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SPEAKERS

Edroy Odem, Bill Lee-Emery, Scot McKay



Edroy Odem 00:05

From the mist and shrouded mountaintop fortress that is x&y Communications Headquarters. You're listening to the world famous mountaintop podcast. And now your host Scot McKay



Scot McKay 00:19

Hello out there everyone. Welcome again to yet another episode of The World Famous mountaintop podcast. My name is Scot McKay at Scot McKay on both Twitter and clubhouse real Scot McKay on Instagram, Scot McKay, just search my name on YouTube. And you'll find all the video goodies there. Visit us on the web at mountaintoppodcast.com. And I invite you to join us and our merry group of travelers, men who are looking to be better men and get better women in their lives at the mountain top summit Facebook group on Facebook. Today, I want to welcome a brand new guest to the show. He hails from town onda. Originally, he's from New Zealand, and he's been to England and now he settled in Australia for the last number of years. He's on the Gold Coast, which is just a beautiful place. His name is Billy Emery. He is the author of a book called How to be bulletproof from criticism, which I would assume involves a lot of mental Kevlar. So without anything further, my new friend Bill Lee Emery from the Gold Coast of Australia. Welcome, sir.



Bill Lee-Emery 01:20

Hey, thank you, Scott. I like that thing about Kevlar being bulletproof.



Scot McKay 01:24

Yeah, metal Kevlar. Right. So tell us a little bit about what got you interested in this subject of helping men deal with criticism better.

 B

Bill Lee-Emery 01:36

So for the last eight or nine years, I've been involved in men's gatherings in Australia, there are two that happening in Queensland, one called manhood and the other one command shine. And I've been working on running workshops for eight or nine years on a variety of different topics. And one day, I was sitting around my lunch table listening to men talk, and I noticed there was a theme coming in the conversation that I was hearing. And it was all about their inability to deal with criticism, either from their partners or in their business, or even internal critic. So the thing of criticism just kept on emerging to the top of conversations. And so I thought, That's a great idea for a workshop. So the next year, I ran a workshop, it was very successful, I then put it on Udemy. And then I found that I then created the book. So it's very generic topic. From this, there'll be a book for couples, there'll be a book for entrepreneurs, there'll be different segments, the book will cover, because I've got 40 years of experience in a whole variety of different things. And I couldn't put everything in one book, it just be too unwieldy. So I hold it down to be exactly about how to be bulletproof from criticism.



Scot McKay 02:54

You know, it's a huge topic around here to Bill, a lot of guys, that inner critic that you're differentiating from Outer Critics, by the way, which I think is wonderful. And we'll dig into a lot deeper, very soon in this particular show. But that idea that men feel like we're getting it from the inside, and we're getting it from the outside people criticizing us not liking us, a lot of men really are approval seekers, because we want to be heroes we want to do right, we want to do stuff, that's good. We don't want to do stuff, that's bad. And meanwhile, we're told our masculinity is toxic, and men are just out to ruin the place and wreck everything. And we're all kind of this, you know, cartoonish WreckIt Ralph kind of characters that have been guys who really want to leave the world a better place. And what is so amazing to me, along the lines of exactly what you were just talking about Bill is it seems like no man is immune to this. I recently saw a clip of none other than Elon Musk, who basically everybody wants to be like, he's literally got a rocket ship company. And he's the electric car guru. And like I just said, the richest man in the world. And he was being interviewed about how the likes of Neil Armstrong and some of these pioneers in the space program, found his work distasteful, and thought that people had no business trying to bring space travel into the popular Zeitgeist and make a profit from it. And Elon Musk himself was almost brought to tears thinking about it, because he admitted on this very interview with the camera running that he would have loved for those guys to be very proud of what he was doing and supportive of him and the fact that they aren't, is not something he understands and something that he's actually deeply hurt by. So, I mean, I guess that's honest, and it's emotional. And my question to you to kind of kick things off here is what's the difference between being sorry, someone doesn't agree with you, and being butthurt by it to the point where it's really affecting your mojo.

 B

Bill Lee-Emery 04:56

So Scott, that comes to a really key concept and that is who We evaluate, do we value our opinion about ourselves? Or do we put our well being in the hands of others. And every human being on the planet wants love and approval, I don't care who you are, we all want love and approval. And love and approval can come from two places. It can come from inside of us, or it can come from outside of us. It always wanting to come from outside of us, we can be

blackmailed, we can be pushed around, we can be manipulated, but you're talking about men being good men. And in the work that I do, one of the things that we hold is good men being good men, and how do you do that. And that's partly how we hold ourselves. So if my opinion about myself is low, then I have to get my, my ratings if you like my emotional ratings from other people, which means I'm a puppet. So part of this, you know, getting right down to the nitty gritty. It's how we view ourselves. Now, let's say for example, you were to call me a goose or anything else, but let's just keep it clean. And what you would agree with me for sure, yeah, it's good play. So you call me a goose. Now, one of the default software packages in my head, is if someone were to insult me, I need to evaluate a couple of things. And one of the things is, this is a fact, or is an opinion. So points, you'd call me a goose, that if I've just sprouted feathers, or modeling a little little bit, I'm making monkey noises, there may be I've actually turned it to a goose, but I just happened to set in which case, I need to go and see a vet or a doctor. So if you comment against that, that's your opinion. And I have to work out, I need to know the difference between a fact and opinion. Because if I don't understand this, if I don't distinguish between that, then I'm gullible I'll open then anyone can take advantage of me in my emotional state, my mental state. So you know, when Elon Musk is getting this feedback, and he's taking somebody else's opinion, and this is what happens, people take other people's opinions, and they take it to heart. Now, if you listen to the language of that, they take somebody else's opinion, and they literally take it to their heart. Now, I'm holding a pen in my hand. So let's say this pen represents somebody else's opinion about me. And then I take that pen, and I'll put it right close to my heart. So if they say, that's a lousy pen, I'll translate that to me, I'm a lousy person. And it's so close to my heart, I don't distinguish between the pen and myself. So what we do and who we are, are two separate things. So if we are going to be literally bulletproof from criticism, we need to be able to separate a fact and an opinion. And we also need to distinguish between who we are intrinsically as human beings, and what we do, because they are different things. Yes, I'm connected, and I'm responsible for what I do. But they're different things. Let's take my book, for example, if someone goes, Well, Bill, that's a beautiful book. Does that make me a beautiful person? Well, it doesn't, because they're talking about the book. In the same way, if I say that's a lousy shithouse book, then does that make me a lousy person? No, because they're talking about the book. So I need to distinguish a couple of things. The fact and an opinion, they are separate. And when a politician says, the fact of the matter is, find out what they're going to give me is going to be their opinion about something. So that's one thing we need to be clear about. The other thing is, whose opinion about me, am I going to honor let's take online stuff, and trolling and all the things that can happen online. Someone may troll me, for example, on Twitter. Now, this is someone who is anonymous. I don't know who they are. And let's say I've done something and 99% of the population go, that's all wonderful. But 1% goes, that's a lot of crap. Then, who am I going to pay attention to? Is that the 1%? Or the 99%? I said, even my own evaluation of what it is that I've done?



Scot McKay 09:07

Well, the thing about Twitter is that 99% of the time, they'll show you only the 1%. Yeah, that's so.



Bill Lee-Emery 09:13

So what is it that whatever we pay attention to, we get more of, for example, if a child is only given attention, when they're sick, they'll become a hypochondriac. If they're only given

attention, when they're being creative, they'll become more creative. So whatever we give attention to, we will have more of that. So just come back into the inner critic. Let's say I do something on the road, I create something, a book, a piece of art, whatever it might be, if I look at something I've done and go, Wow, I like that. But you know, I should have done this better. And that's, that's not so good. And maybe I should have done this. And then all I start noticing is what's wrong about it, then then I can diminish myself and go further and further, you know, further down into a deep hole. It's like golf as I work with some elite athletes, including golfers and skydivers, and coiffers, for all of you guys listening to this, and you're and you played golf, you know what happens if someone's self esteem, how they regard themselves depends on their golf score for the day. So that's a really lousy day on the golf course, then that bad feeling can stay with him for a week for a month, probably one bad shot can last for a long, long time. So it depends on what it is that you pay attention to. And if I can give you an example, this is something that's a useful thing that people can take away. And this is for all, in particular audio perfectionists that are listening to this, and there's probably going to be a few scattered amongst your audience, I would imagine. So when my daughter was young, she'd bring a painting to me and say, Daddy, what do you think of my painting? And so I've asked two questions. And these two questions are worth writing down. The first question I asked her is, what do you like about what you've done? And she say, Well, I like the green hand, the yellow here, that when she told me whatever she liked, and the second question I would ask is, so if you were to do that painting again, what would you change or do differently? And to say, well, I'd have more blue here, I do this here. And she gave me her evaluation of what she could do differently. Now, notice, in those two questions, there's no criticism, there's no put downs as though I've done this wrong. And then I will ask her, Would you like my opinion? And when she was young, she would often say yes, so she got to be older teenager, often, she'd say no. And I was cool about that, that's fine about that. I was working with the Australian skydiving chamber some years ago. And these guys jumped from 60 and a half 1000 feet. And we were with them for 10 days. And we did 14 jumps from 60 and a half 1000 feet. So the deal was that we train them on what we know. And they were turns out of aeroplanes for that period of time. And this is the Australian skydiving chain, these guys at the top of their game, they would do a jump and they'd have a video photographer, and he would video what they've done, then they'll come back down, and then they would go through they do a debrief. And at the beginning of the day, their scores would be something like 12 or 13, or 14, maybe which is pretty good. That's like, you know, well, class. But as the day went on, the scores would go from, say, 12 to 10, to a to seven, and over the day, it would diminish. And there's the code set, maybe something's going wrong, and I don't want to do it so so can you sit in on the debrief. And so is the chart, so a seven on the debrief, and I noticed that as soon as they came down after a jump when they were looking at the video, the coach would say things like, well, that's not right, you shouldn't be doing this. And that's not good. Look over here, John, this should be like this, and you haven't done that properly. See how this formation isn't working. It's because of this asset. And what he was doing was focusing on everything that was going wrong. And if you focus on everything that's going wrong, you will do more of everything that's going wrong. So I said to him, Hey, listen, this is what I think is what going on here. But you do it differently and start telling the guys what you like about what they're doing. So they said, Okay, that's a bit different what I've been doing, but he started to do that. I didn't know the jump that came back down. And that would be hard, he couldn't help it, you just went back with the same old habits, you didn't do this, that's wrong, you shouldn't have done this, this is not good enough, blah, blah, blah. And this score is kept on going down. So I just let them be for the end of the day. And by the end of the day, they're doing better on a train line, which are not very good. So the next day, they did the jump, the first jump of the day, and the coach couldn't see me but there was a whiteboard behind him. So I put a line down the middle, and I put two columns plus and minus. And every time the coach would say something negative, I would put a little mark. Every

time he would say something positive. I put another mark on the other column. I didn't tell the guys what he was doing. I didn't tell the coach. And it became obvious because the guys could see me and they could see the whiteboard. But the coach didn't say this is going on. If you haven't done this properly, this is you know, wrong. Another mark another mark another mark. And soon, the line of negatives was way out polling the positives. So the guys started to work out what was going on. They started just Leaguer laughter themselves. And every time we said something negative was almost like raucous laughter happen. So he looked around the cage looked around, and he could see what I was doing anyway. Yeah, that habit just ingrained. Anyway, he decided that with some help and some encouragement, he was going to start to focus on what they were doing well, whatever you focus on, you will get more of that. And this is true for every single human being on the planet.



Scot McKay 14:52

Now it's interesting the context you put that in because you're talking about full grown adults, I would think, and I'm not sure this is actually an opinion. I mean, peer reviewed studies and I think you'll probably agree with me. In fact, a lot of how we handle criticism is ingrained in our psyche at a very young age during our formative years. And I know here in Western culture probably down under as well, because I happen to know a lot of people in Australia, New Zealand, etc. And it's very much the same. We love to tell our kids Good job, even when they come in last place. You know, and everything is wonderful, there's participation trophies, and yet at the same time, you go to the sporting events, and fathers are yelling at their children for messing up by getting second place, to the point of being abusive, and making the kid burst out in tears. Now, obviously, this child worship and this absolute, utter debasement of our kids entire self esteem, are both pretty bad. So where's the balance in what you're talking about here? I mean, you're making checkmarks. Every time the skydiving coach says something good. And you're making a checkmark every time he says something bad. Obviously, it's nice, probably in the Mr. Nice Guy sense of the word to avoid criticism, or avoid getting criticism. But at some point, you got to let people know what the deal is and what they need to improve upon, especially if you're in a position of authority to help them with that. But it has to be done positively without destroying them emotionally Correct?



Bill Lee-Emery 16:24

Absolutely. Let's take a couple and one person is doing one thing, and the other person doing something else, and they're having a disagreement. So if you think of what the end outcome is, if you want to have a relationship, which is honest, which is supportive, which helps both parties thrive and flourish, then you'll do certain things. So for example, with with my partner, I might say, you know, we have some agreements about how we deal with with things that we don't like, this is part of what we need to have in a relationship, we need to have agreed structures of how we deal with conflict of how we deal with things that we don't like. But we also need to understand that underneath the conflict is an opportunity to grow closer. So for some people, they shy away from criticism, because they don't know they will literally take things to heart, and they don't know how to evaluate what's being said. So the intention of what is being said, or what's underneath what's being said, is really important. So for example, if you know my partner's saying something that by whatever my approach are, that it's going to be instrumental in what happens. So I need to choose the time I need to choose the words carefully. I need to be honest and truthful about what I'm feeling, not push my feelings and

make her responsible for them, because no one is responsible for my feelings. So it depends on the price that you go about, and how we choose where we are. One of the quotes I really like is that love brings up everything I like itself for the purpose of healing. So if there's something going wrong in a relationship where people aren't really being honest or truthful, then that will rise to the surface. And there's an opportunity to deconstruct what's really going on and find out what's what's really bothering the person.



Scot McKay 18:14

I think that's really profound. You mentioned the word agreements. And yes, what I'm about to say speaking of which is lifted right from the work of Don Miguel Ruiz and his four agreements. Yeah, but one of those agreements is basically don't take anything personally. You hear from someone else? Yes. And everybody is so darn offended. And you know, you talk about this kinda at the top of the show, and I want to circle back around to it. Jen Psaki style. You may not know who Jen Psaki is, but that's okay. A lot of these guys do. I'll put it in the show notes. Anybody who needs to know. But she's famous for saying that. And what Ruiz means by that is, don't just take any negative things. Someone points in your direction and take it to heart assume it's true. Come back with a temper tantrum and feeling so disrespected. I mean, it's just not very manly to respond like, listen to some of the most macho guys you've ever seen in your life. Like the Jocko Willink 's of the world. You know who sponsors this show, of course. And they'll say, Look, just walk away. Someone's trying to break bad with you. Someone's calling you names. Someone's acting like a numbskull. Be the bigger man and de escalate that. Yeah. And one of the things that Ruiz talks about is how, you know, really, it's not ever about you, when you get right down to it, someone's angry someone's had a bad day, someone's projecting their own insecurities and their own weaknesses upon you. And what happens is, if you can always if you can at least lead by looking through that lens at whatever is well for lack of a better word confronting you, right, trying to offend you trying to criticize you Then the starting point will almost always be that you'll look at this situation with a much greater sense of sober judgment. So getting back to what you said earlier, someone has a criticism of me. Okay? Is that a factor? Is it an opinion? Well, if it's a fact, there are two things I can do with that fact, I can either take the criticism, and listen, true maturity will allow you to see that criticism as something you need to take to heart regardless of who the sources, it could be the most screeching Karen in the world, or someone who just can't stand, but you know, they hit you were hurt. That doesn't mean it's any less important for you to take heed. And I find that when you start hearing a pattern of things from a variety of people, that all add up to the same thing, you probably need to get adjusted in your life, that's when you need to start taking heed of it. And it takes a big man to do that. Because sometimes you just want to lash out and return serve by calling them names and, you know, truncating them a little further down the totem pole than you just feel like you got truncated. Well, if it's a fact that I'm this way, and I can do something about it, that's in my circle of influence, I need to own that, and I need to do that which I have power over, get it done. If it's something that's true, but is outside of my control, like if it's about my race, or my ethnicity, or where I was born, or something like that. You can either walk away because these people are dumb asses, or you can just own it and play along. Like as soon as I started joking about my height with everybody else, hey, that's when the short joke stopped. And I'm not very tall, by the way. So hanging fruit, literally. So that's that. Now, if it's a projected opinion, it will seem random, I would think. In other words, you know, I don't like your shoes. Well, if you're the first person who's ever said they don't like my shoes, then I probably shouldn't feel so self conscious about it. Because it's a weird opinion. It's non

standard. And that's when you can kind of just brush it off, you certainly don't entertain it and get into the shouting match and get into the volley of your mother jokes because of something like that. Right? My onto something here.

B

Bill Lee-Emery 22:16

Yeah, you are. Yeah, so let me just tie this into, from what you're saying, to probably one of the most important ideas or concepts that I can offer your your listeners, and that's this. When I started studying 40 years ago, one of my mentors, were doing a year long program, and on the whiteboard, he put the thought, life is meaningless. Now, considering we were doing a year long program about the meaning of life and who we are like, What the heck remain. And so he put the word event on the middle of the flip chart, and you said, there are millions of events in our life, and every single event is innocent. Often by itself, it's meaningless. But as human beings, we are almost compelled to make meanings out of every single thing that happens to us. For example, I'm walking down the street, I see a friend of mine that I know, I say hello, they've completely ignored me. In nanoseconds, I've come up with some kind of meaning about them, what's wrong with them? Why don't they recognize me? What's wrong with me? I can ratchet it up until I'm feeling really bad about myself. That's a



Scot McKay 23:23

Twitter effect also, yeah, that's 140 characters of information with which I'm going to fill in all the gaps my way, which is usually again, drumroll wait for it a projection?

B

Bill Lee-Emery 23:35

Yes, I can also when he doesn't recognize me, I think to myself, you know, maybe there's something wrong, I'll just catch up with him later on the day. So there are two different meanings attached to the same event. Now, whatever meaning I place on that event becomes my reality. And the meaning that I make is always self chosen. So if I choose it to mean this or that, then whatever I choose becomes my reality. And they're both self chosen. And the kicker is this, whether the meaning that I make is true or not, because truth always be debated. The key thing is, is the meaning that I'm making useful or not. And if it's not useful to drop it. So for example, someone calls me it goes that just an event, I can make all kinds of meanings about that, whatever meaning that I'm making out of it. It's up to me to choose which one I take on board, and whether if it's useful to keep it but if it's not useful, then it's my responsibility to drop it. So in my opinion, we live the world from inside out. Whatever we do on the inside will be reflected in our work. If I think it's a dangerous world, I'll find danger everywhere I go. If I think it's a peaceful world, I'll find peaceful people wherever I go. So whatever is going on the inside of me, the world will simply reflect that back So if I'm not taking charge and being conscious, being conscious really is the word here, being conscious of the meanings that are making the things in my life, I'm a puppet. I'm a puppet to everybody else's opinions, whatever they think whatever they feel. I'm a puppet. And I don't know about you, Scott. But I don't like being a puppet of anyone. Well, you lose your personal power in that regard. Absolutely. Just given to everybody else. Yeah,





Scot McKay 25:25

you feel like a victim instead of having personal agency and that feels anti masculine, whether we recognize it as such as men or not, because the attractiveness to women about being a man who is the master of his domain can lead, make good decisions, and protect those he loves and provide for those he loves is all about having the personal power to do away with that, which is negatively affecting his ability to do those duties. And to clear the way for those things, which he will confidently be able to assert as a man who's acting in the best interest of those he loves. Yeah, and you can't do that from victimhood. You can't do that from a position of weakness. And that brings me to asking you this question, because you talked about the idea of life being meaningless. There's true power and being undefendable. Yeah, I mean, first of all, we've talked about it ad nauseum on this show. So I don't want to talk about this at length. But you know, easily offended people are just a bummer. I mean, they suck. They're no fun. I mean, you gotta walk on eggshells. Oh, my God, I'm so sorry. I say something that offended you and made you feel bad. All this political correctness wokeness. The reason why even the people who originally started purveying it are getting sick of it is because it's backfiring on them. They're starting to realize, man, this really does suck. It sucks for me, you know, I'm bored of these conversations. I mean, people who are negative and complaining are boring. We're over it.



Bill Lee-Emery 26:53

If it can't be truthful for someone, you can't be close to them. Well, that's very,



Scot McKay 26:57

very true. And I think that's an incredibly intuitive observation. So you talked about meaning, like I said, and how life is meaningless. And the first thing I thought of even though you went in a different direction was none of us get out of here alive. Why is this all about me, when 100 years from now, none of its going to have mattered, right? Yeah. So you know, the concept at play here is the one of taking oneself less seriously. That's a very confusing concept to a lot of guys. First of all, how would you define the notion of taking oneself less seriously? And what advice would you give to the guys listening about why they should try a little harder to do that?



Bill Lee-Emery 27:35

For me, it comes down to having a good sense of humor, having a sense of humility, not modest are made up but just, you know, I'm here and being on this planet, like all the other billions of people here, I'm here for a short time. So if I can find something that's of value in my life that I can enjoy, I can put my heart and soul into, if I can have a life where I am fulfilled and satisfied and do stuff that I like and enjoy. If I can be of value to the people that I love, and I care for, then, you know, we can make things way more complicated than they need to be



Scot McKay 28:14

so much less stress so much more happiness, right? I'll tell you why it's a two word phrase that always seems to work its way into the conversation whenever we're talking about this idea of

taking oneself less seriously and being less offended. And those two concepts are integrally linked, by the way, the two word phrases, so what I mean, does this really? Is this really going to have lasting implications? If I post on Facebook and someone says something embarrassing to me? How many people really saw this post? Is everybody really going to stop hanging out with me and start making fun of me and private people care so much less than we think they do, especially when we're taking ourselves too seriously? Good stuff. I've really enjoyed this conversation bill. And I want to point these guys to your book, the book is called How to be bulletproof from criticism. And you can find it by going to mountaintop podcast conference slash Bill B. I ll guess what guys, this is the first bill we've ever had on this show in 280. Some episodes How about that that's almost miraculous. I will also put Bill Lee Emory's book at the top of my Amazon queue on my storefront, which you can find by going to mountain top podcast.com front slash Amazon. Bill Lee Emery. Good to talk to you man. Hope you'll come back and talk more about this subject or maybe some of the others that are interesting to you because I feel like we've really only scratched the surface. Thank you for joining us today.

B

Bill Lee-Emery 29:46

It's my pleasure, Scott. Happy to come back. Yeah, man. And gentlemen,



Scot McKay 29:49

if you haven't been back to mountaintop podcast.com Lately, go there. Download the free book called sticking points solved. Also, you can talk to me for free for 25 minutes. Hey, the New Year is here. We're on this thing. It is on us like white on rice and it's time to do something about getting a woman in your life, maybe many women in your life, but 2022 is got to be the year gentlemen, time passes by very quickly. Life is short, but life is also long. You got to get the woman in your life but you got to get the right woman in your life. As this year kicks off, get it on your calendar and mind to talk to me free for 25 minutes and you can sign up for that at mountaintop podcast calm of course. While you're there, visit the good folks at origin in Maine and heroes soap.com You can use the coupon code mountain 10 with either of our fine sponsors and get in on all their manly goods that they have for you over there. I'll tell you what if you have not tried the origin labs protein powder, do so and get vanilla first. Just saying over a hero soap you'll find all the natural soap and body wash you need to smell like a man and to have women perk up and take notice you can go either to mountain top podcast conference slash origin or mountain top podcast conference I'll share a soap or simply find links to both at Mountain Top podcast.com When you visit and until I talk to you again real soon this is Scott McKay from x&y communications in San Antonio Texas be good out there

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Edroy Odem 31:28

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