# Transcription

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Do you feel like you're stuck in a rut in life or in a dead end job with no progression? I'm Jerry Dugan, and welcome to Beyond The Rut, the podcast that offers you the motivation, inspiration and practical tools to help you build a life worth living. Join me as I share encouraging stories and actionable advice on how to get out of your rut in life and create a vision for your future. Life is just too short to live stuck in a rut. Here we go.

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Hey, rudder nation. You know, one of the downfalls that men experience is that we've been told pretty much our whole lives that our masculinity is tied in with our achievements at the office or in our career, that we've got to pursue excellence. We've got to win at work. But what if that winning at work cost you the family relationships that mattered the most? I'm going to be joined by Alain Dumonso.

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He is a former culinary Olympian. Yes, I said that. Culinary Olympian. So this is a guy who cooked in competitions as well as restaurants. Now, he was really good at what he did.

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He probably still is good at cooking. I mean, it's kind of like riding a bicycle right now. He was so good at it, though, and he was so competitive that his professional success took him away from really making his first marriage work. And he wound up seeing his first marriage fall apart in divorce. Now, fast forward years and years and years later.

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He is the founder of The Awakened Man and the host of The Revolutionary Man podcast, where he's on a mission to fortify families and help us master our masculinity. And in this episode, we're going to be talking about mentorship, the impact of pride, and the promise of living a legacy worth having by rediscovering our life's mission. So sit back, relax, grab a notebook and a pen, because this is one of those short and sweet and lots of content and lots of nuggets kind of episode. Here we go. All right.

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Hey, Alain, thanks for joining me on beyond the Rudd. How are you doing? Doing great, my friend. Thank you so much for having me on the show today. I'm looking forward to our conversation.

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Same here. I mean, you had me on your show, the Revolutionary Man podcast, many moons ago. Many months ago. For those who are like, many moons who talks like that? I do.

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I'm a dork. And I was like, I need to have you, Alain, on my show. And the soonest we were able to get you on is, like, months later, and I'm like, I'll take it. So I'm glad that we're able to join and talk about your message and your life a little bit to help inspire folks to create their own lives they feel are worth living in their faith family. And.

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Now you're calling in from Canada. What part of Canada are you calling in from? Yeah, I'm here in Winnipeg, Manitoba, canada. So Winnipeg is right above North Dakota for those of you that are in the US. So we're pretty much in the center of the continent.

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And so, yeah, it's great up here. We get the widest range of temperatures. We can be the hottest place in North America, and we can also be the coldest. And so it's pretty cold up here, man. It's funny that you brought up.

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It could be the hottest place because I'm in Texas, and we usually think we're the hottest place everywhere, and that's not true. There are hotter places, but you don't think of Canada as being a warm spot until it is. You're like, oh, it is hot, and y'all have mosquitoes. Yeah, that's our that's our provincial bird, as we like to tease. And also lots of gators, we call them up here.

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Nice. Yeah, they just suck the life out. Of you natural way. Right now, one of the things that I saw in your bio that really piqued my curiosity is that you mentioned that you have, like, three decades of exposure or experience with something called the Culinary Olympics. That sounds like it's competitive and the food is involved.

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I have no idea what it is, but I'm going to ask Alain about it. Tell us about those highs and lows that you experienced with the Culinary Olympics. What are they? What was your experience like with them? Yeah, what a great question.

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And you got to think back. I competed in the Culinary World Culinary Olympics in the early 90s. So 92 is the year that I went, and the Culinary Olympics follows in the same calendar or the same cadence as the Summer Olympics. Right. So every four years and what this is, you got to remember, this is long before there was cable TV, there was Iron Chef Bobby Flay, all that stuff that we're just used to seeing today.

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Right. So back then, this didn't exist. And so what it is is it is a competition. It's competition for nations as well as regional teams. I competed on a regional team through my province here in Manitoba.

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And what you're competing against is you're competing against not only yourself, but also with other chefs. And so from a national perspective, actually, Canada had won three or four consecutive Olympics in a row, were the top team in the world, and we have some really amazing chefs here. And actually, the gentleman that won on Team Canada two years ago is a master chef here in the city where I grew up where I grew up in my professional career. And so I got such great exposure about this. And so really what it is is it's a hot food competition.

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So something like you would see today with Iron Chef. Although it isn't about making food. Know you got an hour to get it done. While they got to do that, they still graded on the same type of thing you would see today with taste, presentation, skill, skill, but it was also on how many tickets you sold. So in that Olympics, regular everyday folks can buy a ticket to come to the show.

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And if you sell out fast or sell in a certain period of time, then you get electro bonus points and you're graded on it. In my competition we just competed with there was five of us, we competed in a cold food competition. So imagine you were going to do a dinner for so I did a dinner for eight and platters for eight. So imagine that I want to serve this food hot, but it's all presented cold. And so we do this thing called aspect that goes on it and makes it look nice and shiny and bright and really beautiful work.

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And then you're judged on with a set of judges on the composition of your work, your skill, the workmanship in order to put it on it. And unlike the Olympics, where there's one medal for one silver, one gold, one bronze, you really scored in a range. And if you score within a certain range, then you achieve a medal. I was blessed to win two silver medals for my two showpieces in that year. And what I really learned from that is I really learned that the amount of effort and time that it takes to really create something and it taught me how know the old Stephen Covey idea of begin with the end in mind, what were the steps I needed to put in place in order to achieve?

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I know what the competition date was, we know what the time to be. You had a certain time to have your food out on the tables and if you were late, you'd be disqualified. So there was no fooling around in terms of, hey, I'll get it there when I get it there. But you start to learn some skills on how to some project management skills, although we didn't call it back then in the early 90s, but really that's what it was all about and how to set yourself up for success in order for you to be able to do things and present products. So I've had such a great experience with that and some mentors, some real key mentors early in my professional career that helped me guide me on going through some of those tough times.

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Because let's face it, there would be anything you're going to do in life is going to have the valleys and the highs and it's how we survive and how we manage through our valleys really determines the type of individual we become and the success we'll see in life. I love that you brought up the notion and the need to think about the end in mind. So what does a winning competition look like? That very much is a parallel in our own lives, right? If we want to live a life worth living in our faith, our family and career.

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What does that look like when we're at the end of life? Is it a little morbid to think that way? Probably. I mean, I was in the army, so everything was thought up in terms of all right, leader, so and so what's your vision for after you get blown up on the battlefield? You're like, wait, I don't think that's the plan, but it's like insurance in case it happens.

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What's the insurance? That your team is going to pick up the mission and continue and survive and all those things. But also what does a successful mission look like? And you start planning around those things and same thing like a life well lived. What does that look like?

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I'm glad you brought that up. That's so important, guys. That what does your life look like when you're on your deathbed? Let's say you get to live in your hundreds because I think I saw an article, if you were born after a certain year, chances are you're going to be around 141 years old when you die because of the advancements in medicine happening right now. And I was like, wow, okay, I might make it.

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I think it was at the cut off for this study and I'm like, I could go the other way and die in my eighty s or seventy s, who knows? But yeah, what does that life well lived look like? And that's really cool that you brought that up. Now at some point in your career and in your life you said you had lost it all almost twice. Tell us what happened there, if you don't mind.

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Yeah, absolutely. Well, at the pinnacle of my professional career in the early 90s there having just recently come from the winning the culinary two silvers the culinary Olympics. My personal life was in shambles. And the reason at the time I had married my high school sweetheart and when we'd made we were really young, I was in my early to mid twenty s. And we made some decisions in life that financially weren't the wisest things to do.

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There was infidelity in the relationship that ended up by really putting stress on us. And when I came back and came back from the Olympics, within a year to two years, the relationship was over, it was done. And I ended up by losing it all, I had declined bankruptcy, I lost my home, my family, and I had such a state of depression that I actually hardly saw my kids for almost a year. Wow. And so the challenge with that was that what I really learned from that experience was that we can be so successful in one aspect of one area of our life and so focused on it.

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And while that takes, it does take focus in order to become successful, but at what cost? And I think where we find now what I've recognized now is that while that's important to be successful and I enjoy having success in my life but how do I measure it? And so now today instead of just looking at it and men as men we're pretty compartmentalized right? We can slice things pretty and have their own little space. But today the work is more about integrating all aspects of life and so fast forward 25 years from almost 20 years from there and married again beautiful woman supports me greatly.

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But while I had learned a bunch of things in my early twenty s and started reading books and autobiographies and taking classes and learning mental stuff, neuro stuff, getting understanding it was here while it was an intellectual piece I never really learned it in my heart. I didn't get a chance to learn it and embody it. So what I mean by that is really practicing what it is that I was learning. I could recite to you the steps of things and I could do the application, but I didn't feel it enacted in my heart. And so I almost ended up by losing my second marriage.

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And it was through the grace of my wife that saw the man in me that I was yet to become that gave me an opportunity to do the work. Now that's a key point that I'd like everyone to really pick up on. She gave me the opportunity to do the work. Not all of us are going to be blessed with that and if you are blessed with that opportunity man, you got to take it. And so it's about leaning into then leaning into what you need to change.

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And so I was given that opportunity to do that work and had I not done the work I can say honestly that we wouldn't probably be doing this interview today and I wouldn't be married, I wouldn't have my home and I'd be telling a two times story. But instead the story is one of redemption, one of opportunity, of growth. That rut in my life was I just didn't recognize what I was doing in my life and how it was impacting how I was seeing my wife, how I was seeing my relationship again falling into the traps of work was all that it needed to was everything about me. And there's so much more as men that we are than just our work but we tend to identify ourselves so much with what we do for a living instead of who we are becoming as men. And so it was really those two pieces that started to shift and change who I am today and the work that I'm doing.

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Yeah. And a lot of times when we are focused on work especially if it's bringing home the bacon in a sense the big paycheck is we think we're expressing love by providing for the family. That it's my duty to provide, I'm providing and that's how I show my love to the family. And it's like you'd said, you could be successful in one compartment of your life, in this case, work, but miss out on the relationship piece with your spouse, the connection piece with your children, the physical part with your own fitness. That's something I run into from time to time.

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That's a nice roller coaster of life for me.

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Yeah. Very important to look at every aspect of your life. I got to talk about that on your show. So little shout out plug for the revolutionary man there. I'll put that in the show notes, guys.

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Don't worry. Don't leave right now. We're still talking. Alain, I'm glad you brought that up. That whole importance of looking at the whole person, the whole you the other thing you brought up, that's very key was where your wife was forgiving and patient, to give you that space and create that space where you could grow and work on yourself.

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How much would you say pride played a role in that recovery versus vulnerability? What a great question. Wow. Jerry, man, that just right between the eyes. What would I be struggling with if I was in those shoes?

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And I have been in those shoes from time to time. And so it's huh. People need to hear. So yeah. You know what?

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Truth be told, lots of pride. I don't think I could be authentic by saying there was no pride in that. There was lots of pride. Here I am at the time getting early, late 40s. Here's an opportunity for me to really show who I am as an individual.

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So we need to have pride. And I think sometimes we feel that I'll say we, but it's the royal we. It's actually me think that pride is a bad thing. Pride isn't a bad thing. How we express it maybe at times may not be could be done better, but I think we utilize that.

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So I would say that in the beginning, for sure, there was lots of pride, and there's still some today. But it isn't the most important piece. The most important part of it is the second part. And that was about being able to do that work. Knowing that even though times were really tough for us, that there was this piece of hope that as long as I did the work, as long as we were open enough to have some communication and to talk some things through and work through some stuff that time would give us the opportunity to grow and change.

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And so that pride piece is there. And I think when we use it as an advantage, it's a great motivator. And as long as we keep that in check, I think we can be okay. Yeah, I love that because it wasn't the exact answer I was expecting. It's like, wow, pride leveraged in a good way, because I was thinking of pride as I'm the man this is what it means to be a strong man.

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Dir Dur I've been that guy, so I knew how am I still married 21 years later? Because my wife was patient. For me to get past that moment, to realize there are other things. And what you bring up is that other piece of that pride. One thing that I know for myself that I pride myself on is being a husband who cherishes his wife.

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And it's like, am I that guy right now? No. And then it's like the next piece, being vulnerable to do the work, to be the guy that does cherish his wife, who does support the needs of the family and be connected. And it's like, that's what I could be proud of. That's who I want to be.

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That's who I am. This other guy that came out a few hours ago. Yeah. I'm sorry. Thank you.

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For me, I'm glad you brought that up because we do have to face that. And then I love that leveraging the pride for the positives of who we are and want to become. Yeah. And great point on utilizing the vulnerability aspect of us so that when pride goes runs wild on us, it's because we forget we're like a thoroughbred. We're Secretariat here and we've got the blinders on and we're going for that finish line.

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But when we can just take a breath and allow ourselves to be vulnerable enough to come up just as you said and like, I'm really sorry, or be willing to hear from our children or our spouses that al, you were really being difficult and I don't really like you that much right now. I love you, but I don't like you much right now. And it's okay for us to hear that because I think as guys, we need to recognize that we are imperfect and that it is a work in progress. Right. It's progress over perfection.

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When we come from that standpoint, instead of being that prideful man of that I know we're the right way, it may not always work. And it's about being able to allow ourselves the ability to empty and create some space in our minds that maybe there's a different way of getting this thing done. And so I liked how you put that together with the vulnerability piece. Yeah. You inspired it.

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So thank you. Now, at some point, you rediscovered your life's mission and you kind of went on this hero's quest. And I think in my notes or your notes, to me, you kind of made this mention of Return of the King. I don't know if you meant Lord of the Rings, the third volume, or if you met like, in a spiritual sense, the Return of Jesus, but I like it. But tell us about how do we rediscover our life's mission and apply this hero's quest in doing that.

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Right on. Great question. Yeah.

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The Return of the King actually conjures up both of those images, doesn't it? Yeah. And really what it says to me is really about that king within us and it's about coming back and understanding about what is our mission in life and for us to do. And so part of that work is really unpacking and understanding what are the values that we have today that we carry today and are they still serving us? Because my experience is that we still carry values with us that aren't necessarily serving us today.

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What I do is I take guys through a process and a value assessment that gets them to come up with ultimately five core values that they govern their lives on. And then what I ask them to do is to write a brief statement on what that is. And when they write that statement, the idea is to see how they're embodying and living that. Are you living that statement from your heart or is it just an intellectual exercise? Because that was my experience.

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I could do that, but it was an intellectual experience. I wasn't really living it inside of who I am as a person. And so when you start doing that well, then the next thing gets revealed to us is that we start to realize that we've got some limiting beliefs around what we think our values are and how we're expressing ourselves in the world. And so we start to unpack those and look at what are the sabotaging and limiting beliefs and the typical ones that we have as men. That we just don't measure up.

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That I'm not good enough, right? Especially if we're very career oriented. That I'm not worthy. Many of us have struggled with that. That's one for me, the limiting beliefs and the stories I tell myself about.

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Like this morning I went to the gym. But it was really challenging. I wanted to stay in bed this morning. To be honest with you, Jerry, he wasn't really interested in going to the gym. I did stay in bed this morning.

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But that belief, that story that we tell ourselves, right? And so we start to help guys unpack what is the story that we're telling ourselves and how are we self sabotaging? And when we start to do that, ultimately I take them through this journey and then we take them through ultimately a visioning quest, an opportunity. And it's a set of questions that I get them to answer to themselves about what it is that they ultimately wish to become and aspire to become as men. And so in the end, ultimately, really what the return of the king is crafting a personal mission statement.

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What it is that drives you and opens your heart every day, that makes you want to step up and do things. And I ask guys to make sure that it touches doesn't have to spell out the six pillars of life, but that they touch on it. So it touches on financial emotional, physical, spiritual, professional and in our relationships, what is the kind of man that I want to become? And when we can then craft that, we have our target, our mission. As an ex military guy, I'm sure you can appreciate when you know what your target is and your mission, it's much easier to execute versus being just living every day on a go to day by day basis and not really paying attention to what's going on.

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So that was really the concept behind it. I wanted to help guys get solid in who they are as men and then craft their mission purpose statement that allows them to live and get up each day. I love that. And it goes back to the thing you talked about way back in your days in the culinary Olympics where you would think about the end in mind. It's kind of the same thing.

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The mission is, this is what I want to do in life. This is how I want to live it and all those things. And it's casting, in a sense, the line, this is what I'm going to follow, this is the path I'm going. And it's a very intentional course of action as opposed to life happens to me. So there's like this sense of responsibility that comes into it.

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There's a sense of ownership because it's coming from them and they're like, this is my life. This is how I'm going to connect with everybody. And I love that. I think men, we need that a lot. Now, the really cool thing is taking those stories of self sabotage and turning them into stories of the King's return and crafting that mission based on those core values.

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And that is huge, guys, you got to do this now if people want to reach out to you and get more of this. I know there's the podcast, the Revolutionary Man podcast, and then your website is Theawakenedman Net. What can folks expect to find when they go to your website? Theawakenedband Net. Absolutely.

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There's two things you're going to find there. Right at the very top of the page, you're going to see a little red button. That red button is a clarity consultation. I highly encourage everyone, if you just want to get a little bit of more information, find out what we're all about, hit that button. I know it says it's 30 minutes.

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Most of the time we're there for about an hour because I really like to get into understanding people, but I encourage them to do that. We offer two programs here at the Awaken Man. The Worst program is a group mentorship program. It's our band of brothers. We meet monthly.

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We have monthly topics. This month we're talking about fatherhood and healing, the father wound, whatever that looks like for each other. And so we're going to talk about that and how that helps. And then also if you're interested in that or you want to dive in a little bit deeper and you really want to get onto your own Heroes Quest. And that's exactly what the program is called, is a Hero's Quest.

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And that's a 90 day program where we're going to really dive into and unpack everything from your values or limiting beliefs, all the things that really make you tick. We're going to crack open, as I like to say that walnut. We're going to play around a little bit in there, and we're going to help you get centered and straight and give you an opportunity to go through an integrity challenge, which really is how you're showing up in the Six Pillars of Life. Those are the two primary programs, but I really encourage everyone to hit that Clarity Session button, get an opportunity to talk a little bit about it. Maybe we're a fit for you, maybe we're not.

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There's lots of programs out there, but it's opportunity to get a sense of what it is, where you're going. And if I can leave you with a piece of some gold nugget or two, even on that Clarity Consultation, then I think I've done my job to serve in this world. Awesome. And before we go, any final words of wisdom for those listening in right now? Yeah.

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One piece I would say is men don't take anything in life for granted, especially not your family and your spouse. Be intentional every morning, what is the kind of man that you want to be? And so I leave you with this. Complete this sentence every morning, and I guarantee you your life will change forever. I'm the kind of man who, whatever you put after that will be the type of man that you will show up that day.

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I love that. Al, I'm glad we got to reconnect again. This was a great conversation. Nice, short, sweet dudes, you're going to get a lot out of this. Share it with your friends and family.

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Al, great to see you again. And if I make it up there to Manitoba for some good camping, I'll have to look you up as well. Looking forward to seeing you, my friend. Take care. Wow.

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Hey, I enjoyed talking to Alain, and I hope you also got a lot out of that conversation. If you want to get more resources, like how do you get his list of books, 30 books every man should read, as well as a free strategy call about rediscovering what your mission is and maybe even tapping into that collective that he has going on where men are mentoring each other. Check out the show notes@beyondherut.com. Three, eight, six. There you'll find all that information about Alain, his website, those resources, as well as related episodes on beyond the Rut, that relate to positive masculinity of living a life as a father, a husband, a community member, and all those good things.

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Now, I'm glad you joined me for this episode, and I look forward to joining. You again on the next one. But until next time, go live life. Be on the rut. Take care.

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Bye.