



## Ray Edwards Show, Episode 302

### Have You Hit Your Upper Limit?

**Ray Edwards:** *Ray Edwards Show* episode 302. Have you hit your upper limit?

**Announcer 1:** It's *The Ray Edwards Show*. This is the podcast for prosperity with purpose.

[music].

**Ray:** I'm here in Cliff Ravenscraft's Next Level Studio in Northern Kentucky near Cincinnati. This is such an awesome place, Cliff. Thank you for inviting me into your world.

**Cliff Ravenscraft:** Ray, I am honored to have you here. More than anything, I'm excited to share with you something that means so much to me. Not that it's a materialistic thing, but it represents so much of what you and I believe in and what we teach others. The idea of what we're sitting in today is something that was a vision that I had for a space.

**Ray:** I know and I've seen the pictures of how you started with your laptop sitting up on a footstool or ottoman or something like that. Look where you've come now. This beautiful studio, it's amazing. This kind of realization of your dreams is available to anybody and that's so inspiring to me.

**Cliff:** You and I have been having conversations about all sorts of things. One of the things that came out of this book, *The Big Leap* by Gay Hendricks, is a quote that he recommends that you begin to work on believing and that is this phrase, "I always have plenty of money for all the things I truly want," "I always have plenty of money for all the things I truly want." The interesting thing about the house that we're in and this studio was built into this home. The fact is is that this house was literally impossible in my mind until an instant of a moment when I decided that it must happen. As soon as I decided it must happen, there was no question that in nine months, this house would exist and it did.

**Ray:** It is beautiful and I know the legend so well. When I stepped out of my car, what was the first thing I said?

**Cliff:** The house that podcasting built.

**Ray:** That's right. That's what I said. If you feel like this episode is already feeling kind of weird, just you wait.

**Cliff:** [laughs]

**Ray and Cliff:** Just you wait.



**Ray:** Okay. Before we get into what I want to talk about, I want to take a moment. I already recorded a segment with Sean that we're going play now. It will be inserted post-production where we talk about the coffee shop we just bought.

**Cliff:** Oh, cool.

**Ray:** That's going to tie into the rest of the conversation we're going to have, so I think you need to hear this first.

Okay. Lots of questions are coming in now because people are like, "You did what?"

**Sean Edwards:** We did what?

**Ray:** For several years now, we have been frequenting one of the best, possibly arguably the best artisan coffee shop in Spokane.

**Sean:** Some people do say the best.

**Ray:** Some people other than us.

**Sean:** Yes.

**Ray:** It's called Revel 77. We've been going there for coffee meetings, writing sessions for about five years.

**Sean:** Well, for me, only about three, but yes.

**Ray:** They've been open for five years.

**Sean:** Yes. They've been open for five years, yes.

**Ray:** Well, that's interesting. I was actually there before you.

**Sean:** Yes.

**Ray:** Well, anyway, recently, Sean walks into my office or the house. I can't remember whether it was here or the office.

**Sean:** I can't remember either.

**Ray:** We're doing this in our kitchen this morning because Sean's got a rush out to open the coffee shop.

**Sean:** To open the coffee shop.

**Ray:** Sean walks into the office, plops down in a chair, and says, "I have some sad news and an idea."

**Sean:** [laughs]

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**Ray:** Of course, I said, "What's the sad news?" You said-

**Sean:** "Well, Revel 77 was closing at the end of August."

**Ray:** What's the idea?

**Sean:** We could buy it and keep it open.

**Ray:** That's what we did.

**Sean:** That's what we did, absolutely.

**Ray:** September 8th, 2017, 3:00 PM, Pacific time, we signed the legal documents and took possession of Revel 77.

**Sean:** That's correct. We did a lot of things. We did it for a lot of reasons. There were a lot of personal reasons, "Hey, we just liked the coffee shop. We didn't want to see it closed."

**Ray:** We really were sad that they were going close it.

**Sean:** Not just sad that they were going to close the shop because we were going lose our shop, but we had gotten to know many of the people who went there and the employees. It became a little community center almost, like a little hub. To see it go was just going to be sad and we both love good coffee. For personal reasons, it was a great fit. Business-wise, it actually synergizes a lot better than I think people initially think.

**Ray:** I've got a couple of things I wanted to bring up here. First of all, one of the questions that has come up for me anyway is, "Are you closing down your internet business?"

**Sean:** [laughs]

**Ray:** "Are you now our coffee shop guy?"

**Sean:** "Right, yes. Oh, yes, we're done." [laughs]

**Ray:** "Yes, that's it, last podcast. It's been fun. It's been real."

**Sean:** [laughs]

**Ray:** That's a joke. We're growing, not closing. This is part of our strategic growth plan. It's been part of our plan for quite some time. When you came back to Spokane, you came on board as our director of strategic development.

**Sean:** Right.

**Ray:** One of the visions you had for us was-

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**Sean:** - was to buy local businesses that had great potential, but just hadn't broken through that barrier to really make them successful in ways that we knew how to fix obviously.

**Ray:** We felt like that's a unique skill set that we have. We want to be investors in businesses, not operators in businesses because as one of our friends says, "Operators get tired, investors get wealthy."

**Sean:** Yes, right.

**Ray:** We're doing some operation right now in the transition, but this is part of our strategic plan. It's not like something that came out of the blue like, "Oh, I want to buy a coffee shop." We're looking to buy businesses. We're just looking for the right one to start with. This could not have been more perfect.

**Sean:** No. There's so many things that lined up about this one that made sense for us. I mean, A, it was already a business. I already mentioned that we had said that we've been a part of, we've been patrons of, and we believed in. We had proven that by paying them lots of money. [laughs]

**Ray:** Yes, lots of money. It's funny because people who listen to this podcast had gotten to know this is our favorite shop. Because we would occasionally go in and somebody behind the counter like Katie would say, "Hey, somebody bought you a gift card from the internet. One of your internet friends."

**Sean:** One of your internet friends. [laughs] There are actually lots of great ways for these to synergize as well because we predominantly deal with people with online businesses, but we do work with a lot of brick-and-mortar businesses. However, one of the constant questions we get is, "Will this work for brick-and-mortar businesses?" We realized, "Well, hey, this is a great thing that we can do as well." We can say, "Hey, look, we now have a brick-and-mortar business," and, "Hey, look, these things work."

**Ray:** Somebody on Facebook when I made the announcement, I can't remember who said this, but he said, "But Ray, marketing doesn't work for brick-and-mortar businesses."

**Sean:** Oh, I saw that. Yes, that was funny. [laughs]

**Ray:** I just jotted down a few reasons that this was an important decision for us and we're so excited about it. We're really in a hurry. This is going to be a short podcast this week because Sean has got to go open the shop. I've got to go catch a plane to Nashville for a trip I decided to take two days ago.

**Sean:** It's been crazy around here in the Edwards world.

**Ray:** Here are some of the reasons that I feel like this is why we made the decision and why it's a good decision. Number one, and I think, emotionally, this is the most



important reason for me. To save a vital thriving business that serves as a gathering place for a diverse and eclectic group of people.

**Sean:** Absolutely, I love that verbiage. You must be a copywriter.

**Ray:** I'd been known to write a little copy every now and then.

**Sean:** [laughs]

**Ray:** That's really important to me. When I was faced with the prospect of it closing down, I realized I don't want it to close down.

**Sean:** In even moments where I questioned whether I wanted to go through with the purchase.

**Ray:** There's been those moments.

**Sean:** Yes, there have been a few of those moments.

**Ray:** Like every other day.

**Sean:** I thought, "Well, how would I feel if Revel was gone?" That would be a worse feeling, I think.

**Ray:** This is going to upset some people, but I'm going to say it anyway. I feel like this like I would feel if my church was going to close.

**Sean:** Yes, a little bit. [laughs]

**Ray:** No. Come on, you guys. Number two, to diversify our income streams. This is a money deal for us. This is an investment. We're doing some operating right now, but we plan to have somebody else run it and we plan to collect the profits. We plan for it to be big fat profits. Number three, to create and grow a business asset. What that means is it's not just a casual thing. It's something that's worth money that at some point if you wanted to cash in and sell it, we could, but we don't intend to.

**Sean:** No.

**Ray:** Not for a long, long time. Number four, to provide a place for our online audience to come hang out with us.

**Sean:** Yes, absolutely. I'm really excited about that one. I've been surprised about the number of people that I haven't -- I mean, Jim Diamond came in the other day.

**Ray:** Yes, Big Cat Daddy.

**Sean:** Big Cat Daddy. He came in and I think he got an Americano, but I hadn't seen him in years.



**Ray:** Frank Sousa showed up?

**Sean:** Frank Sousa showed up yesterday. Well, when this airs, it won't be yesterday. Yes, Frank Sousa showed up.

**Ray:** I got an email from Robbie Miles, "I'm going to come by."

**Sean:** "I'm going to come by," yes. Who knows how many people we might see, but we just thought it would be fun to create a place for our business associates and friends to stop by.

**Ray:** Now, we don't have a date to give you just yet. Soon, within the next couple of weeks from the time you're hearing this, we will have an open house for our internet friends. Everybody's welcome, of course. For those who listen to the podcast or read the blog or are on the email list, we'll tell you in advance what the date is so you can come. The reason we want to make it a special date is because I have to be there.

**Sean:** Right. Both Jim and Frank came by when you happen to not be there.

**Ray:** When we have the open house day, I'll be there all day.

**Sean:** Or at least during the window whenever we say.

**Ray:** You can come by. You can know for sure if I show up during these hours, Ray will be there, Sean will be there. We can hang out and talk and drink coffee.

**Sean:** Coffee, yes.

**Ray:** Because if you come, you need to buy some coffee.

**Sean:** You should buy some coffee. [laughs] It's going to be good coffee. If you've never had good coffee, if you're just used to Starbucks, watch hey. You know what? Some people that's what they want, that's fine.

**Ray:** That's right.

**Sean:** I just want to invite you --

**Ray:** Some people's idea of fine dining is McDonald's.

**Sean:** Right. I just want to invite you to a new world of artisan coffee.

**Ray:** The next reason I had jotted down here was to experience the fun of using our marketing chops on a retail business.

**Sean:** Absolutely and it is fun. I mean, we have so many ideas. We don't even know what to do with them all.

**Ray:** Well, we've already seen. You just did a little Facebook promotion.

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**Sean:** Oh, just a little bit, yes.

**Ray:** We saw a bump in business immediately and we're like, "Hey, this is fun."

**Sean:** I mean, because we know that they work for our business and we know that they work for businesses like ours that are predominantly online. We know they worked in brick-and-mortar.

**Ray:** We have a lot of clients and students who are brick-and-mortar people and they've used our stuff and they've done well.

**Sean:** It's different when we have to do it.

**Ray:** Yes. It's different when the expenses of running the business, the net every month is ours to turn. We have a little more skin in the game then.

**Sean:** It's fun because there's lots of ideas. There are strategies that we've been employing on the online world that we are even adapting and modifying and we're excited to see what works.

**Ray:** I know you got to get rolling.

**Sean:** Yes, I do.

**Ray:** If anybody's listening to the podcast and they decide, "I want to come to the coffee shop," even before you have the open house.

**Sean:** You certainly can.

**Ray:** The address is?

**Sean:** 3223 East 57th Avenue, Suite K. It's called Revel 77, Spokane, Washington. It's the top of the South Hill. Again, that's 3223 East 57th Avenue.

**Ray:** Cool.

**Sean:** Sweet.

**Ray:** We'll see you there.

**Sean:** All right.

**Ray:** Okay. You may be asking yourself, "How does that fit into a conversation with Ray and Cliff?" Well, we have to now take a different track for a moment. We have to talk about a book called *The Big Leap*. I'll tell you the story from my viewpoint. I got this cryptic text message from Cliff, I'm paraphrasing now, saying, "Have you read the book *The Big Leap*? If not, I recommend that you do it right away. It was recommended to me by our friend Dan Miller and it's changed my life. I think it'll change yours," or something like that. I thought, "Well, that's a big deal." I'm going to

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rearrange my reading list, which nobody gets to rearrange Ray's reading list. I have like 75 books on it. Normally, when somebody recommends a book to me, it would be number 76. Because it was Cliff, it went to number one and I read it that day. How did I respond to you?

**Cliff:** I'm going to paraphrase, "Cliff, it was an interesting read, but I don't get what the big deal is. Can you tell me what you got out of this?"

**Ray:** Then I got a response or responses, dozens of them through text messaging. It was the longest text message exchange I've ever been part of. It wasn't really an exchange. It was a torrent.

**Cliff:** It was a torrent. It was one-sided. You asked, I shall deliver.

**Ray:** Cliff said some things to me in those messages that really touched me in my heart and I just felt like, "Oh, I really missed the point of this book. I've got to go back and reevaluate this." I went back and read it again. What I would like to do so that people have the context is if you could give a quick -- you're so good at this -- if you give a quick recap of Gay Hendricks' book, *The Big Leap*, what it's about and what it meant to you, and especially go through the zones.

**Cliff:** Okay. That's not going to be super quick like 30 seconds. Dan asked me to do it in 30 seconds. I just can't do it in 30 seconds, but here's what I tell you. The book is called *The Big Leap* and it's talking about taking the big leap from your zone of excellence into your zone of genius. I'm going to go back and I'll talk about the zones in just a moment, but here's the premise of the book.

The premise of the book is that we all have a thermostat in our lives where we have a comfort zone of how comfortable we feel with the amount of financial success, relationship success, and also business success that we have in our lives. We have this thermostat that says this is what we feel worthy of, this is what we feel is acceptable, this is what we feel is right and does not go against this -- Some of us from the Christian perspective says this is what we feel is spiritually acceptable, that what God would allow because we don't want to get on that slippery slope of going full-on into living into the world and all this worldly possession stuff. We have all kinds of things that have conditioned us to set a particular setting on our thermostat.

The idea is that financially is the easiest way for me to explain this. If somebody has gotten to the place where they're making \$100,000 a year throughout their employment or their own business that they're operating, the reality is that those people are going to roughly make \$100,000 a year every year. They may have a couple thousand below or a couple thousand above. Even if they go up, it's going to be incremental because that's where the thermostat is. If you're going to make a change, you want to make them slowly because you want to adjust your comfort zone slowly.

What happens is there's often times potential, I would say "always potential," in our life to really turn that thermostat up a lot. For example, it's possible for somebody

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who is making \$100,000 a year to, instead, the very next year, make \$500,000 a year. There are people who have stepped into that. They tapped into something called their zone of genius. As a result of operating in their zone of genius, something clicked and financially their income went way through the roof. What happens is he has this thing called the "upper limit challenge" or the "upper limit problem."

The upper limit problem says, "Whoa, wait a second. That's way beyond your thermostat. That's way beyond your comfort zone. You do not feel worthy of that much success and nobody else should have that kind of level of success. You did not work hard enough for that success." Because of that, you no longer feel comfortable. You're out of integrity with what you feel is right in the world. What happens is you will experience things in often times. It could be a physical ailment that your body produces and it is designed to bring you back down to your comfort zone. You may do things in your business.

By the way, Ray, I've had this experience. My thermostat, for the last several years, has been \$20,000 a month income in my business. As a result of that, there are times I've had a podcasting A to Z that generated \$65,000 in one month. I'm like, "Whoa." That was way up there, right? I felt awesome. The next thing you know, the next three or four months, I coasted. I coasted and I coasted and I coasted. Even though I could have reproduced that over and over again, I decided to coast. Because I recognized, well, that's three months of income right there.

**Ray:** Interesting.

**Cliff:** That's the thermostat.

**Ray:** Not that's the new normal.

**Cliff:** That's not the new normal.

**Ray:** That's three months of income.

**Cliff:** I remember when we used to have these things, these big upticks, Stephanie would say, "Hey, we have a lot of expenses coming. The kids are back in school. I need more money in our paycheck this month than we normally pay ourselves." I'm like, "I don't know, Stephanie." She goes, "Well, didn't we just have this big huge financial windfall that you were so excited about?" I'm like, "Yes."

She goes, "Well, the money is there, right?" It's there, but there's no way for me to know that that's going to happen again. The reality is that I could have duplicated that. If I was honest with myself, I knew I could duplicate it again. It was outside of my comfort zone to do so. That's this upper limit challenge, it's a part of it. There's so much more.

**Ray:** Yes, so and this upper limit challenge is a big deal. I want to camp on this for just a moment because, earlier, we're talking about the fact that we have both been



for the last couple of years, I think, self-confessed, self-proclaimed introverts. The explanation that I give people when they say, "Well, what do you mean by that? Because you don't seem introverted." I said, "Well, if you're an introvert, being around people drains you."

I would have this thing after I would do live events. I do seminars and workshops like you do. I speak at events like you do. I would always feel drained at the end of the event and I would go home and would suffer from what I called post-event depression syndrome. I even made up a big fancy important sounding label for it so I could be sure and experience it. Why? Your theory is, it's part of the upper limit problem.

**Cliff:** Well, that theory just came to me recently as a result of reading this book because I experienced the same thing. I called it post-vacation blues. I didn't come up with that label. It's in Wikipedia.

**Ray:** Oh, my gosh.

**Cliff:** Do a search on Wikipedia, "post-vacation blues." It's there and it will tell you all about it and I'm like, "Sign me up." That's what I got. The whole idea is that you go on vacation or you go on this experience and you experience more joy and elatement, more excitement than you normally feel. It's beyond where your thermostat is for joy in your life. All of a sudden, you come back. Now, you're back to normal and all those other stuff. For me, where I experienced this concept of post-vacation blues more notably than any other time, is when I go to a conference and I speak at an event.

For days at this conference, I'm confronted with people all the time who want to tell me how much they loved my content, how much my content has inspired them, how much it's made their lives better, and I feel so much like, "This is incredible." It's like, "Wow, this feels awesome," and then there's this question that the author of the book, *The Big Leap*, Gay Hendricks, he says, "You have to ask yourself. How much joy and excitement are you willing to allow into your life?"

**Ray:** Repeat that, please.

**Cliff:** "How much joy and excitement are you willing to allow in your life?"

**Ray:** I experienced the same kind of thing that you described. I go to an event and I have people giving me feedback about how awesome what I shared was, about the impact I've had in their life. I'm really feeling like I've contributed like I've made a difference, I've made an impact, and what I've done has been important to other people. Not that I want to be important in their eyes, but I want to have an impact on their life so they can see themselves the way God sees them, the way He made them to be. I go home and I'm on my way home. Typically, I would start to feel this letdown, this sadness, this depression. I would describe it as, now, I'm going back to the real world.



**Cliff:** Because what you experienced there can't be real.

**Ray:** No.

**Cliff:** Nobody's worthy of experiencing that all of the time.

**Ray:** The theory is my psychological, unconscious mind has now decided, "I'm going to reset your thermostat. You are feeling too good. You don't deserve to feel this good. That's what you believe, so I'm going to fix that for you." That is such a powerful theory. I feel like just when you spoke it, I felt like that feels so right. I feel like that is the explanation for why I've had these feelings in the past. I even talked about it with my wife, "Why do I go?" I say, "Lynn, why do I go and have this wonderful experience that is inarguably real, that feels great, that had a positive impact on other people and yet I feel so let down afterwards?"

Now, I believe I know the answer. There's a friend of mine who described his phenomena a little bit differently. He's speaking about grace, the grace of God. He says, "We all feel like God's grace is amazing. We get so much from Him. He gives to us freely all His gifts, all of His riches as it says in the Scripture." He said, "But we all have a limit how much grace we can accept." He described it this way. If I came to you today, Cliff, and I wrote you a check for \$25,000 and I said, "I love you so much. I just want to give you this gift," how would you react?

**Cliff:** I've been on the receiving end of something like that and I can tell you my experience then. I don't know how this will fit into what you're saying-

**Ray:** Go ahead. Just say the real thing.

**Cliff:** - but I was elated and overjoyed and I'm like, "Wow."

**Ray:** Cool, I think I would react the same way. Now, I come back tomorrow and I say, "You know what? I want to do it again. I write you another check for \$25,000," how do you feel now?

**Cliff:** I would begin to question, "Why is this happening and why would you want to do this and what did I do to provide so much value to you that you" --

**Ray:** I come back a third day. I give you \$25,000 more.

**Cliff:** Knowing what I know today about the upper limit problem?

**Ray:** Yes.

**Cliff:** I can tell you right now I would graciously be able to accept those over and over again.

**Ray:** But before you read this book.



**Cliff:** Before I read this book, I would eventually get to the place where I'd have to deny it.

**Ray:** Yes, and most people would. Most of us would say at some point, it'd be like, "This is too much. I don't know why you're doing this, but I don't deserve this. I didn't earn it. I don't know if what you're doing is wise. I don't know what you want from me." Because inwardly, what we're saying is there's something either wrong with you, there's something wrong with me, or there's something wrong with both of us, but this cannot be real. You cannot be this gracious. You cannot be this generous. I cannot receive this much goodness from you.

**Cliff:** Some people, I would say they would even say to themselves, it's like, "Okay. I'll agree to accept this, but I have to give it all away." You see what I'm saying?

**Ray:** Yes.

**Cliff:** Or there must be something that I have to do with this money-

**Ray:** This is a test.

**Cliff:** - that there must be something that has to be -- I certainly can't use this for anything that's pleasurable for myself. Maybe the first check, I can take the family on a vacation, but I would need to do something more responsible other than just experience the joy and other things that come from this. I'd have to give it to other people. I'd have to pay it forward.

**Ray:** Oh, my gosh. We're going to come back to that. Now, another thing that Gay says in the book that made me angry when I first read it was he says that when we hit this upper limit or we hit the point where we feel like, "This is as good as I can feel. I don't deserve to feel any better than this," sometimes we get ill, we get sick, we have physical pain or illness that our psychological makeup causes to happen to our body. It made me angry because I felt like he was saying, "Well, if you're sick, it's your fault."

**Cliff:** Let me read this so that I can give people -- These are exact words transcribed the first time I was listening to the audio book and I took bullet point notes.

**Ray:** I'm impressed.

**Cliff:** "Getting sick or hurt as a result of upper limiting, you ask yourself, 'What is the underlining positive message trying to break through?' Our unconscious minds are not rational and sober. His unconscious mind's solution is to punish him with a killer migraine for feeling so much ecstasy." That's the word I was looking for. "Many times, pains" -- He's not saying all times, but, "Many times, pains and symptoms are a sign from the body that something is out of integrity here."

Then he says, "The next time you find yourself with a stomachache, a throbbing headache, a stubbed toe, ask yourself if you might be upper limiting. Sometimes a



headache is just a headache. But often if you look a little deeper, you'll find that it's an expression of your upper limit problem, then as a signal that you need to expand instead of contract, that it's telling you that it's time to open up and embrace a new high watermark of positive energy that's trying to establish itself in you. Underneath the headache might be an insight that's as powerfully positive as the pain is negative. The surface pain is often caused by resisting the underlying positive message. Sometimes the positive message is a message we are afraid to hear such as, "It's time to quit my job and do something else."

**Ray:** Okay. This is perfect. Just keep that thought in mind. Well, let me just share this. I have for some time been working on a book that I finished recently. It's called *Permission to Prosper*. I've had numerous people tell me when I tell them about the book, that they've said to me, "Ray, I feel like that's your life's message. That's what you bring to people. That's what you carry. You said to me that you feel like that's my particular brand of genius."

I won't go any further than that. There's more I want you to say about that. I finished this book and I had a conversation with someone yesterday, the night before last. This person is very influential and we were talking about the book. He was asking me questions about it. He said, "I think I can put this book in the hands of a particular celebrity."

**Cliff:** By the way, I just want to make sure because, of course, I got a little distracted for a second, but I just want to make sure. We're talking about your book, *Permission to Prosper*?

**Ray:** Yes.

**Cliff:** A very influential friend of yours is telling you this?

**Ray:** Yes, about my book.

**Cliff:** About your book.

**Ray:** He says, "I really believe in this book, Ray, that you've written. I want to put it in the hands of this celebrity person," who if he did put it in this person's hands, and this person endorsed the book, it could mean instant bestseller status. It could mean millions of people will have this book in their hands. That's what it could mean. I was elated. I was excited.

**Cliff:** What's the word? You were experiencing ecstasy.

**Ray:** I was. I was high. I was literally high. I got in my car and I was driving here yesterday. It's a four-and-a-half hour drive. I was feeling that same ecstasy even the day after that it happened. I began to think about what that could mean. I began to develop a migraine. It got so bad I had to stop the car at a rest area and get out of the car to get some fresh air, take some deep breaths, and something occurred to



me. I thought, "Am I upper limiting? Did I just experience ecstasy because something fantastically wonderful just happened to me?"

I'm telling myself, "You don't deserve this. You don't deserve to feel this good, so stop it. Here's some pain." Within five minutes of asking that question, I didn't do anything. I didn't chant or I didn't even pray quite honestly. I just asked myself the question, "Is this what's happening?" Within five minutes, my migraine was gone.

**Cliff:** Now, because I know that you're' still going through this. You've read the book now twice, but did you remember to think about what's the underlying positive thing that is trying to establish a new high watermark for me?

**Ray:** I didn't think in those terms, but I did think about, what's the new thing that's happening that I'm resisting? I didn't think about that. The new thing that's happening that I'm resisting is this message. If I carry it fully, it means I have to let go of things that I've been relying on to create my income. The things that I'm very good at that I'm comfortable doing, but I need to focus on this new thing, this book, this message that we have permission to prosper, that it's okay in God's eyes for us to prosper. I had that experience then I got here and I had you carry my bag in from the car because, why?

**Cliff:** You told me that you had some back pain.

**Ray:** Yes. Only this morning after I told you about the migraine thing that I realized in the middle of us recording your podcast, "Wait a minute. Was my back pain upper limiting? Did I move it from my head to my back?" While we're doing the podcast, you're talking. What did I do?

**Cliff:** I didn't know what you were doing, but I thought maybe you had your laptop bag and you were going to reach down and get something. I was like, "What's Ray doing over there?"

**Ray:** I stood up and I was touching my toes because the moment I had that thought, my back pain was gone. I believe that was upper limiting still. Still. Now, I'd like to pause that thought and have you explain about the zones.

**Cliff:** Okay. What Gay Hendricks says is that when it comes to the work that we do in this world, there are four different zones that we could work in. The first zone is what we call the "zone of incompetence." This is where you are doing things in your work that you're not good at. In fact, there are lots of people out there who are better than you and you waste your time. You want me to give some of the same examples that I gave in my own show?

**Ray:** Yes, absolutely.

**Cliff:** Because they came to me as we were recording for my show. The first one is when I started this business, I had to figure out all kinds of things related to taxes and stuff like that. There's this Kentucky State Sales Tax Report that's due annually.

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The very first time I got it was this legal sheet of paper with all of these financial questions on it. You take block 37 plus 27 plus this one. Multiply it and add it. It should be 60% of that. I'm like, "Oh, my God."

**Ray:** It's all part of the Paperwork Reduction Act, Cliff.

**Cliff:** What happened was the very first time I had this, I spent I think it was a day and a half trying to figure out how to complete this form. Completely in my zone of incompetence. The thing is I did it. Oh, by the way, I had procrastinated all the way up until the deadline. I got it done right at the deadline, but it took an entire day and a half of my business to do that one form. Next year, I did the same thing although I did get it done in one day instead of a day and a half. Eventually, I got to the place. It's like, "You know what? Every year, I'm teaching myself how to do this."

I think it was around year three or year four, I started making notes on one of them. I made a copy of it and said, "Just go pull this from this line of the profit loss." I got to the place where I feel like it's in my zone of competence. Maybe, but actually no, that's not true. Because there are still people who out there can do it a whole lot better than I can. Even today, filling out that form is in my zone of incompetence. Because the reality is, is I could print my P&L statement and send the form over to my CPA. In five minutes, somebody in that office would be able to fill that form out for me.

**Ray:** Let me go you one better. In my business, anything that has anything to do with accounting is definitely in my zone of incompetence. I don't touch it.

**Cliff:** By the way, this isn't just for business owners. Even if you're an employee, wherever you work, you really ought to be working to make a leap from your zone of incompetence to your zone of competence first.

**Ray:** Just an example so that you understand, it's not just for business people. When it comes to handyman projects, that is my zone of incompetence. I should not handle tools. I finally came to grips with that and became so happy when I realized, "Oh, this is a handyman project. Somebody else needs to do this because I'm incompetent here and I don't have any passion to invest in trying to become competent.

**Cliff:** Right, that's the zone of incompetence. The second level of incompetence is where you're spending your time, effort and energy doing things that you're competent at. These are things that you're good at. For example, and an example for me is mowing the lawn. I'm competent, I can pull the string on a lawnmower and I can walk around and all of that stuff. I'm very competent at doing that. But the reality is, is that a good use of my time? Because there are countless other people who are equally as capable and competent of doing that.

For some people, it's even in their zone of excellence or maybe even in their genius to do it. Anyway, the idea is that the zone of competence, you don't want to be doing too much work that just about anybody else can do. In fact, for those of who are

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worried about maybe losing your employment, the chances of you losing your employment are greater if you spend a majority of your time in your zone of competence, because then if they want to get rid of you, you're easily replaced.

**Ray:** Yes, let me give you an example, if you work in McDonald's and your job is pushing the buttons on that little pad when people order, just you wait because McDonald's at some point is going to figure out, we can just flip that screen around and have the customer do that and we don't have to pay people to do that. Now, you are eliminated because that's a zone of competence that has pretty low value.

**Cliff:** Yes. The thing is, I think, there's a progression through these steps. You start out some things of competence and the thing is, when you get into your position at work or in your -- I think we should probably transition back into where we are; self-employed, business owners kind of people. What happens is you want to get to the place where you're delegating out your zone of competence and you want to move into what's called your zone of excellence. You may have been doing all of these different tasks and you realize there are some things that you're really good at.

That you're uniquely gifted for, and these are the things that when you do them, you do them at a level that's better than other people. This is called your zone of excellence. For me, that's been the technical ins and outs, explaining the technical details of podcasting. What is an RSS feed? I could teach you that, it's things that there have been people who have been researching, "How do I set up an RSS feed? What equipment do I order? What cables do I need? How do hook those cables up? How do I get Skype recorded?" How do I do all of the technical details of launching successfully a podcast?

There have been people who, Ray, have been trying for sometimes two or three months, I've had people who have spent over a year, sometimes I've had people who have been trying for two to three years to figure it out. I could teach them how to do it in one afternoon. That's my zone of excellence.

**Ray:** My zone of excellence is writing sales copy and coming up with marketing campaigns, and also teaching people how to write sales copy and come up with marketing campaigns. Something that I've told people many times is, "If you're trying to figure out what your business should be about, there's a line from a book by Jeffrey Folks, the book is called *How To Make Big Money in Your Own Small Business* and he says, 'Your business should be based on something you do that comes easy to you but it's difficult for others'". I think that's pretty good advice but it definitely plants you I believe right in your zone of excellence. I used to think that being in my zone of excellence was the Promised Land.

I had arrived in the land of milk and honey.

**Cliff:** Yes, the ideal is that -- The thing is, if you're ultimate goal is financial success at standards that you have set for yourself that is easily within your thermostat settings, whatever your thermostat -- Your zone of excellence should be able to



propel you to the upper ends of your current thermostat settings of your financial success.

**Ray:** The upper limit if you will.

**Cliff:** Exactly. In fact, once programmed, this thermostat or whatever, this is a quote from the book he says, "Once programmed, our upper limit thermostat setting holds us back from enjoying all the love, financial abundance and creativity that's rightfully ours. It keeps us in our zone of competence or at best our zone of excellence. It prevents us from living in the ultimate destination of the journey which is our zone of genius".

That leads us to the fourth zone which is the zone of genius. The zone of genius, the way I would describe it just off the top of my head,

paraphrasing all the stuff running through my head. Is it's the thing that you are uniquely gifted to do in the world. I would even go further to paraphrase it is, it is the thing that you were put on this earth to do.

**Ray:** What would you say that thing is for you?

**Cliff:** I have been put on this earth to communicate to others. The things that I have learned and am learning, and experiencing in my life in a real and authentic way. Through communicating to them in an entertaining, educational, encouraging, and inspirational way. So that people when they hear my voice, something happens inside of them that unlocks things, that sets them free to embrace more of who God created them to be, that is my zone of genius.

**Ray:** Yes. When I sent you the message that said, "What's the big deal?" [laughs] And you began to feedback to me, you very much felt free to say, "Well, here's where I see you operating in your zone of excellence, Ray. This is what I see as your zone of genius". Would you share what you said about those things?

**Cliff:** First of all, I thought for a second, "Well, okay, maybe this book probably isn't a big as deal to Ray, because Ray's already tapping into his zone of genius and maybe he just already understands this and I'm just late to the party and Ray's like, 'Yeah, I learned that years ago'". I haven't told you that yet, but that was my impression.

**Ray:** I was thinking, "I must be kind of dumb, because I don't get it".

**Cliff:** Really?

**Ray:** Yes.

**Cliff:** Because I was thinking, I said, "Well, I must be kind of dumb, because Ray probably is like, 'Dude, you're just now discovering this?'"



**Ray:** Oh, no.

**Cliff:** Isn't that funny how we work?

**Ray:** It's totally not where I was coming from.

**Cliff:** Basically, what I said is, here's what I see, Ray. Maybe it's not as big of deal to you, because I see that you have achieved in many areas of my life where I want to achieve success. I see you've already reached greater success in many of those areas so far. When it comes to the upper limit challenge of the financial mindset and so many other areas. The other thing is, I've seen you actively pursuing your zone of genius, but I don't think that you had the language to wrap around this stuff. So what I told you in a text message is that, in a string, or a rope of text messages, which is a callback to when Ray was on my show.

But anyway, when I sent you these messages, I said, "I believe that for you, Ray, you're zone of excellence is copy-writing. I believe that your zone of excellence, your comfort zone if you will, it's easy for you to produce X number of dollars, whatever your thermostat is financially. Whatever it is that you want to create, as far as financial abundance for yourself and your family, and in your community, or whatever. You can easily do that without too much internal struggle, you could easily just turn on a new launch for copy-writing academy.

You could repeat that over and over again, you could create more things out about copy-writing, you could create 18 different other products about copy-writing, and you're going to operate in your zone of excellence, that's your comfort zone. But I believe what your true zone of genius is, is this message that you have that will unlock people from the limiting beliefs that they have about money, and what God desires for them to be in this world. I really believe your zone of genius is basically, I believe in my heart, is a replacement for the book *Thou Shall Prosper* for Christians around the world".

**Ray:** That book is called *Permission to Prosper*, that's the book that I've just finished writing. I've been processing this ever since we had that text conversation, ever since God arranged for me to show up here at your house, even though I had already cancelled the trip. That's a whole other story. But I want to take just a moment, because I've got something I want to play for people, but I want to go to the questions that, Gay, as you answer to help figure, if you're thinking to yourself, "I don't know what my zone of genius is". there's a way to figure it out.

**Cliff:** Yes, he proposes that you ask yourself four questions and the fourth questions has some additional questions within the questions. The first question, if you want to discover what is my zone of genius, the first question you ask yourself, what do I most love to do? This is something that I can do for long stretches of time without

getting tired or bored.



**Ray:** Now, earlier we were talking about this on your show and I made a joke and I said, "Watching *Star Trek* is in my zone of genius?"

**Cliff:** I said, "Yes, it could be". If you love to do that and you could do it for long stretches of time without getting tired or bored, I'm saying it's possible that that could be within your zone of genius.

**Ray:** Then after we laughed a little bit I said, "Well, it's interesting because the thing that all the *Star Trek* shows have in common, is they have this positive optimistic view of the possibility, and the potential of humankind. How people are at heart good, and that we're going to become better with time". Then I realized that from the days of the original series something that has been buried deep within my psyche, is the saying that is spoken by Vulcans which is.

**Cliff:** Live long and prosper.

**Ray:** Now, my book is a spiritual book that has its roots in the Judeo-Christian tradition. I would like to now play for you an interview that a reporter did with Leonard Nimoy, who played the role of Mr. Spock in the episode where that phrase originated. Gene Roddenberry didn't come up with this phrase, Leonard Nimoy did. Let's get the story from Mr. Spock himself.

**Interviewer:** This has a long history, it traces back to your childhood in a very compelling moment, do you mind telling me?

**Leonard Nimoy:** We got a beautiful script written by Theodore sturgeon, wonderful science fiction writer and the script was called *Amok Time AM okay, Amok Time*. It was lovely. It was poetic, it was exciting, it was dramatic and it was about Spock having to go home to his home planet of Vulcan to fulfill a marriage betrothal. Go home or die was the story. Kirk had to get Spock to his home planet to save his life. When we got there, we discovered that the wedding ceremonies would be performed by a character named T'Pol.

Played by Celia Lovsky, wonderful Viennese actress. She's the matriarch of the planet, she's a powerful figure on Vulcan. I'm to approach her and I'm a very sensitized to the idea that we're seeing other Vulcans for the first time. We're on a Vulcan planet for the first time, what's Vulcan all about? What are the morals of the culture, or what can I find, what can I show an audience or bring to an audience about the Vulcan people? As I'm approaching her, we say hello to each other and she said welcome home, I don't remember exactly what I said. What the dialogue was, but I said to the director, "I think we need something that Vulcans do when they greet each other because humans have certain things that we do.

We shake hands, we salute each other, we bow to each other in certain cultures". He said, "What would you like to do?" That's where I came up with this. It came from an experience that I had that obviously made a big impression on me because that happened when I was about eight or nine years old. I was in the synagogue with my family, an Orthodox synagogue; the men sitting downstairs, the women upstairs at

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the back end. With my grandfather, my father and my brother and myself comes a point in the service where a group of men, there must have been five or six of them is my memory.

They are called Kohanim, they are members of the priestly tribe of the Hebrews. At this particular moment they get up in front of the congregation, face the congregation from the stage was known as a Bema in Hebrew. They chant a particular prayer which is translated to be, "The Lord bless you and keep you, may the Lord cause his countenance to shine upon you, may the Lord turn his graciousness unto you and grant you peace". They chanted, were chanting it in Hebrew. I'm too young to know what it meant, I'm too young to know why they were gesturing but they were doing this with their hands facing the congregation.

While they were doing that my dad was saying to me, "Don't look". While there's this crazy fervent chanting going on. They're shouting this prayer in Hebrew. They're shaking, they're rocking and it was a frenzy. I peeked, I saw what they were doing. I immediately went towards to learn how to do that [laughs], I had no idea why they were doing it and much later I found out that this is the shape of the letter Shin in the Hebrew alphabet. Which is the first letter of the word Shaddai, which is a name for God.

The sense is that they're using a symbol of God's name as they bless the congregation with that blessing. You're not supposed to look because,

I was told many years later that during that benediction, the shafina, also starts with a sheen, comes into the sanctuary to bless the congregation, and this is the feminine aspect of God. And you don't want to see her because the light that emanates from the deity could hurt you, could blind you or even worse. So, we introduced it that day. The director said, "Okay, let's do that".

**Interviewer:** Wow.

**Leonard:** And that's how it got into the show. Immediately, immediately on the street people started doing that. I thought [laughs], "We've touched something". It's one of those magic things that happen sometimes when you present an idea and a big yes comes back [laughs]. It's been a big yes ever since.

**Cliff:** : Wow.

**Ray:** So, it's been a big yes ever since. Then he created the phrase, the greeting, the parting words, "Live long and prosper". So I realized that this message, this thing that I carry has been with me since I was, in my single-digit years.

**Cliff:** So the question is, "Can watching *Star Trek* be something that you love to do, something that you can do for long stretches of time throughout your lifetime without getting tired or bored? Can that be a part of your zone of genius?"

**Ray:** And the answer is, a big yes.

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**Cliff:** The funny thing is, you ask me this on my show and I'm like, "Wait a second, hold on, do you realize how I came to understand--" I mean you asked me just a few moments ago, "What is your zone of genius?" I never had the language "zone of genius" but I did know my purpose in life. I've discovered my purpose in life through this journey of podcasting. Which by the way, I don't know that I ever would have figured it out had I not sat for long periods stretches of time watching the television show *Lost*, and then creating podcast content about it with my wife, which took a \$35 investment and built everything that I have today.

**Ray:** Yes.

**Cliff:** So, yes watching a television show could potentially be within your zone of genius.

**Ray:** So amazing. So-

**Cliff:** That's the first question.

**Ray:** What are the rest of the questions?

**Cliff:** All right. The second question is, "What work do I do that doesn't seem like work?" Specifically, stuff where when I'm finished doing it, you say to yourself, "Now, that's why I do what I do". The third question is, "In my work, what produces the highest ratio of abundance and satisfaction to the amount of time spent?" I think I paraphrased it, I don't know if I'll be able to get the exact words but it's kind of like, "What is it that I do at my work that when I do it, I get the greatest return on investment with the least amount of time spent doing it?"

**Ray:** Yes. I think that's a good way to summarize it.

**Cliff:** Then there's a fourth question. The fourth question is, "What is my unique ability?" Now, this is the one where he says, "Listen, you might just think you just write that down and answer the question". He goes, but no, he says, "You want to search for the skill, within a skill, within a skill". He gives this Russian doll analogy. You know the little Russian dolls? He suggests that to answer the question, "What is my unique ability?" You want to finish these statements. The first statement is, "I'm at my best when I'm processing--" Actually no, I'm reading you my statement.

**Ray:** [laughs]

**Cliff:** Hold on. Where did I just? Okay, "I'm at my best when--" Okay, so it's fill in the blank. I'm at my best when, and you fill in the rest. The second one is, "When I am at my best, the exact thing I'm doing is?" Fill in the blank. The third one is, "When I'm doing this, the thing I love most about it is?" Fill in the blank. I will tell you, I have gone through and answered all of those questions, Ray. If you would have asked me what my purpose in life is? I would have told you exactly the same thing you told me when you said, "What is your zone of genius?"





But I never would have associated my purpose and my zone of genius as what would actually lead to the greatest levels of -- The highest possible levels of financial, love and just joy and relational abundance in my life would come from that. It's almost though as I had divorced that from how I might make a living, and instead, that's my "ministry in the world" and how

I make a living is from something else.

**Ray:** One of the questions that comes up is people will ask, "Does everybody have a zone of genius or is that only for a special few people?"

**Cliff:** I've come to the conclusion the answer is absolutely yes. One of the things that immediately makes it easy for me to understand is because I took some time to process something you and Sean said on the podcast recently. You were talking about can anybody do something, I can't remember what it was but what about somebody who's paralyzed, a paraplegic can they experience whatever. So the question is, "Do they have a zone of genius? Can they operate in their best way?" You mentioned Johnny Erickson daughter, you also mentioned Stephen Hawking, those two individuals.

If they can, and there are other there are other examples of other people who you might think it be a stretch to figure out how that would work for them but I think that each of us -- If I personally would paraphrase what is your zone of genius, as what you were created on this earth to do. The question is, is there anybody that was created and put on this earth for no purpose? The answer the question is; yes, I believe everybody has his zone of genius

**Ray:** Yes, I do too, if you don't know what yours is, there's nothing more important for you to do than to figure that out. The way to do that is to get this book.

**Cliff:** Well, I think it's one way. I think so. I believe there are some people who might be able to figure it out through a journey of life without this book. I'm sure people have before this book existed, I just want to throw that caveat but I believe this book could be instrumental to you for figuring that out.

**Ray:** Yes, it's called *The Big Leap*, it's by Gaye Hendrickson. I will have a link to the book in the show notes, or you can just go to [rayedwards.com/leap](http://rayedwards.com/leap), you'll be able to get the book there. I encourage you to do that and work through it, take your time with it. The mistake that I made the first time was I got the audiobook, I put it on double speed because I was trying to get through it quickly, that's part of the reason why my response was, "Yes, what's the big deal?"

Because I didn't even take the time to soak it in and really think about the ideas that were being presented. One of the things that I have done recently that has -- I pushed against my upper limit was actually buying this coffee shop that we were talking about earlier in the show. Because I didn't know this at the time, I hadn't read the book. I hadn't had these discussions, but I did know I was running up against a resistance internally to buying this coffee shop because Sean and I have been

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talking for quite some time about investing in other businesses, investing in real estate to build wealth beyond just what we do in our main business.

This resistance that I was feeling was it took the form of thoughts like, "What if I'm not supposed to do this? What if I fail? What if we lose money on this deal? What if I don't know what I'm doing? What if I need to stick with the thing that I know?" My zone of excellence, I didn't have those words at the time but that's what I was thinking. I got past that mostly but now that I've read this book, I just smile when I look back on what I was going through because I realize I was upper limiting myself. Some part of me was saying, "This may be more than you deserve".

Well, now I know that's ridiculous. I'm so excited about the coffee shop that I want to take this opportunity. This is the first time we're going to invite people to the coffee shop for a meet-up, an open house if you will. It's going to be Saturday October 14th, in Spokane, the coffee shop, the name and the address will be in the show notes for this episode but it's Revel 77, R-E-V-E-L number seven, number seven, Revel 77, it's in Spokane, Washington. I'm going to be there all day. We will open up at 7 o'clock in the morning, and we'll be open at least until 4:00 maybe later. I'll post that in the show notes

But I'm going to be there all day, Sean's going to be there, we will be welcoming you and if you want to come from -- We'll probably have some prize for the person who comes the farthest. Not probably, we will. I'm going to have something special for you the person who comes the farthest. We would like to welcome you in our environment,

serve you some great coffee, and have some time together to get to know you, to hang out, to build relationships, and it's going to be a fun time.

**Cliff:** Awesome. That is incredibly awesome. I'm getting ready to do my final session of podcasting A to Z.

**Ray:** Wait, what?

**Cliff:** Yes. The final session of A to Z, the final day is the day before that. I did this for the previous session A to Z, I did the final group coaching call at Dan's place, at the sanctuary. I'm going to have to talk to Stephanie, and see if I can work it out to fly to Spokane, and maybe be there myself.

**Ray:** That would make me so happy.

**Cliff:** I would love to do it. I would confirm it here, but obviously I need to have a conversation with somebody, with a higher power if you will.

**Ray:** Yes.

**Cliff:** [laughs]



**Ray:** With my higher power. Just mark it in your calendar, come to Spokane, Saturday, October 14. We're going to have open house meet up at Revel 77, coffee shop. Sean and I will be happy to welcome you, and serve you some great coffee. With that, we're going to wrap up the show.

**Cliff:** Awesome.

**Ray:** This my friend has been a tremendous privilege to be in your home, the house that podcasting built; to be in your studio which truly is the next level studio, because just being here has elevated my own standard for what I want in my studios. I'm going to rephrase what I said earlier. You've given me the vision for some new things that I want.

**Cliff:** I like that.

**Ray:** I'm going to have this in my studio, and I'm so excited about it. Thank you very much.

**Cliff:** I'm so excited about that. It's been an honor to have you here in my home. It is a joy to be able to experience the friendship that you and I have, Ray. I know that what we've experienced over the last several years has been incredibly awesome. But I have absolutely zero doubt in my mind that it is just the beginning of the awesome things you and I will experience together in our friendship in years to come.

**Ray:** Yes. Live long and prosper.

[music]

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**[01:02:55] [END OF AUDIO]**