



SPI Podcast Session #189– Entrepreneurship and Life with Aaron Walker

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This is the Smart Passive Income podcast with Pat Flynn, Session #189. Let's go!

Intro: Welcome to the Smart Passive Income podcast, where it's all about working hard now so you can sit back and reap the benefits later. And now your host – it took him over a year to figure out what 'the cloud' was – Pat Flynn.

Pat: What's up everybody? Pat Flynn here. Thank you so much for joining me in Session 189 of the Smart Passive Income podcast. I'm very thankful for you and I just wanted to mention that because it is Thanksgiving week that this episode comes out.

If you're listening to this on the day it comes out, Thanksgiving is tomorrow so I hope you guys are enjoying family. If you wanted to just take a minute to pause and re-listen to this later on after you spend time with family, that's the most important thing, but you know what? You guys are family too, so you're more than welcome to spend time with me. I'm here to serve you. Although I'm not serving you a turkey dinner, I'm going to serve you some great content here in this particular episode.

Today we're talking with Aaron Walker from ViewFromTheTop.com. Aaron is somebody who I met at a conference, actually. I met him through a question he asked on a microphone when I was speaking. Actually it wasn't a question, it was just a compliment and it really stood out to me because here he is an older generation entrepreneur, and he talks about this on the show and how long he's been doing it. He's been doing entrepreneurship for decades, and he has connections and is in a mastermind group with several high-level people, people like Dave Ramsey. A lot of you know who Dave is. We got just incredible wisdom from Mr. Aaron Walker here.

When he stood up to go to the microphone at this conference I was at, I had talked about mastermind groups. This was at Social Media Marketing World here in San Diego and I had given this presentation on mastermind groups, and he came up to the microphone and I thought he was going to ask a question like everybody else, but he just came up to essentially validate everything I had just said.



It was one of the coolest things somebody has ever done during a Q&A for me. He was like, "You've got to listen to everything Pat said. I've been doing entrepreneurship for decades. I'm in a mastermind group and I've gotten so much out of my mastermind group."

We're going to talk to Aaron Walker today about what he's gotten from his mastermind group, what it's been like to be in those groups, and some of the hard things that have happened in his life that his mastermind group really helped him with.

This isn't a conversation just about mastermind groups. I want to talk about business in general and what Aaron has learned over time. I think it's always important to see people who have been doing something for a very long time and who are very successful at it, and just get as much information out of them as possible and have them share in their own words, in their own stories, exactly how it all happened so we can all learn from the wins and the failures.

This is why I do what I do on my site, and Aaron's doing that here on the show for you today. So without further ado, here's Aaron Walker from ViewFromTheTop.com, probably one of my most favorite conversations of the year.

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Pat: Hey everybody, what's up? I'm here with Aaron Walker from ViewFromTheTop.com. Aaron, welcome to the Smart Passive Income podcast. Thank you for joining me today.

Aaron: Thanks Pat. I appreciate you having me on.

Pat: Absolutely. I don't know if you remember this – you probably do because it actually wasn't that long ago – but my first interaction with Aaron, for everybody out there listening right now, was a great one and I'm smiling right now because I remember the exact moment. I was in a room in San Diego at a convention and I was giving my talk on mastermind groups, and at the end we do a little Q&A.

Aaron gets the microphone and what I think he's going to do is ask a question, but he actually just gives me a compliment. He talks about the fact that my presentation was about mastermind groups and that everything I said was true, that everybody should listen to pretty much everything I said, and that you had been doing masterminds for over 20 years now yourself and you attribute a lot of your own entrepreneurial success to the mastermind groups you were in.



So before we get into your story and some tips and talking about everything from living a significant life, to masterminds, to entrepreneurship in general, thank you for doing that in front of everybody. Man, I'm so happy to have gotten to know you since then.

Aaron: You know, it was true though, man. You rocked it. You had a room full of people and you got up there and I was wanting to high-five you every 5 minutes. It was like, "Man, Pat is rocking the room." I've been involved in these groups for 2+ decades and everything you were saying is spot-on.

Pat: Let's start at the beginning. You have been doing business for over 37 years as an entrepreneur. You've been in mastermind groups for over 20 years so you have a ton of experience that I know that everybody is going to pull a lot of inspiration and wisdom and strategies from, so let's go from the beginning. Where did you get started with all this?

Aaron: I'm a native Nashville-ian. I'm soon to be 55 years old and I started early. My dad got me to help him one summer when I was 13 years old remodel a pawn shop. I'd never even heard of a pawn shop, but at 15 I fell in love with that business.

At 18 I went up and introduced myself to a couple guys that had been buying diamonds and gold from me for about two years, kind of hedging against inflation. They were in an insurance agency and I approached them one day and said, "Listen, I don't have any money but I've got experience and I want to go in business with you guys."

They said, "How old are you?" and I said, "I'm 18," and they said, "We've never had an 18-year-old approach us," and I said, "There's a first time for everything, you know!" He said, "Well, let's talk about it," so I went to his office and we talked about it.

To make a long story short, we formed a partnership. He said, "I want your name on the line. We've got the money but I want you to go to the bank with us and sign a note." I said, "I'll sign it. I don't have anything to lose." I came from a family with a very humble background and I said, "Let's do it," so we did. We signed a 10-year loan.

We borrowed \$150,000 and that was a lot of money in the late 70's and it's a lot of money today. The Lord just really blessed our business and in 36 months, Pat, we paid off that \$150,000 loan. I got married in the process and we went on to do that four more times before I was 27 years old.

Pat: What was it exactly that you were doing back then?



Aaron: We opened our own pawn shop, and I didn't even know what a pawn shop was at the time. Then we opened it and it became very successful and we grew large pawn shops. Then a Fortune 500 company in Ft. Worth, Cash America, came to me and said, "We want to buy you out. You've got great stores. We want to be in Nashville and we're growing through acquisition and we want to be here. It's better for us to pay more and grow through acquisition than it is to start up."

I said, "I don't want to sell. I'm 27. What am I going to do?" and they said, "We don't care what you do. Here's the money," and I said, "I'm not interested." So we did that dance for about 6 months and finally one day they came in and said, "Listen, we want to be here and we want your store. You've got the best stores in Nashville and we want to be here."

He said, "Hypothetically if you were going to sell, what would the number be?" and I said to myself, "Well, now's my chance to get rid of them" and I quoted a number and they said, "We'll take it." I was breaking out in a cold sweat now. I'm like, "What do I do?" and he said, "Well, you're going to sell it!"

I don't want to make this whole thing about me, Pat. I want to talk about other guys and how they can do the same thing. I don't want it to be just centrally focused on me and my success. I want to serve your audience, so if there's things that I can tell – tips, things that I did – I'm happy to, but I don't want the central focus to be all about me.

Pat: Thank you for that. Let's go back to the mastermind groups. What was your first experience with a mastermind group? It surprised me because I haven't really heard of anybody being in a mastermind group for this long. I didn't even know what they were until when I starting online 6 or 7 years ago. Obviously it's been around for a while – Napoleon Hill and *Think and Grow Rich* and that sort of thing.

What was your first experience with mastermind groups? I think along the lines of serving the audience, talk about maybe some fears you had or how you found people, because I think that's something that most people struggle with. I think everybody listening to this knows the power of connecting with other people, but when it comes down to the work of doing that it can be very difficult, very nerve-racking, and people just don't do it.

Aaron: I'll have to go back quite a ways to 1995. I'm at a Chamber of Commerce breakfast early one morning and there's this guy up there talking and he's telling about a radio station where he was starting a show here in Nashville. I heard him speak and



he sounded interesting, and I went up afterwards and introduced myself and he introduced himself.

I said, "I've got a new store I just built." We bought this property and tore it down and built a big 10,000 square foot pawn shop, state of the art. He came down and looked at it and he said, "I love this place. Why don't you advertise with me on the show?" and I said, "What is your name?" and he told me. I said, "I never heard of you," and he said, "I'm just starting and I would love for you to be one of my sponsors."

I said, "No thank you, I'm not interested," and he said, "Listen, what if I give you a week free?" and I'm thinking, "I'm a smart business guy, that don't take long, so okay I'll do that."

That was my first encounter with Dave Ramsey. Dave had started in Nashville. He was on one station here in Nashville and we struck up a friendship out of that. Three days into the advertising I signed up for an annual renewal contract. I said, "I don't know what you're feeding these people but it's working," so I've been on Dave's show now every day for 20 years, either a business I own or have owned, and we just struck up a friendship.

One day he saw me at a concert. He walked up to me and he said, "We've started a mastermind group," and I said, "Dave, what is that?" He said, "It's where guys get together, we encourage each other, we have accountability, we share resources, and I want you to be a part of it."

I said, "I don't know anything about it but I'll come sit in," so I went and there were other guys in there like Dan Miller, *48 Days to the Work You Love*. Dan's been one of my personal mentors now for 15 years.

Pat: I love Dan.

Aaron: He's an awesome guy. He's the reason I'm coaching now. Dave Ramsey of course was in there. It's in his office. Then Ken Abraham is in there. Ken has got 100 books in print. He writes biographies like Payne Stewart, John Ashcroft, George Foreman, Joel Osteen, and Lisa Beemer's *Let's Roll* book. He's got over 100 books in print, so he's in the room. I'm like, "Man, this is an impressive room!"

At the time Dave was just starting and he wasn't who he is now. He's on 800 stations now. He's a big deal. He wasn't then. A lot of people say, "Well, I would have joined that group too with those guys," but they were just starting their professions as well.



Dan was just getting going. So we went together and we formed these relationships and these bonds, and it does take a lot of time, Pat. You're right because I was a little skittish. I didn't know these guys and it takes time.

I'm a long-termer. I look at everything long-term so I'm thinking, "Well, they're good guys and we're going to spend some time together," and that's what we did. We just offered accountability to each other, encouragement, resources, and connections. They challenge you to go to new heights and they're not biased.

That's the thing I like most about mastermind groups. They can tell me the truth. They're trusted advisors because whatever they tell me they have nothing to gain or lose as a result of the outcome, so then you're going to get an honest answer.

Pat: Do you remember a specific thing that the mastermind group you were involved with really helped you out on? Maybe you were struggling with something and maybe you can give some details on that?

Aaron: Yeah, I can. There's a couple of things. I was going through a really dark time in those years or soon thereafter. Back in 2001 – I don't even know if I've mentioned this to you, Pat – I was headed to the office and I hit a pedestrian and killed him.

That rocked my world forever. As a matter of fact, I sold out, I retired, I quit, I cashed it all in for about five years. You don't get over that. You don't just one day say, "Oh, okay." This guy had a family and children and I'm like, "Oh my goodness. How am I going to get through this?"

Those guys right after that happened were rallying around me, they're helping me, they're talking through it, they're eating lunch with me. I've got an accountability group that is coming to my aid, and it takes years to work through that kind of stuff.

If I didn't have guys like that, I don't know what I would do. I guess you would just have your family support and that would be it, but men really need other men that can pour into them and can help them. Ladies need other ladies. We need people that can come along and say, "Don't do that, do more of this."

I was at Ace Hardware one day and my phone rings. It's a guy named James Rawl. James was in my group. I looked at the phone and I thought, "This is interesting. We don't talk to each other on the weekends." I went outside and said, "Yeah, James," and he said, "Aaron, I know you've been struggling for a long time with this situation, this decision." He said, "You're wearing the crap out of everybody around you" and it made



me mad. I said, "What?" He said, "Nobody wants to be around you. You won't get over it."

The guys in this group are Christians, as I am, and he said, "It says in the book of Isaiah in the Bible, 'Take the chains from around your neck and let's move on.'" He said, "It's time for you to move on. I gotta go, I'll see ya," and he hung up.

I'm standing there in the parking lot and I want to bite a nail into him so bad. Then I think, "You know what, he's invested all these years in me." He had the privilege and the ability and the right to say that because he'd invested all this time and he knew I needed a push.

Those are two very extreme isolated incidents for me personally. You said, "How did they help you work through tragedies?" That right there alone was worth the decade-plus that I was in that group, just them walking through those two dark times in my life.

Pat: Aaron, thank you for being honest and sharing all that with us. I'm literally tearing up right now so just thank you. It just shows the power of a mastermind group, connecting with other people and what it's like to have real support. I know that if somebody else in the group was in a similar situation you would pick up the phone and tell them the brutally honest advice that they need to hear as well.

Aaron: You know what happens in that environment? It's a safe environment. Those guys of course run very large businesses now and we all do okay, but there's some things that you just can't talk to maybe your staff or your leadership about. It's kind of like having your own board of directors. You've got a safe environment.

We even signed a document stating that these things are private in nature. You're not going to hear about it at the coffee shop. We made a commitment and a vow to keep the things that we talked about in that room a very safe environment.

The first year or two it was like, "Don't tell anybody this. You'll get me in trouble," but it got to a point where you didn't have to say that. You just said, "Hey Pat, this is the deal, man. This is hard. I don't know what to do. I need you guys to pour into me." Everybody needs that safe environment.

For the listeners listening right now, you don't have to be a big-time business guy or run a multimillion dollar business. You can be a guy that works for somebody. You can



be a solopreneur. Just get yourself around some guys that have the same core values, that have the same dynamics. They can be very diverse.

We were very diverse. We had accountants in there. We had guys like Dave running big businesses. We were very diverse but we all had the common goals, the common morality, our values were the same and we were all wanting to grow and go forward. We were willing to subject ourselves to scrutiny. You can't have a little thin backbone. You've got to be able to man up in there and say, "Okay, I'm going to trust you."

Recently I was going to do a deal. My wife said, "What about your guys? What did they say?" and I said, "Well, I haven't talked to them yet," and I went to them individually. We were going to do the deal and I went to them individually. 11 of 12 guys said, "Don't do it," and I never saw that. They were looking at it through a different lens, different life experiences. They said, "If you do that, this will happen," and I'm like, "Man, I didn't even think about that. Thank you."

They've saved me so many times. That's the reason I'm a huge proponent for mastermind groups. They keep you in the center of the road. They encourage you when you need it, and they stop you when you're going the wrong places.

Pat: Amen to that. I have been saved several times from other people I've associated myself with in the mastermind groups I'm a part of. That's why I'm in many mastermind groups because I need that and I feel like it's easy to get off track, but when you have the right people in place to help you kind of balance back up you're on your way to things that are great.

Now, besides mastermind groups, which I know you know is a great and important part of becoming a successful business owner and entrepreneur, and I know that too and I think everybody else gets that, what else in your eyes is an important component of becoming successful?

Aaron: You know, when I was young my mom would never allow us to say "can't" and I didn't understand till later. She had this little saying. She said, "Can't couldn't do it, and could did it all." It was goofy at the time but I've made it kind of a life mantra and I'm thinking, "You know what? It's attitude. It's the only thing that we're in 100% control over." A lot of things happen to us that we can't control, but the way we respond we can control.

I saw through my mom living this out saying, "You may not be able to do it, but you're going to try," and through that process it built up a lot of self-esteem. I developed a lot



of self-confidence so it allowed me to go out and do other things that I might not try otherwise. One of the key components for me in being a successful entrepreneur is having a mindset of "I can do that" and not "I can't do that."

Another thing is I fear missing an opportunity more than I fear failure, and that's the biggest component for people that holds them down. They're afraid they'll fail. My daughters used to come to me – I have a daughter 32 and one 29 – and they'd say, "Dad, I'd like to do this but I'm afraid I might fail." I said, "Brooke or Holly, failing is in not trying, not in not succeeding." They said, "What do you mean?" and I said, "I would hate to lay in bed at night thinking, 'Would it have worked?'" I don't know about you, Pat, but that would drive me crazy. I couldn't stand to think, "Would it have worked?"

Most people are afraid they'll fail and their neighbors are going to be talking about them. Let me just tell you, your neighbors are not that concerned about what you're doing. If you think you're the topic of conversation at the dinner table, you're not, so get over that part of it and I say fear missing an opportunity more than you fear failure.

Pat: I love that. One of my sayings is I would much rather live a life full of "oh well" than a life full of "what if?"

Aaron: I know, that would be a bummer. That would be the ultimate drag to me, to live a life and not know if it would have ever worked.

The other thing is to be steady, be consistent and be dependable. My dad raised me, "Son, when you shake hands with a man and you say you're going to do something, you better do it. You better be dead if you don't go through with doing it," and consistency. Like I said, I'll soon be 55 years old but even today with my business I'm very regimented, kind of methodical, and I work through things.

The consistency of doing the mundane things every day even though you're not seeing the grass grow yet, keep throwing the seed. You throw enough seed, it's going to come up. Be steady, be consistent, be dependable.

Pat: I love that. These are things that I'm trying to instill into my son right now. My son is 5 and we don't let him use the can't word either or the never word. It's "can't yet." We always add that yet part. Whenever he says he can't do something I always look at him like, "You've got to finish that sentence – yet," and he continues to try and he's getting there. He's 5 and young so that fear is sort of naturally getting into him now and I'm trying to get it out of him, so I appreciate all this advice.



Aaron: Here's the thing, Pat. Why not ask yourself this question. "Why not me?" If you don't ask, the answer is always no. All they can do is say no. They can't eat you up, but if you don't ask you'll never get the opportunity.

Like with you, I talked to you in San Diego and then we talked at Podcast Movement and I'm like, "Let me talk to Pat, maybe I can be on his show," and we struck up a conversation. If I'd never approached you, never met you, never asked the question, it wouldn't be happening today.

My point is don't be afraid of rejection. That's been one of my biggest strengths forever in business. Yeah, you may get rejected. So what? Let's do it again. Like you said, it's "no for now." When people tell me no it's like, "He just means right now. I'm not through yet."

My wife uses it against me, Pat. We've been married 35 years now and she'll come up and say, "I'm not sure you can do that," and I'm like, "Don't do that!" and I can't get over it either because I have to do it and show her, "Yes, I can do it. I can."

The other thing is being proactive. I want your listeners to be proactive, not reactive. Most people live a life looking in the rearview mirror. "If I'd have done this, if I'd have done that." Look forward. I say that's why the windshield is so big and the rearview mirror is so little. You need to spend a lot more time looking forward rather than looking back, so be proactive.

I created a document called "What do I want?" Most people say, "I'm going to make enough money and then I'll decide how I'm going to live." Robin and I have always delayed gratification. We've always said, "Let's wait just a little while," because if you delay the gratification, chances are you're going to use it longer and you'll use it more because you'll think through the process.

That's the reason a Fortune 500 company bought my business. I could have bought a bigger house. I could have bought a bigger shinier whatever, but instead I put the money back into the company and we opened a second store and then we paid it off. Then we saved the money and we bought a third store, then we bought a fourth store.

If I had increased the size of my house or whatever in the earlier stages, I could have afforded it but I wouldn't have had the money to put back in the business, so think long term and decide what you want.



Robin and I would sit on the porch and we'd say, "What do we want it look like in 90 days, a year from now, 2 years from now, when we retire? How much money do we want to have? How much passive income do we need? How do we want to live our life?" and we would tailor our purchases based on how we wanted to live. We'd delay gratification and then really save up and get what we wanted. It's just all a mindset. It's how we look at things.

Pat: Yeah, the mindset is huge. In terms of getting into the specifics of being proactive, how do we know what to do next? I think that's another thing that a lot of us struggle with is figuring out that one thing we need to work on. Obviously there's a lot of bright lights out there trying to distract us, but when it comes down to it how do we know if what we're working on is actually what's going to be moving the needle for us?

Aaron: One of the good books I've read recently is one Greg McKeown wrote called *Essentialism*. I'm sure you've read it. It's a great book. As a matter of fact I need to contact Greg. I've sold so many of these books he needs to make me an affiliate or something.

The truth is, we've got to decide on the non-essentials and focus on the vital few. In Greg's book he talks about we can't do 15 things, we can only do 2 or 3 things really well. We've got to niche down and really do those things well, and Greg teaches us how to do that.

We could be doing a million things. I know in the world you and I live in there's no ceiling. The opportunities are endless. If you get bogged down in trying to do all these things or all the social media platforms, all the courses, all the books, all the shows, you're not going to be good at any of them.

I'd rather take a little bit of energy and pour into one or two things and be an inch wide and a mile deep. Now I'm an expert. Now I can dictate getting top dollar for whatever it is I'm doing because I'm the best. I want to be the best at whatever I'm doing. You can't do that if you're doing 15 things.

The next best thing is to prioritize. Really write down on a yellow pad the things that you want to do, then go through them and prioritize them. "If I could only do 10 what would it be?" and then narrow it down. Get the top 3 and go with it.

Pat: It's difficult to do, too. I know in that book, for example, he has you write the things that are going on in your life or these decisions you have to make on a scale



from 1 to 10. Everything under 7 it's easy to get rid of. You can see it there on paper. "Why am I even focusing on that?" You can get rid of them.

The 9's and 10's are the things you obviously want to keep because they're most important to you or they're going to make the needle move the most, but then it's the 7's and 8's that people really struggle with, and that's what holds people back. They seem like they might be easier to do or they're closer, but that's not what we need. How do we let go of the things that could help us, that we could get a result from, but that might not be what we need to do right now?

Aaron: What I do is go back to the mastermind group. I'll go to the trusted advisors. I'll go to these 10 or 12 guys and say, "Hey, these are what I'm thinking about doing. This is the process by which I'm thinking about it. Shoot it down."

I'll go to my accountability group. I have 3 guys that I meet with every Thursday morning. We sit for an hour and a half and we talk about these things. As I said earlier, I'm a Christian and so I pray and I read the scripture. So I have the counsel of the multitudes, of people, I go through prayer, I go through scripture, I consult my wife, and then I fire the gun and ride the bullet. I pick out one of them and I do it.

Otherwise you're going to sit there and starve in indecision. You're going to work through your whole life and never have pulled the trigger. I'm just saying do that. Get the people around you and go through the process with them and get a general consensus.

Pat: Love that. I know you've learned a lot of these things that have been struggles for people over time through your coaching and stuff. You're a life and business coach now as well, and I'd love to talk to you about the practice of building a business around life coaching and being a coach in general. How do you guide people and all those sorts of things?

I know there's a lot of people in the audience listening right now and they're doing 1-on-1's with people, they're trying to help people through their health and fitness, they're trying to help people do these other things or accomplish something. We've talked a lot about the mindset as well, but in terms of creating a business out of that do you have any tips for people out there?

Say for example, Aaron, I decide that I wanted to start coaching individuals. How do I go about doing that in the best way possible that not only helps the most people but also can help me make a great living as well?



Aaron: Quite honestly, Pat, I wasn't even going to do this, but Dave Ramsey and Dan Miller said, "Aaron, you've got 30+ years of business. They've all been successful. You've had 8 businesses. You and Robin have been married 35 years. You need to go pour into some guys." I said, "I'm not coaching. I'm retiring at 50. I'm done," and I did. I sold my business.

A construction company is the last company I owned for about 8 years. We built high-end houses and small commercial projects and we were #1 for three consecutive years here, so we built a great business doing that and it was built on relationships and customer service, the stuff that really matters.

What I do now is I interview the people. There's somebody recently that I said, "I don't think I'm a good fit for you. I'm an entrepreneur. You've been in education for all these years and you've done great. We think differently," so you've got to evaluate the person. You want to be sure that you give them great value.

A guy recently came to me and he said, "I want to be a business coach," and I said, "Well, convince me that you know what you're doing. How many businesses have you owned?" and he said, "Well, I've not owned a business." I said, "Why do I want to hire you if you've never owned a business, if you want to be a business coach?" and he laughed and said, "I get your point." So the credentials are experience, first of all.

The second thing is having a genuine heart to help people. You've really got to care about that person, and it's not just about the transaction of getting the money. That's where I've been the most successful in my business is trying to meet the needs of the person. If you'll listen – stop waiting your turn to talk and really engage with the person – they'll tell you exactly what they want, and all you've got to do is fill the order.

If they want to be held accountable, that's the biggest part of coaching is the accountability aspect. A lot of people know the answer but they don't have the stamina to stay with it. Motivation is a big thing, but motivation is an exhaustible resource. It's just like anything. It wears out. You can only run on motivation so long. What you need is a well-executed plan, and a coach can help you get that and keep you on task. So the accountability, working through that process, is #1.

Pat: How do you hold people accountable? What are some ways that you can increase the likelihood that somebody you're coaching is actually going to follow through?



Aaron: First of all, they're paying me pretty good money so that's a real incentive. If they don't want to do the work it's like, "Hey, just send me another check then," so that's a big accountability when they're paying you.

The second thing is this. Pat, you know as well as I do, if you and I are sitting here talking and you say, "Aaron, I want a date night with my wife, and I want to take my son to a ball game twice a month, and I want you to hold me accountable," and we meet 30 days from now and I say, "How many date nights? How many ball games did you go to with your son?" and you say, "I didn't do too well," I would be like, "Man, we're not doing this. If we're going to do this, we're going to do it. We're going to play ball. We're going to do it."

The next month you don't want to come in there and tell me that again, right? You just don't. You're not going to look at me as another man and go, "Hey, I'm a loser. I just don't do anything I say." You're going to do it and it's going to work. Mrs. Flynn is going to say, "Hey, I kind of like this date night," and you're now a hero, so now you're going to take her out again.

Charles Duhigg wrote a great book called *The Power of Habit*.

Pat: One of my favorites.

Aaron: Yeah, it's awesome. It tells us in there how to break old habits and implement new ones. In that process of me holding you accountable we've taken people who had 10-year-old businesses and we doubled their revenue in 18 months simply working through the process of getting rid of the motivation, because I don't care about motivation. What I care about is a well-executed plan.

If I want to get the mail I don't have to get hyped up to go out to the mailbox. I've got to put my left foot in front of my right one 50 times and I'll be at the mail box. Same way with business. If we say we need to contact this many people and you get somebody to hold you accountable to contact that many people, the law of averages are that there's going to be a certain amount of sales made as a direct result of that.

It's the same way with any service industry or any widget that you're trying to sell. It's just applying the basic fundamentals and the principles of executing a well thought-out plan, and that's what business coaches and personal coaches do.

Pat: By the way, I do date nights with my wife every Thursday, just so you know.



Aaron: You're a hero then! Mrs. Flynn thinks you're a hero. That's good! Good for you.

Pat: But I do need to do the baseball games. Like I said, my son is 5. He's about that age now where he'll really enjoy it, and we're playing catch in the backyard so it's about time.

Aaron: Pat, now I'm your new accountability partner. You just told me, "I've got to do this" so I'm going to be checking on you periodically.

Pat: I want to go back a minute. You mentioned the price point. The first thing you said is, "They're paying me very well" and I think that's a really important point. When it comes to the services that we can provide for people, I feel like a lot of people under-value themselves and they might be shooting themselves in the foot because their perceived value is there. People aren't going to be held as accountable if you're only paying \$50/month for a coach for a call here and there.

Aaron: The perceived value is really, really important. I have a personal coach that was head of psychology at Baylor University and he helped me work through that process. I still have coaches. I do LinkedIn coaches, Twitter coaches, mental coaches. I hire coaches because I've got to continue on staying fresh myself, so I'm a big believer in continuing education. I read constantly. I love to read, and through that process you just learn.

The accountability of the perceived value is if you go into an electronics store and there's a TV for \$1,000 and the one next to it is \$2,000, if you don't know anything about electronics you just assume naturally the one that's \$2,000 has got to be twice as good, so if you can afford it you're like, "Give me that one."

It's the same way with everything. What's harder to get over is if I say, "Pat, I've got a new 550 Mercedes and I can get it for you for \$12,000," your first question is, "What's wrong with it?" It's much harder to overcome that obstacle than it is paying more. It's paying too little. You know there's something wrong but you can't figure it out, but eventually you convince yourself it's worth paying more.

Most people under-value themselves. Most people don't get the clients. The person that can charge the most and be the most confident as a result of it gets the most clients, whatever you're doing. People buy confidence, and if you don't have any confidence and you look down and you quote your price and you're apologizing, you're never going to sell them. But if you say, "I'm \$X and I'm worth it and this is what I can do for you," people will buy that all day long.



There was a shop in North Dakota that hired me. He said, "You've been in this business all these years. We're only 3 years old." At the end of the 6 months he said, "You took us from 3 years old to 10 years old." There was a fee he paid me, and he even said, "I didn't pay you enough because you eliminated 7 years because you've done this. Why would we want to spend 7 years learning the mistakes like you did? Let's capitalize on what you know." People pay for what you know, not by the hour.

Pat: I love that. You've been doing business now for a while, over 37 years. Things have changed over time and they're changing all the time. How do we make sure that we continue to serve our audience in a way that is how they want to be served, depending on how things have changed?

What are the things that are making you successful, whether you were 18 back in the day or you're 55 today? What are the things that we can always take with us no matter where we're at, no matter what technology is around us, to make sure we succeed?

Aaron: There's one thing that absolutely without a question has been paramount for me, and that's building relationships intentionally. With the internet or without the internet, nothing takes the place of pressing the flesh.

I was at Podcast Movement and Michael Stelzner came over and we were talking and he said, "Aaron, why are you here? You don't even have a podcast." I grabbed his shoulder and I said, "Because I can't do this from home," and he looked at me and smiled and said, "You're exactly right." I said, "Now we've got a relationship."

I couldn't come up to you and say, "Pat, what a great job you did in the mastermind group talk today" if I was sitting at home. I couldn't do that over the internet. I was there in person and I could shake your hand and we could do a picture together. We bonded right there. I don't care what you're doing on the internet. Nothing takes the place of 1-on-1.

I'll tell you a quick little story. My dad passed away in 2006 and my dad never was a businessman. He didn't know anything about making money, but my dad loved people and I watched him my entire life. I didn't realize it until his funeral in 2006. I stood at his casket with my 2 brothers and my sister and my mom and we greeted people walking in.

Pat, my dad never made over \$15,000 a year in his life ever. My dad had no money. He wanted to hunt and fish and he loved people. It was 6-1/2 hours, the line. It was an



hour and a half wait to pay their condolences. The line was to the parking lot of the funeral home for 6-1/2 hours.

People came through that line 18 years old to 75 years old and they stood at my dad's casket and they said, "Let me tell you what your dad did for me. Let me tell you how your dad impacted my life. Let me tell you how your dad was there for me when I needed him."

Not one person said, "Your dad had a nice boat, a nice house, a nice car," but they said, "Your dad impacted my life." To me that says that relationships are paramount in everything that we do. If not one person was interested in his tangible possessions and they were only interested in his relationships, why do we spend 95% of our time trying to build bigger houses, get faster cars, etc?

Don't hear me wrong. I'm not saying anything is wrong with gaining more possessions, period, but we don't spend enough time building relationships that are lasting, just like in the mastermind groups, just like with your wife and with your son, the things that really matter.

If you knew today that it was your last day, I promise you the house wouldn't be of interests. It would be the loved ones. It would be the people. It would be the relationships, your peers, your colleagues. It would be the people.

I want people to be successful. I want them to make money. I love to make money. I hate it when people have money and they say, "Money's not important." I want to say, "You liar, it is important!" but just don't make it #1. Just don't make it the priority. Let's put people as priority #1. If you do that, then you've lived successfully and you've also lived significantly, so just put the relationships as #1.

Pat: Thank you for that. I think this would be a great place to stop the show and have people think about that, because that's really important. Aaron, thank you so much for your time, your wisdom, and your education today. Where can people find out more about you?

Aaron: Pat, I've got a little gift for your audience. It's documents that I use every day that I wrote. One is a personal assessment where you really dive deep and you look at yourself. The other one I've already explained called "What do I want?" There's a 3-page document you go through and you specify exactly the life you want to live. Then the third document is called "Steps to a productive day." It's to help you once you realize who you are and what you want, then you can implement it daily.



I've taken the price off. They're free and you can find them at viewfromthetop.com/spi. You can go there and download them and use them, and I hope it's a catalyst to take your life to the next level so you can live a life of success and significance.

Pat, you're awesome, man. Thank you for having me on your show.

Pat: You're awesome too, Aaron. Thank you. That's ViewFromTheTop.com/spi. Thanks Aaron.

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I hope you enjoyed that interview with Aaron Walker. Again you can find him at ViewFromTheTop.com, and he has some give-aways and special freebies for us if you go to ViewFromTheTop.com/spi.

He mentioned some of the stuff that was there already, which is very cool and very thoughtful, so Aaron, thank you so much for the time and I can't wait to see you again at another conference. We seem to keep running into each other now and I like it because you're awesome, so thank you, Aaron.

For those of you who are listening, if you want to check out the show notes and the resources and everything mentioned in this particular episode just head on over to <http://www.smartpassiveincome.com/session189>. You can get the link for Aaron's stuff there, too.

I also want to thank today's sponsor, which is 99Designs.com, making it super easy for all of us who are doing designs for our business and websites, no matter what level we're at. If you can't afford that designer for your business that you just want working for you and only you the whole time, 99Designs is a great solution. It's very economical and has a quick turnaround, usually within 7 days. You can get hundreds of designs for different things that you need, and you get to select the ones that you like best, so go ahead and check it out.

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I've used it myself a few times in the past for things from logos to complete website designs and other things. It could be anything – something small like a logo, all the way to a food truck wrap or a t-shirt that you want designed for your business, whatever the case may be. Check it out again at 99Designs.com/spi.

Thank you again for listening in today. I really appreciate it and I look forward to serving you in the next episode because we have somebody who's been really, really requested here on SPI to come on the podcast. This is Bryan Harris from VideoFruit.com. I hope you're excited because he drops some incredible knowledge bombs, as Chris Ducker would say.

It's going to be one of those episodes with a ton of actionable content that is probably going to be talked about for quite a while, so look forward to that in Episode 190. Until then, you can check out the show notes for this episode at smartpassiveincome.com/session189.

Again, because it's so close to Thanksgiving right now I just want to take a moment and say thank you. You're amazing. I appreciate you. Take care.

Outro: Thanks for listening to the Smart Passive Income podcast at www.SmartPassiveIncome.com.

Links and Resources Mentioned in This Episode:

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