

**Ep #383: James Miller - Breakthroughs in Life - You
Are the Expert**



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Dr. David Phelps

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Welcome to the Dentist Freedom Blueprint, a podcast about freedom—freedom from expectations of society and the traditional path to success that has been ingrained in us from our early years, I'm joined by mavericks, renegades, and non-conformers to discuss an anti-traditional path to financial freedom, freedom of time, relationships, health, and ultimately freedom of purpose. My name is Dr. David Phelps. Let's get started.

David Phelps: Good day, everyone. This is Dr. David Phelps of the Freedom Founders Mastermind Community and Dentist Freedom Blueprint Podcast. I'm back this morning with a good friend, someone I had the opportunity to get to know over the last year or so, and that is Dr. James Miller. James, how are you, sir?

James Miller: I am doing very well. Thank you so much for allowing me to be a guest in your show today. I'm really excited.

David Phelps: Well, we've done some interviews back and forth before, and I think the one thing that listeners always tell me is, David, a lot of times, I like to turn up the speed to get it faster. In the case with you guys, I have to turn it back.

James Miller: It's very true.

David Phelps: Here, I'm just prepping the audience for what happens when we get going.

James Miller: Yeah, exactly.

David Phelps: Excellent. All right. A little bit about James. James is a licensed psychotherapist. He's also a piano composer who resides in Miami, Florida. He's been in the mental

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health field for 23 years. He's 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.

Since the age of three, James has been a performer. He is a talented singer and piano composer who had regularly performed in front of thousands of people in on live television events. 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 wasn't feeling fulfilled, believed there needed to be a next step, I love that, for personal growth and development. James moved to Miami, Florida. Merged his passion for self-development and his love as a performer. Created his brand, James Miller LIFEOLGY. LIFEOLGY started as a daily YouTube episodes. Then it 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, you already caught some of that this morning, his relaxed manner in 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 lives. We've exchanged some of this. We've been on podcasts before. We talked about people's next, their involvement, their personal growth, the things that we've both gone through. And I think things that a lot of people

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are potentially poised to go through James, but maybe afraid, fearful. Right?

James Miller: Yes.

David Phelps: And no question, certainly the last two years, COVID, all the disruption there. I mean, you've got probably story after story, after story of what people are still dealing with and will be dealing with for years to come. Now, we're potentially, we're moving into a recessionary period. We've got geopolitical concerns with Russia and Ukraine. So much going on today. So many people are, I think, just in that position where they're just not sure, they're uncertain.

You've got a new book that's coming out. We're going to talk about this morning because I think it's very timely. No doubt. It comes to you because of the work you do with people. The title of the book is Life Lessons. You are the expert on your life. And it's a workbook, a workbook to help people, I believe, go back in their life and look at previous times when they had to go through different times of change, disruption, volatility, whatever it might be and what they figured out. Because what I love about what you say is it's in the title of the book. You, we are the expert in our lives and nobody else knows us better than we are. I'm going to stop there and let you jump into and the premise. And really, again, what prompted you to write this book?

James Miller: Well, once good. I really appreciate of you allowing me to be in your show. When I wrote this book, I was actually looking at my own life. In fact, it was funny. I spoke at your events back in August of last year of 2021. And I told about an event, where nine years to the day prior to me

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speaking at that event, I had a huge change. I was a speaker at a really big event in DC.

And then the next day, I had a breakup and my life just changed. And so, what I didn't tell you was about the breakup. It was interesting when I came back from this event where I spoke, I had the same exact thing happened. The change in my life, a relationship ended and all of a sudden, I was like, "I have been here before. I have literally been here before." The high of me speaking, and then my life changed in a different way.

And that's when I realized, "James, once again, you've been here before. If you've been here before, what did you do that worked for you? And what did you do that did not work for you?" And so, that's how the premise of the book started because there's so many different self-help books out there where people can read all these different methodologies. And they're absolutely wonderful. But just like you and me, if I have a really busy day, I may remember what I'm reading when I'm reading it. And it makes sense. But when I go throughout my day, my schedule gets busier and busier. I forget about what I just read.

Why this book is different is it really helps you focus on when you felt something before. The situation may be different, but the emotions you experienced, you've experienced them before. You go back into your database of your mind and say, "Well, when I felt this, what did I do that worked for me? What did I do that did not work for me?" And that's how, you don't have to reinvent the wheel. And that's why the premise of the book started.

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I went through all these different aspects of what the book are. We'll talk about that in a second, of course. And with that, I thought, "Well, how can people use their data to become the expert in their life?" And so that's why Life Lessons was written.

David Phelps: The first thing, I would assume, and I don't have the book yet, but I'm excited to get the book and we'll talk about where to get it when it comes out. But assume as in a workbook style, you are actually helping people go back in their life and helping them recall some of the specific events and helping them delineate what those look like.

We're just, it's like some people journal. And so, if you were journaling, or whether you didn't journal, this book helps you go back and rebuild those timeframes. And then, you got, I assume frameworks that help people build out, well, what was going on then, and how they dealt with them. And so, some of the chapters in the book, give us some of the areas where you've built these chapters out for people to go back in these particular areas of life, just so we get a feeling for what that might look like.

James Miller: Sure. When I was thinking about this, I was like, "Okay, well, let's really walk through, what does this look like?" And so, I was looking at my own life and I've been in the field for 25 years. And so, I was really compartmentalizing, what everyone I've worked with, I have people I've spoken to, what makes sense for them?

I broke it down into nine categories. And the nine categories are when your emotions overwhelm you, improving your communication, when you're blindsided by life, improving your relationships, moving on with your life, life lessons, of course, identifying self-sabotage, creating

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your future and even tackling your holidays. Because those are, as we know, holidays can be very overwhelming for people.

I broke down into those nine categories. And in that I have between three to six chapters per category. There's actually 52 chapters in the book. And so, when I create that framework for people, and then I ask them the questions and the prompts that they fill out.

David Phelps: With many years being in clinical practice, no doubt that this book evolved from the discussions, the actual your practice with individuals. And I'm sure you must have been using this in your practice. I mean, using these concepts in your practice.

James Miller: Yes.

David Phelps: And so, you've been doing this and therefore, you saw the relevance in taking people back Janie, Jim, let's go back in life and let's find something similar pattern. And as you said, there's a lot of great self help books out there. But if the concepts are difficult for us to apply, because they don't really mean that much to us, then that's where the conflict comes in.

And here, we're actually taking something that we have experience with, which to me would give me more confidence. "Oh yeah. I actually have done this before. Different environment right now, but similar situations. What can I use from that past experience to take me through this particular one to the other side?" Whatever that might look like.

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James Miller: Exactly research states that it takes between 63 to 66 times for change to happen. In other words, for a habit to be created. To read a new self-help book, once again, absolute wonderful. And there's so many wonderful things out there. But to read that, and then to integrate that, that's going to take a few months, which is fine. You can do that. But if you are someone like me, who's like, "Crap, life is happening right now. What do I do?" It's really important is to reflect on your past, because if it's a habit, a healthy habit or an unhealthy habit, you're aware of it because you've done it more than 66 days.

And so, that's why it's really good to reframe the situation, because you already know, once again, what works for you and what does not work for you. And so that's why you don't have to reinvent the wheel and you can just simply feel something and ask yourself, "When did I feel this before? And when you can ask yourself that question, it allows you to go back in time and say, "Okay, yeah, I did feel this way. It felt overwhelming at the time, but I got through it. But what did I do to help me get through it? And what did I do that was not helpful for me?"

David Phelps: The chapter, blindsided by life. I mean, who, at any age, any age beyond maturity, can't say I've been blindsided by something. I mean, you just for me, it was my daughter being in a health crisis, where did that come from? No one told me that was going to happen.

And I've used that experience. And I talk about it in my own life. Going through that for the first time, extremely difficult. Just, you don't know what you don't know. You definitely need help somewhere. You need to plug in somewhere with people that are going through the same

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thing so you don't feel like you're all alone. And that's probably part of it, going through something that blindsides you. Well, probably there's other people that are dealing with something, some similar fashion.

Number one, I don't want to feel alone. Or there's people that say, "Hey, it's okay. This happens to other people," and do that. And then just also, I think for me, getting the strength of, I call it like a personal board of advisors. Who are my inner five friends or people, that they could be business or social or church or whatever? But who are those people that are really close to me that I know, I can trust them with my inner thinking, my inner soul, my what's really going, and they're not going to judge me? Number one, they won't judge me.

And so, you know how those people would help guide me through, because I need perspective. When you're in a place of life where things are just falling apart or you just disillusioned about what's going on. It's like, we always need perspective. And I think for me, it's reaching out to people. And that's sometimes hard to do because we want to act like life's good. And I got it all together. And yes, I can do this. And it's, yep, none of us can go through life just alone. I just want to throw out one example about that and see if that relates to other people.

James Miller: Oh, it certainly does. When we are experiencing so much, the majority of us go insular, we turn inward and we lick our wounds, if you will. But the problem is, is when we do that, we only hear our own voice in our head. In other words, we relive the situation as if I could have done this or this could have been different.

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And in doing that, we just keep telling ourselves the same looping thoughts over and over again. And usually, it's our fault or there's something wrong with us. And so, those core beliefs that we think about ourselves become reinforced because we keep telling ourselves something over and over again. What I always tell people is this. If you're struggling and if you're able to find those five people that you're talking about, simply ask them for perspective, ask them what they think.

Because if they can find the hope for you that you can't find in the moment, you listen to their voice. And then if, when doing that, once you start to think, when you're by yourself, again, you may think the same thing about yourself, but say, "Wait a minute, David said this. Let me think about that. James said this, let me think about that."

And when you can reintroduce a new narrative or a new potential thought, it allows for the shift to happen. There is a first response and a second response. The first response is always when someone gets overwhelmed and they don't know what to do. The second response is this is what we call radical acceptance. You accept the facts as they are. You don't like it. You don't agree with it. You wish it hadn't happened, but these are the facts.

And these are the facts. What do you do now? And that's the second response. And that's when you listen to people like yourself, who would be able to help you find that perspective and now say, "What do I do with this?"

Self-sabotage, one of the chapters in the book. And how often do all of us self-sabotage? We want to change something in our life. I was working with a group of our, our members last week and we get to these with couples.

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I love working with couples. And I am not a clinical trained psychologist, but I feel like I need to have parts from those skills. But I hear people that are hardworking, that are diligent, responsible. And I'm talking about men here, responsible for the financial security of their family. Yet, at the same time they want to be with their family and their family wants them.

And so they've got this conflict. The thought is, "I want to be a better spouse. I want to be a better parent. I want to spend more time there. But on the other side is I think I need to be out there slaying the dragons, making more money, building up a bigger business because I don't know how much is enough. I want to be this. But if some beliefs are contaminating me, then even though I may want it, I'm not going to do it." Talk a little bit about self-sabotage. If I've even framed it up.

James Miller: Oh, you have. Exactly. You did a great job. You're not clinically trained, but you did a fantastic job. Self-sabotage is basically anything you do that gets in your way. And so, let me actually read the chapters here. Under the category of identifying self sabotage, I have five different chapters there and the first one is mediocrity, the dream killer. Doing what you've always done is assigned a mediocrity. The three second rule. In fact, I didn't know that there was someone who did a five second rule, but I did mine way before she did, which is basically self-sabotage what starts in three seconds.

For example, if I want to do something new. For example, if I want to wake up and go to the gym in the morning at 5:00 AM, incredibly ambitious goal. But if I want to do that, if the alarm goes off at 5:00 AM and I wait three

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seconds, if I don't get up, I'm just going to hit the snooze button and go back to sleep. And in doing that, it's the same type of thing when we introduce something new we want to do that's healthy for us. If we don't make that conscious decision right that second, then all of a sudden we will revert back to something.

Anyone listening right now, if you want to make a change, you have to be incredibly specific about what's going to happen when that time comes, that you are going to do this new event. Because if you don't have a plan, you will automatically revert back to what you did before. Because reverting back to what you did before, that is what you knew, which is your habit because you've done it more than 63 to 66 times.

The next one is creating self-acceptance. That is really important. Core beliefs are those things that we believe about ourself. For example, when we were told something, we were a child, that core belief is what we've reinforced. If you find that you do something and you say, "James, you're so stupid, or you're so ugly, or you're so fat." Or whatever that might be when you have those looping thoughts that go through your mind, that is a core belief that you've created when you were a child. And either someone told you that, or you just reinforced that and you thought it over and over and over again.

When life happens, when we're blindsided, those mantras come out and that's what we believe. I help you figure out what your core belief is and how to change that, to believe the truth about you, as opposed to what you thought before.

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Two more here, just stand up. That is a really important one. Sometimes, when life happens, either emotionally, we become bombarded. And when we're just like, "I can't do anything." Or we're trying to make a change and we can't. If a concept of literally standing up, either your body stands up or you emotionally stand up, it allows you to have a different perspective. Sometimes we get lost in, "I have to do all these things, but when we just think about it, it becomes overwhelming.

If you literally just stand up, you've started it. And if you've started it, that means you can do the next thing. And so breaking things down to the smallest component, allows a person to do the next thing. Remember, a beach is not a beach. It's multiple grains of sand. That's the same concept of one little grain of sand, another grain of sand, and it continually builds and builds. And there's the beach that you have.

The next one real quickly, is the last one is meditating on unhealthy things. What we don't realize is, well, first off, people say, "I don't have time to meditate." Well, did you know that anytime you think about something more than three or four times in a row, that's meditating? You're either meditating on healthy things, you're meditating on something or anxiety.

Anytime you think about something, is a meditation. Learning how to be mindful of what you think about, allows you to switch that unhealthy thought structure and meditate on something that is in your future, you're kind, you're loving, you're normal, you're gentle, whatever those things might be. As you continue to meditate on those things, you'll find that it rewires the neurology of

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your brain with the brain plasticity. And all of a sudden, what you thought is now is something you will now become. Those are the chapters in self-sabotage.

David Phelps: Wow, that's powerful. Let's do one more. Improving communication. To me, communication is everything about relationships and how we deal with people and just everything about life. And we all suffer from lack of communication skills. How's this chapter built out? And in what ways would it improve our lives in going through some of the issues that we deal with in our day-to-day?

James Miller: Excellent. Well, the three chapters in there are healthy conversations, setting healthy boundaries and steps for effective communication. We all communicate, but are we really communicating effectively? There's a difference between what I say and what you hear. If I were to use the word love to, let's say a 13 year old girl, versus my version of love as a 46 year old, man, that's going to be perhaps a little bit different. Maybe not. It's going to be very different.

And so, we all have different concepts of what those words mean. If I use a word and I say it, because it's a normal word for me, but if someone hears it differently based on their own life experiences, all of a sudden we're not communicating effectively because it may be a really powerful word for them, but not a powerful word for me. It's important to recognize how you communicate effectively. You want to be able to make sure that you understand the nuances of the person as you're talking to them.

The other aspect is we judge others by their behaviors, but we judge ourselves by our intentions. My intentions,

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maybe to be a really kind person. But if a person hears me say something and doesn't come across kind, well, unfortunately there is a disconnect. I teach people how to be really mindful of how they interact with the other person.

One other thing is when a person is going through something. For example, David, I come to you and I'm like, "David, I really need to talk to you right now. I'm really struggling." If I don't tell you what I need and I tell you everything that's going on. And then you try and problem solve it for me, but I didn't want you to problem solve, all of a sudden, there's a disconnect. I'm like, "Man, David, I'm just trying to talk to you."

And so that's how to really be mindful of the role each person plays to be very specific about how to effectively communicate and allow yourself to have the needs be met in the way that you need them to be met.

David Phelps: Is that where my problem comes up when I try to fix everybody's problems? Especially my wife, it seems like that's the lesson that I have to relearn over and over again. Because so typically, she just wants to be heard. She just wants to be heard to have my attention and I want to come in and fix it.

James Miller: Yes. Well, there's one thing you could do. Yeah, one thing you could do. And obviously, this isn't marriage counseling, but it's for anyone listening right now. Anytime someone's talking to you and if they don't do this and you simply ask them, "What do you need from me right now? As a listener, what role would you like me to play?" And you can say, "Do you need advice? Do you need just a

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shoulder to cry on? You just want to vent? Do you just want me to listen? What is it that you need?"

And it allows them to assign you the role. And then you fill in the blank and you become that role. Because in doing that, it's so much easier because a person is really knows that you are hearing them and you're listening to them. And you can give them specifically what they need in that time.

David Phelps: Really, really helpful. If I get the book, because it's based on the different chapters, it's a book that I can go in and I can just jump to specific chapters. I mean, I could say, "Wow." And so I don't have to just read the book from cover to cover. I could jump in. What do you want people to experience as they're using this as a workbook, what do you want them to experience?

James Miller: Oh, yeah. Well, first, I'm going to say two things about that. Yes, you can either read it. it's 52 chapters. You can either read one week or you can read it just like a normal book, go front cover to the back cover. And you can do the workbook. You don't have to do it. All the questions and prompts are after each chapter.

You can read it like a normal book. You can do it as a once a week, you do something. But the great thing about it is, in each chapter, I give like a little sentence or two about what that chapter's about so you can jump right to it. In the moment you're like, "Crap, James, I'm struggling here. I need something right now." You'll be able to go to whatever chapter it is, read the chapter. It gives a good framework for it. Asks you the prompts, asks you the questions, gives you what to do to help you become the expert of your life.

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But yes, what I want people to remember just to feel when they experience it is hope. There is always hope. There may be the darkest day in your life. But to know that there's hope and there's an answer. When you can put a name to something, when you can be aware of what you're going through, you then become the expert of your life. And that is what I really want people to understand is, regardless of how dire the world is or how wonderful the world is, things continue to get better and better and healthier and healthier. As you have more of awareness of who you are and the person you want to become because there's always hope.

David Phelps: James, when is the book going to be available?

James Miller: Presales starts May 31st to June 13th. You can buy the presales on Amazon. After June 14th, when the actual launch happens, you can buy at any of your favorite bookstores, Barnes & Noble, Amazon, Targets, Walmarts, all places where books are sold.

David Phelps: Fantastic, fantastic. As busy as you are and with as many talents as you have, do you still have time? Do you still work with people one-on-one on any capacity?

James Miller: That's a great question. Actually, I do. It's doing everything. As you're busy, I'm busy. I really enjoy that. Being in the media world, I absolutely love and I enjoy it, but I do miss the clinical work. I don't see patients per se, but I work with a lot of people and more mentoring.

I'm not a life coach. I'm psychotherapist, very different. And in that, I do help people. What they read when they purchase this book is exactly what I would teach them on a one-on-one basis. Yes, I work with many people from all

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over the world who consult with me. I absolutely love that. And if any of your viewers or listeners want to do that, simply go to jamesmillerlifeology.com and contact me and I will work with you.

David Phelps: And we really haven't touched on your radio show, but that's really how you and I first connected. And you've got a large bandwidth of listeners. Let's talk about the radio show. What happens there and where can people connect with you on that?

James Miller: Oh, well thank you. Yes. It was when I started LIFEODOLOGY in 2015, made my change and started something new. I really wanted to do something different. When I created LIFEODOLOGY and started as a YouTube channel, then it went to podcast and then went to syndicated radio show.

I have, like you said, very large listenership. I really want people to have these life acts. Just as you and I were talking about ways to enhance and improve your life, that's what happened. I think, as of this date, I have over 400 episodes. And I'm on three times a week in 17 major markets in terrestrial stations, all streaming radio platforms. And it's archiving on all podcasting platforms.

Anybody can hear anywhere, simply go to your favorite podcasting platform. Or if you're in the major markets like, well, Washington DC, LA, Vegas, Pittsburgh, any place you can hear it there as well. Or simply go to jamesmiller@lifeology.com and you can listen to all the shows there as well.

David Phelps: Great. Well, we will list the links to the book and the radio show in our program notes. That'll all be there for people

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who may be listening to this on the drive right now. And just go there and you can pull those links up if you didn't have time to write them down or memorize them, which would be difficult for me to get on the fly.

James, it's always a pleasure. I'm excited, I really am. I'm excited about getting this book. I think it may be something that may become one of our base books. We give a lot of books out to our members about different aspects that we think are highly conceptual and fundamental. I believe your book is one because, no matter what we think we need in life, there's always areas that we haven't really gone into to enough depth to make the changes. And we just bump the ceiling all the time.

I know it's happened to me and those breakthroughs are some of the keys. I love this. I can't wait to get my hands on it and get it into it myself because I know there's some chapters that will be very relevant to me.

James Miller: I'm very honored by that. Thank you so much, David. I truly appreciate that.

David Phelps: My pleasure. Talk to you soon, James.

James Miller: Thank you.

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more about how we help high income earners create the freedom to buy
back their time and create more impact.