

## Ep #262: Biz Owner Mindset?: Executive State



**Full Episode Transcript**

**With Your Host**

**Stacey Brown Randall**

Stacey Brown Randall: Hey there, and welcome to episode 262 of the Roadmap to Referrals Podcast, a show about helping you build a referable business.

***Roadmap to Referrals* with Stacey Brown Randall**

## **Ep #262: Biz Owner Mindset?: Executive State**

My journey from a business failure to a successful business now 10 years in, I know generating referrals naturally and consistently has made all the difference. Working with clients around the world, we leverage the science of referrals, protect relationships above all else, and help you build a referable business.

Welcome back to another episode, I'm your host, Stacey Brown Randall.

If you're new, just so you know, we're in a special series right now. That's right, this is our 2023 summer series.

We do this every year, and I gave the overview and the reason behind it in last week's episode, which is episode 261, if you want to go check that one out.

But we talk about the why behind the summer series. So, for the sake of this episode, I want to dive right in because this interview I have with this hand-selected expert is going to be good. And I don't want to waste too much time with my fluff, so we're going to dive right in.

But if you're here looking for information on referrals and you're like, "Where have I found myself? Am I in an alternative universe?" The answer is no, you're right where you're supposed to be.

But for the next couple of weeks, we are not focused on referrals, we are focused on the mindset you need as a business owner and what you need to know about helping your mindset work through the best of its ability.

So, today, I'm excited to welcome Dr. Eugene Choi. That's right, he is a Transformational Mindset Coach and a board-certified clinical pharmacist who is on a mission to help talented, heart-driven leaders operate at their highest levels of performance, intelligence, and communication.

He firmly believes that by activating the powerful executive brain, which you're going to learn all about, it is very different from a survival brain. He believes it maximizes results, not just in business leaders, but in humanity as a whole.

So, without further ado, let's get to the interview with Dr. Eugene. And then again at the end, just so you know, we'll also share how you can connect with him, and we'll also put every link of how to connect with him in the show notes page for this episode as well. But right now, let's get to the interview.

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Eugene, I am so excited to welcome you to the podcast. You are kicking off our summer series as we do every summer here on the Roadmap to Referrals Podcast.

We do a summer series talking about usually a topic that's not on referrals, just to kind of break it up for everybody who tunes in every Tuesday to this podcast. And so, the series topic for this summer of course, is the Business Owner Mindset, and how it is so important, what is going on between our ears.

So, you're kicking us off, I'm very excited, I structured this on purpose for you to kick us off. So, I'm very excited, so don't disappoint us. No, I'm kidding, don't worry. You couldn't, I'm not worried.

But I want to start by zooming out of this conversation. We're going to dig into the important stuff about understanding all the things you want to teach us about the brain and things like that.

But I want to zoom out for just a minute on this conversation and having people get into the mindset of the fact we're talking about having that business owner mindset. Because you can have lots of different kinds of business owner mindsets, but why the mindset matters so much to a business owner.

And understanding, because you are a business owner yourself, why it's so important for other business owners to understand this stuff that's happening in our brains, and why it's so important for us to really care about how we're making decisions.

And I know this is like a meta question. It's like, "Let me ask the brain guy why we should care about what's happening in our brain as a business owner." But I think it's really important and I think you would have some great insight to share.

Dr. Eugene Choi: Yeah, at a high level, why is this so important? I'll just share a quick story if that's okay. I had this client once from rock bottom, built a multimillion-dollar business, Inc. 5000, made it that list of fastest growing companies and all that good stuff.

He started debating with me, he's like, "You don't understand, I needed to be in that work hard hustle grind mode to get to where I'm at today. Because when I hit rock bottom, I lost all my money, my second wife was leaving me. I still had kids and child support to still pay for, I had to keep my

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head down and my shoulder up and bash through concrete wall after concrete wall.”

And it's a very compelling argument. So, I was just like, “Look, I get it, it makes sense what happened, happened. But what if, because you're able to manage your brain state better, it's what gives you the ability, even if it's just for a moment to put your head up and your shoulders down. And what you might see is those concrete walls you felt cornered into bashing through were only three feet wide.”

Meaning, when our brain is in a state of stress, we develop this tunnel vision, you can't see all this other information. If a tiger walks into the room, are you going to look anywhere else except where that tiger is?

No, you're so focused on your problems, the threats that you think are there, that's where this saying comes from. Are you able to work smarter, not harder? Because how often are we in this work hard mode?

And we've all had that experience. You look back on it, and you're like, “Oh man, if I did this or that differently, it would've saved me so much heartache, so much trouble.”

If we manage our brain state better, it's what gives you that ability to work smarter, not harder, and you accomplish way more than you think you could have.

Stacey Brown Randall: It reminds me of that saying that people always talk about, anything that's going to save you time, anything that's going to definitely save you time on the backend is going to take time to make it easy. It's going to take time to make it easy on the front end.

You're going to have to put in the work somewhere. And this reminds me of that because it's like anything we do as business owners, there's always a lot coming at us.

And I don't care if you're a solopreneur like I am, it's like the me, myself and I club with an army of vendors or subcontractors that help me live my life and get out the business product so to speak, that I produce. Or you have a team of 5 or 10 or 55 or 105, it doesn't really matter.

Like there's just so much coming at us, and it's like understanding this stuff makes our life easier on the backend that we have to put in the work on the

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front end. And I'll be honest, I feel like when I talk to a lot of entrepreneurs, a lot of business owners, it is that wall.

They're like, "Yeah, I don't know if I've got the time or if I'm going to put in the work right now to make the backend easier," and that is truly a choice. That's truly a choice, you have to decide; are you going to put that process in place so that next time you do it, it takes you three seconds and not 15 minutes?

And I do this myself, it's not like I'm saying, "Oh my gosh, all these other business owners do this, and I've never done this." But sometimes I find myself doing things and I'm like, "I should shake myself and be like, what are you doing? Why are you operating this way?"

Dr. Eugene Choi: 100%, and after coaching hundreds of entrepreneurs now, the amount of times where you see like, "Wait, you're still doing what? And you've generated how much for your business? You're running a multiple seven-figure business and you're still doing what — that you can pay someone 10, 15, 20, 30, \$40 an hour for?"

We literally get in our own way and because we're in this work hard mode, and I mean there's no judgment around it. I think the thing to be aware of is our brain operates on efficiency. If we're used to doing something, we will keep doing it that way. Path of least resistance, it doesn't want to burn energy.

So, if we can learn how to program things a little bit differently, then you might be able to get yourself in a place.

Like this is kind of what the experience is like. You ever have that friend where you're like, you trust that friend, they know how to do something you want to get done, but you're afraid of doing that thing?

And because you trust your friend, you let your friend take you through the process and by the time you're done, you're like, "Oh my God, why didn't I do this sooner? This is the best thing ever."

That's kind of what it's like, the process of working smarter, not harder. It's just like once you do it, you get yourself to want to do these things that might not be as the sexy things to do, then it's just so worth it, it's just so much better.

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Stacey Brown Randall: It totally is. So, let's put a little bit of context around this conversation because I'm familiar with the work that you do, and I understand how you help other business owners, how you help entrepreneurs.

But why don't we ... because I know we're going to talk about these operating states of our brain. So, why don't we just start with you defining for us what are the different states that our brain finds itself in and then explain them, so people understand that.

Dr. Eugene Choi: So, I left behind my healthcare background to really dive deep into the neuroscience of how the brain operates. And the big aha for me at the end of the day was, yeah, your brain really operates only in one of two states.

It operates in a mode of survival, what I call a survival state, or it operates in what I call an executive state. So, the key thing to understand about these two states is either one or the other, we're only in one or the other.

And when you're in a state of survival, you're not accessing a lot of these things that you want to access; your critical thinking skills, your problem-solving skills, your empathy and the ability to actually connect with others, all of this stuff is hard to access because your brain feels threatened. And it's what it sounds like, it feels the need to survive.

It's originally meant for life-threatening scenarios, like a tiger is in front of you about to eat you. You need this mode because you're reacting without thinking. You need that because if you start thinking, you might die.

The executive state is where all of these amazing capabilities come from because your nervous system actually feels safe, and then now, you can actually access these things.

You want to access your empathy, your critical thinking, your problem solving, your performance, your productivity, all of these amazing things. The problem though is based on research, it suggests that we're in the survival state for about at least 70% of our adult lives. Not because we're surviving ...

Stacey Brown Randall: Wait, 70% our adult life?

Dr. Eugene Choi: Of our adult lives.

Stacey Brown Randall: Like all the years combined?

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Dr. Eugene Choi: All the years combined, yep. And not because we're running away from saber-toothed tigers anymore, but we're surviving from a lot of different stresses.

So, we're surviving from emotions that feel uncomfortable. So, we have to ask ourselves, how often do we feel stressed? How often do we feel anxious, angry, frustrated, the list goes on.

All these feelings we don't like feeling, your brain will perceive it as a threat unless you train yourself to not do it as much. It'll perceive it as a threat because research suggests that emotional pain can be just as painful as physical pain.

So, your brain can't help but try to survive from it. But as a result of that, now you're not working smarter, you're in survival state again, you can't access your critical thinking, your problem-solving skills, and now you keep feeling stuck. Now, you keep feeling like you're a hamster on a wheel.

So, that was the big aha moment for me, it was just like, "Oh my gosh, it's true how often I'm anxious, frustrated on autopilot, reactively doing this all the time."

Stacey Brown Randall: It's like you're not thinking.

Dr. Eugene Choi: Exactly, you're literally not because that's what survival state is, you can't think.

Stacey Brown Randall: I mean, it's interesting when I first heard you talk about this, of the survival state versus the executive state. It's one of those things when you hear it, you're like, "Yeah, that makes sense."

But I think it would be helpful for folks, for them to hear business owner examples of what it looks like to be in survival state and/or executive state. Can you give us some real world, like when you're like this, you're in survival state, but from that business owner context.

Dr. Eugene Choi: I think a lot of it has to do this working smarter, not harder, so it's kind of what we just mentioned earlier. By becoming more aware of the survivals that executive state and getting better at identifying what it actually looks like, you start changing the behavior because you're realizing it's working against you not working for you.

To do the \$30 per hour job when your value is worth, like for your skillset, is like hundreds of dollars an hour. Do you see what I'm saying?

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It's just people work hard at the wrong things. I think we've all had that experience — working harder at the wrong thing. So, that's what made the difference between someone having their six-figure launch after spending the last year, they made a quarter of that amount.

Just by working on the right things when it comes to business, because in business, there's best practices, I don't know how else to put it. Like I'm sure you've run into this a lot, with referrals, it's just like, “Look, just do this, this is the best practice. Are you doing it or not?”

Stacey Brown Randall: Why aren't you listening to me?

Dr. Eugene Choi: Why aren't you listening to me? That's what I often say, is like, business is simple, not necessarily easy. But the frameworks, it's all solid foundational things if you implement it, you do it. But why don't we want to do it? That's the bottom line.

And then when we get clear on that, that's where the work comes in with what I've seen, what entrepreneurs do, like that entrepreneur I mentioned earlier in the call on this episode, is that when we get really good at identifying what survival state looks like, then you can get yourself out of it.

So, that's what this looks like at the end of the day. Because I've had a client be like, “Yeah, I can't get through to this ...” all the reasons why they can't grow in business. Like this guy already had like a seven-figure business and he was stressed and busy. I'm too busy.

So, then busy, I'm like, “Well, tell me more.” Which by the way, what I learned in business, bottleneck is never about money, and it's never about time. So, if you're saying you don't have enough time, you don't have enough money, that's not the root cause, there's always multiple layers beyond that.

So, anyway, long story short, I talk about the survival state. What does the survival state actually look like? Fight, flight, freeze. You have to get really clear on what this looks like.

In the wild, it's obvious. If a tiger is in front of you, you might pick up a weapon to fight, you're going to run for your life in flight, you're going to stay frozen and play dead and freeze when you're paralyzed with fear.

Playing dead is a survival mechanism for a lot of animals, because they're predators like their food alive. It's the same, it's wired in us as well. We've

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done it in wars if you think about it, when you lay down with the dead bodies to not get killed.

But we're doing it every day, so that's what I have to bring through the client for him to realize that. So, it's just like, look, fight, what does that look like? It's the need to prove yourself right, the need to be right. It's perfectionism, it's people-pleasing.

You're saying yes to something you don't want to say yes to, to hope for affirmation, acceptance because you don't accept yourself. You don't believe you're worthy or whatever it is that we carry that we're surviving from. And we don't realize we do this every day. A hustle culture is a fight response. The working hard ...

Stacey Brown Randall: That's a terrible one.

Dr. Eugene Choi: Oh, that's a big one that I worked through a lot in mindset with clients, is they think working hard is what got them to where they're at, which there's a plot twist to that. But anyway, just getting familiar with that, and that's when I had this client realize, "Oh my gosh, my whole life I've been fighting for approval."

Why? My dad left my mom when I was a little kid. I was in second grade; he wasn't faithful to mom. In all my life, I've been fighting my butt off to get that approval, get that acceptance because my mom was always so critical. I didn't want to be criticized beyond that receiving end. So, I felt I needed to fight, which is why he was always so busy, so stressed, on autopilot.

Stacey Brown Randall: Which is interesting though because you can't actually ever escape from criticism. Everybody today has an opinion about you and in social media, they feel as if they can say it and state it, however, whenever, wherever they want.

Whether it's in the form of a book review or podcast review or it's in the form of a comment on a social media post, or I mean, it's interesting the things that they're so ingrained in us.

From I would assume with the work that you do, a lot of times from earlier years, maybe not always — but a lot of times from earlier years of these things that then manifest themselves in how we behave today as adults, even as an entrepreneur when it comes to our business.

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Dr. Eugene Choi: Yeah, and it still stings, the bigger you get. I had a viral article once and then there was some not nice things being said about it, and it still stings. But when you understand that judgment is also a fight response, why do we judge other people? I'm not talking about a skill, judging a skill is fair game.

If I need a marketer and they don't know how to market, I can judge that skill. But I'm talking about judging people as an individual, as a human being. It comes from our own insecurity, it's a fight mode.

Why do we gossip? I'm trying to put someone else down because I'm insecure about myself in an effort to make me feel better about myself. So, when we can see that we handle criticism better.

Oh, if it's coming from a non-empathetic place, I don't have to take this personally. They're clearly acting out on their own pain and for whatever reason, they're taking it out on me.

If you can see people's pain beyond their behavior, then it helps us get back into executive state faster; empathy, faster, because you're not empathetic when you're in survival.

You're not wondering, how is this tiger in front of me doing that's about to eat me? So, yeah, that's what I brought my client through the fight response. The flight response is things like procrastination. It's why we procrastinate; we're trying to avoid the thing that we're trying to do right now.

Stacey Brown Randall: And I would like to say I've evolved some to where I'm not as a bad procrastinator as I used to be. But I would say if I had to pick my two survivals, I don't know what you call them — like my survival choices would be self-sabotage, procrastination.

Dr. Eugene Choi: And the key here is just awareness. Remember, judging is still a survival state, it's just being cognizant and aware of it. There's no judgment around any of this because the flight response gets a little bit more triggering for people, it's when we numb ourselves.

Some people like to keep ourselves intentionally distracted. Some people eat a tub of ice cream, some people binge watch Netflix. Some people over-indulge in things like alcohol, sex, drugs to the point of addiction. It's all a flight mechanism if you think about it to survive from the feeling you don't want to feel, you see what I'm saying.

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Stacey Brown Randall: I feel like you're telling everybody that when I roll into my house around two o'clock in the afternoon sometimes and I'm binging Netflix. But you're just letting my secret out Eugene, come on now.

Dr. Eugene Choi: And there's nothing wrong with it, it's just a matter of how do you become aware of yourself and you get to choose, you get to choose what you want to do with it. No one needs to be — like who cares what other people say about it. It's still your choice. I think that's why it's important to take the judgment out of it and it's just how aware you are of it.

And freeze response is when we just don't take action. It's usually happening because we're overwhelmed, we're paralyzed in fear, that's a freeze response. So, if you have too many things on your plate that went over your capacity, the reaction is to not make a decision. You wake up in the morning, you don't want to get out of bed.

Where more subtle things with this is when like traumas evolve, it's a protection mechanism when you're in shock or disbelief, so you just can't move. So, when we become aware of this ... that's when my client realized it's just like, "Oh, that's why I keep working on the wrong things. I'm so afraid of feeling like I'm not in control because I remembered that time when dad left mom and they were in the argument and all that stuff was happening, I felt like things were out of control and I was definitely afraid because dad's leaving the house."

It's like, yeah, so you've been surviving from that. How do you survive from that? "Oh, I keep myself busy." And the irony is he says he's busy, but when he has time, he's busy doing things that just whatever, whether it's surfing the web or whatever, he's just keeping busy.

Stacey Brown Randall: Not valuable.

Dr. Eugene Choi: Yeah, he's just keeping busy, it doesn't mean he's being busy doing productive things. So, I think that's more often than not, si if we can just get really clear on that, that's when you become aware of it, it's what gives you the power to make a choice.

It's the whole like broccoli in your teeth, how do you become aware of it? How do you have the power to remove it unless somebody points it out to you or you see it in the mirror, do you see what I'm saying?

So, the awareness helped him work down the right things, and then yeah, all that good stuff happened; profits raised and biggest year and all that.

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[Music Playing 00:20:18]

Stacey Brown Randall: Hey there, pardon the interruption, I know this summer series we are focused on the mindset of a business owner, but don't ignore your referral mindset as well.

In our Building a Referable Business Coaching Program, we help you implement the mindset strategies and individual tactics you need to build a referable business.

Go to [staceybrownrandall.com/referable](https://staceybrownrandall.com/referable) to learn about everything that you receive inside BRB, see some of the amazing success stories that our clients are having, and of course, submit your application. The link again is [staceybrownrandall.com/referable](https://staceybrownrandall.com/referable).

Now back to the interview.

[Music Playing 00:21:06]

So, what are some tips that you may have for folks for recognizing when they catch themselves. They start recognizing that they're in survival state, they're not in executive state. What are the tips to help them move into executive state?

Dr. Eugene Choi: So, as a first start, there's two approaches I take, one is short-term, one is long-term. The short term is just like, "Oh, I became aware, I'm in it, what do I do right now?" So, two tips I usually share a lot is number one, is just labeling your emotions. Just acknowledge how you're feeling. You don't have to do it out loud, you could do it in your mind. I'm feeling anxious, I'm feeling frustrated.

The reason for this is, you see Elliot did this study where they had a group of people come in, had brain scans on their head, they would show people's faces in survival emotions, basically emotions that don't feel comfortable; anger, sadness, depression.

As soon as they show the photo, the survival part of their brain immediately lit up, which was fascinating. Then the researchers went, "Okay, can you tell me what emotion you're seeing on this photo?"

And it's easy to identify, oh this person's sad, that person's angry. Soon as they label the emotion, guess what happened, the executive state brain went back online. Why? To label something, it requires you to think about it. When we're in survival, we cannot think.

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So, simply making it a daily habit, oh, I'm feeling anxious, I'm feeling stressed without judgment, I'm feeling frustrated, I'm feeling angry. It helps you actually regulate, it promotes your brain to regulate, and we have the brain science to back this up now.

So, simply doing that on a daily basis. One key differentiator that I like to mention I learned from a clinical psychiatrist friend of mine is that there's a difference between I am sad, and I feel sad. I am is a declarative statement, you're assuming it's your identity, I am sadness. And then what state will that keep you in, survival or executive? Survival.

So, it's important to say "I feel" because you're acknowledging it's a feeling and feelings come and go. How do we know? Well, because feelings come and go, sometimes we're happy, sometimes we're sad. So, when you do that on a daily basis, it helps you snap out of survival as a tool, as a tactic.

And the second thing is much more commonly known as breathing. When you take deep breaths, you're tickling these parasympathetic nerves at the bottom of your lungs that get your body out of survival.

Our body is in survival very often. think about it, your heart's overworking, your lungs are overworking, your digestive system shuts down which is why people who are stressed out all the time tend to have digestion issues because your body thinks it's about to die, it's not a time to be eating food. When you're in danger, sleep issues because adrenaline's pumping through your blood.

So, when you practice deep breathing, you can do this anytime. Two popular ones I recommend is something called box breathing. Five second inhale, hold it for five seconds, five second exhale.

Or the other one this neuroscientist Andrew Huberman shared live scans of people doing this type of breathing. It's just deep inhale, inhale again second time, and make a slow exhale.

Make sure the exhale is longer than the inhale time and that calms your body down to help your brain get back into executive state. So, those are two simple short-term tips that I always recommend that you can do anytime.

Stacey Brown Randall: I feel like I'm really good at using the take a breath when I'm dealing with my children. Before I go to attack them, I try to remind myself, "Take a breath, Stacey, take a breath." But I don't know how

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well ... I'm going to start paying attention to how well I do that in business owner mode.

It's really easy because I watch myself sometimes, be like in my head. I'm thinking, "Oh, turn your brain on kid." And I'm now, irritated because now I've explained this for the 15th time because you weren't listening the first 14 times and now, I'm irritated and before I say a lot of things I'm going to regret, I'm going to take a deep breath.

But I don't know how much I do it in business owner mode. I mean I think I do a lot of stuff now in probably the last 12 months more than I ever have before, but I'm going to start doing that. I'm going to start recognizing, labeling my feelings and then seeing how often I actually do the take a breath.

I do know I take lots of breaths before I have to go respond to an email or respond to somebody asking me a question like several times. I'm like, "Okay, take a breath." So, I do know there's moments I do it, but I wonder how often, so I'm going to have to definitely look into that one.

So, I think that's important, and I think for people listening to this, I mean, this is such a small snapshot of everything that you teach and what you help business owners and entrepreneurs (I guess I could use those words interchangeably) — but what you help business owners do to be able to perform better.

So, that they can actually have the business they wanted when they decided to become a business owner that gives them all that time and freedom and happiness and joy and all the things they want.

I know this is such a small slice of what you teach, but I think it's so important. It's why I wanted to start the series with this topic because I think the ability to recognize what state we're in helps us obviously outside of business and other areas of our life.

But really, I think in some cases, it's the simplest thing to at least maybe recognize, maybe solving and moving into executive is more of a decision you have to make that decision to move into executive state.

But the recognition I think is just so important because it's like that saying, once you're aware you know. Once you know, you got to do something or not, but most of us do something.

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Dr. Eugene Choi: Exactly, it's interesting ... I'm laughing because it just reminded me of a story I had with a client once where client was just coming back. We were working on her business, it was growing, and she's like, "Something's wrong." I'm like, "What?" It's like, "I'm looking at my calendar and it's pretty empty."

I'm like, "Okay, so why are you freaking out about it?" It's like, "I don't know." I'm like, "Isn't this what you wanted?" "Yeah." So, I'm like, "You're telling me even though your outside circumstances change, your internal circumstances haven't," which is why it's so important. You own the business, but are you willing to own your inner world as well? Own the feelings that you're experiencing on a daily basis.

Stacey Brown Randall: I've talked about this before on the podcast maybe once or twice, so it's been a while. But when I made the decision in 2021 to change the entire model or the majority of the model of my business and roll out what we call BRB, which is Building a Referable Business, it's the coaching program.

And I made that model shift from a time perspective. It was like the sweet spot of understanding where I showed up my best and where my clients got their best results. And then figuring out the delivery mechanism of how we make that happen repetitively for people so that both pieces were happy.

They were getting results and I was happy showing up. And I had to realize some of the things that drained me and some of the things that gave me energy and excited me. And when I finally put those pieces together and then built BRB, I launched it end of, I don't know, fourth quarter of 2021.

It was February of 2022, I remember I called one of my best business buddies and I was like, "I'm freaking out, I don't know what to do with all my time." I feel like I should go create a bunch of stuff. I'm like, which is the exact thing I wanted to get out of.

It's funny, she was like, "Are you kidding?" Like you can see it in other people so much easier than you can see it in yourself. And she was like, "Be bored, Stacey." She's like learn to be bored.

And I was like, "Okay, that's right, that's what I wanted. This is what I ultimately wanted." And so, I totally get that whole story that you shared about your client because I did it, like I was there.

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Dr. Eugene Choi: And Einstein says the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again expecting a different result.

It's just like how does working harder get you this extra space because even though you have all this extra space, you're going to just keep trying to work harder. You see what I'm saying?

Stacey Brown Randall: And I think another area where I see business owners in particular move into survival state and out of executive state is when they start playing the comparison game.

When they start coming, "Like I should be further along." I mean, I've said that myself. I should be further along, my business should be making more money, I should be helping more clients. This piece should be easier, that piece should be easier. Look what they're doing, look what I haven't done.

We play that comparison game, or we just judge ourselves and that is us literally sitting, I'm assuming from everything you talk about — sitting in survival state and not recognizing how to move ourselves to executive state.

Because the other thing about that I think though is defining what success means and what you want it to look like. And I think that is actually one of the hardest things for business owners to do, is to probably move into executive state and think, but what do I want?

Do I want to make seven figures, or do I want to make a really super healthy profit margin on multiple six figures and have all this time? And then why do I find myself not feeling great about myself because I can't share that I'm a seven-figure business.

I think that also ... I'm imagining you could unpack that can of worms all day long with people because we also put ourselves there by how we think about ourselves.

Dr. Eugene Choi: Correct, so where I go with every client is you have to think about what's happening in between your years based on the meaning you're giving things. Look, we attach meanings to things all the time, that's what our brain does. I'll give you an example.

I'm a parent, I have three kids, my oldest one's a seven-year-old girl and when she was growing up, I would find myself getting into attack mode. I would get really upset when she's not listening to me.



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Well, why is there such a thing as other parents that I've seen that are so patient with their child when they're not listening and compassionate and empathetic? "Oh, I'm the common denominator." What meaning am I giving this experience? "Oh, that's right, when I was a teenager, my dad left our family," I used to think really angry and resentful thoughts.

Like if I'm ever a dad, I'm not going to be a crappy dad like him. So, what's my brain doing in the moment? The meaning, "Hey look, your daughter's not listening to you, you're a bad dad just like your dad." Quick fight, flight, freeze.

And I'm fighting and yelling and screaming, trying to control her. And all I'm doing to the poor girl is scaring her. When deep down what I really want with her is to be connected with her. And when we're in survival, you're disconnected, you're not empathetic when you're in survival.

So, when we're willing to examine the meanings we're giving things: "Oh I need a seven-figure business." Why? If you're willing to look at what you're actually surviving from, because if you're feeling stressed, if you're feeling scared or if you're feeling frustrated, it's because you're feeling vulnerable and scared of something.

What are we surviving from? And it always always has to do it yourself: "Oh, I have this deep-seated belief that I'm not enough as an individual. I have a low sense of self-worth. Oh, I'm a loser. Oh, I'm not supported, I'm alone."

We carry these belief systems that have been constructed in our brains because of our unique experiences and the meanings we're giving things, we give a lot of meanings to things. Like that client I mentioned earlier, "Oh dad left mom, dad left me because I'm a loser," it had nothing to do with us.

When we're in survival, it never has anything to do with you. But the meaning you attach to that experience is what creates you in putting yourself in an experience of perpetual survival.

When we get really good at getting clear on what that is first, now you can do some work to rewire that, to get out yourself out of it so that you're working smarter, not harder, and producing the very results you've been looking for to begin with.

Stacey Brown Randall: We think about all the things we have to do as a business owner, all the skills we need to have, all the tasks that we have to mark off our list, all the projects we have to do, all the things we have to

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figure out how to do because we don't know how to do them or hire somebody who can do them and make sure we get the right thing that we want.

We think about all the things that we do. And I would tell you like Stacey in her twenties ... I mean, I know I love it that people think I'm in my twenties, I'm not — I'm just kidding.

But Stacey in her twenties would've like ... that was like the badge of honor to be able to figure the things out and make the things happen and really paying attention to all those pieces.

And then as I've aged, it's paying attention to what really matters and what doesn't. And I always just dismissed this idea of how I thought. It was like I'm just a hard worker and I just get it done, and that's who I am and that's what it looks like.

And when I really got open to the idea of like, okay, maybe mindset is the 80%, producing the 20, you know what, whatever that is that they say.

Dr. Eugene Choi: The 20, yeah.

Stacey Brown Randall: Yeah, it's like okay, so maybe me actually focusing on my brain is actually what's going to solve some of these problems when I think I'm supposed to solve every problem with a hammer, maybe this one actually, needs something else.

It was really interesting to make that shift to be like, "Oh, I actually probably need to work on me." And that'll actually make it easier to do the business because we don't think like that.

We think what'll make it easier to do the business is just get more clients or learn social media, or build a website, or understand how to do blah, blah ... like get this different certification.

We look at all the things we're supposed to be doing and sometimes, what we forget and overlook is paying attention to the way that we are thinking. And that is so very valuable, I think, for business owners to understand and hear.

Dr. Eugene Choi: And I think this is a very common struggle. I've been through it and still go through it at times, we all do, like this work hard mentality. But look at the science behind this. Poor people stay poor for this

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reason because of survival, it's not because they're stupid, it's not because they're incapable, based on the science, based on what I've discovered.

When they do these surveys with low-income individuals, they ask them, "How do you plan to get yourself out of this financial scenario?" A lot of them genuinely, they mean this, they're saying, "I'm going to win the lottery." That's their strategy. To win the lottery is their strategy.

It's because when your brain can't think, do you see what I'm saying, because you don't have enough money, your brain can't think, you're not using your critical thinking skills to develop the skills you need that can generate that value.

So, that's why they end up in this, get rich quick. What's the one secret? So, if you're ever in that mode of what's the silver bullet that will solve all my problems, you're probably already in survival, I'm sorry. Because you're working harder not smarter.

But then when I have these conversations with clients, I'm like prove to me, out of all of the people that have achieved the goals that you wanted — prove to me that working harder is the thing that got them there, like hustle, grind. We glorify the sleepless nights, but what you'll find if you study this deeper is they're just really good at working on the right things.

Do you see what I'm saying? The things like you said, the 80/20 rule, they're really good at identifying what that 20% is to generate 80% of the results. But why can't most people do that? Because they're in survival, you see what I'm saying.

Stacey Brown Randall: I think it's looking at it from that perspective too. It's like the what we think about manifest itself and shows up in everything that we do. It's like the way we think is then the way we act.

And so, I think that it's just so important for people to recognize when you are in that comparison mode, and you're like, "Look at all these people who've done more from me ..."

To your point, it's like you don't necessarily know everything they've been through. And I can guarantee you they didn't find a silver bullet either on that journey. I have people who come to me and they're like — I always say to people referrals and the way that I teach it is not your Hail Mary. If your business is drowning, it's actually probably too late.

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There may be another way for you to save your business or for you to shift how you're thinking about it. But the referral piece, it's not a silver bullet. I'm not Staples, I don't have an easy button for you. There's work involved and there's a lot of people that have to make that decision.

Am I actually going to do the work to get the results, but that doesn't mean working hard, it means working smart and the right ways to get those results. I just think this whole conversation's really powerful for business owners, for our listeners to hear. It's completely different from what I typically talk about, which is why I wanted to do this series so badly.

I know we have more episodes coming up but what I do want to do, because I know we've got to wrap up, is I'm sure there's a number of my listeners that are like, "Okay, Stacey, thank you, but I just need a little bit more from Eugene, maybe a little less from you/from me," but they just need a little bit more from you, and I didn't give it to them.

So, tell our listeners where do they need to go if they want to learn more, and they want to understand more about the work that you're doing?

Dr. Eugene Choi: Yeah, absolutely, I have free trainings, all that good stuff, you can find on my homepage, [destinyhacks.co](https://destinyhacks.co). I have a podcast that I go deeper into the science behind this called Neurohacking Podcast.

And yeah, if you want to join our membership community that I launched fairly recently, that's available on the site too, where we do two live calls a month. I record all the stuff that I teach that you can access at your own pace, and yeah, I just take all of that stuff deeper and I'm available if there's any questions.

Stacey Brown Randall: Awesome, well, I will definitely link to all of that in the show notes page for this episode.

But Eugene, thank you so much for being here with my audience today. I really appreciate it and I appreciate you saying yes and being willing to share and go first with this series. So, everybody's got some big shoes to follow.

Dr. Eugene Choi: Yeah, it was an absolute honor, I really appreciate you having me, thank you so much.

Stacey Brown Randall: Oh, you're so welcome.

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What an awesome conversation. I love anytime that I can chat with Eugene. I just really think he is A, brilliant and B, has a really good way of breaking things down so that you're like, "Oh my gosh, I get it" right away like the duh moment without you feeling like you're stupid which is really, really nice.

And I really appreciate him taking the time to walk us through the idea behind executive state and survival state.

I know I said during the interview I was going to try really hard not to relate things to parenting, but that for me is where things just crystallize in my head. And then I can take that aha moment and then apply it in business as well. So, I really appreciate you guys listening in to this conversation, hopefully, it was as helpful for you as it was for me.

Everything you want to know about Eugene can be found in the show notes page for this episode. So, we link to his website and of course, you can find him on social media as well.

I definitely recommend you check him out or at least just start following him on LinkedIn or Instagram, and start letting some of his goodness just feed into your mind, it's going to be great.

The show notes page for this episode where you can find all those links are [staceybrownrandall.com/262](https://staceybrownrandall.com/262).

Alright, so coming up next week is episode 263, and as the summer series of our Business Owner Mindset continues, what will we talk about next? Let's talk about beliefs.

So, until then, you know what to do, my friend: take control of your referrals and bill a referral business. Bye for now.