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INTERVIEW SERIES

**Michael Senoff Interviews
Legendary Memory Expert
Harry Lorayne**

Dear Student,

I'm Michael Senoff, founder and CEO of HardToFindSeminars.com.

For the last five years, I've interviewed the world's best business and marketing minds.

And along the way, I've created a successful home-based publishing business all from my two-car garage.

When my first child was born, he was very sick, and it was then that I knew I had to have a business that I could operate from home.

Now, my challenge is to build the world's largest resource for online, downloadable audio business interviews.

I knew that I needed a site that contained strategies, solutions, and inside information to help you operate more efficiently

I've learned a lot in the last five years, and today I'm going to show you the skills that you need to survive.

It is my mission, to assist those that are very busy with their careers

And to really make my site different from every other audio content site on the web, I have decided to give you access to this information in a downloadable format.

Now, let's get going.

Michael Senoff

Michael Senoff

Founder & CEO: www.hardtfindseminars.com

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Any perceived slights of specific people or organizations is unintentional.

Michael Senoff Interviews Legendary Memory Expert Harry Lorayne

Harry Lorayne is a legend. His memory courses and magic books landed him on The Tonight Show 23 times with Johnny Carson. He's also been on To Tell The Truth, The Ed Sullivan Show and The Jack Paar Show, to name a few. He's developed information products, starred in infomercials, had his own TV show, and, at age 85, admits he's had a pretty good life.

And in this two-part audio, you'll hear how he did it – how he went from being a Depression-era child with only a potato for dinner and a year of high school under his belt to a household name with famous friends and his choice of projects and engagements. But most importantly, you'll hear how he took a simple "Aha!" moment – and turned it into an informational product empire – and how you can do that too.

Part One: There Is No Learning Without Memory

Harry's biggest "Aha!" moment came when he was a kid. He wondered why he was failing the tests that his classmates were passing. When he realized they were able to remember the material better than him, he set out to improve his memory. This led to his life mission to help others improve their memories as well. And in Part One, you'll hear how he turned it all into an informational product and how he sold it. You'll also hear. . .

- How Harry negotiated his deals for his shows, the unbelievable things he used to do in them, and how much he got paid to do it
- Exactly what he learned the hard way about managers and contracts that he wishes he would have known back in the day
- All the details about how Harry met Eugene Schwartz – and the famous 3,000-word ad that changed Harry's life
- The one simple trick you can start doing today that will quickly take your memory to "superpower" level

- The surprisingly innocent element the Wall St. Journal changed in one of Harry's ads that sent his sales plummeting down... practically overnight

Part Two: The Secret To Being A Good How-To Writer

Harry has written more than 30 how-to books on magic and memory, and says the reason he's such a good teacher is that he makes sure there's no ambiguity in his writing. People don't finish reading his books and question what he was talking about. And in Part Two, you'll hear how to be that kind of a writer too along with...

- How to add value to a simple course – and more than quadruple your price point right away
- A real-life look at the ups and downs of the literary agent vs. self-publishing route, and what Harry recommends
- A quick “idiot's guide” on winning at blackjack just by playing the averages – but be careful, Harry's so good at it, 6 casinos won't deal to him anymore
- All about how Harry got on Carson along with how he made money running infomercials – and all the ways he used that exposure to sell more products

Harry is an unforgettable legend. With more than 50 years of experience in the information-product and entertainment industry, he knows what sells and how to sell it. And in this audio, you'll hear all about his amazing road to greatness that started with a simple “Aha!” moment, and how you can take that road to greatness too.

Hi, I'm Michael Senoff, Founder and CEO of HardToFindSeminars.com. For the last five years I've interviewed the world's best business and marketing minds. Along the way I've created a successful publishing business, all from home from my two car garage.

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Now my challenge is to build the world's largest free resource for online, downloadable mp3 audio business interviews.

I knew I needed a site that contained strategies, solutions and inside angles to help you live better, to save and make more money, to stay healthier and to get more out of life.

I've learned a lot in the last five years and today I'm going to show you the skills you need to survive. Now lets get going.

Michael: It's interesting that when you went to my site, you saw Eugene Schwartz. I have studied Eugene Schwartz and his great copywriting, and I have studied some of the ads that he wrote for you. My students at [HardToFindSeminars.com](http://www.HardToFindSeminars.com), lots of copywriters, they think Eugene Schwartz is the king of copy and direct mail response, and I thought talking about that story and how that occurred and how you built an information products business because it looks like that's what you did, and I'd like to talk about some of that and just some of your career. I think it'd be fascinating.

Harry: Gene Schwartz and I became very close friends, he and his wife Barbara and my wife Renee. We spent many evenings together etc., but it started when Frederick Fell, who is long gone now also he published my first book, How to Develop a Super Power Memory. That was back in 1956.

Michael: How old were you in 1956?

Harry: I was thirty years old.

Michael: Where were you born?

Harry: I am as an original New Yorker as you can get. I was born on the mean streets of the lower east side of Manhattan, right off the East River.

Michael: I see, and what did your parents do?

Harry: Oh boy, they were professional poor people. I had an awful childhood. I'm a depression kid. I remember having a potato for dinner, that kind of thing, but fortunately it took me about twenty years – I don't know if you know New York City, but I was born as I told you on the lower east side right off the East River. It took me about twenty years to move all the west near the

Hudson River, which is where I'm sitting now in an eight million dollar town house, but it took me about twenty years to make that move, and it's two different worlds.

As long as you asked, I'll tell you about the lower east side. There is a very important drive along the East River called the FDR Drive, and when I was a boy it was not there. It was just the banks of the river and that's where the city dumped its garbage. The garbage became petrified hill. They were long, petrified like mountains of garbage, and that was our playgrounds. That's what my friends and I played on when I was a little boy.

Michael: Are you Jewish?

Harry: Yes.

Michael: Harry Lorayne, is that your real name?

Harry: That's my name, yes.

Michael: Wonderful, so what did your parents do? Did you grow up poor?

Harry: Absolutely, there's no other word for it. My father was partner. He died when I was twelve. It's very difficult to put it into the real concept, but when I say they were professional poor people, what I mean is like my wife is about the same age as me. She's a little younger. They were also poor people, but they were able to live better. My parents couldn't. It went out of my mind. I didn't want to remember it. It was not a good childhood.

Michael: Did you have brothers and sisters?

Harry: One brother. He's gone now.

Michael: How young are you now?

Harry: I was born in 1926. I'm 85 years old.

Michael: How were your teenage years? Were you a good boy, or did you cause a lot of trouble?

Harry: Well, caused a lot of trouble until I was sixteen and got the heck out of that area. I started to leave that area at about age. You see what it is Michael, there was no television when I was a boy. So, I thought the whole world lived the way I did. It's not like now where people watch television. You

see how the other part of the world lives. It was not that way when I was a boy. Like I said, I thought the whole world lived like we did on the lower east side, what I always called the mean streets. It was ghetto. I don't know if there was such a word being used at that time, but that's what it was.

Michael: So, where did you go when you were sixteen?

Harry: Well, I still stayed there, but then I went into the Army when I was seventeen and a half. I enlisted. I was going to be drafted anyway, I thought. I weighed 110 pounds when I got into the Army. When I got in, the first day I was told, "You know, if you weighed 109, they wouldn't take you." So, all I had to do was run around the block three times, and I'd weigh 109.

I enlisted because I thought if you enlisted you got a better deal. You could choose what part of the Army you'd want to be in. It didn't work out that way. It was not a very good choice. I ended up in what was called the IRTC which stands for Infantry Replacement Training Center. See, we were losing the war at that time. This is right after the Guadalcanal. We were losing the war. Look it, they took me. We had to be losing the war.

Michael: Where did you go to?

Harry: Well, they put me into this IRTC. See, we took intelligence tests, and I thought if you got a good mark, if you were really intelligent, you could go into a nice safe area. It was just the opposite, Michael. They needed people like I just said to go into this infantry replacement training center so you can learn everything an infantry man needed to know in seventeen weeks. It was a seventeen week training course.

That took some intelligence because what the infantry replacement training center was, was a suicide squad. In other words, you went overseas, and alphabetically whoever was killed or wounded, you took that person's place. You had to be able to do what that person was doing. In other words, which firearms he was using, what his position was in the infantry. So, it was not a very good experience.

Michael: Did you score high on those intelligence tests?

Harry: Yes, that was the trouble. I shouldn't have.

Michael: At that age, sixteen, were you intelligent?

Harry: This was seventeen and a half at that time when I enlisted in the Army.

Michael: Were you a smart intelligent kid?

Harry: Oh boy, that's a good question.

Michael: How did you do in high school, your grades and stuff?

Harry: Well, I got to high school, and then I was fine. It was grade school. That's what changed my life. Let me see if I can get into this way, Michael. I'm on television, and the host says to me, "Harry, how did you become the world's foremost memory training expert? How does that happen?" I said, "Stomach cramps." He turned white under his make-up. He thought I had flipped my lid.

We went into a commercial, and I said, "It's a cliffhanger. I'll explain it." Let me explain what this guy said to me, "How does one become the world's foremost memory training expert," and I said, "Stomach cramps." That's what started it, Michael. Now do you want to hear this story?

Michael: I want to hear this story, absolutely.

Harry: Okay, I'll tell you the story because you asked me about when I was a teenager. Forget that. When I was ten and a half, eleven years old, I got stomach cramps every morning, and I thought that was norm. I thought everybody had stomach cramps, until I realized that it was only Mondays through Fridays – in other words, school days. Saturdays and Sundays, I didn't have stomach cramps. So, it was school days.

Now, let me tell you why. There was Mrs. Goldfish who was my teacher. I'll never forget her, and I could visualize her very clearly, and every day we got a ten question test on a yellow rectangular piece of paper which we numbered from one to ten. These are things that there's no way I can forget them because it was blunt point for me. It changed my life.

We used to have the ten questions, which she would grade that same day, and here's the point. We had to take it home so at least one parent would sign it to prove that we showed it to a parent. As I told you a few moments ago, my father died when I was twelve years old. So, when I was ten and a half, eleven, he was the signee. He was the one I had to show this test to, and the point is I was always getting failing grades, whereas from my little classmates, they were all getting seventies and eighties, whatever passing grades were. I was getting forties and fifties, in other words failing.

Well, when I brought it home to my father to sign – I’m going to go off on a little tangent here, Michael. I was talking about this on the Johnny Carson show, on the Tonight Show, and I was telling story. When I got to this point of the story that I’m telling you now, I got the paper home to my father to sign, and he would look at the failing grade, and he would punch me. I told the story, and I’ll continue the story about punch you.

What happens about two weeks after I did that particular – I was on the Carson show 23 times, so this was one of the early ones. I got a call from Freddie DiCordova. Freddie DiCordova was the producer of the Tonight Show at that time. He said, “Oh, Harry, we got 8,000 calls and letters and things.” At first, I wanted to say, “Great, I did good.” He said, “No, they were all negative.” I said, “Negative, why?” He said, “Because you said your father punched you. They didn’t like that.”

So, I found out that you can’t say that on television, Michael. So, now when I tell the story, and I’m telling it to you now, I brought the ten question test and my father had forty on it, a failing grade. He punished me. That’s okay. That’s the way I tell the story.

Michael: We’re not national TV. I like to get the real story. Is that what motivated you?

Harry: Yes, because what happened is that’s the reason for the stomach cramps. I’m trying to round out the story here because I was scared. Not of getting failing grades, but of getting hit by my father. So, that’s what was causing the stomach cramps, and this is the way it was every school day until one day, and here comes the plot point. I’m walking to school – those days if they were, I didn’t know about them. There were no school buses. I walked to school, and all of a sudden I stopped and the light bulb went on in my head.

I said, “Wait a minute.” I found out later years that I was dyslexic, and I am very dyslexic, but we didn’t have that word when I was a kid, and if they did, I didn’t know it. So, they give you the name, you play the game. They stamped moron when I was a little boy. So, you played the game.

So, as I’m walking to school that particular day, I said, “Wait a minute. Why are my classmates all getting passing grades, and I’m getting failing grades?” There’s no intelligence involved here. There’s no smart involved here, not the kind of questions you get at that age like, “What’s the capital of Maryland?” It’s the kind of question either you know it, or you don’t. In other words, you can’t intellectualize it. I didn’t know that word, but that’s what it boils down.

In other words, I just realized that that point in my life, that all you had to do was remember the darn answers to the question, and then you'll get a passing grade, and then more important your father won't punch you. That changed my life because now I thought, "Wait a minute. How can I help myself to remember the answers to these darn questions that Mrs. Goldfish had mentioned in class or had read it in a page that she told us to read that day?" That's what changed my life because I ended up at the Pit Street Park Library what we called it. The actual name was Haddleton Fish, but it was on Pit Street, so we called it the Pit Street Library.

I asked the lady behind the counter if there was any books that could help me remember, and I'll tell you something, Michael. She took me to a room where we had to push away cobwebs to get in. Nobody had been in there in a hundred years, probably, and it was one of those rooms that had books on different subjects, and in one corner, there were a few books on the subject of memory training. She left me in there. Remember, I was ten and a half, eleven years old. So, 99.9 percent of the stuff I was reading, I didn't understand, but that one percent, that changed my life because what I started to do was change it to help me remember the things I want to remember like, "What's the capital of Maryland?" "What's the chief export of so and so?" "What's the Vice President's name?" – things like that.

I remember that lady, the librarian coming in every half hour to make sure I was okay because I had been in there for hours. That's why I say after that incidentally to round out this story, I started to get hundreds on Mrs. Goldfish's test. Then, of course, my father stopped punching me. One day, Mrs. Goldfish said to me, "Harry, what happened? Now you're getting marks that I thought you always should get. What happened?" I told her, "Well, I learned how to remember." She said, "What do you mean?" I gave her an example like I said, "Well, there's a girl Mary in the class and I want to remember that the capital of Maryland is Annapolis," because most people say Baltimore. The capital of Maryland is Annapolis.

I said, "Gee, I visualized Mary with an apple landing on her head – Maryland, the apple is landing, and apple is, and that reminded me of Annapolis," and as I'm telling them to Mrs. Goldfish, I see the glazing come over her eyes. She thought I was nuts. She said, "All right Harry, sit down."

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Michael: So, the books you were reading back then, who were your mentors that really made it stick for you even at that young age?

Harry: Nobody, in those days I could remember nobody you would remember, but I'm telling you there were people way back then like Aristotle. I'm going back three thousand years now. I don't have his books. I wish I did, but he's quoted in a lot of the books I have about saying in order to think we must speculate with images. That was the first line of one of his books, and that's a big part of my memory training systems. You speculate with images. It helps you think.

Michael: What's the name of this memory system?

Harry: There were no names then. They were just called How to Remember or Memory Training or things like that. There were two people that I knew when I was very young. One of them was a man named David Roth. He died when he was ninety-six. When, I was growing up he was to me what I got interested in this particular subject.

David Roth died many, many years ago. Like I said, he died when he was ninety-six. He used to call me because he knew about my books and etc., etc., and he always called and say, "Gee Harry I can't do what you do." He meant my remembering 400 names on the Carson show and things like that, but anyway, on his ninety-fifth birthday, I was invited, but I couldn't make it. He was almost like the number four member of the Rotary Club, and he said to me, "Harry, on my birthday, I'm not going to do much." Remember, he was ninety-five.

He said, "I'm just going to remember all the guys in the audience and their telephone numbers." That's what he did with a hundred people in the audience when he was ninety-five. So, hopefully using your brain that way helps you live longer, but he's the one I remember, David Roth, and there was a fellow by the name of Bernard Zoofall who wrote some pamphlets on this subject. Those are really all those that I know when I was growing up.

Michael: So, once you learn this thing and you started changing your grades to one hundreds on your tests and you weren't getting punched by your dad, did you use this feverishly as you continued through your grade school and then high school?

Harry: Yes, that became a way of life, but it was personal. See what happened, when all these things like I say they're little plot points like I when Mr. Goldfish's eyes glazed over when I was telling her how I remembered the

capital of Maryland is Annapolis. I realized that people were going to think I'm nuts. I couldn't care less. I was only interested in my father not hitting me. So, I couldn't care less.

What happened was my classmates started to say, "Harry, what the heck happened here? What are you doing?" I explained it to them, and they say, "Oh, help me out with this, teach me that." They were interested, in other words kids my age were interested in how to remember it easier and in a fun way etc."

So, I started to teach it to school people that way. So, as they say, that's what changed my life. Obviously, I kept using it because see I started to realize and I've written so many times in all my books, the first thing that I started to realize that everybody must realize is that the word remember, the word know, and the word learn, are all synonyms. They all mean the same thing. If you remember something you know it and you've learned it. If you've learned something, you remember it and you know it. Do you see what I mean? In other words, they're synonyms.

Listen, one of my books, one of my early books I'm going back thirty years, I wrote in the front of the book, "There is no learning without memory." That's my quote. I said it very strongly. There is no learning without memory.

Now, why am I telling you this? I'm telling you this Michael because that started a whole thing in my local education departments because all the teachers got up in arms and said, "How can you say that?" Well, I've got to tell you something. In those years, we would debate it, and I never lost that debate never because without memory, there is no learning.

To me that's so obvious. How can you say you learn something if you haven't remembered it?

Michael: So, you were consulting or helping your schoolmates. When was the very first part of your information product done? When did you first put some of what you are learning down pen and paper where you had something that you could sell as an information product?

Harry: I'm going to answer that question. It's a whole other area. You mentioned David Roth before, so my assumption is you know a little bit about magic.

Michael: I watched some of his videos and it's interesting, the coin manipulation.

Harry: Okay, I don't know if you know that I've written about thirty books about the subject.

Michael: I didn't know you had that many books on magic.

Harry: Yeah, that sort of magic. I just finished one that's out on the market right now, but that's a cliché kind of thing. It's just certain people that are interested in the subject, but my magic books are best-sellers comparing your best-seller magic to a best-seller of my memory books is like a joke. It's like you're comparing 2,000 copies which is considered a great best-seller in magic, which a 3,000 which my books do or a little more to hundreds of thousands for my books on memory.

So, it's a labor of love, but it's the kind of labor that I do love. I like to do it. I don't lose any money on it.

Michael: You enjoy it. It's a passion.

Harry: Yeah, and mostly my stuff is card work. David Roth is a coin man. I'm a card man.

Michael: I've watched some of your magic tricks on your website which were excellent.

Harry: There you go. Okay, so now let me ask you a question. Going back, I must have been twenty years old or nineteen years old, I had a magic place in the back of somebody's store. It was a store on 52nd Street. It's now a big record store, but he had dishes and cups and things like that. It was a big store, and I rented the back of his store for a magic counter, which is what I had for a while, people like Dumminger used to come in and became a friend because he was going to do a show doing magic. His area was mind-reading, but he had to do a show.

He'd come and asked me. I was a kid. I was eighteen, nineteen years old. Anyway, people started to know me there. Anyway, long story short, a friend of mine by the name of Leslie Spegway – unfortunately he's gone now, but he walks into the store, and he knew I was interested in memory because I was doing magic for people using memory with a deck of cards, things like that. He said, "Harry, I just took a memory course. I can sell that man across the street the importance of listening to us." I can still visualize this so clearly.

One man sitting there rolling cigars, and he said, "I can sell that a guy a memory course right now." I said, "Yeah, of course you could. What are

you talking about Leslie?” He explained it to me. He said, “You and I, we should get into this business.” He said, “My father is like the president of the B’Nai B’rith,” whatever club he belong to, or masons. He said, “We can go there and demonstrate.” I said, “Leslie, demonstrate what?”

We went up to my apartment, and in five minutes, I wrote an act, something to demonstrate in front of an audience.

Michael: Memory.

Harry: Yes, well, because I sat down and I said, “Look, what’s the main thing people have trouble remembering?” He said, “Names.” “So, let’s demonstrate how to remember names. What’s the next thing?” “They hide things and then they forget where they hide them. I invented a routine called hiding places.” I said, “What else?” “Well, Americans are card players. Let’s teach them how to remember cards, and everybody wants to remember what they read. Let’s do a demonstration. We’ll memorize the pages of the magazine.”

Those are the things that I came up with in about five minutes. Now, Leslie said, “Yeah, but how are we going to do it? How are we going to demonstrate these things?” Well, now I had to come up with a methods, which is what I did, and I’m getting to the point to answer your question when you said, “When did you first put things in writing?”

We started to demonstrate this. I put the act together. Leslie and I each of us doing memory.

Michael: Tell me about your first act. You’ve got to be able to remember the first act, that first time you did it in front of people.

Harry: It was not very good. First of all, Leslie was the kind of guy if he couldn’t think of something, he’d put his fingers up on his forehead, and he would think quietly. I’m the kind of person, I don’t know if you noticed, I’m a talker. There’s no silence when I’m on stage. I’ve been on stage most of life. I don’t like silence unless it’s done for a reason, but that silence that I couldn’t stand. The point there is I memorized everything, over half the memory work we did that he was supposed to do, I memorized anyway. So, that as time went by and we went to other B’Nai B’Riths and other mason lodges, when he put his fingers up on his forehead to think, I said, “Leslie, that’s so and so,” and I would tell him what it is so that there was no lengths of silence.

Michael: Did it become like a straight man funny man routine?

Harry: You know, almost because you're reminding me of another thing when Leslie quit. The agent said to me, "Harry, don't you realize you're a young Jan Murray." That was a big comic of the day. "Leslie's holding you back." – things like that. I could write a book, Michael, but to answer your basic question, what happened is we started to appear at no cost. We didn't charge anything because we thought we'd sign up students. Are you ready for that? We were going to teach. We never signed up a student, never.

Michael: No one asked to be taught?

Harry: No, never signed up a student, but everyone said, "Oh, gee I belong to the Redman. I belong to this Mason group. Would you appear there?" We said, "Sure," always thinking that we'd sign up students, but we never did. So, finally I sat down and I wrote a ten chapter memory course called, The Memory Aide Course.

What we started to do is at the end of our demonstration, we would sell these for ten bucks, and that started to bring in a couple of dollars anyway. Then, what happened is that an agent saw us one day. He said, "How much are you guys getting for these?" I was carrying heavy blackboards in those days, etc., and became salesmen for God's sakes.

Anyway, he said, "What are you guys getting?" We'd said, "Well, we're just getting expenses, ten, twenty dollars." He said, "I'll get you \$85 a show," and he became our manager. His name was Harry Lee, and he started to book us. We're getting \$85 a show.

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Michael: I want to ask you. So, he was your manager. I'm curious about this. When a manager comes on, like what was your deal? How did you negotiate? What did he make? What was his job? Do you remember?

Harry: Sure, I do. I made a big mistake, and I've written this about two of them. Mel Brooks told me to call it a [inaudible]. He was getting twenty-five percent of whatever we earned, and it got to a point after Leslie disappeared, which is another part of the story which I'll tell you if you want to hear it.

I was working by myself, my wife, and we started to really make money. He got ill. He never ever even answered the phone. He became a

telephone answering service, but then he wanted twenty-five percent of everything I did like writing books and stuff, and I said, “No.”

Michael: Leslie did?

Harry: Yeah, that’s it.

Michael: So, when the manager signed you, he got twenty-five percent.

Harry: Twenty-five percent.

Michael: Was it a fixed time contract?

Harry: Like I said, I was very naïve – you know, you have to understand. I have one year of high school. I wasn’t too smart in those days. I signed a contract in perpetuity. I did that with my first book also. That book is still being published by somebody that I don’t want to publish it, but there’s nothing I can do about it because as I said I signed contracts in perpetuity. Probably a lawyer could get me out of it, but it ain’t worth it.

Michael: How old were you when you had printed that first ten chapter report?

Harry: I must have been twenty-three or twenty-four years old.

Michael: Okay, so you started selling them. This manager saw what you were doing and said, “I can get you more for the shows.”

Harry: Yes, he did start to get us more, but we had to give him twenty-five percent, but what happened after a while, we weren’t making that much money, and Leslie one day said to me, “Harry, I got to go out of town for three months. I’ve got to make some money. I have two kids. I need to make some more money,” and his father was a manufacturer of men’s clothing. So, he was going to go out and sell his father’s clothing.

He said, “I’ve got to do it.” I said, “Fine.” I called the agent that we were booked for one show that we had to do after Leslie left, and I called this agent. His name was Lou Price and we used to call him Low Price Lou Price. I saw him after this, it’s like they say, Michael. I could write a book.

So, anyway, I called him – I’ll give you another plot point now – I said, “Lou, you have to cancel that show.” He said, “What? What are you talking about? There’s paper all over the place.” I don’t know what it was at a B’nai B’rith or something like that. He said, “You’ve got to do it.” I said, “I can’t.” He said, “Why?” I said, “Because you know a lot of things I do, I

need thirty seconds like when I memorize a deck of cards. Leslie would talk for thirty seconds, and that's when they settled in."

He said, "Harry, that's what I told you before. Don't you know Leslie's been holding you back? You have a gorgeous wife. Why don't you have her do it?" I said, "Well, my wife was a model so she appeared in front of large groups, but not with talking." She just was modeling clothes. He said, "Have her talk for you," because I needed that thirty seconds in certain areas. So, I said, "Let me check with my wife." I did. I said, "We've got to do this."

Okay long story short, we end up doing the show. My wife got up to introduce me breathing heavy, nervous, "Ladies and Gentlemen." We were both so nervous, Michael. Anyway, talk about a plot point. What happened was the fact that there was no silence when I was working, and more important, I was remembering all of these things not half of these things, all of them. What happened was we ended up getting a ten minute standing ovation.

We were drenched in sweat, but we got a standing ovation. We went into the dressing room, both of us breathing sighs of relief, "Oh boy, we're glad that's over," and in comes Low Price Lou Price, and he says, "Hey, Harry, you did great." I said, "I'm glad I did it for you Lou. That's it. I've got to find another way to make a living." He said, "What are you talking about? I just booked twelve more shows for you."

Michael: Were you surprised that you were able to remember everything?

Harry: Not really. I was doing it while Leslie was around anyway, but kind of keep it in the background only for the times that he put his fingers on his head for thoughts.

Michael: What were a couple of things in the show that you did, some of the amazing feats of memory you did in those shows back then?

Harry: Well, first we started off with the objects in hiding places. Objects in hiding places was a big black board with sixteen squares on it. See, most of the things I did, a lot of them anyway, I looked for laughs. I'm basically an entertainer, and magic is my media anyway. Anyway, what happened with objects in hiding places, they were numbered from one to sixteen, and I would tell the people in the audience, "Look, I want you to call any number any order." I called out an object in any ridiculous hiding place.

Like, they might say, “The lamp hiding in the television set.” I would get like somebody would call out “Elizabeth Taylor hidden in my bed.” I’d say, “That’s not ridiculous. That’s wishful thinking.” In other words, I want to laugh.

So, what happened, as these things were called, Renee, that was part of her job, my wife, would write them into the square that was called until all of the squares were full. Then, I would call them off in order. Number one is so and so, number two is Elizabeth Taylor hidden in your bed, Mr. Jones, blah, blah, blah.

Incidentally, that was the second thing I did. The first thing that I did was to remember the names of everybody in the audience. I would say, “Would the few people I met please stand up.” I said, “Few,” which I said a few times, the whole audience would stand up, which would get gasps right away in before I did it, and then I’d call everybody’s names, seating them as I called them.

Then, I went into the objects in hiding place. The next thing was a playing card demonstration done with giant cards, very quickly were four people came up behind me. They had half the deck which they separated into clubs, hearts, spades, and diamonds. The fifth guy was shuffling the other half deck as much as he wanted, and then he would call them over. I had a snapper, and I was snap. So, he did it quickly.

He would hand the card to Renee, who would put it on a special blackboard that I had numbered from one to twenty-eight although there were usually only twenty-six cards. I was pretty good at cutting that giant deck exactly in half. Then, the whole concept was that I would tell the four people behind me not only which cards they were holding, but where the cards they weren’t holding in their suit on the blackboard. In other words, when the man with the clubs came to me, I’d say, “Give me the cards that you have as I call them. You’ve got the A of clubs, the two of clubs. You don’t have the three of clubs because that’s the fourteenth card on the blackboard.” That was the point that I did.

Michael: As you did these shows and as you practiced these memory feats, did you see your memory improving over time?

Harry: Oh, sure. Yeah, I’ll tell you when it became an effort, when I became known and popular, Michael. Sometimes I was doing three shows a day. My wife and I did the act for twenty years after that after that first thing I told you about. We did it for twenty years until she once said to me, “Harry, I don’t want to ever say ladies and gentlemen again,” because she

used to open the show that way, “Ladies and Gentlemen I want to talk to you about Harry Lorayne.”

We wanted a child at that time. We had just turned forty, etc. So, as we were doing it, the hard part that I started to tell you is we got so well-known I was doing breakfast shows, luncheon shows, and evening shows. The hard part was when I got to the second show, and for example, somebody would call off what card was number twenty-three, the card that was in twenty-three that came to me was for the first show, but I knew that. So, I had to do that extra mental callisthenic of eliminating the first one and go to the present one.

Michael: Did you do any kind of exercise?

Harry: No, my work was my exercise.

Michael: Your work was your exercise.

Harry: Oh, sure.

Michael: Did you ever learn to juggle?

Harry: No.

Michael: What's your dominant hand?

Harry: Dominant is right hand, but a lot of card work I do, I do with my left hand. For example, most people spread from left to right. I spread from right to left with the deck of cards. Don't ask me why. It's just what came naturally.

Michael: Anything else left hand other than that?

Harry: Yeah, mostly with the card work. Other than that, no. Now, I'm going to tell you how the first book came to me.

Michael: Did you still have this same agent that you signed up with, the same manager?

Harry: No, a couple of things happened that made me get rid of them, and they cost me somebody to get rid of them which is unnecessary that I learned afterwards.

Michael: Our listeners are entrepreneurs, and you've learned life lessons about making deals and signing contractors. So, put there a little lesson in there for the students, maybe a mistake that you made.

Harry: Well, the obvious mistake is when you sign a contract, get a lawyer. I just signed what was important to me, like my first book contract, which was a big mistake, but I learned as I went on. Now, I don't have a manager. I'm my own manager, but I found out don't you see that the contract that I signed with my original manager would have never held up in court because it was in perpetuity, and those contracts are not allowed I found out, but I didn't know it when I signed it.

Then, he started to do things, well we did a show and when we were finished, it was at a church, and the priest of the church came and he gave me two envelopes. One was marked, "Mr. Memory Marvel," and then other one was marked, "Mrs. Memory Marvel." There was a twenty dollar bill in each one. He had tipped us. So, I stopped at a telephone and called him. I said, "Sir, we get paid for this." He said, "I know, but I felt like doing it."

Why am I telling you this? I told it to my agent, Harry Lee. Well, when we settled up at the end of the month, he took twenty-five percent of the forty bucks. Those are the kind of the things that started to bother me. We were called Harry and Renee Lorayne, the Memory Marvels. We were getting so busy that he didn't want to sign it by hand on every contract. So, he got a rubber stamp, which cost \$6.50, he took twenty-five percent off my money to pay for the rubber stamp.

Then, my first book came about, and I told him about it, and he said of course I get twenty-five percent of that, and that was the end of it.

Michael: Let me interrupt you. Was the first book the ten chapter book that you put together?

Harry: No, no, no, what happened was we started working the Catskills Mountains, what's called the Borsch Belt, and one day I finished my performance, and a man came over to me and he said, "Harry, could you teach this stuff?" In those young years, I was the kind of guy. I said yes to anything. If somebody said to me, "Can you play piano," I would say, "I don't know. I never tried." I was that kind of person.

He said, "Can you teach this?" I said, "Yeah." He said, "Would you send me a couple of chapters?" He gives me his card, and he's a literary agent. Scott Meredith was his name. The agency still exists, I think. Anyway, I

took this memory aid course I had written. I took the first couple of sections, and I rewrote them, and I sent them to him. He sent them to a publisher, and that was my first book, how to develop a super power memory. I got a \$500 advance and I was frightened because I thought if the book didn't make it I would have to give back the \$500.

You're listening to an interview on Michael Senoff's [HardToFindSeminars.com](http://www.HardToFindSeminars.com).

Michael: Okay, so tell me from all our students who are self-publishers, you had a literary agent, and he sent it to a publisher. The publisher gave you an advance on the book. How was that structured? What was your deal on that?

Harry: Like I say, I still have the contract. It's a contract in perpetuity. In other words, the way it was written, I would owe allegiance to this company for the rest of my life.

Michael: Just for this literary work, this book.

Harry: Yes, and the agent allowed it. He allowed a lot of things. We get back to Gene Schwartz. My first connection with Gene Schwartz was when he wrote the 3,000 word ad for how to develop a super power memory. I wrote the headline that said, "Give me one evening, and I'll give you a push button memory."

Michael: I want to get to the Gene Schwartz, but I want to separate that. Go back to this publishing deal for your first book. What did the deal look like? You got a \$500 advanced, and what kind of percentage would you make on book sales?

Harry: Gee, I guess it was ten percent in those days. I don't have it in front of me.

Michael: Did they perform? Did it do well?

Harry: What do you mean, the book?

Michael: Yes, the book, the first book.

Harry: It sold eight million copies. You know why it sold eight million copies, because of Gene Schwartz.

Michael: Okay, so you have this first book. So, how did the connection from the first book to Gene Schwartz to you happened?

- Harry: Frederick Fell contacted Gene Schwartz who contacted me and said, "I want to do an ad for your book," which incidentally he did and in many languages all over the world.
- Michael: So, Gene Schwartz was hooked up with the publisher. What was the publisher called then?
- Harry: It was Frederick Fell, Inc.
- Michael: So, it was his own publishing company?
- Harry: Yes, it still exists, but taken over by a different man. It's called Lifetime Books or Frederick Fell Incorporated.
- Michael: Back then, what kind of books was he publishing? What is it a certain genre of a type of book?
- Harry: Not really. He published whatever he could get his hands on.
- Michael: Was he big time back then or kind of small?
- Harry: No, not at all.
- Michael: So, he had the contact with Gene Schwartz. He knew that Gene Schwartz was the copywriter, and he hooked you guys up.
- Harry: Right, incidentally, Gene Schwartz ended up publishing a few of my books. He published them. He had a different company called Information, Incorporated.
- Michael: Okay, let's go from the beginning, your very first contact with Gene Schwartz because this is fascinating. Talk about that.
- Harry: We got together and he started to ask me questions about the memory thing.
- Michael: Where did you meet?
- Harry: I think in my apartment in those days. I was live in White Stone Queens in those days. I remember, and he came there.
- Michael: He came there to talk to you with the intention of creating an ad for your book. He had already studied your book probably.

Harry: He had, and there are certain memories that are very good with Gene Schwartz but the first memory isn't because you know, I told you it sold eight million copies and what I was getting per book? I was getting two cents per book. That's all. So, that was another thing that my agent Scott Meredith in those years allowed. It never should be allowed. Then, Frederick Fell said to me, "Harry, you've got to do another book obviously," because they were selling like crazy, but you've got to understand in those days, you know what a book selling for? Two dollars and ninety-five cents or something like that. It's a different world.

I had a little problem there, which is kind of interesting. I don't know if you'll find it interesting. Don't forget that my whole thing was making it look like I was a genius. I'd get up and do all these things, and incidentally to end what I would do on stage. After I did the objects in the hiding places and the names of everybody in the audience and then the card thing, I left out I had a copy of Time Magazine which Renee would hand out before we even went on. We would tear it down to binding, take out the staples, and hand out the loose pages so people would call any page number, and I would tell them what was on that page or vice versa. I'd say, "There's a picture of President Nixon on the upper left. I'd say that's page 76, and on the lower right, there's so and so."

Then, the strong part was I would say, "You could test me anything you want as quickly as you want." People would call out anything. "What's number fourteen on the blackboard?" That's the Ace of Clubs, number fourteen on the objects of hiding places is Elizabeth Taylor under the bed, and number fourteen in the magazine, etc. As you can tell, I'm a fast talker. That was my thing, the machine gun delivery there on anything they called.

Michael: You said you had a little problem. What are we referring to?

Harry: It's not really a problem. In other words, when I finished working, the assumption was that here's this genius that can do this and nobody can. Here I just wrote a book saying that anybody could do it. So, that was the obstacle we had to get over to prove that "No, I'm not a genius, and anybody can do it."

Michael: You were demonstrating that it could be done.

Harry: But, we didn't actually do it that way. We made it look like I was this great genius.

Michael: Was this a contradiction that Gene Schwartz understood?

- Harry: Of course.
- Michael: Okay, so you guys talked about this.
- Harry: Oh yeah, and he said, “No, we’re going to explain.” It was a 3,000 word ad that he wrote, with incidentally a very mysterious looking picture of me in the middle.
- Michael: It’s very interesting. So, he came to your apartment, and you guys are talking. Can you remember anything about that day? I’m trying to bring the listeners back to Gene Schwartz’s methods for creating wonderful powerful ad copy.
- Harry: Well, he would show me his copy after he wrote it, and I very rarely had to change much. I would change some things that I thought were important, but basically he would write the ad. I would okay it, and it would go.
- Michael: Do you think when you met, did he record the call by any chance?
- Harry: No.
- Michael: He just took notes?
- Harry: Yes.
- Michael: I’m sure you’re an enthusiastic talker, and you probably talk a lot when you met with him, right?
- Harry: Sure.
- Michael: He was an incredible listener and he was just listening for your words.
- Harry: Oh, absolutely, he used mostly my words when he wrote it, and that’s okay. I knew more about the subject obviously than he did, but like I say, afterwards he published a couple of books of mine. One was called, The Memory Isometrics Course, and the other one was called The Mental Magnet Course, which is published under the name Information Incorporated.
- Michael: I want to get to that. I want to just do a little chronological. Your first book that went on to sell eight million copies, did you ever do a second book with that publisher?

Harry: Yes, I did two books with them.

Michael: Were you locked in – like, when you do a contract, do you sign like a two or three or four book contract, or did you just agree for one?

Harry: No, that's another story. The way it is, if you were to sign a contract now, boiler plate publisher's contract, the publisher always has the option for the next book. My book the Memory Book, which probably most people would know is the one that was on the NY Times Bestseller's list for over a year. It's the only book on memory training that was ever on the best-seller list. That was published by Stein and Day. Then, he published another book for me called Remembering People, and then he was a bit of a crook. I didn't want to do any more books for him, but the boiler plate on those two contracts were that he had the option in the name of his company was Stein and Day. His name was Saul Stein.

He had the option for the next book. At that time, fortunately, I was with a very good literary agent by the name of Owen Lassiter who was the head of the literary department of William Morris. They're very important. So, I told him I didn't want to do another book for Stein and Day. He said, "Well, Harry, the only way to get out of this contract, is to have him turn down a book, or have someone bid higher than him for one of your books." So, I said, "What for example?"

What I did, one of my books, the only book I ever wrote on magic for the public is a book called The Magic Book, which Putnam published, but I wrote it for one reason. I knew that Saul Stein was not happy with the magic book he had just published, and a couple of books on magic by somebody else that didn't do well good. Owen Lassiter, the William Morris guy had to give it to him first, and Saul Stein did bid, but then what Owen Lassiter did was he made it an auction. He sent it to other publishers because you're allowed to do that.

We would get a higher bid, and he would have to go to back to Saul Stein and say, "Well, we just got three thousand dollars more, ten thousand more," whatever. It kept going that way until Saul Stein backed down. That's when Putnam had overbid him.

Now, the next problem which I remember Owen Lassiter to me, he said, "All right Harry, first problem solved. We just got rid of Saul Stein, and Putnam wants to publish the book. Now, you've got to write the bloody book."

Michael: Did you have to write it for Putnam?

Harry: I wrote it for Putnam. They put it out. They sold 125,000 copies of that book. It's called The Magic Book.

Michael: So, back then, you didn't even have the book written, but you could submit it.

Harry: I could submit a little outline which Owen Lassiter helped me do, but then I had to write the book. It sold to the public I told you 125,000 copies. Then, Putnam, a big institution took them over, and they said, "No, we don't want to publish it anymore." They gave me back the rights, and that's it. Now, I republished it for the Magic Fraternity.

Michael: So, Schwartz did the ad for, what was the title of that book?

Harry: The first one was How to Develop a Super Power Memory.

Michael: Okay, so after he came out with the ad, and he showed it, you said this looks great. Did you think it looked fantastic?

Harry: Oh, sure. It built up my ego, yeah.

Michael: Okay, so then, after you approved it and the ad started running, did you see the ad all over the place?

Harry: All over the place, and every magazine with over 5,000 circulation and every newspaper with over 5,000 circulation.

Michael: At that time, did you understand the power of full pages ads written by this man at that time.

Harry: Not really.

Michael: When the ads were all over the place, what did you see happen? Take me through that progress.

Harry: What I saw happen was books being sold, some money coming in, but also recognizability. I started to be recognized, which was nice. I have a big ego, and being recognized say, "Hey, aren't you the guy?" That was very nice, but that was basically it.

I'll tell you another story. I told you there was a picture in the middle that they used of me when I was much younger, of course. I don't know if you ever saw that. Well, the Wall Street Journal called one day because the

Wall Street Journal was running it once a week, every week or maybe more, and doing a lot of business selling a lot of books. Once the Gene Schwartz or Fred Fell got the call, now I don't know who got the call originally. When the Wall Street Journal said, "Listen to this. We're getting a few letters from people saying, 'What are you trying to do with that ad for Harry Lorayne? Are you trying to get him to hypnotize us into buying the book?'" It was this picture.

They said, "No, we're trying. We're getting complaints. We can't run the ad with that picture anymore." So, what we did and I have the original painting here. They did a caricature of that picture, in other words, it was no longer that mystery looking kind of picture. You know what happened? The sales went way down. I guess I was hypnotizing people.

I'm not sure it was coincidental because they had been running the ad for years. That ad ran from 1956 to about 1960.

You're listening to an exclusive interview found on Michael Senoff's [HardToFindSeminars.com](http://www.HardToFindSeminars.com).

Michael: How many books do you think that one ad was responsible for selling?

Harry: Well, it had to sell a couple of them. It's been over the years, it's kept selling. It really was a vast number, but I like I told you in those days, now you're buying a book, what is it \$24.95? They were \$2.95 or \$3.95 in those days.

Michael: Would you get letters from your students all the time?

Harry: Oh yeah, I have letters you can't believe. I have testimonials.

Michael: "I have changed people's lives."

Harry: Oh my god, did I ever. I have people who had brain tumors who told me I saved their lives from my television infomercials. One of the important testimonials, people [inaudible] I don't know if you'll let me say my websites.

Michael: Absolutely, yeah, give your websites.

Harry: Well, if people go to [HarryLorayne.com](http://www.HarryLorayne.com), that's where I sell the Memory Power course. It's [HarryLorayne.com](http://www.HarryLorayne.com). Obviously, you've got to spell it right, L-o-r-a-y-n-e, [HarryLorayne.com](http://www.HarryLorayne.com), and there's a section there for testimonials that you click on. One of them is from a guy named Bob

Norland who had a stroke when he was 75, and he wrote me this letter. He lived in California. He said he had the stroke, and the doctor told him that he never would be able to remember anything again. He said somebody brought him one of my books, and he said, "Mr. Lorayne, I've got to tell you that I remember better now than I did before the stroke."

He's in a wheelchair, and he said, "I can't write, and I'm still in business." I take telephone orders, so I have to remember the names, addresses, the orders because I can't write because of the stroke, and you just saved my life. He said, "I give demonstrations at my Toastmasters Club using your systems, and God bless you Harry." So, I mean testimonials like that.

Michael: How is your penmanship, personally, your writing?

Harry: I write pretty clear because that's communication.

Michael: Do you write cursive or print?

Harry: I write both, but basically when I'm writing a book, it's cursive.

Michael: So, when you write your book, do you write it out freehand?

Harry: Always. I write everything first, and then I edit as a type.

Michael: You write it first, and then you retype it into computer.

Harry: Right, right, the computer just with my last few books because for years I worked first with the standard typewriter, and then I went into the electronic typewriter. I was a typewriter guy.

Michael: So, when you wrote out your books, you wrote them out in cursive.

Harry: Always in long hand. That's the way I write. I write on a legal pad.

Michael: You write with your right hand.

Harry: Yes.

Michael: Are you a musician at all?

Harry: No, not at all. I can't carry a tune in a basket, but what's interesting is my son is in the music business, but no I have no talent in that area, but a lot of people tell me they use my systems to remember music, which is interesting, but you know? I mention a thing like that, and they say, "You

know that's okay. I guess it's important to the people who use it for that, but you know what's very important to me. I'm going to read you a call from the back of one of my books.

Listen to this – “I have been using Harry Lorayne's memory training techniques for years for myself and for Alzheimer patients. I have had very gratifying results with my patients. Mr. Loryane's systems probably have pretty clinical results than the currently available medicines.” This is from Dr. Steven Zuckerman, a neurologist. Those are the things that end up making it worthwhile for me.

Michael: Have you ever gone into the study of how memory affects the brain? Is that something that's fascinated you that you've dived into the research on that?

Harry: No, I'm very careful about that Michael. I know about it like imagery and sign waves and the left hemisphere and the right hemisphere, but I've never even used the word mnemonics in my books. I'll tell you why I am very result oriented. People who go to these things and they hear all these fancy words, they nod. It doesn't help them any. It's like I said on that we talked about Gene Schwartz. Give me one evening, and I'll give you a push button memory because if you get my course, the Memory Power course, the first evening, you will do things with your memory that you never could do before, but you wouldn't be able to do that if I talked about the left hemisphere, the right hemisphere, sign waves and imagery. That's fine for professors and people that are interested in that.

Michael: The average person, it's not going to interest them.

Harry: That's exactly what I'm talking about. People that come to me, when I say come to me I mean buy my books and courses, they want to learn how to remember. When I was very young, one of the things that I did when I started to write was to go to classes where they said they will teach you how to pay attention. They didn't say how to memorize, but how to pay attention, and I would go to these classes, but it always ended up after they talked they used that phrase. They said, “All you have to do is pay attention.”

When I got older, I would shout it out and say, “Wait a minute. I know that. Tell me how. How do I pay attention?” That they never did. That's what I do. I teach people how to pay attention.

Michael: You said you had to be careful about mentioning the brain, right hemisphere, left hemisphere. What did you mean about being careful about that – from a legal standpoint?

Harry: No, no, no, from a standpoint of not selling books because that's not what people want. People buy my stuff. They buy my Memory Power Course, which incidentally, I can tell you that story why I devise a memory power course, but the people are going to that, they want to learn how to remember.

Michael: For themselves.

Harry: Exactly, and talking about imagery and sign waves, who cares? It's what I call those people's pie in the sky.

Michael: Let me ask you this. Today with technology and advancements and understanding the brain, do you believe that a memory system can help stem the tide of Alzheimer's and dementia?

Harry: Well, I just read you a quote from somebody who said that the Alzheimer's patients using my systems, his exact words, he says they have better clinical results than the currently available medicine. Look, you know when I wrote my first book, let's go back to 1956 again. Don't forget, I had jet black hair then because I was very young. Now, I have very little grey hair.

With my first book, when I really wasn't very well-known, who the hell ever heard of Harry Lorayne in those years except people that saw me in the Borscht Belt or as I got to be more important to Mason's and you know higher class kind of groupies. Nobody knew me, but in my first book, I stressed the importance of exercising your mind.

One of the examples I used, which is a childish example. I said, "If you kept your right arm hanging down and didn't use it for six months, you would never be able to use it again." The same with your brain, it's the cliché, "Use it or lose it," but nobody pays attention. Nobody paid attention in 1956 when I screamed and yelled, "You have to exercise your mind." Now, all of a sudden, that's very important. Everybody's yelling about exercising your mind and do crossword puzzles and all that silliness. I can do the Times Crossword puzzle in an hour I'm finished, but after a while it gets to be a bore. It's no longer exercise.

The best mental exercise there is are applied in my systems whether you think they're going to work or not.

Michael: You've got Schwartz who's launched that book, and you did two additional books with that, what was the publisher call?

Harry: Frederick Fell, Incorporated. I was sitting having lunch, and he said, "Harry, you've got to do another book." I said, "Fred, I've said it all." I really thought I did at that time. Who dreamed that I would write thirty more books or whatever? I said, "Nah, I've said it all." He took a paper napkin. He wrote down, "How to utilize your time. How to get rid of bad habits. How to establish good habits," and he wrote down about thirteen sentences like that. He said, "Give me a book on this." I didn't know anything about that.

So, I did a little research on how to utilize your time, how to get rid of bad habits, and thinks like that. I made up my own things about it, and it ended up I have letters on my wall from people saying they were ready to commit suicide and that this book saved their lives. It was called Secrets of Mind Power, and I have a plaque on my wall from him and Gene Schwartz when it hit 250,000 copies, they sent me a plaque. Secrets of Mind Power it was called.

Actually, it was just basic self-help. There was only one chapter in there on memory.

Michael: How was the deal with your second and third book compared to that first publisher? Did you get treated better with that?

Harry: Yes, the second book was a little better. I mean, I have a current book out right now called Ageless Memory which is interesting, you know why? It's geared towards people with my colored hair. Ageless Memory is geared toward older people. Did I remember to take my pill, kind of thing. The systems are the same, but it's geared more toward older people, which is why it's called Ageless Memory. I wanted to call it the Over 40 Memory Book, but the publisher didn't want to do that.

Michael: How is it going?

Harry: Very well. It's been out there for a while. It goes from one end of the scale to the other. I read you the first quote on the book, on the hardback, the paperback doesn't have these quotes, but on the hardback, I just read Dr. Steven Zuckerman's about Alzheimer's, but the one on the bottom is from Alan Alda, the actor. He says, "Harry Lorayne can you make remember and address full of phone numbers and typically a first kiss. When I go on stage with a hundred pages of text in my head, they got there thanks to method that Howard Lorayne method." That's Alan Alda.

I have a letter on my wall from Annie Bancroft who said, "Thank you so much for making the drudgery part of my creative art," and she goes on to explain what the drudgery is. The drudgery is memorizing a script because how can you get up an act if you haven't memorized the script that you have to think, "What the heck is the next word?" She ends up by saying, "You are a miracle worker."

Listen, if I'm going to drop names, I was introduced back in August of 2001, I was introduced to Colin Powell, when they said, "Mr. Secretary of State, meet Harry Lorayne," Colin Powell said and I'm quoting now, and I use this in the Ageless Memory, I write about it, he said, "Harry Lorayne!" and he threw his arms around me and he said, "You helped make me a general."

Michael: Did he explain how?

Harry: No, I was too awestruck to say, "Would you put that in writing? I would like to use that quote." I have pictures of me and him with our arms around each other. I'm looking at them right now. They're on my desk with my other awards.

Michael: Tell me some others.

Harry: Well, Sir Anthony Hopkins the actor uses my systems, Mel Brooks does. I told you about Annie Bancroft. The mayor of New York, Michael Bloomberg has become a friend. We go out to dinner together because he uses my system. He wants to learn to speak Spanish, which he does very well, but he'll call me once a month and say, "Harry, how the heck do I remember this," and he'll give me an example to help him. Commissioner Ray Kelly uses my system.

So, there are very important people all over the world who use my systems.

Michael: How is that the brain by using mnemonic devices in creating images in the mind and the stories, why is it the brain can remember that and have such a hard time the other way?

Harry: I'll break down the basics of my systems for you. All my work and all memory is based on the reminder principle. This is the title I've given it. We all go through life snapping our fingers either physically or mentally and saying, "Whoops, that reminds me." Usually the thing that we're reminded of had nothing to do with the thing that did the reminding. It's if

you made a subconscious connection between the two things, then you remembered it.

If you didn't make that connection, then you forgot it. It's "forgotten." You never really remembered it in the first place. So, all memory is based on reminders, in other words, a name to a face, a foreign language word to its English meaning. All memory problems boil down to entities of two, like the examples I just gave you. That's what I teach, how to make one thing remind you of another. That's the basic concept of all my systems, but how do you do that with numbers for example? How in the world do you visualize a number? Numbers are just concepts. What does five mean to you except it's one lower than six or one higher than four? It's very difficult to visualize except for me and my students.

So, my students can visualize numbers physically, definitely. Then, you can remember them. So, that's what it boils down to the reminder principle.

Michael: You said you were dyslexic. Did you ever do any research on dyslexia?

Part Two

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Michael: Did you ever do any research on dyslexia and how memory comes into play or visualization where the letters get jumbled or turned upside down? Did you ever research that?

Harry: No, I never got into it. Again, I'm not a doctor, and I don't want to be one, but I've had people tell me that I'm probably the best expository writer there is, meaning the best teacher in writing. I mentioned that not because it feeds my ego, which of course it does, but because my dyslexia helped me there.

You see, I think the reason I'm a good teacher is because there are no ambiguities in my writing. In other words, I teach as if everybody is like me, Michael. That's what started my first book in magic which you might find interesting. It's called Closed-up Card Magic. It was written in 1962 because I was so interested in card magic, and I started to read these books, and I would read something, and I'd say, "Wait a minute. Does he mean the left hand or the right hand? Does he mean this figure or that figure? Does he mean the deck face up or face down?"

In other words, there were ambiguities, and I said to myself one day, “You know something? I can do it better,” and I did because there are no ambiguities in my writing because to repeat myself as I write as if everybody’s like me. I make sure that my writing is understood.

Michael: I understand that. Take me back to your first product, the audio tapes or your first course other than a book. How did that occur? Was it with a publisher? Did you self-publish? Don’t let me forget, I want to hear about the books that Gene Schwartz published.

Harry: They’re not that important. When you say audio, I have audios right now of Ageless Memory which the publisher said, “We want you to talk in Harry instead of getting somebody else.” I said, “Fine, nobody’s going to emphasize the words correctly like I will.”

But, there are very little audios out there that I know of. Random House I think sells two audios of mine. One is just called How to Improve Your Memory. One is called How to Remember Names and Faces.

Michael: Well, back then, your course, you had the books going. When was your first course developed, full on course?

Harry: Are you talking about the Memory Power course?

Michael: Yeah.

Harry: Here’s what happened Michael. I was getting so busy mostly with corporations, in other words quite honestly that’s what I do now. I do corporate work. You know why? They’re probably the only people that can afford me at this stage of my life of my career because then the money obviously. Incidentally, many corporations all over the world use my systems as part of their regular training course. To this day, I did it many years ago when we did videos of those. They still use them.

But, most of the stinking engagements I do now, and I take only the ones that I can’t refuse because I told you my age. I’m tired. I’m semi-retired, Michael. I still do it just because I’m a ham, and I like the applause and I like standing ovations. I admit those things. I like them.

So, okay, what started to happen years ago when I was very busy when I was younger is that it was much more than I could handle so, what I did was I took the few people who I knew and I taught them how to teach my system. I taught them how to be instructors for Harry Lorayne Memory Course, and I would send them out to corporations, and what started to

happen, and I have letter – oh god, just a year or two ago, I took a warehouse full of letters and got rid of them, but from corporations saying, “Harry, Mr. So and So was very good, but we want you.”

Now, that I set my ego. I can only be at one place at a time. My wife won't agree to that, but I can only be at one place at a time. So, that's what started the Memory Power course because somebody said to me years ago, “Harry, if only you could bottle your system, what a boom to society that would be.” That's what I did. I bottled them. Of course, that's what I always say when I talk about it or write about it. You've got to do something. You've got to uncork that bottle.

In other words, you've got to spend a few bucks. You've got to buy my Memory Power course. What I did is I put it all programmed learning. Of course, there is a manual, but more important there's me on five CDs, me personally doing the teaching, and two DVDs of me teaching numbers and names and faces. That was something the corporations started to buy.

Michael: Now, was this course published under one of your book publishers or under your own company.

Harry: This is my own company. When you go to HarryLorayne.com, that's where you learn about the Memory Power.

Michael: Where could one of our students if they're interested in getting your memory course, what website could they find it?

Harry: That's it, HarryLorayne.com. I have another website called Memory Improvement. That might be easier to remember. It's MemoryImprovement.org. It's a different thing. It gives you a little bit of the history of memory and about me also, personal, but you can contact me from that. I think you just click on the picture or something like that. You can find about the Memory Power course.

Michael: Okay, I've got a question. You've got this publisher and you want to create your own course. Was that something that you had to give them first right of refusal of in your contract because it was a different category of a product, you can do it on your own?

Harry: What are you talking about, the Memory Power course?

Michael: Yes, the Memory Power course.

Harry: No, nobody has any control of that. Listen, I have people all over the world who have written me off. All they have to do is change the dial on change the words, and there's nothing you can do about it.

Michael: I'm saying from when you decided to put together the Memory Power course, where you beholden to your publisher like they didn't have you tied up in a contract where you had to approach them first and say, "Hey, guys I want to put a course together?"

Harry: No, no way at all.

Michael: But, if you wanted to do another book, you may have had to do that right?

Harry: Ageless Memory I sold to one publisher. Like I say, as long as I change the concept, as long as it's not word for word, I haven't for the last, I don't know how many decades signed any contract where any publisher has the option for my next book.

Michael: Okay, so now you're your own self-publisher. Your course was under your own thing.

Harry: Yes, but that's different than a book, Michael. That's the most important thing there are the CDs and the DVDs. Any regular book, I won't publish not in the memory area. Magic, yes, I self-publish my own magic books, but no the memory books, not for the public. That I want a regular publisher who has distribution and he can set-up the publicity, etc.

Michael: How did it go with courses? Now you had something that sold more than a book. You had more margins. How was the money on the actual courses?

Harry: That's a little more expensive than a book. People can buy my books for \$29.95. The Memory Power Course is \$150 plus the shipping and handling. It comes out to about \$164, but I have letters from people who have that course like I say saved their lives. So, that becomes unimportant. Of course, it becomes unimportant really. It's what you gain that's important.

Michael: We have a lot of students who are into information products. They're into self-publishing. So, they self-publish a book. They get a literary agent. They get a publisher, and they make a small royalty, but the publisher gets you a lot of exposure. You're an entrepreneur, and maybe you want to make more money. You create an information product, a course that maybe adds more value, some CDs, some audio training from the man

himself. You've got more margins and you're controlling and you're keeping all of the money.

So, from a business standpoint of an information product developer, what could you tell the students in your experience how that was different. Was it good? Was it better money than the books? From a business standpoint, what could you add about that?

Harry: Well, it's better money because you charge much more for something like that, and that's the way it should be because you're getting – I call it the closest thing to personal instruction that you can get from Harry Lorayne. If you think personal instruction from Harry Lorayne is important, then that's what you get.

Although, people tell me that when I write, they learn the same way. That's fine. That's up to the individual which way you want to go. I would not do a book that way. The Memory Power course is entirely different. The book is okay, but the CDs and the DVDs are the important things, but if I do another memory book, I would certainly go to a publisher.

First of all, I like it better for a variety of reasons. Number one, they've got to give me advance of many thousands of dollars if they want to use my name.

Michael: If a publisher really wants you, you've got something hot, what kind of advances in the publishing world are some of these publishers willing to put up front?

Harry: I can only go by me. Nowadays, I think with the economic situation is not going to be that way, but I've got \$100,000 from my last book. Listen, my first book, I told you I got \$500, and I was scared out of my mind because I thought I'd have to give it back if the book didn't make it. I learned that that's not refundable, but then as time went by for the memory book, which became a fast best-seller. I only got \$20,000, but because of the great success, a memory book because it was on the New York Times best-seller list for a year, my second book after that remembered people got a \$500,000 sale in paperback.

Michael: This would be fun. Okay, you've got a lot of students listening. I mean, one could only dream of getting a hundred grand for an advance on a book. I want you to take me back to the day, the time, how did this all work? Did your literary agent call you and say, "Harry, okay, sit down. They want to give you an advance," and then he tells you how much it is? Can you recount that story? I know it's no big deal to you, but imagine all the

students who want to self-publish and become a successful publisher with expertise that they have. What does it look like when you learn that a publisher wants to give you a hundred grand advance on a book? Was that exciting to you?

Harry: Well, of course, but that's not self-publishing, Michael. Self-publishing is when you do it yourself.

Michael: Okay, you're right. I made a mistake, not self-publish.

Michael: I self-publish my magic books. Look, I've written a memoir that I did some years ago. I told you Mel Brooks told me to call it a rememoir, but I did it originally. I wrote it for the public, but I have not gotten the kind of offer, the kind of advance that I will accept.

Now, that sounds silly because they were pretty high thousands of dollars, but nowhere near what I used to get for my training books, and I would love to get that money, but I can't. It would be bad business because it's like years ago, when an agent called me – this was when I was not that well known before my books – and he said, "Harry, I've got a B'nai B'rith," but I was getting let's say a hundred dollars or a hundred fifty in those days for an appearance, and he said, "They can only afford \$75, but Harry, I'm trying to break them in as a client. Can you do it for me as a favor?" blah, blah, blah, and I said, "Oh, okay, for you Henry." The agent was name Henry Stern. I did it for him for \$75.

Now, go forward a couple of months, and Henry Stern calls me and he said, "Harry, I've got a job for you. Are you free such and such a date?" Yes. "I'll give you \$75." I said, "Wait a minute, Henry, my fee is \$150." He said, "But, Harry, you did it for \$75 for me last May." That's why you've got to be careful.

In other words, I will not accept the offers I've gotten for my memoir because later when I want to do a book, if I'm still around and I want to do a book on memory training, they're going to say, "Oh, but you accepted only so much for that." I can't do that.

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Michael: What has been the most rewarding things about your career in the whole memory education training business?

Harry: Are you talking money wise?

- Michael: It could be money or whatever.
- Harry: Well, money, the biggest amount was somebody people bought Remembering People for \$500,000.
- Michael: Remembering People, I mean obviously that was your work, but was that self-published?
- Harry: No, no, no none of the memory books were self-published.
- Michael: What do you mean they bought it for \$500,000?
- Harry: They bought paperback rights from Saul Stein for \$500,000.
- Michael: I see.
- Harry: This was a different company, Warner Books. They pay Saul Stein \$500,000 for the paperback rights of Remembering People.
- Michael: Is that world-wide paperback rights?
- Harry: Oh, yeah.
- Michael: How many languages are your books in?
- Harry: The last time somebody counted them, they told me eighteen that they knew of that they could find, but you know, that's another whole story. I remember somebody sending me a book from Taiwan. It was like on onion skin paper. It was terrible. He said that he had it smuggled out. I didn't know this. If they see a book in your suitcase when you come out of Taiwan, they confiscate it. They don't let you take books out because they're all crooks there.
- So, this guy showed me one of my books. I don't even know which title was. It doesn't matter, but it was my book word for word. It said my name on it, but they printed it and they sell it. They don't pay any royalties. They just steal it.
- Michael: What's your advice on someone who's deciding, should I go the self-publishing route and sell the book myself on my particular expertise, or try and land a deal going through a literary agent or approaching publishers today?

Harry: My feeling is if you can get a literary agent that you think can sell your book, you're much better off, but I'm thinking individually. I'm thinking of myself. I know how to sell a book in magic because it's a very small area. I take a few ads in magic magazines, etc. It's done. I wouldn't know how to sell my own book if I self-published a book on memory. That is really my expertise, which is what the world knows me for.

I wouldn't know how to sell it. I wouldn't know how to set up a publicity tour. Listen, I went out for the memory book. I did thirty-seven cities in one trip. Do you know what I mean? I couldn't do it.

Michael: You need a team.

Harry: I need people who are expert in other areas that set up your publicity and get your tickets and your hotel rooms and all that kind of stuff. I couldn't do that. So, to answer your question, I could only answer it for me. I would never want to self-publish in the memory area. In the magic area, yes, I write the book. I have it printed myself. I run a few ads. I have a whole email list of magicians like 8,000 of them that I email a copy of the full page ad, and I get all these orders. I'm involved in that right now.

I don't even have my book shrink-wrapped. You know why? Because most people want my books autographed. So, before I realized that, I have to sit and cut off shrink wrap. So, A-it saves me money because I'm not paying for shrink wrap, B-I don't have to cut shrink wrap off my books in order to autograph the books.

Michael: How about Schwartz? How did it end where he published a couple of your books? Tell me how that occurred.

Harry: I don't even know how he worked it out with Frederick Fell because in those days I was under option to Frederick Fell, but Gene Schwartz and Fred Fell were like partners with my books anyway. So, he must have worked something out. He said, "Harry, I want to publish so and so." He took some of my older books, and he put them into programmed learning. He didn't. He told me to do it, but I didn't even know what program learning meant, but it ended up I'm very good at it, but it's not a very popular thing now, the book. My Memory Power course is programmed learning. What programmed learning is taught in frame form, in numbered frames, in other words, frame one, and you answer questions. Either you fill in a blank or you have multiple choice.

The way it makes it work at least the way I do it, I want to make sure that the student always answers correctly because they have what's called an

auto practice-mask. They pull it down to see if their answer is correct. I want to make sure they get it correct all the time because I learned years ago if people keep saying the wrong things three or four times, they say, “The heck with it. I can’t do this.”

Michael: Okay, interesting. So, Schwartz ended up publishing which two titles did he published?

Harry: One was called the Memory Isometrics course, which was basically how to develop a super power memory but in program learning form. That’s how it was for the second book, the program learning format for secrets of mindpower. Those things are all out of print, incidentally Michael.

I’m going to give you another website. I don’t know if your people are interested. Somebody put this together for me because they said, “You know Harry, there’s no websites selling your magic stuff.” Years ago, I’ve got to tell you this, Michael, I was very careful about mixing magic and memory. I didn’t want the world to think, “It’s all a trick.” So I was being careful about that until one of my books, Frank Fields – I don’t know if you know that name, Frank Fields – he was the weather guy for NBC for many years. He was very well-known, and he was like a fan of mine, and he read my book. They got a quote from him for this particular book and it was on the back jacket in big print.

He called my systems a trick. He said, “These are the greatest tricks you’ll ever learn on how to train your memory,” and he used the word tricks. It didn’t change or anything, and then I wrote the memory book. In my forward of the memory book, I did something purposely. I wrote that I had started as a card manipulator. That’s the way I started, and I wrote that because I wanted to see what would happen. You know what happened, Michael?

Michael: Nothing.

Harry: Nothing did. The sky didn’t fall around me.

Michael: They didn’t fear. They just want to know how to do it for themselves.

Harry: There you go. It just didn’t matter.

Michael: Harry, how did you go from being a very good card manipulator to memory? Where is this connection?

Harry: What a good question that is, Michael. Listen, I thought that my living was going to be magic – cards. I had my own television show back in 1950 called the Professor Magic Show that my wife and I wrote the whole concept of the show, and this is very funny. I was nineteen or twenty years old, and I was a retired magician that owned a candy store. The reason for that was because the sponsor was a candy manufacturer.

So, I owned a candy store so the camera could pan on all the products. The whole point was once a week, this was the concept of the Professor Magic Show, once a week I had the children from the neighborhood come in, and I would do magic for them, but I was supposed to be a retired magician that opened the candy store. So, they greyed my hair. They made me wear glasses – I had perfect eyesight in those days – that had just regular glass in them. I had to act like an older guy. I looked like a young guy with greyed hair and faulty glasses, but it was a very popular show.

In any case, the reason I'm telling you is I thought magic was going to be my livelihood. Then one day, I was very friendly with a guy by the name of Richard Himber. Richard Himber was a musician and also a magician. He was a very well-known musician of his day, and he was a good friend of mine and always tried to help me out. I was down in the dumps and he said, "What's the problem Harry?" I said, "Gee, I can't get any work doing magic. There are other people doing close up magic in restaurants."

He whistled for a cab, and he took me to Billy Reed's Little Club. Billy Reed's Little Club was on 55th Street near Park Avenue. In those days, New York was a late night kind of place. Until four in the morning, people were going down and drinking and whatever.

He took me there, and long story short, he made me meet Billy Reed who I thought owned the place, but I found out that he worked for people with crooked noses and cauliflower ears, strange people, but anyway, he managed the joint. Long story short, he hired me, and I did table magic. There was a tent card they called it on every table, "Call Harry Loryane if you want to be amazed, ten fingers of magic," etc. In that kind of club, Frank Sinatra used to come in and he only carried hundred dollar bills. So, when he tipped you, it had to be a hundred dollar bill. So, it was good.

I was paying Billy Reed twenty percent of everything over \$400 I made. So, even if I didn't make it, I gave him money because I wanted the job. Now, why am I telling you this? One day, in comes a Victor Joury. This is my life at that time doing table magic because I was very good at it, mostly card stuff.

Now, I don't know if you know the name Victor Joury. He was a popular actor at the time. In the movie Miracle Worker, he played Helen Keller's father. He was a very popular actor. He came in, and he was interested in magic, and he had me come over. I did some stuff for him, and then he comes in a few days later. He comes in a few days later, bringing in a friend and he says, "I want you to do some of the stuff." He kept coming in, maybe eight times he came in with different people, which is very nice, always asking for me.

I would always try to do at least one or two tricks with the cards that he hadn't seen yet because I wanted to fool him or entertain him. Well, I was very young. I started to get to the bottom of the barrel. Now, you give me a deck card, I go on forever because I keep inventing as I go along, but I couldn't do that then. I wasn't that knowledgeable.

So, I was getting to the point where I had nothing else to show him. I said, "Ah, I'll do a memory thing for him." I did a memory thing with cards Michael which I still do if I want to really impress somebody, which is very rare now but I do occasionally is I have somebody shuffle the deck, and then they call them off to me pretty quickly. When, he's all through, I say, "Give me any number from one to fifty-two." He says, "Twenty-three." I say, "That's the Jack of clubs." They check it and sure enough it is. Then I say, "Name any card. Four of diamonds, that's the twelfth card." They check it. There it is.

In other words, I prove that I've remembered where every card is in the deck by number, and then the ending was, "What's your favorite hand in poker?" They'd say, "A royal flush." I said, "What suit?" He said, "Hearts." I'd say, "Fine, look at the fifth card, twelfth card, thirteenth card, forty-eighth and forty-ninth card," and they would look and there was a royal flush – ten, jack, queen, king and ace of hearts. That was the effect that I did.

Michael: I saw that trick on your website.

Harry: Yeah, I do something like it, yes. Anyway, the reason I'm telling you this, I did that trick because I thought I was scraping the bottom of the barrel. I had run out of sleight of hand, real magic card tricks, so I did that, and talk about plot points. When I finished that trick with Victor Joury, he stood up and he started to applaud, and he said in a loud voice because this was called a little club. It was a little club. Everybody heard him. He said, "Harry, all the card stuff you've done for me, the sleight of hand was great, terrific. I've never seen anything like it, but what you just did," and he

started to rave about the memory, and that changed my life because then again off goes the light bulb. I'd say, "Wait a minute. Wait a minute. If this is so great for him, I'm doing something wrong."

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Michael: Wow, that's incredible.

Harry: Yeah, that was a big plot point for me. That's when I started to gear toward doing the memory work, and that's how I gather another way. I was into memory I told you when I was eleven years old as a kid, but now I saw where the entertainment value was.

Michael: Do you gamble?

Harry: I can't in six places, I'm told.

Michael: Okay, so I wanted to talk about the relationship between your memory and cards, card counting and casinos.

Harry: First of all, I don't card count. You see, there's a difference. I remember the cards. First of all, this is very important. People ask me about this all the time. Let me tell you something. There are six casinos I'm told that will not deal to me in Las Vegas. Why? I'll sit down at the Blackjack table and I will win. There's no question about it. I'm going to beat them, but it's work for me. It's a grind because what I used to do I haven't done in years.

After I'd finished at the Blackjack table, I'd go to the crap table which is more fun for me, and I lose it all back anyway. Don't you see, the Blackjack, I love to do it because I like to win, and in my memory, I'm exercising my mind, etc. But, what I started to say is very important is you know the game, and most people who go to Las Vegas or Monte Carlo, which I went to very often to gamble.

I'll give you the anecdote. First of all, I started to tell you, I was playing this game, what we used to call a twenty-one on the mean streets, on the dirty sidewalks of the lower east side when I was five years old. So, I know the game better than the dealers in the casino, better than the owners of the casino. So, knowing the game is important.

For example, I'm working for an audience and this has happened so many times. Somebody will say, "Oh, Mr. Lorayne, Blackjack," and I start to talk about Blackjack, and I say, "Look, let me ask you all a question. Let me prove a point. Get this picture in your mind. You're sitting at Blackjack

table. The dealer has a five showing. You know that he can show one card. You know that. He's got a face down card and a face up card. Let's say it's a five showing. You have a soft 15. If you don't know what a soft 15, that's an ace and a four. Here's my question. It comes your turn. Remember the situation. The dealer has a five showing. You have a soft fifteen. What do you do? Do you hit or do you stay?"

Let me tell you, whenever I did this for large audiences, fifty percent of the people would raise their hand when I said, "Would you hit?" The other fifty percent say they would stay. Then, after it quiets down, I would say, "You're all wrong." Now do you know why?

Michael: No, I don't.

Harry: Okay, because if you know the game, if the dealer's got a five showing, he is mathematically at his worst positioning. He usually has a nine or a picture card there, and he's going to go out. You have a soft fifteen. Whatever you pull you cannot go out even if you get a picture card, you'll end up with fifteen. Blackjack is the only game where in the middle of the hand you can double your bet, and if you don't take advantage of that, then the odds against you are very high. If you know how to take advantage of what I'm about to tell you, then you even up the percentage.

What you do in a case like that, you double down. In other words, if you've got a hundred dollars' worth of chips in front, it comes to your turn the circumstances I've just described, you put another hundred dollars' worth of chips there. He deals you one face down card and he goes to the next player. The odds are you're going to win, but here's the point. Most people don't know that. So, what I'm saying is you've got to know the game.

Now, you asked me how do I apply it. The way I apply it is the enlargement of what I teach in every one of my books where I teach cards, and what I call the missing card stunt. Dick Cavett does it all the time. He shows off that way.

You could take five cards out of any shuffle deck, and call off the quickly as you want, and I'll tell you the five cards that are missing. It's like a Rainman thing. As a matter of fact, I talk to Dustin Hoffman about that. It was very funny because he was the star of the movie Rainman.

Michael: Did you ever meet the real Rainman?

Harry: No, he came to my house with his brother, who he said his brother, I don't even know what the title is, remembers every day in his life and things like that.

Michael: The savant?

Harry: Yeah, but when it came down to remembering a deck of cards or remembering a long digit number, he couldn't do that at all, which I can or any of my students can.

Anyway, listen I started to tell you before, let me get this off my mind. HarryLorayneMagic.com, you could see what my current items are available, but also magic things. Back to Blackjack, I don't count.

Michael: Did you ever have anyone approach you to do a book or have you done a book on how to win at Blackjack?

Harry: No, I wouldn't go into that part. I talk about it in the card section of a number of my books, yes.

Michael: Are you familiar with being in the magic publishing business? Who is it, Edward Thorpe, How to Beat the Casinos at Twenty-One?

Harry: I know the name, and I read the book a hundred years ago, but I didn't go along with it because I don't do that mathematical stuff. I go by averages. When they were dealing only one deck, I had it down pat. In other words, again it's know when to double down.

I would be sitting at a Blackjack table and I've got an eighteen showing, and I double down and people look at me like I'm crazy, but I knew that there are only twos, threes and aces mostly left in the deck.

Michael: Let's say there's someone who's fanatic about card-counting. As a Blackjack player, and let's say you're going to go play Blackjack with single hand decks. Where do you think you're going to come off better – actually remembering the deck like you train in your courses, or doing a card-counting system?

Harry: For me, it would be what I just told you, knowing what cards are left because I don't do the card-counting at all. You know, again, it's an individual thing. For me, I would never attempt that. I would never think of that. I don't lose at Blackjack, never. Like I said, it's a grind. It's work.

Michael: It is work. How about in the casinos today there's five shoes. I can understand one deck. Could one remember what's left?

Harry: Only by average. That's what I meant when I said average because they don't go through a full deck even if you're dealing with one deck. When you get down to near the bottom, they always take them out and reshuffle.

So, you go by average, and the averages work out. If I know that by the time they've gotten three quarters down that shoe with five or six decks in it, if I know there are more deuces and threes and aces left than anything else, that average usually works out.

Michael: Let's talk about your infomercials. Tell me about the first infomercial that was done. How did that all come about?

Harry: Well, I was called to do an infomercial, and I flew to Arizona.

Michael: What stage in your career you were? About how old were you?

Harry: The first one was about 1992, and it was a very good infomercial. It became the number one infomercial in the country. I made a lot of money with it, but I didn't own it. The company's made a lot of money.

Michael: We talked about literary agents and publishers doing a deal. How is an infomercial deal different?

Harry: This was a percentage. This was a 60/40 deal, and I was getting sixty. They were getting forty.

Michael: Sixty percent of the net?

Harry: Yeah, after you deduct the cost of the product, and the cost of the media. Don't forget, you're paying television companies a lot of money.

Michael: Is that a better deal than what you're going to get generally from a publisher?

Harry: Oh yeah.

Michael: Who approached you on this?

Harry: This company called me and said, "Would you like to do this? We want to do something on memory. You're the only name we found." That was

then. Now, I've got [inaudible] all over the place, but I was the only one really known and doing this stuff.

We did in one day. We shot the thing. I brought friends of mine from New York. They flew down to see it. When I say friends, I mean testimonial people. There was one very important guy, and he was on my second infomercial also. Lieutenant Colonel Arthur Ballard, he wrote me a long letter that he was shot down over Vietnam and they took away paper and pencil, etc. He hurt his back, and he was laying there with nothing to do, and he just read one of my books.

What kept him sane he said was going over all my systems in his head, and then listen to this. As he got better and they took all writing implements etc., he said there were other American soldiers, prisoners there. He started to tap on the walls in morse code, and teach my systems to the next door guy who would then tap on his wall to teach it to the next guy. He said after a while all the Americans were using my systems to remember psychology and music and mathematics and numbers, and he said, "You helped keep us sane behind the bamboo wall, and thank you and God bless you, and all that kind of stuff."

He lived in South Carolina. He was retired, and they had him on film. They filmed him saying what I just told you. He ended by saying, "You are my hero," and I'm started to cry as I'm telling you this. Incidentally, there was a television show called To Tell the Truth. Do you remember that?

Michael: Yes, I do.

Harry: They saw this thing or read about it somehow. On the back of my book, the Memory Book was part of his letter, maybe that's where they saw it. They called me and got in touch with him, and he was on that show To Tell the Truth. The concept of the show were there three people all claiming to be the same person. So, after all the questions and answers, they said, "Now, we have Harry Lorayne here with us who will come and stand behind the real lieutenant." You know, I came out and pretend to stand in front of one wrong person, and then you go behind the real guy.

So, they had him on television just because he sent me this lovely letter how I saved his life behind the bamboo curtain in Vietnam.

Michael: Wonderful story. So, how did the infomercial go?

Harry: I'm knocking wood mentally. It was a tremendous success. Like I say, it was the number one infomercial in America for a long time, and then I did

my own infomercial after that because again, I didn't do options anymore. I wanted to do my own. I owned it, and I did it. Dick Cavett was the host. Dick Cavett was a friend. He became a friend because he's using my systems.

He is quoted on the bottom of the dust jacket of Ageless Memory also. He says, "You can use it. You can learn it. You can employ it. You'll do be glad you did." That's Dick Cavett. So, he was a friend, and he hosted the show.

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Michael: Did the first infomercial do better than your own infomercial?

Harry: My own did better. A-I had Dick Cavett hosting it. It was very well-known at the time. He still is, but he was quite well-known, and that one did better. Then, a company called Positive Response took it over because again, the company I originally did it with didn't know how to put it on television properly. So, I had a company called Positive Response. They're out of business now. The guy that owned it died, and it went out of business, but they set up all the appearance, running the show all over the place.

Dick Cavett called me once. He said, "Harry, for God's sakes, I'm at a hotel in Missouri, and I just finished my talk and I'm up here having a drink. I'm scanning the channels, and I just saw myself three times." They were running it all over the place.

Michael: How many years did these infomercials run? How about the first one? How long did that run?

Harry: The first one ran for about a year, and the second one ran for about two years.

Michael: Did they run nationally?

Harry: Oh, yeah.

Michael: Did they run internationally?

Harry: No, you know I remember somebody calling me about to translate into Spanish. I don't think that ever happened.

Michael: When infomercials started running, did that increase your notoriety? How did that affect your business?

Harry: Oh sure, oh sure, I started to get recognized walking in the streets because I'm telling you it was all over the place in those days when they were running it. Sure, more people called me, corporations to come and teach their people or be their speaker for the evening. That's what I did mostly. Now, I don't want to do that. I don't want to demonstrate anymore. I want to teach because for example I don't want to go in and remember everybody's name anymore because not that I can't do it mentally, but I can't do it physically.

Michael: Tell me about your introduction, how you got on Carson. Who got you on Carson? When was that? How did that lead to being on twenty-three times?

Harry: I don't know how I got on originally I guess. See, I'll tell you how I got on the first national show that I ever did was called I've Got a Secret. That was Gary Moore. Gary Moore did himself to be – what happened was I couldn't get on any television show, and I was talking to somebody, and this somebody said, "I know Chester Feldman." Chester Feldman was the producer of I've Got a Secret, which was a very hot live television show in those days. Do you know what the concept of I've Got a Secret was?

There was a panel of three or four people, and somebody got on, and they asked them questions to find out what was his secret. This guy said, "I can get you an appointment with Chester Feldman," and he did. Long story short, I go up there. Chester wasn't too thrilled. He was sitting writing. I coughed until he looked up, and he said, "Harry, what can I do for you?" I said, "Well, I want to be on I've Got a Secret." He said, "Well, what would your secret be? What would you do?"

I said, "I'll remember the names of everybody in the audience, which is 400 people." I saw again the curtain go over his eyes. He said one of these clichés, "All right, Harry, we'll call you." In my mind, I said, "Yeah, sure you'll call me." I said, "Look, Mr. Feldman, why don't you let me do it after your show one night?" They were on Tuesday nights. "I'll do it for you not on television after your show." He looked up at me, "You would do that?" I said, "Of course."

So, long story shore, that Tuesday, Gary Moore before he goes on television says, "Listen, folks, there's a man walking around asking you for your names. He is not with the Internal Revenue. Please don't get

frightened. Just give him your name. You're going to see what we're going to do with that after the show."

That's what he did so people didn't get scared because don't forget, I wasn't well known then. So, when I go over to somebody and say, "Excuse me, I just want to know your name." They want to know why. They got a little frightened. So, he made that little talk.

Anyway, long story again after the show, he introduces me. I say, "Would the few people I met stand up?" Everybody stands up. I call them all by name. As I call them, they're seated until everybody is seated, and he says, "Harry, you're on next week."

Michael: Wow, were there 400 people.

Harry: Four hundred people, that's what they told me. I don't count them. It'd scare the hell out of me if I counted them.

Michael: That's so many people. How do you process and come up with the tricks so quickly and match them up to the face of the person?

Harry: That's one of the things that I write about is by the time you shake hands in real life, by the time you shake hands, it should be done. If I meet a Mr. Ben Davinia, by the time I stick out my hand then I thought of Bent a Vein, and understand something. I'll give you another one of my clichés, even if my systems don't work, they must work, and this is a good example because in order for me to do what I just told you in a split second, I meet Mr. Ben Davinia, by the time I shake his hand, I'm thinking of a Bent weather vane, bent vane because remember what I told you about the reminder principle, because bent vane is going to remind me of Ben Davinia, not only that, Ben Davinia is a conglomeration of sound. If you're not Italian, maybe it means something in Italian.

Michael: But, how do you match it up to their face?

Harry: Well, that's what I'm trying to tell you. Now, by the time I shake hands, I've already thought of bent vane. Now, in order to do that, you know what you're forced to do, and most people will not understand this until I mention it, and then say, "Oh, of course."

In order for me to have come up with bent vane, I had to do something that most people, 99.9 percent of the people in the world don't do, and that is listen to the darn name because how can I have come up with bent vane for Ben Davinia if I didn't hear it in the first place. That's so important

because the universal memory complaint is, “I’m introduced to somebody and two minutes later, I forget his name.” When people tell me that and I’ve written some books, I say, “That’s a lie. You didn’t forget his name. What you did is you didn’t remember it in the first place, and I’ll take it a step further back, you didn’t hear it in the first place. You know something, you’re too busy looking around trying to see who in this room do I want to network with, who do I want to impress, never realizing that maybe the person you’re not listening to right now may be the most important person in your life. You never know, do you?”

So, anyway, in order to come up with the visible thing I cannot visualize Ben Davinia, but I can visualize a bent weather vane, the thing on top of a roof with NEWS on it. So, by the time I shake hands, I’ve done that, and when I said even if my systems don’t work, they must work because I forced you to listen. That’s the key.

Okay, next thing, as I shake hands, I look in his face, and I pick out the most outstanding feature. First impressions are lasting impressions. The first thing I see, let’s say I see a big nose, let’s say that’s the first thing I see on Mr. Ben Davania’s face, but the time I finished shaking hands I visualize his face with a bent weather vane instead of the nose.

The next time I see Mr. Ben Davania, that nose is going to be outstanding feature and I see bent vane, and I say, “Hi, Mr. Ben Davania.”

Michael: Okay, but you’ve got 400 people. Everyone has an outstanding feature. Aren’t you going to start mixing up the features?

Harry: No, because I’ve been forced to listen and concentrate. That’s the key. You know, I’ve written this in a book. I was at a show where there was seventeen Mr. and Mrs. Smiths in the audience. So, it’s the same question like you just asked me, all the same outstanding features, how about the same names? I don’t care because to me when I’m working and meeting people, each person is an individual and that’s very important also.

That’s what I teach people. If you’re at a busy meeting, you’re not going to worry about 400 people. You’re interested in ten people, and you do exactly the same as I do except I do it faster because I’ve been doing it for sixty years.

Michael: Have you ever screwed up and blanked out for any reason?

Harry: Yeah, but I have ways to get out of it.

Michael: What do you think inhibits good memory for the public out there?

Harry: Very simple, not paying attention. That's the thing. You've got to learn how to pay attention. It's what I call the slap in the face principle. I told you before that Aristotle in one of his books said one of the things that we must speculate is images, but there was something else Aristotle used to do that was very important when I read about it. He and Plato and Socrates, people like that, they were teachers. They used to teacher one to one, one person at a time.

One of the things I found out they did is let's use Aristotle as the example. If he made a point, if he said something that he thought it was very important for the student to remember, you know what he did? He slapped their face. It's the slap in the face principle. Incidentally, that concept worked a thousand years later, or two or three thousand years later when we were settling in the west here in America because the guy who staked land, he would take his first born son when he was twelve, old enough to think, and he would take him and he would say, "Here is the boundary." He wanted the boy to remember where the boundary of his land was, and he would take him to the boundary and he would say, "Listen, look here. This is the boundary of land," and as the kid looked, he'd slap him.

Why? The kid never forgot that. He said, "What are you doing, Dad?" "Now, you'll never forget. This is where your land ends." So, that slap in the face principle is very important. All it means is grasping attention. The problem, and I've written about this so people who have read my books, forgive the redundancy, that hurts. I'm too small to do that. So, I had to develop a way to slap people in the face or teach you how to slap yourself in the face without the pain, and that's where I teach how to make ridiculous pictures like I just demonstrated a little bit with Ben Davinia.

Michael: Fascinating. Okay, Johnny Carson.

Harry: When I did the I've Got a Secret thing, I started to become a little known, and then another long story I couldn't get on the Jack Parr show, and at one of my appearance, Boris Hart, may he rest in peace, he became a good friend. You know who Boris Hart is. He directed My Fair Lady, and he wrote a book called Act One. He was very important, and he came to me and he said, "Harry, you have given me an evening I've never forget. What can I do for you?" Without thinking I said, "Get me on the Jack Parr Show," because I couldn't get on it, and he did. He wrote a letter to Jack Parr. He said, "If you don't put this guy on, I will never do your show again."

I got on the Jack Parr Show. Around that same time, I did the Ed Sullivan Show. That's another story where Richard Hinder brought me to meet Ed Sullivan and Hinder used to get things off key a little bit, a little bit off synch. He said to Ed Sullivan, "Ed, this guy will remember everybody's name in the audience, and then, when he calls their name, they'll all stand up until the whole audience is standing." He had it backwards. I do it the other way. I have everybody stand and I seat them.

So, when he said to Ed Sullivan, this is at the Broadway Theater where it's now called the Ed Sullivan Theater here in New York. When he said he'll call everybody's name, and as he calls them, they'll all stand until the whole audience is standing, Ed Sullivan said, and I'm quoting now, "Dick, I can have Ray Block play the Star Spangled Banner and get the same effect." I started to laugh. That was the end of that.

A couple of weeks later, Bob Prankter who is Ed Sullivan's son-in-law called me and I got the show anyway. That's when I started to get known, and then I got a call to do the Johnny Carson Show. Who called? I guess it was one of the talent coordinators.

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Michael: Do you remember that night specifically?

Harry: Yeah, and they all start to blend. I've got a picture on my wall. I'm looking at it right now. The last time they called me, I was sitting here and the talent guy, we were talking on. I said, "I've got a picture of me and Johnny." Well we both had jet black hair. We were smoking, which you don't on television anymore. He said, "Oh, Harry, bring it. Bring it. Johnny would love to see it." So, I did.

The talent agent said to me – how do I know I was on 23 times? I don't keep those kind of records – the talent agent said to me, "Harry, Johnny wants to mention how many times you've been on." I said, "Honestly, I don't know." He said, "Okay, we'll take care of it." Johnny mentioned that I was on 23 times. In other words, they counted it. I didn't.

Anyway, he showed that picture of he and I when I was sitting in what they call the first chair, talking to him, and he said, "Let's pose. Let's do it again." So, I have those two pictures in a frame. They're about 28 years apart with the top one with the black hair and smoking, the bottom we both have grey hair and not too much of it.

So, we got friendly. Johnny started doing magic, and that's one reason I guess he knew about me. He became a big fan. He would come into the dressing room every time I was on, and somebody once said to me, "Harry, was that Johnny coming out of your dressing room?" I said, "Well, yeah," like what's the big deal? He said, "Johnny doesn't go into anyone's dressing room unless he's a big fan." Well, I didn't know that, and he used to come into my dressing room all the time.

He was the kind of guy, he knew my background. We were very friendly. Whenever I was in town, he would call me. We would get together, not on the show necessarily but personally, and I'll give you another little vignette. He knew my background. So, when I was finished, I'm sitting in the first chair talking to him. He said, "Harry, how many degrees to you have?" He knows my background. I said, "Johnny, I only have one year of high school." Then, we went onto something else, etc, and again, here comes that same call from Freddie DiCordova. He said, "Oh, Harry, we've gotten so many negative pieces of mail and calls." I said, "Why? What the hell did I do now?" He said, "Well, you said you only had one year of high school. All these letters and calls we got, they all said basically the same thing. They said we have enough trouble keeping our kids in school as it is. We don't need to see an obviously successful guy saying that he only had one year of high school," and you know something. They were right.

Now, I'm not going to lie publicly. I don't lie even privately, but I'm not going to lie publicly. First of all, I opened my mouth. I'm not a PhD, but let's not kid each other. So, now if somebody talks about my education, I will say that I only have one year of high school, but if I had it to do over again, there's no question I would get my high school diploma. Then, it's okay.

Michael: They say, if you made it to Johnny Carson, you've made the big time. Did you believe that at that time?

Harry: Well, you know, it didn't change my life that much. I got more recognizable, and people talked about me. I have a video of Carl Reiner who is another friend of mine being on the Johnny Carson show when my name came up, and so for about three or four minutes, they talked about me and I wasn't even there.

So, then, the next day, I get all these calls saying, "Harry, you know Carl Reiner and Johnny Carson talked about you." So, what it was is being more recognizable. It made my work easier. I'm a basically very shy person, like mother like son. My mother, oh god, if she was standing on a

railroad track and a train was coming, she'd be too shy to raise her hand and say help.

When I was a kid in school, kindergarten and first grade, I was too shy to raise my hand when I had to go to the bathroom for god's sake. You can see the end result of that. I really was a very shy kid. Magic saved my life when I saw a counselor doing a card trick, and I was too shy to ask him how he did it because of him, I said, "Oh my god, if I could do that, if I could only do that." I didn't know he wouldn't tell me how to do it anyway. Magicians don't give away their secrets.

I ran home and I stole milk bottles to get the two penny or three penny deposits on them in those days so I could buy a cheap deck of cards to try to work out that trick. That was a plot point for me that changed my life because I had never made eye contact with people. I never spoke to people unless they spoke to me first. Now, suddenly if I wanted to show this card trick that I just figured out, I had to say at least three words. I had to say, "Pick a card."

Michael: Yeah, it was a license to be social with someone.

Harry: Yes, it literally changed my life. Magic did, which is why I love magic to this day. I've written thirty books on the subject. So, those things were very important. They were plot points to me. Like I told you the Victor Jory story, so I guess I've been very fortunate in my life, Michael.

Michael: What's your life look like today? Are you super busy? What are you doing currently?

Harry: I'm not super busy, but I'm always writing and I'm writing another magic book as we speak.

Michael: Are you writing longhand in cursive?

Harry: Always longhand, excuse me longhand first and then into the computer which scares the heck out of me and took a long time for people to talk me into the computer. Of course, I'm a first time writer. I don't want to have to write it again once I type that. So, when I type a chapter, immediately I print it out and I send it to a friend who edits it for me. I'm afraid, but it is easier on a computer than a typewriter. I don't have to use whiteout. I can always change easily if I make a mistake. Although, my dyslexia does affect it that way, I'll sometimes write the word, "hnad." I realize it, and I can change it easily on a computer.

Michael: You speak so well. You speak fast, and your recall and the memory and the names, it's just incredible.

Harry: Well, thank you. My wife tells me I talked too fast sometimes, and perhaps I do, but I'm very succinct. I mean I make sure people understand me. I write the same way. I ran classes personally for a few years here in New York, and I always talked fast, but there was no question that people understood me. So, my attitude is talking fast is okay as long as people understand you.

Michael: Do you think all the memory mental exercises from all your career has maybe staved off any kind of dementia or Alzheimer's or anything like that? What's your personal belief? I'm sure you've thought about it.

Harry: I think mental exercise is very important, and you hit on a very good point which I wish I could answer knowingly. Would that be great? I'd be a savior for God's sakes, but I don't know, but I've got to honestly tell you I'm knocking wood mentally as I do. I'm not a particularly religious person, but I hedge my bets. I'm going to knock wood. Maybe that helped me at my age. I'm still mentally okay because the older I get the more I hear about old friends and friends of friends who are going into Alzheimer's and dementia and things like that.

So, I read you that thing from Dr. Steven Zuckerman who says that my systems helped with Alzheimer patients. I have a feeling there is something there, but I'm not a doctor. I'm so very careful about those things.

I'm very upset with one thing that you see all these advertisements about this pill will help your memory. Take this medicine and this pill and that's hogwash, and that I will state definitely because I'd love for some of these companies to sue me. It's such a hogwash. They're going to teach you how to run through a maze like a mouse does. That's what they do. They give these medicines for mice. Maybe in fifty years, there will be a pill that will help your memory, but certainly not now, not from the research I've done, and I have done research.

Right now, the best over the counter pill to give you a memory that you never dreamed possible is me.

Michael: The Harry Lorayne Pill.

Harry: Exactly.

Michael: Harry, I absolutely loved this. You're one of my favorite, favorite interviews.

Harry: Thank you. Well, what are you going to do with all that?

Michael: I'm going to share it with thousands and thousands of my subscribers. Let's do one more time, best websites for our students to visit.

Harry: If you want to learn about the Memory Power product alone, just the Memory Power product, you will see Dick Cavett for a moment at the beginning, and you'll have the testimonials and things like that. You'll see a piece of me on the Johnny Carson show remembering everybody's name, etc. For that, you go to HarryLorayne.com.

If you want a little bit of background of memory and my personal background, and a lot of testimonials, go to MemoryImprovement.org, not dot-com but dot-org, MemoryImprovement.org, and finally, if you want to see a bunch of my things that are not out in print, that are currently available in both the memory and magic area, you've got to go to HarryLorayneMagic.com and for all those cases, or any one of those, you can email me directly if you have any questions. As I said, I'll answer any question. If I don't know the answer, I'll make it up.

Michael: You got it. Harry, thank you, and I hope you have a wonderful day.

Harry: Good to talk to you, Michael.

Michael: Bye.

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