



**Complete Transcript: HALO Talks with Matt Spielman
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Pete Moore:

I want to do a quick commercial here for our friends at DAXKO. Owners of Club Automation, CSI, Spectrum, motionsoft, bfp. Next, these software platforms go beyond the current club software and provide best in breed solutions to the Halo sector. They wake up every day, they're thinking about your fitness community. They're trying to enhance your member experiences, the facility, easy to use software for the staff. If you're looking to change your software, if you're looking to get ahead, if you're looking to get to the next level in the halo sector and win, do me a favor, go to info.clubautomation.com/the-experience that is slash the experience. Pete Moore, PT Mo checking out. And now back to your regularly scheduled podcast.

Pete Moore:

This is Pete Moore on Halo Talks NYC. So I heard it from a friend who heard it from a friend who that Matt Spielman, who has written his first book, Inflection Points, a good friend of mine for a short 25 years. And we have worked together, played together, run together, and excited to talk about his book together. So Matthew, welcome back to the square.

Matt Spielman:

It is good to be back to the square and please don't call me Matthew.

Pete Moore:

Oh, is that, is that what your mother called it? The one She was mad when

Matt Spielman:

I've done something, when I've done something wrong.

Pete Moore:

I just want to make it sophisticated. Cause it says, it does say Matt's feeling on the book. So I'll, I'll resin the h e w for now. But I wanted to formalize this since, you know, we we're turning 50 now and, you know, maybe we'll, we'll length in our name at some point.

Matt Spielman:

No, no, I

Pete Moore:

Know. So, so, so quick background here. You know, why don't you talk about, you know, your preamble, you know, which is in the book you know, which talks about where you started, you know, kind of doing well, but, you know, probably soulfully unfulfilled. Yeah. and knew that you had a calling and, and, you know, you affected a plan to, to get to where you should be, which is where you are now.

Matt Spielman:

Yeah. So the, the quick headline is I transitioned from executive to executive coach, and this was about six plus years ago. Prior to that, as in the executive component, I, I did enjoy the work that I was doing and just principally for the audience, it was my function was sales, marketing, business development. And this was both in some smaller organizations that I helped capitalize, grow, build, and was part of a few acquisitions or, or selling of those companies, and also in larger organizations as well. And it was sort of through, as I ascended in my career, I took on more managerial responsibility and more of a direct impact on people. And that's Pete, the part that I absolutely love. So yes, my job was to sell a product or a service, or to market a product or a service or to, to develop a business for that particular company for sure.

Or raise capital. The part that really drew me in was seeing the people on the team, or when I was largely even running even larger organization. So the whole, as a general manager, just seeing people grow, develop, thrive, giving them stretch opportunities, you know, the, the promotion discussions and like, just giving feedback in a constructive way. That was the, that was the stuff that really drew me in. And it was, I was at this kind of positive inflection point. Pete, you know, around 2010, 2011, I was at MTV Networks working on a 15, 15 Broadway in New York. Wonderful people dynamic. What was going on. It was sort of pre iPhone, post iPad era of 2005 to 2011. Like a lot of stuff was going on, but I was, I, I felt like every day that I walked into 15, 15 Broadway, I should have been walking somewhere else.

And I wasn't quite sure what it was. So I began talking to, I sought out a career coach, an executive coach, just a, a coach partner, and Peter Hazelrig is his name. I talk about him in the book, and he and I have been coach client, you know, coach partnership for the last 12 years. And I'll end the, the mini story here by saying, Pete Peter said something really simple, but to me it hit like really hard, like in a, in a positive way. He said, Matt, just, just, just cuz you could do something well doesn't mean that you have to do it. Doesn't mean you should do it. And I'm like, Whoa. Like that sounds really simple, but it kind of like blew my mind. And then thus began the exploration of how could I get closer to do more of that direct impact that I was talking about earlier.

Pete Moore:

So for the, the listeners here who are yearning to, to do something else or maybe want to elevate what they do inside their companies and maybe become more of a coach and less of less of a manager or, you know, in, in professional sports, like we talk about in, in our book, you know, like there's a, there's a lineman coach, right? There's a quarterbacks coach, there's a running backs coach in companies, There's no sales coach, there's a sales manager, right? There's no one you go to. So if you think about a professional team and you think about a professional organization, like there should be way more coaches, whether they're inside or outside the company. My point that I wanted to make is for the people that are thinking about following a path that you went down, you know, you were in your, you know, 40, you were 40, right? And you're like, Now I'm going to go make a career change. Now I'm going

to go back to school. Now I'm going to go get a personal training license. Like, what kind of gave you the humility to say, I'm going to go take two or three steps backwards and I'm, I'm pretty sure I'm going to get back to where I was, or I'm going to feel better about it. Yeah. And be comfortable with that.

Matt Spielman:

Yeah. So Pete, I was 44 and it's one of those, whenever I, I, I do talk, I do a ton of career coaching. And when people say, Oh, I'm just, you know, I'm not sure I could do that right now. I'm like, I know you're talking to somebody who did, you know, so Right, right. Where do you start? And we talk about it a lot in the book. We, we start with finding energy, right? So some, some sources and drains of energy. Many people have a hard time maybe explicitly articulating, here's what I want to do and here's what I need to do. Everybody can identify energy. So what are the things that you're doing on a day to day basis? And, you know, take out a sheet of paper and for two weeks saying, you know, okay, I'm doing this right now, I'm talking to Pete Moore and, and dg and man, I'm, I'm lit up. I'm excited that this is a source of energy

Pete Moore:

And a true story. Right?

Matt Spielman:

Record is absolutely true. Okay, awesome. Okay, so this recording podcast, Okay, so then I'm going to, I'm going to work on this financial model. You know what, like I have to, I need two cups of coffee to make it through that one. That's kind of, that's a drain of energy. So we do, we keep this sort of running tally of sort of sources and drains. Cuz we know inside, we know inside whether we're drawn to something or not. That's kind of where I first started. And to this, this point we were talking about just before I was drawn to, my energy was around giving people opportunities to go see the CEO if I had an opportunity to go see the CEO, et cetera. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. So identify energy. And in the book we talk about a lot more sort of like, here's the actual exercise and here's the people can download the tools at the end and kind of do it.

Okay. So then I, I think it's, you know, you are outlining Pete that maybe somebody wants to elevate or somebody wants to be this, or somebody wants, I would actually say maybe, but I think they need to ask themselves that question, not what they should do, but at this point where they are in their career than their lives more broadly, what could I do that's most accurately reflective of that, which gives me energy and hopefully less of that which takes energy away. So just cuz it like, hey, that next promotion is like, hey, that's something I should aim for. Maybe not like that. Maybe not. There are no shoulds in our coaching, in our coaching approach.

Pete Moore:

Well one of, one of the you know, as I read through your book I was on a plane, I didn't have a pen. I'm like, you know, this, this feels like a book I want to underline, you know, and that, that's a compliment. And one of the things I underlined when I start reading the book is you can't goal set your way out of an emotional rut. And that kind of hit me because sometimes I feel like, alright, I've got this plan, like this is going to happen by May 31st. This is going to happen by June 30th. And when I get to that point, then I'm going to feel better because like these things have gone. And then you realize, fuck dude, it's like 10 years later and like, I don't feel exactly how I thought I want to feel. And when a deal closes now I'm like relieved. I'm not like setting up a closing dinner because it's, it's, it's emotionally exhausting. So, so how do you kind of, obviously people read the book and, and they'll understand, you know, the game plan system, but how do you kind of tell someone, hey, maybe you're goal setting your way into like, like

quicksand. Yeah. Like maybe you're never really goal, you're goal setting your way towards something that you don't even know why you goal what the goal is.

Matt Spielman:

Yeah. Yeah. So it's interesting to a little bit of a side note, I've, I've heard from dozens of people in the last couple of weeks that they almost treat it like a workbook. You can write in it. I'll, I'll buy you another copy, Pete, I promise if you want to, I'll

Pete Moore:

Buy my own. I'll put up a five star review. I'll buy my own. I'm here, I'm here to help. I'll coach you on

Matt Spielman:

If, if and only if it warrants. I if

Pete Moore:

We traded a multiple revenue, that would be amazing, by the way, <laugh>.

Matt Spielman:

Exactly. Go ahead. Exactly. But I, I, I think there's a little bit of people have a little bit backwards, right? You, you can't, if, if you're in a tough place setting the quote that you shared, you know, setting a goal may not necessarily get us out of that. I think because we need to take a couple of steps back. I talk a little bit about in the book, and you and I have, we've, we've spoken about this before, the sort of slowing down to go faster. It sounds counterintuitive and you see it on the race track around multiple turns. Sometimes they have to position the car, slow it down, set it up for that one turn so they can go faster too with returns in the future. And I think we can apply that lens to, to our life. And that's why I, you know, I call it the gps or the game plan system with the game plan is the epicenter, the single laminated, you know, along

Pete Moore:

The laminate, by the way, you got me into the laminate and a book laminate for a lot of people. Yeah.

Matt Spielman:

And that's the, the, the game plan is the center of that. However, the system part Pete, which is one I want to focus on, is what precedes the game plan. We need to gather information, We need to slow down in order for us to go faster, going faster, meaning let's get that limited document in your hand, but not as quickly as possible. We need to learn a little bit about ourselves and the world around this. So I'm big on, you know, Pete, you and I, I did the 360. I gathered information, you know, I spoke to you, I spoke to key stakeholders we also administered some assessments, right? And there I talk about a couple free that are online that people can take. Called Via is one that's amazing. For example, it's values and action. So via character.org. And it ranks your strengths from one to 24.

And so we want to tap into even more of who you are. We want to engender as much understanding of you as possible. And, and maybe others around you. Then, then we have the questions about, okay, what are some outcomes that if you were to achieve them would have great meaning and consequence for you? And so we might, you know, jot out in a thoughtful way sort of what the, what the, what is that the, the goal I guess, or the outcome that we want to bring about. And then we spend a bunch of time,

Pete, not only we, we spend probably two of the three to four X as much time on the y or the meaning or the consequence behind that goal because if, if you were to say to me, Well, you know, Matt I really want to run the New York City Marathon.

And I say, Okay, you know, I'm, I'm not commenting whether that's a good or bad goal because only, you know, and then we get into the consequence of it and you're like, Well, you know, my, my parents think it's something that I should do. And we get into this some more. And, but we realize this sort of, you know, kicking the tires a little bit, this should is not going to get you out of bed on February 6th at eight degrees in, in the pitch black when it's kind of rainy outside. You're going to roll over, hit the snooze button and it's never going to see the light of day. So we really want to get at understand why that particular outcome is meaningful for you. And that's predicated on, we go back to the sources and drains of energy which, you know, what are the things that excite you, that energize you, that you're enthusiastic about that ultimately equate to engagement?

Pete Moore:

So when you think about coaching someone who is at this inflection point, you say, Look, we've kind of figured out where your energy, you know, derives and where it flows and you're, you're not in the right career path. Like, you're not in the right company, you're not in the right, you're not waking up in the morning and excited. You're waking up in the morning and you're like, have fear, right? And I've been through this in, in, in parts of my rollercoaster life where I'm like, shit. Like every day you should wake up and be like, man, I got a lot of opportunity, right? Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And a lot of people wake up and say like, man, I'm just bracing myself for the stress of what's about to come today. And I'm in a tidal wave and it's, you know every breaking wave, it's a you two song.

Every breaking wave tells the next wave to come down. Like it's like just continuous, right? And people get in to say, Hey, you know what, this is my life. This is what I signed up for. How do you kind of tell somebody after we've diagnosed this, like, trust yourself that we are going to find a job that will replicate your financial requirements? Or you might say, Hey look dude, you can't live in this, this kind of budget and lifestyle if you want to do this. So how do you help someone who might say like, I'm trapped in investment banking, which I was. Yeah. You know, and people get trapped because they get too much operating expenses. So how do you help somebody through that type of discovery and analysis?

Matt Spielman:

Yeah, yeah. So that fear, that dread of waking up as you're outlining, it's not a good place to be in. And even monotony, you know, the, I don't know if the audience is old enough to remember that, you know, time to make the donuts is sort of like the monotony of the day. We try to, we try to get away from all of that. I open up the book talking about, you know, the massive people, these lives of quiet desperation, the Henry David Thoreau quote. And, you know, I'm, I'm not content with letting that play out. I actually think, you know, people letting that play out is the great resignation or the greater resignation that people that we should get more, more attention behind as opposed to, you know, people leaving John, how do we do it, Pete? We do it by carving a path forward.

And it doesn't have to happen today or tomorrow. You don't have to get out of investment banking tomorrow. But what would really make tomorrow a lot better is if today we begin to, we begun work. Like if we're doing this in the present tense, we begin to outline what the next one year, two, six months, one year, two years look like to create a path for you outside of this. Doesn't have to happen right away, but it's amazing when you sort of put down sort of a plan on paper, it makes waking up tomorrow morning a lot better. Cuz what you're doing going forward is working service of that path that you are, that you articulated it and got down hopefully on paper.

Pete Moore:

So, you know,

Matt Spielman:

So I also just to, just to kind of complete this, there also are things that you might be able to do today that actually generate some, some energy and excitement even in a challenging situation now. So we do think of the, you know, we, how can we get creative in some of the constraints that we face today? And you know, if maybe there, there's, you have a real interest or a passion in doing something and or a course that you want to take. And yes, you're doing investment banking, but can you, can you take a piece of that like on Saturday afternoon, can you dabble in something that you're really interested in? So given the current constraints, and maybe you can't leave investment banking PE because you need to pay the mortgage, you need to pay the bill, you need to pay, you know, private school tuition. So the exercise becomes let's create a path forward that you feel good about over a time horizon that is realistic. And then let's think about, given the constraints that we have, what's possible. Mm-Hmm.

Pete Moore:

<Affirmative>, you know, when you think about pre covid, I think everyone was kind of running a hundred miles an hour. At least I know I was and I wasn't really, you know, taking time to, let's evaluate how last quarter was, or how do I feel right now. I just said like, let me just keep running and I'll, I'll run through wherever I need to get to. When you talk to people now about how you define success, right? Somebody you might, you might diagnose and say, Look, your energy comes from hanging out with your kids coaching little league, playing with your friends, doing this and that. How do you kind of say this? Have you said to anyone, Hey, look like your work's, your work and let's find the energy sources in that and let's kind of re maybe take some of that energy and like devoted towards these other activities.

Cause a lot of people are focused on the work life balance, right? Yeah. And like, how to work and live with purpose is the, is your tagline in the book, right? So I used to think, you know, I was like, investment banking with you and I back in the day, I was like, was like, Oh, how big's your office? Or, you know, what does it say on your business card? Don't give a shit about that anymore. So how do you kind of help people say, Look, you know what, you, you, you're in a good place. Like, let's kind of polish you up a little and figure out like maybe where you could modify your, your work, but not necessarily, you know, go back to school and we're going to kind of reboot you.

Matt Spielman:

Yeah. So the, the pandemic and people being forced to take a step back and be more reflective, both do some introspection and sort of looking outside the world that there are a lot of really horrible things that came out of the pandemic, of course. And then we're still sort of facing. But I think that's, that's one area that, that it's been really good and really important and people are asking bigger questions and they're trying to find answers. I'm definitely seeing that. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>, Pete, you're talking about success and I, I want to pass this along that only you and I, I'm not talking about you or Dave, but it's more pluralistically, all of you, you listening, only you can define what success is. There are some objective measures that people may use sometimes, but only you know how you feel inside about what you're doing on a day to day basis, what it is that you've accomplished or brought about.

And as I say in the book, my definition of success, which I shared at HBS in the first year lead class was when everybody in, in the class was saying is it was our, our last class of leadership and organizational behavior. And there was the Peterson case about, you know, should he go to company A or should he go to company B? And company A was a better brand name and it was more money, and company B was

more entrepreneurial. And, and everybody was saying, Well, she go here, it'd be more successful if you did. And I sort of jumped out of my skin. And David, Professor Kang called on me at the end of class and he said, Matt, you look like you're going to jump outta your seat. I think you have something to say. And I said, Well, it really depends on your definition of success.

He said, Well, what is your definition of success? And I said something like, you know, having the desire and the courage to listen to oneself and then the, the, the ability and the desire to listen to oneself and then the courage to act upon it. So I think it's only we can determine what it is that we want to pursue through internal exploration, some of which you spoke about, you know, in the last 20 minutes or so, and others. It's much more detailed in the, in the book and the overall process, but then having the resolution, the courage to pursue it and to move forward. And we only we know inside whether, you know, that that's something that, that outcome, you know, that definition of success. It could be maybe I want to be a seventh grade teacher in the town where I grew up in Idaho. And that would, that's something I really want to do. I want to touch, you know, those, those particular, that age group and all that, or it's to be a managing partner at a private equity firm. But that's something again that, that expresses my strengths. So we're talking about the, the energy, the strengths and the energy sources, but that's a true reflection of what it is that I want to do. So it's really a very personal thing. And, and I'll, I'll, I'll close with this little anecdote I remember

Pete Moore:

We're not closing yet, but you can say something

Matt Spielman:

This particular answer. Okay. So I, I ran the New York City Marathon several times, and I remember I always hated that five times. And when people ask me, Oh, so what'd you run? Or, you know, was your time? That's like my least favorite. I know it's sort of an easy question to ask and I, I understand why, but if I had said three hours, like, what does that mean to you? Nothing, Right. That you, you have an objective measure of what's, what's a good marathon maybe. Maybe it's, you know, I, I ran a, I ran three and I've been training for, it was a two 50, so I'm like wildly disappointed and I then pushed through the way I wanted to push through. I didn't have the courage to kind of really double down and really pushed myself. So that was a real disappointment for me. Or I was training and I was like, I was at it like a three 15, so it was the best day of my life, you know, to do a three or whatever it is. So the, the subjective number or amount of money you have in the bank or the, the, the title that you have, people can, they're a little prism that they look at life through that's successful and not successful, but only, you know, inside. Like if,

Pete Moore:

I just hope that over time, you know, like people socially maybe change, like the KPIs they used, like we put out that you know, you're happy Dave, remember that postcard we put together. Like, what's your happy odometer or your stress odometer? You know, cause ideally, look, when I met you and you said, Hey, a random marathon, I'd probably say, What, what, how, what was your time now? I'd say, How do you feel? Like, how, like how do you, like how do you, how'd you internalize that? Like what does that do for you?

Matt Spielman:

Well, yeah, you might even, like, what was that experience like or what

Pete Moore:

Exactly Yeah.

Matt Spielman:

Run. What prompted you to run a marathon? Yeah. Are

Pete Moore:

You proud of yourself? Are you happy? Like, are you glad you did it? You know? Yeah. Yeah.

Matt Spielman:

So

Pete Moore:

Maybe our perspective change and maybe the more people that listen to this might queue in on, you know, like, your success is not like you're after tax account or like the square footage on your house, which requires extra Swiffer's. Cause I've, I've been in these places where like, people like you got 10 bedrooms, like, dude, you only have four people in here. Like, right. Why would you, why would, what's a necessity of

Matt Spielman:

That Now? Now Pete, I, I don't live in a world of unicorns and rainbows. We do want a roof over our head. We do want some, some financial security and nest egg, you know, colleges and, you know, all that stuff, I think, but both can coexist is really my message.

Pete Moore:

I agree. Well, the book's great. Real, real quick. I can I, Matt, please, please, I encourage you, I'm sure you've heard this before Matt, and I can't remember where I first heard it, but someone had mentioned to me, when you're in conversation with someone, and this goes back to the lens, right? Yeah. Where you're looking, when you're in a conversation with someone, especially in New York City, what's the first question that people tend to ask? What do you do? You do make it a habit in your brain to, to not ask that question, right? I'm sure you've heard this before and, and see how long the con and I've done it, and it's almost sometimes uncomfortable for that other person. They don't, you start to see like, they want to know who you are, they want to know what your title is, they want to know what you do.

And it's, it's, I found it a really fascinating personal exercise. A lot of that is a lot of that I think is environmental. Yeah, yeah. Obviously I lived in New York and when I moved to Manhattan Beach, I, I'd naturally say like, Hey, what are you doing? Like the, the guy, the guy on the there was across the street from me, he is like, you know, I hike, I ride my bicycle I'm surfing right now. I like to do travel this and that. Like, it was almost like he didn't want to tell me what he did and it almost like didn't really matter. Cause if he wanted be friends with me, he want, he was, he was trying to like ante up his, his hobbies and what he likes to do, not like what he does to fund those hobbies. Yeah. So I kind of, I kind of felt relieved

Matt Spielman:

When

Pete Moore:

I came out here for that purpose.

Matt Spielman:

I mean, both of your point, like Dave, you bring up a really good point and, and is that, that first question I tend to say, what do you enjoy doing? How do you spend your time? What do you looking forward to tomorrow? Like those are, those are the things I, I tend to get at more. But yeah, I don't think I ask people what they do for a living. I just I don't, Yeah.

Pete Moore:

So let, lemme just ask you one question and, and then we'll close here. You know, going into executive coaching, right? There's a lot of people that, you know, have gone into this field, whether they're qualified or not, you know, how did you kind of establish yourself? And obviously you got, we're not going to talk names, but you've got some family offices, you've got some private equity funds, you've got some, you know, eight personalities. You've got entrepreneurs like ourselves that you've really helped. What kind of how did that happen and how much of it was deliberate or it's like, you know, you get into enough traffic and, you know, you lose the h e w so you just Matt Spielman like call Matt spiel and call Matt Spiel. Like how do you, how did that evolve and how patient were you in letting that happen? Cause I think people need to understand if you're going to build a business on your name, you know, it's inflection point. Like you working with Matt, he's my coach and now he's kind of like the most important person for me as like my trampoline or springboard as I like to use those terms. So yeah, give us like a little insight or blurb on that if you

Matt Spielman:

Could. Yeah. So it wasn't, it wasn't deliberate in the sense of I'm going to work with the executive producer of 60 Minutes Bill Owens, or I'm going to work with Alex Rodriguez. You know, I have found that I got into this. I went through the process that I went through, I detail in the book, and I, I went through sort of step by step by step and that which I emerged from that process came from like, it was such an accurate reflection of what it's I wanted to do. So it was very authentic, it was very genuine and I just was kind of oozing in, in the best possible way that somebody can use that this is this type of impact to ignite careers, to energize lives, to engender that fist pump, whatever your version of the fist pump is. That was my mission that was driving me every day.

That came out, every single conversation I had, it guided my actions during the day and it just kind of naturally built on itself. And no, I didn't talk to Alex in day one or year one or Bill in year one or day one. I just kept doing really good work and really was focusing on impact and outcomes. And the word of mouth sort of got out there and people wanted to have me on, you know, in articles or on TV or on podcasts like this. And people heard the word and they reached out. But it was, no, I thought about taking the sign out on the side of the highway, like one 800, you know, got coach. But no, I, I never actually did that. It was just doing authe. It came from authentically me. And a lot of people said to me, Matt, you know, cause they knew me as a, as an executive before, like, Matt, I could totally see you doing this and I know somebody who could benefit from this. Like, that was just a, I just found myself doing that, which I think I should be doing and align up with my, could be doing

Pete Moore:

Well in, in closing here. I'm glad you took this step. For people that don't know, Matt has been extremely helpful to Dave and I personally. It's definitely, you know, giving us the, the infrastructure

framework for coming up with the, you know, really going hard with the term halo and giving us the confidence to do that. Coming up with the force behind your growth, which I really, you know, from our standpoint like that, that's what Dave and I and everyone in Integrity Square, like, we just want to help people grow up. And that's capital, that's introductions, that's advice, that's certified entrepreneurial therapy that we got unfortunately certified in you know, live during Covid. And if we could be the force behind the growth, we're not looking for a trophy. Like, you get the trophy, like, I just want to make sure that we got you there. Yeah. so thanks for what you've done for us, for our friendship. You know, I love you like a brother and go out and buy the book Inflection point points, How to work and live with Purpose. Matt Spielman, global executive coach to the masses and the classes, my friend. Thanks for having you

Matt Spielman:

On. I, I appreciate that. And because I, I want to get the book out to it in as many hands as possible. We created this single page and it's simple. It's the inflection points book.com and the inflection points book.com, and you can read about it there and, and if you wanted to order it. Great.

Pete Moore:

Awesome. All right, brother. Thanks for coming on. Excited that we were able to be a part of this this career path success plan. And the more people you help, the, the healthier they are, the happier they are and, you know, creates a halo effect. So for sure, anything we do to help you, brother and look forward to seeing you in person sooner than later, Please,

Matt Spielman:

I, I appreciate Pete and Dave, thank you for the opportunity. Can't wait to see you guys in person. Awesome.