**GARY VAYNERCHUK - THE WORK-FAMILY DEBATE**

**Male speaker**: Welcome to the Chalene Show. Chalene is a New York Time Best-Selling author, celebrity fitness trainer and obsessed with helping you live your dream life.

**Chalene** **Johnson**: So today you’re about to hear a guest that maybe some of you are surprised to even see his name in the title of my show. But you shouldn’t be because I’m all about bringing to you other people’s opinions. As I always say, my priorities, my life, my definition of success, the way that I exercise, my relationships, my faith, all of those things are mine. But that doesn’t mean they have to be yours.

The purpose of the show is to help all of us be better. And I think the only way we can do that is if we really examine what it is we truly want and not just go after or prescribe to a way of life or a way of thinking because one of our mentors does it that way. I want you to think critically about your life, about what makes you happy. Don’t do things just because somebody else does it. I don’t believe in the hustle anymore. I used to. And I love Gary Vaynerchuk. There’s something about his energy and his intensity and there’s something about watching him that just seems so ironically familiar, nonetheless, this is the truth and I told Gary that. I try not to watch him because he triggers all of these kind of temptations I have to work and to hustle. I’m a reformed hustler.

I am a girl who believes in smart success. But just because I believe in that way of thinking, just because I have a certain way that I’ve structured my life and my business and prioritize these things doesn’t mean that that’s how you should structure your life. And legit, I have been avoiding Gary Vaynerchuk because I have to keep myself accountable in these areas and so his people reached out to us. They asked for an interview. They wanted to be featured on The Chalene Show. And I was like, “You know what, I got to do it. I have to do it.” And I know that there is no topic off limit. I know that Gary is going to be honest. I know he’s going to say the things that he’s truly thinking, the things that many people are thinking but they would never dare say it, yet their actions are saying they love work and they love work more than family.

And a lot of people are living a life that says, “I love work more than I love spending time with my family, but my family comes first.” A lot of people say that. A ton of people say that. You know people who say that. I said that at one point in my life. But my actions were saying something else.

Gary on the other hand, he’s just going to be honest. And he’s like, “You can judge me. You can hate me. You can do whatever, but I like to work and I really like to work. And sometimes I like to work a lot more than I enjoy being with my family.” He’s really unbelievably honest in this interview and it might offend you and it might upset you. And you might take a look in the mirror and realize that your actions are actually saying the very same thing that Gary is bold enough to say out loud. So, I don’t know. This is for you to decide.

I am not here to tell you how to live your life. I am, however, going to bring you the experts so that you can examine things, use your own critical thinking and make a decision for the way in which you want to live your best possible life. I do want you to improve. I do want you to work on some of your weaknesses. You’ll hear Gary talk about playing up to your strengths which I think is incredibly valuable. But I do also believe I have to work on some of my weaknesses too because that’s just how I’d become a better person.

And I hope I’m not offending my audience by introducing Gary, but I’m sure there are people maybe outside of the United States who are not familiar with his work. He’s pretty much what he set out to be. He’s a legend in marketing. He’s a legend in social media. Gary Vaynerchuk built a business that he basically acquired or stepped into, a family business that was a $3 million wine business and turned it into a $60 million wine empire that still exist today.

He’s the author of several New York Times Best-Selling books, the most popular of which is Crush It. The guy is a hustler and he has a lot of success under his belt because of that. He’s also an angel investor having invested in companies you might have heard of like Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Uber, Birchbox and **[MyrCap 0:04:18]**.

You’re about to hear his voice on this podcast which we recorded live by the way on both Facebook and on Periscope. But Gary does a daily live show on YouTube called #askgaryvee, and that’s the letter V-E-E. But check it out because you have to experience him live to really like truly understand who this dude is. But he’s down to earth. He’s honest. He’s a hustler. He’s energetic. He’s got more passion than just about anybody I know. His energy comes through the screen so you’ve got to check out his show. Ladies and gentlemen, Gary Vaynerchuk.

My name is Chalene Johnson. Thank you to everybody who’s jumping on live. If you’ve never met me before, I’m a New York Times Best-Selling author. I am the creator of the SMART Success Academy. I am a former hustler. And I am so nervous to talk Gary, not for the reasons you might think, but because it would be like an alcoholic making their first trip back to the bar. And they’re just supposed to eat nachos, right? Because I am a recovered - oh, I guess, I’m always in recovery, workaholic who the word “hustle” is my word. That was my word. And I had camps called Camp Do More. And my husband and I built two multimillion dollar companies that we eventually sold because it became too much. And I realized the reason why I was hustling is because I was trying to just forever find validation and like keep going and going and going and be the first. And I just kind of got caught up in this momentum that made me feel panicked and stressed and like I would never ever get ahead.

So, Gary, the very first question I have to ask you, where are you in that stage of your career? Do you ever feel that way? Do you ever wonder if the hustle is too much?

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** That’s a great question. It’s funny, listening to you, my brother is my partner in Vayner Media and we’ve gone from 30 to 600 people, 550 people and I can see it - and he’s young and it’s his first rodeo and I can see that he has those feelings at times so I can live through it and have empathy for it.

For me it’s a little different. For me, it creeps in my mind once in a blue moon. First of all, I only build evergreen businesses or family businesses, right. So Wine Library where I kind of made my first name, it’s still, you know, it’s a very large - it’s one of the largest wine retail companies in the world, right. It’s running.

Vayner Media which I’m running now is going to always run. It’s the marketing company that I built to be in place for all my behaviour for the rest of my life.

So, for me, it’s, you now, I’m very much not driven by money.

**Chalene** **Johnson**: Can I stop you right there and ask, what drives you and what makes you feel valuable?

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** A pulling in opposite directions of my legacy and how people feel they were impacted by me or why I sit in the lexicon of communicators and entrepreneurs and equally not giving a rat’s ass about that.

**Chalene Johnson:** Okay. And so I got to ask you one more question.

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** And I really, you know, before you do I want to really break that down because I think it’s the paradox that I think I’m living through has so much to do, Chalene, with what is going on with me, which is, I really do want to be known as the best personality around marketing and build the biggest agency and sell the most books and win, win, win, win, win. But it’s scary to me how well I handle the losses. I literally want every person who’s watching or listening to your show right now to become a new fan of me, to care about me. But I also have a lot of empathy towards maybe my style doesn’t work for them or maybe I won’t win that game. I just love the process of the game. The game is what gets me excited and the two parallel pullings of definitely trying to win and have all that but being very comfortable with the losses and feeling like it’s just - and very cozy in that environment I think is what helps me do my thing.

**Chalene Johnson:** That’s a very fair answer. My - what I wanted to follow up with as a question was, you used the word legacy, right?

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** Yes.

**Chalene Johnson:** And I think about that too and I’ve talked to so many people who had been to a position like yourself where you’re truly leaders and thought leaders and making changes not just on a small level but a global level. And you feel this like obligation to continue and to help people, right? But then I also wonder, for me, and this is just me...

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** Yeah.

**Chalene Johnson:** Because I feel that pull but I also know that the most, like just me, my purpose, the most important legacy I have to leave is on my kids. And so, where I was at was I realized I couldn’t be present.

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** Yeah.

**Chalene Johnson:** Even when I was like sitting at their games, I like was thinking, okay, what’s next, what am I going to write about, how could I take a picture of this, you know.

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** Yeah.

**Chalene Johnson:** And I knew I needed to - they were young when this happened but I knew I needed to like kind of get that straight and realize a lot of what I was doing was to have credit and to be out front.

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** Yeah.

**Chalene Johnson:** And that I wanted - the legacy I wanted was to have kids who knew they were more important than anything I was doing.

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** Yeah.

**Chalene Johnson:** And I know you’ve got kids. So how do you struggle with that?

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** You know, I run them in parallel paths. I feel very confident in that execution. My dad has had an outrageous impact on my life. I didn’t see my dad until I was 14 years old.

**Chalene Johnson:** What do you mean?

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** I mean, he worked every hour because we were Russian immigrants so we had no money. And he worked at a liquor store from 7:00 in the morning to 11:00 PM. And so I literally - and I don’t mean like - like there is no question that children of divorced families or estranged from their dads for a couple of years or several years literally saw their dad more than I did. When I tell you I did not see him, I literally did not see him for months at a time because I’d wake up after he left. And like months, not days, not weeks - months, I literally have zero memories of my dad from, you know, 3 to 14.

Now, I know what people are thinking when I say this which is like, great. You’re replicating that behavior, dah, dah, dah, dah, dah, dah. So I’m winning in extremism, right. I spend - I’m very checked out and into my kids on the weekends, the holidays. I’m hustling a lot during the day. And I’m adjusting along the way. I made a huge decision that this September I’m coming home from 5:00 to 6:00 PM and eating dinner with them and giving them a bath. So I’m hacking my life along the way and I’m not trying to be perfect at all times. I’m trying to be perfect to what feels perfect to me of that moment. And I recognize that if I don’t deliver on that and the second it doesn’t feel, like literally, out of nowhere, four months ago I’m like, “You know what, it doesn’t feel perfect enough anymore. What can I do? Okay, this 5:00 to 6:00 PM thing seems real and that’s what I’m going to do.”

So I think - look, I think your actions are your truths, right? And so, I can talk all day long about family-first or this, that and the other thing but if I don’t act on it, then it’s not true. And so, at the same token, I’m not crippled by going five months with it, doing it the wrong way even to myself because I’m very confident and play a neck-neck game that’ll I’ll quote-unquote, “Get to where I need to go” because I’m constantly pushing against what I want selfishly for myself, what I want to impact my kids, how I want to impact my audience. It’s a constant grind. We’re all balancing.

It’s kind of like relationships, right? Like giving relationship advice is...

**Chalene** **Johnson**: Yeah.

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** ...ludicrous. Everybody has got their own different dynamics. There’s so many variables in play. I’m a big believer in intent. And I know what my intent is with myself, with my family, with my audience and it gives me enormous comfort. I’m very comfortable in my own skin and actions and have empathy towards how it doesn’t work for everybody else or can be critique. But I am cozy, cozy, cozy, CJ, in my - in the way that I roll.

**Chalene Johnson:** Yeah. And I think people do have to live their own purpose as opposed to what’s prescribed or what we see other people doing. And like you just said, you have to wake up one day and go, “Something is off. Somewhere something is off.” And just the littlest tweak can bring that area back into balance.

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** I’m hacking enough along the way where I don’t feel like I’m hoping - and it could change - it hasn’t happened yet. I’m 39. I’m hacking enough along the way, chipping away with it on a daily basis to make sure - I’m - it’s top of mind every day for me, “Am I happy with my balance? Am I feeling fulfilled? Am I happy? Are people that I care about happy?” That I don’t think - I’m hoping that I don’t have to have a major shift like go on a three-year sabbatical, sell the businesses, but maybe I will. Maybe I’ll just wake up one day and be like, “Fuck it. I’m doing it.” So like I don’t know but so far I’m in the constant communication, constantly hacking on a daily basis kind of philosophy.

**Chalene Johnson:** Hey there. Okay, thanks so much for allowing me to interrupt. I wanted to interrupt. I wanted to interrupt because at this point you might be feeling torn, pulled in multiple directions. So should I hustle more? Should I hustle less? I can hear that Chalene wants us to hustle less. I can hear that Gary is - got this amazing legacy that he’s living because he’s got that hustle. So what’s right for you? I don’t know. Neither does he. Only you know.

So what I want to suggest you do is take a little quiz. I’m hoping this might be able to help you assess what’s right for you. It’s a quick and simple quiz. You can download it or answer it online. This will help you to assess your current stress level based on that work-family balance.

Okay, so write this down. Go to stresslesstest.com. Got that? Stresslesstest.com. Okay, cool, back to the show.

Okay, so my husband was one who just kind of rolled with the punches. He’s my biggest supporter, always, he’s like, “Go, go, go, go, go.” And I - he never said like, “This is too much.” Like, “When is this going to slow down?” And you’ll never hear like a big fid. There was just one day where he’s like, “I just don’t think you’ll ever be able to stop,” and I could see in his eyes that he didn’t feel as important to me as all the stuff I had going on.

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** Yeah, yup.

**Chalene** **Johnson**: And so I just - you know, in The Chalene Show, which is what we’re doing this for live is a show really about just balance and life and everything. And everybody figuring out their own way and making sure it is theirs, not something their parents wanted them to do, not something they’re doing to feel valued, but something that feels right. So - and I, you know, I haven’t heard much about your wife’s perspective on it, but what would you assume she would wish you would do less of or more of?

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** She would wish that I would spend less time working and spend more time with her and the family. I mean, it’s - you know, I mean, you know - because the answer to that question is, and this is why we’re husband and wife, she’d want that to be every minute of our lives. And by the way, and this is something that I think people need to realize and you’re going to know this truth, I don’t.

**Chalene Johnson:** You don’t what?

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** I want to do this.

**Chalene Johnson:** Mm-hmm.

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** And what makes my relationship work is my wife knows that whatever she wants to do, I’m super down with and always have been. We communicate a ton about this. And I don’t wish that I spend more time with my family and I do wish that I’ve spent more time with my family. And I’m being very honest with everybody. Let me explain that because I want people to understand.

**Chalene Johnson:** Good, because that’s confusing.

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** Yeah, it’s really easy to unconfuse. Like, if I wanted to spend more time with my family, I would spend more time with my family.

**Chalene Johnson:** Ouch.

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** Like, like - and please, let’s break this down.

**Chalene Johnson:** Please.

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** I’m taking seven full weeks of vacation a year, completely checked out. I’m taking every single weekend completely checked out.

**Chalene Johnson:** Hmm, I don’t think people here that.

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** I’m spending an outrageous amount of time with my family especially considering how I’m positioned as a hustler in the marketplace, right?

**Chalene Johnson:** Right.

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** It’s just that every other minute that I’m not doing some things, I am - it’s not how much I spend with them or not spend with them. It’s when I’m not spending it with them, I am working at an insane pace of 7:00 AM to midnight and I’m accomplishing in those 17 hours the - at the speed that I’m going at, you know, 34 hours of work, right? So I think that, you know, we all want to do things. We all, you know, grass is always greener, right?

When I’m on a connecting flight to Oklahoma City like yesterday you don’t think I want to be in the backyard in the Hamptons with my son throwing around the ball. I mean, get out of here. But, when, you know, after the end of a long weekend on a Sunday, if you don’t I’m **[Jonesing 0:16:36]** to get back into the action, I am. It’s just the truth. I can’t lie against my DNA.

**Chalene** **Johnson**: No, I hear that. And that’s the struggle, you know, for me - it’s easier for me to work. It just is. It’s just my default. I can wake up. I have too many ideas. There’s not enough hours in the day. I want to go, go, go. It is my default. I wake up and I want to work. It’s fun for me. It’s easy for me. But I, you know, I also feel - but I shouldn’t do like what’s easy. I try to hold myself accountable so that I’m doing what I think is right even if sometimes that doesn’t come easy to me. I feel happier when I make the important people feel most important. And so this is just my constant struggle. It’s a constant struggle. It’s my default.

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** Let me, let me, let me say something that I really hope brings you value. Explain to me your children’s situation. What do you - I have a 6 and a 3-year-old. I have 6-year-old daughter. I have a 3-year-old son.

**Chalene Johnson:** Yeah.

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** Paint me a picture of your world.

**Chalene Johnson:** Yeah, so mine are 18 and 15 and they’re ninjas.

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** Yeah, I’m sure. With that kind of DNA I’m sure. I think people grossly underestimate impact and quality and quantity and lack of impact. My intuition is you could sit there and be at the baseball game, you can rattle your brain and try to check out and really focus on the task at hand, but my intuition, as a son of this product from both of my parents...

**Chalene** **Johnson**: Yeah, me too.

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** Not as an ambitious father to justify his actions, as the son of this product, my intuition is that your actions are bringing disproportionate value to your children and that you’re more than welcome to think there is nobody who’s doing it all.

**Chalene Johnson:** Right.

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** And one of the things that people make a humungous mistake on is they spend so much time trying to fix their weaknesses instead of tripling down on their strengths. And I can tell you right now as a father of a 6-year-old daughter who I want to completely rule the world and think that she has the DNA to do it, you know, your hustle and your work ethic are things your kids pick. And of course, there’s times.,,

**Chalene** **Johnson**: For sure.

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** ...where they wish you were there for this or they wish you paid attention because they can tell you’re in your head space but I believe that intent and actions are way more important than people think and you’re more than welcome and knock yourself out and you can roll and try to like play out the struggle and beat yourself up about this but I have a feeling that when you have a - I have a - I’m positive and I hope you remember this moment that you’re going to have a conversation with one of them when they’re in their 30s and they’re going to say something about the way you rolled and what they saw you do and the impact it had on either them or the partner that they chose in life. And I think there’s a lot of things you could be doing that are worse.

**Chalene Johnson:** Thank you for that. I will. I look forward to that conversation. My dad was an entrepreneur and hustle, hustle, and I learned so much from that. But he was able to shut off and I just - that’s something I always admired with him. On the weekends, he could shut off and I have to work at that.

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** Listen, I go through ebb and flow on the shut off. Sometimes I’m really rolling, some other times I’m not. But like, again, my dad, you know, I didn’t even like see him. And then the years we spent together when I was in the business with him, you know, like, life is a long journey. I was the biggest mama’s boy of all time, right, and still am. But, you know, like even the relationships with my brother and sister, my relationship with my kids right now, like my wife, you know, I think you know this. I don’t have to tell you this. This is kind of like speaking to the audience. You know, you can get very hung up in the way that it is, but that’s already played out. You just got to recognize so much ebbs and flows through the years of relationships.

And so, you can take things for granted. It could all end and I get all that, but at some level fighting your hard wiring instead of enhancing those skills and allowing them to bring value is something that we’re taught by society that I actually think is a little tricky and something worth debating. And if people are listening, one way or the other, maybe, listen, you know this, we know a lot of friends and family who’s - who are less ambitious and their family wishes they worked more, like, “Dad, why do you only worked 9 to 4? Like, why don’t you get a side hustle so we’re not - you know, so we’re not struggling every week?”

So there is no such thing as perfect balance. There’s just your reality. What I would say is this and this is what I’ve been relying on. When was the last time you’ve had real in-depth conversations with the 18 and the 15-year-old on how they see it versus you hoping you’re reading their body language.

The thing that I’ve been doing very well with my wife...

**Chalene** **Johnson**: Truth is I’m afraid to ask.

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** I got it. Listen, I - the thing that is working for me, I’ve been walking into it. I asked my wife questions I don’t want to get answers to which is like, “Lizzie, would you want me to travel a whole lot less next year?” The answer is yes and then I start going down the path and then she’ll say yes or no depending on the scenario. I’m in a situation where my wife is my greatest cheerleader. And she knows that I’d be suffocated if I couldn’t do me and she takes the pros and the cons that come along with that. But I think, you know, I think a real conversation with the 18 and 15-year-old, and they’re younger and they can’t quantify everything and they’re going to say emotional things. But it starts the cadence of a nice age in my opinion, it’s the age I’ve been targeting, maybe even a little younger. It’s the cadence of you having a true communication funnel with your children that will pay dividends in their mid-20s, 30s, 40s and 50s.

**Chalene Johnson:** True, very true. Okay, last question. Gary, people love watching you live. They love that you’re off the cup, that you are so articulate and you speak your mind and you’re comfortable on camera and now live streaming has taken over the world. We’re on Facebook. We’re on Periscope. We’re on Skype doing this live video. Does everybody need to just get over themselves and get on camera or are some people better served in the seat of the viewer?

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** Ninety-eight percent of people are better not being in front of the camera because it’s not their natural comfort zone, right? For example, I would - I as you - and you know this and some of the people need - ought to know, I’m really good at this environment. I’m great on stage. I’m all improv. I do all Q&A. I - I’m great. I’m comfortable saying that.

Do you want to hear something scary? If you ask me to read the first chapter of my book right now, I would suffocate. I’m a terrible reader...

**Chalene** **Johnson**: #truth.

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** I’m a terrible - at Jewish holidays when we have to read things in front of seven people that are my family, I shiver.

**Chalene Johnson:** I’m like no teleprompter. No teleprompter. Let me just riff.

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** Well, listen. TV has, you know, I’ve been offered a lot of television in my career and I always start - when I go down the rabbit hole. I’m like, “Look, if you’re thinking teleprompter, you better check out,” because first of all, I cannot read. Like if you want to hear funny words, I did a talk show on Furious Radio where I had to do live read commercials. The first one I ever did was hands down the worst public thing I ever did in my life. They came in to the audience during the rest of the commercials and they said, “What the hell was that?” I said, “Guys...” And then luckily, one of the guys who was the executive producer, worked with Howard Stern. And he said, “The reason Stern became so great at doing commercials was he sucked at it too so he’d read it beforehand and then in improv.” I did that the second time and literally like the advertiser who was a beer wanted to like triple down the next show because it was the best thing they’d ever heard.

So, listen, I got to run and I’m making you a promise. Let’s do a part two because this is fun and I think...

**Chalene** **Johnson**: I dig it.

**Gary Vaynerchuk:** I will leave you with this, that story encapsulates what happens, which is, most people aren’t good on camera. Most people can read really strongly and feel comfortable in an environment. I’m the opposite. I bet on those opposites. That’s why I have a happy life. Bet on your strengths. The weaknesses are going to play but bet on your god damn strength.

**Chalene Johnson:** That is the word we end with. Thank you so much, Gary, for your time. You are the man. We really appreciate you. Thanks for being here.

Well, that was crazy, cool and fun. What a great opportunity. And I want to thank Gary for taking the time and just letting me go there, letting me challenge him on that whole work-family balance.

The one thing I want you to take away from this podcast and any podcast that you’re listening to especially when the host is someone who you kind of consider a mentor from afar, I have my own mentors from afar, I think it’s important for those of us who are in the public eye, teaching others how to be entrepreneurs to be as transparent as possible because people are going to do what they see. That is - that’s the blueprint for success. So if you’re following in Gary’s footsteps and you want to have his success, you want to live a life like his and you think that’s he’s working every day from 4:00 AM until 11:00 PM and then he never takes any vacations off, well, then you don’t have the whole story.

As he said, you know, “I come home at night and I make my kids dinner and give them a bath. I take...” I think he said “...seven or eight weeks of vacation. I’m off on the weekends.” And so we don’t always get to hear or see that side of things because that’s his persona. That’s his brand. The hustle, hustle, hustle, go, go, go, work, work, work, that’s part of this brand persona. So I was really happy that he was honest enough to disclose the other side of it. That piece that he doesn’t always put out front but it is the reality.

I ask you only this, I ask you to evaluate every expert that I bring to you based on your own personal definition of success. And start with not money and cars, but start with success, meaning what would you want to feel? If you were feeling this, you would feel successful and think of all the areas of your life. That’s what we’ve built the basis of SMART Success on. And this show, this episode, timely as it has been, has been brought to you by SMART Success.

It’s my mission. It’s my passion. And so, I want to take this opportunity to invite you to learn more about SMART Success. It’s an online academy. It’s a school. It’s a lifestyle. It’s a group of people supporting each other, keeping each other accountable, understanding that you can have absolutely anything you want. The prescription, the blueprint just needs to be yours and we’ve got to start over in many cases because we’ve built this big beautiful house and it’s just keeping us in like a prison, a stress ball. That’s what we do at SMART Success. And it’s not just for entrepreneurs. It’s for anyone who wants to be living a life that they are 100% the architect and the builder.

To learn more, please go to smartsuccess.com. And again, if you’d like to take that test to figure out if in fact your home versus work is in balance or at least it’s right for you, you can go to stresslesstest.com. That’s it for today. If you enjoyed the show, do me a favor. Head over to Gary’s show and leave him a comment. You’ve got to check him out on YouTube. Anyways, you guys are awesome and I can’t wait to have the opportunity to spend some time with you again very soon.

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