



# Astronaut

at a Glance

1  
00:00:05,004 --> 00:00:07,774  
I think life hands us challenges  
and lessons that we can always

2  
00:00:07,774 --> 00:00:09,509  
learn from.

3  
00:00:09,509 --> 00:00:12,345  
That makes us better human  
beings and better astronauts,

4  
00:00:12,345 --> 00:00:16,850  
whether it's a discussion  
around the table.

5  
00:00:16,850 --> 00:00:21,321  
Whether it's working in the  
yard, it crossing my mind a lot

6  
00:00:21,321 --> 00:00:23,490  
when I'm doing some  
plumbing work at home.

7  
00:00:23,490 --> 00:00:26,326  
Or working on the  
car or something.

8  
00:00:26,326 --> 00:00:28,995  
Saying you know, I didn't  
approach that the most efficient

9  
00:00:28,995 --> 00:00:29,996  
way.

10  
00:00:29,996 --> 00:00:31,998  
And some day I may be asked  
to do something similar on the

11  
00:00:31,998 --> 00:00:32,999

Space Station.

12

00:00:32,999 --> 00:00:34,033

How can I do better?

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00:00:34,033 --> 00:00:36,503

high school is when I found out  
I wanted to be an astronaut.

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00:00:36,503 --> 00:00:38,738

It just kind of hit me over  
the head one day reading a book

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00:00:38,738 --> 00:00:41,107

about it in the  
high school library.

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00:00:41,107 --> 00:00:43,143

I was reading about Apollo 13.

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00:00:43,143 --> 00:00:45,845

So I changed my  
education in high school.

18

00:00:45,845 --> 00:00:49,082

I loved art and wanted to be  
an artist, and then decided I

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00:00:49,082 --> 00:00:51,618

wanted to work with the space  
program and started really

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00:00:51,618 --> 00:00:54,554

buckling down on  
math and science.

21

00:00:54,554 --> 00:00:57,824

Went to a liberal arts college  
though because of the love of a

22

00:00:57,824 --> 00:01:00,760

lot of different  
kinds of education.

23

00:01:00,760 --> 00:01:05,698

So didn't do much more in terms  
of art, but I did major in

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00:01:05,698 --> 00:01:09,803

physics at a small  
school in North Carolina.

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00:01:09,803 --> 00:01:12,739

And then went on to engineering  
graduate school at the

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00:01:12,739 --> 00:01:14,507

University of Virginia.

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00:01:14,507 --> 00:01:18,144

Got a degree in  
engineering physics there.

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00:01:18,144 --> 00:01:21,347

And then from that point  
on I changed gears again.

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00:01:21,347 --> 00:01:24,050

Found out that I loved science  
but also loved working with

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00:01:24,050 --> 00:01:25,351

people.

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00:01:25,351 --> 00:01:28,021

I like the people that,  
doctors that I work with.

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00:01:28,021 --> 00:01:29,856

I was in a biomedical project.

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00:01:29,856 --> 00:01:33,626

So I decided I'm going to go  
to medical school instead of

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00:01:33,626 --> 00:01:37,764

continuing on with a graduate  
degree, a PhD in engineering.

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00:01:37,764 --> 00:01:39,933

So I switched over to  
the medical school there.

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00:01:39,933 --> 00:01:44,637

Went to Wake Forest for medical  
school in North Carolina.

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00:01:44,637 --> 00:01:47,340

And then from there fell in  
love with emergency medicine.

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00:01:47,340 --> 00:01:49,442

Did a residency in  
emergency medicine.

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00:01:49,442 --> 00:01:53,680

Was working as an ER doctor for  
a while in Seattle, Ohio and

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00:01:53,680 --> 00:01:57,650

Seattle, and then found out they  
need flight surgeons down here

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00:01:57,650 --> 00:01:59,352

at the Johnson Space Center.

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00:01:59,352 --> 00:02:02,689

And they had a new program for  
training outside doctors to work

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00:02:02,689 --> 00:02:03,690  
as flight surgeons.

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00:02:03,690 --> 00:02:05,892  
So I came down, applied  
for the program.

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00:02:05,892 --> 00:02:10,396  
I was one of two in the first  
class for a brand new flight

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00:02:10,396 --> 00:02:11,698  
surgeons here at JSC.

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00:02:11,698 --> 00:02:14,067  
Started taking care of  
astronauts and pilots.

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00:02:14,067 --> 00:02:16,369  
And then during that time found  
out, man I'd love to be an

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00:02:16,369 --> 00:02:17,370  
astronaut.

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00:02:17,370 --> 00:02:19,105  
So applied and got in.

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00:02:19,105 --> 00:02:23,076  
as an astronaut  
selected in 2004.

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00:02:23,076 --> 00:02:27,413  
And then in 2008, I got a call  
from the chief of the office at

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00:02:27,413 --> 00:02:30,216  
the time, Steve Lindsay, called

me in and said he wanted to sign

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00:02:30,216 --> 00:02:35,321  
me to a crew, SDS 127, shuttle  
flight, to go up in 2009.

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00:02:35,321 --> 00:02:37,724  
So I started training with  
my crew, six other crewmates.

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00:02:37,724 --> 00:02:39,726  
And a little bit with  
the station crew.

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00:02:39,726 --> 00:02:41,995  
There was going to be  
six people up there.

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00:02:41,995 --> 00:02:46,900  
So we were going to be the  
first gathering of 13 at once in

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00:02:46,900 --> 00:02:47,901  
space.

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00:02:47,901 --> 00:02:50,403  
So that was the  
shuttle flight in 2009.

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00:02:50,403 --> 00:02:53,973  
And then soon after that was  
reassigned to a Space Station

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00:02:53,973 --> 00:02:57,110  
flight, long duration, six  
months, to launch out of

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00:02:57,110 --> 00:02:59,879  
Kazakhstan on a Russian  
rocket on the Soyuz.

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00:02:59,879 --> 00:03:03,249

Docked to the Space Station and  
worked as a flight engineer.

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00:03:03,249 --> 00:03:07,253

But that meant actually not only  
helping fly the Soyuz but mostly