

TCM 121 - Dre Baldwin: “The Work on Your Game System” for Remote Teams

Mitch Simon: Welcome to another episode of Team Anywhere, where CEOs, leaders and experts at building teams,

Ginny Bianco-Mathis: companies,

Mitch Simon: organizations,

Ginny Bianco-Mathis: and amazing cultures, share how to lead from anywhere in the world. I'm your co-host on the East Coast, Ginny Bianco-Mathis.

Mitch Simon: And I'm your co-host on the West Coast, Mitch Simon, and we invite you to join us to Team Anywhere.

It takes discipline, personal initiative, confidence, and mental toughness to be successful as a virtual team member today. But what you really need to be successful is a system. Dre Baldwin, former professional basketball player, has created the work on your game system, a system that uses a pro athlete's mindset to dominate your game in business, sports, and life. You'll be truly inspired by Dre's personal story, his ideas, and his approach to dominating your game as you Team Anywhere.

Hello, and welcome to another episode of Team Anywhere. I'm your co-host on the West Coast, Mitch Simon and on the East Coast our amazing Co-host Dr. Virginia Bianco - Mathis.

Ginny Bianco-Mathis: Ginny, how are you doing today? I am doing great, thank you. But it's cold. It's cold in Washington DC today.

Mitch Simon: Oh, darn. I'm so sorry. Yeah, it's dropped below 70 degrees here in California. So, talking about warming it up today on the podcast. Super excited to bring you Dre Baldwin, better known as Dre all day, who has changed the lives of over 75 million entrepreneurs, athletes and business professionals by helping them master their game from the inside out. Dre, how you doing today?

Dre Baldwin: I am doing amazing Mitch and Ginny. I'm really excited to be here. Thank you for having me on. It's a pleasure.

Mitch Simon: Dre is coming at us from Miami, Florida. It's got two people on the East Coast.

Dre Baldwin: That's right.

Mitch Simon: Dre, can you tell us a little bit about your story, you know, that began with you. What we know is you're an athlete, but you began—

Dre Baldwin: Yeah.

Mitch Simon: in high school trying out and failing what, three years in a row to make it to your high school basketball team?

Dre Baldwin: Yeah, that's right. I tried out for my high school team in Philadelphia at the time when I was growing up, there was only the city. A lot of city schools didn't have junior varsity and we didn't have freshman teams. So it was just one team, just the varsity. So either you made the varsity or you didn't play. So, I tried out for the varsity. Everybody tried out for the varsity and I didn't make it, you know, three years in a row. So I only made it my last year, my senior year.

And even that year when I made it, I didn't really play that much. I sat the bench mostly that whole season. I scored like two points a game. And I always tell people in hockey or soccer, two points is you're a superstar, you're in the hall of fame, but in basketball, two points. Yeah. Basketball, two points, you're doing nothing, right? Nobody even remembers that you were there.

Mitch Simon: I think you picked the wrong sport then Dre.

Dre Baldwin: Yeah. Right.

Mitch Simon: So, what kept you going? 'Cause I know, I know my son his game was volleyball and he was like, if they would drop him from the first year, he'd be done. He'd be like, dad, I'm out. What kept you going to try out for pretty much four years in a row and make it?

Dre Baldwin: Yeah, it's a great question and I get asked that, you know, even players ask me that sometimes. That's kind of what started what I do is that,

well, first of all just competitiveness, I'm a competitor. So when I did tried out the first time, I didn't make it.

I figured, okay, well I could technically try out every single year, so I might as well just try out again. You know, I have nothing to lose by trying out. A lot of young men especially in that era, we're talking like the mid to late nineties at this point. If they tried out and they didn't make the team, it wasn't so much that they couldn't try out again.

Anybody could try out. I think a lot of guys had the embarrassment of, I tried out and I didn't make it. And then they're looking around at their peers like, man, who saw me try out and not make it. I wanna try out again and not make it. So what happened is, my freshman year, I remember going to the tryouts, my high school wasn't super big.

So, like all the young men tried out for the team when I was a freshman. And then sophomore year is a little bit fewer people tried out. Junior year a little bit fewer, and then my senior year, I remember senior year of trials, there wasn't even that many people there. So I was like, man, I wish there had been this many people when I was a freshman. I might have made the team. Alright. So people just stopped trying. It was like a battle of attrition.

People just stopped trying to make, at least from my class, my graduating class, they just stopped trying out. So by the time I was a senior, how many seniors tried out for the basketball team?

I think every senior who tried out when I was a senior, we all made the team. Cause it was only like three of us, three or four of us who hadn't been on the team before who tried out. And we all made it. Nobody else tried. So it was just a matter of, *sometimes it's a matter of showing up. So that was the number one thing.*

And the other thing for me was, I was a late bloomer in sports. I didn't start playing basketball till I was about 14, so I could feel myself getting better. Even though, Mitch and Ginny, there was no tangible proof that I was getting better. I could feel like I was getting better, but I couldn't prove it.

There was nothing I could show you to say, hey, look at this chart. I'm improving. But I knew that I was getting better, so I knew if I kept trying, maybe I would make it. But even if I hadn't made it that senior year, honestly, I still would've tried to playing [inaudible].

Ginny Bianco-Mathis: Ah, fabulous. There's one thing you said that I'd just like to punctuate. You said several times, what did I have to lose? And you said, some people did not go out again because of the embarrassment. You didn't care.

Dre Baldwin: No.

Ginny Bianco-Mathis: Right? I mean, you just went for it.

Dre Baldwin: I mean I came—

Ginny Bianco-Mathis: you showed up—

Dre Baldwin: but I didn't care enough to not do it. Yeah.

Ginny Bianco-Mathis: Right, exactly. Exactly. Yeah. I like that.

Mitch Simon: I love that there's a negotiation tactic where you need to care, but not that much. Okay. So follow us through this. So, you make a high school basketball team and then just tell us what happens after that, and then tell us how that led to you becoming a speaker, author, coach, where you've been able to impact so many entrepreneurs, athletes, and business professionals.

Okay, so I'll

Dre Baldwin: condense, 15 years down, about five minutes. So here's what happened. I played my senior year of high school, scored two points a game. I graduated from high school and I went to a pretty good high school.

I had relatively good grades and standardized test scores. So, I wanted to go to college and one of the reasons I wanted to go to college, cause from Philadelphia, I wanted to get out of my hometown. I wanted an excuse to get out of there. Sure. So, I figured college was a good excuse to, you know, go somewhere else.

You two probably remember, during the college recruiting process, you would get mail from all these different schools. They just send all kinds of mail. I don't know how much money they waste sending all these correspondence.

Ginny Bianco-Mathis: Oh, yeah.

Dre Baldwin: But I would get letters from all different schools all around the country. So, I would only look at the ones that were far away. So, I'm looking at schools in Tennessee, Texas, California, Florida. I'm like, yeah, these are schools I wanna go to. I got a couple little smaller academic scholarships, but nothing like, not a full ride or anything.

And of course I didn't have anything athletic, so I'm just looking at all these schools that I want to go to. But because there was nothing that was really pushing me to, you know, pick one particular school and I was gonna go actually to Morehouse College. It was an HBCU down in Atlanta, Georgia. And the thing is, they offered me a 50% scholarship, but the other 50% was still a lot of money.

Like the tuition to go to Morehouse is like 50 grand a year. So, my parents were like, well, we would have to take out the loans 'cause you're not gonna get the loans and we'll be in debt for the rest of our lives as we take that out. So you can't really do that. So what I ended up doing is going to a school that was in state, which was Penn State University.

And the thing is the in-state tuition for Penn State was super low. It was a state school, super low. So, and then I had my academic stuff, so it was a very small amount of money. So I ended up going there, played my freshman year as a walk on in college and walk on, on in basketball just means nobody knows you.

You literally walk in the gym and try to earn your spot on the team, which I was able to do. So clearly I was getting better at basketball. Played, you know, four years. Well, my college career, four years, division three school, which is a level that, you know, nobody cares about a division three athlete.

You're not going pro, all right? Division three level does not produce professional athletes. So even though I played okay, I didn't set the world on fire, and nobody was checking for me when I got outta school.

Graduated from college, my first job outta school was working at Foot Locker as assistant manager. That was my first job. And then I worked at Balley Total Fitness, they're outta business now, but I think I did pretty good for them. It's not cause of me, they're outta business. I graduated college in 2004, but so by the summer of 2005, I still had this idea in my head that I wanna play pro basketball.

'Cause when I graduated I wanted to play pro, but there was nobody again. Nobody's knocking on my door. I don't have any agents trying to sign me to a

contract. So the stuff you see in movies and tv, that was not happening. People weren't calling my parents' house. Trying to get in touch with me, none of that.

So in the summer of 2005, this is a year removed from graduation, I saved up my money and I went to this event called an Exposure camp. Did any of you either, you know what that is?

Mitch Simon: Yeah. This guy is good. Let's get him, right?

Dre Baldwin: Yeah, it is kind of like that. Exposure camp is basically like a job fair, but you paid to go to this, so this is not free. You pay your money to go to an event and you pay for the opportunity to showcase yourself. So it's kind of like a casting call, but it's not free. You pay money for the opportunity, the privilege to be seen.

And the people in the audience are not just random basketball fans. These are agents, coaches, scouts from all over the world. And we don't just go there and talk and hand out resumes, you bring your sneakers. So, I'm at this exposure camp. This is in Orlando, Florida, and I'm in Philly at the time. So me and a couple college teammates rented a car in Philly and we drove 15 hours from Philly to Orlando. Hopped out of the car, 9:00 AM Saturday morning. What's happened to be the start time at the camp, and we started playing.

Ginny Bianco-Mathis: Oh gosh.

Dre Baldwin: Yeah, so at age 23 I could get away with that. Couldn't do it now, but I could do that.

Ginny Bianco-Mathis: Right, right.

Dre Baldwin: All right. So I got out the car, paid \$250 in cash at the door cause I didn't have a bank account or a credit card at the time. And over those two days, this is a two day event. Over two days. I basically played my way into professional basketball. Played pretty well at the camp. Got a good scouting report, got good footage from that event and then had to go back home to Philly 'cause the camp ended on Sunday night.

Sunday afternoon, I had to be back at work at Balley Total Fitness Monday. I negotiated to get three days off to go to this camp. I negotiated with my boss to get Friday, Saturday, Sunday off. Nobody got the weekend off working at Balley. So get back Monday morning. I'm back at work. What I have now is a scouting report, which is a third party validated proof that this guy can play.

So it's not just me talking myself up and I have footage of myself that I can play. So here's what I start doing. I start reaching out. I go on Google, and Google did exist at the time. It wasn't what it is now, but it existed, right? And I looked up basketball agents because I figured I had barely been outta the state of Pennsylvania at this point in my life.

I'm trying to play overseas. I don't know anybody overseas. So, how am I gonna get a job overseas? I don't know anybody. I figured a basketball agent would know the people who I don't know. So an agent in basketball works the same as a literary agent or acting agent. They're the go between, between the talent, which is me and the jobs, which is the opportunities I wanted.

So, I start calling cold. I'm literally cold calling. I'm not talking DMs, not emails. Cold calling agents. If I saw an agent, basketball agent on Google and they had a phone number, I called them, I said, Hey, here's who I am. Here's what I have. I have a scouting report. And the scouting report was online so I could send 'em a link to the scouting report.

And I said, hey, I also have footage of myself playing. Now here's the thing, I called about 60 basketball agents. Of the 60 agents, I called, 20 of them said, okay, let me see what you got. Let me see your scouting report. Let me see your footage. Now, mind you, this is 2005. YouTube didn't exist yet. So, this footage was on this thing called a VHS tape. You two remember that?

Ginny Bianco-Mathis: Oh yes.

Mitch Simon: Yikes.

Dre Baldwin: Yeah. So I had a VHS tape of my game footage and also at home I had a double Decker vcr. So we got any, millennials or Gen Zers listening to this, ask your parents or grandparents or you Google it.

So, I was making copies. I went to Eckert, the grocery store, and I bought a 10 pack of blank VHS tapes. And I was making copies of this master tape that I had, and I'm mailing this out in bubble mailers to agents around the world who asked to see my footage. So, of the 20 agents that I sent this footage to, one agent called me back.

He followed up and said, okay, I'll represent you. He decided to represent me, and this was in, this is about, July 2005, and then by the end of August, early September, 2005, I got my first contract that was in Countess, Lithuania. So

that's how I got started playing pro basketball. You want me to continue? Keep going?

Mitch Simon: Yes. So you're playing pro basketball, you have a career. How do you move from your career to being in front of so many people with your message.

Dre Baldwin: Yeah. All right, so this is what happened. I took that footage that was on that VHS tape, and you know how VHS tapes were. I mean, you drop it, you leave it in water, you leave it in the sun, it is destroyed. You've lost that footage. So I figure what can I do with this footage so that it's safe kept and it won't get destroyed. Now at this time, the internet is starting to become more of the internet, I guess this is web version one at this point we're talking about, and there was this new website that had come out that said, Hey, you can put as much footage up here for free as you want.

And it was called YouTube.com. So, I took that VHS tape to a audio visual store and they said they can take footage off of VHS and put it onto a data cd. So, I got that footage transferred. I paid about 80 bucks to get it transferred from a VHS state to a data CD. Put that data CD in my parents' desktop computer, uploaded the footage of YouTube.

So now I have my video on YouTube. Now again, this is 2005. Who cares about YouTube, right? So at work, working at Balley Total Fitness. I'm playing overseas. Nobody cares about YouTube. So I'll go check YouTube maybe six months later just to make sure the video is still there.

And people had left comments on my footage and they were like, Hey, who are you? Who taught you how to play? How often do you practice? Where do you play at? And they were asking all these questions. And what I realized is these are basketball players. They weren't going on YouTube looking for Dre Baldwin.

They're going on YouTube just looking for someone who can show them how to play basketball. The difference. And what I realized was that these players are me. They're just 10 years younger than me—

Mitch Simon: Right—

Dre Baldwin: they need someone who can teach them how to play basketball and the difference between me and them is that me, I didn't have the internet to go to, I had to learn how to play basketball by myself, right?

Nobody taught me how to play basketball. I taught myself. But they could go to the internet and get information. They could crowdsource information off on the internet. So when I saw these comments, immediately was a light bulb in my mind. These players just want somebody to show 'em how to practice, and clearly they think I know what I'm doing, so let me just take my little hundred dollars camera 'cause at the time we didn't have the video cameras on the phones, right? This is when you had to have a camera and a phone.

I had the hundred dollars camera. I would bring that with me to the gym. I didn't even have a tripod, guys. So I would put the camera on the bench next to the courts. And just let it run while I'm playing, while I'm practicing. And I would just record myself and I would just take little clips, anything that look good, and I would put that up on YouTube. And I did that from 2005 to about 2009. And this is where the story, turns a little bit.

So I'm playing overseas. I've been a few places by this point. 2009. I find myself unemployed. I'm a free agent. So I don't have a job. The phone's not ringing. And I'm saying to myself, man, what am I gonna do now? How am I gonna take control of my life? Because at this point I'm into my mid to late twenties.

I'm like, how am I going to, you know, live like an adult? I don't even know when my next paycheck's coming in. So to go back in the story, back in around 2001, I got introduced to a book by Robert Kiyosaki called Rich Dad, Poor Dad.

Mitch Simon: Yes.

Dre Baldwin: And I remember reading that book and I said to myself, this is what I want to be doing. I know I'm gonna play basketball first, but I know basketball doesn't last forever. When I get done with basketball, I want to do something like what he's talking about in this book. But the things that he was saying in that book, he was saying rich people don't work for money, they make money work for them. They don't just go looking for work. They go looking for ways to build a network and things like that.

And I said, whatever he's talking about, this is what I wanna do. Because the adults I had seen around me growing up, they did something different. They were always at work, they never had time, they never had money. So I'm like, I don't wanna do that. So I kept that in the back of my head. So by 2009 when I didn't have a job, I'd also just finished reading, kind of like the digital version of Rich Dad, Poor Dad for the Digital Entrepreneur. It was. The Four Hour Work Week by Tim Ferris. Similar concepts, but for the digital world.

Mitch Simon: Yep, yep.

Dre Baldwin: And I read both books and I said, okay, how can I take what I've learned in these books and give myself some power here? Because I had a little audience on the internet. I had all these basketball players following me by word of mouth, but there's no money to be made on YouTube at this point. Nothing. So what I started doing, based on what Tim Ferris has said, is I started creating my own product and he gave this little experiment, here's how you can test out a product. So I'll tell you what the experiment was very quickly.

He said, you can go on this free hosting website called Weebly. Still exists to this day. You make a one page website and say, here's my product, here's what it is, here's what it's called, here's what it does, here's the price. And you put a real button that says Buy this product for, and I made a basketball training program how to dribble, how to shoot, two programs.

\$4 and 99 cents a piece. So the little button said, buy this program for \$4 and 99 cents, and when you click the button, it would take you to another page that said, this program is under construction, but when it's ready, we'll email you and let you know that it's ready. And Tim said, if you get people, go to Google and you buy \$5 in Google ads to drive traffic to the page.

Now, mind you, disclaimer to everybody listening now, you cannot spend \$5 on Google Ads and get traffic in 2022, 2023, but back then you could. So I've spent five \$ on Google ads and drove traffic to this page and I was getting people putting in emails and he said if people put in email addresses, is not skewed.

If you go to your own audience, you gotta go to people who don't know you. So people who don't know you are putting their email addresses in. You have a viable product, go make the product and start selling it. Yeah. So when I started to get email addresses, I went and made that product and this is just a pdf.

All I did was use the videos I was already putting on YouTube. And I just organized them. I wrote out exactly what they were, put them into a product, and I started selling that product. \$4.99 cent basketball training programs. And when I made my first sale that first night, I remember I had the Blackberry phone back then.

Okay, so you remember when you got the Blackberry, the little red light will start blinking. And I remember I got the email that said, congratulations, you made a sale.

Mitch Simon: Wow.

Dre Baldwin: And when I made that first sale, I said to myself, this is what I'm gonna be doing. This right here. I know I'm gonna keep playing basketball. And eventually, the phone did ring and I kept playing ball until 2015. *But when I made that first sale, I said, this is what I'm gonna be doing. Because what I was doing was taking the idea outta my head, turning it into a real thing and exchanging it for money.*

What we, what I now know as, I didn't know what was called this then, but what we now call intellectual property. I said, this is what I need to be doing right here. I could do this forever. I know I wouldn't be able to dunk a basketball forever, but I could do this forever. And that's where this whole work on your game thing came from and to get to the part of, you know, how we got even here today, fast forwarding is a lot of the basketball players who were following me, they would hear my story cause they would start to ask me questions and I would always read and reply to the comments.

I still, to this day, I read and reply to my comments and the players would say, well, you know, where'd you play at? Where you from? And I would tell them the story I told you I only played one year of high school basketball, walked on in college, had to hustle my way into the pros. And a lot of these players, they could see themselves in me.

What I like to tell people is that for every one, LeBron James, Kobe Bryant, you got 10,000 Dre Baldwins, right? So, you can like LeBron and Kobe, but you cannot relate to them. Like how many people have been superstars since they were 14 and destined to be in NBA. Most basketball players cannot relate to that, even though you can admire it.

So when they saw my story and they said, oh, you got cut. But you kept trying, Hey, I got cut. Why should I keep trying? So they saw inspiration in my background and my story. Then the fact that I was on the internet and I'm there every day and I'm accessible, I'm responding to their comments, I'm replying to their emails.

They're like, oh, well, I can't talk to LeBron, but I can talk to Dre. So that's how they really started to connect with me and really it was the mindset piece that they really started to, a lot of people connected with. 'cause they would say, well, why come to the gym every day to work out. *Start talking discipline. How do you show up under the lights?*

You get that one time every year to try out for the basketball team. You have to show up that one day. *Doesn't matter what you did all the other days. Talk confidence. Why keep trying when you got kept getting cut, mental toughness.* How do you get started? You know, getting on the internet 'cause by this point now it's starting to be cool to be known on the internet and put out content.

And I was already starting to be known. So now that's when I started talking about personal initiative. Those became the foundation for what I do now. Then when I started talking about those things, the way I did it was through these videos that I called The Weekly Motivation.

Tuesday through Sunday was basketball, basketball, basketball. But every Monday I put out this video called The Weekly Motivation. It was just a little two to five minute selfie video. Four selfie videos were cool. I was just talking about some kind of mindset principle, so something like, showing up every day, doing the work and you know, just believing in yourself at a level that is above all your competitors.

And what if your best opportunity got presented to you right now today, would you be ready for it? Just talking about those kind of things. These are things that just kind of naturally occurred in my mind. These are just the way I normally thought, and I thought this was normal stuff. But when I started putting it out, I realized that people were really gravitating to those messages, and people who didn't even play basketball were finding me on YouTube and saying Dre, I don't even play basketball, but I follow you because that video you put out every Monday, I really like what you're talking about. That stuff applies to life. That's not just sports. So, I did the weekly motivation every Monday for 400 Mondays in a row.

Mitch Simon: Wow.

Dre Baldwin: That practice became the foundation for Work on Your Game as we know it to this very day. And I kept making more training programs for basketball players. I started writing books 'cause now self-publishing was a thing.

I jumped on that when I saw that opportunity. You know, making courses, all of that. And then by 2015 when I knew I was gonna get done playing basketball, the advantage I had over most athletes is that, I wasn't waking up the day after I stopped playing saying, all right, what do I do now? I already had momentum.

I already had been doing all this stuff. I knew exactly what I was gonna do in the internet. No, luckily I was born at the right time. The internet became the internet at that right time, and I had taken advantage of it. So, I hit the ground running as soon as I stopped playing ball, and I went straight into this full-time. So that's how we got here.

Mitch Simon: That's a great story.

Ginny Bianco-Mathis: Oh my gosh. I know.

Mitch Simon: And so, I can see behind you. I know this is just audio, but I can see, you know, you got workbooks, you got Work on Your Game, you got Bulletproof, you got The Third Day, everything.

Our audience wants to know how would you apply these principles to working on a remote team? Obviously when you're on a basketball team, you're not remote. But now, in today's world, which has changed again 'cause of COVID, most of us are on remote or hybrid teams. How would you take your philosophy and use the Work on Your Game System to excel as a member of a virtual team.

Dre Baldwin: That's a great question, 'cause I'm, I mean, I'm at home right now. So one of the biggest things first of all, you gotta be disciplined. That's the first principle is *discipline*. *And the discipline is, even though you're not reporting to a physical vocation with a bunch of other people, you're at home, you have to figure out a way to eliminate the distractions or really find the focus is really what you need to do.*

You had to still operate your business like a business even though you're not showing up to an office. That's the biggest thing for people who kind of have, autonomy as far as location, that you still have to run your business like a business. Because if you're getting distracted by, you know, what's in the refrigerator or what's on TV or there are other people in your house or apartment or condo, wherever you are, and you're getting distracted by that, then you're not putting that time into work. Cause if you were at the office, you wouldn't be doing that.

You might be looking at your phone, but that's the only distraction possibly that you have. But at home, anything is a distraction. *So you have to regiment your day and really operate what you do like a business.* And this is whether you're on a remote team, whether you're a solopreneur, doing it all by yourself, whatever you're doing, you have to have a system for what you're doing.

And the system should be telling you exactly what to do. All you have to do is follow the system. And what I tell a lot of, you know, people who work with me is that your system should be working harder than the people. All right. The system should be the hardest working entity in your business. All you do is what the system tells you to do. You are an employee of your own system, even when you're an owner of the business.

Mitch Simon: I love that.

Ginny Bianco-Mathis: And if I can give you another answer to that question, which you answered before, and you said you took advantage of this new thing called YouTube, and then you put the YouTube up there, right? That's a very virtual experience. *But you then answered everybody, people put comments and you made the statement, I can't talk to you know, some famous basketball players, but I can call, talk to Dre. You made yourself accessible.*

Dre Baldwin: That's right.

Ginny Bianco-Mathis: *And visual, even though you're virtual and people felt real connected with you.*

Mitch Simon: Yeah, I think that's key. You know, when you're on a remote team, yes. You gotta follow a system. Can you tell us more about that? About, how you need to make yourself accessible on a team?

Dre Baldwin: That's a great question and it depends on how much correspondence you're getting from your team. I think you had to make adjustments based on that, but I think there needs to be a time, and let's say you're the CEO, you're the person in charge and you have a big team and a lot of people could possibly be reaching out to you.

Is this is something that Tim talked about, Tim Ferris talked about in his book is that you have a certain time every day from 8 to 11 is when you respond to all your emails, and then at the end of the day, from 5 to 5:30, you respond to all your emails and those are the times that you're available to respond. Outside of those times, you're not gonna reach me. Or it can, depending on the size of your team again and how much correspondence you're getting, you can have that or response device available to you all day.

When somebody hits you up, you're hitting them back and you're responding back to them again, depending on what your workflow is and how much, how much correspondence you have coming in.

What I tell people, even in my coaching programs and things like that, is I'll get back to you within 24 hours. So usually it's much faster than that, but they know that's the window. All right? So if I decide to take several hours to get back to you, that's how long I'm taking. But if I get right back to you, don't think I'm gonna do that every time.

It's just setting the expectations. Letting people know, Hey, this is how I'm gonna respond. This is how you reach me. Don't text me. Don't call me, email me. All right? This is the way you need to reach me. If you wanna reach me, you must go through the proper channels. So that's all part of that system as well.

Letting people know, here's how you communicate with me. Here's what I want you to tell me. I even tell my staff this. I say, anytime you have, if I send you to go do something, or I say, Hey, I want you to look into this and tell me what you think. I want you to gimme your top five things you found, gimme your top three recommendations. I want you to explain to me why each one is good. Gimme the pros, gimme the cons, and then gimme your recommendation. If you had to pick one, that's what I want you to tell me. Don't just gimme a list of links off Amazon and then I gotta figure it out, like, why are you here?

Ginny Bianco-Mathis: That's right.

Dre Baldwin: *Giving them the system to empower them, that helps empower me so that we can save time.*

Mitch Simon: Yeah. I appreciate that you call your work on the game a system as opposed to the work on your game principle. It sounds like from everything you're saying, the way to really be successful, when you're virtual is to create and follow a system. Are there any other parts of the system, in addition to discipline that you would say are great, concepts to support the success of someone who's on a remote team?

Dre Baldwin: For someone who's on a remote team. Also *personal initiative* I think is, the next thing is just making sure that you are staying in touch and showing face. And I think one of the things with people who are on remote teams is because you don't have that direct in-person interaction.

And sometimes it can start to feel a little bit lonely cause you're not around other human beings. You're not actually getting direct human communication. So making sure whoever's in charge of that, making sure that that communication is actually happening as best you can to replicate in-person connection through virtual teams, through Zoom is not the same as meeting

somebody and shaking their hand and feeling their energy, but making sure that everybody is being touched on. You gotta have those touch points when you're staying in touch with people and somebody should be in charge of making sure that everybody's engaged.

It's kind of like same way, if I'm having a meeting and there are five people in the meeting and somebody hasn't spoken for a while, I'm gonna make sure I call on them to make sure they say something. Even if they didn't have anything to say, I'm gonna make sure that they get engaged.

Ginny Bianco-Mathis: Yes.

Dre Baldwin: And involved in what's going on. So I think that's a big thing, especially now that we're doing things virtually, because somebody could be in the meeting, quote unquote, but they're on their phone, they're looking at TikTok, or they're checking email, they're not really paying attention. So you gotta make sure that everybody stays engaged and somebody should be responsible for that. And I usually put that on the boss.

Mitch Simon: Great. Okay. So definitely personal initiative. And then if you could give us one more of your, principles from the, *Work on Your Game System* that would apply to hybrid team.

Well, next one is then you got *confidence and mental toughness*, both of them. So the confidence and mental toughness just about the way that you are showing up every single day and putting yourself out there boldly and authentically. And the mental toughness is just dealing with the inevitable challenges that come with running a business or just living life, period. Because no matter how much you organize things. And no matter how strong your system is, eventually something's not gonna work. I'm sure, you two have set up an interview at times and you come on here and, detect, hiccups. All right. Something's not working. All right. Somebody's mic's not working. The audio's not working.

The internet crashes, something goes wrong. So how are you gonna deal with those inevitable challenges that come up in business and come up in life and everybody has them. And how do you deal with that within your team when you're dealing with human beings. It's one thing we are dealing with tech.

Another thing, when you're dealing with human beings, how do you have that conversation that you need to have that heart to heart conversation you need to have with a team member who might be a little bit, upset or annoyed or

something didn't go right with them, or they made a mistake and you need to talk to 'em about the mistake that they made.

It's much harder to have that conversation on Zoom than it is to have in person, 'cause they can't feel your energy the same way. So that's where **communication skills** come in. And that's a big thing here, working with on your game. It's not one of the four principles, but it's one of the principles is that communication skill is everything.

Because communication, if we can't communicate with each other, then we get chaos and all of society. When communication breaks down, everything breaks down. That's the thing separates us from our ability to communicate with ourselves and with others is what separates us from animals, right?

We can communicate on a higher level than they can, and that's why we dominate, even many animals are bigger, stronger, faster than us. So that communication is a big deal. And again, this comes to *everybody in the organization is responsible for it. And I think people can become a lot better communicators when they're encouraged to be and when they're trained and coached to be.*

Cause I've worked with people who didn't start off as great communicators, but as I encourage them and push them and coach them, they became really good at it. So good in fact, that they know might leave and go start their own businesses, but that's some different story.

Ginny Bianco-Mathis: That's right. Yes. That's totally different.

Mitch Simon: I got one last question. I'm gonna pretend like this is a motivational Monday. Let's pretend it's on Motivational Monday. This is a serious question. With a lot of the clients that I'm working with right now, Gen Z, they're, you know, working from their homes. Who knows what their situation is at home.

They might be the only one in their, apartment or, you know, they have a roommate that they don't really connect with. There's lots of garbage on the news. We're going through a pretty scary time in the economy. What would you say to these employees and I think it's gotta be a large percentage of the workforce out there right now.

What would you say or coach them on how to make it through so much uncertainty right now?

Dre Baldwin: It's a great question and dealing with uncertainty is, it's part of the mental toughness piece. That uncertainty, it's something that pops up all the time in life. And when you talk about uncertainty here, Mitch, are you talking about like, as far as like, are they gonna have a job tomorrow or —

Mitch Simon: It's interesting, Dre. I think people know they're gonna have a job. They're just, they're lonely, they're scared, they've got a lot of anxiety. Just cause the world just doesn't look that safe or certain or, let's say loving these days.

Dre Baldwin: Yeah. Yeah. So what I would say is that nothing in life is guaranteed. I mean, the only thing is they say is death and taxes is guaranteed.

And I would say to people is that's part of the mental toughness is accepting the fact. That there is uncertainty in life because most of the things that we think are certain are not certain and is when we become a little bit too relaxed and we just lose our edge and we go mentally soft because we think things are certain.

That's when a rug gets pulled out from underneath our feet. So I would really just talk to my team and talk to people and tell them, listen, nothing is guaranteed, nothing is certain, but the fact that things are uncertain is actually, that's your safety is in the fact that you know that things are uncertain, which means if and when something happens, you are on your toes and you're ready to move.

It's kind of like being in a combat sport. You know that nothing certain. You don't wanna just stand in one spot 'cause then you become a punching bag for your opponent. *So it's being ready to move and being ready to pivot if and when it is necessary.*

And continuing to build your skills, continuing to work on your game, and mentally just conditioning yourself for the fact that there are going to be challenges. It's inevitable that there are challenges in life as they say. You're either in the middle of one coming outta one or on your way into one, right? So you're always in that position.

It's just a matter of are you noticing it and are you ready to deal with it? But that's going to happen. *So anybody who's looking for guaranteed certainty, you are not gonna find it. Only guaranteed certainty is death.*

Mitch Simon: Right. Dre, that was very inspirational. What you shared is just so true.

How can our audience find you, learn more about you, find, you know, all your books, and, perhaps, bring you in to do a speaking engagement or something?

Dre Baldwin: Sure. So I'm on all the social medias. I've started to put some stuff on TikTok every now and then, but I'm probably most active on Instagram. My Instagram is just my name Dre Baldwin, but I'm on every other platform, LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, et cetera as far as my books and programs, the book that I would recommend to people is my latest was *The Third Day*. This book right here, the decision that separates the Pros from the amateurs, we're on audio, but they can get that book for free just cover the shipping. Just go to thirddaybook.com.

And as far as my courses and programs, you can just go to workonyourgameuniversity.com. And then they can just, DM me, message me on any social platform. Either me or someone on my team will get the message and get back to you.

Mitch Simon: Great. Dre, this has been just so fun. I'm so glad you reached out to us. Just to let, anybody who wants to know how to hustle, Dre does hustle, and the way that, we came upon Dre is Dre basically put it together over a minute video for us to say Virginia and Mitch, you need to bring me on your show. And you know what? You were right.

So, Dre, this has been awesome. Thank you so much for your time. Thank you Ginny for, co-hosting again. And if you've loved this podcast like we have, please share this with your friends. It's just really inspirational. I just think, this is just gonna be perfect whenever you listen to it, and we look forward to seeing you next time on our next episode of *Team Anywhere*.