

The Tim Ferriss Show Transcripts

Episode 69: Glenn Beck

Show notes and links at tim.blog/podcast

Tim Ferriss: Hello boys and girls. This is Tim Ferriss, and welcome to another episode of the *Tim Ferriss Show* where I deconstruct and analyze world class performers to find the things they have in common. Most important, the tools, the tricks, the favorite books, the routines that you can use that you use. And the figures that we look at range from billionaire investors like Peter Thiel, to actors like Arnold Schwarzenegger, to musicians like Boreta of Glitch Mob, or Mike Schneider, Amanda Palmer, to chess prodigies like Josh Waitzki.

And the point of this podcast is to help you to question assumptions, to find a better way of doing things, whether that is agreeing or disagreeing with these guests. And it's really an exercise pushing your comfort level and pushing you outside of your comfort zone. And the guest for today is no exception. He's definitely going to help you get excited one way or the other. And his name is Glenn Beck. And there's no secret agenda, no secret political agenda to this show; that's not what this is about. And it is both not a "gotcha" interview conversation with Glenn, but it is also not a softball interview with Glenn.

So we dig into a lot of his personal habits and role models like Walt Disney, and Orson Welles, for instance. But I also ask him questions, such as how he feels interacting with Peter Thiel, who is openly gay. Or how he feels interacting, as he has, with Penn Jillette, who is a very open atheist. And I ask him a lot of questions that many of you submitted via Facebook, and some of them are pretty hardcore. And I think he does a very fascinating job of answering them. So that is that.

Now, there's a bit of background because I think Glenn is a world class storyteller. He's also a world class performer, radio personality and entrepreneur. Some of you may not realize in 2014, for instance, Forbes named him to their annual Celebrity 100 Power List, which pegged earnings at \$90 million for that year and placed him ahead of people like Mark Burnett, Jimmy Fallon, Leonardo DiCaprio and Will Smith. He is founder and owner of theblaze.com, which gets somewhere between 30 and 50 million

unique visitors per month, which needless to say is massive. And there's no end to the growth in sight.

So it's a fascinating story, it's a controversial story but there's something to be learned, here. And I think you'll enjoy the conversation. So withhold judgment, reserve your judgment, and try to listen with an open mind. Again, this is not a political show. I'm not trying to convert you to anything. But it is a learning show, and there are some gems in here. So without further ado, please meet Glenn Beck. And for the resources links, show notes and so on for this episode, you can just go to 4hourworkweek.com/podcast. That's 4hourworkweek.com/podcast, where you can also find all the other episodes. Thank you for listening.

Tim Ferriss: Glenn, welcome to the show.

Glenn Beck: Thank you, very much.

Tim Ferriss: I'm thrilled to have you here. We're sitting outside at Aquatic Park in San Francisco. It is a gorgeous day.

Glenn Beck: Perfect.

Tim Ferriss: And I was going to say, has anyone ever told you you have the perfect voice for radio, but you've probably –

Glenn Beck: Not today, not today.

Tim Ferriss: I know we have a block of time. I want to get into a lot of different subjects. The first question I really want to ask is what your close friends or colleagues believe you're world class at.

Glenn Beck: You know, I know you always ask that question, and the punch in the face question, and I'm stumped by that because I don't consider myself world class at anything. I think that I'm a guy who just kind of slips in under the radar a bit and does things just differently enough to where it kind of short circuits the system. So maybe short circuiting the system, maybe.

Tim Ferriss: Okay. This is an interesting place to start. So what are the elements of short circuiting the system that you are gifted at? Or have developed a gift for?

Glenn Beck: Yeah, I think it's just – quite honestly, let me just start here. I have a friend who is an economic professor at Columbia. And he came

up to me – first time we met, he came up to me and it was a cocktail party and he said, “So tell me, Mr. Beck, where’d you get your education in economics?” And I said, “I don’t have a formal education. I’m a self educated man.” He said, “I knew it.” Now, I thought to myself: you S.O.B., here we go.

Tim Ferriss: Yeah, here we go.

Glenn Beck: And I said, “Did you?” And he said, “Yes, because I can’t get my students to think like you.” He said, “They’re all trained to think a certain way.” So I think short circuiting the system is a lot easier when you’re somebody – Steve Jobs is a great example – that just has not been trained to think like everyone else. Because everyone else expects the system to work this certain way. And then when you walk in and you don’t have that formal education, you walk in and you look at it and you’re like: this doesn’t make any sense. There’s an easier way to do this, or a better way to do this. And you kind of charge your own path and everybody stands around telling you: don’t do it that way.

And you do, and it usually works.

Tim Ferriss: Jobs is a really interesting example because he was able to take disparate areas such as calligraphy where, in that case, he took a number of classes that he then brought over to the development of Apple and its interface. Let’s talk about radio for a second. Actually, before I get to radio, you did not graduate from college but you took – and correct me if I’m wrong – one class at Yale.

Glenn Beck: One class, yes.

Tim Ferriss: What was that class at Yale? And I read that you were encouraged or introduced to Yale through a senator. I’d just love to hear a bit of the story surrounding that.

Glenn Beck: I sobered up in my 30s. I was an alcoholic and really a pretty despicable guy. And very arrogant and just not a good guy. And had tried – not tried, but had begun to follow the path of my mother, who was an alcoholic and drug addict and committed suicide when I was 13. So I was kind of going down that road. And when I turned 30, I knew my life was at a crossroads. It was either over or I was gonna restart. And at the time, I thought it was over.

But my daughters convinced me that I could start all over again, and so I did. And I realized I didn’t know anything. I was reading

everything I could get my hands on and trying to educate myself because I was just a self – I was living in self imposed ignorance. I didn't care. So I started reading a lot. And I was reading Carl Sagan's *Demon Haunted World*. And at this time I'm not really religious at all. I was raised Catholic but I didn't really believe in any of it. And I'm reading *Demon Haunted World* and it was all about technology. But he was comparing it to: technology is going to become like Latin to a lot of people.

And there will be priest holders, you know. And we're kind of there now. It's like, "IT, can you fix this?" And you have no idea how to fix anything. And so he was warning about it. I don't remember what it was, but he just made some mention of the church. And I snapped the book closed and I threw it down. It caught me off guard and I thought: what the – where did that come from? Where did that anger come from, here? I don't believe in the church and this was something that was a thousand years ago in the Dark Ages; of course it was like that.

And I realized I didn't know anything and I thought: how much of what's in me has been planted in me just through my experiences or just through other people, or my teachers or my parents? Not stuff that I even believe, but just stuff that's been planted there. And so I decided to take everything out and examine everything piece by piece. I was reading a letter from Peter Carr about a month later from Thomas Jefferson – from Thomas Jefferson to Peter Carr. Peter was his nephew. Peter was coming of age and his mother had died when he was young, and his father was dying

And before his father died, he went to Thomas and he said, "You're the smartest man I know. Would you please oversee his education?" Thomas said yes. So as Peter comes to age, he writes this beautiful letter and it starts out and it says, "When it comes to literature, never read a book out of its native tongue because you'll lose too much. Learn the language, then read the book." And he goes through all of the different studies – mathematics and physics. The last one is religion.

And he says, "When it comes to religion, above all things fix reason firmly in her seat. For if there be a God, he must surely rather honest questioning over blindfolded fear." When I read that, that freed my mind up to question everything. And so I began to. And I started reading Hawking and Einstein and Immanuel Kant and I just couldn't keep up with it myself. I was just not prepared.

So I decided to go to school. I was friends with Senator Joe Lieberman at the time.

Tim Ferriss: So this was around age 30?

Glenn Beck: Yeah. And I'm talking to Joe and said I just gotta go. And he said, "Well, why don't you go to Yale?" And I said, "I don't think I'm smart enough to go to Yale." And I said, "I don't even remember my high school grades. I think they were bad." As it turns out, they were all As but I had such a poor image of myself that I thought I was a horrible student. So I was accepted and went in. I could only afford one class. The first day of class was the day my wife and I decided to get a divorce, and so it was really hard. But I took Early Christology. And I wanted to take it out of the Theology Department. I wanted to take it through the History Department.

So I had a professor named Wayne Meeks, and he was great. I was an underclassman so I am this 30-year-old freak in the class and nobody knows what I'm doing there. He doesn't know what I'm doing there. And I'm engaging him on everything, and the underclassmen love it because they just want to skate, you know what I mean? So I'm really keeping it busy. And at one point, he said to me – I was reading – I really do have the library of a serial killer because I go and I look for people who disagree with each other. And so I was reading – well, I was reading all the things that were supposed to teach me about Christ. I was also reading all of the people who were saying it's bunk.

And I was reading a guy named Dominic Crossan at the time. He's a Catholic theologian who doesn't believe in the divinity of Jesus, doesn't believe in the resurrection or anything else. And the professor had said something, and I said, "Well, how do you explain, then, this particular point of view?" And he said, "Mr. Beck, who are you reading?" And I said, "I'm reading Dominic Crossan." He said, "Don't read him. He'll screw you up. Don't read him." I said, "Okay, who do you recommend I read?" And he recommended somebody.

So the next week I came in and I asked him the same question. And he said, "Mr. Beck, didn't I tell you not to read Dominic Crossan?" And I said, "Yes, you did. You told me to read this other guy and I've read him. And I get it. But I want to know why Dominic Crossan is wrong." And he said, "I'll see you after class." Turning point in my life. We went and had lunch. And he looked at me and he said, "Why the hell are you here?" And I

said, “Because I know I don't know anything. I'm a moron and it's self inflicted and I need to know what's going on in the world and in my life and what I really believe.”

He said, “What are you doing, what are you reading?” And I told him. And he said, “Who's guiding you through all of that?” And I said, “I'm not and I'm having a hard time getting through it.” And he said, “Nobody gets through that.” Then he reached across the table, and I said, “I know, but I'm really struggling.” He reached across the table and he grabs my hand and he said, “You listen to me for a second, would you? You realize you belong here, right? You're okay to be here.” That endorsement, and as stupid as it seems, that endorsement opened up my whole world. Because it was the first time somebody said, “You're smart enough. You can do it.”

That changed my world. I wish it hadn't, in some ways. I wish it didn't mean so much to me. But I've learned from that, now in my position, to say that to people. Because there's something stupid in us that just makes us feel like we're not good enough, we're not smart enough. Everybody else is better. If they just knew who we were. If they just knew how much I'm bluffing, I'd be caught. No, we're all bluffing. We're all trying to figure it out.

Tim Ferriss: That brings me back to something you said earlier that I'd love to explore a little bit, which is your daughters convincing you to forge on. Was that a conversation? If so, what did they say to you? Can you tell me a bit more about that?

Glenn Beck: I used to –

Tim Ferriss: Because I think everyone listening – or a lot of people listening have faced dark periods. I know I've faced some pretty dark periods, and I'd love to just hear a bit more detail on that.

Glenn Beck: I used to think I was a better father when I was drunk because I – riddled with ADD and so I operated at a high speed. I have a really hard time sitting on the floor and just playing with the kids. Like: no, no. Don't you see the blocks? We can build a bridge. You know what I mean? And so I would drink and I was a – I didn't think I was an alcoholic because alcoholics are poor, living on the street, can't hold a job, and are abusive. I was none of those things. And I was a very high functioning alcoholic, and became even more creative when I was drunk.

So every night I would tell my kids a story about Inky, Blinky and Stinky, the three little mice that would go to the island of cheese where it would rain Parmesan, and their adventures against Thomas the cat. And they would go out on their marshmallow boat every night as they would escape from their parents' house. And I would tell them these stories and we had a great time. My alcoholism was getting worse and worse and I was starting have blackouts. And I know that people in movies are like: I don't remember what I did last night! Bull crap. If you don't remember what you did last night, you don't have that attitude. It's a scary thing.

One day my kids came down to the breakfast table and they were so cute. And they said, "Dad, tell us last night the story from Inky, Blinky, and the Stinky. That was the best story ever. Tell us again." And I realized I didn't even remember tucking them in. And I lied to them and I said, "Let's see how much you remember. You tell me the story of Inky, Blinky, and Stinky and I'll tell you if you have it right." And as they were telling me the story, all I could think of was: what are you doing? What are you doing? You're missing everything. You're now lying to your children about this. What are you doing?

And it had been about a two year struggle to finally get the guts to admit that I was an alcoholic. But that was the weekend that I did it. And I left the breakfast table and looked for a place for AA, and went into a meeting.

Tim Ferriss: I know we're bouncing around quite a bit chronologically, but how do you structure your life to avoid the temptations or problems that you've experienced in the past? And I think this is an AA expression, but "If you don't want to slip, don't go where it's slippery," for instance. Are there ways in which you structure your life so that you're insured against revisiting that past?

Glenn Beck: Yeah, there's a couple of things. I was just talking to Jim Dode from the Center of Compassion and Research of Altruism at Stanford last night. And he's an atheist. He's totally cool without any framework of God. My friend Penn Jillette, atheist; totally cool. One of the most moral men I know. Really good, decent man. I'd leave my children with him. If there was a problem, I'd be like, "Penn, protect my children," you know? But doesn't believe in God at all. Okay. And? Honestly, as I told Jim last night, my church – the one I go to – is a three hour service on the weekend. Good God almighty, that's just agonizing. Three hours?

Tim Ferriss: Dances with Wolves.

Glenn Beck: It is, it is. You know, and I gotta get up on Sunday and put a tie on and a jacket. I hate it. I hate it. But it holds my feet where it needs to be, and it teaches me and it forces me to serve. And so for me, service is really, really important.

Tim Ferriss: Service meaning the weekend service? Or different type of service.

Glenn Beck: No, service meaning in my church, there is no paid clergy. So everybody – like I'm a teacher, my wife and I ran the New York drug and alcohol addiction program for awhile for the church, New York City. And it's all non paid positions. And so you're forced to serve. And then you're also – we call it home teaching, where everybody is responsible for other families in the church. So your job is to go over and teach the family and make sure the family is okay, and see if they need anything. Because the bishop, if you will, doesn't have the time. He's got a job. He's got a full time job. So at 300 families, we've got to take care of each other.

And so it forces us to live the principles that Jesus taught. It's not up to the government. It's not up to your priest to do it. It's up to you to do it. Take care of your brother, take care of your sister. That's probably the biggest principle of AA that keeps people sober is serve; serve other people.

Tim Ferriss: How much of the service and the church being able to hold you firmly to the ground do you think is the theology or the scripture versus the accountability of having that social fabric?

Glenn Beck: I'm not –

Tim Ferriss: If that makes any sense.

Glenn Beck: I think it does. Let me answer and see if my answer makes sense to your question. I really don't care what other people think about me. And I say that somewhat hesitantly because I'm not a robot. You can only take – I'm actually grateful that I get hit in the head as much as I do, and take the – or I'm handed the abuse that sometimes is deserved. Because it keeps me honest. It keeps me constantly reflecting: am I that guy? Do I believe those things? Am I a jerk? And this and that. But beyond that, I don't care if I'm rich or poor. I don't care if I'm famous or not. And I don't care what other people think. I do care deeply about what God thinks of me, and he's the only one that can judge my heart.

And that comes from being as low as I was. And for anybody who doesn't believe in God or whatever, they may not understand this. But I believe in the redemptive power of baptism. And whether it is a complete sham, it doesn't matter because it works for me. But when I got into the water, the promise is that if you ask for forgiveness and say, "I will obey you and I will do what is right and what you tell me to do," then I'll remove all the problems of the past. I'll remove all your mistakes, and you don't have to carry them anymore. That was really important to me because I was repeating my mom's life, and there was no out for me. I mean I just couldn't live with myself anymore.

And I stood in the waters of baptism. And I don't recommend anybody ever does this, but I stood in the waters of baptism and I have a very contentious relationship with God. I challenge him and I said, "You promise – your words promise that you will set me free. If I live the truth, you will set me free. And if that's not true and I live up to my side of the bargain, then you cease to be God. There is no God. Because to be God, you have to be handcuffed to that truth. You cannot break your promise."

And I said the dumbest thing I've ever said, and that was, "It's not gonna be me that breaks the promise, dude." And I challenged him. And that I guess was good for me in a way because I think of that quite often. I challenged him and he kept up his side of the bargain, and now it's my turn.

And so I do a lot of things. Like when I left FOX, I left FOX because I felt led to leave FOX. It was really – I think I would have – well, I know I would have been destroyed had I stayed.

Tim Ferriss: Why is that?

Glenn Beck: Fame is a really ugly, ugly, corrosive, awful thing. Especially that kind of fame. And when I was going up there, and we were being on the cover of *Time Magazine* and being as ubiquitous as I was at the time is really intoxicating; really intoxicating. And right towards the end, I remember the last night before I told FOX I was leaving. My wife and I had decided, and we had worked months on it going back and forth. And that night – I've always been a pariah. I've always been the kid who was beat up in school and whatever. I was never the popular one. And the night we decided – and I was going to go in and tell Roger Ales that next day – I went to *Spiderman*. And I had been to *Spiderman* –

Tim Ferriss: The movie?

Glenn Beck: The Broadway show. And I had been to *Spiderman* two weeks before, and they were – that week they were gonna close it. But I gave it a review that saved the show and so they invited me back and said, “Hey, we’ve made some changes; will you come back?” So I came back. That night, halfway through, I get a text that says, “Bono’s backstage; wants to meet you and say hi.” So I go back. Backstage is Michael Cole, is Julie Taymor and Bono and we spent about 30 minutes talking about the show. And they were struggling with the ending. And I’m like, “You guys have the ending. The ending is the beginning. That’s the ending. You’ve just got it in the wrong place.”

And as they were talking about the ending, I was walking into the meeting and I said, “They don’t know what the ending is, and here’s the ending.” So when they said they don’t know what the ending is, my wife looked at me like: Dear God, don’t talk; please don’t give them advice on this, please. But I did. And we had a great conversation. And it was like a cool moment. It was like: I’m cool for 30 minutes. I go home, and we lived in this apartment in New York that was – I mean it was movie cool. It was in the Bloomberg building on the 50th floor. Had a 180 degree view of the city.

I mean it was just spectacular. Floor to ceiling windows. I walk in, I open up the door, and all the lights are off and there’s just the city, just lit up. And I’m looking right at Rockefeller Center, which is where I wanted to work when I was a kid. I wanted to work in Rockefeller Center. So it was a lifetime dream to be there. And I just had the cool kid night. And I walk into the living room, and I’m standing right there by the window. And I said to my wife, “How can this be God’s plan? We’ve worked hard. I know I didn’t get me here, because ten years ago I was a nobody.

So here we are. I finally have access. I’m finally starting to get in with creatives, which I’m better at than all this other crap I’m doing. And we can make a difference in culture. How can this possibly be God’s plan?” And I was lucky enough to be married to a woman who does not care about fame or fortune at all. And she just said to me, “I’m going to bed.”

And I stood there and I put my head up against the glass, and I looked down on Lexington Avenue. And I heard in my head: if you don’t leave now, you won’t leave with your soul. And I knew

that to be true. I was beginning to want it. Once you want something, get rid of it. Get rid of it.

Tim Ferriss: Meaning once you're attached to something? Once you start needing something?

Glenn Beck: Yeah. Once you're like, "I really want that," then you'll pay too high a price for it. If you're like: this is cool – you know, my kids ask me all the time, "Dad, why do you always say: enjoy it while it lasts?" And I say, "Because nothing's permanent. I've been rich, I've been poor and you don't know what's gonna happen tomorrow. Let's just enjoy it for today. And if we have nothing tomorrow, we'll enjoy that tomorrow." And I think that keeps me healthy. The minute you start to say: it's always gonna be like this; or: it's only gonna get better; or: I can't lose this, you're starting – I am; I can't speak for everybody else – I know I'm starting down a road of trouble.

Tim Ferriss: One of the most fascinating aspects of doing research for chatting today was discovering things like your friendship with Penn Jillette, for instance, which I never would have anticipated in a million years.

Glenn Beck: Why?

Tim Ferriss: Well, because he would seem to be so antithetical to a lot of your beliefs and I admire the fact that you have that friendship. You've spent time with Peter Thiel, for instance, who is openly gay. How do you feel about his homosexuality?

Glenn Beck: I'm totally fine with it. How does it affect me?

Tim Ferriss: It doesn't.

Glenn Beck: Right.

Tim Ferriss: This is why –

Glenn Beck: Let me back up with –

Tim Ferriss: I think a lot of people – there are people who –

Glenn Beck: I think there are people who project what they think I believe.

Tim Ferriss: Oh, definitely, which I'd love to hear you talk more about.

Glenn Beck:

Penn Jillette and I – the only thing that Penn Jillette and I really have found some disagreement in is God. And we respect each other on that. And at first, we didn't. When I first met him at CNN, I spent an hour with him. And I just think Penn Jillette is just brilliant, just brilliant. I've respected him for years and years and years. So we did an hour with him. And I finished, and we're standing on the set and had a great time. And I said, "Penn, next time you're in town, let's go have dinner." And he said, "Dude, I don't think so." I said, "Okay. All right." And he said, "Look, man, you're a religious freak. Religious freaks, you're a cancer. You're the problem with the world."

And I just stood there and I was shocked. And I said, "Wow, Penn, I've thought a lot of things about you but I never thought you were a bigot." And he said, "Look, I'm not gonna bring a disease into my family. I'm just not gonna do it. And that's what religion is." I didn't say anything. I just decided I'm still gonna be his friend, you know? And I'd still invite him to a show, and we'd still be on and I just love him for who he was. Because I respect him on so many other things. And years go by, and Penn is really getting conflicted because now I'm suddenly this anti-homosexual – none of the things that I am; just I'm getting these labels because I believe in X so I must believe in Y, Z, and D and C and you know, M. I'm not a Republican, I'm a Libertarian.

And so I see this post that Penn had done backstage, and he's crying. And he said, "My childhood hero, Tommy Smothers, has just reamed me for going on the Glenn Beck show. I told him I was gonna go on next week. And he said 'how could you possibly be with a bigot like that, and this bad man, and I don't know if I can be your friend, Penn, if you're gonna be friends with him.'" And Penn was just torn up. And I wrote to him and I said, "Penn, you don't have to be on the show, man. I understand what it's like to have heroes say things to you like that. And I really, deeply understand."

He came on. He tried to corner me on homosexuality out of the blue. And he's like, "So what do you think about gay marriage?" And I said, "I'm totally cool with gay marriage." And then he didn't know what to do. Over time, Penn came to me just last year and he said, "I have to apologize to you for something. He said I don't know if you remember, but the first time we met was at CNN." And I said, "Oh, I do remember." And he said, "I hated myself the minute I said it. I was angry at 9/11 and I was confused and I didn't know what to do because of 9/11." And he said,

“That’s not who I am.” And I said, “I know that and I’ve known that the whole time.”

And so we’ve become great, great friends. That’s the way we should be. The country right now is so screwed up because we’re all talking about interests instead of principles. Why are we talking about gay marriage? Why do we even have the government involved in marriage at all? I contend it’s because of interests. We started issuing marriage licenses – one of the reasons why we started issuing marriage licenses is so we could stop blacks from marrying whites. Well, that sounds like a really bad idea. Why are we still in that business?

Tim Ferriss: Right.

Glenn Beck: So all the people are doing is they’re using this to separate us from each other. I have no problem. You want to get married? Get married. Don’t tell my church what I have to do; I won’t tell your church or your judge or whoever what you have to do. Let’s just leave each other alone. Let’s just live side by side and be decent to one another. Let’s celebrate real diversity. We’re living in this world where we’re arguing about nonsense and real, massive – the biggest issues possibly that man has ever faced are happening right now, and we’re arguing over what? Why?

Tim Ferriss: How would you suggest people on opposite sides of the fence try to find common ground? And the reason I ask that is when I’ve observed a lot of – whether it be religious debates or political debates, oftentimes it seems like people are unwilling to be moved.

Glenn Beck: They’re afraid.

Tim Ferriss: They’re afraid. It turns into a question of who is right not being effective in terms of solving problems. How do you try to bridge that gap? How do you find common ground with people who are arguably opposed to – or feel like they are opposed to you?

Glenn Beck: I will be friends – the Jefferson quote I gave you guides my life entirely. Because it has every important word in it. Question with boldness even the very existence of God. So at that time when he wrote that, and for me, there’s nothing bigger to question than God. There’s nothing more damning than saying, “I don’t know if you even exist.” So question with boldness. Don’t be meek. Question it. The ultimate authority, question it. Question everything, turn over every stone.

And then because he must surely rather honest questioning over blindfolded fear, we live in a society where rarely do you hear honest questions. I haven't heard a dishonest question from you yet. I haven't heard an agenda from you. I haven't heard a "gotcha" question. You're not coming in – and this is what most people do. They come in – on both left and right; doesn't matter who's doing the interview – journalists generally say, "I've made up my mind who this person is and I'm now going to prove it."

Tim Ferriss: Definitely.

Glenn Beck: That's not an honest question. So we're not gonna get anywhere. So if I sit down at a table with somebody who I disagree, and they're really looking and they really will say: "Okay, now wait a minute, wait a minute. Jeez. Holy cow. Maybe I am wrong." And they're willing to say it. I can meet with anybody. Those people will change the course of the world. But that takes real confidence to say – you know, I think most people are – I was. When I was at the height of my alcoholism, and I think most – the average person is like this. They're not sure there's enough inside of them to be full.

And there is. That's a lie. And so if they get rid of maybe their illness, their disability, their complaints, their childhood trauma, whatever it is; I don't know if there's anything left besides that. That's who I've become. That's who I am. It's not. That's not. Those are the bumps along the way. There's a gold nugget in each one of us. You just have to be willing to say I'm gonna get rid of everything and I'm gonna go mine for that. The true, last, unexplored frontier is inner space of each of us. We start exploring inside and say, "I don't care what I find. Whatever I find will be good. Whatever I find will be real and authentic." That's when we really change things.

Tim Ferriss: I've been very impressed with how many books you've read. But of course, there are more books in the world than you could possibly read and consume as one person. What are the books or book that you've gifted most to other people?

Tim Ferriss: Probably *Book of Virtues*, for anybody who has a baby, *Book of Virtues* by William Bennett. It's just all the old stories of who we are and how we grow. The things you tell your kids; the stories you should tell your kids and we should relearn. Another one I think is really good is John Huntsman's – the senior John Huntsman's book, *Winners Never Cheat*. It's awesome. Here's a guy who is really responsible for the idea of the Catel record. And

he did that – he was trying to make – he’s the pioneer of Styrofoam and he’s trying to get enough money to make the mold for the McDonalds clam shells for the hamburgers, okay?

And he knows he can sell a million of those. He knows. That’s the perfect thing to keep hamburgers warm when you go. And he’ll just make these little Styrofoam clamshells. But he didn’t have the money to make the mold. And he had just – he invented the Styrofoam egg carton, and he just knows. But he didn’t have the money. So he’s like, “Okay, how can I make money to be able to fund this other?” And he comes up with the idea that: you know, there’s all these songs that I like but I don’t like the whole album. I’ll just make a collection and I’ll sell the collection of these songs on one album. Well, those are like the Super Hits of the 70s. That came from him. He’s a petro chemical guy. He’s not a music guy, a record guy; he’s a petro chemical guy.

And so he really thinks out of the box. But more importantly, he knew who he was every step of the way. And in the book, he talks a little bit about making a deal. I think it was with Shell. And I don’t remember any of the numbers; it’s been years since I read the book. But he’s doing a deal with Shell and it’s a deal for I think \$250 million and he’s selling off part of his petro chemical company.

Well, Shell’s attorney starts screwing around. They have a handshake deal on it, he and the head of Shell. And the attorneys start screwing around with it. Takes him eight months. Well, in those eight months, John’s company is valued three times as much. And the head of Shell calls him up and says, “John, I need you to fly out and talk to me about this deal.” He says okay. So he goes, he flies out and he said, “How can I help you?” He said, “Well, you know, we’ve been screwing around so it’s our fault but you know, I was hoping that maybe we could kind of fall in the middle, here, because I know we have a deal at 250 but it’s 750; maybe we could do 500.

John looked at him and said, “We shook hands at 250. It’s 250.”

Tim Ferriss: Wow.

Glenn Beck: Yeah. And when you are that man, that’s where your success comes from. When you can say money doesn’t mean more than my word. When we can get away from people who are doing business and they’re taking you because they can. That’s when we’re in a business world I don’t want to be in.

Tim Ferriss: I've read that in the last two or three years, you've been trying to be more positive. I don't know if that's – that was in a profile I read. I don't know if that's accurate. But if it is, what was wrong and what are the ways in which you have been trying to be more positive? Or maybe it's a misquote. You can also –

Glenn Beck: No, no. I don't know if more positive – maybe less divisive.

Tim Ferriss: Okay, let's talk about that. Because a lot of people would accuse you of being very divisive and so I'd like to hear how your thinking or behavior has changed.

Glenn Beck: That was never my intent. I never set out to be the guy – I don't want to be the guy on FOX News. I'm not Sean Hannity. I'm not Bill O'Reilly. I don't like confrontation. How weird is that? I don't like confrontation. Bill O'Reilly loves it. I hate it.

Tim Ferriss: We'll do it live.

Glenn Beck: Yeah. I just hate it. I like it when we all get along. I was the kid in the alcoholic family that was trying to make everybody get along. How did I become the divisive one? It's not cool. And so here I am finding myself in a position that I've never wanted to be in and I don't like. And I went to FOX only because I believed the country was in trouble. I was saying the same things over at CNN. I was calling for the impeachment of Bush on CNN because what are we doing with the Patriot Act? What are we doing with the border? What are we doing? He's lying to you.

What are we doing with the war? And nobody paid attention to me because I was on CNN and it was popular to say impeach Bush, I guess. As soon as I pointed out the same things about President Obama, well, then it becomes divisive and I'm on a much bigger stage at FOX. But I only took that job – and I knew I'd only be there for a couple of years; because it's not who I am, not what I wanted – I just really believed that – and this is why I always said it almost every episode: “Don't take my word for it.” I don't want your trust. I don't trust people who say “trust me.” Do your own homework. And if I have it wrong, I'll lead with my mistake.

And so I got out of there and now I think I'm finally in the place to where I finally am beginning to put the team around me that is building the company and the direction that is really, truly, authentically me. And that is let's build a better world. Let's look to people who are focused on principles and ideas and a brighter

tomorrow. Because we choose. Yesterday's gone, tomorrow may never get here, but today we choose. Today we choose.

Tim Ferriss: I want to dig into – I definitely want to talk quite a bit about the company, and especially how you manage your time because I'm just astonished with how many arms to this business you have. But before we get there, I'd be very curious to hear a little bit about radio. Because you started in radio at –

Glenn Beck: 13.

Tim Ferriss: 13. And it wasn't until much, much later that you got into talk radio.

Glenn Beck: 2000.

Tim Ferriss: 2000. In that span of time, what were the most important things you learned that helped you get good at radio, or what was the best advice that you received?

Glenn Beck: The best – if I would just have to pick one, the best thing I learned, I learned by mistake. I learned by self sabotage, actually. I was – it was in the '90s. I'm sobering up. Everybody thinks I'm clean cut, you know, I had the image if anybody listened in the '80s to radio in Los Angeles, I was kind of like a Rick Dees, kind of clean cut Mr. Wholesome, golly gee, mom; that kind of guy. So nobody knows I'm an alcoholic. Nobody knows that my life is completely out of control. The people who work with me know that I'm a complete ass. But other than that, they don't.

So I sober up and I start going to school, start learning, start really searching for truth in God. And those are all the things I can't talk about. And I just don't want to do radio anymore because it's empty. It's meaningless. I'm talking about Britney Spears and Madonna and it's like: what the hell does any of this mean? And I got to the point where I'm introducing the music and stuff in the morning and I'm like, "And that's that super classic from what's her face," and I would just go on and I didn't care about any of it.

And at one point, it's during the Monica Lewinsky scandal, and it's a topic on the Morning Show. And there are about eight people on the Morning Show. Somebody calls in and said: "Glenn Beck, you're Mr. Perfect, like you've ever done anything wrong. You just can't accept a flaw in anybody." I stood there for awhile and the room got really quiet. And I said, "You know, let me tell

you something. You don't have any idea who I even am, or the bad things that I have done. Let me tell you who I am."

And the whole room just turned like – God, what's about to happen? And I spent about 15 minutes just being unbelievably, brutally honest and laying out who I am. The worst. No apology, nothing. Just saying: "You think you know? I've been lying to you. This is who I am." I turned off my mike and I looked at my then intern, lowest producer on the ladder who's now my executive producer, Student. And I said to him, "Mark this down on your calendar. Today is the day Glenn Beck ended his career."

The opposite thing happened. I had grown up in a world where everything was manufactured, everything was written, timed, produced perfectly. What I realized that day was people are starving for something authentic. They'll accept you, warts and all, if that's who you really are. Once you start lying to them, they're not interested. We're all alike. So the best advice I learned by mistake, and that is: be willing to fail or succeed on who you really are. Don't ever try to be anything else. What you are is good enough for whatever it is you're doing.

Tim Ferriss: Peter Thiel has a number of very fascinating questions that he asks. You've spent time with him; I interviewed him on the podcast.

Glenn Beck: He is a tough interview, isn't he?

Tim Ferriss: He is. He's a very incisive guy and he asks questions including – and I'm paraphrasing here, but what controversial thing do you believe that few people agree with you on? I want to ask you a separate question, but let's start with that. So what controversial thing do you believe that few people agree with you on?

Glenn Beck: That we have already seen our Arch Duke Ferdinand moment. Arch Duke Ferdinand was the beginning of World War I, and it seemed like a disconnected, stupid little assassination that nobody was going to pay attention to and it ended up washing the world in blood. And I think that that was the man who set himself on fire in Tunisia. I think that was the thing that started the ball rolling for the chaos that's now in the Middle East. And that Russia – Putin is either going to orchestrate or he is going to be taken out by his own people because he has allowed really very, very bad men who are Uber fascists – literally talk about Hitler in glowing terms; about Hitler didn't go far enough.

Alexander Dugan is one of them. He runs the Moscow University. And really frightening people. And we are now set up for a global conflict unlike anything we have seen since World War II. I've been warning about – the caliphate people made fun of me on the caliphate and now the caliphate is in everybody's language. But when I talked about it four years ago and said this is going to lead to a caliphate, I was hammered and made into the biggest joke in the world. Now I am telling you not only is the caliphate real, this particular strain of the caliphate, they actually believe – you don't have to, but they do – they actually believe that they are the army to bring on Armageddon and they are calling on the armies – they call it the armies of Rome.

Meanwhile, Dugan and Putin and his crew in Russia have just taken the Crimea and they're doing it because they are becoming, in Putin's own words: "We are restoring the third Roman empire." And he is trying to take back all of the land that the Soviets lost. And nobody's paying attention to this. We have to take our troops out of there, and we have to pull back and stop getting into everybody's business until we will at least admit what the hell is going on and be honest with ourselves. We're asking people now to kill people in our name, and I don't know why we're killing them; I don't know who we're killing. I don't see anything good coming out of this, and we're about to go into a global conflict that people our age have never witnessed.

Tim Ferriss: What are you doing, if anything, to prepare for that or mitigate against how that might impact your life?

Glenn Beck: I don't know. I don't know how you even prepare for that, I really don't. I've talked to great financial advisors and – you know, when you're printing money all around the world like we are and now Europe is with QE, the worst phrase uttered today is: well, this time it's different. No, it's not. It never is. That's a lie. So I'm looking into things like bit coin and what is the new technology. That's one of the reasons why I'm here. There has to be a group of people that say: okay, this old system doesn't work. It just doesn't work. The principles work but the power structures, the way they were made – we're sitting here in front of a building that was made by FDR.

We're still using this power structure. Look at the architecture of this building. It's art deco. It is clearly from a different time. We're using the same structures for a world that is totally different; doesn't need any of this crap. So look for the people who are thinking differently that can connect. And then more importantly,

are honest and will honestly connect in love and in tolerance of one another.

When I went to Auschwitz – I took my family to Auschwitz about three years ago because I really – at the time, I was talking about the rise of neo Nazis in Europe, which – again, mocked for; look at it now. The Nazis are in Germany, they’re in Spain, they’re in Italy and they’re in Greece, the Golden Don Party. And it talked about the rise of anti-Semitism in France and in Europe, and look at it now. So about three years ago, maybe four years ago, I went over to Auschwitz and I took my family and I had them read the Corrie ten Boom story of the hiding place, which she was one of the righteous among the nations and she hid families in her house, her family did.

And I asked my family: let’s decide who we are now before trouble comes, and let’s now build and water those seeds so God forbid, those times come, we’re prepared. And that’s all it really has to – you can’t prepare financially or anything else. You can prepare –

Tim Ferriss: Behaviorally.

Glenn Beck: – behavior. And I talked to one of the righteous among the nations, this old, sweet lady. She wouldn’t let me take any pictures of her but she let me record our conversation. And she was fantastic. And she said to me – I said, “Paulina, you were 16 at the time when you decided to give a Jewish person a bowl of soup. That was the first thing she did. That was a death sentence. Everybody has that righteous seed in them. How do we water it?” “And she said to me – and I thought this was really important – she said, “Glenn, remember the righteous didn’t suddenly become righteous. They just refused to go over the cliff with everybody else.”

That’s all we have to do: know what our principles – not our interests – know what our principles are today. And as the world goes over the cliff, I’m not going to change my principles. Treating human beings, whether they’re like me or not like me, whether they’re the same religion or a different religion, I will treat them with love and respect. The story of the Good Samaritan. Most people don’t understand the Good Samaritan. If you don’t hear that story of the Good Samaritan and when Jesus says – and you know who was – you know who the good guy was? The Samaritan.

When you don't hear an audience go [gasp], that means they don't understand the story. Let me just tell that line over in today's terms. So you know who the guy was that helped the other guy on the side of the road? It was Jihad Johnny. It's the most vile person you can think of, the most hated person you can think of, your biggest enemy you can think of.

Tim Ferriss: So the Samaritans were reviled in that time?

Glenn Beck: They were the Jihad Johnny of the day. So we have to understand that even Jihad Johnny, we better love. We need to be loving to Jihad Johnny.

Tim Ferriss: How do you demonstrate or embrace love with people you fear to be violent?

Glenn Beck: I would say – I don't know. I'm not –

Tim Ferriss: It's a tough question.

Glenn Beck: It's a tough question. But I would say, the same way I love my children. And I know they're not violent, per se, but yeah, let me just say my kid is violent. My kid goes out and he robs a bank. I love my kid but I turn him in because it's the right thing for the kid and the right thing for society. But I go and I visit him in prison and I love him. But I don't excuse it, and I love him every step of the way. Unconditional love, but not love that makes excuses.

Tim Ferriss: I would love to shift gears a little bit, and I know a lot of people are very curious about your departure from FOX and the success that you've experienced. And just out of my own personal interest, also. I'm at a point where I have – writing the podcast started off as a lark and now has become quite a thing.

Glenn Beck: I'd say.

Tim Ferriss: I'm bursting at the seams. And at one point when you walked off of FOX, I assume you are effectively starting from an organization of one, as it were. Some of the numbers – and we can update these as need be – but with GBTV, so your streaming network featuring your daily TV show in its first year generated more than \$40 million in revenue compared to the \$2.5 that you made at FOX News. If you were doing it all over again, or giving someone advice who was doing the same thing, what are the first three hires that you would suggest they make?

Glenn Beck: I would –

Tim Ferriss: Specifically in the content game, sort of in the world that you operate in: the media content camp.

Glenn Beck: Let me answer that a little differently. Let me answer in a way that – I think you need to hire – it was just in Facebook yesterday. And everybody there is a fan of Mark Zuckerberg. You don't really find anybody who's like; yeah, you know, Mark is okay. It's important that the team you have around you are not "yes" people, but they are one with you. If you're the visionary, they have to be one with you. They should throw you up against the wall and say: Glenn, I don't know how that works; I don't understand it; show me the vision. You know what I mean? Help me explain – explain this to me again.

But they have to be in the pocket of exactly what you're trying to do. And that was – I got a little too broad with some of the hires. We had to hire and take on – geez, I think we went from 30 or 60 people to 300 overnight. It was really hard. You just can't hire that fast and hire right. And we hired a lot of people that were not in the pocket. And so they didn't see the vision. As I explained to my staff here recently, I just went to a store in – I went to the new Ralph Lauren store on Fifth Avenue in Manhattan. And you can take all the labels off of it and I could walk by the windows and I'd know it's Ralph Lauren.

I walk into the entry, and it's all paneled and it just looks like Ralph Lauren. You go in and now all of a sudden it's Indian motif and hunting lodge. Ralph Lauren, it screams it. Upstairs, it's all white walls, black polished floors and black and white photos. And all of it screams Ralph Lauren. And I thought to myself: how the hell does Ralph Lauren do this? How does he do this? It's because most people, I think, can see the difference. Can see Ralph Lauren and Tommy Hilfiger. Most people will see those two and go: eh, it's pretty close. Ralph Lauren – Brooks Brothers. One's got a pony, one's got a – I don't know, lamb or sheep or whatever it is on it. Okay, I got it.

But the same thing: they're both button down shirts. Not to Ralph Lauren, they're not. They're wildly different. And if you don't hire the people that know the difference between Brooks Bros. and Ralph Lauren; if you don't know the difference between Tommy Hilfiger, an American East Coast kind of guy, and Ralph Lauren, it's not close enough. So he developed a team that could see the vision and then execute the vision, and didn't have to come back to

him every time. That's really hard to do. Really hard to do. You've got to have a head of product, first.

Tim Ferriss: And they oversee the unity of the messaging on those different platforms?

Glenn Beck: Make sure that vision is consistent every step of the way. The second thing is – and we did this poorly, really poorly – and I'm spending all this year working with a new head of product that we haven't hired yet, and somebody else I haven't hired yet: new head of customer service. There is nothing more important than my tribe. And most companies – let me just speak from me and I'll just give you the warts of my company. I started looking at my company over the last year and I had been really sick, and thought – when I left FOX I was sick and most people didn't know it. I thought – my wife and I had talked about it – that this last Christmas might be my goodbye and I would leave the public sphere.

Tim Ferriss: This last 2014?

Glenn Beck: Yeah. And we had given it – my health – to recover to 2014. And if it didn't recover, then we would leave and I would just go off into the sunset. And so I had some miracle doctors and some miracle cures happen over the last spring and summer, and in this last six months. And so I got enough brain power back, if you will, to be able to really look at my company. Because I had turned my keys over to my partners and said: hey, take this. What we had done was we had flipped the entire company upside down. And we had become a company that was all about profit: make the money, make the money, make the money and then protect that profit.

Don't let anything happen to that profit. You gotta keep that money in there. And then, what products can we make to make the money, make the money, make the money? And then people. Well, that's upside down. Principles weren't even there.

[Crosstalk]

Tim Ferriss: [Inaudible] in the team that you've hired.

Glenn Beck: The team and the tribe, okay? The company – and I think all companies, to be successful, need to be the exact opposite. So I went back in over the summer and I said, "We're flipping this whole thing upside down. The first thing is principles. Why do

you come here? Why is anybody getting up in the morning? We do it because we believe in something, right? What are our principles? What drives us? What do we know that we can say we do this because of these principles, okay? We're never going to violate those things.

Then, the next thing is the people. Our principles revolve around the people; our tribe and the people that we work with. Then, because we love the people and we know our principles, then we're going to find the product that makes life easier for the people that we love and serve. Then we're going to protect those people and those products and those principles at all costs, and profit becomes a byproduct. That's the way a company needs to work.

Tim Ferriss: That's analogous, I suppose, to what's on the Facebook walls when you walk into a lot of the buildings, which is a quote from Zuckerberg saying, "We don't make services to make money; we make money to make better services." Now, at the same time, who's the first person – I'm stunned by how quickly you were able to hire and your team was able to then expand coming out of FOX News. Had you had experience hiring people before, and who was the first person that you hired to –

Glenn Beck: Betsey Morgan.

Tim Ferriss: All right. I'd love to –

Glenn Beck: And she was the head of Huff Po – CEO of Huff Po and quite controversial. Because everybody was like: what? What are you doing? But she was the fastest hire I've ever made.

Tim Ferriss: How did that hire happen?

Glenn Beck: Through mutual friends and Chris Balf, who was running my company at the time. He had done a search and talked to her and said you should meet with her. And I said all right, and met with her and literally – I'm a really fast hirer. If it drags on, it's not going to happen. But I was sitting with her for about three minutes and I was done because I could tell she had good, quality principles. She was honest and full of integrity. And obviously, she's smart. You're not getting into the office unless you're smart. But she has been fantastic. Now she's the CEO of the place. She's replaced Chris.

Tim Ferriss: What did she say or do in those three minutes that made such an impression to you?

Glenn Beck: I'm a gut guy so I can't remember anything that we even talked about. I just looked her in the eye and I just felt she was a person of real principle. And I asked her, "Do you know who our tribe is?" She said, "Yeah." I said, "Tell me about it."

Tim Ferriss: What'd she say?

Glenn Beck: I don't recall. I think it was probably somewhere along the lines of "You have a wildly underestimated, under served and misunderstood group of people." And that's true. We have this massive audience that nobody's serving anymore.

Tim Ferriss: 27 million plus uniques a month to the website, something like that?

Glenn Beck: To the website. I think the total – the last total I saw was like 50 million – footprint of 50 million a month, which is insane. It's hard for me to go back in time and redo what I've done. But if I could start all over again today, the first thing – I just hired a guy named Jonathan Schriber and I look at him as an architect. He can build the structure. I'm not a business guy. I'm more of a creative in the content and I can see the vision of where I want the company to go, but I have no idea how to build it, per se. So I need an architect. I need somebody who can really see my vision, really get it, and then say: here's how the structure works.

Because for instance, I know I want an extraordinarily flat operation. And that's one of the things that we built improperly. We were building a lot of stuff up in New York and it was being built like CBS. And that's not a flat organization and that doesn't work and it's just not gonna happen. I want a very mobile, empowered group of people to work with me that doesn't have to go through a lot of red tape.

So you need a good architect. And then you need somebody who's looking at the product itself and the customer. Protect the customer, protect the content or the product and protect the flatness of the organization.

Tim Ferriss: I've heard a question you sometimes ask is: how is your soul? And you have very good eye contact. What do you look for or get when you ask someone that question?

Glenn Beck: Do they even know what that question means? Are they just skating through life? If they answer that question like: oh yeah,

my soul's good. Or have they pondered – especially – and I ask that generally of politicians – new politicians – because most of them don't have any idea what they're walking into. I mean there's no hope in Washington on either side. I don't know how you do it. You're walking into – a lion's den would be a picnic. It's just a – it's a cauldron of rot and everything – and I know this because of the media.

Had I wanted to play the game, I could have made a lot more money for the rest of my life and be given anything I've ever wanted. They'll give you anything as long as you perform. Give it to him. The same thing with politicians. You're going in there. Play the game, brother, play the game. Just make it all go – you and your family are going to be taken care of forever. Don't worry about anything. And so your soul is gone before you know it. You first think: well, you know what? If I just compromise a little bit, I'll be able to do X, Y, and Z. You're done. You're done. So how's your soul?

Tim Ferriss: Right.

Glenn Beck: And if they take it likely, they're not the guys. If they are afraid of losing their soul, then they have a chance. I want somebody who's like: geez, man, I gotta get out of there before I lose my soul. Because nothing's worth losing my soul.

Tim Ferriss: So they at least demonstrate that self awareness.

Glenn Beck: Yeah. And the awareness that there's more to life than being successful or being a senator or – I don't believe in Saul Alinsky, that the ends justify the means. I don't believe in that. We don't torture. I'm sorry. One of the reasons why we're having a problem in that country is because we torture. We don't torture. And so we've diminished who we are. The ends don't justify the means.

Tim Ferriss: What does your – the first 60 minutes of your day look like?

Glenn Beck: Ugly.

Tim Ferriss: Ugly?

Glenn Beck: I get up –

Tim Ferriss: What are your morning routines or habits?

Glenn Beck: Get up in the morning around 5, read for about 15 minutes, just check the news, check Facebook, check my email.

Tim Ferriss: What news do you check?

Glenn Beck: Just generally The Blaze and just the quick headlines. I'll check The Blaze, Drudge, Business Insider, Zero Hedge. I like Zero Hedge a lot. And then just get ready. I get up in the morning, I say my prayers for probably five minutes, then read, then get ready, then get in the car. Try to watch any clips that might be wanted for the radio show or for television. Then I go in and I have my first briefing within that first hour.

Tim Ferriss: What are your prayers? Are they the same prayers each morning?

Glenn Beck: No, they're just – I mean generally they are help me see the things that I'm supposed to see, help me avoid doing damage, help me be wiser than I was yesterday.

Tim Ferriss: And do you do that at the kitchen table? Do you do that in your bedroom? Where is that –

Tim Ferriss: On the side of my bed.

Tim Ferriss: On the side of your bed?

Glenn Beck: Yeah.

Tim Ferriss: And when you go into your office for your first briefing, how is that briefing organized? What happens in that meeting?

Glenn Beck: I have the main executive producer, Tiffany Seigel, she produces television. She gives me a briefing. I get three briefings. I get one from Benjamin Weingarten, he is a guy who looks at things that are a little deeper than the average person. Maybe he's looking into the Middle East, he's looking into Russia for me. He's looking a little more over the horizon for the deeper issues. And he'll give me probably 15 stories a day. Then I have another guy who is actually from Silicon Valley who is kind of a mole for me that is as fascinated by the singularity as I am in Ray Kurzweil.

And he looks at emerging technology on a much bigger scale. I'm not interested in the latest app; I'm interested in the singularity and the ethics that go behind that, and so what's coming. And I get about ten to 15 stories from him a day. And then Tiffany Seigel,

she gives me about ten or 15 stories that are considered useful for television on things that she knows I'm watching for that.

Tim Ferriss: How are these stories given to you? What's the format?

Glenn Beck: I get a one sheet with just a quick brief on it, and then I get the full story. So I get packets.

Tim Ferriss: Got it. So each one basically has a – it's almost like a research paper. You have your abstract on the front page.

Glenn Beck: Yes.

Tim Ferriss: Potential hotline and then the –

Glenn Beck: And then I have the full story. And then I get one more briefing from the radio division, and those are all the stories that they're looking at for radio. And so in that second hour, if you will, as soon as I get to work, in that second hour I go through all of those briefings and decide and pick the direction of the day and then the longer term.

Tim Ferriss: How do you choose those stories for the day? How do you choose the right combination of stories?

Glenn Beck: I have absolutely no idea. Just my gut. Just whatever is – whatever interests me, you know? Whatever I think – the one thing that I am decent at is tying stories together. I can see connections on stories and see things that – how they can come together that most people don't. I think that's one of the problems with the news and with today is everything is just a separate topic. It's not, really. It's not. We're all connected and the stories are all connected. What's happening in the Middle East does matter here. And what's happening on Facebook matters to people.

Tim Ferriss: What type of tools or software do you use – or apps – on a daily basis to help you manage your time? Because I think most people listening to this probably don't have an idea of the breadth of your business inasmuch as you have all the content, you have a clothing line, you have a very large business. What are the tools, tricks that help you –

Glenn Beck: I don't. I just have a really unbelievable staff. I mean it is really – I went through a period where my day is so scheduled that – we call it the Great Sock Incident of '06 because I just snapped one day. Because I had gone from a regular life to: you don't have a

life, Glenn. Everybody has to do everything else for you. You have to focus on what you do. Everything else in life, you no longer get to do, okay? And I wanted to go buy a pair of socks. That's all I wanted to do, buy a pair of socks.

And everybody's like: Glenn, we'll get you a pair of socks. I'm like: no, I want to go buy a pair of socks. I want to go buy a pair of socks. And it went on for like two weeks. Okay, we'll schedule in a time for socks. And I finally I just like – I just flipped. And I was like, "I'm going right now and I'm going by myself, and I'm buying a friggin' pair of socks." That was the last time I wiggled like that. But you just have to kind of get used to your time is no longer really your time. You have to – I read a great book years ago. There's two of them, and I don't remember which one this was in but *The Mind of the Millionaire* or *Millionaire's Mind* or *The Millionaire Next Door*; something like that.

One of them was talking about how, unless you're a plumber, don't fix your own plumbing. Because you're going to spend way too much time on that. And you can hire somebody. I concentrate on the things that I do best and let everybody else do everything else. So I have very regimented times to where – you know, I just had somebody shadowing me a couple days ago and I think they freaked out. I think they were about to go into an institution afterwards because they had no idea what it was. And I was in – I'd come right off of radio that day, and I walked right into another stage where we're doing Claymation.

And I'm talking to him about the Claymation and we're talking about the story and so I'm looking at the Claymation, I'm looking at the shots. Then I'm talking to them about the story. I go upstairs and I'm talking to them about the orchestration and all of the music for the story, and kind of doing a quick download on what it needs to sound like. And they're showing me some pieces of music that have been coming back. And then I go right from there, I go to the clothing line where we're looking at sweaters and designs and what I want for the designs to be.

You know, in the patterns of the sweaters I'm talking to them about what are the companies that are making these for us, what are the conditions for the workers, etc., etc. And then I walk out of there and I'm into another TV shoot that I'm doing for a special for three weeks down the road. And I get my briefings as I'm walking from place to place. And so it's enough to drive you insane until you get used to it, you know.

Tim Ferriss: Did you change anything after the sock incident of '06, or –?

Glenn Beck: I let it go.

Tim Ferriss: You let it go?

Glenn Beck: I just let it go.

Tim Ferriss: So you'd just become accustomed –

Glenn Beck: Yeah, I just let it go. And then there are times, too, that we just schedule in – I just want time. I just want my own time, now, you know.

Tim Ferriss: So you block that out on the calendar?

Glenn Beck: Yeah.

Tim Ferriss: When you hear the word “successful,” who's the first person that comes to mind?

Glenn Beck: Gosh, the first person that came to mind was Billy Graham, only because I was talking about him last night. And when I met with him, he was the most at peace man I've ever met in my life. He was just totally comfortable and happy. And he said to me with tears in his eyes, he said, “I'm not afraid of death.” And he was smiling. “I'm not afraid of death. The whole dying part has me a little freaked out, but death I'm not afraid of.” And he said, “I've done my best every step of the way. I've failed on many things, but I've tried my hardest every step of the way.” That's success, to me. Can you get to the end and go, “Man, I screwed it up, but I tried.”

Tim Ferriss: You have mentioned before – we had dinner a few nights ago with a group of folks here in Silicon Valley – Walt Disney specifically – also George Orwell quite a lot. Why the fascination with these two men?

Glenn Beck: George Orwell not so much. Maybe Orson Welles?

Glenn Beck: Oh, I'm sorry.

Glenn Beck: Yeah, that's all right.

Tim Ferriss: I need another cup of coffee. Sorry about that.

Glenn Beck: Because Orson Welles – let me start with Orson Welles. He played a role in the early part of my life. At 8 years old, my mother gives me a set of record albums called “The Golden Years of Radio.” And it’s because – I grew up in Seattle, and it was a day like today. It was beautiful outside. And I was in watching TV. I must have been 7, I think. And she said, “Turn off the TV and go outside and play.” And I said, “You watched TV when you were a kid.” And I talked back to her. And she sat me down and taught me not to talk back to her and then said, “You know, we didn’t have TV when I was a kid.”

I mean I was thinking Wilma Flintstone had TV; how old are you? For my 8th birthday she got me this record album – a group of them. And most of them were Orson Welles: *War of the Worlds*, *The Shadow*. There was *Jack Armstrong, the All American Boy*, *Fibber McGee’s Closet*, all these great, classic radio shows. So at 8, I knew exactly what I wanted to do. I wanted to tell stories. And I thought radio and the spoken word was so much more powerful than anything Hollywood could do, anything television could do because your imagination is so much stronger.

And then growing up and learning about Orson Welles, he taught me the two most important things. One, never give up. And two, because of his failure – and borderline insanity, I think, on never admitting defeat – let it go. Let it go.

Tim Ferriss: Is this *Citizen Kane* specifically?

Glenn Beck: Yeah. Let it go.

Tim Ferriss: What was he not able to let go of? And why was it important that he let go?

Glenn Beck: Because he took on – I mean *Citizen Kane* is masterpiece. He took on a fight that he knew anybody who was less arrogant would know: you’re probably not gonna win.

Tim Ferriss: Which fight was this? I don’t actually know my history, so.

Glenn Beck: *Citizen Kane* is the story of William Randolph Hearst. And it’s deeply personal. Rosebud is the name that William Randolph Hearst gave to his mistress’s private parts.

Tim Ferriss: Very direct.

Glenn Beck: In your face. The most powerful man on the planet. Were you gonna take him on, you're not coming out without a bloody nose, maybe a broken head, right? So he gets his head kicked in on that.

Tim Ferriss: So what happened? I actually don't know.

Glenn Beck: Okay, so he makes this movie. He's bluffing. At the time, he is the highest paid guy in Hollywood: more than Spencer Tracy, more than Clark Gable. He's never done a movie, okay? He's done *Macbeth* with an all black cast in New York. He's done all of the best radio shows. He's brilliant. And he's got all of this stuff going but he's never done movies. So he goes and he does – he goes out to RKO, they pay him a fortune. He's bluffing. He doesn't have a story. He goes up to San Simeon and he sees –

Tim Ferriss: Hearst Castle.

Glenn Beck: The Hearst Castle. And he's like: this is the story we're gonna tell. That's insane. It's a closed set. Nobody knows what's going on. He writes it all. Hedda Hopper, who's the gossip columnist at the time, she finds out about it, once it's all done. She tells Hearst. Hearst goes – I'm giving you a very short version of this – Hearst eventually goes to all of the heads of the movie studios and says, “Here are the pictures of the homosexuals that work for you. Here are the pictures – and I don't think I need to remind America about all the Jews that work here.” And he just takes them all out and says, “I'm going to destroy all of you. I want this film destroyed.”

Welles gets on a plane, flies up to RKO in New York and meets with all the Jewish investors and the board. And it's right after Czechoslovakia. And so they're very well aware of what's happening in Hitler. Well, Welles gives one of his best performances ever and basically he says, “You don't let one man squash the free speech of everyone else.” They release it. Hearst destroys him in it. It's just pure slander and everything else.

[Crosstalk]

Tim Ferriss: [Inaudible].

Glenn Beck: Yeah. Just hammers it. It's remembered as a horrible movie and everything else. It's not found until the '60s. When it's found in the '60s, everybody realizes this is a masterpiece. But he couldn't let it go. He couldn't let it go.

Tim Ferriss: Couldn't give up the fight.

Glenn Beck: No. Just let it go, man. You did a great thing. Now go do something else.

Tim Ferriss: How have you found that to apply to your own life? Have there been any moments where that has been particularly relevant for you?

Glenn Beck: Yeah, I think right now is one of those moments for me. I believe the things that I believe about the country and the direction that we're headed with progressivism. And I don't agree with it. But the country's made its choice. Okay, let it go. And now let's see what impact I can make in a positive to help bring people together and make it the best that we possibly can so we don't go down some of these horrible roads that we've gone down before in the past.

Tim Ferriss: What about Walt Disney?

Glenn Beck: Walt Disney, most people don't know Walt Disney was responsible for the death of his parents.

Tim Ferriss: I didn't know that.

Glenn Beck: Walt I love because he was eternally optimistic and he believed in a better tomorrow. And he had a horrible childhood. His father was abusive and his mother he loved, but his father was – he just was not a good guy and was a loser. But Walt and his brother loved him and wanted to bring him out to California. So when they first became successful, they decided to buy a house. Back then you didn't have inspections and everything else. So they bring the family out. His father calls him – as soon as they move into the house, his father calls him and says, "Walt, something's wrong with your mom. You've got to come to the house quick. She's sick. Something's wrong."

When they got there, they were both dead on the floor. There was a gas leak. So the house that they bought their family and then didn't do the due diligence –

Tim Ferriss: Proper inspection of.

Glenn Beck: Right. Had a gas leak and it killed their parents. They never, ever spoke about it. So he had really tragic stuff happening in his life, but he was really, really optimistic. More importantly, Walt I think saw the future. I have a book that was really hard to find. It was

the book that he carried in his pocket the last ten years of his life. It's called *The Garden Cities of Tomorrow*. It was printed in 1898 and it's the first book on urban planning. This is the key behind the Epcot and what he believed Epcot was. Epcot is a dream killer. I was just talking to the head of Imagineering at Disney and we were talking about it.

He was there, part of the team as a younger man, making Epcot. And he said – I said, “How did that feel?” And he said, “I never felt like I had ever killed a man's dream more than making Epcot.” Walt saw the future and was responsible in many ways for us going to the moon. He was the guy who brought Wernher Von Braun and Ward Kimball together and did an episode in 1955 called *Man in Space*. Because of that episode, the legend is that Eisenhower called Walt and said, “Walt, you son of a bitch, you did it. I've been trying to convince the Pentagon we could go to space. You did it better. You convinced the American people.”

And I think in 1955, it was very much the same kind of atmosphere that we have now, to where people are concerned. They don't know the technology is all about to change. We could destroy ourselves in a heartbeat. They had the Cold War, we now have what's brewing over in the Middle East. We're afraid. The world is changing under our feet rapidly. Somebody just needs to be a warm blanket and say, “It's okay; look this way. Look to Silicon Valley. Look to space. Look to what's on the horizon. If we all just take a deep breath, relax, believe in the best of one another, believe that the principles of America work, we're gonna make it and it'll be a far greater tomorrow than it has been in the past.”

Tim Ferriss: That's part of the reason of all the places in the world, I've chosen to live here in [inaudible] in Silicon Valley because there's such an element of optimism and possibility with people like Peter Diamandis, who actually lives in LA but he's chairman of the XPRIZE and the Elon Musks of the world ironically enough also in SoCal but it's a place where people ask why not quite a bit. Love to ask one more question, and then a few questions for my listeners.

Glenn Beck: Sure.

Tim Ferriss: First is, if you could give your 30-year-old self one piece of advice or two pieces of advice, what would it be?

Glenn Beck: Relax.

Tim Ferriss: Why?

Glenn Beck: I don't know. I've always been in a hurry and I've always felt like gotta get it done, gotta get it done. Relax. Let it happen. Nothing ever is good when it's forced. Nothing's ever good when you try too hard, you know? Do your best, then let it go.

Tim Ferriss: If you could give yourself one more piece of advice, when you just got hired to work with FOX News, what would that advice be?

Glenn Beck: [Inaudible] and I have thought about a lot, and I'm trying to think of an answer, here. I was really – believe it or not, I tried really hard to do the right thing. So I don't know what advice I would give myself. Because I know I didn't do it right, but I don't know how else to have done it in that time period of where I was, you know what I mean? Maybe – this is – this sounds horrible, but maybe they won't listen. They won't listen. But I don't like that advice because that leads me to say don't try.

Tim Ferriss: It's tough. I've heard it said before, the person who says nothing can be done and the person who says everything will be all right are the same because neither does anything.

Glenn Beck: Yeah, and I don't accept that. But I don't know how else to have done it. I have wracked my brain on it and I wracked my brain then. You have to be a pretty bad monster to kick up the dust that I kicked up without any reflection on it, during it. You know what I mean? I think that would probably be the more surprising thing. The staff I have is still the staff – a lot of the staff that I had at CNN and the staff that I had at FOX. And a lot of the staff, they don't agree with me politically. You know, I have atheists, I have Democrats, I have Progressives. My director is from San Francisco and she's about as progressive as you can get. We agree on principles and so –

Tim Ferriss: What are the principles you guys agree on?

Glenn Beck: That we need to try to be good to one another, we need to take care of one another, we can be better tomorrow. Don't fuel hate. But as we have gone through this, they're with me because I've looked to them and said: How am I missing it? Help me. Help me. How can I – you know? And so I've had – many of my advisors are the ones who don't agree with me. Some of my best friends are people who don't agree with me politically. And they've helped me a lot. But I don't know how to mix – I don't think you can. I don't know

how you mix politics with reality because I don't think politics is real.

Tim Ferriss: This is actually a good segue. So I'd love to ask you – I know we're running tight on time now, but just before we close up, a couple of questions from people on Facebook. And I think that at least one or two of them will perhaps offer an opportunity to – as you did earlier – correct some misperceptions and so on. So the first one is from Matt Brandt. And the question is – and again, I have no agenda in asking this. I'm very curious to hear you answer it. If you were to theoretically be reborn as a disabled gay woman into a poor family, what political system would you want in place?

Glenn Beck: A Libertarian one. The one I'm advocating for.

Tim Ferriss: I'd love to hear you elaborate.

Glenn Beck: One where we are free to be who we are. We are judged on the content of our character, not our abilities, color of our skin, or sexual preferences, or our political preferences. I mean the most power to the individual is the system that I want. And it's the one that I think the Constitution gives us. Not the Constitution that we've been living under for 100 years; we don't even recognize the Constitution anymore. But one where the individual is empowered at the maximum, and the government is at the minimum, although we do need government.

Tim Ferriss: So I suppose it's almost like a – it's one of the most famous track coaches – and I'm blanking on his name –said. He's broken dozens of world records. He's in the 4 Hour Body. But he said, "The goal is to do the least amount necessary, not the most possible."

Glenn Beck: Yes. Yes. That's the way government should be.

Tim Ferriss: The next question is from Alex Kirby. And it is: what are some of the things we can do to – quote – rebrand capitalism and encourage entrepreneurship to people here in the U.S. and abroad?

Glenn Beck: Tell stories. Tell the stories – like what you do, you know? Let people see what's really happening in America. The media is full of crap and nobody in the media is empowered to tell the story of the people who are reinventing the world because they're reinventing a world that doesn't include the people who have all the power right now, you know what I mean? So the best thing we can do is, as individuals, look for the stories of the people who are

changing the world. I really feel that a gift that I have that I want to use is to be able to connect and highlight the dreamers and the doers of tomorrow.

Kind of like what Walt Disney did with the Spaceshot. To be able to highlight them and show the American people again it's good to dream, and we will make it. But highlight those people and look for those people, and stop considering what we're doing now capitalism, because we're not doing capitalism. We're in some sort of crony, I don't know, capitalism that's ugly now. This isn't capitalism.

Tim Ferriss: If you were to leave people listening to this with one piece of advice or a question they could ask themselves, what would that be?

Glenn Beck: What role have you played in the dialog of humanity lately? Are you playing a positive role or a negative role? How can you change or enhance that to make the most positive impact? Who is it that you should reach out to and go, "Hey, dude, I really screwed up. I'm really sorry. Or I misread you, or you misread me and I want to fix this." Who or what have you done that has put you way out of your comfort zone lately?

Tim Ferriss: That's a strong question. That's a very, very powerful question. One personal question and then we'll close up with how people can find you and where they can learn more about you. If you were in my position – I've always tended to stray away from politics because I quite frankly don't know what label to apply to myself. I fly to Alaska to go hunting and I eat everything I hunt. I live in San Francisco, lots of gay friends, like minimal government.

Glenn Beck: You're a Libertarian.

Tim Ferriss: I guess. That's what somebody said. Socially liberal, financially conservative; I don't even know where to start.

Glenn Beck: Liberal and conservatives can get along entirely if they're Libertarian. Because I'm not gonna control your life and you're not gonna control mine. So I don't care what lifestyle you lead; it doesn't matter to me. Let's just be good to each other. You do your thing, I'll do my thing and let's just be good to each other. That's how we get together. It's this "I'm gonna control your life and I'm gonna tell you who you can marry, and what you can eat,

and how you carry your gun, and what you do, and how you do your job.” That’s crazy. That’s crazy.

Tim Ferriss: Each to their own. Where can people learn more about you? Where would you like people to visit you online?

Glenn Beck: GlennBeck.com. Facebook, Glenn Beck and TheBlaze.com.

Tim Ferriss: Wonderful. Glenn, thank you so much for taking the time.

Glenn Beck: It’s a pleasure. Really a pleasure.

Tim Ferriss: Really had a great time. Thank you.

Glenn Beck: Thank you.