

**Shrink Rap Radio #221, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2009, Secrets of the Bulletproof Spirit**  
**David Van Nuys, PhD, aka “Dr. Dave” interviews author Azim Khamisa**  
(Transcribed from [www.shrinkrapradio.com](http://www.shrinkrapradio.com) by Virl Seribo)

**Excerpt:** *What I’ve learned from my journey, David, is that you get problems in life your heads cannot solve, you get problems in your life your hearts cannot heal, and in my deepest crisis, I have a degree in math and finance, and it was useless. What saved me was my spiritual foundation. I started to meditate when I was 20 years old and I lost my son in my 40s. I remember I couldn’t sleep or eat, but I could meditate.*

**Introduction:** That was the voice of my guest, Azim Khamisa, speaking about developing what he calls, *A Bulletproof Spirit*. Having lost his only son, Tariq, to a gang related murder, Azim N. Khamisa, is a rare individual, who not only speaks of powerful and life changing concepts, but also walks his talk, having created a foundation in his sons name, the Tariq Khamisa Foundation, which is dedicated to breaking the cycle of youth violence by empowering children, saving lives and teaching peace. Azim is also the author of three best selling books: *Azim’s Bardo- from Murder to Forgiveness*, *A Father’s Journey- from Forgiveness to Fulfillment* and this latest one with his co-author, Jillian Quinn, *The Secrets of the Bulletproof Spirit*. Now, here’s the interview.

**Dr. Dave:** Azim Khamisa, welcome to Shrink Rap Radio

**Khamisa:** Thank You

**Dr. Dave:** You and your co-author, Jillian Quinn, have written a fascinating book called, *The Secrets of the Bulletproof Spirit* and I’m eager to speak with you about your work on this topic.

**Khamisa:** Thank you, yes; it’s been very well received, thank you.

**Dr. Dave:** Yeah, that’s wonderful, as it should be. Now the subtitle of the book is *How to Bounce Back from Life’s Hardest Hits* and I really like that subtitle for a couple of reasons. One is I like your use of the word ‘hits’ for the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. It’s colloquial and it’s a word and concept that I think we can all relate to. The other thing I like is your frank acknowledgement that we all take hits sooner or later, right?

**Khamisa:** Absolutely, its part of living, isn’t it?

**Dr. Dave:** Yes it is. In fact, you took a major hit in your own life and maybe you can tell us what brought you to this work.

**Khamisa:** Yes, it was a personal tragedy and this was a tragedy on the Richter scale of 10 because how do you deal with the loss of a child? I think probably, what I’ve learned is that parents are not engineered to withstand the loss of a child. It’s probably the most complex thing a parent can go through. 14 years ago, my son who was a student at San

Diego State University and worked as a pizza delivery man on Fridays and Saturdays for a local Italian restaurant, it was his turn to make a delivery, and he went to some middle class area where they delivered pizzas all the time. He was lured to a building with a fake apartment number and he knocked on many doors and found out that nobody had ordered the pizzas. He came back to his car and put the pizzas in the trunk and climbed into the driver side seat and as he tried to back away from the scene of the crime, he was accosted by four youth gang members. Three of them were 14 year olds, the leader of the gang was an 18 year old, who handed a 9mm gun to a 14 year old and as my son was trying to back away from the driveway, the leader gave the order *Bust him, Bones*. Bones was the 14 year old gang member's nickname, and he fired one round which entered my son's body under the left armpit, traveled across the upper part of his chest, and the bullet actually came out of the right armpit and as the coroner explained to me afterwards, he said, "Azim, this was the perfect path. You don't see a path like this very often." And I said, "A perfect path?" And he said, "Yes, because it destroyed all the vital organs." And my son died drowning in his own blood a couple of minutes later over a lousy pizza ...

**Dr. Dave:** Oh my goodness

...at the age of 20. He was a great kid, charismatic, good student, had a wonderful girlfriend that he just got engaged to and they moved in together. Always a very, a lot of friends, was generous, good writer, an amazing photographer, and we had him for a short 20 years. He was a very important part of my family. So needless to say, it brought my life to a crashing halt.

**Dr. Dave:** Yes, you know, it's like a nightmare that I think every parent fears. What was your life like before your son's...?

**Khamisa:** Yes, my life was very full. I worked as an international investment banker. I speak a half a dozen languages and I was educated in England. I primarily worked in the investment banking field, mostly doing international work. I used to think nothing of coming in from London, changing suitcases and flying to Tokyo and after he died, it literally took all of my willpower just to climb out of bed.

**Dr. Dave:** I can well imagine

**Khamisa:** Yes, it was very difficult those early days

**Dr. Dave:** Oh yeah. Did you go through some stages following his murder, you know, they talk about the stages of grief. Do you recognize any stages that you went through?

**Khamisa:** Yes, absolutely, absolutely. The first stage is exactly that. It's to acknowledge that you have been wronged. It's a grieving process and I have with the grace of god I have survived the loss but the first few weeks and months were extremely hard. You don't sleep, you don't eat, your biological functions change. You're like a zombie. I was suicidal at one point because I did not know how to live without my son. He was a big part of my life, as children are.

**Dr. Dave:** You must have been very angry as well, I would think, in those early stages

**Khamisa:** You know I wasn't so angry at my son's killer. I was angry at our society because what I saw in this tragedy was probably a lot of people wouldn't have seen is I saw there were victims at both ends of the gun. I saw my son was the victim of a 14 year old gang banger and I saw the 14 year old gang banger as a victim of our society.

**Dr. Dave:** Hmm Hmm

**Khamisa:** And as an American, I felt we are all responsible for the society we created. We are, we love this country and I'm a naturalized American. I'm an immigrant first born. I was born in Africa, although my roots are Middle Eastern. I went to school in England, as I said earlier, and I immigrated to the US in '74 and my son was actually born here. So as an American, a naturalized American, I felt I must take responsibility because I am part of this society and this bullet was fired by an American child. I really felt I should take my share of responsibility for that bullet and quite frankly, so should every caring American because I have learned that kids in our country aged 10-11 join gangs for all the wrong reasons. We're not doing a lot about it, it's a huge problem. 75 kids get shot every single day. About 13 die. The rest end up in wheelchairs. Another 230 kids are arrested single day for violent crimes. This is every day, I'm talking *kids!* Kids ages 12-19. Something like 30% of our kids float with gangs and I thought, *My God, this is not right.* So, 9 months after Tariq died, I started a foundation which is named after him. It's called the Tariq Khamisa foundation and our website is [www.tkf.org](http://www.tkf.org). Essentially, after I started the foundation, I reached out to forgiveness to the grandfather and guardian of my son's killer. And I explained to him that I don't come to you in anger or resentment, or in retribution. What I see here is we both lost a son. My son died and your grandson went to adult prison. There's nothing I can do to get my son out of, you know, I can't bring my son back from the dead and there's nothing you can do to get your son out of prison. And I've learned there are so many challenges for these young folks. I shared with him all the statistics and I said that I started this foundation with the mission statement of stopping kids from killing kids by breaking the cycle of youth violence by 1) saving lives, 2) teaching and empowering the right choices 3) teach the principles of nonviolence and peace and compassion and I've come to you in the spirit of forgiveness.

**Dr. Dave:** What was his reaction to that?

**Khamisa:** Yeah, you know, I told him while I can't get my son back from the dead and you can't get him out of prison, we can stop other kids from our community making the same mistakes as your grandson did. This is a very lofty mission and will you help me? And he was very quick to take my hand of forgiveness and he told me right there... when I met him I remember looking in his eyes and there was this connection which was beyond your mind or your heart, it was almost what I call a *soulular* level, and I coined the word *soulular*. There was this recognition of being one soul. He was very quick to take my hand of forgiveness and he said that the first thing was that I've been praying

that someday I'd have the opportunity to extend my condolences to you and your family. You've been in my daily prayers and meditation and of course I will help you. And we've now been together for 14 years. We've reached 8 million kids.

**Dr. Dave:** Wow

**Khamisa:** I have personally spoken to half a million live. We have over 150,000 letters from kids and we are successfully keeping kids away from gangs and guns and violence. I started the foundation with no staff and about \$8000 and today we are 50 employees and a \$2,000,000 budget. There is so much demand for the work we're doing; I wish we had \$200,000,000 because I want to be in every classroom in the world. The program starts by me and him together and we go to schools and we are introduced: *This man's grandson killed this man's son and here they are together.* We met in some extremely trying circumstances. He's African-American and I'm Eastern. He's Christian and I'm Muslim, and here we are. His grandson took the life of my son and here we are together. It's a very powerful, visual image of how you create love and unity from conflict.

**Dr. Dave:** Well I'll say it is. Now, I'm wondering, I don't know if it was your Muslim upbringing or what, but somehow it seem like perhaps you had been somewhat 'bulletproofed,' to use your phrase, before the tragedy and I was wondering what in your prior life 'bulletproofed' you?

**Khamisa:** Yes. I think it was my spiritual foundation. What I have learned from my journey, David, is that you get problems in life your heads cannot solve, you get problems in your life your hearts cannot heal, and in my deepest crisis, I have a degree in math and finance, and it was useless. What saved me was my spiritual foundation. I started to meditate when I was 20 years old and I lost my son in my 40s. I remember I couldn't sleep or eat, but I could meditate. I used to do an hour a day, now I do two hours a day. I feel that without the spiritual foundation, I wouldn't be talking to you. So one thing I've learned is we all have a Bulletproof Spirit, although not all of us are connected to the Bulletproof Spirit and that's the point of this book. When you are connected to the Bulletproof Spirit, when you have a strong spiritual foundation, I can tell you there are no problems, and I want to repeat there are no problems that you get in your life that you cannot solve or heal.

**Dr. Dave:** Yes

**Khamisa:** And I'm a living testament to that.

**Dr. Dave:** Well I'll say. I guess this is what in psychology would be referred to as resilience. Have you and your co-author reviewed any of the research literature on resilience?

**Khamisa:** Yes, and I think that resilience is part of it. I think you see that lot of kids who have gone through of abuse or gone through social services that they do develop resilience. But I think beyond, now I didn't go through a lot of heartache. I grew up in a

nice family and a strong spiritual foundation but I think that the ability to understand that the soul of the spirit is mightier than the head and the heart. A head is a logical device. I have a good friend that says a mind is a dangerous place to go by yourself...

**Dr. Dave:** hahaha

**Khamisa:** ...because a mind will justify anything. Hitler justified killing 6 million Jews and a lot of people joined him. Some of us who are more evolved think that, you know, we live in the heart. But the heart is where emotions resides and how often, as humans, do we care about our emotions? A lot. So the point I'm trying to make here is that the real resolutions are in the soul because soul is mightier than the head and the heart. The soul has a rudder, the soul has wisdom, the soul has compassion. The soul is really, I believe in God, the soul is the God within us. It is our connection with God and once you tap into that reserve, once you tap into that resource, you essentially have God as your partner. And I think that where you are able to build the spiritual foundation, and the book helps because if you look at the book, we talk about five different sections. We talk about your *Bulletproof Birthright*, and then our second section is the *Bulletproof Plan*. Third one is *Bulletproof Breakthroughs*. The fourth section is *Bulletproof Blueprint* and the last section is *Bulletproof Best Practices*. These best practices essentially help you develop that spiritual foundation. And I was lucky that I started meditating when I was 20. Forgiveness is a blessing and a blessing is when preparation meets grace and I was given this gift of forgiveness very quickly because nine months after Tariq died, I was able to reach out the family of my son's killer because I had the preparation in place and when preparation meets grace, that's what a blessing is. I truly believe now that it is important for all of us to, it doesn't matter if you're Muslim, or Jew, or Christian, or Buddhist it doesn't matter. Or even if you're an Atheist it doesn't matter because we're all have a soul, we all have a spirit and spirituality is the study of the soul. You can go to a surgeon who can operate on the frontal cortex of your brain if there was a problem with your brain. But you can't go to the doctor and say fix my soul.

**Dr. Dave:** Right

**Khamisa:** Yet we all have a soul. And what do we know about it? Just because we can't see it doesn't mean we don't have it. The soul is our best attribute. It is the most powerful organ that we possess and I think that you built this practice by creating some kind of spiritual practice. Now I do it through meditation, you can do it by prayer, inspirational reading. You can do it with nature; there are many ways you can connect with your spirit.

**Dr. Dave:** Yes. Now it seems to me that part of the challenge of writing a book, such as you've done is walking the tight rope between denial and realistic hope and I think you and your co-author have done a good job of doing that.

**Khamisa:** Right, right. And I think that one of the things you'll learn that if you are in denial, you are a victim. I had a very full life when my son was alive and I wanted that full life again. I have it again today. It's different. I don't spend as much time doing

investment banking. Most of my work, 80% of my work now is working with kids and adults and I teach a course in forgiveness. So the key point I want to make here is I could have gone through life on crutches and saying I lost my one and only son. I have a beautiful daughter, but he was my only son and people do feel sorry for me. But I didn't want people to feel sorry for me neither do I want to go through life on crutches. And there's no way that you can stop being a victim without forgiving. Once you forgive, you are no longer a victim. And this is important, forgiveness is something you do for yourself. I mean why do you want such meager important real estate of your psyche occupied by somebody who has hurt you? Why not forgive and release that real estate of your psyche so love and joy can live there?

**Dr. Dave:** Yes, well let's step through some of the strategies in your book. You say that bullets, or hits, are spiritual bullion. Say a bit about that

**Khamisa:** Essentially in every hit, the point I'm trying to make is, I've had many hits in my life, as an immigrant too, and I've been able to take my life to the next level. We get hits all the time, David, and you are at this door, and behind you is stuff that doesn't work anymore. People hang into relationships, stay in abusive areas, or keep working in companies that they're not getting their fullest satisfaction from and the point I'm trying to make is when you get a hit, the universe is trying to speak to you. You need to move through that door because it doesn't serve you anything. And right outside that door is a whole new world. So anytime I've taken a hit, you know, and sometimes I say it takes faith because it may feel a chasm to go through that door...

**Dr. Dave:** Yes

**Khamisa:** ...and you can't cross a chasm in two steps. You got to take that leap of faith...

**Dr. Dave:** Right

**Khamisa:** ...but go for it because when you do go for it, the universe is waiting on the other side to catch you and to help you and have a whole new life. So every time you take a hit, you know, spiritually what this book does, David, is it provides the information and inspiration, the difference between somebody who is spiritually resilient and somebody is spiritually fragile. The difference is the spiritually resilient people have that inspiration and information and for the spiritually fragile person to get there, this book will be very helpful. The spiritually resilient person talks about, he doesn't say *Why did this happen to me?* A spiritually resilient spiritual person would say *Why did I attract this to me? What wisdom can I garner from this hit? How do I take the bullion from this hit and make leap of faith to become a better person or to have a more fulfilling lif?* I mean, I can clearly tell you I am a better person, not that I was a bad person 14 years ago, but I'm a better person and we can all be better people.

**Dr. Dave:** Hmm hmm

**Khamisa:** And I can clearly say I made the right choice 14 years ago. If I could have gone the other way, where would I be today? In my life, when I made that choice, I honored my son, I honored my family, I honored myself, I honored the killer, I honored his family and I'm helping society. And yet, knowing I made the right choice, knowing that most everyone else goes the other way, don't they?

**Dr. Dave:** Yes they do. Yes they do, and that leads into my next question. You have a short chapter on entitlement. One of my colleagues was just complaining to me that our college students seem to feel very entitled these days. They demand high grades. How does entitlement come into play in terms of the Bulletproof Spirit?

**Khamisa:** Yeah, I mean, entitlement is what I call the enemy of energy, you know? The thing about entitlement is that it really zaps the energy necessary to take the hit and come out on top. Spiritually fragile people stand a lot of time with psychic emotional and physical energy, reacting to the unfairness they experienced because they feel they are entitled to a certain kind of life, one without hits and hurt. And that's not realistic. Spiritually resilient people don't do that. They resist this feeling of entitlement and use all of their energy and resources to do all they can with whatever it is they have been given. And I think this is an attitude, you know, you don't want to think *Why me* or *I'm entitled to this*. Everybody gets hit.

**Dr. Dave:** Hmm hmm

**Khamisa:** Everybody has a story.

**Dr. Dave:** That's right

**Khamisa:** If you're spiritually resilient, if you're Spiritually Bulletproof, you see past the surface dynamics of your relationship, and you get to the real role of mutual spiritual evolution because, I actually believe we all have a spiritual purpose and my spiritual purpose was, you know, working with kids and stopping violence and the work I'm doing in forgiveness, not as an investment banker. I did not know that. The gift that came out of my son's tragedy is that it put me in my spiritual purpose and when you are your spiritual purpose, you are part of the universe. So when you look at this entitlement, again it's a victim mentality. You got to look and say *This is not the attitude, I got to be spiritually resilient and right in this entitlement, I am short changing myself*.

**Dr. Dave:** Yes. Now you have several chapters that focus on the grieving process. For example, you say *Grieve like a Guru*.

**Khamisa:** Yes

**Dr. Dave:** How does one grieve like a guru?

**Khamisa:** Right, well according to my Sufi tradition we have - I'm a Sufi Muslim- when a person dies, we are told that for 40 days after the soul passes to the other side, during

the 40 days, it stays in close proximity of his loved one and family. So for 40 days, I had people come into my house everyday. From my mosque, they brought breakfast, lunch and dinner and everybody had to ask the story and I couldn't say *Tariq died*. I would say Tariq, and the word died would send like 2000 volts, you know, surged through my body, it would take me a long time to get out, well he died. And they would wait, and they would hold my hand and they would do prayers, and finally I would get it out and I used to think I am not going to be able to tell this story one more time. So, the 40 days are for grieving and at the end of 40 days, I was counseled. After the 40 days, the soul moves to a new consciousness. I don't like to think of Tariq as dead, I like to think of Tariq at home. We are all eventually going there.

**Dr. Dave:** Hmm hmm

**Khamisa:** And souls also have a journey, and so I was counseled by my teacher, the rabbi in Muslim fate, that excessive grieving after the 40 days will impede your son's journey, your son's soul journey. Other than grieve, you do a good deed. Good deeds are spiritual currency. Good compassionate deeds are spiritual currency and they will transfer to the departed soul and will help fuel your son's journey.

**Dr. Dave:** Yes

**Khamisa:** So, I thought, why don't teach this stuff in college, you know?

**Dr. Dave:** Right. Really, well I'm trying to. I'm going to teach a course in positive psychology and we will be covering many of these points.

**Khamisa:** Yeah, so 40 days was not enough time, David, and the clouds did not part for me for about 3 ½ years but I started the foundation 9 months later in my son's name. [unintelligible] So, I was able to start this foundation because I wanted to create spiritual currency for my son, and the inspiration was I want to do something for my son. It's an automatic thing for a parent. You go on a vacation, you buy a gift for your kids before you buy one for yourself, and I wanted to create spiritual currency for my son because I was taught by my spiritual teacher that by doing compassionate deeds in his name, you can create spiritual currency which provides high octane fuel for the soul's journey. I thought I'm going to create millions of dollars in spiritual currency to Tariq can finish his forward journey in a rocket.

**Dr. Dave:** Hahaha

**Khamisa:** That felt good to me.

**Dr. Dave:** Yeah. Great way to express it. And then eventually, I guess you came to the place you talk about *Invoking the Sunset Clause*, in relation to grief, which suggests that there is a time, finally, to let go of it.

**Khamisa:** Absolutely

**Dr. Dave:** How does one move on from the grief?

**Khamisa:** Yes, and that's exactly the point. That's a very good question because there are several chapters on forgiveness. The first is acknowledge that you have been wrong. That's grieving and the best way to do this, by the way, is through ritual. I explained to you my Sufi ritual but all faiths have rituals, but you have to have a sunset on grieving because if you don't stop grieving, you remain in victim hood. So while it's important to grieve, it is also important to stop grieving. Now the Sufi tradition says grieve for 40 days. I suggest to people grieve as long as you want, but then you got to stop that grieving and take that energy and put in something positive for society. By creating or whatever it is you'll do, if you want to join a non-profit or go volunteer or work in a soup kitchen or give or help a lady cross the street. In any way you can, go out there and create compassionate deeds because in that giving of compassionate deeds is where the real healing comes in. I love talking to kids because I know I'm saving lives, I know that I'm keeping kids away from gangs, guns and violence, I know that I'm empowering the right choices, I know I'm teaching the principles of peacemaking, love, forgiveness and compassion. And through that I get the healing. So, you know, and I love the work because it has got so much meaning and my son did not die in vain. So at some point, whatever your hit was, right there is the message of once you're done with the grieving pieces, you evoke the *sunset clause*, you stop grieving and you take that energy and transform it to the soul or the spirit because the soul is a prism. It can take dispersed, negative dark light and create positive, bright, laser focused light and that's what you got to do.

**Dr. Dave:** Yes. How did you hook up with your co-author, Jillian Quinn? Is she a Sufi as well, or does she come out of a different tradition?

**Khamisa:** No. She actually is a Christian and she is a teacher, a mother and a wife. She teaches a course of Miracles. She's a very spiritual lady. She lost a daughter in a trimester, you know. She was almost ready to deliver it and then lost in a pregnancy and then went through some very cathartic experiences and then went to China and has adopted a third child. She has had two and lost her third child. She was here in San Diego, she lives actually in upstate New York, and her husband is a teacher as well, so they take summer vacations. They were in San Diego and she came to one of my talks. I speak often, I've given like 300 keynote speeches, and she came to one of my speeches. She was also writing a book and was looking for a chapter in forgiveness and obviously my story was perfect. Then after we met, and she came to my house and I gave her my story and she wrote her chapter, but then it eventually led for us to a book together because she really always wanted to do a book on forgiveness and she asked me if I was interested in doing a book with her. Actually, she came up with the title and did a lot of the writing. We wrote it together. A lot of the stuff I gave her came in interviews and conversations and then looking at every chapter. She's a great writer and she did a phenomenal job on the book.

**Dr. Dave:** Yes, yes. It's well written. I like the structure of it and I love the chapter titled *Dance between Desire and Detachment*. Take us to the dance if you will...

**Khamisa:** You know, there's a Chinese symbol for crisis, which is essentially a conflict, which is between the dance and the desire, you know?

**Dr. Dave:** Hmm hmm

**Khamisa:** And what I talk about, the dance between desire and detachment is essentially similar because the Chinese symbol for crisis is the symbol for danger and the symbol for opportunity.

**Dr. Dave:** Yes

**Khamisa:** So in every crisis, the danger is to create more conflict, the opportunity is to create love and unity. And that's where, you know, spiritually resilient people can understand the difference that there is that peace. Spiritually fragile people are often unaware of how important their desires really are to the manifestations of their dreams. See what I'm saying?

**Dr. Dave:** Yes

**Khamisa:** I truly believe that if you are very clear, you have to, you must figure out how to combine passionate desire with dispassionate detachment.

**Dr. Dave:** Yes

**Khamisa:** So this dance of desire and detachment requires grace and practice, but will reward you with a tremendous boost in your ability to bounce back after taking a hit. I would say that when you are, and I do it through meditation. When you put out very clearly to the universe what your desires are. The how is not important. But you want to put it out there and say this is, and obviously the desire has to be in the highest good, the highest good for me, for even the killer of my son, for society. If it is in integrity and it is clear, I believe the universe then conspires to make that happen.

**Dr. Dave:** Yes, yes, I've seen instances of that in my own life.

**Khamisa:** Yes, so what you've seen here is that the Spiritually Bulletproof people combine the creative power of their desires and the profound power of detachment to heal from their hits and manifest their dreams.

**Dr. Dave:** Yes

**Khamisa:** So there is a process here and I tell people if you don't know how to forgive, set that intention out there. Make sure there are no strings attached to it. Make sure it's in the highest good for you and the other person and society. Through meditation or

however you want to do it, get that intention out to the universe in a consistent way. I meditate three times a day but I always tell people to do it at least twice a day. And once, you get that, it will manifest.

**Dr. Dave:** Well you've got 30 chapters, each with some very specific advice and homework exercises and I'm not going to ask you to give away the whole book here. The country, indeed the world is going economic hardship right now. What bulletproofing advice do you have for our listeners who are maybe hard hit by the economic downturn?

**Khamisa:** Well I think my biggest advice is that I don't worry about problem that money can solve. I worry about the problems money cannot solve. So I think you need to look at your blessings and hopefully you are healthy and you are able to work and you able to have a family and you are able to have other blessings in your life. I think if you had a financial hit, maybe it's time to look and say, *Life is not about the relentless pursuit of the almighty dollar. Life is about integrating the other aspects of your life.* I've always had an equal emphasis on my material life and my spiritual life. If I'm reading a book reading a book on investment banking, I'm reading the book by the Dalai Lama or Thich Nhat Hanh or you know, Rumi. So I've always believed that you have to take things into perspective. Money comes and goes. I've had many setbacks of money. I came here as an immigrant, made money, lost it and then made money and I've always felt that there is an ebb and flow to money. And I think that I had learned in my journey is that if you have built a strong spiritual life, happiness is not a material concept, it is a spiritual concept. And I work very hard not to be living in those lower rated emotions of greed and anger and jealousy and resentment and avarice. What has gotten us to this stage in the financial crisis is greed and avarice in Wall Street and our country as a whole.

**Dr. Dave:** Good point.

**Khamisa:** And now there's a point to see that that was not the way we should be living our lives. That you want to live in the high vibratory emotions of goodwill, of friendship, of trust, of empathy, of compassion, of forgiveness, of love. If you can live here all the time, you will succeed in finding happiness. So, you know, you have to look at the financial hits and see what excesses you may have had, what attitudes you had about greed and avarice and how you can now look at this and say, I want to not just be in the relentless pursuit of the almighty dollar. I'm going to improve my spiritual base. I'm going to improve my resiliency. I want to improve and want to be able, when this thing will turn around eventually, I'll be much stronger, much more resilient, and yes, I've made money before, I can make money again. So it's not the end of the word, you know what I'm saying? It's an opportunity to now look and see how this financial hit can impact your core values. Were you always in this area of material pursuit? Where are you spiritually...how resilient you are. Do you have thoughts about greed? Do you have thoughts about avarice? Do you have thoughts about jealousy? Are you living in this high vibratory emotions? I think this book will be very helpful to people to develop those attitudes. And I work very hard not to get angry, I don't usually get angry, but we all have a bad hair day, right?

**Dr. Dave:** Yes, ha ha

**Khamisa:** But I'm able to pre-empt it. I've realized that when you are in those low vibratory emotions, you have essentially fallen off the wagon. Happiness does not live there. And it's important to develop good core values and good hygiene. We have 30 different secrets here to help you so that you not only take hits, from thrive from it.

**Dr. Dave:** Ok. Well you know, I think that's a perfect place for us to close and I will put a link to your website and encourage people to visit it and look at your workshop schedule. So Azim Khamisa, thanks so much for being my guest today on Shrink Rap Radio.

**Khamisa:** Your welcome, David.

End of Interview

**Post Interview Commentary:** I hope you were as moved and impressed by this interview with Azim Khamisa as I was. I was particularly struck by Azim's sense of responsibility for his son's death. That as an American he shared responsibility in not doing his part in rescuing the floundering youth in this nation. What a remarkable and courageous insight that was. And what a powerful testament in the importance of forgiveness. So much of what Azim said represents the perennial wisdom which we have heard expressed in these interviews time and again in different ways: the importance of developing a spiritual practice, the importance of forgiveness, the importance of generosity, the importance of service and loving kindness to others, the importance of placing spiritual, family and community concerns over material concerns and so on. Imagine transforming the tragedy of a child's death into reaching half a million youngsters with this deeply peaceful and inspiring message instead of being permanently locked into grief, anger and revenge. I highly recommend this book, *The Secrets of the Bulletproof Spirit-How to Bounce Back From Life's Hits* and you might want to go to Azim's website to find out more about his work to consider supporting it and to see his workshop schedule. You'll find all this at [www.azimkhamisa.com](http://www.azimkhamisa.com).