

John McIntyre:

All right it's John McIntyre here; I'm here with Craig Ballantyne. Now Craig is a productivity and success transformation coach from Toronto Ontario, Canada and the author of "The Perfect Day Formula: How to Own the Day and "Control Your Life". He's been contributing to Men's Health magazine since 2000 and in 2001 he created a popular home workout program called Turbulent Training. And on his journey to success he's had to overcome crippling anxiety attacks and he beat them with his five pillars of transformation. Today Craig show's men and women how to use the five pillars to lose 10 to 75 pounds get a raise and make more money. Find the love of your life and pretty much overcome any obstacle in the way of your success. Now you can read his daily essays on Success Productivity and Fitness Early to Rise. what's interesting is I actually met Craig three — I think it was three years ago at the blacksmith — there was a blacksmith in Lithuania, of all places, which was sort of a strange story when people would ask me if I'd been in Europe and the only place I'd been was Lithuania, but anyway back then I tried to get a podcast going. Didn't happen and now three years later here we are finally talking about — we're doing a podcast here with Craig. So today we're gonna talk about his book, "The Perfect Day Formula", and we've got some questions that we'll get into. I think you're gonna make this really interesting cause I've played around with my routine a lot. So there — there we go. Craig how you going?

Craig Ballantyne:

Yeah real great, yes. So it's great to connect again after all these years John. It's fantastic to

see what you've been up to. I mean you're just making an amazing head waves in the world.

John McIntyre: [Laughter] thanks mate, you too, by the sound of it.

Craig Ballantyne Well I appreciate that and you know I actually I will say that one of the interviews you did with John Lee Dumas about constructing webinars really helped me with a webinar I had the other month. So thank you very much. Now the student has become the teacher so, thank you very much.

John McIntyre: He is a machine when it comes to those webinars.

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah he is.

John McIntyre: So let's — I mean I've done the, you know, given you a little bit of an intro there. Can you give the list — maybe a bit more of a background? You know who are you, what are you like, what are you into, what do you do?

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah for sure. So I'm — I was born very close to Toronto in Canada and I grew up playing ice hockey. Ice hockey was the thing there and so, I went to college thinking I was going to be a strength and conditioning coach in the National

Hockey League, of all things, and so that was what I wanted to do and then in 2000 I started writing for Men's Health Magazine and realized I loved helping the busy guy get home from work and do these short burst workouts that I invented and so, I got into creating information products and selling them on the internet. Did that for about 12 years before we met, John, and I also have bought another business called earlytorise.com which is more of a personal development business. And so we sell books and all sorts of information on helping people build their wealth and their health.

John McIntyre: Awesome, awesome. So I was reading a bit about your story and how it all came together with — cause it started, you know, I read this a few days ago, but you started to want to get into the online stuff. I think you had a business coach, at one point, then that — eventually you came, you know, Turbulence Training grew and grew and grew into from — what I remember was a million dollar business or multiple millions and then you eventually leveraged that or leveraged that success to then go and invest or buy or become a partner in Early to Rise which is where you've been now, for a few years, and now it's just grown from there.

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah that's pretty much it and it was 2006 when I hired that first business coach and that's when my Turbulence Training business really took off. I mean it was doing okay before that, but getting that business coach was like the exponential increase in business and so, I always tell people that was my number one mistake, was waiting

too long to get a business coach. And it's the number one piece of advice that I give to anybody is get a coach! Get a mentor! Someone who has been there and done that, who has achieved what you want to do and who shares your morals and ethics and your values. And when you have somebody like that to guide you, whether it's for a couple of months or whether it's for years, you'll become a better person and a much more successful person as well in so many areas of life.

John McIntyre: I was wondering that when I read that. It seemed like you'd been going for three years or four years or something before you actually got around to hiring the coach.

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah, I mean, I was just silly and stupid and cheap and stubborn and thinking I knew everything and it was just a bad, bad decision to wait so long. I should've been in there earlier; I should've hired a coach in 2003 or 2004. I would've got my book out earlier, I would have helped more people — everything would be even greater than it is right now. So it just, you know, anybody that's listening — no matter how much you think you know everything or you know even if money is a little tight, if you get enough money to invest in resource do it because it will then give you a 10 to 1 or 100 to 1 return on investment which then you can leverage and invest into more coaching. So I always tell people if you're really broke start with free YouTube videos. Make a little bit of money from that, you know? From learning about people or go to the library and read somebody's book. And

then when you made \$100 or \$500 invest in your next course. And then when you made \$5,000 invest and go into their seminar. And then when you made, you know, \$20,000 or \$50,000 invest in that person's mastermind group or find a way to intern with them. But get out there and find your coach as soon as you can.

John McIntyre: I reckon that's great advice, but the challenge — the challenge that I've found with this, cause I've worked with a few different coaches now, and I think people who are listening to this it's gonna be like well in today you would've seen this — there's a proliferation of life coaches and business coaches who are gonna, you know, solve all the problems in your life and help you — like they're all making the same claims. I'm gonna help you lose weight, I'm gonna help you make money, I'm gonna help you get — find the love of your life or learn to pick up girls or whatever it is — there's so much of — cause anyone could be a coach these days. So there's a slight tangent, but I think it's quite interesting and valuable. How do you think that — how do you go about finding a good coach?

Craig Ballantyne: You make a very fair point and it's a fair assessment of the world today, however you should be able to find hours and hours of free content from people whether it's from podcast or whether it's through YouTube videos or whatever it is, I mean, there is just — there's no — there's almost no way to hide these days. And so right now if someone listening to this, you know, there's gonna be that bell curve of people, you know, there's gonna be that huge amount of

people in the middle who are like, "Yeah this guy's got some good information, but he doesn't hit me in the gut." And then there's gonna be a few people who are like, "Yeah this guy hits me in the gut the wrong way. I don't ever want to hear from this loser ever again," and that's totally fine because then, "Oh I got a way of life that I live and it's not going to attract everyone." But you repel those people to attract that 10% at the top. There's gonna be 10% of people who are gonna go, "I got to get to Lithuania for the Blacksmith Camp and learn from this guy." If they're — if you're younger or if you're older you're like, "I gotta investigate this guy more. I got to read his book, I got to and check out Early to Rise, I got to do X, Y, Z, you know, if I'm in America I'm gonna find one of his seminars — where ever he's speaking and I'm gonna go and learn more from this guy because this guy is my guy." And so I think that, you know, if you're a coach yourself or if you're someone who — well if you coach yourself you should be going and trying to get your message out as — every where you can. I mean I've been interviewed over 50 times this year. Health has helped me communicate my message better, but it's also allowed me to get in front of people and show them that I can help them. And then if you're a student looking for a coach you should find everything you possibly can about somebody who's, you know, kind of tickled your fancy a little bit, who's got a little bit of interest from you, you know, if somebody got on your list, John, a referral from somebody else, they should listen to dozens of your podcasts to see if this person is right for you. And I mean it's very much like dating. I we're gonna kiss a few

dragons before we find our princess, but that's how —

John McIntyre: [Laughter.]

Craig Ballantyne: — things should work, you know? And last thing I'll say is you should ask around people that you respect and say, "Who would you refer me to if you were in my situation looking for a coach at my age, my experience, my goals?" you know, "Who should I go to?" and you should ask for referrals because that's really one of the best ways especially to become wealthier — to actually find people that you can trust and that is, you know, among affluent people — they generally get their advisers, their coaches through referrals so, you should start that process pretty soon.

John McIntyre: Point worth pointing out too like I think in the — especially in the marketing world there can be a bit of like a — bit of hurrah that gets around and to this benefit, I think, it's almost sort of — especially when you're a beginner, it can be hard to see through the noise where you, you know, you don't know — you don't really have the expertise yet to see through the claims that different people have and it's —

Craig Ballantyne: That's a great point.

John McIntyre: Yeah so I reckon, you know, and there's a lot of like, you know, sleazy, scammy, sort of people at

it that don't really — it's like they, you know, business coach you've never really built a business and the best way to probably get through that is to go and find people who aren't in that world who have a, you know, a normal business or an e-commerce business, something outside the internet marketing, info product world, for example. Find someone from out of that and ask them for feedback and what they think of this person's, you know, branding or image or whatever it is. Cause they'll probably be a pretty objective sounding board.

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah, I mean, I would just definitely get into the world as well of past clients, you know, and ask for referrals or references. If you — if you're gonna invest \$1,000 a month or more, you should be able to go the coach and say, "Listen, I would love to speak to two or three of your past clients." And you know, as someone who runs mastermind groups, I would have no hesitation of sending you to people — not only who have had success in my groups, but to send you to the people who dropped out after one or two months or six months because people do. I mean not everybody joins my mastermind group becomes a millionaire, but there are some that become, you know, multi-millionaires and there's some people who have been with us for four — five years and we, you know, we're — we got nothing to hide. And it's those people who do hide — have something to hide — who don't act congruent with their image at all times that — those are the people you want to avoid. And that's why you start with just a seminar first. Don't go directly into somebody's coaching program. Go to one of their seminars. Try and

see how they act around the hotel staff. Try and see how they act around other people. And if they don't strike you as sharing the same values as you then no matter how great they are at marketing you — you'll probably won't be a great long term fit. And so, yes, you could still learn marketing from them, but they probably got courses on that and you would avoid them as a coach because there's more to coaching than just the tactics. There's so much more about — listen at the end of the day you can take my tactics and — but you're still gonna have those days where you swing and miss. And when you swing and miss am I going to be there for you to raise your spirits? And that's what coaching — there's an art and science of it and so, science of tactics, but there's also the art of making sure that you take care of the person as a whole.

John McIntyre: Totally, totally. And on that note I reckon we should probably talk about Blacksmith Camp probably at the end. So drop an open loop for them.

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah.

John McIntyre: The — but we can talk about that at the end and who that's for. So let's move on then to The Perfect Day Formula. Tell me about the book, what it's, you know; what it's about, you know, what made you write it? Let's start —

Craig Ballantyne: Well, I mean, it's — yeah. I mean it's a compendium of everything that I've used over the years and I've used with so many of my coaching clients. To help them get more done, make more money, but also, most importantly, to have more freedom in their life. And so we help them put a lot of structure into their day and so, for some people they want to resist my idea of structure, structure, structure in the day, but we're only doing this so that you have more freedom in your evenings for your family or for your hobbies or, you know, to live where ever you want because you've gotten so much done during the days. And so it's people that are proactive are really gonna love the book. People that just want to react to the world. You know those people struggle and they're gonna either take a lot from the book and say, "Oh I get it, now I can really fix my day," or they're just gonna reject everything I say which, again, is fine. I don't expect everyone in the world to love what I say because it is very structured, but essentially it helps people find when they're most productive. It helps people block that time, it helps people really focus on their days and really control the chaos that the world brings at them so they can concentrate on what counts whether it's at night or on the weekends or in the morning. So if they have more free time and freedom in their life.

John McIntyre: Right. And then one of the guys that I'm a big fan of on Instagram is The Rock, Dwayne Johnson. You know the guy, right?

Craig Ballantyne: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

John McIntyre: He posts these photos every — he hasn't — I don't think he's done it in a while, but he — every now and then he posts a photo of it's — you know 4am or 3:45 am and he's alarms going off and he's — then he's got like an Instagram status update about how, you know, let's wake up and chase our goals and chase our greatness blah, blah, blah. And it's really cool like ah you know I like that — I like the hustle that he has with that, that he's up at 4am. And from what I understand that's when he's — has to be on set say at 7 am, he's waking up so he — like do basically a weight workout, go and eat some carbs, and then do a cardio workout or something like that. Then he goes onto the set and probably works 12 to 14 hours acting. So there's something really cool about that, but I think from memory you are — you actually wake up something — some time around then as well at 4 or 4:30.

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah I get up at — I start work every day at 4 'o clock so, you know, I — what I found, and I talked about it in my book, is there's something called magic time and everyone has magic time and — when do you work, John? Are you a night owl worker? Like when do you just crank out your emails like you're a magician?

John McIntyre: Right, I mean, right now I'm in this flex. I'm trying to figure some of this out. I was waking up at — I was doing 4:15 am for a month or two in — when I was in Berlin.

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah.

John McIntyre: But that — it burnt out and I don't think it was the 4:15 was the problem, I think it wasn't being disciplined — I was drinking too much coffee. So basically that was —

Craig Ballantyne: Hah.

John McIntyre: — screwing the whole thing up so, that worked pretty well, but then the downside of that was that if I want to go out, you know, have a social — it felt like you wanted to have a social life — go out, you know, with a girl or go dancing or something like that. I couldn't really do that cause I had to be in bed by 8 which it had it's own downside. So then now I've been testing no alarm at all, but you know I'm sort of — I can just go on sleeping. So I'll wake up at 10 am and that's not really conducive to getting that much done cause you feel like you're already behind when you wake up so —

Craig Ballantyne: Right that's — I felt when I was, you know, in about 2007 when I was able to go from being from a personal trainer to, you know, being a full time online fitness guy and, you know, I was starting — I was like, "Okay I don't have to get up and train people really early in the morning," so I was getting up late, you know? Air quotes around that. It's 7:30 in the morning, but I'd felt I

was always chasing the tail of the world. And so I realised I need to get up early, just personally, for me I love the spirituality of the morning when I'm the only person up. It's just amazing to me. And so that's when I get my most work done — most of my work done. Now going back to the social aspect I do believe in keeping a regular wake up time and a regular bedtime, but you know last week I was just in Las Vegas for a mastermind meeting and there's no way that you — you know first of all you're gonna be social with the members. And plus there's plenty to do in that town so, I don't — I recommend trying to stick to your wake up as close as possible. So even if you stay out 'til midnight, you know, not — and you regularly get up at 4:30 don't sleep past 6 'o clock in the morning. I know it's only a few hours of sleep, but you know have a nap later on, but you don't want to get too far away from your wake up time. Your wake up time is one of the most important things you can stick to. So you stay up a couple of hours late, and that's fine, try not to overdo it too much. And obviously people that are listening, you know, don't drink too much alcohol on too many nights. And so you stick to that wake up time, you have some naps, and that will give you a lot of all day energy and so, going all the way back to your original question, I do get up — I start work at 4 in the morning because I get 3 times as much work done in my magic time, which is in the morning, than I do at any other time of day. And everyone has magic time whether it's 2 'o clock in the afternoon or whether it's like my friend, Joe Marion, who has it at, you know, midnight and he gets 3 times as much done then as if he would try to do it at 10 am. So everyone has it, everyone should find it, everyone should protect

it, and then build your structure around that as much as possible, you know, with considerations of if you have a regular work job or if you have family stuff you have, family stuff you have to be around with. But everyone can do that. And so going back to The Rock, there's another guy named Jocko Willink who has a book out and he has something, I think, like the 4:45 am club. And then there's another guy who — Robin Sharma who has the 5 am club and there's a lot of people who are like me — about getting up in the morning because if you get up in the morning there's nobody there stealing your time. And when the world — when your life is so busy that's what you have to do in some cases especially if you have a priority project. If you want to write a book — if you want to write a sales letter, and you try to do it during the normal work hours, there's just too much stuff going on and no matter how disciplined we are it's very, very difficult for us to overcome the phone calls, the emails, the people running into your office with their pants on fire, the — you know what they think is their pants on fire. Even though it's not an emergency, but you know they think the end of the world is coming because, you know, some — something happened, they got a phone call. You know so, all that stuff happens during your regular workday so, you either have to do it first thing in the morning or you have to do it at night. And there's this, you know, then there's too many social calls in the evening for most people to stick to it at night so that's why I get up in the morning — that's why I think most people should get up in the morning and, you know, have that quiet time and make massive progress on their big goals.

John McIntyre: Yeah, I mean, that was the feeling I had in Berlin until the — too much coffee is only go — overload the adrenals. The feeling of like being up at — cause I'd start at — I'd wake up at 4:15 then I do sort of a morning routine of meditation and few things like that —

Craig Ballantyne: Yup.

John McIntyre: — and I'd start work at 5. And the whole idea was I'd do 4 and a half hours of focused work so, priority — whatever the priority goal was for 4 and a half hours — no email, nothing like that. It was meant to be primarily creative. And then at 9:30 I would stop and go to the gym. And it's — it was great cause I'd be walking to the gym, which was 5 or 10 minutes away from the place I was staying and everyone else is on their way to work and I've already gotten done more than most people — more than what I would get done in a whole work day or several work days and it's 9:30 am. And that's a cool feeling.

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah I know that feeling. Oh man that's a great feeling.

John McIntyre: It's addictive though like it started to get to a — like I started to think more about the tradeoffs it's like you keep pushing it back — you could then go to 4 or 3:30. Cause what time — cause if you start work at 4, what time do you get up?

Craig Ballantyne: I like to get up about quarter to 4 and then I do my meditation after I've written for a while so, I don't let — because I know, I mean, I'm a weak person and that's what I have these — this structure in place because I'm as tempted and distracted as anyone else. So that's why I go, you know the night before? I have the outline created; I put my subconscious to work at night which I actually truly believe in. I think that you can have your brain work while you sleep so that when you sit down in front of your screen or piece of paper that you can pour thoughts out better than if you did not go through this little subconscious programming at night. And so that's what I do and, you know, the first hour I get, like I said, the magic time — 3 times as much done in any other time of day and so, if nothing else happened over the course of the day, John? No one can take that victory of that first hour away from me and that — but then after I do that I go into meditation and then I go to the gym and then I actually — when I'm in Denver here I have to spend a full day in the office with a lot of meetings because we've grown our team up and our marketing team and we actually do a lot of meetings. So there's no way I would get all that writing done unless I did it first thing.

John McIntyre: Right, right so your thing is you wake up and then at 4 — you at 4, right? 3:45 you're up, 4 you start —

Craig Ballantyne: Yes.

John McIntyre: — and you'll write for an hour and then you meditate?

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah.

John McIntyre: Yeah and then off to the gym and then the day kicks in. The reason why I like to focus on this is this — like the waking up early is like step — it's probably one of the hardest steps, but it's also the most essential because if you could get this down the rest of the — all the other stuff of organizing your routine and staying off social media and everything like that — a lot of that becomes a lot easier when you win the morning.

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah, absolutely and so, really great example is, you know, Russell Brunson got a copy of my book and my — the kit that comes with my book — so I have a kit that I actually, you know, people can invest in this kit with all these work tools and stuff. And so Russell was, you know, he was getting up to like 8 or 9 before he read my book and, you know, then he was going into the office and he never felt like he was getting time to work on his click funnels which is his business. So he read my book and he said to his wife, "I'm gonna start going to bed at 10, getting up at 5 and writing for two hours on these funnels." And he did an entire podcast on this. I think his podcast is called like "Marketing in The Car" or something and, you know, out of nowhere he just did this amazing testimonial about using my system. Now he's getting up and doing 2 hours of work saying the exact same

thing that you and I have said here John that, you know, he's got more work done in those 2 hours than he would all day and he gets into the office and, you know, he's on this role. And even though the rest of his day in the office is spent on the phone or with team members and all that stuff, he's gotten his click funnels done, and he just had an amazing story about it and so you're very right. And what it comes down to is not getting up in the morning, but getting to bed on time and in the right environment so that you can get up on time. And if you were doing it for 4 am you know you've probably got a great routine. I'd love to hear about it.

John McIntyre: [Laughter] right now I've just got back to Thailand so, I've relaxed the routine for a while just to experiment with some things, but back then there was a realization. It's like yeah you could use some self discipline to wake up, you know, after 4 hours sleep or 6 hours sleep, but that's not sustainable. The whole battle is really won when you go — it's totally when you go to bed. Like the mood you're in — are you gonna fall asleep quickly or have you been, you know, on YouTube until, you know, you're looking at the bright screen until too late at night. You've really gave —

Craig Ballantyne: Right.

John McIntyre: — me — you have to be disciplined about the night before. That's what really sets up the morning.

Craig Ballantyne: Absolutely. And it's — I've written a chapter in the book called the "10-3-21-1-0 Formula" and I'll explain it in a second, but you know that — I posted an excerpt of that online and it's gone viral because it just speaks to so many people. So we've had it on the telegraph.co@uk. In England it was picked up there, it was picked up by inc [?], it was picked up by Lifehacker, and we've had hundreds of thousands of people to our website from this article. And then I was actually even interviewed on Russian television about it.

John McIntyre: Wow!

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah, I mean, it's just —

John McIntyre: Did you speak Russian?

Craig Ballantyne: — it speaks — I didn't. They dubbed it over.

John McIntyre: [Laughter].

Craig Ballantyne: And then we have — we have a girl, I don't know if you ever met her? A sous chef from — that I met at the Blacksmith Camp back in 2010. She went and listened to it and said they kind of screwed up some of the stuff because she speaks Russian. And she translated it, but it was funny. I

just did this little video and then sent it over to this person who contact me on Facebook from Russia and it's on Russian national television, but again, it's because it speaks to so many people and it's such a problem that so many people have. And so the "10-3-2-1-0 Formula" goes like this: 10 hours before bed you stop drinking all caffeine. So, you know, you found out the hard way about that one, unless you're ballsack who drank 50 cups of coffee a day and, you know, kept to strange hours, but you know it's — no more caffeine after — 10 hours before bed because the half life of caffeine is about 10 hours. So if you stop drinking caffeine there's still some in your blood 10 hours later, but it's not enough to generally keep you up. So — and then for me, personally, I just can't handle much caffeine at all so I stop drinking caffeine about 14 hours before I go to bed. The 3 is to stop drinking alcohol or having heavy meals 3 hours before bed which means some people might have to be afternoon drinkers.

John McIntyre: [Laughter].

Craig Ballantyne: Which is okay, but — you know? They drink on the patio and then — but the thing is, you know, people do feel sleepy after they've had a little bit of alcohol, but the problem is it interrupts your sleep cycles. And I'm a big believer in the 90 minute sleep cycle — the power of the 90 minute sleep cycle. And so science shows that we go through these 90 minute phases while we're asleep and so, if I wake up after 6 hours of sleep and my alarm is set to go off in an hour I actually won't go back to sleep because that

would mean I would get half way through another sleep cycle. And if you wake up through a — half way through a sleep cycle you're actually groggier than if you would be if you got up at 6 hours and have an hour less sleep. And then you try to have a little nap later on. So I'm a big fan of that, but alcohol does interfere with those sleep cycles and so, you wake up — even if you know you have like 2 or 3 glasses of wine an hour before bed and you wake up and you're kind of like stuffy and kinda groggy the next morning even if you get 7 or 8 hours of sleep. And it's because the alcohol interferes with that. So 2 hours before bed stop all work, an hour before bed stop the screens. So no blue light screens which are iPhones, laptops, and some televisions. You can get glasses actually that stop and block the light — the blue light that keeps you alert, but if you just look at your iPhone in bed right before you go to sleep the light from that keeps us alert and, you know, you toss and turn in bed all night. So that's the 1 hour rule. And then 0 is the number of times that you should hit snooze in the morning because, again, it goes to that sleep cycle. Yeah, I know, I mean easier said than done, but with practice you can do it. I mean I'm probably 10, 15 years older than you, John, so when I was your age I wasn't even as good as you are with the habits. So I rejected a lot of this information and I wish I hadn't, but now I don't hit the snooze button. I just get up because I know if I go back in to 10 minutes of sleep, again, you're into the sleep cycle and you're gonna wake up groggier than if you had just gotten out of bed at that first alarm. So, you know, some situ — you know ideas if you sleep alone. Some of the time or all of the time you can put the alarm across the room or —

I actually have my alarm outside of my room when I'm travelling — outside or sorry — really across the room when I'm travelling. If I'm sleeping alone at home then I have it outside the bedroom so that I actually have to get up, walk across the room, and by then you're just not going back to bed. Another thing is you can get one of the light alarms. So Philips is a company that makes them and you can set it so that it just gradually increases the light in the room so it's like waking up naturally. You can buy those on Amazon and those are another way that people are using to have less of a harsh awakening in the morning.

John McIntyre: Right. I mean it's — this is what I'm trying to experiment with at the moment because in Berlin it was great to do the, you know, waking up at 4:15 or whatever it was. That was fantastic, but then yeah I found that it wasn't — I mean that's quite early so I felt like it wasn't that sustainable with going out, but it also that the wake up time's — becomes — it starts to feel very, very abrupt sometimes. And so I've experimented with the 90 minute cycles and I think there's like an iPhone app where it tracks your sleep cycle and then tries to wake you up when you're at the light stage of sleep, but that —

Craig Ballantyne: Okay.

John McIntyre: Yeah.

Craig Ballantyne: I don't know that app, but I'd love to — if you find the name of that I'd love to hear about that cause I think sleep is very important and you know I would say for a young man like you try and aim for like a, you know, 10 to 5:30 or if you wake up at 4 'o clock or 4:30, you know, just get out of bed then, but you know 10 to 5:30 you're still up before 6. I think there's still something really fantastic about that. You're still up before most people are going about their day. It's not inhuman, you know, to get up at 5:30 as a young man. I mean a lot of construction workers do that. So a lot of people are doing that during the week. And then on the weekend you relax things a little bit, but not 'til you're sleeping 'til 10 'o clock in the morning. And really, you know, using the meditation is also, from what I've talked to some Doctors say that if you meditate for 20 minutes it's almost like having a 20 minute nap or even an hour of sleep and then you can have an afternoon nap of 20 minutes and collectively even if you only sleep 6 and a half hours a night it adds up to being the same amount of rest. And you know you should try and get 7 or 8 hours of sleep, but I think that a young, ambitious man who still wants to have a good social life, but also take advantage in the morning would do well on a 10 to 5:30 schedule.

John McIntyre: Interesting. I mean this brings up another issue that I've kinda wrestled with a bit. It's like how much like sleep do I need? Because some days it's like, you know, 9 hours isn't enough and then other days I can have 6 hours and I'm like — I'm up like a rocket in the morning. And so I'm still toned, I seriously go up and down depending on exercise. Right now I lift 4 days a week and so,

I'm not sure if 7 and a half — sometimes it feels like it's fine, sometimes it feels like it's too little. How have you train — you know figured out how much sleep you need?

Craig Ballantyne: I have to force myself to sleep cause I can sleep, you know, 6 hours and you know have days go about me. Days go by before I feel tired and I — but I know that's not right, I shouldn't give in to that temptation of cutting back on the sleep so, I force myself to make sure that I get — go to bed early on some nights or to have the nap and I try and — I would say I average 7. I wish I was averaging more like 7 and a half or 8, but I'm doing pretty well when I get an average of 7.

John McIntyre: That's so interesting. I find this fascinating how some people are like that. There's a girl who goes to the local salsa dancing I've been going to here and she just wakes up — she doesn't use an alarm which I think is really cool. And so I was like, "Oh I want to try that." Now she wakes up at 6 cause her pets come and wake her up. And I think if she just wake up at 6 she's one of those people anyway. If I —

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah.

John McIntyre: — don't use an alarm I'm waking up at like 8:30 — 9. Starts to get — seems to get a bit later each day, cause each day I wake up late then I stay up a little bit later the next night, then I wake up a bit later the next day and it creates this —

eventually it's like 11 and it's [laughter] what's going on and this isn't — you can't live like this.

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah that's very interesting.

John McIntyre: So it's — it is fascinating to me how different people — you, you know, you talk about you can get, you know, for days on 6 hours and not feel tired. If I had 6 hours usually now, yeah, I'd — depends on the day, but most the time if I had 6 hours I'd be pretty tired. I'd —

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah, you know, then there's the thing, John, is well, you know, someone's 8 hours can be actually worse than someone's, you know, 6 and a half hours, right? Because of the quality of sleep, you know, the noise and all that sort of thing. So there's other things that people should make sure that they're doing at night, you know, 65 degrees Fahrenheit temperature in their room. You know blacked out and no light getting in. I sleep with earplugs and an eye mask like an old lady, you know?

John McIntyre: [Laughter].

Craig Ballantyne: But I mean the earplugs have been a lifesaver especially in the hotels. And same with, you know, you go to hotels and they got these little green lights up in the ceiling and you always —

John McIntyre: Oh I hate that.

Craig Ballantyne: — and, you know, so the eye mask, as silly as it is, it's really, really been a fantastic little tool. So I have eye mask, I have earplugs, I use this sprayable melatonin which is a company from the Blacksmith Camp that I invested in. So I use sprayable melatonin a couple hours before bed, magnesium before bed, and you know I just get a little dialled in sleeping routine. And I travel a lot so I done this because I travel a lot and I want to adjust as quickly as possible between going to different time zones. And so there's an art and science to it, there's great books out on it. A friend of mine, Shawn Stevenson, just wrote a book for Rodale Press which is a company that publishes Men's Health and he has a book called "Sleep Smarter". He has about 300 5 star reviews on Amazon. So if you want to get the ultimate bible in sleeping get that book and you'll learn about dialling that in. Because sleep is so important and it's not just how we feel, John, it goes back to — you know you were talking about training, you know, if you want to recover properly from training that's when you have to get that extra sleep. And so that's why even if I can feel fine on 6 I know that mentally and physically my body and brain need the recovery of 8 hour sleep. And I definitely feel different when I get 8 hours sleep compared to 6, you know? I don't feel like I need caffeine if I've slept 8 hours.

John McIntyre: Right you can notice it in the gym too. When I was in, I think couple of days ago, I had one of those big sleep ins and I went in the gym and I

just felt so — just don't feel worn out. It's like you've had, you know, two coffees before you into the gym and everything's just working except —

Craig Ballantyne: Yup.

John McIntyre: — that I hadn't any coffee. So —

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah.

John McIntyre: — and on the lights down here it's funny like I'm — noises don't do that much, like I'm very — I'm a musician so I think I'm sensitive to noise, but some reason not while I'm sleeping.

Craig Ballantyne: Right.

John McIntyre: But I hate lights. So like if I'm lying in bed and there's that little red light or green light on the TV I — unless I have an eye mask, I'll usually try and — I have to cover it up.

Craig Ballantyne: Right.

John McIntyre: I'll have to get sticky tape, a bit of paper —

Craig Ballantyne: Right.

John McIntyre: — the same thing on the AC.

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah. It's funny my friend, Bedros Keuilian, I was just with him in Vegas on the weekend. He's a really great marketer, he's got a great YouTube videos on mindset, but Bedros was thinking of buying a house beside the ocean where he surfs in California. And so they went down and they rented a house there and he could not sleep, for the life of him, at night with the waves coming in. You know some people love that white noise, the fan, whatever it is, but he's the opposite. You know he's the opposite of you and so, they decided they would only buy a house on the other side of the street where they couldn't hear the waves coming in. So everyone has their own little sleep things, you know, some people like to be really cold, some people can't sleep unless it's warm, and you just have to figure it out and make a routine out of it because this is what allows you to have amazing mornings and get stuff done. And if you're dragging your tail every morning you're gonna have a hard time getting ahead in life. I mean that's just the bottom line as far as I can see.

John McIntyre: All right so let's move sort of further on into that. The "Perfect Day Formula" what — you mentioned the — there's a 10-8-3-2-0 rule and then, you know, what else is there to it? I know you've got the "5 Pillars." What do you think would be — what else really, really matters?

Craig Ballantyne: Well I think the "5 Pillars" are very helpful for anybody looking to make a change in their life. Because I actually discovered these from my weight loss transformation clients so, in my fitness business I've run 25 before and after contests. So we've been doing this since 2008 and we have 4 categories in each one. So we've had about 100 winners in this contest and they have to submit this little 200 or 300 word essay, I guess you would call it, and every time I would read them the people who won had 5 common pillars in place. And the people who dropped out after 2 weeks, I take a look at their entries in the form that we keep, and I'd realize that some of these pillars were missing. And so the "5 Pillars" work, not just for losing weight, but they'll work for anything. If you want to become a better copywriter they'll work for that. If you want to get out of debt it'll work for that. If you want to make more money, if you want to find the love of your life, if you want to buy the house of your dreams these 5 pillars work for everything because you can implement them this way. And so they go like this: better planning and preparation is pillar number 1, pillar number 2 is professional accountability, pillar number 3 is positive social support, pillar number 4 is a meaningful incentive, and pillar number 5 is the big deadline. And you can just, you know, pull a topic out of a hat, John, and I could show you it'll work for anything.

John McIntyre: I mean one thing that I — sort of on my list of questions to ask you about this was it's — like we're often used to thinking about this stuff in

terms of let's lose weight, let's make money, let's get a partner and I've been doing some — I guess you could say — recently I read a book called "The Surrender Experiment" which, as the title implies, the guy just decides to surrender to life. Gives up his preferences and gives up his goals and if someone comes up to him and says hey, you know, can you help me do this? He'd just say yes even if he didn't want to and that was the way he started to live. And so it's made me start to think about where do our goals come from? Like why is it that we, you know, not — it's fine to want to lose weight or it's fine to want to make money and all these things — the great things in life, but a lot of the — well I don't know, maybe a — some of the time, at least, these are driven by these needs and we wanna be someone or — driven by sort of an egoist need or a, you know, insecurity in us where there is — there's also goals that might come from a desire to express ourselves. Like I've been thinking about this, it's a bit like dancing. When you're dancing you're not really trying to get to the end of the song, you dance to express some kind of sort of energy or something inside you. It's not to do anything other than to simply express that. And so this is where it's interesting is what I wanted to ask was why or how do you come up with these, I don't know, you might not even think this matters, but how do you figure out what to do? So what to apply these 5 pillars to? Cause you got to apply it to something that's driven by this, "Oh I feel bad about myself so I'm gonna lose weight," but if you don't fix the core underlying emotional issue — losing the weight may or may not help. If you're not — do you understand what I mean?

Craig Ballantyne: Absolutely. So I'm gonna answer that in two ways. First of all, you know, we'll talk about that meaningful incentive. And so people at the start of the year, in most cases, they'll say, "Oh I want to lose 10 pounds this year." And that — combined with that time of year will get you through the first 2 weeks, right? You know 2 weeks of you'll have motivation enough to do almost anything, but because it's just this goal of losing 10 pounds it doesn't really mean anything to somebody. And so that's when people drop out. Now how do we figure out what really matters? And that comes down to what season of life you are in. And I learned this from a good friend of mine whose name is Luciano Del Monte who — he's a pastor and the father of Vince Del Monte who, you know, has sold a lot of information about building muscle on the internet. So Vince's dad, Luciano, said to me, "Craig people are in a season of life and what that means is we need to go and take a look at our priorities in life and figure out whether we're in a season of health, wealth, family or personal development." And so, for example, if someone is 55 years old and listening to this interview and they've built a nice career and they're kids are off to college and they're relationship is good they've probably let their health go. And so, you know, they're 20 pounds overweight, they got, you know, pre-diabetes — something like that. They're in a season of health and so, they need to wake up. And instead of writing or doing whatever you and I do first thing in the morning they need to focus on their health. So it might be preparing meals, that might be getting some exercise, and so that person is in a season of health. They're gonna build their goals around that, they've got a meaningful incentive and it's

also gonna help them build their vision for their life. And so that's one example. Now someone else, who might be closer to your age John, who might have a fiancé, who might say, "Oh we're gonna start a family in 2 years," that person's gonna be in a season of wealth building because they need to go and make money to buy the house, to take care of the kids, take care of their spouses, gonna be awful work for a couple months. So that person needs to be focused. Number one priority — get up and make money whether it's figuring out what to say on sales calls or to, you know, get new clients or to do whatever it is they need to be making money. Now they're not gonna let their relationships suffer, they're not gonna let their health suffer, but they're gonna be put off to the side a little bit as they focus on their wealth building priority. And they're gonna build a meaningful incentive around that. And then someone who's my mom's age, you know, she's got her kids out of the house, you know, she's financially secure, she's got her health — doing well enough. And so she is in this phase of volunteering and helping other people. And so she's gonna get up first thing in the morning and after she has breakfast she's gonna, you know, organize her volunteering schedule and check in with all the people that are supposed to be doing the volunteering, you know, taking this shift and that shift. And so everyone's in a season of life and they're gonna build their 5 Pillars around that, they're gonna build their rules for living around that, they're gonna build their structure for sleeping around that, they're gonna build their vision for their life around what season of life they are in right now.

John McIntyre: I really like that. I've read a lot about this topic and I haven't heard someone say it like that. I mean the hard thing, I think, is like these days — I'm just reading a book right now by Cal Newport called "Deep Work" and he mentions this a lot.

Craig Ballantyne: Oh yeah.

John McIntyre: You've read it, yeah?

Craig Ballantyne: Well I'm a big fan of Cal and he's like the angel on your shoulder where it's like, you know, or maybe not an angel on your shoulder, but I mean that's the kind of guy you would look to as — I would call him a virtual mentor. Like what would Cal do? You know like right now, would he be, you know, how would he focus and I look to him as a role model. I've never interacted with him. We do publish his stuff at Early to Rise because it is such great thinking. And I do take a lot of inspiration from it, but sorry to interrupt on that.

John McIntyre: No, no it's fine. He mentions this idea of like social media especially Facebook. So I probably spend, I don't know exactly how much right now, but I — social — Facebook's probably the main social media site I'm on — probably for most people. And the challenge with these sites is that we spend all day being, hopefully not all day, but big part of the day being bombarded with this image just of how great everyone else's life is

whether they're losing weight or they're getting married, they're having a kid, they're doing volunteering. And so one of the challenges that — and it's not just that. It's also — today with the amount of opportunities, you know, could be career opportunities, could be different diets we could go on, do we wanna, you know, if you're guard you wanna bulk up. Do you want to get lean; do you wanna get, you know, really big like a body builder? You just wanna get kinda, you know, more like just athletic. There's all these options that we have and plus it's compounded by social media where all these other cool things that people are doing and so, we're being, you know, hit by these fummel [?], fear of missing out, and so that's part of the challenge, I think, is figuring out what do you actually want versus what do you just think you want because, well, you know would be cool to be as ripped as that friend of yours. You know be married and having that baby like that — those friends or whatever.

Craig Ballantyne: Absolutely and so, John, to go back to the inspiration for my book, it's based on stoic philosophy on Epictetus and the teachings he has. And it's actually built on what I call the "3 C Formulas". I interpreted his teachings which is control what you can, cope with what you can't, and concentrate on what counts. So we control our mornings, we cope with the chaos of the world in the afternoon with the 5 Pillars and we concentrate on what counts in the evening with our vision. And so, you know, I'm a big fan of just cutting things. I mean I just can't, you know, keep up with everything in the world. Eventually you have to draw the line somewhere. I mean you can't have 9,000 friends on Facebook and

keep up with all of them. You have to decide which ones are gonna be most important to you and which ones you're gonna keep up with. And then you just kinda have to say, "You know what? I'm just have to let my interest in all these other people kinda wane because I literally can't read Facebook updates from 900 people a day." I mean you just can't do that and get ahead in life. And there's the quote from Warren Buffett that the difference between successful people and very successful people is that very successful people say no to almost everything. And so most people think of Warren Buffett, they see this old man at, you know, his annual event or they see him on TV a little bit. But he actually spends 90% of his work day reading. All he does is read annual reports from companies. And everyone thinks, "Oh he's got this great life, he's a billionaire," he reads annual reports which is boring as saw dust 90% of his day because he knows what really matters. And so, you know, another example is like Michael Phelps. Everybody would like to have, you know, 16 gold medals or whatever he's won, but nobody wants to spend 10 hours a day in the pool. But listen if you want to succeed you have to know where you're line is, you have to know when enough is enough — so if you want to make \$100,000 a year — you can have a much more leisurely life than somebody who wants to have an income of \$1 million a year. You have to realize though at \$100,000 a year that you're gonna sacrifice things compared, I mean obviously it's not a huge sacrifice — \$100,000 a year, but you know rela — you know respective to the person who's making \$1 million you can't be jealous of the fact they have a brand new Tesla and you don't, you have a 5 year old car.

And if you're okay with that, you know, going back to the stoic philosophy, we can only control our thoughts, our words, and our deeds. So if somebody buys something we control whether we're happy for them or whether we're envious of them. And if you're on social media it's gonna be much, much more difficult to be able to overcome all the envy that is naturally, you know, inhuman. And so if you have all these things coming to you and bombarding you it's gonna be tough to control your emotions. And so you have to just cut things off and you have to say, "Listen I'm gonna stay in touch with these 10 people, they are my core circle of 10 people. I'm just not gonna pay attention to all these other updates. I'm gonna contact them on a regular basis. I'm gonna stay in touch with other people — if somebody emails me I'm not gonna ignore them, but I just can't, you know, be on social media 24 hours a day keeping up with 900 people. And I'm gonna dedicate 4 hours a day to writing because this is what I do. I have to get my message out there to the world and change people's lives." I mean you could go on in Facebook and go back and forth with somebody for 30 minutes or you could send, you know, write an article that could be read by 5,000 — 10,000 people. And so which makes a bigger impact on the world? And if that matters to you, making an impact on the world matters to you, then you should better spend that 30 minutes. And so really it comes down to what's called "introspection". Taking a look at your life objectively and figuring out what you're doing. Right now is that the right thing for your right life, right now? And that's the biggest decision you should be make — or the decision you should be making all day every day. Is this

second coffee the right decision for my right life right now? Is this third glass of wine the right decision for my right life right now? Is going out salsa dancing 'til 11 'o clock at night the right decision for my right life right now? And in some cases darn right it's gonna be! You know staying up 'til 4 'o clock in the morning when you're 21 years old in a beach party in Thailand is the right decision for your right life. When you're 35 years old it's not — probably. And so you have to make these decisions properly at all the right times and you always have to be thinking about this and so, I've ranted and rambled on a lot here John.

John McIntyre: [Laughter].

Craig Ballantyne: I hope it's given some clarity to people because I thought about this a lot. You know I'm a 41 year old guy so; I've got a little bit of — a few years on a lot of people listening to this. And I just want to say people use your time wisely no matter what age you're at.

John McIntyre: Yeah, I mean, one thing I've been thinking about lately is this idea of tradeoffs and that we're often not aware that we're making each other [?]. When I was in Berlin I started thinking about, you know, I'm in Berlin spending a certain amount of money, you're living in a certain type of place — all that. And, you know, I thought — I was saying, "Oh I'm choosing to be here it's great. It's —" what I wasn't thinking about was all the other stuff I could've been doing which

may or may not of been, you know, been something that I would've rather been doing or whatever. And so, okay, you know one of the things I sacrificed was coming back to Thailand, for example. So staying in Berlin meant sacrificing Thailand. Coming to Thailand meant sacrificing Berlin and obviously, you know, by just you going to Berlin or Thailand — I'm also sacrificing being in say Australia, from where I'm from.

Craig Ballantyne: Right.

John McIntyre: And so it's interesting, you know, of choosing to have that third glass of wine than you were choosing not to have that early morning tomorrow when you feel great or if you're choosing to skip the gym and watch TV, you choose — you know at the same time you're making the choice not to be fit or to a, you know, to a road to your self-discipline and things like that. And we often don't — we sort of put these tradeoffs out of our mind cause their uncomfortable in the moment, but it's sort of through the introspection, that you mentioned, — when we think about it then we can make a proper decision about what we actually want to do cause we've sort of looked at the options, you know, squarely in the eye.

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah and one thing I'll add to people, you know, this whole concept of a bucket list has become quite popular, but the bucket list is like the shotgun approach to life. I mean if you got 50

things on your bucket list you're gonna be chasing these things — I mean do they really matter? Do you really need to go and bungee jump in New Zealand? I mean do really, really, really, really need to do that? I mean sure you could put it on your bucket list, but you know at the end of your life are you gonna die and you know be on your deathbed and think, "Oh man if I had only gone to New Zealand and bungee jumped," no what you're gonna think is, "You know there's these core people, I wish I spent more time with." That's what most people are gonna think at the end of their life. "I wish I spent more time with these core people," and maybe there was a couple of experiences they wished they had, but it's not this 50 bucket list items. And so you got to cut back and cut back and cut back and say, "These are the things I'm gonna do in my life and these are the people I'm gonna spend my life with because this is what really matters to me." And that's what people need to do is tighten it up. I mean sure you should have some great experiences on there, but you need to tighten it up and so there's not 41 things. It's like people that set 30 goals for the year, you're gonna do a poor job —

John McIntyre: [Laughter].

Craig Ballantyne: — on all 30 versus a person who has 3 goals. They're gonna conquer all 3 and they're gonna get better at 30 other things. And they're gonna be at a much better place than the person who had 30 goals.

John McIntyre: Right. I feel like we could talk about this stuff forever, but we need to wrap it up.

Craig Ballantyne: I know, I know.

John McIntyre: Before we sort of do wrap it up let's talk about Blacksmith Camp briefly. Tell me about that.

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah so Blacksmith Camp is where you and I met, John, it's something that we are now on our seventh year. So we started this in 2010 I believe. It was started by my friend, Simon Black, from sovereignman.com and my business partner here in Denver, Matt Smith, and we do this for young people generally between the ages of 18 and 30. We have 50 students, I think, every year from about 35 different countries. We teach them entrepreneurship, little bit of liberty talk — libertarian type politic talk. Basically just about helping people, your age John, get their freedom. Get their freedom in life, get out of the system, if they want to, realize that they don't have to live in Podunk, Iowa or Ohio or where ever you grew up, that there's a big world out there. You know we get people from Zimbabwe, Tajikistan, all these countries and a lot of people we never heard of. It's — I mean you've built incredible relationships at the event you went to, right?

John McIntyre: I think it was amazing for the time and the place — cause you got to be under 25, right?

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah, I mean, we get it up to about 30 now, but I mean there's just so many amazing people doing such amazing things — people that have sold tech companies at age 25, I mean, it blows my mind. It's just unbelievable what kids, you know, and I say that affectionately. Kids these days are —

John McIntyre: [Laughter].

Craig Ballantyne: — and I mean I've — some of my dearest friends and some of my employees and business partners have come through the Blacksmith Camp and so, this year we've filled up the camp, but people can go to [blacksmithcamp.com](http://blacksmithcamp.com) or [sovereignacademy.org](http://sovereignacademy.org) and find out — watch the video, find out more about the camp. They can go to [sovereignman.com](http://sovereignman.com) and learn more about Simon Black and if they want to meet amazing people and see other people who are just doing awesome things and who have that same freedom and success mindset then they should be there. So I do have to run John, but that's what I'll say about the camp and it just is my favourite part of the year because I love hanging around ambitious young people.

John McIntyre: Absolutely and me too. I think it's one of the best places to go and build a peer group if you're — just to be young upstart trying to go somewhere so, we'll let's call it here then. What — say if people want to learn more about you, learn about the book, where should they go and do that?

Craig Ballantyne: They can get the book on Amazon or they can get the full kit and watch a little video about it at [perfectdayformula.com](http://perfectdayformula.com) and see all the amazing marketers and business owners that have used the kit to make more money and have more success in life. And it's really fantastic there, and then they can join me at [craigvalentine.com](http://craigvalentine.com) or [earlytorise.com](http://earlytorise.com).

John McIntyre: Perfect. I'll have links to all that in the shownotes at [themcmethod.com](http://themcmethod.com). Craig thanks for coming on the show!

Craig Ballantyne: Yeah really great to speak with you again John. Hopefully we catch up again in person very soon.