



# **JIM HARSHAW, JR.**

---

*Clarity of Action. Peace of Mind.*

Success for the Athletic-Minded Man Podcast

Action Plan Episode #458

**Maurice Ashley**

What does it take to become a grandmaster in chess?

It's a journey filled with intense competition, relentless focus, and unwavering determination.

In this episode of ["Success for the Athletic-Minded Man" podcast](#), I sit down with Maurice Ashley, the first African-American Grandmaster, to delve into his remarkable journey from Brooklyn to the pinnacle of the chess world.

But this episode is more than just about chess; it's a motivational guide to personal and professional growth.

Maurice shares how his early days in Brownsville's rough neighborhood shaped his resilience and competitive spirit. He also opens up about the grueling path to earning the grandmaster title, drawing parallels between the strategic sacrifices on the chessboard and the calculated risks in life and business.

Maurice's story is a testament to the power of persistence, the importance of learning from failure, and the necessity of having the right mentors.

Whether you're aiming for a promotion, starting a business, or improving your personal and professional relationships, this episode is packed with insights and inspiration to help you harness your inner grandmaster.

Tune in to learn from a legend and discover how the principles of chess can elevate your game in business and life.

## Top Quotes From This Episode

*"The path to success is often littered with failures. It's your attitude that dictates whether or not you're going to call an individual action, an individual loss, a failure or you're going to call it a stepping stone because nobody wins right away."*

*"Every single loss, every single so-called failure, every single mistake is a potential learning tool. The real failure is not learning from the loss, is not extracting all the lessons possible that you can get from a loss."*

*"The journey is so much easier when you have trusted advisors in your corner."*

## Show Notes

**This episode touches on the following key topics and ideas:**

- **What it takes to be a Grandmaster (1:55)** Maurice explains the requirements for achieving the Grandmaster title in chess, emphasizing the need for competitive victories against internationally ranked players and the importance of earning "norms" through consistent performance in tournaments.
- **The Brooklyn beginnings (3:49):** Maurice shares his background as an immigrant living in Brooklyn and the challenges he faced growing up in a tough environment.
- **Athletic Excellence (5:04):** Discussing his family's competitive nature, Maurice reveals that his brother and sister are both world champions in kickboxing and boxing, respectively, highlighting the intense competitive spirit that runs in his family.
- **Is chess a sport? (5:41):** Maurice makes a compelling case for considering chess a sport, describing the physical and mental stamina required to compete at high levels. He emphasizes the importance of physical fitness, meditation, and mental clarity in maintaining focus during games that can last several hours.
- **From good to great (6:33):** The role of chess magazines, studying legendary games, and the influence of the Black Bear School of Chess in honing Maurice's skills that got him from being a novice player in high school to becoming a Grandmaster.
- **Different chess styles and environments (12:54):** Maurice compares the fast-paced, tactical style of blitz chess played in Brooklyn parks to the more strategic, long-form games played in formal chess clubs.
- **The Importance of mental toughness (17:27):** Maurice explains how learning from losses and maintaining resilience separates future grandmasters from merely talented players.

- **Handling failure and setbacks (19:56):** Maurice discusses how to view failures as stepping stones rather than setbacks. They stress the importance of choosing the right mindset and learning from mistakes to achieve long-term success.
- **[Environment of Excellence \(24:39\)](#):** Maurice highlights the value of having trusted advisors and coaches to provide guidance and support.
- **Balancing sacrifices and risks (31:44):** Maurice discusses the strategic decision-making involved in balancing sacrifices and risks in both chess and life.
- **Becoming a Grandmaster: Key Moments (37:02):** Maurice recounts a pivotal game where he learned the importance of playing like a grandmaster even before officially earning the title.

### **List of Resources Mentioned in the Episode**

Books by Maurice Ashley

["Move by Move: Life Lessons on and off the Chessboard"](#)

["The Life-Changing Magic of Chess: A Beginner's Guide with Grandmaster Maurice Ashley"](#)

[\[VIDEO\] Grandmaster Maurice Ashley plays NYC trash talker - The Tim Ferriss Experiment](#)

### **Want to talk to a personal performance coach?**

Want to consider executive life coaching? Claim a spot on Jim's calendar for your free one-time clarity call: [JimHarshawJr.com/APPLY](http://JimHarshawJr.com/APPLY)

Enjoyed the podcast and want to hear more? Head on over [here](#) for more!

### **How to Leave a Rating and Review for STF on iTunes**

Ratings and reviews help a lot! Please consider leaving one. It's really simple. Here's how: <https://youtu.be/T1JsGrkiYko>

### **Other Episodes Referenced**

[#293 A Remarkable Story of Discovering Success, Failure, and Hope in Mississippi: Dr. Jeff Bulington of Franklin Chess](#)

**Guest Website and Social**

**Maurice Ashley**

[Website](#) | [Instagram](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#)