



## Embracing our traumatized parts

**Guest: Jason Prall**

*Disclaimer: The contents of this interview are for informational purposes only and are not intended to be a substitute for professional medical or psychological advice, diagnosis, or treatment. This interview does not provide medical or psychological advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical or psychological condition.*

**[00:00:09] Alex Howard**

Welcome everyone to this interview where I'm really happy to be talking with Jason Prall. Firstly, Jason, welcome. Thank you for joining me again.

**Jason Prall**

Thanks for having me. It's always a pleasure.

**Alex Howard**

So this is going to be an interesting one. There's a few different paths we're going to go down within this interview, particularly looking at the impact of childhood trauma on how it shapes us in adult life. The different patterns, some of the survival strategies that come in, but also the individual differences of how people can experience the same impacts but have different responses to those.

Just to give people a bit of Jason's background. Jason Prall is a health educator, practitioner, author, speaker and filmmaker. In 2018 his independent research and experience led him to create *The Human Longevity Project*, a 9-part film series that uncovers the true nature of chronic disease in our modern world.

He's currently finishing his first book on longevity, as well as his next film series that explores ancient methods of healing mind, body and soul from Indigenous cultures around the world.

So, Jason, should we start a little bit with just opening up this frame around how traumas and wounds and missed experiences, that you might want to just explain a bit of that in a minute as well, create and shape our patterns in adult life?

**Jason Prall**

Yeah, totally. And I think the missed experiences one is a really interesting one to focus on because we're pretty well aware of the big capital T traumas, the ones that were significant, the abuses and even the things like divorces and things that really impact us and shape us as young ones. And then, of course, even in adulthood, those things happen as well, which really radically shift our perceptions and the way we are in the world.

**[00:02:05]**

But these missed experiences are critical, because as infants, as young ones, we don't know what we're missing and we go through our entire life and we become adults and we still don't know what we're missing. In other words, this isn't going to Disneyland and these types of experiences, this is an experience of my caregiver truly accepting me and loving me and giving that energy off. Me actually feeling that when I do something wrong, so to speak. So it's this unconditional aspect.

So many of us have conditions on our love, and this is just a reality of being human and we're working towards this idea of unconditional love. But there's tons of missed experiences where perhaps dad wasn't around as often, or mom wasn't around, or breastfeeding wasn't a regular thing, or it had to end early for whatever reason. There's all kinds of these experiences in childhood that we, to be honest, we actually expect in our beingness.

We come from the universal one where everything is perfect and it's all unconditional level. We're birthed into this world and now everything's a mess and we are expecting perfection. And this is a reality as children. And when that's not met, and it's never met, it's never met 100% of the time, this perfection, this perfect parent, this ideal parent, we have these missed experiences that then create this pattern. This pattern emerges in us to get our needs met. Whatever need is not met on a consistent basis we figure out ways to try to get that need met.

And it's always the case in childhood, where there's always these things that we are trying to figure out. And to be honest, we carry these in adulthood. And until we get those experiences, we can get those in adulthood, that's the cool part and we'll probably get to some of that, but if those missed experiences are not filled in, if they're not given to us, if those energies, so to speak, aren't reflected back, then we can't recognize our own true nature. And thus we are always looking outside of ourselves to try to get needs met.

We create all kinds of strategies. And this is again related to missed experiences as well as these traumas. These traumas create just these schisms, these really hard ruptures that force us to create these strategies or patterns that end up looking like personalities. And this is the confusion that I think as we get older, we have the opportunity to start to work out. Is this me or is this a personality aspect of me? Is this a part that shows up when I need to get a need met, when I feel like I'm in danger, when things don't feel safe?

And that's really fundamentally, the big thing here is safety. And if we're not feeling safe, then all these patterns start to emerge. Now that's the baseline thing. You can actually think about it in the Chakra system, safety is the root, it's the fundamental thing that we must feel. But then there's other aspects of ourselves that we need reflected back, too. This idea of autonomy, this idea of me, this core idea of me, which is of solar plexus. This is also discernment to be able to tell the truth or to be able to tell the difference between truth and falsity. And so many of us still, as adults, I'd still put myself in this category, we looked at an outside source for the answer when the truth is that we have the ability to detect truth from within. So there's all these little things, but that must be reflected back to us to some degree in order for us to understand that.

So we are such a blank canvas as infants that we require the world to reflect back to us who we really are. And as that is happening, the conditions that are placed on us, the missed experiences, the big capital T traumas, they start to shape who we become as adults.

## **[00:06:06] Alex Howard**

And it's interesting, the point that you made is that we don't realize we're missing something because we just normalize to what we have.

I remember when you were interviewing me for your conference, your summit, I was talking about the experience of my father not being around as a child. And one of my most formative things someone said to me in my self development journey was, I was doing a family conservations workshop in my late teens, early 20s, and I was really getting in touch with the grief of the absence. And the teacher said at the end, fathers are not optional. And at that point it never struck me that there had been any impact because we normalize.

And then, as you're saying, we then build these defenses and these ways of managing these things that we don't have . In a sense, they help us survive but they become their own sources of suffering.

## **Jason Prall**

Totally, 100%. And this sometimes becomes a very elusive challenge. Because again, these capital T traumas, these big ruptures, these things that we can actually remember as adults that happened to us in childhood, of course we can work with those, and we somewhat understand perhaps what's missing and what I need or how it's resulted. But these little things that show up as, what we might consider, very valuable traits in our Western society. The one who works hard, the one who's getting straight A's. The question isn't, is getting straight As a good thing? The question is, why does that student or that child feel the need to get straight As? Is it for themselves and they truly understand the path of their future and then they're looking forward and this is a good thing? Or is it to satisfy mom or dad? Or is it to satisfy even the idea of mom and dad who may not even be there? They might have passed away. They might be gone. So it's trying to fulfill this need of being accepted, of being loved, of being admired.

And these are, as infants, what we're looking for. As infants we want to be loved, we want to be admired, we want to be accepted, and we want to be safe. So there's all these little things that we really fundamentally need as our nervous system is developing. And keep in mind, this is a big part of it. I wouldn't say it's the full picture, but it's a huge part of it is the fact that the nervous system is developing. We come into this world and we have a very underdeveloped nervous system. It's not even completely myelinated, we don't have the prefrontal cortex, we are coming into this world as a developing nervous system. And as that system is developing it's taking in all this information.

And so if it's not met in the right way then we're going to do all kinds of things. And it can look like behavior that we deem is bad. Or it can look like behavior that we deem as good. And again, it's highlighting, actually the conditioning that each of us received as infants, when we actually label certain behaviors good or bad, no, it's just behavior. The question is, why is the behavior happening? That's what we need to look at, because there is no bad or good kid at the core. It's a blank slate to a large degree, anyway. And fundamentally, I believe there is a goodness. So it's just the behavior, what is really underlying that? And why is this child or why is this adult doing the things he or she is doing?

## **Alex Howard**

And I think one of the things that really strikes me in what you're saying is that the impact of the past isn't only, whether it's metabolized or not, pain and impact of the past, the survival strategies we develop, often then are perpetuating that suffering throughout our lifetime. Like we're almost

recreating our pain or creating new pain because of the ways we've tried to deal with what happened in childhood.

### **[00:09:46] Jason Prall**

Totally. Yeah. And it's interesting because it's a double edged sword. It's a paradox, if you will, that the patterns, the strategies that we develop undoubtedly will cause undue suffering ongoing.

And ironically, the strategies are so brilliant. They are the things that created safety for us as young ones, and still, to some degree, create safety. It's just doing so in a less aligned way, a more difficult, more challenging process, that's all. But it's still perfectly designed to get you where you want to go.

In other words, to some degree, it's the suffering that then finally wakes you up to the pattern that is causing the suffering. So it's not good or bad, it's just there's easier ways. And so that's what we end up, and this is fundamentally at the core of what free will is all about, at some point we recognize, oh, I have a choice here. I can continue on this path. It's not good or bad. It's just perhaps a little bit more struggle. It's a little bit harder. It's a little bit more of a challenging process. And I can follow that path. And that's okay. There's actually no judgment on that at all. And yet I do have a choice here where I can actually metabolize these things. I can get these needs met. I can recognize the true nature that is me. And in doing so I can follow an easier process.

Again, it ties in some Karma, too. You can see how I love the Indigenous and ancient ways of thinking. It's so fascinating, because Karma really is, if I can walk an easier path for myself I'm actually helping other people walk an easier path. And reflecting back to others a more true aspect of themselves instead of this distorted aspect that we end up exhibiting through our personalities.

So again, I think this is the idea of self realization, recognizing what my true nature really is. And so if I can choose, and it's not an easy path to make that choice, to metabolize some of these things that have been stuck in the process, some of these things that are backlogged. But in doing so we actually do follow an easier path. And so it's interesting that it is good and bad, so to speak, depending on your perspective.

### **Alex Howard**

I really appreciate the way that you're speaking to the inherent wisdom within ourselves. It's very easy, as you're speaking to, as an adult to go, oh my God, I'm so dysfunctional, I'm emotionally shut down, and I can't feel my emotions. But as a small child that probably literally was the reason that we survived.

### **Jason Prall**

Absolutely. And it gets back to the missed experience. If you didn't regularly have this idea that it was safe to feel these emotions, and that not only was it safe, but you would be loved for it. So most of us have certain experiences where we actually perceive it as negative. And so we don't do that anymore. Then there's the neutral aspect. So it's actually doing something and it's a neutral. What we're actually all looking for is to be able to be ourselves, as infants and young ones, right or wrong, good or bad, and not only have it be neutral, but be positive, you're loved anyway, as you are, my dear.

Like all this very fundamental, and this is the core nature of, primarily motherhood, that really motherly loving energy that is like, you could do no wrong, no matter what you do, no matter who

you are, no matter who you become, I love you infinitely. And so that is the unconditional aspect of love.

### **[00:13:12]**

And again, it's a pretty high standard that we're asking our mothers and our fathers to exhibit. And so it's about that. It's about the fact that we're missing these experiences. And so yeah, of course we're not going to do this thing. Of course we're not going to feel. We're going to shut down. Of course I'm going to be rageful and angry when I don't feel safe, because that's going to protect me, because it was not safe to go through whatever experience. Of course I'm going to shut down, and I'm going to check out. That's another aspect. There's all these little personalities and structures that we build, and most of us run multiple, depending on what's happening. We have these brilliant, brilliant strategies that not only kept us safe but allowed us to navigate the world despite this unsafe circumstance.

### **Alex Howard**

I want to get into a bit, something that I know you're passionate about, around some of the individual differences of how we may respond. That you can have four siblings, you have four identical twins, have exactly the same childhood and experiences, and yet the way it shapes them and the way it impacts them is different.

### **Jason Prall**

Totally. And it might be helpful to provide at least one of the maps. There's a lot of different maps in terms of the personality types that are out there. There's a book called *The 5 Personality Patterns*, that I really like, and it just gives five distinct personality patterns and the ways of being as you express these things.

One is called the leaving or the schizoid. And this is like when something bad happens, you're just like, you're checked out. And you might know these people that it's like they're not even there. Fundamentally, their energy has left, they're not in their body.

Another one might be called the merging pattern, where you're actually relying on the other person to find your way. This might be called the oral pattern as well.

Another one is the enduring pattern. And this is like the masochist. This is the one who just grinds through no matter what's happening. It's like, you won't barrel me over, I'm here, and that's just who they are, and they just go and they go and you can't disrupt them.

Another one is the aggressive pattern. That's one of the ones I mentioned earlier. This is also called the psychopath pattern, but I've run this pattern, so it's one of the ones that will get really fiery, really angry if something happens. The hot head. And that's a very important pattern. These seem like negatives, but they're really not.

Another one is the rigid. And this is like they find safety and structure. So when things are neat, they're organized. This is the military strategy. I also run this one as well.

Again, this is just one map. There's a lot of different maps, and some of them are similar and a little bit different. But it gives you an idea of these personality patterns.

**[00:16:00]**

So why does one run one pattern versus another? Why am I more on the aggressive side? Or on the rigid side? And I have some of these other ones, too, but those are my main two. So why is that?

Well, one theory is that we develop these depending on the stage of childhood development, that we are receiving our wounds, that we're perceiving most of our wounds. That because childhood development has stages that we've identified, your high mind starts to come online at certain times. Then this is going to result in the strategies during that period of development. And I think there's some truth to that. I think there's some real truth to that. So it's dependent on when the ruptures or the missed experiences or the primary perception is happening. But I think more fundamentally, there's an aspect that has to do with our constitution, who you are at your core, at your essence.

And I love Ayurveda because it actually provides a map for this. It goes into Pitta, Vata and Kapha, and not to get too deep into that but essentially we have a constitution that when we're born, you might think of it as your genetic makeup, it's who you are at your core. Now, again, even through Ayurveda it's not seen as good or bad, these sort of characteristics that are fundamentally you. It just is what it is. It's just the energy, so to speak. So I am in Ayurveda Pitta which is this fiery, hot, transformative energy, then that's the type of pattern that I'm going to run if I get any of these ruptures.

And so again, I'm hesitant to rely too deeply on maps and these concepts and ideas, but I think I like to look at them because it helps me understand me. Oh, interesting, Ayurveda has mapped this out. Well, that's fascinating that this is the type of constitution that I am. And if I look at the characteristics of that constitution, sure enough, when I don't feel safe or when things get overwhelming for me, this is the thing that happens. Anger, frustration, resentment, competitive. This is a fundamental aspect of the energies that I was born with, so to speak. And sure enough, if I look at some of these personality maps, that's what I exhibit in that.

The cool thing is, and again, it's not good or bad, that's just how the energy is being expressed. So if you think about the core essence of your fundamental energy, it can be expressed in a distorted way, which we would call the personality patterns and these ego parts. Or it can be expressed in an aligned way, in a fundamentally aligned way, which for pitta and for fire or aggression, that is transformation. So that's a beautiful quality, that transformation is huge. It's also associated with the heart, so a lot of sensitivity, a lot of leadership.

So we can look at the positive qualities and the so-called negative qualities. Fundamentally, the reason I like to look at these maps is because it helps me understand me. And if I said, oh, I've just always been this way. Well, perhaps you've always been this way because that's the wounding that happened. And as we resolve the wounding, as we process these things, now the energy can express in a more aligned way, a more embodied way. It doesn't have to be so distorted as it's being expressed. We don't have to find safety in these strategies. We can actually find safety within ourselves, within God, so to speak.

So there is a more fundamental and more aligned version of that energy that can be expressed. And to me, again, the value of these maps is not to memorize them and try to paint the world in them, but rather to understand yourself and recognize that you express all of these patterns in certain instances. And perhaps you're expressing more of them than others. And again, using things like Ayurveda, if I know that I'm constitutionally this way and my energy is being expressed this way, I can actually use certain herbs to cool me down. I can use certain foods to cool me down, certain breath work, certain yoga postures. Now I'm starting to understand the constitution of me. I'm starting to

understand my patterns and my ego parts that are being distortedly expressed. And I can go, oh, that's interesting. That's not me. That's just the distorted expression. It's a brilliant strategy. And I can figure out how to work those pieces. I can start to metabolize these things that are stuck. And I can start to use the world around me to balance this energy that's being expressed.

### **[00:20:30] Alex Howard**

One of the things that I've also found very helpful about maps, I really like the way that you speak about it, is there's also a sense of not feeling so alone. One can feel like, oh my God, I'm crazy because I have this reaction. And then whatever the map may be, be it Ayurveda or the Enneagram or Spiral Dynamics or the different maps that are out there, it's like, oh wow, a whole bunch of the population has this lens or has this way of responding. And I think it's something that's very comforting about that as well.

### **Jason Prall**

I totally agree. And again, I think no matter what it is in the world, fundamentally we are trying to get to know ourselves. That's what it's all about. Everything that you can look at is a mirror to understand who you are.

And so, again, these maps are a great tool because sure, they may be a little bit broad, they may be a little bit not so nuanced, they're in distinct categories where we know things aren't in distinct categories in the world, it's the big blend, the soup of different things, but they can start to point you back to yourself. Oh, yeah, I do do that. Interesting, I didn't know that was a thing. And so it helps you understand yourself, it helps you accept that you're not alone, like you said, and that it's being understood and it's being expressed by a lot of other people. And so sure, there's a lot of other hotheads out there. Cool. I'm not such a bad guy. And fundamentally, it's not me that's the problem. It's just... Let me make sure I say this right. It's not me that's the problem. I do have responsibility though for my actions, for my behavior, for my energy as a whole. And so it just helps you create some distance between this idea of me and how I'm expressing in the world.

### **Alex Howard**

The phrase that comes to mind as you say that, around responsibility, it's like hurt people, hurt people. And one of the things I try to remind the kids if they are in situations at school where... our eldest daughter's in a special educational needs school because of very severe dyslexia, and there are some complex children in the school. And sometimes, and it's true of every school, these dynamics play out. And there was a particular child that was causing quite a lot of upset. And one of the things we were really trying to remind her is that as much as it's difficult for you being on the end of this, it's remembering that being on the front of this, being the one that's acting this out, people only do that when they're already in pain and they're already in suffering.

And there's something about having the lens of maps to be able to make sense of what's happening, I think also helps us have more compassion for ourselves, but also for others, even when they're acting in ways which are hurtful or frustrating or difficult to manage.

### **Jason Prall**

Totally. And fundamentally we can only have as much compassion for others as we do for ourselves. That's really what it stems from. And I was reading a story, actually I don't remember where I heard this, but it was about a teacher who was teaching in the Waldorf style of education, and there was a

young boy in the class who was very disruptive. He was aggressive. He was hitting. It was really causing a problem for the class, so to speak. And the Waldorf style education really teaches the teachers to figure out who these kids are, who they are meant to be in the world and try to structure the class around that individual dynamic of that unique classroom.

**[00:23:51]**

This is a really challenging task, so to speak. What this teacher did was create a unique workshop for this kid using real tools. So this kid, and these were young kids, 5, 6, 4, something like that, and gave him real tools and took the toys away from the rest of the kids. And they said, where's all the toys? And then the teacher said, well, you're going to have to go ask little Timmy, go ask him to make you a toy.

And so now this kid who was the bully, who was causing problems in the rest of the class, he now had a purpose. And he was here to do big things and lead and he wasn't given that opportunity as a young infant, as a young one. As she did this, the dynamic of the class completely shifted. Everybody was harmonious. And this kid, now he had a job, he was responsible, and he was helping other children have fun. And all of a sudden that gave him purpose.

I point to that to illustrate the fact that as young ones it's so easy to dismiss what's going on and call it a problem. I have a 2 year old and he hits and he does all these things, and it's not because he's a bad child, it's not because maybe perhaps mom and dad aren't doing anything wrong, it's just there's an energy that wants to express, and it's up to us to allow it to express to some degree and coach him and educate him and teach him on the proper way to express that energy without creating separation.

So no, we don't want him to hit anybody. We don't think it's okay. But yet if I reprimand him and scold him and punish him at this young, early age, what am I actually teaching him? Yes, I'm teaching him not to hit for sure, but I'm also teaching him that this natural energy that he's expressing that's naturally him, by his own perception, is not okay. He's not okay. And he's bad, and he's not going to get love, and he's going to get nothing but disconnection and separation if he does this. And so don't do it because the way you should behave, behave like this, and then we will love you.

And so it's a very tricky business being a parent and I say that because it helps us give a little bit of compassion to our own parents who maybe, quote, unquote, "messed up" or did something wrong or what have you. And this is the small scale and this is the big scale, the one who just completely left, who abandoned. There's a lot of really hurtful things as children that we cannot understand.

And so as adults this is our opportunity to work the parts within us so that eventually we can understand why my dad left. And that's a really hard thing at a core level to truly recognize. Oh, that's why he left. He was unable to deal with what was going on. He had wounds of his own that weren't dealt with. I have compassion for that because I see that in me as well.

So to develop this sense of compassion is not a mental exercise. This is an exercise of working our parts, of working these things that are within us to process these things that have been unprocessed. And also, again back to missed experiences, to actually get these reflections, energetically, hopefully by some guide or a mentor or a therapist or something of that kind, that can actually reflect those sort of truths back to our own being. And just like a tuning fork, we start to resonate with them. Oh, okay. That's what that is. That's this idea that I'm here, that I'm me, that I have a core, that I have an ability to



sense what's true and what's not true. We have these aspects of ourselves, but a lot of times they need to get reflected back.

### **[00:27:29] Alex Howard**

One of the things that you're speaking to which I think is really important, is the nuanced wisdom of the heart. That it can be very tempting to get into a right and wrong or a black and white. And it's the thing that I've noticed working as a therapist, that you work with someone one on one, and they talk about their relationship, and they tell you the story of the relationship, and by the end of the session you're like, oh, this person sounds terrible. Like what an awful person they are.

And then maybe they come and meet that person, they pick them up and you meet that person you're like, oh my God they actually seem really nice. That is how easy it is to want to oversimplify dynamics and one's past and one's history. And in a sense, that's part of our need to make sense of things and to have certainty about things. But what I think is really important in what you're saying is that there's great nuance and subtlety, and there is innate wisdom in our emotional body if we can be curious and we can open to it.

### **Jason Prall**

I think what you said right there is really important. It's this idea of curiosity. It's gentle curiosity, this loving curiosity that when we start to get curious about what's going on, what am I feeling, what's the sensation here, what's the story with that? You just get curious. You don't go in there forceful and try to figure things out. I mean, that's my old way, and I'm still to some degree, really fond of that way. And there's a softer way, and it doesn't work as well, especially with these types of things. You can't pry open this aspect, your parts, your protectors that you've developed. These ego parts and protectors are too brilliant. They're too smart. You cannot manipulate them. All they respond to is love, compassion and these needs that were never there.

So if you think about these little protectors that you've developed, that we've all developed, they're so brilliant. An easy one to point to is the comedian. That's an easy protective part. But there's many subtle, brilliant, the thinker, the deflector. There's all kinds of different things that we do, strategies that prevent us from feeling that thing that we don't want to feel.

And the way to relax those is not to point at them and say, oh, there you are. I see you. No, it's actually to recognize them with love, compassion, recognize their brilliance, welcome them, and you give them what they need, which is that safety, which is that trust. And as that starts to develop, then they will start to relax. Now you can get into those emotions that are there and start to really be with those. And this is the interesting thing about these emotions and these sensations, I'm not saying they're one and the same, but often they're very tied. Because you actually have sensation in the body, you can learn to feel it. And that's a process sometimes too, just to learn to feel what's happening inside the body energetically.

But as you start to get with those, oftentimes it doesn't require any work. There's nothing you have to do, so to speak. In fact, that's the trick, is that you start to relax the doer and you allow things to naturally emerge. Because the wisdom of the body, the wisdom of your whole system is so intelligent. And especially if you're working with another being, too. And you have this coregulation, you can use two nervous systems. Now the wisdom is like there's an alchemy there, and there's a wisdom there, and things start to naturally move. They start to naturally process.

**[00:30:50]**

And I think what's interesting, you mentioned nuance, I just want to bring this up because it can be really tricky, especially when you're in a session and you're starting to get into these emotions. Sometimes there's these binds that we get in, these emotional, energetic binds. And the easiest example I can give is with the parents, mother. And you can have this really, really strong hatred that's existing within you for mom, like really strong disappointment and hatred and anger. And that's a real energy. And yet there's another aspect of yourself that is totally loving, unconditionally loving of mom and doesn't want to admit that there's anger there, doesn't want to admit that there's hatred.

So now how do you get out of this? Because you need to honor the anger and the hatred that's alive. And the truth is that you do love her. And so it's like, how do you work with that? And that can be really confusing at the time. What you see a lot is that people suppress the hatred. They suppress the anger and say, no, I really do love mom, because of course you do. And so sometimes we need to find room for both. And we need to actually allow the anger and the hatred to come up, because that's the only way it's going to get processed.

And this is one of those things, especially if we're in that energetic emotional bind, we do often require another being there with us, either in somatic connection with some kind of touch, or energetically able to attune and give us the comfort and the safety that it's okay to feel the hatred. Because that's what we're afraid of. We're afraid of feeling the hatred and feeling like, if I feel this hatred and anger then I'm going to lose connection with mom, I'm going to lose connection with a huge source of love. And so I better not feel that because it's not okay to hate mom.

So again, I think this is the interesting thing, when you start to work with some of this stuff is that eventually you start to realize none of this is me. The anger, the jealousy, the disappointment. These are not me. These are just emotions. They're just energy. They're just feelings that I, which is pure passive awareness, at my core, can experience. That's it. Again, it's creating distance, but it's so real that sometimes it's very difficult to start that process. But as it starts to unfold there becomes a familiarity with this stuff and you go, okay, that's just hatred right there. That's just anger. That's just a disappointment.

And even on the good side, so to speak, oh, that's joy. Cool. And you can start to get curious with these things and start experiencing. And at some point the stuff starts to just amalgamate and just become this soup of experience, and it stops being good or bad. It just becomes a natural expression. And then again, I think it's important to recognize, too, that there's a choice to be made. So, again, it's not that there's good and bad, but I still can make a choice. It's like vanilla and chocolate, neither of those are good or bad. In fact they're both good if you really boil it down, but I still have a choice.

And so in these experiences we stop labeling as good or bad, and we just start labeling as interesting, and we make choices. To be honest, the deeper you get into this stuff, you recognize that even those things that you don't like feeling, the hatred and the blame and the shame and the frustration and the resentment, even that is fundamentally good, at the core of all this stuff is good. And so it just becomes very tricky in the moment but there is so much nuance in these processes.

### **Alex Howard**

And that resistance and rejection that inevitably comes up, I think what you're saying is really helpful, because the sense is, if I don't like it, I'm going to reject it. When I reject it, what actually happens to it? It doesn't mean that it goes away. In fact often what happens it has even a bigger impact on us because we're now disowning all of these energies that are still part of our experience.

## **[00:34:50] Jason Prall**

Exactly. And especially if I'm identified with them, then I'm actually rejecting myself. So for me, the Pitta person, the aggressive pattern, if I'm still identified with that, not in the mind, the mind is different, this is an embodied representation, and if I'm identified with that and I start to reject that aspect of myself, then I'm actually rejecting parts of myself. This is the shadow work, we start to recognize that, oh, there's actually parts in me that I don't like. When I behave this way I don't like that.

And that's understandable. And that's okay. We can honor that disliking of that part, but it just means that that is actually a shadow that I'm disowning. There's an aspect of myself that I'm disowning. When I burst out in anger and I get too frustrated, I'm like, oh, man, I shouldn't have done that. I know better. I hate it when I get like that. I'm actually disowning myself. I'm actually pushing myself away. So in order to become whole, in order to become integrated, fully integrated, it actually does require that we open up to those aspects of ourselves the way that the energy is expressed.

And it doesn't mean that type of an expression, that way of being has to remain, but it does mean, in fact, that's the paradox. The more I can accept it, then it starts to actually naturally shift. So it's actually accepting these aspects of ourselves. And this goes to body image. It goes to everything. The way that we are with money, relationships, anything that you can think of, that we start to disown or dislike. There's an opportunity there to recognize that I'm actually disowning an aspect of myself. How can I learn to, first, warm up to it, get curious about it, and then eventually, as these energies start to process and get worked, then I can open up to a little bit more acceptance, and then eventually I fall into this recognition, oh, I actually love that about me, because that's me.

And so again, this is not a mental process that you can just start to walk down with your mind. There's not a step by step thing here. It starts to naturally, organically unfold as you start to get curious, and you start to work some of these parts and these pieces that are stuck, that are backlogged, that are fractured off.

And so again, what I'm describing is the natural unfolding of what happens as you start to work these traumas, these missed experiences, etc. This is the cool thing, is that you don't even need to know what I'm saying is true. You're just going to eventually realize it as you start to experience it. Because if somebody had told me, I would have just listened and said, okay, cool. But you don't have a map to get there other than working your stuff and getting to know who you are. And as it happens then this stuff starts to unfold. You don't have to do anything about it.

## **Alex Howard**

I think sometimes we even get to the place where we end up almost in awe of the wisdom of our 2 year old, 3 year old, 5 year old, whatever, self that was like, not only can we figure out, I'm not getting this need met, but this is how I'm going to deal with that. And as much as it may have been a source of pain in our lives, how incredible that we were able to come up with that.

And I love the way that you're really invoking and inviting that perspective of curiosity and compassion, and really, gratitude for the wisdom of ourselves.

## **Jason Prall**

Yeah. I actually got a little bit emotional when you said that. There's a real enjoyment of the brilliance of our systems.

**[00:38:23]**

And I think this is the gift that as we start to recognize our own brilliance, now we can recognize the brilliance of others. And that's the only way. It's the only way. You cannot recognize somebody's brilliance unless you start to recognize your own. And that is the method. As you get to know your brilliance, then you can look at that. Again, my 2 year old son who's hitting somebody or whacking or breaking something, and I can understand this is just a brilliant system that just needs some guidance and reflection to recognize who he really is. He's underdeveloped. That's it.

### **Alex Howard**

Because that's the same energy that at some point in his life he goes, I want to go and do this thing, and it's hard, and it's difficult, and it's going to give him the life force to do that.

### **Jason Prall**

You can think in metaphors. You can think of energies. Perhaps he's here to make an impact in the world. Therefore, he's making an impact on other children's heads right now and furniture. I don't like that. But perhaps he's here to make an impact in the world. Perhaps not. Perhaps I'm reading that incorrectly. But at the end of the day I think there's an opportunity to see what's really underneath this.

To some degree it's just an underdevelopment, especially as kids. It's like, we don't know what we're doing. I mean, think about when you were a kid, how many stupid things you did. As an adult, you're just like, oh my God, how did I survive that? What was I thinking? It's hard to understand. But this is why teenagers are so stupid, to some degree. And they do so many stupid things. Their brain is underdeveloped, their hormones are raging, and that is leading the charge. And the thinking, the rational mind, the one that says, whoa, maybe this isn't a good idea right now, that's totally in the background. It's taken a back row seat.

So again, a lot of the time, especially as adults and parents, it's looking at these children and really understanding what's happening here.

And again, the challenge with that is that we can only do as much as we've worked our own system and understood ourselves. And it's through our own understanding of ourselves, again, that we can start to recognize the brilliance, the compassion, the love, the amazingness of each individual. You cannot do that for another until you do it for yourself. And the only path I know how to do that is to start working these parts, these pieces that were missed, these pieces that have fractured off, these personality patterns and traits and ego parts that have kept you safe and are so brilliant. Once we start to work this backlog of experience and these perceptions and these energies, and this is really all happening through the body, most of it is happening through the body. And as we start to process this stuff, then these things can start to emerge of self acceptance, self love, self appreciation, self awe and admiration. And you can do so from a place, not of the ego mind, because from ego mind it feels icky, just like self praise and self aggrandizement and it just feels icky.

And so this is what we don't want. We don't want that egotistical perspective, but as we start to develop and process these things, then it comes into this real awe of, like, wow, I really am amazing. And not only am I amazing, every single other being here is amazing too. We all have that spark of genius, that spark of infinite potential. And the more that we can start to see others that way, the more they can start to see themselves that way.

**[00:41:52]**

This is the challenge for all of us, is that for most of our lives we weren't seen that way. And perhaps still we aren't seen that way by others, perhaps maybe by a couple of people if we're lucky, we can start to run into these people that have really done some amazing work, and they see the brilliance in us that we don't even see yet. But that is what is required is that we need others to see us as that, so that we can actually become that.

And so remember that who you become is largely a reflection of your perception of others perceiving you. So how others perceive me, and I'm watching them watch me, or I'm watching them react to me, that informs me, do this, don't do that. Think of a comedian on stage. The comedian on stage thinks they've got some good jokes, but until the audience starts to laugh or not laugh or boo or cheer or whatever, that's going to inform them, okay, my timing was off there. This joke didn't land. I've got to tweak that. This is what we're doing our entire lives really, even into adulthood. We're modulating based on what the feedback is from others around me.

In business, Alex, you and I are in business, in the same type of business, okay, well, we did this thing, that didn't really work. Why? They didn't like that.

### **Alex Howard**

It's not always what you expect. Sometimes you do something and you think, this is my best work, I'm so proud. And it totally flops. And other times, you go, I'm not sure how this is going to go down. And that feedback is so important.

### **Jason Prall**

Exactly. And so you do more of this and you do less of that and you try to figure out, is this alignment? And who am I in this whole process? And that's what we're all doing all the time.

And so again, I think what I'm speaking to here is it helps us understand that the way others are perceiving us matters. And so therefore the way we perceive others matters. How I view this person across from me actually is going to help them determine who they are. And if I'm rude and I'm short and I'm aggressive or I'm passive and I'm totally just ignoring, then that's going to really shape them.

Think about high school, I mean, so many kids go through this in high school, whether they were bullied or they were shamed or they were made fun of or what have you, and that just kills self esteem. It totally kills the spark of that child and what they're really capable of and what they want to do and how they want to show up in the world. So again, I'm just speaking to the value of doing the work. The importance of doing our own work. Not in service to others per se, but in service to ourselves. Ultimately, in service to ourselves reflects back into others. So you don't even need to worry about others. It's a nice gesture to want to do for others, but ultimately do it for yourself because that will then reflect out to everybody and everything around you.

### **Alex Howard**

This is fascinating. And what I love about this, it's a very simple principle. In a sense, what you're really saying is that we need to understand our patterns, our reactivities, our defensiveness and meet them with curiosity and meet them with care and meet them with love. Not rejecting those parts of ourselves that, in a sense, becomes the gateway to things changing. Often we think if we embrace those parts of us we're going to get more stuck.

## **[00:45:02] Jason Prall**

Absolutely. And I think the thing that is, perhaps not said enough, is that your external reality is a reflection of your internal state. There are so many times, even right now, even in myself, I'm doing a lot of work right now, and there's some deadlines and things that I've got to get things done. And I can feel the stress building in my system. And so I can point outward and say, oh, it's because this person didn't do that, and all these things didn't happen, and I don't have enough time here and blah, blah, blah. And my wife is sick and my kid is this and blah, blah. I can point to all the external circumstances as a way to explain my internal feelings of why I'm feeling so stressed or defeated or excited or what have you. And the truth is that it's actually your internal state that is determining what's happening outside and then the feedback loop continues.

So we get ourselves into these binds, whether it's with money, a job, a career passion, what have you, and we look for an external explanation for all these things. And the external world is real, but it's also reflecting what's happening internally.

So again, I'm just speaking to this idea that as we start to work within ourselves, the outside world begins to shift. Money starts to become easier. And I'm not saying you're going to be rich. I'm just saying it just starts to become easier to work with. It's not going to stress you out as much. Whether your finances fundamentally change or just your internal state changes, it actually doesn't matter. Really what we're all looking for is safety, security and that feeling of ease and grace in the world.

But things start showing up. You start meeting the right people. If you've got physical health challenges, the answer starts showing up right in front of you. You meet somebody who helps guide you on a path and you get resolution. Or you figure out the actual diagnosis, which you've been looking for forever, and now, finally, you figured it out. So there's all kinds of these things that can start happening for you as you work these pieces and parts within your own system.

And again, to me, if there's not enough motivation, that's it for me, it's like I just want my life to be easier. Truthfully, I'm tired of struggling. My whole life I've struggled. I was taught that I had to work hard. I was taught that you only get anywhere if you really grind and you work hard and you sacrifice. And look, those are fine things, but they're not required. And so really, what I'm looking for is for my life to become easier. And the only way I know how to do that is to start working with my stuff internally.

## **Alex Howard**

That's a great climax.

For people that want to find out more, Jason, about you and your work, what's the best way to do that? And what can they find?

## **Jason Prall**

Yeah. They can go to [humanlongevityfilm.com](https://humanlongevityfilm.com) to find some of our earlier work on the Human Longevity Project and some physical disease, chronic disease, longevity, that kind of thing.

And then they can find me over at [awakenedcollective.com](https://awakenedcollective.com) as well. And that's where we do a little bit more of this type of work around trauma, around spiritual awakening, Indigenous cultures, ancient methods, and that kind of thing.

**[00:48:04] Alex Howard**

Fantastic. Jason, it's always a real joy to spend time together. Thank you so much.

**Jason Prall**

Likewise. Thanks, Alex.