

Audie Attar and Conor McGregor Talk Fighting Resistance with Boldness, Dreaming Big and How to Achieve Your Goals

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Audie Attar is an Iraqi-American entrepreneur born in Baghdad in 1980 and raised in Southern California. He's the founder and CEO of Paradigm Sports and Conor McGregor's longtime friend, manager and business partner.

I spoke with Attar and McGregor in an exclusive Q&A about building businesses together and about UFC 257, just before McGregor faced off against Dustin Poirier.

You can watch my conversation with Audie Attar in full below.

[embedded content]

Shatter resistance with boldness

Attar received a scholarship to play Division I football at UCLA and was the only Muslim on the team. He had lost his brother at a young age and had his name tattooed on his arm in Arabic.

Three years into the football scholarship, the September 11th

attacks happened. His tattoo, a tribute to memorialize his brother, became the subject of suspicion. Due to his background, Attar was on the receiving end of ridicule, bullying and racism.

Despite this, he kept his faith and soldiered through it. "I've always believed sports [provide] a powerful platform that allows the world to come together. You can see this throughout history. Just look at the Olympics and what that's done," says Attar.

After his football career, he became a sports agent. His professional journey started with the NFL, where he cut his teeth and learned the business. At this time, Attar also enrolled in business school and began working toward his MBA. Being an agent allowed him to redefine himself while creating opportunities around his greatest passion: sports.

"It was also a way for me to get involved in sectors and business that, traditionally, people would think that a sports agent or athlete shouldn't do. When I was in business school, I realized that I had, throughout my journey [up until that point], had these paradigm shifts. It's the way I approached my life, and I wanted to continue to shatter stereotypes every which way." It was then that Paradigm Sports was born.

Related: [Conor McGregor Says There Is No Such Thing as a Self-Made Success. Here's Why](#)

Dare to dream, then commit fully

Since the founding of Paradigm Sports, Attar and McGregor have redefined the role of the client-agent relationship. "There's no precedent for the things we've done," Attar says. Together, they're behind the Proper No. Twelve Irish Whiskey, which many dismissed as a gimmick but is now the fastest-growing Irish whiskey brand in the spirits industry's history.

They oversee August McGregor (McGregor's fashion line), TIDL Sport (a topical spray to minimize aches and pains), McGregor Fast (their massively popular fitness app), and Dystopia: Contest of Heroes, which won "World's Best Mobile Strategy Game" at Huawei 2020.

Long before it was public knowledge, they gave back too.

McGregor has used his fortune to build gyms and donate personal protective equipment (PPE) to first responders and health-care workers. He made many of the deliveries to hospitals himself. McGregor even supports his competitor's foundations. He donated \$500,000 to Poirier's Good Fight foundation.

They've reached such great heights by focusing on the less glamorous side to success: discipline, hard work and relentless commitment.

"You have to dare to dream," Attar says. "You have to be ready to fail a million before you succeed once. I would dare to dream for what people would laugh at or tell me that I couldn't do. If you have the discipline to go and work for it, anything is possible."

When I asked McGregor how he prepares himself mentally before stepping into the Octagon, he shared similar thoughts.

"My mental preparation comes from my physical preparation. The more work and preparation I put into my intense training regimen, the more I become prepared mentally from my obsessed and focused training regimen," says McGregor. "Difficult things are not so difficult when you commit yourselves fully. They become easy. There is no secret sauce here. I put the work in and that's it."

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Fight for balance

In Paradigm's early days, the term "self-care" didn't exist in Attar's vocabulary. "When I first started as an entrepreneur, [I didn't] have two nickels to rub together. You're doing everything independently. You're going to deal with a lot of challenges, not just exterior, but interior."

In the beginning, his diet consisted of 99-cent burgers, and he let go of what was familiar to him: health and wellness. Neglecting himself made the stress of his job overwhelming.

Once he refocused on rebuilding good habits – healthy eating, exercise, adequate sleep, meditation and prayer – his strength returned in spades.

Feeding the mind is of equal importance. "Whether it's autobiographies or just subject matter I'm interested in, feeding my mind satisfies me and allows me to find my balance," Attar says.

He encourages others to define what will work for themselves. "Whatever it is, find it, then hold on to it. When you find that balance, your mind processes things better." And science reinforces this, with studies demonstrating that self-care allows you to adapt better and maintain focus.

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