

EPISODE 513

[DISCUSSION]

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FT: You're listening to So Money everyone. Welcome back, thank you for joining me. I'm your host, Farnoosh Torabi, and we are almost at the end of 2016. What a year it's been, really. For those of you who celebrate Christmas, I hope you had a very, very happy holiday. Tim and I and Evan enjoyed our last Christmas a family of three, before we welcome our newest family member in just a few months' time. So lots of exciting things on our 2017 calendar.

Many of you are on vacation this week and I'm hoping will be taking some time to rest and relax. We're heading into our second week of the So Money year-end highlights. I hope you're enjoying it so far. Today's topic is *Your Health and Wealth*, lots of correlation between staying physically and mentally healthy and your bottom line. 2016 was a very popular year to talk about sleep. The first episode we're going to revisit with Arianna Huffington, episode 435, one of my favorite interviews.

She's the author as you know of *The Sleep Revolution* and this year made headlines when she left The Huffington Post to start Thrive Global, a corporate and consumer well-being and productivity platform. She's a huge advocate for sleep. Thinks that it is actually the most important factor to being able to be successful both at work and in your personal life. She, in fact, calls not sleeping the new smoking.

Take a listen.

[EXCERPT]

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AH: Well, we are really living under this collective delusion that in order to succeed and achieve, we need to burn out and to sacrifice sleep and it is simply a delusion. We are a little bit, in a

way, in the same situation that we were regarding smoking in the 1950's and 60's. When people still glamorized smoking in the movies, you had doctors, literally doctors in the 1960's on television advertising cigarettes.

I just watched one saying, "I smoke menthols because it refreshes my throat," and we're in a similar moment where there's a cultural shift happening but as is often the case in any cultural shift, multiple behaviors are coexisting. So you have the people who are still bragging about how little sleep they got and you have employers congratulating employees for working 24/7, which is the cognitive equivalent of coming to work drunk.

But at the same time, you have more and more CEO's coming out saying, "I need sleep to make wise decisions for the company," like Jeff Bezos is saying, "I need eight hours sleep and if I make fewer decisions but they're 5% better, that's much better for Amazon." And you have many brands, hotels, airlines using sleep serve as a competitive advantage. So the shift is happening.

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FT: The shift is happening. Sometimes you don't see the rewards of sleep at a corporate level quickly. That's the fear, right? It's like, if I'm JetBlue and I'm going to start incorporating more sleep allowances for my employees, maybe Virgin is not doing that and they're going to get a leg up, at least in the short run. How do you reconcile the shift to sleep more when in the meantime it may mean taking a step back in order to be more productive?

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AH: But it doesn't. You see, it doesn't mean a step back. That's why I structured the book so that people could first of all understand the crisis and the price individuals and companies are paying for devaluing and scorning sleep. Then have a whole section on the latest scientific findings about sleep that make it absolutely clear that getting enough sleep improves your productivity. Companies would see the result immediately.

That's why we have a major company like Aetna that recently introduced financial incentives up to \$300 for people who get seven hours of sleep or more. That is like a huge turning point because the reason they did it is not just because they care about the health of their employees, but because they made the connection between employees who get enough sleep and what happens to the bottom line in terms of reducing healthcare costs and improving productivity.

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FT: Right, similar to how companies are having new wellness programs, if you join the gym or you go onto a weight loss plan that will actually mean maybe some bonuses for you or some financial benefits. There's nothing better than a financial benefit sometimes to get people motivated. But there's a cost to being able to afford yourself asleep sometimes and critics say that being able to sleep more, having eight hours of sleep, it's a luxury that some can't afford. Do you think that's a fair statement?

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AH: No, absolutely not. Because actually, I would say that the more challenging your life, the more difficult circumstances, the harder you are struggling to put food on the table, the more you need your resilience. Sleep deprivation affects your resilience immediately. You are less able to deal with challenges, you are less creative about finding shortcuts through problems, and you have more likelihood of becoming depressed or anxious.

And all these aspects of your mental health that affects how you function and how you deal with difficult circumstances. So sleep is not just for those who can afford to have support and we see actually the sleep deprivation is a crisis across our whole society whether it's those at the top who are struggling with multiple demands on their time and have they forgotten how to say "no" and how to set boundaries in terms of the use of technology.

And also, among the people who are more struggling in our society, in fact I had a clinic in a Harlem Church and I talked to a lot of people who are precisely the demographic you are describing. And what was really sad was that they were completely unaware of the importance of sleep and that they were prioritizing say watching TV for four hours and falling asleep with the

TV on. Then going to the kitchen to get something sweet when they woke up in the middle of the night because they couldn't go back to sleep, and then they were wondering why they were in their 30's and diabetic. There's such a great need for raising awareness about the importance of sleep.

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FT: I also got into this a bit with another So Money guest on the show this year, sleep coach, Christine Hansen, episode 457. She and I discussed how sleep really is so different for everyone and why we're seeing this shift in really understanding the importance of getting some shut eye.

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CH: I always say, if it's not medical, sleep is really for everyone as unique as your fingerprint. So there's so many different things that can affect it. The way I explain it is that if you are someone who has a lot of trouble sleeping, you cannot control sleep, which I think is what infuriates you so because you want to sleep sometimes and you just can't. Sleep is really something you cannot just grab it and say, "Okay, I put it on myself and it will work." Even with sleep medicine, like sleeping pills, it will not give you the same effect.

So if you look at it like a puzzle, the mold has to really fit in order to have the piece of the puzzle really match it really well. In order to do that, you kind of have to do different things. So I always start with inner work usually, I always start from the inside and see what's been going on? Is it something, is it really FOMO? Is very often the case. Are you stressed about something? Is it something maybe a perception that you have a bad sleep?

A lot of people don't like sleeping, they feel really uncomfortable because they kind of lose control. It can be from an anxious point of view. It can also be something like lots of people

have, all of this thoughts racing in like at 3 AM especially if they wake up, you have this wave of thoughts crashing down on you and then we look out what this thoughts are, can we do something about them?

Then you have lots of exterior factors, it can be related to your nutrition, it can be related to your hydration, to your movement, to how you live, what your environment looks like or what your work environment looks like. So it's really a lot of profiling is connected to all of this. It's really interesting, it's very, very interesting

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FT: Yeah, and your work is probably getting a lot of even a heightened interest now. There's a lot of discussion globally now, for the first time in a long time I think, happening around the importance of sleep. We've gone so long without it and it's been something that I think a lot of us wears a badge of honor. You know, "I only need four hours of sleep. I can get off with just five hours of sleep." I used to envy those people because I can't do that, and I wished I could. But what happened in our culture where suddenly we thought, we stop and said, "Wait a minute, this isn't actually very healthy." Why is the paradigm shifting?

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CH: So I think you have a couple of sleep advantages like Arianna Huffington, who you had on your show, and I think she's doing a tremendous job on doing that, on waking people up to sleep. Also I think that we are slowly starting to hit a wall where numbers can't lie. We have so much burn out going on or also something that is called "bored out" is a new thing. Like when people are bored out of their minds because they aren't interested in anything anymore because they're all so tired and I think we all start going back to looking at ourselves. Whether it is through sleep, whether it is through health and nutrition.

You can see that every — even like strict business magazines start to have more and more articles about how you as a human have to be fit in order to produce the best results you can and sleep is just something that you cannot neglect if you look at yourself, at your body, at your physical and at your mental health and speed and cleverness and everything is connected.

So I think that's why sleep is suddenly starting to come back into the discussion because there's just so much science and research and facts that also tell you, "Look, it's not clever what you're doing," and in the end, that's what is interesting for people. "Am I clever enough? Am I producing the results? Am I making enough money in the end? Is my relationship working?" If you look at yourself, sleep is always one of the most important factors in there.

[END OF EXCERPT]

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FT: Burn outs are becoming so prevalent nowadays, right? Speaking of this constant need to be always on, I caught up with life coach Christine Hassler earlier this year episode 420. Got to be one of my all time favorite episodes and quite the therapy session for me. She had this really incredible quote about being busy and taking the time to celebrate our achievements.

Along the same vein of making sure we get the sleep we need in order to be our best selves, we also need to be more in the moment she says. Being grateful and taking time to acknowledge our gratitude for where you are is so key. So let's take a look back at my favorite excerpt from the interview with Chrisitne Hassler.

[EXCERPT]

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FT: Can people stop asking other people, "So what's next for you?" Because it's part of our dialogue, especially if you live in New York, how many times a week I get asked that question, "So Farnoosh, what's the end game for you? What's next? Are you working on another book?" I'm like, "No people. Can we just enjoy the fact that I've had a really busy year? And if that's not enough for you, I guess I'll go make an online course then," you know?

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CH: Oh my gosh, you are speaking my language. We do not celebrate enough in this culture. We really do not celebrate what we are doing right now and busyness has become this badge of honor and we've become this human doings rather than human beings and this expectation, especially if you are someone like you who has created a lot of things and are successful, it's like people almost project that expectation onto you and it's like, "Wait, wait, wait a second, let me just acknowledge where I am and if I never do another thing, I've done enough," you know?

This needing to drive and do, and I don't just think it's in the big cities, I think it's pervasive because of the internet, because of social media and everybody putting their highlight reel on Facebook and Instagram and everything else that's out there, is everybody feels that you're not doing enough. They don't have enough, they're not skinny enough, they're not doing enough, they don't have enough money. We live in a very "not enoughness" culture instead of a culture of gratitude and abundance.

[END OF EXCERPT]

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FT: I think that has to be one of my favorite quotes from 2016, this expression that we have to stop being human doings and start being human beings. Yes. We also have to stop wearing busyness as this badge of honor okay people?

The last interview we're going to look back on is with a man who is the total opposite of most of the interviews we covered today. He requires very little sleep he says, and yet still very successful. Hal Elrod came on the show earlier in the year episode 438 and his story is just magical. He's the award-winning author of *The Miracle Morning*. It's one of the highest rated books on Amazon. He once died and lived to tell the tale. So he's really not human to begin with if you ask me.

For that story go back and listen to his interview if you haven't yet, episode 438. But right now, we're going to revisit an excerpt about how he wakes up most mornings at 3:30AM; he starts his day, he's very productive. He gives advice to everybody else, how we can all too have miracle mornings and not necessarily get up that early. I mean, come on. Let's listen.

[EXCERPT]

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HE: Right. I make tea, I brush my teeth.

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FT: How much sleep do you get though when you wake up?

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HE: Six hours. I typically go from — I sleep from 9:30 PM to 3:30 AM. Just to be clear for everybody listening, it's so funny, when I first started the miracle morning before it was ever a book, it was just my own ritual. I would post on Facebook, "Up at 3:30 for my miracle morning," and after doing that for like six months, someone goes, "Yeah, your miracle morning, I've seen your post, it's really inspiring but I could never wake up at 3:30," and I then go, "Oh you think it's waking up at 3:30?" I realized, how many thousands of people think that they have to wake up at 3:30 to do their miracle morning, that's not it at all.

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FT: That's just you?

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HE: That's just me, I'm extreme. As the guy that created it, I just kept like going, "How early could I go? How much juice could I squeeze..."

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FT: "Maybe I don't have to sleep at all? Maybe I could become nocturnal after all?"

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HE: Yeah exactly! I'm going to start my Miracle Morning in the evening, I'll just start at like 11:30 PM and you know? Yeah exactly, how early is waking up until it's like the day before, you know? But anyways, so for me, normally, I go through this six practices, the miracle morning's made up of the six most timeless personal development practices known to man or woman. They're organized into a nice little acronym thanks to my wife, the thesaurus. It's the SAVERS: Silence, affirmations, visualization, exercise, reading, and scribing.

So meditation to journaling and everything in between and doing that every morning and anywhere from 30 to 60 minutes is what most people do their miracle morning. For me, I do a full hour and some people do it as little as six. There's a whole chapter in the book on the six minute miracle morning and it's literally how do you do it on those days where you're really busy, rather than making it all or nothing, how could you actually squeeze it into this really legitimately effective six minute practice every day? So whatever works for people.

[END OF EXCERPT]

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FT: Well that was a nice walk down memory lane. Talking about health, wellness, sleep, lack of sleep. Listen, it's important to take care of yourself, that's the bottom line right? When you take care of yourself, you can take care of your money, you can take care of other people. Regardless of what kind of person you are, I hope you take the time to at least do what you need to do, to feel refreshed, to refuel this week. It's our last chance in 2016 so make it a good one, you deserve it.

I'll be back here on Wednesday for our last installment of our 2016 highlights. On Wednesday we'll be talking about the best advice we had around investing on this show. Don't miss out. Until then, I hope your day is So Money.

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