



Achieve Your Goals Podcast #142 - Calling ALL Dads (Be the Dad Our Kids Deserve - Interview with Larry Hagner)

Nick: Welcome to the Achieve Your Goals Podcast. You're listening to the podcast guaranteed to take your life to the next level faster than you ever thought possible. In each episode you will learn from someone who has achieved extraordinary goals that most haven't. He is the author of the number one bestselling book *The Miracle Morning*, a Hall of Fame and Business Achiever, an international keynote speaker, ultra-marathon runner, and the founder of Best Year Ever Coaching, here is Hal Elrod.

Hal: All right goal achievers, you're ready? You guys here? You're ready? You're listening? Hey it's Hal Elrod, host of your favorite podcast, I don't know if that's true. Host of a podcast you listen to, or you're listening to at least now. That's an accurate statement. This is the Achieve Your Goals Podcast where we talk to individuals that have achieved pretty extraordinary goals in different ways and different industries, both personal and professional, and bringing you their stories and their strategies.

I've got to go back and listen to that, that was the first time I've ever given a concise introduction to the podcast that made sense. I'm going to script that out I think. I'm excited for today's guest, and actually he and I are going to be at an event here in a few weeks, it's Larry Hagner. In case you don't know Larry, he's the father of four boys. I know that he always leads with that, which I love because I think that so often, and I'm guilty of this, you get the bio and at the end like, "Yeah, and by the way I have a family," when in reality there's nothing more important.

First and foremost, Larry is a dad, father of four boys. He is an Amazon bestselling author of a book called, appropriately, The Dad's Edge. He may be best known as the host of the Dad Project Podcast, which has hundreds of thousands of downloads. It's downloaded in a hundred and thirty countries; he's impacting dads around the world. The creation of the Good Dad Project came out of his own struggle as a father and as a husband. It was roughly five years ago, he really had enough and decided to stop struggling, to take ownership of his life and become the man and father he always wanted to be. Now he is paying it forward and he's leading by example and inspiring other dads to step up and really own that role as the most important role in their life.

He and I are actually going to be both on the program, speaking and attending the upcoming Front Row Dad's Retreat. In fact I don't know if this episode is going to air before the retreat, I hope it does. Go to frontrowfactor.com/dads, that's frontrowfactor.com/dads. Our good friend John Vroman founder of the Frontrow Foundation who I believe John was inspired by Larry, I think that was part of the inspiration to step up and actually lead, similar to Larry, in an area that is one of

the most if not the most important area of his life, which is being a father.

I'm inspired as a fellow dad, and if you're not a dad don't stop the podcast, you're still going to get a lot of value today. You're actually going to hear about Larry's morning ritual which got him out of a really difficult time. There is some overlap with the Miracle Morning but there's some things that he does that are different and that will add to your morning ritual as well, as well as a bunch of other stuff we're going to talk about. Larry, you on the line buddy?

Larry: What is going on Hal? Man, it's so good to talk to you? How you doing?

Hal: I'm doing well man.

Larry: Good.

Hal: I'm staring out my backyard out of my office window, it's beautiful, trees and green. Yeah, half the time my kids are playing in the pool. It's a joyous space up here.

Larry: Nice. Nice, it sounds good.

Hal: Yeah. Yeah man. You have to come visit Austin dude, you're invited. Vroman's moving out here in a couple of month. I said when I moved out to Austin, which has been a few months ago, I said if I like it then anything that I believe in I become like an automatic sales person for it. People are like, "Are you making a commission off of people moving to Austin?" It's like, "No, no, no. I love it." Vroman was the first, I was like, "I'm going to recruit," and Vroman was the first of my good friends that came out and visited. He was like, "Dude, this is great. Let's make the move." I'm excited.

Larry: Good for him man, get that poor guy out of the cold weather.

Hal: I know that's what it is, his wife Tatiana, she doesn't like the cold weather up in New Jersey. Another one of her friends was trying to get her to move to Cleveland, I was like, "Dude, there's no way. You're trying to sell her on Cleveland," and I'm like, "The one reason she's moving is weather. She's not going to move to somewhere equally cold, if not colder, right?"

Larry: Right, right.

Hal: [inaudible 00:04:52] You're doing, everything you're doing is in the dad space. I want to get into that and how that became your focus, but I want to start earlier. I always ... I won't say always, but I usually start out the podcast by going back and asking, what was the first defining goal that you achieved in your life that gave you the confidence or the foundation that you could

achieve goals bigger and better and continuing through your life?

Larry:

Man that is such a good question. I think my defining moment was, I came from this crazy, crazy childhood. You'll hear more of my story when we're at the dad retreat together. I came from this background where I didn't have a father figure for half of my childhood growing up, and then the other half, when I did have a father figure in my life, my mom was married three times, dated a lot of really crazy toxic men. Any time I had a father figure in my life it was usually a toxic one, usually some sort of alcohol, drugs, or something that was going that was toxic.

Then there were times obviously where there was abandonment, so I didn't have a father figure in my life. I would say I struggled. I struggled terribly as a kid. I struggled with grades, I struggled with confidence, I struggled with making friends, and I even struggled with my weight. I was an overweight kid. It wasn't until I was fifteen, I was a sophomore, and if I could take you back to a moment, I was actually at a dance. I was at a dance and I was there with a bunch of my guy friends. I had been eyeballing this girl all night long and I did not have the courage to go up and ask her to dance.

This went on for a couple hours, finally at the end of the night they were playing a slow song. I go up to this girl, finally had the courage to go talk to this girl. I said, "Hey, would you like to dance?" If you could picture this, she turns around, she looks at me from top to bottom, then from bottom to top, has this look

of disgust on her face and says, "Absolutely not." I'm like, "Oh my gosh man." It was really at that point, I'm like, "Man I'm tired. I'm tired of this. I'm tired of being overweight, tired of not having confidence."

Hal: This was at what age again?

Larry: I was fifteen.

Hal: Fifteen.

Larry: I was fifteen, yeah. I started my health journey, taking care of my body and I lost weight. I lost a lot of weight. I lost about fifty pounds in about a year and half. Completely transformed my body, I was no longer overweight. I was a chubby kid that was not good at sports, I was terrible at sports, no confidence. I really went, transformed not only my body but my confidence and the way I looked at life and the way I looked ... To answer your question, achieving goals, I'm like, "Man, if I can change this part of my life maybe I can turn my grades around, maybe I can do this." Then I graduated my last two years of high school, for a kid who struggled with grades, on the dean's list. Then I went on to college and made great grades in college. That was really a defining moment for me, was turning my health around.

Hal: Yeah. Yeah, and I think for all of us that health is such a foundation that when you do that it affects everything. It affects

your energy level, your confidence, right? It's like everything tends to improve. You picked a good one to start with.

Larry: Right.

Hal: Right, really cool. Okay. I want to hear, and we haven't actually talked about this, I don't know the story but before we started recording you mentioned, you're going to hear this story at the Dads' Retreat, about how a morning ritual completely saved my life, or turned my life around. I don't remember the exact words you used but I thought, "Dude I don't want to wait till Dads' Retreat." Can you tell me that story in five minutes. Here we are five minutes later on the podcast. Yeah man, I'd love to hear about how your morning ritual evolved and what it entails, anything related to that story and the ritual itself.

Larry: Yeah. To be honest with you I didn't even plan on talking about what we were talking about, but I'm willing and ready because when I do speaking events I talk about it all the time. It's actually, the story I'm about to share is the final chapter in my book, The Dad's Edge, but I really didn't have a morning routine before this whole thing unfolded. Not to start your podcast off with a huge obstacle but we'll go there because there was a lot of really, really good things that came out of this.

In October of 2014, almost two years ago really, my wife came to me. At the time I had three boys, I had an eight year old, a six year old and a one year old. My wife came to me, this was a

week before Halloween and she's got that look, I think we all know like, "What is she going to tell me? Because she's either pregnant or I'm in trouble, one of the two," right?

Hal: Yeah.

Larry: My wife comes to me and she's like, "Hey," she's got this smile on her face, she's like, "You're not going to believe this." She goes, "We're pregnant." I'm like, "Oh my gosh. Man, are you serious?" I'm sitting there like, "Wow." I'm just trying to manage three at this point, we're going to have four. She told me we were pregnant a week before Halloween in 2014. We immediately traded in our SUV and we went out and got this super cool, what ever guy dreams of having, which is a minivan.

Hal: We still have a minivan man, I'm with you. It's the most practical vehicle on the planet, yeah.

Larry: I never thought I'd use the word awesome and minivan [crosstalk 00:10:17]

Hal: Yeah dude, it's awesome, I'm with you.

Larry: Yeah, they're pretty awesome.

Hal: Yeah.

Larry: When we found out we were pregnant we went to our OB/GYN. OB/GYN said, "Your wife's over thirty five, I'm sure everything's fine. We have to do a blood panel though at ten weeks, just to make sure everything is healthy, but hey guess what, you'll also get to find out what the sex is, if it's going to be your fourth boy, God forbid, or if it's going to be the girl that she's always wanted." We got this blood work.

Now we go from a week before Halloween to the day before Thanksgiving, and we get a phone call. We get a phone call from the OB/GYN and it's not the nurse it's the doctor. That's never a good thing when the doctor calls. She tells my wife, "Hey put me on speaker phone, I need to speak to you and your husband." Of course we're like, "This can't be good news." She says, "Look, I don't know how to tell you this. I've been practicing for over twenty years and I have only seen this one other time but I have two pieces of news for you. Number one you're having a boy. Number two, your baby has tested positive for trisomy 13."

I've got to be honest with you, I had no idea what trisomy 13 really was, but I can tell you, I won't go into a whole lot of detail, trisomy 13 is a fatal abnormality that there's only one documented case of a child living passed seven days after birth. It affects all major organs of your body. It's a death sentence is

really what it is. We found this out right before Thanksgiving. Literally our whole world changed in that one day.

Immediately you start asking yourself really poor questions like, "Why did we do to deserve this? Why us? We're good people, we try to raise our kids. We believe in God," on and on and on. We didn't tell anybody that Thanksgiving. We were around the whole family, we were deep in denial. I have to tell you that our OB/GYN said, "Get through Thanksgiving, come back, come to my office next week we'll talk options." We sat down her office that next Monday, she said, "Look, I don't know how to tell you this but you have three options here. Number one you terminate. Number two miscarriage, you only have a thirty percent chance of this child miscarrying, you have a seventy percent chance of this child going full term. Number 3, you go full term and you allow him to die on his own." We're like, "There's not one of those [crosstalk 00:12:50] not great.

Hal: Not a good ... Yeah.

Larry: She said, "Look, if I could tell you anything it's really most people decide to go with number one. Whatever your religious belief and all that, but just to forego any serious trauma that you're going to experience. There's not one good option here, it's which one can you live with."

Hal: Yeah.

Larry:

It was that day that ... I've read your book before and I knew about the morning rituals and whatnot, but I literally was like, "I have to do something every day to get my mind right. I have to, otherwise I am going to sink, and so is my wife, lower and lower into this mindset of utter self defeat." Which is, it's the first thing when you're told news like that and your wife is pregnant with a child that has a death sentence, it's the first thing that you think about when you wake up, it's every minute in between and it's literally the last thing you think about when you go to bed. There's so much stress, there's so much of a defeated mindset. It's horrible. It's hell, I'm not going to lie.

You immediately start thinking of the worst case scenarios, I'm having visions of my baby boy who's hooked up to wires in the hospital and my two older ones are seeing him pass away. I'm like, "We can't go through this. We can't go through this." I immediately started a ritual. That ritual was I got up thirty minutes early before my house and I started a journal. I started doing three different things in that journal. I literally still have written down every day throughout this whole experience that I wrote. I forced myself to sit down in silence every morning and write down three things that I was grateful for, because in the midst of mass chaos you have to, "Okay, what's good here." There's got to be something good.

I would write down three things that I was grateful for. I would also spend time with my affirmation of the day because as soon as I would start to get these horrible thoughts or this defeated mindset or asking myself really poor questions like, "Why me?" I would immediately stick in that affirmation of the day, which a lot of times my affirmation was, "Through God I have unlimited strength," or maybe it was, "I got this." Something

simple that would cue me to get my mind in a different state. Then the last thing was, what is my mission of the day? What is the one thing I'm going to do today, come hell or high water I'm going to do? That ritual was literally my foundation through six weeks of mad chaos.

I'll go on with the story of, we decided in the end through a lot of back and forth to go full term with this child. It was the scariest decision ever but it felt very, very right for several reason. You will hear more detail at the retreat of why. Doing that ritual literally got me through the most horrible time in my entire life, all the way up until the point where on December twenty eighth 2014 my son at the time was twenty weeks old and my wife ended up going into labor in our bathroom. She ended having him and he passed away. We were there with paramedics, it was crazy. The most emotionally crazed and charged experience of my life. The Dad's Edge is actually dedicated to my son Gabriel, we ended up naming him Gabriel.

It was taking that time in the morning to get my mind in the state of gratitude and to take the time to give myself the affirmation of the day that was going to kick my mentality back into some sort of positivity. Finally, what was my mission of the day? A lot of times my mission of the day was, "I need to give unlimited support to my wife, that is what she needs. It has to be through words of affirmation. It has to be through physical affection." Because my wife just had this look of desperation on her face for the six weeks that we dealt with this.

I had to remind myself every single morning, today my job is to be her rock no matter how much agony I'm going through myself I have to do that. When I took time to write that every morning, man, it became like, "This is my charge for the day. This is what I'm doing." If can intertwine what you do Hal, which is phenomenal by the way, and how it impacted me in maybe the worst time of my life, it was really that. It helped incredibly, so much.

Hal: Yeah, it's so profound. What a challenging, tragic story. I know that you've turned that tragedy into a triumph for you and for your family, and then now for so many other people. I do honor you for that Larry, it's really fantastic.

Larry: Thank you.

Hal: Thank you for sharing that by the way, I really appreciate that. Let's transition into how the Good Dad Project evolved. You had said five years ago, so it sounds like it was before this tragedy that your journey into the work you do now started. Tell us that, how did that journey ... How did it begin? Where is it now? What's the journey to now?

Larry: Yeah man, I appreciate that Hal. I've got to tell you, I've been a dad for ten years. I have a ten year old now, I have an eight year old, I have a two year old. We have another one, we now have my youngest Colton is our caboose, he's six months old.

Hal: Congratulations man.

Larry: Thank you. Thank you. But you know what? For the first five years of my fatherhood journey I wasn't good at it. To be honest I was pretty horrible at it. Now when I say that I don't mean I was abusive or I told my kids I didn't love them or I hit people or anything like that. I just did it at an arm's length. I was kind of half in, half out. I think a lot of that had to do with my own childhood, and I'm not saying, "I'm doing this because of blame," it was because I didn't know any better to be honest with you.

When you grew up like I did, where half my childhood was spent without a dad, the other half was spent in a chaotic environment with a toxic father, I knew, and by the way I'm grateful for that upbringing. I am so grateful for that upbringing because it gave me a really good example of what not to do, but the gap really was, "Okay, I know all these things, what not to do, but what are the things that I should be doing because that's what I'm missing?"

I was kind of like in limbo and I finally again, kind of like when I was that fifteen year old overweight kid and the girl at the dance looks at you, that's a defining moment where she's disgusted by you. You reach that point where it's time for a change. I reached a point five years ago where I started to really lose my marriage because I wasn't being the husband that I needed to be. I wasn't connecting with my kids the way I wanted to because I wasn't being a dad that I shouldn't have

been. It really all had to do with me. It all had to do with my mind set around it.

What I did was I was like, "You know what, I give up. I surrender. I am now going to put my ego aside. I don't know everything that I'm supposed to know. I'm just going to become a student of this. I'm going to dive myself as much as I can into self development. I'm going to invest in myself, that way I can show up maybe better for the people around me and maybe I can enjoy this more." The Good Dad Project believe it or not was me. I was the project. It's still me. I was the project.

Basically where it's at now, we've got a huge podcast, the book obviously does well, but it really came out of a man who was struggling, struggling so, so bad. I'm happy to say now, I mean I still learn, man everyday, I'm no expert at this whatsoever but what I'm doing is I'm publicly learning. That's really what our podcast is. You've been on our podcast as well. Publicly learning and sharing what we're learning along the way.

Hal:

Yeah. I love that. I think it's so important, not just because being a dad is important but because there's not a training manual, not typically. I've said for the longest time that you should have to get a license to have kids. I get it it's natural, we can't really monitor that, there's moral, whatever. But it's like you're being responsible for raising a human being and that human being is going to be as mentally, emotionally and physically healthy as you help shape them to be, or as mentally, physically and emotionally messed up as you shape them to be. Have you figured out how we can create a license where you

actually have to be certified to be a dad or a mom, a parent? Is that something we can figure out?

Larry: Dude, I know you can't see me right but I'm literally smiling from ear to ear. Have you ever seen the movie Parenthood?

Hal: A long time ago, but yeah.

Larry: Yeah, there's a part where Keanu Reeves, shout out to Keanu Reeves. He was in that movie. He was like, "Dude," he's like, "you know, you need a license to drive a car and you need a license to catch a fish, but don't let any jackass be dad."

Hal: How funny, I didn't know ... Maybe that's where that was planted into my subconscious because yeah that's funny.

Larry: Yeah, yeah. Anybody can be a father, but yeah you're right there's no manual for it, there's no how to for it. Here's the other thing too that works against we as men, is we don't talk about it.

Hal: Yeah.

Larry: If someone asked us how we're doing, "I'm fine man, I'm great. I've got everything under control. It's good. Life is good." We're

fine. We're good. Inside, there's a quote I hear a long time ago, it's, "Most men will live a life of quiet desperation," and that's absolutely true. It's true for fathers as well. I like to think what the Good Project is, what The Dad's Edge is, it's a very humble platform. Dude, I will be the first to tell you that I'm still learning every day, and I'll be the first to share my big mistakes.

I had a podcast that came out, a five minute podcast came out last week about intentions aren't enough. I shared a story that was humbling about how I didn't show up very well for my ten year old. What I've noticed is the more real and raw you are with the stories that you share, what you're learning along the way, that is what really impact the lives of guys. No one wants to hear anyone speak from a pedestal. They want to know you're in the trenches with them and learning these things along the way too.

Hal: Yeah. Yeah, that's the approach that I've always taken, is not the, "I'm the guru, here I go," but it's like, "Hey I'm just as," I'll just say, "messed up. We all got our issues, right?" Let's be real. By the way today I love that you quoted Keanu Reeves, one of the greatest actors of our time, which most people don't think that but I do. I love Keanu, there's something about him, maybe it's realness but I really like him as an actor. I think he's great.

Larry: Yeah.

Hal: He doesn't impress maybe with the best of the best or depending on the criteria you're judging what makes a good

actor, but I like Keanu. Cool, here's what I'd love to [dive 00:24:38] and I know we didn't plan exactly how this was going to go, in fact I told you, I always tell my guests, "Did you get the PDF with the show flow and the questions?" They're like, "Yeah," I'm like, "Yeah, we're probably not going to follow that, just so you know, all the prep you've been doing that got you in the right mind set but we may go a different direction."

Dude, I really want to hear for me and for the listeners, and I think that for anybody listening, the question I'm going to ask you is what are the best strategies that you've learned on being the best dad possible? For anyone listening I really want you to take, I think it was T. Harv Eker that I first heard say this, "Learn something from everything." This comes up in business all the time, which is like, don't just learn from people in your industry, learn from people in other industries.

In fact last week my business partner and I, John Burghoff, we host a mastermind called Quantum Leap Mastermind, QLM, and we had Jeff Hoffman who is one of the founders of Priceline, fastest company to a billion dollars, fastest to ten billion dollars. We had him for our members for ninety minutes and this is actually what he talked about, which is learning from other industries. He goes, "We looked at what other industries were doing and then we go, how could we apply that?" I think the story he used as the example was the first ever drive through window was not at a fast food restaurant, it was actually a guy, who I think was one of the guys that was in the beginning of McDonald's. He saw a bank, they were doing construction on this bank in town and they were putting a window in. He's like, "What are you guys doing?" They go, "We're putting in a window and we're going to make it so our

customers can drive up and then can drop off their checks and do their transactions or whatever."

He was like, "That's freaking brilliant," and then went back to the other, Ray Kroc, whoever else it was he was working with. He was like, "Dude, why don't we do this for food?" That was a long context creating there, but I think that for anyone listening, and if you're not a dad, really listen to what Larry shares here. I also am stalling, giving him time to prep this. No, but listen and think, how can I apply this to my life as a mom, or as a leader, or as a parent, as a sales person, as an entrepreneur, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera? With all of that said Larry take away man, what do I need to do, and everybody listening, to be the best as a father, as a mother, as a parent, as a leader? What have you learned?

Larry: No man, I appreciate you asking that. You know if you really look at our content, we actually have a lot of women that do listen to our podcast. Even in our mastermind groups, we have five active groups of ten men and in each one of those groups we have at least one who isn't a dad. We even have a couple guys who are single. Really the strategy, it's more self development. It's more being the best you. You ask how do we do that, right?

Hal: Yeah.

Larry: I know I'm going to raise some eyebrows when I say this but be a little selfish.

Hal: Okay.

Larry: What I mean by that is, most of us whether we're moms, whether we're dads or whatever, we feel that we have to sacrifice everything about ourselves to take care of others. We have to sacrifice our health, we have to sacrifice our wealth, we have to sacrifice everything to be our best for others. That's a lie. That's a total lie. You have to take time to take care of yourself so that you can selflessly serve others in a more profound way. I think it was ... Gosh, the gentleman who owns Virgin. Is it Richard Branson?

Hal: Richard Branson, yeah.

Larry: Yeah. Someone asked him, "What's your claim to success? What's your advice?" He said, "Work out."

Hal: Yeah.

Larry: You know what I mean? Which is basically, take time to take care of yourself. Every time I'm on a plane you always get the, "make sure you put your oxygen mask on first before you assist a child," and that's true in life. That's true with being a father. That's true with being a mom. That's true with being a single woman, a single man. That's true for anybody, if you're not

taking that time to equip yourself with investing in your own self development, taking care of your body, taking care of your mind, learning how to manage your emotions, you're going to be a mess. You're going to be a mess and you're not going to serve others in a more profound way, which will then lead to an unfulfilled life.

It's really taking care of yourself and another thing too is, learn something new every day. But a lot of times, man, our egos will get in the way of that, "No, I got this. I don't need to learn anything more. I'm good." But be open to be a student and learn something new every day.

Hal: Yeah. Yeah, that's where, not to keep going back to Jeff Hoffman who is very wise by the way, but he talked about that. He talked about how inspiration comes from stimulation. He actually didn't say it that way but I'm going to coin that because that rhymes, the alliteration on that is good. I'm paraphrasing what he said but he essentially said that it's like when you're reading and you're learning, then you go, "Ooh." It sparks ideas. That's where it comes from. You're reading about whatever and then all of a sudden you go, "Wait a minute." It simply gets your brain and your neurons firing so that you have those great ideas. I love that, learning something new every day. Cool. All right, so being a little selfish is the first strategy. What else?

Larry: I think obviously taking care of yourself, but I see this all the time, how to create what we like to call an unbeatable mentality, how do you do that? It really comes down to what I alluded to, and you'll hear more about it in the speaking event

that I'll do at the Dads' Retreat but it's, the quality of our life really comes from the quality of our questions. I'm sure you've heard that too.

Hal: Sure.

Larry: Most of us, to the undisciplined, untrained mind, is we ... I never like to call it our fault but it's our default, that when life throws us a curve ball we immediately get charged up with emotion. We get charged up with either fear, anger, resentment, hatred, whatever that is. Then we immediately start going to questions of, "Why can't I figure this out?" "Why am I not good enough?" "Why me?" We immediately start going down this horrible rabbit hole of a self defeated mind set, because here's the thing, if we're asking ourselves very poor questions our minds don't care if a question we're asking ourselves is a good one or a bad one, it's going to give you an answer, that's the wiring.

For instance, when I was going through the story I told you about in the beginning of this, when I was asking myself poor questions like, "Why me? Why did this have to happen to us?" Your mind is searching for answer, "You want to know why? This is why." It will give you really poor answers. But if you can interdict that thought process with what you always talk about in your books, one of the missing pieces is an affirmation. Stop that thought process with an affirmation. That affirmation is a cue to ask yourself a more empowering question. When life throws you a curve ball instead of going to that weak minded

defeating question you go to, "What do I need to do right now to achieve victory?"

Another example that I'll share with you is for parents, we're so frustrated when our kids don't listen to us like, "Why can't I get this kid to listen to me?" When you're asking yourself questions like that your mind will start literally playing tricks on you and say, "You want to know why your kid won't listen to you? It's because they don't respect you. You're obviously not a good parent because they're not listening to you." But when you ask yourself a question like, "What are the words that I need to use here that are most effective, that is going to help my child understand what I'm trying to say?"

Hal: Yeah, I love that.

Larry: It's the same question in a way but you are going to get a very, very different empowering answer. That's another one, is ask yourself empowering questions when life throws you a curve ball.

Hal: I love that. I love that. No wonder you and John Vroman get along so well, because Vroman is like the question king. It is so true, it's the question that you ask that points you in the direction that you're going to go, period. Right?

Larry: Right.

Hal: Asking a bad question is going to point you into a bad direction, give you a bad answer. Really good, developing an unbeatable mentality and for you it's that choosing questions that take you in a positive direction. Is that how you'd frame it?

Larry: That's exactly, and man it takes so much practice because again our default is to, because our minds are wired up to sense fear and danger and threats, so it's really our default that wants us to be on the lookout for anything bad that's going to happen, which leads to these weak minded questions. But if we can take that productive pause, take something from The Miracle Morning, which is what are some affirmations that I can use to interdict that thought process, and ask myself a better question, it becomes more of a habit. The more you do it the more it becomes a habit, the more it becomes a discipline.

Hal: Love it. What is your third, I don't know if I asked for three but let's round about a three, what's your third strategy?

Larry: The third is, out of all the amazing podcast guests that we've had on, you included, we've had professional UFC fighters, NAVY Seals, all kinds of amazing, amazing people on our podcast. There's one core thing that everyone goes to, because we always ask a question at the end which is, what's one parting piece of wisdom you can share about being a good dad? Most men, and this is the overwhelming thing that we've really learned as parents as well is, lead from the front, lead by example. We can talk lessons and tell our kids to do certain

things but how are they really going to learn? They're going to learn by us taking action and showing them and leading by example and leading from the front. That's definitely the third one, is lead by example and lead from the front.

Hal: I love it, leave the lessons that you want your kids to learn.

Larry: Exactly.

Hal: Again if you look at all of these, the three strategies that you shared, they do apply to leadership. They apply to relationships with your [inaudible 00:35:24] first taking care of yourself, developing yourself so that you can selflessly serve others, that was number one. Number two developing an unbeatable mentality, asking quality questions. Like you said if it's in a relationship, "Why does she have a bad attitude?" "Why is he this or that?" You're going to get those answers that are going to affirm the negative feelings towards your partner.

Larry: Exactly.

Hal: The last one is leading by example. That's something that for me, I'll use a quick example, I used to be really hardcore ... I was vegan for a long time and now I'm a little more balanced. I was really, when I first dating now my wife, after we got comfortable I was like, "Why don't eat more like me," kind of thing. "Let's get you ... Why are you eating that? That's

terrible." I made her feel bad about her diet, I would always tell her she needed to change it. All it did was create resentment and drive her further away from what I thought would be good.

Then when I stopped that and I continued eating healthy and having energy and feeling good, and I stopped telling her what to do, eventually she would go, "What is that thing that you make again with the avocado and the apple?" It totally changed, but it wasn't from pushing or commanding. I think that as a dad it's so true, you tell you kids to do something and then as soon as you're not looking, the more you try to push it on them, as soon as you're not looking the more they rebel and they want to do what you told them not to do.

Larry: Exactly. It's almost like you're pushing rather than pulling.

Hal: Yeah.

Larry: People respond more to the pull than the push, right?

Hal: Sure. Absolutely, yeah. Pulling, or extending your hand sort of thing, right?

Larry: Exactly.

Hal: Cool man, let's wrap this bad boy up. Really a ton of value today. Thank you so much. What is the best ... You've got The Dad's Edge book, you've got the Good Dad Project, the podcast, you've got the Dad Edge mastermind group. What's the best way to connect with you for any or all of this?

Larry: The best way, I'm kind of crazy with my email, I used to respond to every single email, which is you can always contact me at larry@gooddadproject.com. But also gooddadproject.com is where you can find everything. We do have, much like The Miracle Morning, a private Facebook group. We have a Dad Edge Facebook group, if you want I can give you the link if you guys want in that. We have amazing conversations within that group. It's a closed group, actually Hal I think you're a part of that, I know John is. It's an amazing group of, right now we're knocking on the door of three thousand men. We grow by almost a hundred every single week. The conversations there, if you want some engagement, if you want to join that conversation, literally there are probably about twenty five to fifty posts a day of men asking questions, looking for insight, sharing inspiration. It's awesome. The Dad Edge private Facebook group is a really cool way to get connected.

Hal: That's great. It's almost like a safe way if you will, meaning you said guys don't talk about this stuff typically, when you're talking to your buddies you're talking sports, right? Not, "Hey, so what did you learn this week as a dad?" "What? Did you see the game last night? What are you talking about?" Right?

Larry: Right, right.

Hal: This is cool, that's great. You can really tap into that specific result, you want to be a better dad, here's a group of guys that are all like-minded with the same intention and the same commitment. Larry, man thank you for doing the work that you do, it is so important. As a father I really appreciate you man.

Larry: Man me too. I know it's a long time coming, I love your book. I think I told you, I just bought The Miracle Morning For Writers. I've got tell you, yes I've written a book but that book man ... Your books are awesome, that book for me as a writer was phenomenal. It really got me in the groove. I'm happy to say that I've done all my outlines, I'm three days into my project and I have hit my word count of a thousand words ever day for three days.

Hal: Nice dude.

Larry: Dude, now it's like this book, my next book that I'm working on, it's going to called Empower Your Life Through Gratitude. It seemed like such a huge audacious project once again but when I heard all the strategies in that book I was like, "I can do that. I can do that." I've been doing it and it has been awesome.

Hal: That is so great. I didn't know that man, that is so, so great to hear. I'll tell you, I take a little bit of the credit but it mostly goes ... My whole strategy with this book series is to partner with co-authors that are better than me, smarter than me, that

have more knowledge or experience in whatever the niche is, such as writing. Our co-author, Steve Scott, he's written I think forty books. One of the most successful self published authors of all time. Yeah, yeah man. Thanks for the feedback, I'm glad to hear that and I'll pass it along to Steve.

Larry: Awesome man, thank you.

Hal: Cool, cool. All right, Achieve Your Goals Podcast listeners thank you so much for tuning into my interview with Larry Hagner, the author of The Dad's Edge, founder of Dad Edge mastermind group and The Good Dad Project Podcast. Check him out at gooddadproject.com, right Larry? Did I get that right?

Larry: Yes sir.

Hal: Awesome. Thank you for tuning, I love and appreciate you and your time. As always thanks for checking out and learning from The Achieve Your Goals Podcast. I will talk to you next week. Take care everybody.

Nick: Thank you so much for tuning into this episode of the podcast. You can find links to all the resources mentioned in this episode as well as all the past podcast episodes over at haleldord.com/podcast. Also if you haven't so yet please subscribed to the podcast on iTunes by going to halelrod.com/itunes, clicking the

little subscribe button and then if you would please leave a rating and review because rating and reviews truly are the best way for more people to find out about the podcast and decide if this is the one for them. All right, until next week it's time for you to go out there, take action and achieve your goals.

Nick:

If you're looking to grow your business using podcasting but don't have the time to edit the audio, insert the intro and outro, write up the show notes, post the episodes to all the different sites and do all of the ridiculous backend work that's required, then you need yourpodcastguru.com, where you bring the content and we take care of the rest. We'll even co-host the show for you. Visit yourpodcastguru.com right now to explode your audience and crush it in the podcasting world.