

**Transcript for Tim Grover | Relentless at Best (Episode 636)**  
**Full show notes found here: <https://theartofcharm.com/636/>**

**TIM:** Everybody wants the glory, they want all the stuff that comes with it -- you've got to win some games, you've got to stand out -- whatever your field is, whatever sports you're doing -- if you do that, your brand will build itself.

**JORDAN:** Welcome to The Art of Charm. I'm Jordan Harbinger, I'm here with producer Jason DeFillippo. On this episode we'll be talking with Tim Grover, author of [\*Relentless: From Good to Great to Unstoppable\*](#). This guy has coached everyone from Michael Jordan to Dwyane Wade to -- top athletes call this guy not first but last. He's like the cleaner in Pulp Fiction and there's a reason for that. Cleaner, actually a common concept from the book, nowadays it's a common mistake that it's mostly mental and not physical that gives us an edge in an elite level, even when and especially when we're competing with folks with lots of athletic talent or high performers with similar intensity. But, Tim will argue that you can't even access the upper limits of the physical without putting the mental building blocks first.

On this episode we'll learn that everyone has a trigger that puts us in the zone, we'll gain insight on how to increase our threshold for high pressure situations and performance under stress, and we'll explore something called the dark side, what it is, how to harness it and not let it control us, and discuss some real life athletes in situations that have let this get out of hand and the consequences that follow. All right, now let's get relentless with Tim Grover, here on AoC.

Tim, thanks for coming on the show, man. It's been a long time in the making. I think somebody told me about your book maybe four years ago but better late than never.

**TIM:** Hey, it doesn't matter how long it takes you to get there as long as you get there.

JORDAN: Exactly. And the book title, of course, *Relentless*. Tell us what relentless really means. I feel like, especially since your book came out, a lot of people are like, "Ah I want to overuse that now. Let me make that into a meaningless trope." So, let's hear your definition so that we can dig into the meat right away.

TIM: Everyone thinks they're relentless and until you actually have something that's just in your grasp and you can't get it, and it keeps moving farther and farther away and you continue to pursue it, that's what relentless is. It's going after something that you know is sitting right there but you've got to work so hard to get to it. And you know as soon as you touch it, it's going to go a little farther away. Are you going to continue to be relentless? Are you going to continue to pursue the end result no matter what it's going to take and no matter what sacrifices you're going to have to do? People that say they're relentless aren't relentless. Somebody else say, "Hey you see that person over there? That person is relentless." If you're describing yourself as a person as relentless, you're not because that means everything that you've tried to achieve and grasp, you haven't quite capitalized on it.

JORDAN: I've heard a lot of interviews with you and there's a lot of platitudes being thrown around by people who maybe are trying to do the life coach thing and they're borrowing a line from your book or they're borrowing a bromide like, "Never quit," and, "Chase down your dreams," and so I'd love to move way past that and get into the real wisdom and the real coaching. Because when you're working with guys like Michael Jordan, Dwyane Wade -- I know you're not telling those athletes, "All right guys, be relentless. I'll see you at lunch," right? You're teaching them how to do this.

TIM: Yeah, and as we discussed earlier, it's easy to say it. Everybody talks about, "Yay let's do this. Winning is everything," but the problem is, okay if winning is everything, do you know how to win? That's the big question. Everybody spends so much time on their skillset, unless you have that mindset, skillset does not matter. You know, you look at individuals that -- forget about

athletes for right now, let's just talk about people that sell automobiles, all right? You come in, you have the same automobile, you have the showroom, you get the same manual that everyone else gets -- the car is no different than anybody else.

Why does one individual sell tons of cars and the other doesn't? Is that a physical thing? No, that's a mindset. That's the mindset of the individual to know, "Hey, I don't need this manual. I've studied this manual, I know this thing inside and out, no matter what question is going to be asked of me, I'm going to know the answer." What's the difference? The person next to you has the same manual you had and they sell the same car, but they don't have that mindset to go with that skill set that's needed.

When I started working with Michael Jordan, this wasn't about getting him to be a better basketball player. Physically, yes, we did get him stronger and keep him injury free but this was able to teach him and learn a different mindset to over and above and conquer the competition. That's what we try to instill in our individuals and our athletes is, "Hey, you've got to be strong from the neck up in order to be stronger from the neck down."

JORDAN: That makes a lot of sense and you do have three different types of -- archetypes of athletes or people but they seem like mindsets. You've got cleaners, closers, and coolers. Can you tell us what these are and why these are important distinctions?

TIM: Sure, you know -- well, the one thing I want to explain about this is every team or every workplace, you need to have all of these individuals. You can't have all coolers, you can't have all closers, and you can't have all cleaners. They have to work together.

So, a cooler is an individual that shows up at 9 o'clock and leaves at 5 o'clock or 4:30 whenever that it's time for them to go to work. Their work is okay, they're going to deliver exactly what you ask them to do, it's not going to be exceptional, it'll be

consistent, and you know, you need those individuals on your team. Then you have an individual who's a closer. A closer can deliver the end result as long as too many variables are not thrown at him. You give him a plan, they're going to give you an exceptional result, as long as too many things aren't thrown at them. And they're going to be the ones that are going to pat themselves on the back and tell everybody what a great job they did.

A cleaner is an individual that's going to get you that end result, no matter what's thrown at them, what the variables are, what the situation is -- they are so well prepared, they are always into what I call the "Don't think stage." To get into the "Don't think stage," there's so much hours and years of preparation and studying and work and mental fortitude -- they know everything about their craft and no matter what's thrown at them, they're prepared for it. So, it's like a Navy SEAL, they're ready for every single variable that's ever thrown at them and they're going to get that end result because they don't have option. They have to get that end result.

JORDAN: It seems like something that we're born with. It seems like something that would be very, very hard to train. Now, since you're working with athletes all the time -- pro athletes and high level athletes -- is this because those are the people that already self screened into this or is this something that you can teach literally anyone, in your opinion?

TIM: This can definitely be taught. There's no question about it. So, you know, when you're born, it's funny the doctor doesn't look at one kid and say, "Okay, this kid is going to be relentless, this one's going to be a genius, this one's going to be soft, this one's going to, you know, be extra smart." What's going to happen is, there's something that happens in an individual's life. It can happen early on, it can happen late -- how that person handles that situation is going to determine which category those individuals are going to fall in. It's whether they're going to face that adversity and how they're going to face it or are they just going to kind of curl up and just use it as an excuse the rest of

their life? But this is 100 percent. It definitely can be taught and we actually have a program coming out soon that's going to teach you how this can actually happen. You know, people always say that it's embedded in an individual. This is 100 percent can be taught.

JORDAN:

It seems like it would be a difficult thing and of course, there's a lot of resistance people have in their own head. "Well you can't necessarily teach people this because," -- then it just really highlights our own inability to have mastered that skillset or it really highlights our own lack of relentless results, right? And you mentioned in the book [\*Relentless\*](#), "You don't have to love the work, you just have to want the end result," and I think for a lot of people, we want to think that we want the end result but we really -- you know, when it comes down to Friday night and we're tired and we've got a lot of stuff to do -- we don't all think, "Well, you know, I should work all night and get this done." Most of us think, "Well, I've earned a break by now," or, "I can take a break and catch up next week," and a lot of this stuff falls by the wayside. But then come Monday or even come the weekend, we're sitting there at the bar, with a bunch of projects with open loops, talking with our friends about how much we love Hustle, while sucking down a drink.

TIM:

Yeah, you know what? See that's why cleaners hate Fridays. You know why cleaners hate Fridays? Because all the coolers and closers are -- they stop working over the weekend and they can't wait for Monday to come back so they want to get back to work. That's why we've developed these three different categories because if that's what you are -- a closer will stay a few extra hours, a cleaner is not going to leave until he gets that end result. Those are the three different categories: good, great, unstoppable. It's a mindset. If you're willing to put in that extra work, are you willing to sacrifice it? You can get there. But it's not easy because if it was easy, everybody would do it. Everybody wants things quick, everybody wants things easy -- it doesn't work that way. If that was the case, if people who read a diet book -- would that be enough to lose weight? No you've got to put the actual diet and exercise plan into action. That's

where most people stop. Once they get the action part of it, they don't want to move forward.

JORDAN:

It seems like you're obviously doing some kind of magic over there in Chicago, because people who are elite athletes that are making millions of dollars -- yeah, they don't charter planes to Chicago from L.A. to get iced. They don't charter planes to Chicago from L.A. to get taped. They don't charter planes from Chicago to L.A. to get a, you know, muscle rub or whatever and get Icy Hot put on there.

And it's been said that you're not the first trainer athletes call, you're the last. So, I would imagine that's because the work involved is so intense that it's something that you only subject yourself to if you really, really, in fact have to, in order to either save your career or become the man on top. That's a very tricky thing for us civilians to kind of separate. Do we need athletic skills do have the mindsets that elite athletes used to achieve results And it might sound like a dumb question but it seems almost like we do need to have that athlete mindset and with that comes certain athletic skills. It's maybe something we can't develop outside out that and I think that's a common stopping block. What do you think about that? Do we have to have the skills to match or is it actually just mindset and you could be doing this even if you're stuck at a chair all day?

TIM:

You know what? I'm glad you asked that question. We talk about this in the book [\*Relentless\*](#). I'm not here to teach you how to play basketball like Michael Jordan or Kobe Bryant. There's people in the NBA, there's kids growing up that aren't going to be able to play basketball. But what you can do is you can have the same mindset those individuals have. You know like, when we talk about when Michael -- every time he won the championship, he didn't put up the finger of the championship he won, he always put up the finger of the next championship. He's always thinking about what's next. This isn't about physical ability.

You have bus drivers, you have community workers, you have teachers -- they've reached cleaner status. You know, you have that teacher that sits and stays late in class but she or he wants to make sure that no student gets left behind. She wants to make sure that everybody passes that. Because it isn't about the money, she isn't looking for the overtime, she isn't the looking for the accolades from the principal -- he says, "I own this class, I own this classroom, and I'm going to make sure every student gets to the next level." It's the bus driver never late on his route, everybody knows how to behave on that.

When you talk about individuals that come into Chicago or fly me out to wherever they are it's because -- people always say, "Things don't matter." You know what? Everything matters. Everything matters. I don't care what it is, it's everything matters. Whether you're on time, whether you're late, your appearance, the small details, at some point, when you're dealing with a client, a business transaction or something, everything has to matter because it matters to them. If it matters to them, why shouldn't it matter to you?

JORDAN: In the book [\*Relentless\*](#), you'd mentioned that, "You don't need to change, you just need to face and learn to trust who you really are." What does that mean? Because I think a lot of us view change as positive, a lot of what to change, in fact. Are you saying that every single person has this somewhere inside, it's just that some of us do a really good job of hiding it from ourselves?

TIM: And that's it. From what society and everybody has told us and what we've learned from ourselves, we build these walls around us that keep us down and the walls are built to keep all the B.S. that we've been told -- it keeps us locked up inside. I'll give you a great example of this. You know when you talk about fear -- a kid, as soon as they start to walk -- it could be one year, 18 months, whatever. When you take them outside, when they see a dog, what happens? They yell, "Doggie," and they go running to the dog and they want to pet it and so forth and kiss it and all this other stuff. And what happens when they get older? We tell

our kids, "Don't do that, don't do this. That dog bites," well guess what? Any creature or any human being that has teeth, guess what? They have the ability to bite.

So why are we putting this fear into an individual, into a child where their natural instincts is to see an animal and is to enjoy it, understand it, and then as we get adults, we tell them, "Don't do this, don't do that," you know, "Stay away from that, that dog bites," or, "Stay away from this kind of people." So it's that wall that the parents and everybody, where you think you're protecting your child or you're protecting that individual where you're actually hindering them. And this constantly just goes on and on and on.

It's like -- people out there, if you're listening, if you have kids -- this I can't stand. Parents now have to sign forms when they go to certain sporting events and so forth and you can only say positive things and then kids -- they get a trophy for participating. We don't want to hurt anybody's feelings, don't worry about this, we're going to make sure everybody gets acknowledged. All right, so you go home and your child brings home a 16th place trophy. What are you telling them? You're supposed to put that on your wall. Competition and competing at the highest level and learning how to win and learning how to compete. It is important because you don't get rewarded in life for just participating.

Your boss is not going to call you into your office and say, "Hey listen, your work stinks but you show up to work every single day. I'm going to give you a raise." He or she is going to give you a raise if your results show it. And this is the thing, you can learn all this. This is a mindset but there's a lot of sacrifices that come with it. Most people aren't willing to do those sacrifices. You know we hear this expression all the time. "Don't worry about it." No you need to worry about it. You can't think about it all the time but you need to worry about it. You can't have somebody else worry about it. If your child runs a race and they finish last and we tell them, "Oh, don't worry about it," it's not right.



JORDAN: There's a lot of people that are listening right now that are thinking, "Well, you know, I don't do this. This guy's great and all that but I already do this. I already own stuff. I already take care of business. I'm already getting raises. You know, I've got this already." And it's really hard to separate this from a cleaner, right? But looking at it from a coaching perspective, there's a ton of people that can coast on talent and have been their whole lives and they've been doing it for so long, that they no longer recognize that they're coasting on talent. They really do think that they're putting in the effort because the results are so much higher than everyone else. It just follows that they must be putting in the effort. But I think -- and tell me what you think -- do you see people who are getting great results but are still not living up to potential because they've been coasting on talent for so long, they don't even realize they're doing it anymore.

TIM: Listen, I know tons of talented people that really don't succeed at anything. And you know why? This is what happens. The question that you just asked me, "Is the individual -- the mistake that they're making is they're competing against others. You don't compete against others. When you're at the top of your business or you're the individual that can get these results over and over again, you don't compete against others, you compete only against yourself because you're chasing perfection and you know you can never achieve perfection. So no matter what numbers boss sets for you, their goals are -- yours are always set higher than those individuals. Those individuals you've got to set individual achievements and goals and you have to set team goals. Your individual goals have to make the team better and that's the distinction between also -- a big one between a closer and a cleaner. When a cleaner gets that end result, everybody wins. When the closer gets that end result, it's mainly for him or her to win.

JORDAN: That's a really interesting point that I hadn't really thought about. Whenever I go to mastermind groups or something like that, there's always inevitably someone who'll say something

like, "What's success mean to you," and I am terrible at answering that question. I don't think that I can do that because, as I spoke about earlier on the show with Bryan Callen, I'm in constant competition against myself. I don't know how healthy it is but it's definitely something that I am engulfed in pretty much all the time. There's always more to do, accolades and pats on the back don't really seem to have any effect.

I skipped my high school, college, and graduate school graduation because I was already done. I didn't need to go to the ceremony where everybody applauds you -- strangers in the audience that you've never met, that are other people's parents or whatever. That never did anything for me. It doesn't mean, to be clear, that I don't appreciate kind words from people, especially the AoC family and things like that, but it's not the driving force behind the show, it's not the driving force behind my life, and I've always sort of thought about that as something unhealthy. Because it seems like everyone else has a definition of when they're going to have enough and that's something that they've been working on for a while and they feel very content with that. I don't feel that way.

TIM:

Jordan, you know what? There's more people out there like you than you think there are. They are a lot of them out there and the book [Relentless](#) actually allowed these people to come out and say, "Hey, it's not just me. It's okay to be that way." You know it's funny that you said that. I never walked on my elementary school graduation, I never walked at my high school graduation, never walked at my college graduation. We have a lot of that in common. Other people need outside reinforcement from others to validate themselves. Okay, those are the individuals -- you hear about this all the time -- you've got to know how to push a person's buttons. Okay, I totally disagree with that. Why would you give somebody that much control where they have the ability to push your buttons? If I can push your buttons, I can get you to do things the way that I want you to do them. A true leader does not push the buttons of other individuals, he pulls their buttons and gives them the tool, gives them the mallets for them to push their own buttons when they

need them. That's what you do. You don't need other people to push your buttons. You pull your own buttons and you push them whenever the situation deems necessary for you to of that. That's a huge difference the next level and staying where you're at.

JORDAN: That's interesting. So, cleaners don't push other people on the team, they bring other people up and that distinction, you're saying, is important.

TIM: They're not going to come down to anybody else's level. They're going to force you to elevate your game. They're going to force you to elevate your work. It may not come up to that level -- you know, where the cleaner level is -- but they're going to figure out a way to bring everybody's level up. I mean, you see this in professional sports all the time.

You even see this in business. "This person's a thorn in the side, he's constantly pushing us, he's doing all this other stuff," and then once that person leaves a team, you see everybody's results fall by the wayside. Or, when they go to another team and that cleaner is no longer there to push those individuals, they're like, "What happened?" Somebody allowed that individual to exhale. Cleaners do not allow their teammates or their co-workers to exhale until the job is done. And when the job is done, you have to get back to work. That's why if you see cleaners in championship parades and parties or year end numbers or the accolades that you give your company or so forth, they're the most uncomfortable people there because they're like, "This is what I'm supposed to do. This is the end result. I'm supposed to deliver."

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

JORDAN: So it sounds like the things that are not measurable -- so I don't know, throw buzzwords here. Commitment, resilience, fortitude -- are more important than things that are measurable such as strength and speed, etcetera. So as a coach, how do you quantify results? Because it sounds like if you're going for that

80 percent mental, that elite level mindset training -- how do you quantify results? Are you just looking at a bigger picture here? It seems like that would be a real challenge.

TIM: How you quantify the results is you see is a person a self starter, is it somebody you have to constantly light the fire on? It's funny, your hardest workers and your true competitors are not the individuals that you need to push. You go to any professional organization -- you can go to the New England Patriots, you can go to the Golden State Warriors, you can go to the Chicago Cubs -- the best players on the teams are the ones that work the hardest. They're the ones you don't have to tell them to show up early, you don't have to tell them to get extra treatment, you don't have to tell them to get into the weightroom, you don't have to tell them, "Stay late to get extra shots," they already know that. And those are the individuals -- when you find that individual, if you have that person who has that kind of mindset, you know you can get the skillset to kind of match or at least come up to a higher level.

Forget about passions, forget about inner drive -- you know what you have to have? You've got to have obsession. Because when you have passion -- you could be passionate about a lot of things, you could have inner drive about a lot of things, but these individuals -- whether they're CEOs of companies or athletes, they're obsessed about one thing and one thing only. When they put their mind into that obsession, then the inner comes because that obsession is what's fueling them.

JORDAN: So are you talking about the level of passion that results from emotion or are we talking about something totally different? Because when I look at elite athletes and things like that, there are some people that get jazzed up before the game and there are some people that just sit there and they almost look bored on the sidelines. I'm thinking, you know, guys like on the Warriors, we've been watching here in the Bay of course very recently -- there's a lot of guys that are jazzed up doing crazy handstands or whatever and there's other people that are just

sitting there with a towel on their head. They just look super focused. What are cleaners doing?

TIM: Well see, here's the thing. Cleaners can do all of those things but they only do them one at a time. See this is where people get confused. Where emotions -- and that's with an 's' -- make you weak. If you play with the same emotion and it could be the individual that doesn't say a word, whose got the one expression throughout the whole game, or then you've got another individual, I'll give you a perfect example.

You know, you spot the Golden State Warriors, you look at Draymon Green. You're never going to be able to get him to tone it down. If you get him to tone it down, then he's never going to be able to give you that result that's desirable on the basketball court. He's the guy that needs to stay -- that always needs to stay wired. As long as he's staying wired, he's going to be able to perform. You look at Clay Thompson. Clay Thompson is just the opposite. He doesn't give you a lot of emotion. He's got this blank face -- a blank stare on his face. That's what gets him his end result. If you try to get Clay hyped up like Draymon, Clay would have a terrible shooting night. If you try to get Draymon Green calmed down like Clay, he's going to get tossed out of the game. That's when he's going to do things that are not going to help the team. You are who you are and you need to figure out what fuels you and what emotion -- one emotion -- that takes you to the next level.

JORDAN: You mention in the book [Relentless](#) that everyone has a trigger that puts you in the zone and that's kind of what I was kind of, I guess, hinting at is -- speaking of emotions and triggers and things like that. The interesting concept that I saw was that you say it comes from the dark side. What is the dark side?

TIM: This is the topic that people -- when we give our talks, it's funny, we go through the Relentless 13, it's all interactive, people get up, and they'll talk about all these different things. When we get to the dark side it's literally silence in the room. The dark side is something that every individual has, okay? You

cannot be great, you cannot be unstoppable, you cannot be special unless you have a dark side and you know how to harness it. The dark side is something that's unique to each individual. It is what fuels and drives that person and that's unique to you. You're not willing to share with anybody. It's special to what you do. And you've learned to control it, you've learned to harness it -- this isn't about being a good person or being a bad person. This isn't about vampires and doing bad things.

This is about doing things that help you, that fuel you, that get you to that next level, that allow you to obsess about things over and over again to get that result that you want, that you desire. It's your secrets, it's your desires -- if you're going to share it, you only share it with individuals that are so close to you. It's that fire inside that just can take you to that level that you can't get to without it. Most people in life spend so much time trying to conform and harness it and try to keep it down inside, instead of learning to use it and control it. Our whole lives we go try to fit into certain groups. As a teenager you want to be a part of this group here, you go to college, you want belong in this fraternity, you become a professional at work, you want to hang out with these people -- who are the individuals that we admire the most? The ones that stand out. And I guarantee, every individual that stands out, they have a dark side.

JORDAN: It's a little confusing. It's not negative, or is it? Because it sounds negative. It sounds like the dark side, some sort of Jedi thing -- are you taking people to a positive place with this or are you taking them to a negative place with this, or is it something that actually has no polarity whatsoever?

TIM: It's all how you use it. You've got individuals that can't control their dark side and it just runs amuck on them. They just -- they lose their careers over it. And you've got other individuals that learn how to control it and harness it and use it as -- to get that competitive edge. You know, in the book we talk about Michael Jordan and Larry Bird were the two biggest trash talkers in the NBA. Everybody thought they talked trash to the opponent, you

know, to get into the opponent's head. No, they were talking trash to get into their own heads because they said, "Okay, if we say something -- if we tell a player, "Hey we're going to win this game," or, "I'm going to do this move," or, "I'm going to score 50 on you," it's their dark side that's motivating them to say, "Hey I just said this, now I have to back it up."

JORDAN: It's more of a matter of commitment and things like that. Sort of a personal performance level. Is the dark side sort of an emotional place that you go to? I guess I'm still trying to wrap my head around this.

TIM: It's 100 percent emotional. When you get in that emotional state, you learn how to control it and that's what allows you to get into the zone. You're trying to close a deal, you go into somebody's office, you come out of there, and you walk out and you say, "I got the deal done," and somebody asks you, "Well how did you do it?" You're like, "Man, I don't know. I was just in the zone. I just got it done." That's where you learn to control your emotion, you control time, you control space, and you own that area for that moment.

JORDAN: So let's talk about some powerful high performers because these people often get embroiled in scandal, they've got power and things like that. There's a lot of Psychology Today articles or whatever that are like, "Why do powerful people end up in scandal? Especially men." I think it sounds like maybe these people are used to accessing their dark side, it spills over into other elements of your life, because of the obsession, you can't compartmentalize it that well. Do you think that might be part of it?

TIM: Jordan, I don't have to think. You are absolutely right. Because a successful individual is always thinking no matter what situation is thrown at them, they're going to be able to handle it. It does spill over to a lot of things but a cleaner always feel like, "Hey no matter what happens, I can handle that situation. I can clean it." They're not worried about losing everything because

they're like, "If I lost everything, I know I'll be able to get it back and get it back even more."

As long as they control the dark side -- the individuals that can't control the dark side are the ones that lose everything and they're not going to be able to gain it back. The individuals that go ahead and test it and have it spill over into other things -- and it does. Sometimes it becomes a real obsession with individuals -- those are the people that sometimes become afraid to understand what it can do for them and also how it can harm what they're trying to achieve. It's a very, very fine line that they have to draw but it's something that they always think, "No matter what happens, I'm going to come out on top. I'm going to figure it out."

JORDAN: So if dark side is fuel, if the dark side is energy and it's what pushes you through the edge of your comfort zone -- to use that trope -- then it does seem like it would follow that, look, if you can't really control it, that kind of energy really, it belongs in the private sphere. And it seems like when it becomes a public topic of discussion, right, when the light is shined on this -- like Tiger Woods -- it really screws with their game. Because obviously, all the things he got caught for, he was doing before he got caught for them. Probably for a long time. Before that, at that point, his game was super tight. He was the best in the world, no debating it, and then once the light got shone on it -- sure there's stress associated with court cases and there's stress associated with marriage disintegration and things like, that I'm sure played a role -- but it seems like he just ended up showing his dark side to the world, probably a little bit of shame attached to it, and his game was just eviscerated after this.

TIM: In my opinion, Tiger should have come out and said, "Hey, yes this thing happened, this is a personal issue between my wife and I. We're going to deal with it. Let's go play some golf."

JORDAN: Right so essentially, you've got to get comfortable with your darkside, let in just enough light so that people go, "Yeah I



guess that's just his thing," make it a little bit less interesting to the public at large, and get them refocused on what you're good at, which is golf, basketball, whatever -- otherwise, you're kind of using this energy to get ahead and trying to channel the explosion in one direction but as soon as it gets out, you're done.

TIM: Yeah, and this situation totally made him somebody that he wasn't. You never used to see Tiger do interviews, now all of a sudden he's doing interviews, and you know, his mom wanted him to apologize. You know, one of the Relentless 13 says, "You know exactly who you are." Up to this point he probably still doesn't know who he is.

JORDAN: Yeah, it seems like he's definitely lost. I mean looking at this latest DUI arrest or whatever this controversy is, things are not on the up and up over there, at all.

TIM: No question.

JORDAN: So it seems like dark side and public life or family life don't really mix that well. So, how do we reconcile living in society, having a family, having a public life with harnessing the dark side, to become slash stay a person who's performing at the top of their game?

TIM: People when you go like that, we talk about stress and pressure -- stress versus pressure. Pressure becomes stress when balance gets in the way. And balance can not be forced on an individual. When a family member or somebody else comes up and says, "Hey, I need you to do this, this, and this." All right, now you're forcing something on an individual. That's now how they are. You know how that person was from the beginning. For you, okay, 40 hour work week is probably good from Monday to Tuesday.

JORDAN: Yeah, pretty much.

TIM: Okay. If you have a significant other or you get involved in a relationship or somebody, they tell you, "Hey, listen, you need to work less, you need to do this more, you need to do this." This is how I was when you met me, now you're asking me to do this? It's not going to work. There is no balance there. You try to minimize it. You want to spend as much time as you can with your family. You never want to miss one of your kid's performances or sporting events but we all have. You can't be successful and make more money and people spend less. It just doesn't happen. So there's that ongoing drive to always wanting more and there's a fear inside of where you came from and you never want to return to that. You never want to return to that place and the only way you know how to do that is to continue to work harder and continue stronger. Your family needs to understand that this is who I am -- indirectly, listen, we're also doing this for you.

JORDAN: How do we know then, if we're indulging our dark side for a result or if we're simply not respecting other people, not respecting our families? Because, what I'm trying to get at here is it seems like we need to be careful not to just give a pass to bad behavior because someone's going, "Well you know, I'm a high performer and it's my dark side." They're drinking, they're doing drugs, they're messing around with women or something like that -- is there a way we can tell, "Look, this dark side is useful for me," or, "No, I just got some bad habits that actually my game might be bettered if I got them in check?"

TIM: It goes back to control. It goes back to control. Do you want to drink or do you have to have a drink? There's a big difference between the two. Do you want to go out or do you have to go out? There's a huge difference between those things. Are you hurting other individuals? Working late hours and being obsessed over a project and wanting to finish it, wanting to be the best at that -- there are some negative things that are going to come with that when it comes to family, when it comes to friends -- you know, but being the best at something, being extraordinary, being unstoppable -- it's lonely. It definitely is. Being on the top comes with a price. The price has to be things

that that other individual can accept and they're willing to accept. Being a womanizer and then being an alcoholic and being a drug addict, okay. If you have those things, you've lost control of your dark side. Those things are controlling you. You're no longer controlling them.

And your significant other will give you a pass on that but they're really giving you a pass to say, "Hey listen, you need to go get help and you need to figure out how to control it." Why is it some individuals that can literally go cold turkey from drinking, from drugs or something? There has to be an ultimatum, there has to be something that individual is not willing to lose to get them to curtail that habit and just say, "Okay, this is not what I need." And the key to this thing is, if you're going to do that, you have to trade one addiction for another. You have athletes all the time -- and obviously you know I'm from a sports background, so I constantly go back to this -- you know, you've had individuals in professional sports who have been alcoholics, who have been drug abusers, and until they figure out how to trade that addiction for something else, they're never going to excel.

You have individuals that have basically given up drinking and spend extra exorbitant amount of hours at the practice facility because that's become their new addiction. You just can't give up something and just say, "Hey," -- and not fill that void with something else.

JORDAN:

Yeah, I can see how somebody who is putting this amount of pressure on themselves, or dealing with this amount of external pressure, could easily crack. And I think, for most of us -- when we never have to deal with more than our daily routine -- we can fall apart at the first twinge of external pressure. And it seems like what the athletes are doing when you're coaching them and in the book [\*Relentless\*](#) -- you're talking about focusing only on your internal pressure because that's what you can control. So, I'm wondering, does this mean that we should put more pressure on ourselves than others can throw on us, so

that it's never unregulated, it never takes us by surprise -- what do you mean by this?

TIM:

Yes I -- listen, and the example I like to use about this is. Michael said he practiced so hard and so intensely that the games became easy for him. So no matter what was thrown at him during a game, he had already seen the situation before. So the amount of pressure he put on himself during practice, to know not only where he was supposed to be out on the basketball court, but where every single player was supposed to be. Not only on his team, but the opposing team. That's putting pressure on yourself. No matter what the expectations of the media are, your friends, your teammates, your coaches -- your expectations and the pressure you're going to put on yourself is already greater than their expectations because you know how much you can handle and how much you can bear. They don't know that. Everyone goes, "Man, I'm a beast, I'm this, I'm that," you know, you hear this all the time. They do something, "I'm a beast." You know what? Everyone's a beast until it's time to do beastly things. And when it's time to do beastly things, the only time you can do beastly things is if you've had so much pressure that you've put on yourself, that you know you can perform over and over again.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

JORDAN:

So we're putting a lot of pressure on ourselves in order to grow our threshold for that so that we can be calm under fire and get it done, work through pressure and come back for more -- there are different ways to add pressure to ourselves, right? We can add performance pressure in certain ways but I think what a lot of folks do -- let's say civilians in the civilian world here, non-athletes, non-military -- a lot of the ways that we put pressure on ourselves is we screw up plans, we screw up logistics, we make things harder for ourselves in that way to simply add stress. Is there a difference in your world between adding stress and adding pressure?

TIM: Yeah, you know what? Stress is just pressure you don't want to deal with. It's plain and simple. All right, so if you have a lot of pressure that constantly builds up and you don't deal with it, it becomes stress. The way I describe pressure -- if somebody put you in a pressure situation, it's a privilege. That means they believe in you. Not everybody gets the chance to have the ability to take that last shot and make it. Not everybody has a chance where the boss comes in -- "Hey I want you to handle this account." That means somebody else believes in you and gets you that end result. If somebody puts you in a pressure situation, they believe in you, they know your abilities to excel, and they know you're going to deliver. Pressure is a privilege. If you're not willing to handle that privilege then it becomes stress.

JORDAN: So that's the difference between feeling pressure and feeling stress, but are there ways to apply appropriate types of pressure to ourselves? Is there one type of pressure that's better than others? So, for example, waiting until the last minute to study for an exam works for some students, but isn't necessarily a good idea. There are other students that perform much better or equally good as students who can cram and ace an exam that are putting pressure on themselves in a longer more drawn out, and in fact more effective way. Does that translate across to athletics? Does that translate across to business? Do you see a difference in the types of pressure that people put on themselves and the results that those people achieve.

TIM: Yeah, you know, the people that cram at the end, whether it can be a presentation or whether it can be a test or whatever -- you're not going to be able to continue to do that all the time. Your results are going to suffer. It's the individual that can take the daily pressure every single day and deal with it and control it and figure out how to harness it and use it so the next day that pressure situation has been dealt with because they know another one is coming. Then they're willing to attack that pressure situation and the next one's coming then they're willing to attack that pressure situation. It all kind of ties in.

You have to be able to handle the pressure situation a little bit every single day.

That's one of the things I always say and it's very important. Every day you've got to do something that you don't want to do and you're better off doing that first, whatever that is. Every single day, do something that you don't want to do. If you do that, that's going to help you deal with the pressure situations as they come on through life. If you're a great jump shooter, people love to just go into the gym and just work on their jump shots but then they don't like to work on their ball handling, they don't like to work on their defensive stuff, but now when you're put in that pressure situation, all right, because you haven't trained yourself mentally over and over again, that pressure turns into stress.

JORDAN: Got it, okay. That does make a lot of sense because it seems like there's an almost inoculation process happening here and the way that we do this, the practical takeaway here is, find something you don't want to do every day, maybe do the hard thing first -- eat the frog, as I think one of these productivity books always used to say -- but we can do that and that will increase our threshold for high pressure situations and performance under stress, is that what I'm hearing?

TIM: You're hearing it exactly right. Maybe we should switch sides.

JORDAN: I love this stuff. No wonder this came highly recommended, right? It's about having the confidence or building the confidence to know you can handle any situation that comes out of any permutation of a situation because you've practiced it, you've drilled it until you were just sick, and you've been throwing obstacles in your own way that by the time you're ready to get it done, it's kind of this fighter mantra. Train hard, fight easy.

TIM: You know, there's an old Bruce Lee quote and I may not get it exactly right. He goes -- I don't fear the guy that does 10,000 kicks, he goes -- I fear the guy that does the same kick 10,000

times. It's the one that's practiced it -- the same thing, over and over and over again, that his fundamentals are so sound, they're never going to crack. Because when things go bad, if your fundamental base is extremely strong and you have the foundation and you have the form that goes with it, you can always go back to it. And that's what the greats do. Whether they're business, whether they're community workers, whether they're athletes, if your foundation and your fundamentals are perfected, you could always fall back on them and you know you could always go back to that situation and figure it out.

JORDAN: Going back to what you mentioned earlier about leadership and leaders, when you're on top, when you're a cleaner, it sounds like you have to bring everyone else up or what you're building will just come crashing down on you. So, does that mean that one cannot be an effective cleaner without also being an effective leader?

TIM: One hundred percent. That's the last step of a cleaner. The last step of a cleaner is the individual that can elevate his teammates, his co-workers, everybody's game, everybody's work productivity is elevated. So everybody wins. If a cleaner wins and his company wins, everyone's going to win. They may celebrate it differently but you have individuals that go out there and play and they put up unbelievable individual numbers. Their stats are amazing but the team does not win. Does that mean sometimes you've got to take a step back and say, "Okay, maybe instead of my stats being this hot if I'm scoring this many points, what if I was to bring my points down and increase my rebounds or increase my assists. Or if you're a quarterback on a football team, my b-ball, that needs to be more effective. "I need to be more accurate with that because if I do that, that opens up the running game for my running back." Those are the different situations that they have to constantly figure out. So, just because you're an individual that gets extraordinary results for yourself, that does not make you a cleaner. You have to get extraordinary results not only for yourself but for those -- elevate the individuals around you to get to that end result.

JORDAN: So if this involved pulling people up and being an effective leader, theoretically then, if you're a player and you're on a team with a cleaner, when you get traded or when you move or when the cleaner retires or moves or gets traded, your performance should fall back down to your natural or your default level. Have you seen that happening in professional sports?

TIM: All the time. You know, I'm based out of Chicago. There's a coach that used to coach the Chicago Bulls named Tom Thibodeau, he's out in Minnesota now. And he was a thorn in every player's side. He literally was. He demanded perfection from the individuals, he knew how to push them, how to elevate their games -- you had guys have career years with him. I mean just unbelievable numbers. And the team made the playoffs every single year -- they never got to the finals. There's a gentleman that used to play in Miami and now in Cleveland that kind of kept them from getting there but he raised everybody's expectations, he raised everybody's play because he was that thorn in the side which everybody needs.

When the thorn got taken away when the Bulls decided to go into different direction, every individual on that team's stats -- they dropped by almost 20 percent, and people were like, "Well, what happened?" All of a sudden. They didn't forget how to play. No, the cleaner, which was the coach on the team that was pushing these individuals, that knew what buttons on these to pull so they could push them and how to motivate them and he was no longer there. It forced everybody else to kind of exhale and say, "Oh, the external pressure is off of us," because they weren't putting enough internal pressure on it and you see the results had just dropped tremendously.

JORDAN: That's so interesting. It's really kind of a crazy psychological effect. Obviously, it should almost be the other way around, it should be that when the person who's usually stealing all the limelight or getting all the attention, you know, affecting their compensation one way or another leaves, it seems like



somebody else would step up, but it's actually the other way around.

TIM: Everybody wants to sit in that first seat until you get a chance to sit in that first seat. Everybody wants to be the individual that you play the armchair quarterback, you sit here -- "I would have done this, I would have done that." By the time he hikes the ball, all right -- the quarterback literally has three seconds to decide, to survey everything that's going out there and find the right target to throw ball to. Not only that, okay, he literally has 2,000 pounds of human beings coming at him, trying to knock him on his ass, okay? Everybody thinks they can handle that situation until they're put into that situation. Then you see how quickly things are coming at you.

JORDAN: I think a lot of people -- they want the limelight but they don't want to do the work. I would imagine you see that, pretty much in everybody that walks through the door, there's going to be a certain percentage, maybe even the majority of people who walk in, don't really want to do the work to get there. And you mention in *Relentless*, quite a bit, that there's sometimes guys come in because you're the guy they call, right? You're the cleaner that they call when their career's either going to be over -- they got injured or they're not putting in the work, or they're not getting the wins -- and sometimes they really just want to go through the motions. Is that something you've seen? They think they want it but they don't?

TIM: I've turned away more clients than I've actually worked with. Everybody wants the glory, they want all the stuff that comes with it -- you know, this is a big among sports now. Everybody wants to build their brand. You've got to win some games, you've got to stand out -- whatever your field is, whatever sports you're doing -- if you do that, your brand will build itself. They get their priorities backwards.

Michael did not build a billion dollar shoe business by worrying about his shoe business. He said, "If I continue to play basketball and I perform at the highest level, the rest of this

stuff will take care of itself." People worry about more of the off the field stuff, the off the court stuff, the cars that they drive, the watches that they wear -- that's what's motivating them instead of the end result and say, "Hey, if I produce the best product, I produce the best result, not only am I going to be successful, everybody else is going to be successful around me that I don't need to talk about it. Everybody will do the talking for me."

JORDAN: You mentioned off the court and that the competition essentially starts before then. And I remember an anecdote in [\*Relentless\*](#) where Michael Jordan would go into the other locker room before the games to get into the other team's head. I'm very curious, how does this work? Why does this work? What's he doing? He's just walking in there -- in the story he's just walking in there and shaking hands with somebody and looking around and then he leaves. What mechanism is taking place here? What's the action happening here?

TIM: The action that's happening is when he walks into the locker room, it's an all eyes on me situation. So now what happens is just, "Man, I can't believe I'm close to this guy." It's an automatic intimidation factor because now, instead of everyone talking about the opponent and what they're supposed to be focusing on and their defensive plays and offensive plays, now all of a sudden Michael becomes a center of attention and the topic and they've all forgotten about what's going to happen. If you knew Michael, if he's going into the locker rooms -- the opponent's locker room -- he had no fronts, okay? It didn't matter who it was. He was competing not only to step on their throats but also to try to take their hearts. But it worked.

JORDAN: Yeah, it seems like that's a really great way to steal the other team's focus, have them thinking about him the whole game -- it's such a subtle move and yet this is a regular habit of his. It's part of the game. Before he steps on the court, he's already got a game plan in place to make sure that he's the focus of what they're thinking about -- they're not thinking about strategy, they're distracted, they're not only distracted and intimidated

but also unable to perform at the highest level. It's almost like he's stealing their mojo before they even get out there.

TIM: You know what he's done? He's set up shop in their head. And once you can set up shop in somebody's head, it's over.

JORDAN: It's clear from *Relentless* that the show doesn't start and stop from the game -- Michael Jordan going in the locker room and things like that. But it seems like, for him it started even as he drove up. He was a guy who would show up only in a car that had just been washed, even if it's raining. He's got everything on, he's dressed up, he's got everything to the nines. The show starts when he leaves his house and it ends when he gets back to his house and puts his feet up and not before. It sounds like cleaners -- not just Michael Jordan but cleaners in general -- in your book, both literally and figuratively actually -- they dictate the culture for everyone else. They don't want to fit in. They are the one making the rules and they're doing that through leading by example.

TIM: one hundred percent. You know, there's the old anecdote that's out there -- "The one thing that's never gone up in price is talk." Talk's always been cheap, it's always -- is going to be cheap. Michael and these individuals led by example. You know the reason for the car, the reason for the suit -- he knew not everybody was going to get a chance to see him inside the arena because not everybody could afford the tickets. For the individuals that are standing by the stadium, outside the stadium, wanting to see him pull up, getting a glimpse at him for -- whether it be for five, ten seconds -- he wanted to give them a wow moment also. So then it's like, "Hey this is going to be the only time these individuals are going to get to see me other than TV, I also want to give these people a wow moment." So he'd always get out, he'd wave to the crowd, he's very acknowledgeable [sic] about everybody down there but he always set his rules.

He was the first individual that said, "Hey, this is the way you come dressed to a game, this is how you leave, this is who I am

and I'm not going to let anybody else dictate it. Not only am I performing for the people that are at the game, I'm performing for the people that are watching at home, I'm doing it for everybody." And you know, we talked about this thing earlier where everything matters. To him, everything and everybody mattered. Cleaners come in or people bring me into certain situations -- listen, they're not looking for, you know, applause or approvals from other individuals. I'm not looking to get a standing ovation when I do my job and all the other things. It's about providing and giving individuals the truth. And when you can give people the truth, your work kind of -- it stands out. It's out there. People ask me all the time, "Listen, you know, how can I work with you?" and you know what the reality is? I tell them all the time, the reality is, you really can't. You can't work with me.

But what we've done now, after years and years of thinking of how to do this, is we've come up with an interactive program where you can literally take me with you on your laptop, on your phone -- all these different things. You can learn how to be a cleaner. That's what I want to tell these people. If you're a cooler and you want to become a closer, you can. If you're a closer and you want to become a cleaner, you can. If you're a cleaner and you want to go over the top, the Relentless System that we've put together, that we've developed over years and years of practice with these individuals, it can definitely teach you these things. One hundred percent. It can be taught. It's called the Relentless System. It's coming out very soon, and we've got a pre-launch special.

So everybody who's listening to this podcast -- and I know there's millions of you guys listening to this -- this is a special event. This is only for this audience only. This is not for everybody. If you take out your phones and you text 'Attack' to 96000, that's 9-6-0-0-0. Just send that -- we're going to send you some great information about this program that's going to allow you to sign up and, like I said earlier, you can be taught this. This is -- and everyone says you're either born with it or you're not. It's how you handle situations, how you're willing to deal

with circumstances that's going to allow you to take these steps forward. And we teach you step by step how to do this. Jordan you've already figured it out. I've never met you. From the first three minutes of our conversation, what you've already told me -- you don't have the right to call yourself a cleaner, I have the right to call you a cleaner. Cleaners never call themselves cleaners. Other individuals acknowledge that person is a cleaner. You are a cleaner.

JORDAN: Well thank you for that. I appreciate that. I appreciate you delivering amazing knowledge to the AoC family. You may be right here in that there's almost an element of uncomfortable feeling hearing that because I always know that there's more that I can and should do and so to hear that it's kind of like, "Oh, crap. Now I've got to go back out there and earn that, once again." But you're right, looking at the book, looking at [Relentless](#), looking at what some of these athletes are doing, it seems like they all feel the same way. Tim Grover, thank you so much.

TIM: Oh, my pleasure Jordan. Thank you.

JORDAN: Great big thank you to Tim Grover. The book title is [Relentless: From Good, to Great, to Unstoppable](#). Of course that'll be linked up in the show notes for this episode as well. Jason, what'd you think man? You know, pretty intense. A lot of stuff there. It's really easy to dismiss this cliché or like, "Okay this guy yelled about you've got to do it and be relentless for a while," but I thought there was a lot of good takeaways in there and there's a reason that people call him the cleaner and call him when they need to get it done.

JASON: No, absolutely. This was chock full of goodness, definitely.

JORDAN: Yeah, I think it's easy to kind of look at this stuff on the surface and think, "There's not much to that," but there really is insight to making ourselves deliberately uncomfortable, working the dark side, making sure we harness it, also while not letting it get out of hand. There's a lot more I could have asked but, you

know, we're limited by the time we have here. Of course if you're interested in more, check out the book [\*Relentless: From Good to Great, to Unstoppable\*](#). And if you enjoyed this one, don't forget to thank Tim on Twitter. We'll have that linked in the show notes as well and I'd love if you'd tweet at me your number one takeaway from Tim Grover here. I'm @theartofcharm on Twitter.

I also want to encourage you to join us in the AoC challenge at [theartofcharm.com/challenge](http://theartofcharm.com/challenge) or you can text the word 'charmed,' that's C-H-A-R-M-E-D to 33444. The challenge is about improving your networking skills, your connection skills, your thinking skills, and your leadership skills and inspiring those around you to develop a personal and professional relationship that way. It's free, it's unisex, it's designed to be done in a minimal amount of time there at home -- that is the idea and it is a fun way to get the ball rolling and get some forward momentum.

We'll also email you our fundamentals Toolbox that I mentioned earlier on the show, which includes some great practical stuff, ready to apply, right out of the box on reading body language, having charismatic non-verbal communication, the science of attraction, negotiation techniques, networking and influence strategies, persuasion tactics, and everything else that we teach here at The Art of Charm. It will make you a better networker, a better connector, and a better thinker. And dare I say it, you'll be on your way to becoming a cleaner. That's [theartofcharm.com/challenge](http://theartofcharm.com/challenge) or text the word 'charmed,' C-H-A-R-M-E-D to 33444. The full show notes for this and all previous episodes, head on over to [theartofcharm.com/podcast](http://theartofcharm.com/podcast).

This episode of AoC was produced by Jason DeFillippo. Jason Sanderson is our audio engineer and editor, show notes on the website are by Robert Fogarty, theme music by Little People, Transcription by [TranscriptionOutsourcing.net](http://TranscriptionOutsourcing.net), and I'm your host Jordan Harbinger. Go ahead, tell your friends, because the greatest compliment you can give us is a referral to someone else, either in person or shared on the Web. Word of mouth is

everything. So, share the show with friends and share the show with enemies. Stay charming and leave everything and everyone better than you found them.





