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VERGE PODCAST TRANSCRIPT: JORDAN WIRSZ

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Matt: Jordan it's really awesome to be with you here in Las Vegas. Obviously this is one of the top cities for commercial real estate - if not maybe the top city for commercial real estate - and your experience as an entrepreneur has taken you all over the world, it has helped you ramp up businesses. You've also experienced the heartache of the crash in 2007, but you made your first million before age twenty-one. So I'd love to start the conversation with your first entrepreneurial venture, which I believe was at age ten, is that right?

Jordan: That's right, that's right

Matt: What was that first venture?

Jordan: Well it started with my passion for aviation, as you can see on my wall up here I'm a former air



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show pilot and a commercially rated pilot. So I've always had a passion for aviation, and when I was a kid I really wanted a remote control airplane. I saved up my money - doing lawns and taking care of neighbors' and what not - saved up my money and bought a \$125 remote control glider. I got this thing home and I realized how fragile it was. Those were the days it was balsa wood and that really light covering.

Matt: No drones at that point.

Jordan: No drones, and difficult to fly and at ten years old I was thinking 'gosh, I'm going to waste a hundred and twenty-five bucks', which was all the money in the world to me at the time. So what I did was I decided okay instead of trying to fly this thing and crashing it, I'm going to put it up for sale. So I put it up on the internet and was asking the same hundred and twenty-five bucks. It was on a local free classified ad, and a guy emailed me said 'listen, I don't have a hundred and twenty-five bucks, but I have a remote control airplane.' Well, light bulbs go off in my head and I say 'well, I know that's worth more than the glider. So I traded up and I put that up for sale for a couple of hundred bucks. Before I know it a guy called me up and said, "Listen, I don't have two hundred bucks, but I have a remote control helicopter', and again, another light bulb right? So I built this thing up from about ten to going on eleven years old into the point where at twelve and thirteen I had boats and jet skis and motorcycles and all kinds of stuff that I was just trading and buying and selling, and that kind of stuff, just off the recycle or free classified ads in Southern California.

Matt: That's incredible. So while you were doing that was there a particular breakthrough moment for you? Was there a moment when you went from you yourself being the one calling into these classified ads, or a place in these classified ads to buy and sell these pieces of equipment, to where it really turned into more of a business that had more of a life and energy of it's own?

Jordan: It did. Within four, five, six months of starting this whole process from the remote control glider



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to the airplane to the helicopter, it did take on that role in my life as a business. It was no longer what I wanted to play with, right? It was, well can I make money doing this?

Matt: Yeah

Jordan: And that evolution happened very quickly. Probably the turning point in my life - the lessons I learnt very early on - was when I was fourteen. I was on the internet and I was looking around for information on helicopters and airplanes, obviously my passion. I stumbled across a rotorcraft news group, a helicopter news group. I saw a classified ad from a guy who said, 'Do you want to buy my home built helicopter? And here are the specifications and what not.' It really intrigued me. I mean the idea of a home built helicopter, right? Every fourteen-year old has this in his imagination, I'm going to keep this in my garage, I'm going to fly it around the canyon, around my house. It's just this awesome dream that every kid ought to have. So, what happened was I called them up and I said, 'Hey listen, can you tell me more about the helicopter?' I quizzed him on it for a few minutes and we got down to price and said, 'Well, what are you asking for it?' He said, 'I'm asking fifty-five thousand bucks.' I said, 'Well, thanks for your time but I'm fourteen years old, I don't have fifty-five thousand to spend.'

Matt: Yet.

Jordan: Yet. So, he was nice enough, he was impressed. He said, 'Wow, I'm really impressed with the questions you answered and your level of intelligence.' He said, 'Listen, I really need to sell this thing so if you would find me a buyer for it I would be happy to pay you twenty-five hundred bucks.' Well, again twenty-five hundred bucks being all the money in the world to a fourteen-year old kid, and at that time I could double my net worth right?

Matt: Yeah, absolutely



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Jordan: So, I took him up on it and whatever possessed this guy to create a contract that my mom had to sign because I wasn't eighteen; he printed out flyers with my phone number on it and...

Matt: Did you know to create a contract at age fourteen?

Jordan: I didn't have a clue.

Matt: So this guy almost took on a mentor role for you?

Jordan: In many ways he did.

Matt: That's great.

Jordan: In many ways he did. I went on and posted that helicopter for sale on every free classified website that I could find, had my mom take me around all the local airports in Southern California. We put up the flyers on the little pin-boards. I ended up selling the helicopter three or four months after that. I was just turning fifteen years old and I got my first big pay check at twenty-five hundred bucks.

Matt: That's awesome. How did that feel? Do you remember?

Jordan: It felt great. So the evolution was that I didn't want to buy toys, right? I wanted to invest it. I wanted to be wealthy. I ended up investing it in unleaded gas options in the commodities markets, and within months I had lost all but six dollars and twenty-eight cents of it.



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Matt: That's some expensive tuition at that age.

Jordan: Yep, it was pretty interesting. I think it was six dollars and thirty-two cents was the check I got back.

Matt: Talk to me about how you were feeling at that moment. What was the self talk going through your head?

Jordan: It was interesting because at fourteen/fifteen years old, when you think about investing, you're so optimistic. You're overly optimistic. In fact, most young people are unrealistically optimistic with investments. And I really did think that I was going to take this twenty-five hundred bucks and turn it into fifty thousand, which would turn into five hundred thousand, which would turn into a million over time, and I did really have a good understanding of the risk. Losing that money was a kick in the gut, but at the same time it was very important for me to learn early on in life, especially taking on the role as an investor and an investment manager in years to come, that investments aren't sure things, that there are a lot of risks. Even though it was a kick in the gut, it got me steered back, and I said, 'Well okay, maybe this commodity trading thing is not my deal. I'm going to go back into aircraft sales.' If I did it once, I could do it again, right? That's when I opened up my company 'Extreme Aviation'.

Matt: Okay, and at what age was that? At fifteen?

Jordan: That was at fifteen.

Matt: So you were able to take the psychological hit of losing that twenty-five hundred dollars and somehow parlay that into going right back out there onto the field. Many people might go onto the field



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and get hit, and they might get knocked down and sidelined for years, or maybe even forever when someone doesn't fully understand the risk when they get punched in the gut or hit from the side or whatever metaphor you want to use. What do you think is it that drove you to get back out there on the field and get back in the game?

Jordan: Passion. At that point it's kind of like having your first candy bar, where you kind of go, 'oh man, this tastes so great. I could eat these all day long'. Right? And that taste of that money now, it was like I said was like a kick in the gut. It was depressing to say the least, to lose your life savings or a good portion of your life savings at that age. That was terrible, but that idea that if I did it once I could do it again. And I love airplanes and I love helicopters, and I thought 'I'll go do something I really enjoy.' Like I said, I was home-studied the majority of that time, so it gave me the time during the day to be able to focus on that as well. What I think is really important for every entrepreneur and every business person to understand is that life is going to be full of those times. There's going to be periods of time in your life where everything goes great and goes well, and there's going to be periods of time where you get kicked in the gut - financially, emotionally. There's a whole host of life experiences that people go through, and so there's never this steady climb to the top. I think on Facebook I saw a drawing that someone did, and it circulated itself around the internet pretty fast. It's what people think is the line to success - which is a straight line - and what it really looks like, and it's a bunch of scribble.

Matt: I've seen that one

Jordan: And that's really what life is about; you get kicked in the gut and you do get pushed back, and perseverance as a principle is used way too often in a cliché way. You get people who have no idea what the term means, or what it means to live it, but they're using it everyday and they're preaching it to young entrepreneurs. Perseverance is the ability to understand that you are going to get kicked in the gut and pushed down, and fall down on a very regular basis. Perseverance is the ability to get back up and say, 'I knew that was going to happen. It's fine. I'm moving on, I'm going to keep going.' That has paid huge dividends to me in life.



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Matt: Well obviously sitting here now in your office, you've done a billion dollars in transactions over four hundred properties now with your current company [Savant](#), but obviously there was a huge down point in the market after you made your first million at age twenty-one. Was that hit - that sort of kick in the gut - how did that feel different than the kick in the gut when you lost that twenty-five hundred investment?

Jordan: Way worse. The amount of money that I lost was astronomically more. Percentage wise of my net worth was probably a lot more, but I was blessed because I really fought my way through the downturn. Now the other side of it is I was responsible for managing a real estate portfolio at the time that was about a hundred and fifty million dollars, and I had a lot of investors, a lot of mom and pops, and I took the responsibility very seriously. When I was watching the world crumble around me it wasn't that I could no longer afford the Lamborghini, and the Bentley and the private jet and all the kind of stuff, it was the heavy burden of having other investors money invested in deals that you did. In the real estate market there's no sell button. You can't get out. There's no liquidity when there's no buyers.

Matt: You're going down with the ship if the ship's going down.

Jordan: Yeah, and that was difficult to watch. That was very, very difficult to watch, and God bless their souls, I still have a lot of those original investors that still invest with me today, but it was difficult being at the helm. Imagine waking up every day to a whole new set of problems and knowing that you're not going to see a good day while you're resolving those problems for months or potentially years. And that was very difficult for me.

Matt: I would imagine. What kept you getting out of bed in the morning? What drove you to drive to the office and continue working?



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Jordan: Responsibility. I had a responsibility to those investors and to myself. I was very, very fortunate. Every one of my competitors - I shouldn't say everyone, but a large majority of them had been sued by investors like crazy; I was never sued. A large majority of those competitors have filed bankruptcy; I didn't file bankruptcy. And it was a fight. It was an absolute fight to keep yourself above water and do your best job for your investors. It was a time that really cut my teeth, if that makes sense, in this world. It was the make or break moment. Still to this day, I helped a lot of those investors, still deal with a lot of the issues that happen back in the crash. It was something unlike anything I'd ever seen. I have always made it a habit to surround myself with incredibly bright people. I had ex-CFOs of multiple public companies - name brand companies - on my board, I had ex-CEOs of publicly held companies on the board, I had private equity venture capitalists on my board. We all looked at each other around the boardroom table and said, 'Well okay, it looks like maybe we might be in for a twenty or thirty per cent correction here. You know? And we never imagined that it would be a seventy percent, as in seven zero.

Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: And, you know Kay Schiller and those guys have their own statistics of how bad it was, but there were homes that were selling for three hundred thousand at the top that traded for a hundred thousand at the bottom.

Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: And there's pieces of land that sold for a million dollars at the top that traded for two hundred thousand at the bottom. It was extreme. It was unlike anything that we had ever seen before. So it was a good life lesson. And now being an investor and an investment manager further into the future, I look back and now I realize that there's signs when markets are topping and there's signs when markets are bottoming, and when things are good you just want to believe that they're going to continue to be good and you want to believe how smart you are, and how well-positioned you are, and that it's all your fault



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and your abilities and talents that have created this massive amount of success. Well, you have to realize that markets fluctuate and go up and down, but the real wisdom now is learning what makes them top and what makes them bottom.

Matt: Sure, and through that process I imagine that there was ups and downs, or did you have kind of unwavering confidence and optimism throughout that, that 'hey, we're definitely going to get through this?

Jordan: Oh absolutely not.

Matt: Yeah

Laughter.

Jordan: I mean listen, I'm far from perfect right.

Matt: Sure.

Jordan: I think it would take someone far, far greater than me to have that optimism and confidence in those extremely dark days. Those were the days when Bernie Madoff was out there stealing billions from people.

Matt: Yeah.



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Jordan: And you had Wall Street brokers and investment advisors committing suicide. It was an extremely dark time, especially in our industry.

Matt: Mm hm.

Jordan: For the economy in general for certain, but especially in our industry. I mean we were in the real estate business - the epicenter of that financial decline. So no, I was not the eternal optimist that got up every day saying 'I'm going to go crush this', you know? 'I'm going to be bigger and better than the recession.' I got up every day out of duty and responsibility and integrity and I worked my way through one problem at a time, and that was where perseverance paid off.

Matt: It's amazing. It says a lot about character that you were able to get through that without filing bankruptcy. Obviously you had already earned millions upon millions. You're driving Bentleys, driving Ferrari's, you mentioned the private jet. Obviously you like to fly. Do you think that earning that money at an early age created more risk for you, or less risk, going into that down-turn?

Jordan: Oh more risk for sure.

Matt: Mm hm.

Jordan: More risk. It's funny because a lot of the self-proclaimed entrepreneur gurus or business gurus the show you a picture of their Rolls Royce or their Bentley, and they post pictures on Facebook of all their vacations and the high-flying life that they lead.

Matt: Right.



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Jordan: And I really, at a young age, I thought that's what success was, right? I really did. And so the better I did I increased my lifestyle in order to prove to myself and prove to the rest of the world that that's what financial success was.

Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: And I really consciously understood that that wasn't really accurate, right? But deep down I wasn't convicted of it, and so I followed along in suit. I would have a half a million-dollar month and I'd go buy a Bentley, and when I was able I bought a one point seven five-million-dollar aeroplane and I live in a million-and-a-half-dollar home. I just constantly upgraded my lifestyle along with my success and it was a terrible mistake. And so, having gone through that now the first time, now I understand the real goal and I've been in the investment business for the last thirteen going on fourteen-years and the last half of it, which has been post-crash, has been all about balance sheet, right? It's about understanding the reality that these people who drive the Bentleys and the Lamborghinis and the Ferraris and have the jets, the large majority of them simply don't have the net worth to support that kind of lifestyle.

Matt: Mm.

Jordan: And they're counting on the income, and if their income stream stopped tomorrow they might be a matter of weeks, perhaps a few quarters away from bankruptcy themselves.

Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: And so now there's a tremendous amount of freedom as I've learned through the difficult times, and learned from our investors, that it's all about building your balance sheet. That's how these guys



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have got a lot ordinary investors, guys that walk in in blue jeans and t-shirts and drive Ford pick-up trucks, you know? Pretty much exactly who I am today.

Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: They're all multi-multi-multi-millionaires. Some of them are worth ten, twenty, thirty million dollars, and they're not ostentatious. They're not bourgie. They're not drinking Cristal in their multi-million-dollar mansion. It's not about the physical items, it's about the freedom that wealth creates and it's about growing it. It almost becomes a game of Monopoly, right? And it's about them being able to spend the time doing what they want to do and wake up every day knowing that they're not beholden to anything or anybody.

Matt: Well I definitely want to get back to that because I think that's an entirely different level-up sort of mindset. I think that one of the things that you mention here just makes me think back to something that another entrepreneur said to me, that a lot of entrepreneurs have their ego tied up in all of those external factors, right? The Bentley, the Ferrari, the whatever car, house, or vacation home.

Jordan: Yep.

Matt: And you clearly have learned throughout your entrepreneurial journey to tie your ego to other things, and obviously the balance sheet isn't the only thing. I know that you're a person that is passionate about making a difference, building a life that matters, building a life of freedom; but I think that first mindset of shifting from acquiring things in terms of things and experiences versus acquiring assets on a balance sheet that are actually going to help develop more wealth. Talk to me, or maybe even talk to the listeners here because we have a lot of young entrepreneurs or first-time entrepreneurs who are just now hitting that hundred thousand dollar or six figure – maybe even mid- to high-six figure – income, or maybe they're even making less than six figures but they've taken on millions in investment



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and they're in it for the long haul and growing value in their business. What is something that an entrepreneur can start doing today, or what is one way they can start thinking today, that's going to build them for a sound financial future and a sound base of life?

Jordan: Yeah. Well let me say this: the first thing that they have to understand is that you have to become an investor in principal, right? And when I say that you have to be an investor in principal it doesn't mean that you have to have a million dollars to go invest today, it means that you understand that a big part of your income ought to be held back. And what most people do is, as their income increases so does their lifestyle.

Matt: Mm.

Jordan: Right? And I have made that same mistake. So it's about not increasing your lifestyle when your income increases, and putting a little bit of that money away. And let me tell you the progression that happens. First and foremost, you start with saving a hundred bucks a month or two hundred bucks a month, which I started doing at seventeen, eighteen years old. And then all of a sudden you're able to save a thousand dollars a month and it's like 'holy cow'. You've got ten grand in the bank after seven, eight, nine, ten months and you just think 'I'm a genius', like 'this is awesome. I feel so secure.' And that will turn into twenty and thirty and then thirty turns into sixty and seventy and seventy turns into one fifty and you're like 'wow, I'm doing really well.' And then one fifty turns into two fifty and two fifty into five hundred and, you know, it keeps going and as time goes your number gets bigger and it's exponential. Most people just don't care to save a hundred bucks or two hundred bucks or a thousand bucks, because they don't think it matters in their life.

Matt: Right.



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Jordan: It's too small, it's too insignificant in their view to make them a millionaire. Well I can tell you that, not without exception – their might be a couple of exceptions - but the majority of investors that I have dealt with for the last fourteen years of my life started there. There is the young entrepreneurs that seek to be the Richard Branson's or the Donald Trumps, and they want the big its, they want the big dollars. I'm not working on what's going to make me a hundred grand, I'm working on what's going to make me a million or ten million or a hundred million or a billion. And they have these very grandiose ideas, but what you have to realize is that the statistics say that that's a very rare thing to happen.

Matt: Yep.

Jordan: Right? The Mark Zuckerbergs of the world, the Donald Trumps of the world, those guys are one in a hundreds of millions. And so what it comes down to is you can either choose the path that's extremely risky and chase the elephants, which have a statistic probably of not working, or you can do what you do really, really well and put one brick on top of the other every single day for many years at a time and end up worth twenty, thirty million dollars by the time you're fifty or sixty and ready to retire, and the rest of your life is done.

Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: Right? And you don't need the private jet and you don't need the twenty-million-dollar house on hillside in Laguna Beach. You need security, and that's what that offers you. So to the young entrepreneurs and the young, I'll call them the wealth generation, the people who want to create wealth, it's not just about income. Income is not wealth. It's about your balance sheet. It's about your net worth. And that is where the rest of your life and your future and your stability and your freedom comes from.



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Matt: I think that's a really great perspective because it kind of gets back to this thing that I have learned is very consistent, not only in your life but in most successful entrepreneurs lives, and that is discipline. Being disciplined to do the work every day, day in and day out. If you're younger maybe you're taking on more risk in some areas, but you're balancing that out with low-risk things. Again, it's a discipline of building that net worth and that portfolio so that you're accumulating assets that generate wealth.

Jordan: Yep.

Matt: And so in terms of discipline and your discipline now, having gone through the entire journey, right? The journey of investing in material things early on, and I'm sure you are still investing in things that were long-term investments as well, but now kind of having had to go through the course correction of the market, right? That could have just as easily gone up and now you would be maybe two hundred, three hundred x where you are in terms of net worth. But that's why when you talk to any entrepreneur they all say it's a lot of discipline and hard work, focus and a ton of luck.

Jordan: Yep.

Matt: Right? So you want to set yourself up to be there when luck strikes, but also be prepared when it doesn't. Talk to me about your discipline. What have been some of the habits on a day-to-day basis that have built this discipline for you and help you maintain the discipline?

Jordan: Well I think first and foremost you make a really good point that you have to be there when lightning strikes, right? I make it a practice to be in the office five days a week, if not more, that I'm responsive, that I engage with people; my peers, my mentors, my underlings, everyone. I give everyone a certain amount of time, right?



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Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: Because I know that buried somewhere in every relationship is an opportunity.

Matt: What does responsive mean to you? What is your personal standard?

Jordan: My standard is that if I have an email in my inbox it needs to get out the same day.

Matt: Okay.

Jordan: Right? I believe that so many more people could be so much more successful if they interacted quickly and respectfully and promptly to their customers, their clients, their partners.

Matt: That hits home for me one hundred percent because I feel so busy and overwhelmed by my inbox sometimes, and I realize that my inbox is no more full than, if not probably magnitudes less full, than the most successful people in the world. And they're still able to get responses within the same day. I think part of that for me is probably toning down the amount that I communicate, because I like to communicate with a lot of thought and emotion and I spend a lot of time in responses.

Jordan: Yep.

Matt: But I've been trying to discipline myself to get quick as opposed to thorough.



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Jordan: You know a lot of people make - and I'm not going to call it a mistake, I'm going to say it's a style preference, right?

Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: I make it a point that even if my response is 'hey that works or this doesn't work, let's touch base tomorrow', that an email goes out. And especially in my industry where I've got investors that are investing hundreds of thousands or millions of dollars at a time.

Matt: Mm hm.

Jordan: They don't ever want to think that they can't get a hold of you if they need to; and that's why I make it a policy that every investor has my cell phone, every investor will email me and get a response within twenty-four hours or less. That's really important, not just for my industry but for everyone.

Matt: Yep.

Jordan: And whether you're thorough or you're cursory, it doesn't matter how you do it. Respond. Be active. Engage with your clients, your customers, your partners, the people that are important to your business. And that in of itself will carry a good amount of momentum into the future.

Matt: Yeah. That's great. What are some of the other habits that you've stacked on top of that?

Jordan: I think organisation, which is very tough for me.



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Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: I've found that entrepreneurs...

Matt: Your desk looks pretty neat to me.

Jordan: Well.

Laughter.

Jordan: I cleaned it off a little before you came in today.

Matt: Sure.

Jordan: But at the end of the day it's difficult for me just like it is for most entrepreneurs, because we are creative-minded, right? And it's difficult for us to be organised to get things done. And so I've created this really simple way of myself keeping on top of things. In fact, if you look, I've got eight screens in front of me.

Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: And on one of my screens...

Matt: Do you have enough? Do you need me to get you a couple more?



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Laughter.

Jordan: You know ten might be good, but on eight computer screens I keep track of everything that I need and it makes me very, very efficient. One of these things is my action items, which is the things that I have going on here in life. So if you look down I've got various properties and projects and construction going on, and something that I need to do or the next phase for each and every thing, so that in my breaks and my lulls during the day I can look at this and say 'okay, what do I need to be doing now?'

Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: And so it's finding a way to always be productive. And I'm not perfect, I check Facebook during day and stuff like that, right? Everybody's a little bit different that way and I could probably be more disciplined, but I've found my groove and I found a way for a disorganized guy like me to be organized.

Matt: Yeah. And I notice too that you're not using some fancy piece of software. You're not using the newest latest mobile-optimized, blah blah blah.

Jordan: Yep.

Matt: It is an Excel spreadsheet.

Jordan: That's right.



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Matt: And so I think that that's important to call out, because I think a lot of times people get caught up in the tools and trying a free trial of this out and then switching to this thing and 'well now I'm using Basecamp so everything's going to change'.

Jordan: Yep. It's not.

Matt: It's really about the practice. Right.

Jordan: It is about the practice. It's not about the technology. It's not about the idea. It's about action. Simple action. And like I said, everybody's different. I'm not going to critique somebody for using Basecamp. If that works for you then use it; but what I think happens to a lot of entrepreneurs, and business people in general, is that they try and systemize their creativity and how they're creative and how they do really well at what they do. I'm a deal guy.

Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: I can underwrite a ten-million-dollar deal in about ten minutes, and I can know whether it's something I want to pursue or I don't want to pursue. And there's no amount of organization or checklist or software that I can spend gobs of time, hours inputting stuff, to just come up with the same result. I know that I can do it very, very quickly. And so I don't over-complicate my life by trying to over-systemize my life and my business. I do what's necessary for my team and myself to be production and no more.

Matt: That is a huge, huge nugget that I know I will be implementing more and more, but an insight just in the last two or three years that – for my own self and our own business at Verge – has made huge, huge strides in our productivity and in terms of serving out members and serving our sponsors, has



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made a huge difference just focussing on systematizing every piece of the process. You talk about taking action, and I know that you believe in taking action, but you also believe in taking strategic action.

Jordan: Intelligent action.

Matt: Yeah. Absolutely. Can you talk to me about some of the discipline or habits around the intelligence that you developed?

Jordan: I'll talk to you about the philosophy.

Matt: Yeah. Okay.

Jordan: And here's – I'm going to knock on a few of these young, up-and-coming Jim Rohns, or young, up-and-coming Tony Robbins, and the guys on Facebook and Twitter. It's all the motivational, all the rah-rah.

Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: There's...

Matt: Do you think all of that's helpful or hurtful to young entrepreneurs?

Jordan: It has its place but I think it's become more hurtful than it has helpful.



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Matt: I agree.

Jordan: And the reason why is I think that most people, especially young entrepreneurs who don't have years or decades in experience. I've been an entrepreneur since I was ten, so I've got now twenty-two, going on twenty-three years behind me as an entrepreneur, and I've learned a lot and I've taken a lot of lessons during that period of time. And I've translated those lessons into experience, into wisdom, into knowledge, and I use that every day. And I try and translate it into sophistication.

Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: Because I think it the most simple word to use. And I think it was Jim Rohn, I may be wrong, said that 'Ambition without intelligence is like a bird without wings'. And I think that there's so many young entrepreneurs and there's so many self-help gurus – you know, the business coaches these days – that just try and pump people up. They artificially inflate enthusiasm. They artificially inflate motivation. And what they're trying to sell is that if you're really enthusiastic and you're really motivated and you're really inspired then you succeed. Well that's not really the case. Because unless you have the practical application of it, you can have all the enthusiasm in the world, you know? You can be bouncing out of your skin on a moment by moment basis, so excited to go do something, but unless you have the level of sophistication and the knowledge and the understanding to go execute it in an intelligent way, you're just spinning your energy.

Matt: Yep.

Jordan: And so I see a lot of young entrepreneurs get really, really hyped up and not making practical steps forward in their business and their life and their career and their finances and their balance sheet and their net worth because they're tied up with the enthusiasm. They think that the next moment, or within the next day or the next week or the next month, they're going to get a grain of wisdom that is



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going to turn them into a millionaire. And that's just not how it works. It's wisdom, it's knowledge, and that takes time and experience and that takes falling down and getting back up. And unless you're waiting for lightning to strike and win the lottery the practical application to success in business takes both ambition and dedication and focus, but it also takes knowledge and wisdom and that's built over time.

Matt: So I love that you say it takes knowledge and wisdom, and I know that you're a big believer that a lot of the most valuable insights can be found in books. There are a lot of people that think that reading a lot of books is the important thing. Is that something that you believe success is almost correlated to the number of books you read?

Jordan: No.

Matt: Or do you think it's more important to find the right books?

Jordan: No, it's important to find the right books.

Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: And it's important to find the quality.

Matt: Why is that?

Jordan: And again my philosophy varies from other people, so what's right for me is not right for everybody. I find that it's more important to grab gems, to always be learning, to always be growing, to always be getting educated and building your knowledge and building your wisdom base, and I think



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that there's a lot of great books that do it. John Maxwell, he's got some great leadership books. Lots of good material out there, my own books included.

Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: But sitting down and reading a book is not going to make you wealthy. Sitting down and reading a book is not going to make you a million dollars. What's going to make you a millionaire is taking action based on the information that you have and continuing to grow your practical experience and knowledge. And what is I think hard for a lot of people to understand is that the only thing that comes out of books is superficial knowledge that you have the opportunity to make practical knowledge; that you can put into practice. But if you don't have a practice to put it into, if you don't have a business or a system or a set of clients or a set of investors in my case or a set of deals in my case, if you don't have the practical application for what you're learning you lost that very, very quickly. And so there's people who say 'well I want to read a book a day for the rest of my life' or 'I want to read a book a week or a book a month'. Well listen, I think that's great - whatever's right for you - but don't spend all of your creative time, or your downtime, or your free time, reading a book to try and apply. Don't spend all your working time reading books so that you can try and apply it one day. Spend your time taking action and working and growing your experience-base, and then take the nuggets out of what you read and what's important and apply it practically.

Matt: That's so very, very important. And a key differentiator that I think probably more first-time or early entrepreneurs need to hear, which is maybe it's time to put the book down. If you're going to have downtime use that for thought time. Use that for thought experiments. Use that for thinking strategically about how could you be approaching your work differently? Or how could you be approaching a particular deal in a more creative way, or who could you bring in to the deal to ten x the results for everyone involved? Are there any disciplines that you have in terms of that downtime? Not when you're reading, not when you're doing specific things for particular deals, but just space to think and allow yourself to be free of thought?



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Jordan: I do. One of those things, I've got a cabin that we use as a business retreat up in Utah in the mountains.

Matt: Oh, that's great.

Jordan: And I'm up there quite often, and think here is the other thing that's really important is you need to schedule your business thinking time. You need to schedule your time and block out your time to think strategically, or to plan, or to be creative and come up with new ideas and thoughts and processes and procedures and ways to move your business forward; but it shouldn't occupy every waking moment of your life. And for me, like a lot of entrepreneurs, that's a struggle.

Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: Because we're so passionate about it, and so much of our identity is in the passion of doing what we love that it's hard not to think about it all the time.

Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: So one of the things that I do is I'll go start a fire in the fire pit and I'll sit there for hours and just poke at this fire and put on more logs, and it's therapeutic for me. And I don't have to be thinking about business or anything else. I think taking time to unwind and not put the pressure on you to be thinking moment by moment about your business and what you can be doing, I think that actually wears you down. I think it burns you out. And I think you need that downtime to let your body and your mind recover. One of the things that I like to do, and it goes against a lot of common practical principles, is I love watching TV at night with those mindless programs. Not *Keeping up with the Kardashians* and that



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kind of garbage, but I do watch enough TV, or half an hour, an hour, to let my mind unwind and detach from the goings on in the day.

Matt: What shows are your guilty pleasures right now?

Jordan: *Family Guy*.

Matt: *Family Guy*. Nice. Yeah. It's good to laugh.

Jordan: It's stupid humor, right? And it's not overly complicated, your mind doesn't have to think about it, and it just winds me down. And I think that's okay. Again, it's different for everybody. There's some people who have the discipline and say 'absolutely no TV whatsoever, it's a waste of time'. To his and her own. You know?

Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: And God bless them, whatever works for them; but for me I know that I have to have some time for my mind to unwind. And if I don't do that I begin getting burnt out very, very quickly.

Matt: Yeah, and you said that word 'burnout'. In terms of energy you also talked about the campfire of course, but that term 'burnout', a lot of times the word I hear entrepreneurs or investors say is 'hit the wall'. I finally 'hit the wall', and they almost have to do a reset. Have you ever had a moment where you've hit the wall or come close to hitting the wall?

Jordan: Absolutely. Yeah, absolutely.



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Matt: What did that feel like, when you were close to that? Was that early in the career?

Jordan: Well, it happens periodically.

Matt: Yeah. It just happens?

Jordan: I mean, even to this day, even to this day. It just happens. There are weeks where on Thursday afternoon I am just done, put a fork in me. You know? The mental energy and the stress of what I've had to deal with that week was just frankly too much.

Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: And you persevere and you work through it, and you work through the time because of your obligations and your promises to people, and you keep your integrity and stay in that mode of perseverance; but there's also times when you say 'look, it's Thursday afternoon. This is why I do what I do'. So I that I can take off Thursday afternoon and show back up on Monday.

Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: And take some time for your body and your mind and your emotions and your whole system to just recharge a little bit and get out of a familiar environment. One of the things that's difficult for me is, even though I've got a beautiful office, I am not creative here.

Matt: Yeah.



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Jordan: It's claustrophobic for me. And this is my life, this is where I live, right? I've got a phone, a computer. I get text messages and emails. This is my life in this office. I don't get to go work outside and enjoy the beautiful weather here in Las Vegas, so it's important for me to get out of my familiar zone as well to recharge.

Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: Because you can get stuck in that familiar environment and it becomes monotonous. And that's important. Whenever something becomes monotonous your creativity is done. You're just going through the motions.

Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: And so once a quarter I take our staff and we go off-site and we do our little retreats and strategic planning and talking and thinking. And we always do it off-site. And the reason why we do that is we don't want it to be familiar. We don't want the phone to ring and have us to answer the phone, or we don't want to have emails and computers and printers and faxes and all that kind of stuff within easy reach. It's a time for us to recharge and get out of the familiar so it's not monotonous.

Matt: Yeah, that's great. And while it sounds like even though it is creative, going back to what you said earlier, it's scheduled creativity. To make sure that you're making time for it, saving time for it. But then also, you know I've experienced this myself and still do to this day, that it's very easy to find yourself spending time with family, but in the back of your brain you're thinking about some business opportunity or some particular issue that you're working your way through. And I think that that's so



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important and probably helps balance some of that out by having the scheduled time to think about problems or think about new opportunities. Or, as you said, to just not think.

Jordan: Yeah, absolutely. And even though we say this is my downtime and this is my away time and this is my relaxing time, there's no switch that you can turn off.

Matt: Right.

Jordan: You're always going to be thinking about business and pondering business, and thinking about ideas and clients and good things and bad things and problems and challenges and goals. There's no switch to turn off. And so keeping that in mind, it is still important to do your best to distract yourself from not having to focus on those things.

Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: I've been professionally coached during the coaching program myself since I was in my early twenties. And I've always had an external coach that I talk to, even if it's not a hired coach, it's someone. An accountability buddy for a lack of a better term.

Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: And so one of the things that we do is we try and hold each other accountable to leaving our phones at home, or turning our phones off so it's there if we need it.

Matt: Yeah.



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Jordan: Having some time to detach from technology. To not feeling like every moment has to be productive and we need to be on the computer at every second, and when we get to the airport before our flight we need to be working, and when we're in the air we need to be working, and when we land we need to go straight to our meeting. We deal with that stuff so much on a day-to-day basis anyway, we have to have some time to detach our self form the technology that we've become so beholden to.

Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: And I think that principal in and of itself can – it will feel awkward at first for most people – but turn your phone off.

Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: Take a free day where you're not tied to it and you don't have to be thinking about what's going on or not going on and answering your emails and getting that phone call that upsets you, or whatever the situation may be.

Matt: Well I think that's good homework for everyone listening to this interview to do, is to just schedule one disconnected day. I have a friend who just recently took a month away from the office and away from technology, of course he still had his phone and everything, but deleted the Facebook app, blocked it from his computer, made sure that he wasn't getting on Twitter, wasn't blogging any more during that month. And it's amazing just the level of conversation we've had since he took that. And you don't have to take an entire month, like you said. I think just taking one day would be some great homework for any listener to take. And I think another great piece of homework, if you are someone that reads books – and hopefully if you're listening to this you are – Jordan you have so much knowledge



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and you've written a couple of books. You know, *Maverick Millionaire*, *Becoming Credible*. Can you talk a little bit about what makes those books different from other business books?

Jordan: Absolutely. Well the book *Maverick Millionaire* was my first book that I published in 2007. The title wasn't mine, that was my publishers.

Laughter.

Jordan: But it really talks about the practical – not the specifics of my industry – but it talks about how I became successful and how I became wealthy at an early age, finding the right mentors, hanging around the right people, dressing for success. All the little nuances that most people don't really think about. And it just addresses the little things, all the little principals that I've used up until that point in order to build my wealth and build, at that time, my empire. And so out of that – that's a great book for young, up-and-coming entrepreneurs – out of that I came up with *Becoming Credible*, which I published in 2010. And *Becoming Credible* is about people with stories in their life, and it's about having that story of defeat, having that story of 'I can't', and what it takes to get yourself through that. And I was really writing that book, not only as a successful guy at an early age in life, but I was also going through it myself.

Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: Where there's this entire world crashing in around me and trying to not be attached to the economy or the real estate market or the difficulties and the challenges in life, and don't let yourself buy into that story that you did it once but you can never do it again. And that was really, really important for me to write that book as well, and it's actually a workbook, believe it or not. It's kind of funny how I put it together.



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Matt: Oh, that's great.

Jordan: But you actually have to write out your story in the book, and you have to face the realities of what your own limitations are in your mind. And it's a great exercise. I think it's a great exercise for anybody.

Matt: Well I love that you know only talk about taking action, but have written your book to encourage people to take action. If people want to take action and look you up online how can they find you? Are you on Twitter?

Jordan: Yeah, I'm on Twitter.

Matt: Are you on a website you want to point them to?

Jordan: I'm on Twitter, I'm on Facebook. I encourage everybody, especially the young, up-and-coming that want to build a balance sheet and want to build wealth, to check out my company. It's Savantinvestments.com.

Matt: Yeah.

Jordan: And we've got the savantreport.com, which people can sign up to on the Savant Report website, which is savantreport.com.

Matt: Awesome.



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Jordan: And you can sign up and we talk about everything that's happening in the investment world for the young, the old, the rich, and the poor. And it's just about the world.

Matt: Oh that's great. Well, we'll definitely link it up in the show notes, make sure we point people in the right direction. Jordan I want to just say thank you so much for taking the time.

Jordan: So welcome.

Matt: And taking really the energy to connect on a real level, and share not just the glossy, Instagram-filtered version of your life, but really the truth of what it takes to be a successful entrepreneur, whether you're in Silicon Valley or elsewhere like Las Vegas.

Jordan: Well I'm happy to do it, and I appreciate you taking the time as well. I've got a passion for helping people succeed in life. It's a place that I get joy from each and every day and it's never an easy job for anybody to go from start to wealth, and start to happiness, but if I can make an impact I'm thrilled to do it.

Matt: Well you're really good at it man, and hopefully we can reconnect, whether it's here in Las Vegas or on one of your trips in the future.

Jordan: Look forward to it Matt. Thanks for having me.