth going on in your head like that? No, but yes, but no, but yes, but then that's a sign by itself, the back and forth is a signal. And it's always a signal? No, what's it a signal of is a better question, then? Is it a signal? Because if you can't decide if it's a signal or not that indecision is by itself a signal?



28:39

Signal? Yeah. And worse comes to worse. You ask them, Hey, what's going on? Right? And, well, maybe for the wife example, if she tells you nothing, everything's great. I feel like that's when you know, what's on your mind? Nothing. It's like, really? But that's a that's a big sign that you know, most of there's nothing on somebody's mind. You know, if it's more like, Well, today, this happened, right? But when there's nothing, yeah, it's just you can ask, but I think you bring up a good point. If you're, you're trying to figure out if you're stuck in that point of indecision, that's a signal something's going on. Just dedicate the time to figuring it out.



Francis Wade 29:12

Right. And, you know, the most he may say, or argue with himself and say this, I can't work any more than I am. I'm already maxed out. I have 168 hours per week. Some weeks I'm pulling 100 hours. Yeah, I'm doing the best I can which kind of I can't do more.



29:39

Once you start making excuses for yourself, is that kind of right? Like, well, I can't be doing that because of this reason. This reason this reason, right? When you start making those excuses yourself, that can be another signal. Why don't you know why doesn't she understand, like, I don't have time to do those dates because of this, this? This, this this and it's Yeah, you're continuing to make excuses for yourself like that. It's a sign. Right? Right, and you've lost control a little bit.



Francis Wade 30:08

And he doesn't really have a method of going from excuse making to problem solving. So he, not he he Albert cannot even go there, because he's still in excuse making in our story. But I think, over time as you become better, more attuned to excuse making, and you also kind of figure out some other, that there should be some other kind of solutions, you move into more a productive mode. As opposed to arguing in your head that this shouldn't be happening, and Is it happening? and you spend more time in addressing the problem, figuring out the problem, rather than wondering if the problem exists?



31:03

Yeah, if you're wondering, this problem exists, then it exists, right? And you need to just kind of label it for what it is. And yeah, work on clarifying it. Is that kind of what you mean?



Francis Wade 31:15

Yeah. And then move on quickly. Yeah. You could speedily move on to problem solving. But you'd have to give up the denial.



31:28

Yeah. Yeah. And maybe it's realizing that some of these things aren't always an easy fix, you know, if you're really a motivated person and you're very driven, you're looking for like a really quick fix, right. And that's like, some you just gotta like, you gotta sit in it. You got to accept the consequences of what you've been doing and own up to him, right? It's not like, Oh, I like, you know, I've been a bad fiance for the past six months, I can pick up some flowers, and now we're good for another six, right? It's like, no, you gotta, it's not just a quick fix. It's not just the flowers, like, we got to make changes here.



Francis Wade 32:05

Right, I think that's, that's, that's, that that gives us all a reason to maybe pay attention to what's happening with Albert, because we, we all kind of prefer a quick fix. But one thing I noticed is that as I become more mature... older, is that the quick fixes aren't available to me the way they were before. So one thing we say in the task management world is that I heard a sort of I recorded this sort of first time few weeks ago, or we last week. "Every level has its devil". So when you're when you're younger, quick fixes in terms of task management would actually work. But then as you manage more and more and more tasks with greater skill, then the problem and the solutions of f yesterday, or yesteryear stopped working. Yeah, and you've now got to do exactly what we were talking about, you got to pay more attention than you used. Because the shortcuts aren't available to you anymore. It's a little bit like, you know, being a great football player in high school. You know, being a great NFL player is a totally different kind of activity. And the coaching that you got when you were in high school was good for high school player. But in NFL, that's not the coach that you want to listen to. Because the level of play is way more sophisticated. And the players that you're playing are so much, far better. That your high school stuff doesn't cut it. You need way better analysis. So we don't have coaches, for most of us in terms of our task management, we coach ourselves. But we need to be more sophisticated to pick up on the finer... I think we're getting into solutions here.



34:13

Yeah, I want to think I think that Every level has a Devil. I think this is a perfect example of that with Albert. Right? Like maybe in the past, you know, if there's extra demands at work, his solution was Okay. I'll just work an extra 15 minutes later tonight, right? And I'll tackle that assignment. But eventually that solution won't take...you eventually tap out, right? Like you can't just say, oh, I'll work a little late tonight. I'll work a little later tonight than I did last night. I'll just work a little later. It's like okay, eventually you need to go to the next level. You need

to... that solution isn't going to work anymore. Right? And even with coaching yourself, you still need to take time to do it. Right. And it's most people they just they don't coach themselves. They never take the time to reflect and kind of that's where Albert was...he needs to do like a self audit, right? He needs to actually coach himself. But he probably hasn't had enough time, that would be his excuse, right? Why? Obviously, I have to do this and this and this.



Francis Wade 35:14

Right? I'm too busy to. Yeah, right. That's why you need it. Right? We have that's our first Bell then. Our first our first thing right all the time. Yeah, it'd be that. As you become more sophisticated. The shortcuts aren't available to you anymore. And therefore, you're aware, you're with to kick off an improvement is to become hyper, hyper sensitive to early warning signs, to the first few defects, that you know, the first time that your fiancée, her voice changes, the tone of her voice that a call on what's going on, is to be hypersensitive to these things, because they're an indicator that your task management system isn't working the way it used to. The way the way you manage yourself is no longer working. So maybe that's our first thing is that I can highest higher skill. The new level at that level, is that you need to pay more ie better radar than you ever had before.



Jason VanDervere 36:30

Yeah, yeah, it's kind of just you need to have your radar on to see when, when you've tapped out of that level and gotten to the next level. Right? You have to be watching for one, what am I ready to learn the next the next skills?



Francis Wade 36:43

Right? Right, right. And I need to be open to it in a way that I don't just rely on the old ones. I need to be kind of, I need to be willing to be vulnerable and to be fresh. In looking for it. happens when people make these transitions in life, like single to married or employee to owner, I have a friend who just became an owner of a company, he bought the company from the previous owner. And he was he was sharing all of a sudden the same conversations he used to have with his colleagues. They're not the same conversations anymore. Everything is changing. You know, they're saying, Oh, well, you could just take the money and buy this. And he's like, No, he used to say that before. Yeah. But he can't see it anymore. You know, he's no doubt he's now in a whole different world. They don't, they haven't quite figured that out yet. Because they're still talking to him. Like, he's one of us. Yeah. He's not one of them. And he's no, like, hello, I'm not one of them. No, no, because I know, I used to like to see those things. But oh, we're not doing that. Therefore, we think you already know he's there. And he was all friendly. And he always used to like to spend money, he probably want to spend some money. And so they're, they're suggesting ways that he spent money on them. And he's like,



Jason VanDervere 38:17

Hey, that's good, right? He's done a self audit at some point. And so like, I need to stop doing that. Right? I need to, yeah, I need to change how I spend money on others all the time. And he realized that in changed himself. Alright. Is that kind of what you're getting at?

realized that he changed himself. Alright, is that kind of what you're getting at.



Francis Wade 38:32

That's exactly what he's doing. Yeah. But you know, it's it's not as if you take a class in this stuff. Right? Right. He doesn't have a coach to tell him or watch, because they're going to try and spend more money, they're going to spend more of your money on things that they know. It was really in the heat of the moment. You know, it was actually, he mentioned this case. So it was a phone call. Or it was like it was a good it was a good example. He was out to the office. And he was heading back and he gave a call. He said yeah, I'm heading back into the office and someone said, Oh, why don't you bring pizza for all of us? He's just about to say, yeah, no problem. Oh, wait. hold on a minute. Where's that pizza money gonna come from? My pocket. To buy pizza for everybody in teh office. He said NOoooo and I'll just bring my lunch. In the heat of the moment on a phone call in the car that he could have said, "Yeah, no, problem I will pick up pizza, afterwards." He could have said, "Hold on a minute. What did I just agreed to?" But he said no. He said no. We don't even know how much money there is in the company. And they were implying that he had just gotten paid for something. Some project they've been on so now we could spend it. I see. So it was his vigilance. You know, it was locked. He wasn't I can't say he brought any vigilance to the party. This was just luck that he happened to notice in the moment? And he noticed that quickly enough to say no. Yeah, and then realize that I can't be seen as someone's gonna see yesterday's things just like that. Whereas before I would have been happy to. Sure. Now, I can't because I'm the owner.



Jason VanDerve 40:20

Yeah. Yeah. He trusted his Inkling. Right. Yeah.



Francis Wade 40:25

So it's a it's a initially, we started off seeing this as a, or implying that the problem was working too many hours. TThat was the problem, and that the enemy was you only get 168 per week. But I think we're framing up a different problem here.



40:50

I agree. Yeah. I think now, probably the problem isn't that you have 169 However, 167. Today, you said hours in a week. But 168? Yeah, it's that. He needs new processes. He needs new ways of handling those right. He's tapped out on just having more. Yeah, he's ready. He needs to go to the next level.



Francis Wade 41:20

Needs new ways to be able to see these new devils at this new level?





41:26

Yeah, I think that's a good one. Yeah. He needs to be able to see his new devils. Yeah. Because for a while that worked great for him. Right? It probably has helped helped him do well, in the organization, you're saying, yes, everything working all these extra hours. It's like, okay, but now, as you continue to grow, your demands for your time are also going to grow, right? You need to figure out those new strategies so that you can actually grow yourself along with those demands.



Francis Wade 41:51

Right? Right. So the old solution would be work, work longer, harder. And keep going just as usual, a double down solution to the problem of any kind of anxiety around his performance? Yeah, now, he needs to pay really close attention to the devil at the new level. And take that, and because it's not going to show up the way the old ones did. So he's got to see the new ones for what they are like my friend with the pizza. And he's gonna see the new things coming at him from different angles. And then he's got to figure out a way to respond. But we're, our conversations has focused more on the noticing.



Jason VanDervere 42:45

Yeah, noticing. Noticing that it's process aren't working anymore. Is that what you mean?



Francis Wade 42:51

Yeah, noticing that there's some there's a new devil afoot.



Jason VanDervere 42:55

Yeah, I think probably one of the first things he's going to have to notice is he's probably had in his head in the past, like, how can I work more? Right? Maybe that was he had that drive? Right? Like, how can I go prove my drive? How can I go work more? And he's gonna have to notice that he's, he's hit the tab at the top, where now we need to shift that to how can I actually work less? Right? How can I be more efficient with my time, so I can be doing the same amount in less time?



Francis Wade 43:18

Right. Right. And that's actually the complete opposite of what he used to do. Yeah. Because if you if you move..to it's kind of an industrial engineer by training. And the one of the philosophies, or one of the ways in which we're taught is how can you do as much as you basically used to do but consume less resources? Yeah. So it's a, it's a commitment to perform at the same level, but to do so with less time, less money, less people without eroding customer satisfaction, without reducing quality. So how do you keep your throughput or your output at the same but with the inputs? Or do we actually work to reduce all of the...all of the factors, all of the inputs?



44:19

Yeah, I like that. And I think maybe one of the things he has to start noticing is um, you know, they say once you I think it's once you work more than 55 hours in a week, your productivity is so much lower that it's actually not the claim it's like it doesn't actually do any benefit to continue working. So he needs to start noticing or even tracking to see am I being effective with the 100 hours I'm working. Right, like there's might be a little bit where he's got to suck up his pride and be like, Look, I I could have if I was focused the whole time I was there. Because I was showing up as my best self. I could have done this in 55 hours because I slept for hours. well laid down in my bed and slept right, but was thinking about other things. I was distracted, I had to run three times to go to the coffee store. Right, whatever it is. And yes, start to notice how effective am I actually being with my working hours?



Francis Wade 45:16

Right, which would cut that that question would lead him to do more with less?



45:25

Yeah. He almost has to Yeah. Right. And maybe we'll just show me capable of it. Yeah.



Francis Wade 45:31

Right. Right. Right. And it's not, it's not the way he's used to thinking. But it's the way that's appropriate for this level. So he's sort of recap a little bit, his radar is changing to noticing that it's time to look for a new level. But I want to credit Danielle Baily, whose interview in the last episode (#27) gave me this phrase level devils, for levels, yeah, deils for levels. But that really stuck with me ever since. But, so he needs a better radar for the levels. And always be aware that they're going to change. And they're going to come at him from different angles as he progresses in his career. And then the next is, how do What's my objective function in a way? Instead, and in this particular example, he's changing from maximizing hours to almost like minimizing hours? Yeah, how do I... because he's gonna have kids, and he's gonna do this, he's going to do the other thing. And he can't get there with the 100 hour a week, or the propensity to add more hours, the adding more hours objective will destroy, it's already destroying something. So he should now change to a new a new, a new goal. Goal crazy. Remember, your software, the new goal will be something like as few...as few as possible. The ultimate efficiency is if you're code writing, if you're writing code, how can I produce the same result with as few lines as possible?



47:16

Yeah. Yeah, I think and I don't want to go too far into the solution if you're not ready, but probably to come up with that goal. already. Yeah. Okay. So like figuring out where, how many hours he should be working a week, I think to really do two things with once have that

conversation with his fiancée. You know, if you have that conversation of like, 1) admitting like, Hey, I've been working way too much. I'm so sorry. Right? Like, how much do you feel like, is the appropriate amount for us to have a thriving relationship, you know, still have the time for fitness for whatever it is? What's, what should be the target? And I think having that conversation with her is many things that could have been broken, but uh, yeah, one that will give them some accountability. Right? Right, sharing with her.



Francis Wade 48:02

Actually, I read a website or a book, I'm not gonna mention the name of the book or the author, because I'm, I'm fuzzy on the details, but I can put it in the show notes. But this book recommended that to keep a marriage thriving, you need 15 hours of face to face contact with your spouse. And during the 15 hours you can be watching can't be in a movie theater where you can't talk to each other. Watch TV. So you had basically came rules, you still need to be able to speak to each other so you can drive, walk or exercise, cook. The whole bunch of things that you can do. It's kind of like a date. But you can't sit quietly because it's not. Sitting quietly doesn't count in the 15 hours. Neither does sleeping.



Francis Wade 48:55

So if you if you're a listener to this podcast, and you think that you and your wife sleep for 8 hours and that should count again the 15...it doesn't. You have 15 hours a week... is what this guy says in his book. And he said, everybody he mentions that to squawks and says "No way". Because you know, he counsels couples who are having a difficult marriage. And they say "There's no way where am I going to find 15 hours". And he says, "Think of this as an affair. Would you find 15 hours if you're having a really juicy affair outside of your marriage?" And they go quiet! Oh, yeah. They would find 15 hours, they would be doing all sorts of shenanigans to get the 15 hours in.



Francis Wade 49:44

Because it's not impossible, if you're highly motivated, and his argument is that you should see this as a hygiene factor. And when you're dipping below the 15 You should see that as an early warning sign of trouble You should reverse your schedule or go back into your schedule. It's another devil. For another level. And this is not a problem when you're in that honeymoon phase first three years of marriage, this is not. This is not for that this is for year probably that seven year itch, somewhere around there it becomes a problem.



50:25


It's a good thing. I like that 15 hours a week. Find that with your spouse face to face conversation. Time not watching.



Francis Wade 50:36

At least you could talk if you wanted to. Like cooking... you're not talking the whole time


At least you could talk if you wanted to. Like cooking... you're not talking the whole time .

 Jason VanDervere 50:43

Yeah. But not just sitting watching something

 Francis Wade 50:45


TV yes, because we could talk to each other while you're watching TV. But not movies. Where you can't talk to each other in the movies. Silence is...not church...what's expected. Yeah, right. Not places, you can't talk to each other. But it's some other devil for a particular level kind of problem. Yeah, I think that's the second thing for us then is finding, finding solutions that fit. So the first one was the radar. And the second one is finding solutions that really fit the circumstance and require you to have a new kind of goal. So it's really...instead of a number of hours per week problem. It's a radar problem. And it's a finding new goals to set new objective functions, new,

 Jason VanDervere 51:46


outlooks or strategies,

 Francis Wade 51:48

new goals. Yeah. Which would then lead to new packages and new new processes. But you'd have to at least commit to something very different, like, minimize, or efficiency, minimize the hours or efficiency, but you'd have to have that kind of commitment.

 Jason VanDervere 52:06

Yeah, I like that!

 Francis Wade 52:10

Well, on that note, maybe we could, maybe we could wrap it up? Yeah. Because we've we've got a couple of things. And enough to think about that. Well, you know, we started off as 100 hour per week problem. Maybe if we had Albert listening to this, he may disagree, because, we know, a little bit better than that. But you know, that little bit more mature, we're at a different level. These levels may sound familiar to us. And I'm hoping that this really speak to our audience.

 Francis Wade 52:46

Jason, how can folks get more of you and hear more about your work that you're doing with Google apps and other other parts of your life? Yeah

Google crazy and other other parts of your like? Yeah.



52:53

Yeah. So my website is goalcrazyplanners.com I do have a podcast as well, the Goal Crazy Podcasts, you know, don't go crazy. Go goal crazy. If I'm on Instagram, goalcrazy. Facebook, normal places like that. But uh, yeah, I think probably check out the podcast or check out my planner and see if it's a good fit for what you're doing right now and need help with, with your time management issues or challenges that you might have. And also, I think a good thing kind of down the line of, you know, putting things on your radar. I think I've told you all my planner starts with kind of like a self audit to help you grade yourself in the different areas of your life. So you can see, you know, what should be on my radar right now. And that's a really good place to start when you're starting to make a new plan for how to manage your time.



Francis Wade 53:41

Right. Excellent. Well, you send me those send me the links. Yeah. And folks, there's a couple more couple more that I want to tell you about an upcoming episode here on the Task Management and Time Blocking Podcast. Keep listening. There's more to come in just a couple moments. Thanks for coming on.



Jason VanDerivere 54:01

Thanks so much for having me. This was fun. Great.



Francis Wade 54:05

Keep listening!