

**Ep #327: James Miller - Fearlessly Living Your Fullest
Life**



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David Phelps: Good day, everyone. This is Dr. David Phelps of the Freedom Founders mastermind community and Dentist Freedom Blueprint podcast. Today with you to give you an opportunity to get behind the scenes of a gentleman that I got to know recently, because he was kind enough to actually interview me for his podcast. This is James Miller. James, how are you doing, sir?

James Miller: I am doing well. Thank you so much for having be a guest today. I am really honored.

David Phelps: Well, I had so much fun with you interviewing me and what I realized when I was doing my background research on who's going to be interviewing me, I realized that we had some similarities and similarities we have is making some changes in our life. So before we dig into the story, I want to get people a little bit of the bio and I'm going to read your longer bio. I appreciate that because you're very humble, but I'm going to read both because some of the context I think is going to be important here for what we dig into. So here we go. James Miller is a licensed psychotherapist and a piano composer who

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resides in West Palm Beach, Florida. He's been in the mental health field for 23 years. He is a subject matter expert who has worked in all types of clinical settings, including prisons, residential treatment centers, outpatient clinics, universities, partial hospitalization programs, and most recently was in private practice in the Washington DC area for the past 14 years. And that was a few years ago.

David Phelps: Since the age of three years old, James has been a performer. He is a talented singer and piano composer who would regularly perform in front of thousands of people and on live television events. James currently has two instrumental albums, Constellation and Restoration that are heard all around the world. He is currently working on his third album that will be released later this year. In his early 20s, James participated in local commercials, television roles and documentaries. He was even a principal actor in an indie film in Spain. In 2015, James decided to close his clinical practice. He was not feeling fulfilled and believed there need to be a next step for personal growth and development. James then moved to West Palm Beach, Florida, immersed his passion for self-development and his love as a performer.

David Phelps: He created his brand James Miller Lifeology. Lifeology started as daily YouTube episodes and then evolved into a podcast and later exploded into a nationally broadcasted and syndicated radio show that reaches over 3 million listeners per episode. James is known for his infectious laugh and relaxed manner and explaining why people do what they do. He teaches practical tools and techniques to help people focus on what truly matters in order for them to live their fullest life. And one other piece

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that I really love from the website, I think James, you said this in quotes, "We all have life lessons to both learn and teach." Commenting on what guides him each day, what guides you. "Lifeology is the study of life. It's all about increasing the human experience. No matter what someone is feeling, there's always somebody else out there who's going through the same thing. I always say that regardless of what happens in life, there's always an answer. Keep looking until you find it." I just have to applaud when I read that because-

James Miller: Thank you.

David Phelps: Well, that's in my life, and again, I don't have nearly the context that you do in helping people, but obviously, that's something that you've not only witnessed in your own life, but in some people's lives that you have helped over the years. My first question to you is, going back in your life and in your very early years, three years old, being a performer and being in the creative, the arts, piano music, what took you into the clinical side into a career there? Was there a reason for that, that you didn't stay with performing? Which sounds like, I mean to even this day, I mean, you still do that at a high level. What was it that led you down the path into academia?

James Miller: Yeah, I think the whole thing when it comes to being a creative person, it's you have this catharsis when you create, when you compose, when you do whatever and it's so powerful and moving, but as a blessing and a burden for everything I found for myself that too much of that, I gave too much of myself. And so without saying too much about my past, one thing that I will say is, I've talked about this in other shows, which is kind of cool. And when

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I was 17 years old, I was clinically depressed. And so I had to be hospitalized for a few days. Now, the cool thing about this, and this is what I want you to focus on is, or people to focus on is I was there and I remember I was getting this treatment and I'm like, this is horrible. These people don't know what they're doing.

James Miller: I'm 17 years old. What do I know? But in that moment I was thinking, this is what I needed. I'm like, I'm going to help people. And so I always had a proclivity for people or propensity rather. People come and talk to me about just the problems, their struggles, that was this type of person I was. And so once I got out of the hospital, four years later, I graduated with my bachelor's of arts degree. I went in as a music major, had a full scholarship. But then from there I transitioned into psychology with a music minor. And so when I got out of there, I ended up working as a psych tech in all these different hospitals.

James Miller: And one of my assignments was at the same hospital I was in, when I was 17 years old, four years later, I went in there, I was the person with the keys and I was able to actually talk to the patients that was there. And so for me, that was such a powerful move because I was like, wow, I really fulfilled a vow that I had. I didn't realize I was going to fulfill that vow, but I found for me, I was so impassioned about how to help people. And so with that, I started just with psychology itself. And so I worked in a lot of different hospitals, like you said. But I remember in graduate school, I had an opportunity to go to film school or acting school for all the entertainment and the arts, like up at the new school in New York City. And I was really excited about it. And then I thought, what if I'm not able to make it? What am I going to do?

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James Miller: And I was like, I want to be able to survive. I want to have money. I wanted to do all these things in my life. And so at that moment, I had the opportunity to do either one. I was at a crossroads. And so I chose to do the clinical route. And in that moment, when I chose that... Now that I think about it, when I made that moment, I think I probably made it out of... That's really interesting. I think I probably made it more out of indecision or more of let me take the easy way out, because even though I had done so many things, when it came to performing and I had a lot of accolades and a lot of different ways, I think now I haven't really thought about that. I think I probably took that route because it felt more safe for me. Now, the interesting part of... Go ahead.

David Phelps: No, I'm glad you took that because I think that's what a lot of people do. And a lot of people you'll bury part of their personality. I think about as young kids, we explore, we're fearless. I mean, nothing's off the table, right? And then over time it seems like through school and indoctrination and getting back to what you just said, safety, I think there's a tendency for people to trade freedom for perceived safety and security. And so what does that do? And so, again, I'm kind of leading the witness here because I wanted to take us forward to you did that, you spent 14 years in all these different venues, helping people with your experience and expertise and studies in mental health, but you came to the conclusion at some point I'm not fulfilled. So dig in there for me.

James Miller: In 2015, I remember I was, well, actually 2012. I had not composed in a really long time. And I used to play the piano all the time. It was just my life. I just enjoyed it so much. And I remember in 2012, I chose to leave a

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relationship. And at that moment I was kind of looking at my life and I'm like, nothing just seems like it's fulfilling me. I was well-respected in the DC area, was really well known with certain crowds. But for me, I was like, well, that's fine, but that doesn't really mean anything to me. And so for me, I really took a step back and I just really analyzed all aspects of my life.

James Miller: And one thing I always teach my listeners is you can do a graph of fulfillment. So on the graph, the horizontal line, you have all the different widgets or all the different things in your life that you can conceptualize. So, in other words, your employment, your relationships or health. Break it down to as many categories as possible. And on the vertical line, you tick marks between one and 10. And in that, you can really break down your life, just the smallest integral parts of it, then you decide, where are you fulfilled? And so when I did that for myself, I found that there's a lot of areas of my life that I wasn't fulfilled. And a lot of it was the creativity. I enjoyed doing individual counseling, but I always knew as a child that wasn't what I was called to do. I actually remember I was in front of thousands and thousands of people, and that's where I would thrive.

James Miller: I remember when I was doing my forensic training at the University of Virginia, we had to do all these different types of clinicals. And so I was on the stand, the mock trial, and they're asking me all these questions I felt like I was doing great. I was performing. And when they're done, I remember that moment, like, "Okay, James, you can sit down." I remember thinking, but I don't want to sit down. And that's for me. And I was like, so there's another reason why I was like, okay, I know that I'm missing this. And so when I would do different things like

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that, or if I really am in a true clinical court trial, I didn't want to sit down either even though my time was done on the stand.

David Phelps: I'm not quite finished, I have more to say.

James Miller: I have more to say. Ask me more questions. But that's really how I found for me is I realized that I was missing that. So in 2012, when I finally decided to leave a lot of things, I remember I sat down after I broke up with the person, I sat down on my piano and I hadn't played in forever. And all of a sudden I just closed my eyes and I play it and I actually hit record on it and I've saved it. It's probably one of the most inspirational pieces I've ever played. I write in a very extemporaneous type of way, which means that it just comes to me and I just play. So the cool thing about this, so linking the two things from psychology and the composing part is when I write, I actually write from a very, I use a lot of neurology and a lot of psychology. So I write with a lot of imagery.

James Miller: So if I write something, it has a lot of, for lack of better words, a lot of twirls and twists. What I'm doing is whatever the concept of the song is, is I'm creating imagery in one's mind that one feels with their... How do I say this? Or they feel it with the pace of their heart. They feel it with the way the dopamine would hit the brain. So I write with a way that allows people to experience what I'm writing in a very visceral way. So sometimes we hear music like, oh, it's beautiful. But when we truly think about it from a psychology or neuropsychology type of way, what's actually impacting us. So what we don't realize is our heartbeat actually will mimic whatever the rhythm is of a song.

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James Miller: So that's why, if you get all this energy when you hear like a really, really powerful song, like, oh, this anthem is amazing, well it's because your heartbeat starts to sync up with that. And so when I would write a way with more of a resting heart rate, I would incorporate that, I would incorporate a lot of different ways in which not to get too technical. So there's a type of what's called beating. So beating is a type of dissonance that we hear in our ears. And when the beating happens, when it goes back and forth, it causes dissonance in our brain, but then I will culminate that into something, into a climax and all of a sudden that crescendo the resolution. Once again, all technical stuff that's irrelevant right now. But the point is, is I write in a way that allows people to really experience something.

James Miller: So if you look at any of the pieces that I write, they're all just one name, usually one name like Restoration, Constellation, different things like that. So that concept, and everybody has a different connotation of what that word means. But for me, it would mean this. And so for Restoration, you hear, and it's a beautiful, in my opinion, very beautiful classical type of music you'd hear, but it creates this movements that people will feel like there's restoration towards the end of it. But so that's kind of how I started to write. And so from that moment, 2012, I produced my first album in 2013, second one in 2016, I think. And then, like I said, my third one right now. So I like to do 10 compositions per album, but that's really how I started to reincorporate everything.

James Miller: And so by 2015 is when I made the choice. I was like, okay, I'm in my practice, now what else am I going to do? And so what I did was I took some time. I had the

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opportunity to actually move to London. And I met a lot with a lot of directors over there, and I was going to compose for a lot of different movies. But what was interesting, one of the directors said to me, he said, "James, it's not what you think." I was like, "What do you mean?" He said, "Well, we can tell you, you have 10 minutes or however long to write the score, but we'll tell you specifically how it's supposed to sound." I was like, "Oh, well, that's not really that creative." And what he told me though, is he said, "We've had some composers who will write something. It's just a very rough draft, not polished at all and we'll use that. And so many people will cringe because it's not polished."

James Miller: Like, "Oh, I do not want my name behind that." And so when I thought more about that, I was like, well, I guess I could do that. And I could live in London, which would be really great, but I had to kind of pull back and remove all the bells and whistles to say, well, what would my life look like? What would this composition look like? And so I was like, okay, well, I can do that. Or I had the opportunity to move to West Palm Beach where I am now, Florida. And so with that, I kind of thought about it. I said, well, once again, I'm at a crossroads, what do I do? And so I thought, well, instead of me doing one or the other, how about I do both?

James Miller: I was like, I don't know how that's going to look, but I know it's something. So what I did was I looked at all the strengths that I have and things that I enjoy doing. I talk a lot, obviously. I've been an entertainer, I'm a composer. And so with that, I decided, well, how do I link those together? And so I remember when I was younger, I joked with people. I was like, one day, I'm going to have my own

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TV show. And so when I came to Florida in 2015, I kind of looked at everything and I thought, okay, well, let's see what we're going to do. So I remember I was like, well, let me do a YouTube channel. And for six months I did a episode every single day.

James Miller: Now what people don't realize is I did the episode obviously to help people because nobody knew who I was in this fear at the time. But I did it because I knew my long game was I wanted to practice to be on TV again, because I hadn't been on TV for awhile. And so for six months, six months every single day, I practiced. I practiced my face, I practice how I spoke, I practiced the production of it. And so if anybody looks at the previous stuff, it's so bad. Content's good, but everything else is really bad. And then I got better and better and better. And so that was good. But the whole point was I knew where I wanted to go as far as long-term was, I knew I wanted a talk show, but I didn't know how to get there.

James Miller: So for me, I thought, well, what would the iterations of that look like? And so that's when I started the YouTube channel, that's when I went to a podcast, that's when I went to radio. And now, as you know, I'm going to TV in the next couple weeks. So that's been kind of the thing for me. So when I kind of link all this together, everything you hear on my show, every piece of music you hear on my show, I've written. And when you were on my show, if you would go back and listen to that music, every single sound is mine. And so with that, I kind of incorporated all those things together. I've actually been asked to write some music for some other TV shows, just for fun, friends of mine. And I'm like, sure, I'll write it for you.

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James Miller: So that's fun for me. So now to get back to the entertainment world and to incorporate psychology and life skills, that's really what I do. And so that's how I've been able to kind of weave those two things together. And it's been a wonderful journey. At times can be very scary. I remember when I first started, I had some money saved up and then when I made it down here, I was living like I still made all this money. And then when it kind of dawned on me like four months into it, I was like, wow, that's really frivolous. And so I realized, okay, well, you don't have that same income. So we need to really strategize. And with that strategy came some other opportunities for me. I still do see some patients at times.

James Miller: I do miss that. That's a part of me that I've always really enjoyed. So not only do I see some patients from the DC area, but I also have a lot of people who do contact me to help them more of a life coaching type of thing. So the consultation I do that as well. So I kind of mixed everything together and I've just enjoyed it. I mean, you're not always on the mountain top, if you will, but you always know that the more confidence you have in yourself and you use your previous data or previous experiences to say, well I felt this way before, what do I do to overcome it? Well, this is what I did. So if I felt fear, well, how did I get over that fear? Well, this is what I did. So now I've got over my fear.

James Miller: So that's the same type of thing that I teach people, as well is everything that we struggle with, we've struggled with before. You have the answers inside of you, you just don't realize it because if you've felt it before, you're going to feel it again. So if you kind of streamline that to say, well, what did I do? Oh, this works. Let me try that again.

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And more than likely it will work. And so it's much easier to get over struggles when you deal with it from based on what you've done before, as opposed to trying to reinvent the wheel today with what am I going to do?

David Phelps: James, I think a lot of people inside themselves, wherever they are in life, whatever they develop as a career path and their family, and the vision of what they had when they were younger. And they want to be able to get to that point where they do feel like they're just following the majority and it doesn't feel right and there's got to be more. But there's, I think just the feeling that, yeah but I've sunk all this time and effort and maybe money and education to this thing. And I've got a lot of sunk cost into it. You mentioned it's a little bit scary to think about jumping ship or making a move away from what at least at the moment is stable, but in your case, in so many people's cases not fulfilling, but what gave you the impetus to go and do that and leave a very solid foundation, a very solid clinical practice that was letting you live a certain lifestyle, but it wasn't fulfilling. What's the angst there? What's the conflict that you had to overcome and probably you help other people do the same thing?

James Miller: Yeah, that's a good question. I remember there was actually quite a few situations that happened. Once again, just I wasn't fulfilled with my friend group. There was just this nonsense of people just saying things and doing things that seemed so petty. And I was like, I don't really have time for that. So I remember I started to pull myself away from some social groups, but the funny thing was, the kicker was this. I think it was New Year's of 2014. It's kind of funny. I lived kind of in like a big square. So if you

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see kind of... Hollywood Squares, if you look at that game, I lived in the center square in this building. So the below was commercial and I was in the center square there. And out of all of the windows, they said my window seals were rotten and they needed to be replaced.

James Miller: And I was like, are you kidding me? I'm the only one? Which wasn't true, it turns out. But the point was is that was the final straw. I was like, I'm not going to pay all this money to live in a place I don't want to live anymore and pay all that. It was just... That's why I say it's funny now because I was so irritated by that because I was like, I'm not going to pay this money. So that was a decision. I know that kind of sounds frivolous, but that was the decision I was like, I'm done doing this. And that was really put me over the edge to say, well then where do I want to go? And so that was really what turned it for me was when I looked at all the different things from the biggest things to the smallest things, when I found that I was starting to get irritated and annoyed by silly things that have never irritated me before, I knew it was time to go.

James Miller: We often don't realize is our body gives us more information about how we truly feel about something. As you may or may not know, we have three different types of brains, and I use that in quotations, we have our cognitive brain, our heart-brain and our enteric brain. So the enteric brain is in our gut and that really gives us kind of the visceral response of what's right or what's wrong, usually more than no, it gives us the no, like something's wrong. So for me, I would really sit and listen with that. And so when I would find that all these silly things in the past, it wouldn't bother me now bothered me, I knew that

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it was time to go. So that's why I, as you know, it's so important to listen to what your body says, and listen to what's really around you because when you can stop and think and be aware of it, you'll find that there's so many more answers for you.

James Miller: There's so much more information. And I knew for me that if I continue to stay where I was, I was going to become this angry, annoyed person. And how's that going to help my practice at all? It's not. So that was one of the reasons why I chose to leave. And then from there, like I said, I had some money saved up, but to make that jump, I knew, and it's hard to describe it. I knew for myself that I would be okay. And what I mean by okay, is I knew regardless of where I ended up in life, I would do what I needed to do to make some money to live, whether it was... because I remember this and I haven't really told anybody this. I remember when I moved to DC, it took 10 months for my clinical license to transfer to the DC area.

James Miller: Long story short, they kept losing my information. And so I was like, what am I going to do? So I remember I worked at this retail place. I applied for one place. I took their personality test and I failed it because they said, "Do people steal?" And I said, yeah people steal. Of course people steal, but not really meaning to steal on purpose, but if I take a pencil, that's stealing. And so for me, in my logical mind, that's what I thought. And so this 20 year old boy came back and said, "I'm sorry James, you can't work here because you failed the personality test, but you can come back in a year and apply." And I'm like, are you kidding me? I'm like, I write these things. So it was so funny to me.

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James Miller: But in that moment I was like, well I have to do something. So I worked at a retail shop for three months and finally my license kicked in. But that's my point is when you have to hustle, when you have to do something, you can trust yourself that you know somehow you'll land on your feet. That's what I knew would happen. So in that moment I thought, okay, well, I put my pride aside, put everything aside, I'm going to do what I need to do. In fact, the other thing I did was I sold my fancy DC car when I moved down here and I bought a car that I would never, ever buy. Nothing's wrong with that car, but it didn't fit my personality, didn't fit what I was known for, et cetera.

James Miller: But I bought it and I drove it for a year and a half. And every time I got in that car, I was like, 'This is not me. I am James.' And so it was my way to decouple myself from this, quote, status that I had received before, because I wanted to be James. And so when people ask me what I did, I would say I'm a composer or I'm this, or I'm that. And I never talked about the psychology world, because I didn't want to be known as that. I wanted to create that new iteration of myself because once again, a title is only a title. It's not who you are, unless you want it to be. That's the same thing in life. Any life experience we have, a divorce, a bankruptcy, that's simply a situation. It's not who you are.

James Miller: So for me, I've decoupled all of that just say, I want to reinvent who James is. And so it was very humbling for me to be in this car, once again, nothing wrong with it, but it just wasn't me. But as I weaned myself off of that, I got to really see a different side of me. I was much more calm. I remember when I came down here, my quick expectations of people, I had to get my entire change. I'm

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like, why aren't you doing this? And I realized I'm still in that mindset. And I was like, gosh, I don't want to be that way. The day that I moved from DC, it was five in the morning. And I was driving south on I95. And it was five in the morning but as I was driving out of DC, probably about 30 miles, it was pretty much backed up traffic coming into the city, into the district for people to work.

James Miller: And it was such an eyeopening experience for me to see all those people coming into work at that early in the morning and it was bumper to bumper traffic. And the more south I went, I was like, oh my gosh, I had no idea that I was so enraptured and so caught up in this minutia or this frenetic type of feeling that the more south I went, the more relaxed I felt. And then of course I had to retrain myself to relax more. People here in the south, wonderful people. Just have a different style of how they do things. And so with that, I've learned that, and I've kind of settled down a bit. But going back to the whole thing about the fear is, it comes down to a place of, do you trust yourself?

James Miller: I trusted myself to know that regardless of what happened, I would be okay. It didn't mean I would have all the money I wanted, didn't mean I'd have the status I wanted, but I'd be able to pay my bills. I'd be able to do what I needed to do on a very basic level. And if I had to reset, I had to reset. I've learned over time that if you have to reset or you do reset, because most people do, that's okay. It doesn't mean that you have to start over. It just simply means you take a break and you come back, you reformulate what worked and what didn't work, and then you move forward. But often I think when people do have that concept of, I have to start over, that means start over

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from when you were like 18 years old and that's not the case at all.

James Miller: And so when we realized that you have all this data, all this experience in your life that is going to help you, you just simply reset it. Just tweak your mind a little bit, tilt it a little bit, and you'll find the answer that you seek. But that's one thing that I was able to discern within myself, is regardless of what happens, I will be okay. And then from there is the creativity and how that looked and how that would start to formulate came about. Now, to be honest, I didn't know. I knew where I wanted to go, but I didn't, once again, I didn't know the steps, but I knew the first step. The first step was I had to step out in faith and to say, I'm going to do something different. I had family members love me of course, but were like, "James, are you sure? Because you're done really well here."

James Miller: And great question. But that question had given an opportunity to say, "That's right. I am successful, but do I make the safe choice? And do I stay here and not feel successful or not, or feel fulfilled or not?" And that was something I really had to really think about, but I did it. Now, of course, they're all on board with me. But at that time they were, of course, very fearful because they were uncertain of what would this look like? But yeah, so that's kind of been it in a nutshell. I know I'm speaking very fast because I'm pretty excited about this. I haven't really had a chance to talk about it. So that's been kind of fun.

David Phelps: No, it's great. It's great for me to hear it from your experience because my own experiences is very, very similar. Different reasons to make the change, but realizing that we can reset ourselves. And I think too, as

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you said, we have to mind our own experiences. And my question to you is, an article you wrote was Soaring with the Eagles. "You can't spend time with the chickens and expect to soar with the Eagles." So how important do you feel like it's maybe in your own life and other people's lives who have done a reset, we've done a recalibration and look for more fulfillment in their life, not stepped out in that faith and not letting fear bind them. How important is it to be around other people that you can articulate with the authenticity and be vulnerable about where you are and not where this big ego thing, like I am the clinical psychologist. I am this doctor. I am this title thing. If I strip that up. Oh my gosh, who am I now? I can't do that.

James Miller: Yeah, I was blessed. I was blessed to know someone who really kind of talked me through this as well. Amazing person, Douglas Shaw. He's a PhD MD. Brilliant. He put Echinacea on the map. He's really, really brilliant, but he's very, how do I say this respectfully? He's very wealthy, but he's just didn't care. It doesn't care what anybody thinks about him. When you would see him, you wouldn't... He drives a... It's so funny. He's so humble, but so smart and just doesn't care, which I love. And for me to hang out with him and just to talk with him, it helped me remember how I was. That's how I used to be in the sense of, for example, when I was in kindergarten, I remember I looked at my shadow and I was like, "Oh my gosh, what if I'm the shadow and the shadow is actually me?"

James Miller: So I said this to my friends and they're like, "You're weird." And then they went and ate glue. But for me, as a very precocious child, I thought different. I acted different and I didn't care what people thought because I was really, really... I just get lost in my thoughts. And I remember

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when I would talk to him that he'd remind me of the type of person I was. And I just life happens and we evolve or devolve and just into the person we are today. So for me, it was really exciting to talk with someone who had walked the walk, where I was going, and it was exciting. Now my other friends and other peers were great, but they were comfortable where they were. And since I knew there was something different for me, I would spend time with this person. I would ask this person questions.

James Miller: And so I've found for me, in anything in life, in psychology, we have what's called the law of the group. So in the law of the group, what it basically means is if I come in, scale of one to 10, if I come in with a level eight of positivity, but my best friend has a level five of negative, or I guess positivity. Then what happens is I digress down to where the average of that and they improve up to the average as well. So they're the ones who's leveling up. And I'm the one who's digressing. And so that's something where I realized and everything in life, if I want more joy, who am I hanging out with? If I want to feel more peaceful, who am I hanging out with? If I want to be more creative, who am I hanging out with?

James Miller: If I want to make more money, whom am I hanging out with? Those questions are so important in wanting wonderful people that are in your life, but wonderful doesn't get you where you want to go. So if you have an option, an idea of where we want to be, who are you spending time with? It's funny. A really amazing person named Ken Honda, we've been playing phone tag. He was on my show a little bit ago. He's known as the Zen Millionaire, amazing person. So, so humble. In fact, we were supposed to meet again tomorrow night, but long

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story short, I'll be meeting with him next week, but to hang out with him and to talk with him, he was in Tokyo. So it was 11 hours ahead of me, but we were talking and he has this concept of what's called happy money and happy money just basically means it comes from a place of gratitude.

James Miller: Not I have to pay my bills, I get to pay my bills. And just that slight differentiation of how you perceive something allows not only for the dopamine in your brain to then all of a sudden flood your body, but it also helps you conceptualize things differently that everything's a gift. It's my choice, as opposed to it's a deficit or something I have to pull myself out of. But just even talking to him for the half hour, I found that I didn't realize that there were parts of me that once again, were creating this mediocrity in the sense of I'm doing well, but I'm not striving to where I thought I would be. And what I mean by that is this. It's always good to give yourself the accolades of, yes, you're doing a great job, but if you don't revamp or revisit the things that you want or the places you wanted to go, then you'll find that mediocrity does set in and you start to settle.

James Miller: Like I live, I've been very blessed. I live on the ocean here, so you can't see this, but that's the ocean right there. I've been blessed to live in places and create a life that once again, that I'm happy and comfortable with. But the difference is, is my long-term goal is to have my name be a household name, not just for me, but for my brand. So how would that look? So if I get stuck with one metric of success, which could once again be my name, or it could be finances or other aspects of that, then unfortunately that's an unbalanced type of success in my opinion. So

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the more metrics you can have of success will determine how far you're going to go. Because if you only have one metric, which is finances, nothing wrong with that, but then you have all these finances, but you perhaps work so hard that you don't have a family.

James Miller: If you're an entrepreneur and the first couple of years, you've sunk all your money and all your time and energy in it, but then your spouse divorces you. Well, that doesn't work either. And I say that respectfully, because we've all been there, but the point is more metrics you have, the more you'll see that you live the fulfilled life and that fulfillment in that abundance expounds to every single person around you. And then overflow is beyond what you can imagine. So just to even speak with him, I was, I was thinking about that and I was like, I didn't realize I've settled. And I was like, what does that mean, James? And so I was excited to talk to someone that I wasn't expecting to have this own lesson taught to me, which I loved. But to answer your question, it was so important to be around people all the time, because it's so easy to fall back into what you know already, which then becomes the metric of success, which is not the metric of success, it's a metric of mediocrity.

James Miller: The metric of mediocrity is essentially, I've done this for so long and I'm great at it that this is all I need to do. Sure that's fine for some people, nothing wrong with that. Nothing wrong with it whatsoever. But for me, I realized if I continually stay where I am, well, I'm just repeating what I did in DC. And I don't want to do that. So what does this look like? So it's the constant awareness of what am I doing to continually grow and develop? It doesn't mean I have to read a book or listen to a podcast all the time. It

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just simply means, am I being aware of my surroundings? Am I looking for opportunities? I remember when I first started Lifeology, it was kind of cool. Pretty much every opportunity I had, I didn't seek it. It was brought to me.

James Miller: I found that there's nothing worse than having an opportunity come to you if you're not prepared for it. So what I did when I started my brand, it was just me, a one man, show. Everything you see, my website, I created. I wrote everything, I did everything, all the copy. But I was prepared. And I remember I randomly met this woman and she's like, "Hey James. Yeah, it's my birthday next week. Do you want to come to my brunch?" Sure. I went to the brunch. I didn't know anybody. So I sat down at the end of the table and then probably about 10 minutes later, this couple came and sat next to me and the gentleman next to me, it turns out he's an editor for a huge magazine. He wrote one of the books for the aviator book that was used for the screenplay for the Leonardo DiCaprio movie.

James Miller: So a lot of things, he's written so many things and he's really, really well known. He used to write for Reader's Digest, et cetera. But as we were talking and I just told him what I was doing, he's like, "That's exciting. I want you to write for me." And so that was the first, when I started writing for the magazine when I first moved down here, that was the first thing that opened up for me. And then I met someone who said, "James, I want to introduce you to this radio broadcasting group." I met them. My show blew up. And so once again, it's not about what James has done, and I think that the lesson for all of us is when you are prepared and you do the best you can and you invest your time, your energy, you will find that opportunities do come to you.

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James Miller: But if we're saying, I want these opportunities, but we're not doing the work well, that's just simply wishing without action. And so for me, I've learned that the more time and energy I put into learning more about myself, then I realized, that was an opportunity. Or I could talk to this person. And so that has allowed me to become, I guess, the person I am. Was when I realized that I need to not be so insular. Just simply look around me. When I look around me and I'm open, even smiling to someone, I find that something comes back to me. Doesn't mean it has to be this huge thing, but something comes back in a sense of either I get this flood of dopamine or I just have a great day, something as simple as that. But that builds on success. And for me, success is always something to look for. And so once again, the metrics of success are determined by you, but with the more awareness you have of that, the broader and bigger your life becomes.

David Phelps: James. So good. So good. You gave us just a lot of great insights and I think this would be certainly some lessons in your life story for people to ponder much more deeply. I hope people are not running this at 2X speed because they'll never catch a word of it. I think we spoke-

James Miller: I'm so, so sorry. Speaking way too fast.

David Phelps: No, no I think we laughed last time we did it. We were both at speed level. It's just the energy. When you're excited about something, about what you do in life or expressing to other people, I think that's what you want to see. You want people to be excited about what they love and what they want. To be so motivating, incentivizing to their work and the purpose in life. So listen, we can go on for a long time. We'll be respectful for your time, but I just,

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again, want to thank you, James Miller, James Miller, lifeology.com. So much great stuff you're putting out there with the radio, with the podcast. I think you're offering a book. You've got the TV show coming out, lots of ways to connect with you. And I just encourage people to make that connection because I found it so beneficial for myself. And just having this conversation with you again today has been just super exciting. So thank you so much for your time James.

James Miller: Thank you. I truly appreciate you have me be a guest on your show. I've enjoyed it. You're so good at what you do. So thank you once again. I truly appreciate it.

David Phelps: My pleasure. Take care, sir.

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