

[00:00:07]

ALAN: You're listening to the "Talks at Google" podcast, where great minds meet. Once again I'm Alan, your host for this week's episode. "Talks at Google" brings the world's most influential thinkers, creators, makers, and doers all to one place. Every episode of this podcast is taken from a video that can be seen at youtube.com/talksatgoogle. This episode is with Dan Gable. As the un-scored-upon Olympic gold medalist and two-time NCAA champion, he is the legendary wrestler who ESPN refers to as possibly the most dominant athlete and coach of all time. In this conversation with Googler Armand Hershowitz, Gable shares his view on life, keys to success, and snippets from his autobiography, "A Wrestling Life." Here is Dan Gable, life lessons from an Olympic hero.

[00:01:01]

DAN GABLE: Wow. I thought you were really smart.

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: There's not a teleprompter, I promise.

DAN GABLE: I mean, that was really good, and I didn't realize that was there.

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: Lamar, I said to hide it when Dan came on, [inaudible].

DAN GABLE: Oh, my gosh. That was--that was pretty good. I'm usually not a guy that likes to sit. I get too antsy because last time I didn't really get ready for a match, I lost it. That was about the only time, though, but there was reasons, and you--you have to kinda diagnose that pretty well to figure out the reasons, but, you know, obviously it was something that you never get over, but you gotta get on, and it's one of these things, for me, that it actually made me realize--most people thought I was really good up to that point.

[00:02:01]

When you win and go seven straight years without a loss and your record's 181-0, people think you're good. You know, obviously my opponent didn't think that, or he took on the challenge, but what happened was then I was able to really to go to a new level, and so it's--you wonder how the--some of these people at a certain level of efficiency, so you can take your own life, and you can look at it and say, "Well, you know, I'm at this level, and I've been working all my life to get to this level, but how do I get to that level?" and maybe you can do it quickly, or maybe it's gonna take time. If I'd won that match, it would have taken me a longer time than by losing that match.

[00:02:57]

That was the first time I was ever able to experience something of that magnitude in a sport that actually made my efficiency go up really quick. I believe I would--I say this. For seven years before--from a sophomore in high school to my last match in college, I was on a trend like this. Seven years it took from this point to that point, but within one year after that loss, I took those seven years, and I put it all in one gain. So whatever it want--the steep went like that, and in one year I gained as much as I had gained in seven years, so I kinda look at other--I kind of figured that out through the feelings that I had, but I also looked at, you know, things later on. It made me, like, look at a guy like Michael Jordan, you know, and--for basketball, and, you know, he was one of

the greats three years into his--his NBA, but he all of a sudden jumped to another level of success.

[00:04:08]

And I don't know exactly why he did that. It might be the 10,000 hour rule. It might be a lot of different things. You know, I looked at that 10,000 hour rule, that--there was a book out on that, and I did figure out my hours for wrestling, and I realized that 10,000 hours was already accomplished before I ever wrestled a college wrestling match. So, you know, to me, there was a lot of time put in. It just so happens that my high school coach, who was a--is a famous high school coach, kinda realized that this kid coming in was, you know, maybe more of a leader than most, and because of that, he did things that you can't do now, you know?

[00:04:55]

I don't know exactly what you can and can't do, but you probably--a couple things I know you probably can't do is you probably can't give a first-year high school student a key to the school, and that's what he did for me because he knew that I was gonna be the first guy there in the morning opening the door, and he knew that if he didn't give me that key, he had to be there at 6:00 to open it up. So it actually gave, you know, him an opportunity to have another leader in the program besides himself, and he--and he was, you know, at a point in time in his life where, you know, maybe he didn't have the energy or whatever it was. He actually lived quite a--quite a ways away, so, you know, it's--you know, it was one of those things that he gave me the opportunity to help the team, and really, I was a young kid, and because I was a young kid, I really hadn't had that respect yet, so it was kinda--he didn't--he took a chance.

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: So I heard a few things that I think the audience would love to dig into. It sounded like you were given a great opportunity early on, the keys to a wrestling room, your mentors--

[00:06:02]

DAN GABLE: Keys to the school.

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: Keys to the school. You had mentors. You had the right people around you. I also heard when you--whether it's the--how many hours you were working, that Michael Jordan moment when you're--when you were learning just significantly...

DAN GABLE: Curve.

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: Increased the curve, thank you. I'm curious, like, which one of--trying to extract lessons here that we could all take with us. There's the curve, the right people around you. What are some other key lessons you think that in the next 40 minutes we should talk about? In addition to those, maybe if we just have three or four, and then we'll hone in on those, break them down, see how you learned it. Then hopefully we can take it with us when we're done.

DAN GABLE: Yeah, I think one of the key things is really what you're born into, and, you know, I think that it's sad that some people are born into a situation that is almost impossible, at least when they're younger years.

[00:07:05]

And--you know, and so maybe--maybe that's a good place to start, with mentors, and so everybody here can help the world, everybody, just because you affect somebody. You don't--whether it be your children, whether it be your wife, whether it be girlfriends, whether it be your friends, whether it be--whoever it is, or in another way. I mean, this company affects a lot of people, unbelievably, you know? And so for me, it wasn't the perfect situation, my mom and dad, but they did look out for their kids, which was me and a sister that was four years older than me. So I was born into a good situation. It wasn't perfect, and I'd have doubt if there's a perfect situation out there, but it definitely was a good one, and so they probably realized that they had more than they could handle with me, and so they gave me more opportunities at a young age.

[00:08:05]

Like, "Okay, this kid's got a lot of energy. You know, well, we wanna teach him some things away from the home besides schooling," 'cause I really hadn't started school yet, but--so they had the local YMCA, and they had good people that were working there, and they stuck me in programs that actually helped teach me how to be a competitor, helped teach me how to actually have social skills, helped teach me how to actually have my first job, you know, because they--I actually got a job within the YMCA, and I only stayed at the YMCA from the years 4 to 12.

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: How'd you go about that theme of, you know, acknowledging your current situation, what you would call it, have a competitive advantage on? What could you make the most of and surround yourself with the right people? So it sounded like you--you made a--you took advantage of everything that you had.

[00:09:01]

What about when you were a coach for the Hawkeyes and your wrestlers were training to become Olympic athletes, NCAA champions? How would you help them surround themselves with the right people?

DAN GABLE: Well, you know, I'm a guy that communicates, and I had to learn the hard way, and so there's not a lot that's gonna go on without me actually communicating something, whether it's been said before or not. I just--I don't trust, one of those things, and the reason why I don't trust is because--we'll shoot ahead a little bit, when I was 15. And so I'm walking to school, and as I'm walking to school, there's this kid that was in our neighborhood, but I had never walked to school with him before, and I knew a little bit about his reputation, and his reputation wasn't a real good reputation.

[00:09:58]

He'd been in kind of trouble quite a bit, but when walking to school, he just happens to say to me, he said, "Hey, Gable, you know--" I think he was a year or so older than me, and he just said, "You know, you're doing pretty good in the sport of wrestling. That's good. That's good," you know? And he says, "You know, you got a really cute sister," and then he told me about

three or four other sentences that were, like, not so good, you know? You know, and--but, you know, being a young guy, you know, what do you say, you know? You know, he just--it was something that stayed with me, but I actually never brought it out until after the fact, and so it was probably six weeks later when after the fact happened, and it was in a car ride back from a fishing cabin 100 miles from home with my mom and dad because my sister wasn't.

[00:10:59]

She didn't show up on time that morning, and because of that, all of a sudden I'm riding home. By the way, he murdered her, broke into the house and raped and murdered her, and so on the way home I'm thinking about that conversation, and I got a mom and dad that are--you know, my mom is hysterical in the front seat, and my dad, he's--and I said--all of a sudden I say to them, I say, "I think I might know something about this," and it's like, "How could--" you know, my dad, "How could you know something about this, you know, up here?" and so he kinda swerved the car over, went out, opened the back seat up, kinda picked me up and kinda shook me. "What do you mean, you might know something?" I said, "Dad, I don't know for sure, but this is a conversation I had with this guy six weeks ago walking to school." You know, at first my dad was--he actually cracked me across the face, and he said, "Why didn't you say something?" and I said, "Dad, I just thought it was boy talk."

[00:12:01]

But it was actually a lead, and they brought him in for questioning, and he actually admitted everything right there, and it was o--he was a young guy, but, you know, for me it was--like, my family, what it did for my family, it just was gonna tear this family apart, the family of three that's left, and so for me it was like, I didn't really feel the guilt, but I felt more, like, the motivation. Like, I knew that this mom and dad, I needed to keep them together because they were just fighting and fighting and fighting, and they continued to do that, and just I moved out of the--my bedroom, and I--one night I got up, and I just looked at them in the middle of the night when they were--when they were, like, fighting and yelling, and I think it took a really strong statement to get me out of bed, and I think the statement was really simple, from my mom.

[00:13:08]

She just said to my dad that, "I wished I would have raised her to be--" I think she said the word "whore," you know? "And then she would have gave in to him," and, you know, she fought her--for her life to not give in, which commend her for that, but that got me out of the bed, and that made me realize that something had to be taking place. So a 15-year-old kid decides to move into her room that--because that room is kinda haunted ever since we moved into it. So when I moved into that room, you know, that night I actually went in there and told them, and a little bit later they just kinda snuck in there and looked at me, and I--and they looked at me like I was sleeping, but I wasn't sleeping, I can tell you. But they--it kinda started things changing, and the fact that I would wrestle for her and for them and for everybody else that was pushing for me.

[00:14:06]

But, you know, it just k--it gave me a lot of motivation on such a--such a negative aspect, but, you know, that's just--that's just one thing because adversity--you know, I'm gonna talk--you know, adversity, it happens to all of us. I mean, it could happen today, something, and it's--I used

to, like, have--I used to, like, talk about adversity in two aspects. Adversity, you take it on, or you take it on, and I think we can probably find something in our life that we either are doing something or we're not about something that we should be doing, and I really only had that line for a short period of time. The short period of time eliminates the second part, adversity, you take it on.

[00:14:58]

There is no "or" in adversity, and it's easier said than done, especially in Ls and Ds, lifes and death. Wins and losses, that's another story. Yeah, you can--you know, you gotta take that on too, but there's two levels of grief there, and obviously life and death is the one that's a little bit more difficult, a lot more difficult, but--but the winning and the losing also can be a pretty--can hit you pretty hard. So, you know--so I w--I go seven years, and I have a loss, and that's gonna hit you, and that's why I was able to go to that next level. I've been hit hard at special times in my life, record performance times. I mean, seven years, finally have one more match, only person ever gonna be undefeated in high school and college, and--and I get distracted. I--I don't wrestle up to my ability, and if--had I wrestled up to my ability and done everything right, I can handle that.

[00:16:00]

But when you don't do everything up--when you don't do it right and you get involved, you know, that's--you know that you're better, that's harder to take. So then as a coach, wouldn't you know it? Again, go almost ten years without a loss at the NCAA championship from a team point of view, and then record performance, we lose. But you gotta analyze those losses. You gotta analyze the death, you know? And obviously the communication aspect for me has never been a problem anymore. I--when I hear something, unless it's just dead silence, you know, that you gotta keep this secret because of no major reas--or of a really good reason, you know, you gotta communicate, but, you know, the wins and losses, after seven years and after ten years, they hit you hard, and you really go back, and you figure out what took place. Go back 365 days a year, and I actually analyzed every day up to that loss.

[00:17:02]

And even though the bottom line was the kid got inside my head, he used tactics. I never even really paid much attention to him on that loss until he came to the tournament, and all of a sudden at a press conference like this, he shot his mouth off, which, you know, I absorbed it, and my focus went from me to him, and because it went to him, I wasn't worrying about my skills. I was worrying about his skills, and when you go into a competition, wins and losses, business and not business, you gotta focus on what you're good at, and when you focus on what he's good at, that means he's gonna do something to you, and you're not gonna be at the best of your ability. So, you know, that's--that was pretty amazing, but my team loss, my team loss, this was my team, it was because we were celebrating too much and because you just thought it was gonna be automatic because you did this, you did this.

[00:18:05]

Nothing's automatic, and there's always things that you can change, and when you see something that needs changed and if you let it go, in your life or your business or your family, every day you let it go, there's a term called "the longer, the longer," and that term means that the longer

you let it go up front, the longer it's gonna take on the back to really get back. Even though as soon as we lost, I thought we'd get right back on top, well, it took us five years to go from--we went 2-2, you know, and 3 and went all the way down to, like, 6, and then we shot--started back up again. But it took all that time just because it took all that time to tear us down. Now, you'd have to analyze how long you've been--like, say you're in a marriage, and you gotta look at it, and it's not going so good.

[00:19:03]

You gotta kinda look and see how long you've been not being so good, and don't think it's gonna change right around. You almost have to build it up as long as you tore it down, but you're always hoping for the quickness, but the quickness won't be stable, and you need that consistency, and when that consistency is there--I mean, I'll tell you, it's 42 years now with my wife, 42 years of marriage, same w--same wife. I don't know. I don't need that 'cause it might be--she might--I don't know. But if I don't keep working at it, it's not gonna be 43, I can tell you that. It's just--it doesn't--it's not gonna be there just because it's there. So, you know, it's--when it was shaky, it was because you weren't doing the right things, mostly.

[00:19:59]

You weren't doing the right things. One of the craziest things that--one of the best things I ever did in my life, and I know it's not good for a lot of you guys or girls, is that 1987, which was 13, 16, 29 years? I don't know. Can you add?

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: The engineers, come out.

DAN GABLE: Anyway--

PERSON: Google it.

DAN GABLE: You know, I came home late. I had to get up early, so then I came home, and I said, "Never again am I gonna go to excess." So it's been since 1987 that, in one day, I've never had more than two beers in my life.

[00:21:01]

If I hadn't made that vow and kept that vow, I wouldn't have said 42 years. There is no way because that would have been gone a long time ago. That would have been gone. It's just something that, for me--and again, I gotta work on that too because these guys are trying to get me out drinking tonight over here, and I don't know.

PERSON: [inaudible].

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: That's the wrestlers in business--

DAN GABLE: Actually, I get--I get 32 ounces of beer, you know, because if you say two dr--beers, I mean, some guy gives you a quart of beer. Then he gives you a gallon of beer, you know? So you gotta--you gotta actually define it a little bit, and I've stayed--I've stayed that--again, and then you can't also use two days. You can't go on a roll like, okay, it's 11:58. You

drink two beers, and then it's 12:02, the next day. You can drink two more beers, and then you got a bigger bottle, but you gotta be sma--you can't--you gotta be right exact and know, and, you know, now that I'm actually getting a little bit older, even though I don't claim I'm over 29 on the workout machines 'cause they always say age, weight, all that kind of stuff.

[00:22:12]

I always say 29, and I always win the damn thing over the 29-year-olds. I'm always ending up the first guy, whatever I went, 15 minutes at this level. Then say it's--how you rate, and every time I jump off, it's--if it's number one, you know, I jump off. If it's number two, I gotta go back and do it again. But--but, you know, that's--that's just the way I think. That's the way I think, but, you know, obviously adversity has been something that I hate. I don't like it at all. A lot of people thrive on it. I like prevention of adversity. The more adversity I have, the more I get down, but some people can thrive on a little bit. I got a couple buddies that actually, that's the only way they can get good, is if they have something go bad on them.

[00:23:03]

But I like good, good, good, good, good, you know? Even though it hasn't been perfect, and I don't think there will be a perfect situation, you know, on this earth, anyway, so. But it, you know, doesn't mean you can't strive for it. That doesn't mean I shouldn't have won that match, but if I wouldn't have won that--if I would have won that match the way I wrestled in that match, I probably wouldn't have won the Olympics like I won the Olympics. You know, maybe I would have won the Olympics, but, you know, I won them, and nobody scored on me. The--I mean, I think the last 21 matches I had, Olympic competition and Olympic Games, was 130-1 and 12 pins out of 21 matches with nobody scoring on me. You know, that's, like, domination, kinda, and--well, except for that one point, you know?

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: Would you give us any suggestions on how to find the lessons from adversity without having those catastrophic losses?

[00:24:01]

Being able to think that way although you're not in such a situation, proactively hit that curve that you were talking about?

DAN GABLE: I don't think it's possible. No, I just don't think you can be smooth sailing because when I--longer--the longer thing, again, when I look at that coaching thing, I was breaking down for at least five years, and by that I mean--so when we--we lost it in '87, so in the starting of '83 I was not doing all the best decisions I could make, and the funny thing was in '83 we won. In '84 we won, '85 we won, '86 we won. So, you know, Google, I didn't even know what Google is, but I actually--I asked you about it.

[00:25:00]

I mean, I knew what it was, and I love your answer about making things easier for everybody, you know? 'Cause that's kind of why I was a good coach. If you're just a good wrestler, you know, you--there's ways to win, but as you go higher of level, you know, once you go from high school to college and then on to your Olympic level, you're not gonna win the Olympics unless you have both hard work and smart work, and so at efficiency of Google, of trying to make

things easier to get to, access, and so on, that's like a wrestling match. I mean, I personally kept getting better all the time, and I--and all of a sudden, instead of struggling to score, I could score quicker, easier, because the skills and the techniques were getting better. I mean, for me, I got this guy over here, Nick Gallo over here, that I used to train with him all the time.

[00:25:57]

He didn't like this hard, tough-nosed style wrestling that I had. He liked slick, quick. He didn't wanna get tired. You know, for me, I had to take and learn some of that. I don't mind getting tired 'cause I never knew I got tired, and so I--you know, instead of being real efficient, I just struggled--not struggled, but I would get to it and finish and win, but that's at that lower level. As I got higher, I had to actually know how to be more efficient, and--you know, and, you know, I've seen five people try to jump Nick Gallo, and none of them could get ahold of him because he was like a--like a noodle. You'd grab him, and he'd--you know, and so it--things like that kinda--you gotta be--okay, so I'm going to the woods, and I love hard work, and I take my--nowadays I take my chainsaw.

[00:27:02]

The old days, you'd take an axe, but I'll tell you what, I run out of gas, my engine breaks down, and I can't cut the trees down, I still have my axe with me so I can go b--you know, even though I got my efficiency. I'm gonna do it, but if I have to do hard work and I gotta get a certain thing done, I'm gonna have a backup plan, and a lot of people don't have those backup plans, and in your life, a lot of times there's--you know, especially with Google, I mean, you're just constantly wanting to do things efficiently and everything. You know, sometimes you gotta do a little hard work to become efficient, and you gotta stay in that hard work, and if--and sometimes you gotta work through that to get to that great ability to dominate for--so that's kind of my relation with Google. Wrestling, there's so many disciplines that you have to master. Otherwise they show right in front of you. Everybody sees them.

[00:27:58]

If you get tired in a wrestling match, there's two people out there, and if you see that--everybody's gonna--all--your coach, your teammates, all the fans are gonna see who's gonna be tired, who's not gonna be tired because they're gonna watch shoestring tricks or--and that's why they've eliminated those. They don't even put shoestrings a lot times, or they make you tape them, or if you're going out of bounds and you wanna go back in and they take the big walk around the circle to come back in to get their breath, you know, stuff like that. Or, you know, just in life, say you have to make a weight class or you wanna be healthy in life because I'll tell you what. As you get older, it's really critical to stay healthy. I mean, you think you're--you know, you're gonna make it your whole life by not staying healthy, you could do all this and all that, I'm telling you, you're kidding yourself. You're kidding yourself. So, you know, for wrestling, a lot of times we have to master nutrition and conditioning, and so they go hand in hand, and you have to read about it, and you have to learn about it, and you have to understand.

[00:29:02]

I'm surprised that some of the kids that I got from--to me from high schools, even though they're top recruits, had no idea about the scientific rules of, you know, like nutrition or losing weight properly, you know? And again, there's a lot of--I call them disciplines, but of course, you also

have to know techniques. You have to be updated on them. You have to, you know, know your tactics. You know, you have to know your opponent a little bit, and so, you know, it's just what builds your mind, what builds your mind, and--'cause that's gonna decide, your mind, is whether you're gonna win or lose or how much life you got or you're gonna be dead quicker, a lot of it, and whether it's--you know, I mean, there's freak things that happen out there, but, you know, it's amazing. One of my good friends just never stopped partying after college.

[00:30:01]

He partied all through college, did really well. He was, you know, a genetic-type guy, and--but he just kept on doing that his whole life, and--but about ten years ago, you know, when he's carrying his, you know, oxygen tank around with him because he smoked all the time, and he drank all the time, and he gave up smoking, you know, maybe seven years ago, I think it was, eight years ago, and so he had 20% of one lung, tw--at seven years ago. He's still got 20% of one lung. That's pretty amazing. I mean, today's a little different. You know, my mom and dad smoked, drank pretty good, but the smoking part--but there wasn't really any ev--you know, information out there, and, you know, you--it's--you know, they--they lived till 67 and 73, you know? You know, I got a ways to go to get there.

[00:30:57]

I'm 29, but--but, you know, it's one of these things that--I never smoked, really. Maybe as a kid. I shouldn't say that, but I never inhaled. I just thought it was cool to smoke Swisher Sweets, Swisher Sweets down by the f--when I was in sixth grade and seventh grade--sixth grade, I think, fishing, but, you know, that was just a temporary thing. But, you know, it's just one of those things, and like I said, two-beer limit probably helped me a lot, and, you know, that's just one of those things. But, you know, I do have my drawbacks. I just want you all--there's no perfect situation out there.

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: I was--

DAN GABLE: Mountain Dew.

PERSON: Mountain Dew.

DAN GABLE: Mountain Dew.

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: That's the drawback?

DAN GABLE: Yeah, I just--somebody's gotta kick my butt and get me off that, but nobody can kick my butt, so.

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: Nick, do you wanna challenge that or--

NICK GALLO: I know all his weaknesses.

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: Yeah.

DAN GABLE: None.

NICK GALLO: Exactly.

DAN GABLE: On the mat.

[00:31:59]

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: So thank you so much for sharing your life story, your perspective on just accomplishing anything. So I feel like we have so many pieces of wisdom from everything you just explained. I'd like to--I'd like to invite all of you to join us, ask a few questions. Before I do that, though, Dan did author his autobiography. Do you wanna tell us about the--this book which all of you can buy back there? And then we'll move to Q&A. Should we buy it?

DAN GABLE: Unless you wanna get pinned. No, yeah, it's--a lot of people have bought it--bought it, but, you know, it's one of those things that if you're not--if you like books that are--you could read a chapter and set it down and come back to it, that's fine. This is the book. I mean, it's like every chapter is a new chapter, and it's--there's a lesson in every chapter.

[00:32:59]

In fact, I got a new book coming out in about a year, but I took a lesson out of each chapter and have a chapter on those lessons in the next one. So, you know--and this book actually says a lot of good things about not just wrestling by any means, about family, about, you know, like, my best friends growing up, and there's a lesson with each one of them because--and I didn't get to be who I am by just me and my mentors of my mom and dad. It took a lot of help from a lot of people along the way, whether it be at the Y or whether it be my coaches or teachers or my friends. My friends, I mean, my friends were, like--they looked out for me because there was this crazy kid that was a fanatic, somewhat, and so my friends taught me about having a beer.

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: Mm-hmm.

DAN GABLE: And they taught me about girls, you know?

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: My favorite lesson that I got from this book was when you were coaching Barry and how you empowered him to be an NCAA national champion.

[00:34:01]

You didn't scare him to it. Barry was the--not always--sometimes into it, sometimes not. He wasn't sure if he really wanted to move through and put all the dedication into winning the national championships, and Dan was just--by supporting him, empowering him to accomplish what no one else was able to in his weight class, and--

DAN GABLE: Well, Barry Davis you're talking about, who was a three-time NCAA champion. Well, he ran off on me, and I had to find him. Most people, when somebody runs off, they don't even bother to go find them. Well, I'm pretty much of a Sherlock Holmes expert, and so I had a lot of that training when I was growing up, and so I always got a lot of people to help me to--it

wasn't just me looking for somebody, but Barry, I had to find him, and I got a little lucky there, and I think the more prepared you are, the luckier you get, so I did luckily find him at a point in his career which would have made a big difference in his life, and, you know, I also--when I did find him, pure emotion happened between me and him.

[00:35:00]

He was gonna run off, and I actually broke down crying a little bit, and--but I never pressured him to come back, but he wanted to. I mean, he was just waiting for me to find him, but he was hiding, and I got lucky, and I found him, so it's like, wow. Some things aren't--some things are, like, karma. They're just like, how'd that happen? But Barry is--you know, he's still working on it today. I mean, even though he's a coach somewhere and doing a mentor of kids, and that's how I measure people. So I measure people by not le--really how they did with me back 20 years ago, 30 years ago, whenever it is. I kinda measure people, like, where are they at right now? And, you know, that's, to me, more important, and the ones that have really gone on and do well, then I'm really proud of them, you know? And if they've taken care of their family and if they've stayed within our profession, you know, so, like, you--you know, you just--you just don't let it go totally. You live on it because you know what?

[00:36:00]

It's more about people having these things to look up to, and it's like, I could--you know, I could--I could be gone tomorrow, you know? But it's like, will you really be gone, or are you gonna live on? And are people gonna care, you know? And that type of thing, and so you--for me, it's like, I wanna forever live, you know? Even though I'm not on this earth, and if I could do that, that means I've touched a lot of people, and I've given a lot of people a chance to be a little bit better with their own lives, and so like I said, family of four, three--I'm the only one that's alive. Now it's a family of 21, and we talk about that a lot in this book, and that 21 motivates me. It's why I'm here, for my sport and for my family, for my sport and my family.

[00:37:00]

And it's gonna be good for both of them, me being on a Google Talk, right?

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: Yeah, absolutely.

DAN GABLE: I mean, is this gonna actually go out to people?

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: Your call.

DAN GABLE: Huh?

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: You can decide whether--

DAN GABLE: Oh, wow.

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: We can edit it. We can take out the part of you beating up Nick and--whatever you want.

DAN GABLE: Well, actually, Nick is a guy that has scored some quick takedowns on me because he's slick, and you know what? I had to learn. I--

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: You're okay with us putting that on YouTube?

DAN GABLE: Of course. Nick Gallo? Yeah, he already beat my guy in the national finals, so he's--I can give him some credit.

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: So we have--we have a question over here. Thank you.

PERSON: Hey, Dan. How's it going? Thanks so much for your words of wisdom. You touched a little bit on nutrition. I'm wondering if you have any recommendations for resources for understanding nutrition that are, you know, your favorite resources for understanding nutrition.

DAN GABLE: Well, I usually like to read books that are directly related with wrestling, but that's probably not for the normal.

[00:37:59]

But, you know, because of--you have to be in superior condition in wrestling, you know, they're probably pretty good. I used to have an--I think it's called an encyclopedia of health, but--you know, but it was involved with wrestling, but I'll tell you, there's so much there and so easy to access to get it to, I mean, just go online, I think. Now, here's the thing. Here's the thing with it, and again, there's so much that isn't good, so you gotta go, like, to a--really, a knowledgeable resource because people are always trying to make money, and a lot of that stuff isn't for real. So you just gotta go to the general knowledge and go from there.

PERSON: Do you have, like, a top, you know, one, two, or three recommendations in terms of, you know, maintaining good nutrition? Like, just, like, the top one or two--

DAN GABLE: Well, just interview me long enough.

[00:38:57]

PERSON: All right.

DAN GABLE: But actually, I think for me it is the scientific point and not just the made-up type of things, so I really--you know, I wouldn't say that--if you see something that looks easy, you go back to the actual science of it.

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: So are you gluten-free?

DAN GABLE: Hmm?

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: Are you gluten-free? Have you heard of this, Paleo diet? It comes up in a--

DAN GABLE: I'm just a general science guy.

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: Find the right scientists and follow th--

DAN GABLE: No, I'm serious. I'm a general science guy.

PERSON: Thank you.

DAN GABLE: I don't go for these fads.

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: One question over here.

PERSON: Hey. So you were talking about adversity a lot, and I was wondering if you have any personal experiences or tips or tricks you have when you were competing and you were not performing the way you wanted to perform and you weren't doing your best at--did you have a trick to get yourself to do again what you wanted to be doing in match--

[00:39:58]

DAN GABLE: Well, for me, anytime I'm experiencing something that I don't like, I go the healthy route, and that means I go to the gym, or that means I go to the wrestling mat. Some of the worst times in my life, and you could have laid there and just keep suffering, but I actually got up and went to the gym, and I called somebody up to get a wrestling match in, or even during the days, you know, when my sister was first murdered, it was like, what do you do? Everybody came over to this one house, and everybody was just in this one house, and all they did was just kinda look at each other and talk, and I had to get out and do some exercise. I think exercise is one of the best things that can actually get you in a different frame of mind, at least temporarily, at least temporarily. It will make you feel a little better, and I know that I take it right on again.

[00:41:02]

I take it right on, and that's one of the ways that I've been able to do it.

PERSON: Yeah, also any mid-match--mid-match mentalities? You're in the middle of a match. You [inaudible]--

DAN GABLE: Oh, gosh, if you have to think during a wrestling match, you're in trouble. But I'm gonna tell you what I do sometimes. I have had to do it, and I talked myself into performing at a higher level. I can remember I went in overtime once, and I knew I didn't perform during the match. It was kind of a hangout match, and I've seen--I never do that, and so when I was in the corner, I was just kinda talking myself into I got a higher level that I normally compete at. In fact, my athletes, actually, some of them, to get their game face on, al--wanted me to slap them a lot, and back in the days--I haven't coached for a long time. Back in those days, you know, you could get away with it as long as you--they told you you could do it and their mom and dad told you you could do it, but now, today you--they can tell you, and you gotta have a signed agreement, and then you--and the parents can tell you.

[00:42:07]

You gotta get a signed agreement, and then you gotta go get a lawyer and make sure all this stuff's worked, but--so it's a little different than today, but--but I can remember I sometimes had to pull a trick or two out of your hat, and usually if you have a tremendous reputation going into that, you can pull a few tricks out of your hat and get away with it, but you don't wanna have to count on it too much today.

PERSON: Thanks so much.

DAN GABLE: Thank you.

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: Please.

PERSON: Hey, thanks, Coach, for coming out. I have to say, I appreciate your comment about Mountain Dew. I actually gave up soda when I first started cutting in the eighth grade, and I haven't had a sip since--I wanna say it's, like, 2004, so that's all you gotta do.

DAN GABLE: Well, I appreciate that.

PERSON: I can't say I take the same route on beers, though.

DAN GABLE: No, I--oh, you've had more beers?

PERSON: Yeah, a couple more--couple more than that.

DAN GABLE: Oh.

PERSON: But--

DAN GABLE: Does it get you in trouble or not?

PERSON: No, not at all.

DAN GABLE: Okay.

PERSON: My question--

DAN GABLE: Then you're a good beer drinker.

PERSON: My question for you was...

[00:42:59]

DAN GABLE: I wasn't.

PERSON: I think we really appreciate your story of adversity and working through that yourself, but as a coach, how do you approach maybe your athletes or your wrestlers who are going

through adversity? How do you, instead of approaching it from your own head, get out of your head and inside your athlete's head to help them through it? How do you approach that?

DAN GABLE: Well, the number-one thing, you gotta develop some kind of a respect, and that's on an everyday basis, and so over time they will look up to you, just like a parent. There's no difference from a standpoint that if your kids just don't--if you don't treat them right, don't do things right, you're gonna have a lot tougher times. So it's a daily thing that they all of a sudden see that they really--that they know that you--they real--you really care and that you're working harder than they are, and that's a real key thing. You know, not necessarily just during the match, but--or during the practice, but forever, you know?

[00:43:57]

It's just that whatever they're doing in terms of their two hours of hard work, you're putting in ten, you know, hours of work or whatever. You know, that's another thing. Some people like--don't like to take home what they have to take home. They like to leave it there and then come back and get it. I'm just gonna tell you, I've been one of these guys that I've been able to take it home. I've been able to take it home with me, you know, and if I bring it home and it's not good, then that's not good. If I bring it home and share it and they--the family is on your side, which my family is on my side. That's one of the key things. I said four. They were all on my side. The 21, including me, they're all on my side, and that means--and a lot of it is because of the amount of success, too, that you're having. If you're doing all this and it's just not successful and it's not good, then you won't have those people on, so--I don't know where I went with that, but--but anyway, I--didn't I meet you in the bathroom today?

PERSON: For context, we were washing our hands. Yes, sir, you did.

[00:45:02]

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: I love that we have a handful of wrestlers here. I wanna save a time for people to buy the books and then give autographs. We'll finish right after this question?

DAN GABLE: No, you got two more.

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: Two more.

DAN GABLE: Three more, actually.

PERSON: Hey, Dan. So what fascinates me about successful athletes is not getting to the top. It's how long they can stay at the top, and I'd like to hear a little bit more from you about what drove you or what motivated you to continue to get better after so many years of success.

DAN GABLE: Well, I really do believe that if you don't have a lot of success, you're gonna fall off somewhere, and you're not gonna keep that drive, and I do feel that the drive from the success really helped me, and at the crucial times of--I had all this winning, and then I had a loss, you know? That's a major adversity, but, you know, it's just that you have so much success, you know what that feeling is like, and then you--when you don't have it, it's kinda devastating.

[00:46:04]

So you--I think you do have to be successful a lot to be able to sustain it, sustain it. It's one of these things, you get up there. I think I say that--you know, that my low point is, like, at most people's peaks, and--because by that I mean when I drop down a little bit, you know, it's like--it's still higher than almost everybody else in my work ethic or my smartness, you know, for my sport, and on a daily basis, when you're up at that level, you gotta have--you can't stay up there--I don't like to use the word "can't." I shouldn't say that, but, you know, it's like, you still have to have what's called--and again, this is really critical, and I can't believe I haven't pointed this out 'cause this--you have to have what's called recovery, and a lot of--and people say, "Oh, I'm gonna go fishing once a month--or once a year."

[00:46:58]

"That's gonna recover me for the year," or, "I'm gonna--I'm gonna go do something, and I'll be ready to go, you know, for another year." Hey, it's every day. My recovery is every day. So I alr--what was I doing this morning when I first got up? Well, I was in the steam room. I was in the sauna. You know, I was in a--I got a massage. You know, it's like, you know, I--I do things, and that's one of the keys. So when I come home from work, I s--I do things that are gonna help me recover to be ready to go for the next day. Most of them are, like, for wrestling, but it's your whole life, so it could be my homework when I was a kid, you know, that type of thing, but I could recover really quick, really quick, and part of that recovery is because I did a lot of things to my body and mind that I--that nobody else did. So practice was over. I stayed after, but then I went through all these things, hot, cold plunges, hot plunges.

[00:48:03]

You know, I--if somebody was there in college for a massage, you know, if I get in a--you know, I just--I'd work on that, but I didn't really know what I was doing until I became a coach, and then you kinda diagnose it, dissect it, and then you say, "This is it." So my teams could work extremely hard. This team could work extremely hard, and you could come back and do it again tomorrow, and you're totally recovered because you have a recovery process. So, you know, like I said, when I wanted to go fishing, I had this cabin up north in Minnesota, but I only get up there, you know, three weeks a year, maybe, two weeks a year, and all at the same time. So guess what I did? I built myself a cabin in my back yard.

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: Yeah.

DAN GABLE: So I go in my--go to my retreat every day. There's where I--plus the fact that once I retired from coaching, you know, I still wanted to work on my sport and my life. My wife's house was her house, you know, and so she kinda said, "Why don't you build one just real close?"

[00:48:58]

But, you know, it's like, I've never had to sleep in it yet. There's--but there is a bed there.

ARMAND HERSHOWITZ: We'll have to create our own cabin in one of these MKs. For the remaining two questions, feel free to just approach. Let's give Dan a thank you, a round of applause.

ALAN: Thanks for listening. If you have any feedback about this or any other episode, we'd love to hear from you. You can visit g.co/talksatgoogle/podcastfeedback to leave your comments, and to discover more amazing content, you can always find us at youtube.com/talksatgoogle or through our Twitter handle @googletalks. Thanks for listening. Talk soon.