

N.Y.B.L. Podcast Ep 138 (Unlocking Your Full Potential with Jeff Lerner)

[00:00:00] Welcome to another episode of negotiate your best life. It is my honor and my privilege. To have Jeff Lerner back on my show. He is a friend of mine, but he is also a super badass rockstar. I mean, my goodness gracious, like I don't even know where to begin with him. He is a rockstar musician, badass piano player, but he's also.

[00:00:33] A huge, huge business rock star. I mean, my guy, he is so, so successful, but he started with nothing in debt, struggling with depression, debt, divorce, you name it. He was bullied as a kid. I mean, he really came from not only nothing but less than nothing, and he's built. [00:01:00] A fortune and he will be talking all about that.

[00:01:05] And he really has remained so humble and so kind and such a good person. And it is such a pleasure always to spend time with you. Jeff, thank you so much for being here. Well, thanks, Rebecca. That's quite the kind introduction and I will, uh, do my best here to, to be worthy of it and to deliver as much value as I can for your audience.

[00:01:27] And I'm always so grateful when we get to connect. So I'm glad to be here. Yeah, ed. Oh my gosh. I even almost forgot to mention you have a brand new book unlocking your potential, which we will be talking about today as well. And. You know, that is the name of your book and which obviously, you know how to do for yourself.

[00:01:52] And for many, many people that you've touched. But I think the theme of your life is reinventing your [00:02:00] future, because that is what you've been able to do many, many times. And I believe that you and I are actually very similar in that vein. I've actually reinvented myself many, many times too. And I believe that.

[00:02:13] You know, I believe the universe puts people together. I don't believe it's any accident that we have found our way to each other. Um, you know, but let's go back. I believe your story's so important. We, I interviewed you. I don't even know. Maybe two years ago. Yeah. It's been a couple close to two years probably.

[00:02:36] Yeah. Yeah. Plus it seems like forever, like so much has happened in two years. That's. Yeah. Wow. So I want to tell your story again, because you know, I, you were bullied as a kid, which I was too, and you know, I I'm in the process of [00:03:00] reading a book right now. Uh, as I started to tell you a little bit, before we jumped on the air by Gabrielle Bernstein called happy days, and she talks about trauma.

[00:03:11] She talks about trauma with a big T and trauma, with a small t, you know, trauma with a big T being, you know, like you were molested or whatever. Right. You know, um, and trauma with a small t you know, being like smaller things. But, you know, I think bullying could be trauma with a big T depending on.

[00:03:31] You know how bad it was or whatever, but talk about that experience for you. Sure. I mean, it's pretty, it's pretty straightforward. Um, you know, it's, I was, I was a different, I guess, a different looking kid. I, I have a, a genetic disorder and, you know, it's funny, like in hindsight, I look at my life and, and, and at the time it was like very reductive in my mind.

[00:03:56] It was very, it was this very simple equation. It was like, I.

[00:04:00] Genetic disorder. Therefore, I look different. Therefore people don't accept me, therefore they are mean, but I also know, you know, now with a, a more sophisticated worldview, it was actually a lot more complex than that, you know, bullying and, and social dynamics in general, a lot more multi aspected and multifaceted than, than being, you know, so like simplistic in algebraic like that.

[00:04:23] I mean, I look back and the reality is I was bringing my differences into. The mix in the way I was showing up and what I was expecting on other people. And I was putting onto other people an expectation of how they saw me and, and I was seeing them see me. And just like, you're talking about how the universe brings people together that are of a, like mind the universe, you know, eventually will provide you with whatever it is that you're expecting to find.

[00:04:51] I, I always say people will think what you tell them to think. Totally that's and they'll treat you the way you, and they'll you'll get what you tolerate and you'll yeah. To some [00:05:00] degree, get what you expect and, right. Yeah. So, but you don't know that when you're 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 years old. Exactly. You know, they, and they didn't either the, the bully kids, the mean kids, you know, they didn't know the forces that they were, uh, being, being directed by.

[00:05:15] And, but, but, you know, long story short. Yeah. I probably suffered a, a, a consistent series of little T traumas. In aggregate were, you know, probably a legitimate, big tea trauma of like, you know, before I was old enough and strong enough physically and mentally to defend myself, I was getting kind of cut down by the world on a, on a very chronic and consistent basis for years.

[00:05:42] Uh, and, and it was, and I can't decide in hindsight, if it was better or worse, If it was better before, after I knew I had a genetic condition, I, I just knew that like kids were mean to me. And, and I actually, you know, as a physical, as you know, from physical standpoint, I don't, it's weird how it's like, I don't show it as much now.

[00:05:58] Like I think a lot of people in my [00:06:00] life genuinely don't think like, oh, he looks like he has a cranial disorder, but I kind of did when I was a younger kid, um, it's called Wardenburg syndrome and you can look it up and it's kind of one of those, like, uh, things. Depending on how you do your hair, whatever, like you may or may not see it in a person.

[00:06:16] But, uh, as a kid, I really kind of had the mark, so to speak of, like, this kid is different. There's something wrong with him in, in classical terms. And, uh, yeah, I just took a lot of help for it. And, and you talk about reinventing yourself. Um, you know, I went to one private school from kindergarten through my sophomore year of high.

[00:06:37] So I think it was always really interesting. I went to one school for 11 straight years. I didn't have those resets of like elementary school to middle school, middle school to high school. Like, like there's like natural resets in, in the public schooling system where you get new, you know, maybe the zoning or the districting changes or whatever.

[00:06:55] I never had that. It was like the same identity with the same group of [00:07:00] people from as little as I can remember. To the time when I basically just got so fed up, I dropped out of the school system altogether, which was my junior year. And, uh, and, and yeah, I, I think it's interesting. You talk about my life is about reinventing itself.

[00:07:13] I think that I spent my entire childhood wanting to be able to hit the reset button. But you can't when you see the same people in the same classes and the same teachers in the same buildings for, for a, a DEC your first decade of life, basically that, yeah, I think ever since then, I've been re inventing myself as, as aggressively and often as possible.

[00:07:36] Yeah, no, I mean, I totally get it. And as a kid, you just wanna be the same, you know, I mean, I I'm half Chinese and so mm-hmm, , you know, and my middle name is Yong and I just remember like kids saying, what's your middle name? King Kong. And you know, like, I just remember like, oh, why isn't my middle name? Like Marie or Ann, like everybody else's middle name.

[00:07:59] Right. [00:08:00] You know, you just don't wanna be different in any way. You know, I, why don't I have blonde hair? Like everybody else, you know, you just, whatever it is, that's different is just horrible, you know? And so, so you, you grow up from that and then you, you, you're a crazy talented musician. Um, and so, but you go, you get into your twenties and you start off your book by listing off a whole bunch of your failed businesses.

[00:08:33] And talking about your failed marriage. Like, so your twenties were just, you know, you go from that in your childhood and your teens straight into your twenties. Yeah. Yeah. It was, you know, I, I like to think that I got a lot of the, the messy parts of life. I just got 'em over with as fast as I could, you know, the first few [00:09:00] decades, it was like, let's just screw this up.

[00:09:02] As badly as possible, as quickly as possible. And then I can just slowly get better from there. I, uh, and actually I say that, but it's interesting. I have a theory, you know, there's that saying? Uh, be nice to nerds, cuz you'll end up working for one someday. You know, they say that to kids like, oh, don't pick on the nerd.

[00:09:19] He's gonna be your boss someday. Right. But if I think about what that really means, I don't think it's because, and by the way, if you, if you actually really think back to your high school, The, the, the divide between nerd and cool. Wasn't the divide between smart and dumb. Like there's like this stereotype that like nerds are smart nerds have just as broad of diversity of intelligence as the cool kids.

[00:09:44] Right? It's not about that. I actually think the reason that quote nerds and I mean, the people that get bullied, the people that get picked on the people that are undersized, the people that end up with something to prove, I think a part of the reason. They end up [00:10:00] doing fairly well in this world is because they actually get more comfortable being humiliated early on.

[00:10:09] They get less, they are less attached to the opinions of others because the opinions of others are more toxic to them more early. And if I think there's any, if there's anything that cripples adults. More than anything. It's worrying about the opinions of others and nerds got over that back. When they realized

the opinions of others just hurt them so bad, they need the best move they could make would be to stop caring what other people think.

[00:10:32] And I think that actually sets them free to go on in life and be successful. And I think it's the cool kids that grow up handicapped, cuz they're so attached to being cool. They're scared to make a mistake. And so for me leading onto that for so long. Yeah. And so for me, my twenties. We're just the natural extension of a childhood where I had given up on caring, what people thought, because what people thought just tore me down anyways.

[00:10:54] And so I just tried a bunch of stuff and it's weird. We look at my twenties and we're like, oh, this, this, you know, it must have been so [00:11:00] hard to be his parent. You know, he is just failing at one thing after another look, I was just getting educated. I was trying stuff at my own risk, which by the way, you, if you really wanna learn a lesson, have it truly cost you something, not just like, oh, I failed a test, but.

[00:11:15] Oh, I, I lost all my money now. I can't pay my rent. You'll learn that lesson. Right. And so I just learned a bunch of lessons in my twenties. And so it's no wonder that in my thirties, I've been consistently successful at a number of things because I spent my teens learning not to care what people think.

[00:11:32] And then, because I was free from carrying what people thought I got to spend my twenties learning a lot of really good lessons by repeated failures, cuz I was willing to try things. And so finally by 30, I kind of had it figured out. I think we should put all kids. I mean, ideally we don't have people be so mean to each other, but as a general formula, I think it holds, yeah.

[00:11:50] Well, I don't know. I mean, I know for me, I, I graduated second in my class from high school and then started college. I got married at 19. I had three kids by [00:12:00] the time I was 22 dropped outta college. interesting. Oh yeah. My dad was a doctor. My, I was like the dream at that point. Yeah. Like that's exactly what my Chinese doctor dad wanted me to go drop outta college and get married at 19, had three kids.

[00:12:17] You know, so, I mean, I was like written off at that point. Huh. Right. You know, I mean, not like I wasn't like excluded from the family, but as far as like, you know, but yeah. I mean, no, nobody expected too much from you at that point. Yeah. Isn't that liberating? Well, I, it, it was, and it wasn't, but because part of me was like, oh, this cannot be the end of my, so, I mean, I started teaching.

[00:12:47] You know, I, I did finish college and then I was like teaching inner city public school. And, you know, I was like, oh, this cannot be the end of my story [00:13:00] over here. Like, I definitely know, like, this is not the end of the story over here for me. And, and that's why I wanna get to this for you, because I believe.

[00:13:14] and I actually trademarked this phrase, which is the deciding factor. Hmm. Like, I believe that there's something inside of successful people where you just make a decision mm-hmm where you just decide that that's it. You're done with that. You just decide. And, and I actually, when I give speeches, a lot of times I talk about the word decide because the, the, the root of the word decide it is side from Latin side is to kill, [00:14:00] you know, homicide, suicide.

[00:14:02] It's actually, you're actually. Killing off any other possibilities, you're actually saying, that's it. This is how this is going. And I believe that something happened inside of you where you just said I'm done with that. And I wanna know if you knew that or if you felt that if there was a moment or if you just, if it was a process or tell me.[00:15:00] [00:16:00]

[00:16:51] I think I've, I've always been a fairly decisive person, you know, there are, but there was a, a shift. There was a, there are a few, [00:17:00] there are a few decision points in my life that have, that have been like big ones and they stuck. And I think that, you know, I, I like like yourself, I have researched, I mean, this, you know, now I'm in the business of helping people make transformational changes in their life.

[00:17:17] Particularly through entrepreneurship, at least through my platform mantra, but you know, deciding to become an entrepreneur is no different than deciding to leave your marriage or deciding to, uh, have a physical transformation and change your diet. I mean, that's not the shift I'm talking about. I'm talking about the shift that made, I'm talking about the shift from where you, you decided.

[00:17:44] Success was part of your journey now. Yeah, no. And, and all I'm saying is that as somebody who's now, essentially in the decision business, I help people make transformational decisions. I have studied a lot of what you're talking about around the psychology of [00:18:00] decisions and, and what I, I agree with you very much that.

[00:18:05] Most of what makes a decision, most of what substantiates a decision as being the right decision is what happens after the decision. It's about how you

follow up. Right. And so, yeah, I think that I've been pretty good in my life at a few critical times of pretty good at making a decision and then actually following through on it until until however long it takes whatever pains I have to endure.

[00:18:33] I made a decision, like you said, I killed the other possibilities. I, I, I homicidally eliminated the alternative and I've made a decision, thus, there's no choice. And so, uh, so yeah, I would say that when I, I mean, I actually remember it like a crystal clear moment. I was at boarding school. So after I left, uh, my high school sophomore year, It's a long story, but I couldn't go back to that high school.

[00:18:58] I actually ended up basically getting [00:19:00] ex quasi expelled. They, they told me I couldn't come back basically after the, the year ended. And so we kind of scrambled, and my parents found a boarding school for me and I contracted mononucleosis the first week of boarding school. So I show up at this newborn school, my junior year, and now I have mono and I'm not allowed to go to class.

[00:19:22] So I don't have, I never get to make friends. I don't get to like reintegrate integrate into this new setting. It's like, literally I show up, I get diagnosed. I get quarantines. I get cut off from the, and so I'm just truly alone, like 2000 miles from home at this boarding school with no friends and I'm not allowed to talk to anybody.

[00:19:42] I'm not even allowed to go to class. That's when I decided I was gonna become a musician because I started, I would go wander around the campus. At this board school, it's called Northfield, Mount Herman in Northfield, Massachusetts. And I would go wander around the campus and I found this old abandoned music building, cuz they had built a new music building and moved all [00:20:00] the instruments and classroom classes and stuff over there.

[00:20:03] But there was just an old empty building with a piano in it. And I'm sitting there. I'm a I'm I'm the most isolated like clinically alone human you can possibly be. And I just start playing the piano. And I would go up there every day and play the piano. And it was within like a week. I mean, bear in mind, I'm teaching myself the piano.

[00:20:23] I'm not like already some great pianist within a week. I'm telling you, at least at the time, I was convinced that God spoke to me now who knows teenagers, hormones, who the hell knows what it was, but I heard a voice I'm

sure. And it said, hear that. Well, it I'll tell you what it told me. It said, Jeff. If you don't learn to play this instrument, you're gonna have to get a job.

[00:20:50] Somehow. I just had this sense. This instrument is something I could learn to do that I could trade proficiency at [00:21:00] for, for money. For shelter for food, for like the basic Maslow's hierar, lower level hierarchy of needs. I will, I will survive without having to get a job if I get good enough at this instrument.

[00:21:14] And, uh, I never went back to school. I basically spent the rest of the semester practicing 14 hours a day. Uh, and at the end of the semester, I told my parents I'm coming home. I'm not going to school anymore. I came home and I, I just dropped outta high school and I've been, was a musician ever since. That was a decision, you know, but you know, a 17 year old male and it's important that I'm a male because when I got home, I went to the university of Houston piano faculty, cuz I lived in Houston and that was, I was like, well, I'll go talk to the, the really good pianist at the, at the college.

[00:21:50] And I said, Hey, I'm, I've got this weird story. I'm 17, but I think God wants me to be a piano player. Um, can you. And they said, okay, play [00:22:00] something. And I played and they're like, you're not a piano player. And I know I'm. I said, yeah, I know. I just started. That's what I'm telling you. But God told me to do this.

[00:22:07] And, and they, uh, they said, yeah, there is, it is biomechanically impossible for a 17 year old male per teenager to become a like virtuoso caliber world class pianist. Because you basically, they said you have to start before pub. Because your hands, your muscles, your joints, your growth plates, like you harden physically you harden.

[00:22:33] When you go through puberty, especially as a man, right? Your must sugar gets more rigid. Your tissue gets less pliable. They said, you're never gonna be able to have the technique to be a good pianist. You started too late. Like, you'll be okay, but you'll never be a pro. They told me. And, uh, I spent, you know, probably between 10 and 14 hours a day, every day for the next three years, committed to proving them wrong.

[00:22:54] And I did. And every semester, uh, fall and spring, I would go back and I would re-audition and I would be like, it's me again. [00:23:00] I still don't have a high school diploma. I still think God wants me to be a pianist and I've really been practicing and I can't wait to show you and I would play and they would laugh me outta the room again.

[00:23:09] And finally, after three years I got in and I got a full scholarship. So, so yeah, I'm pretty good at following through on decisions. That's what I'll say. Okay. So I that's amazing. So I, but I wanna get, I wanna get to you F you founded entre. Okay. After your, you know, around when you're 30 ish, I wanna say, right?

[00:23:32] Uh, no, I founded entre when I was 39. Oh, when you were 39? Yeah. Okay. Right. Yeah. So I became an, I say I became, so I was, I was a pianist for roughly 10 years. And then in my late twenties, I pivoted to full-time entrepreneurship. I actually developed arthritis in my wrist because of so much practice. They were right in the end.

[00:23:52] The piano faculty was right. I started too late. And I ended up over practicing and I hurt my wrist. And so my late twenties, I [00:24:00] pivoted to full-time entrepreneurship. And then my late thirties, I started entre to teach other people. Yeah. But in your, in your, late, in your late twenties, you became an affiliate marketer and that's when you became like super, super successful as an affiliate marketer.

[00:24:13] Yeah. So affiliate marketing was kind of my, my first stare. So I, so all through my twenties, I was digging the hole, getting, getting less and less successful, more and more broke, more and more in debt, more and more string of. Years one after the other more and more hopeless, other people thinking I'm nuts and I'm never gonna Mount to anything.

[00:24:30] Right. And then when I'm 29 years old is when I discover affiliate marketing. And, uh, it about the first 18 months of affiliate marketing, I spent paying off, uh, about a half, a million dollars in debt that I gotten into. I remember that now, now I know what affiliate marketing. Just explain what it is for people who are listening.

[00:24:53] Because I actually think for a lot of people who are listening, who are like maybe looking for something, you know, [00:25:00] like explain what it is. Sure. Yeah. And, and I think maybe what you're about to say is that if somebody's like looking to start a little something on the side or make some extra bucks or learn about this whole internet economy, digital marketing stuff, affiliate marketing, Kind of a, an easier point of entry for a lot of people.

[00:25:18] Um, because you know, and I'll, I'll just give an example to describe it to most of us actually have affiliate programs idea. Yeah. So, yeah. So let's say, let's say somebody. Uh, starts a blog. I think everybody's familiar with a blog, right? Let's say you have a blog. That's like things I love.com. And on you

decided to write a blog post about this interview that you heard with this Rebecca lady talking to this Jeff Guy.

[00:25:42] And you're like, it was really cool and it was inspiring. And I don't know if the guy was kind of weird, but he said a few things that I was into. So. Here, let me, let me put a YouTube video. Like you embed the YouTube video in the blog post and you write your thoughts about it. And then you say, yeah, I checked them out.

[00:25:57] They're both pretty cool. Like Rebecca has this [00:26:00] program on negotiating with narcissists and Jeff has this program on becoming an entrepreneur and I became an affiliate of those programs. Which means I signed up to be able to promote them. And if you click this link, if you're interested in negotiating with a narcissist click, this link to watch Rebecca's stuff.

[00:26:16] And if you're interested in becoming an entrepreneur, click this link to learn Jeff's stuff. And if you and disclosure, if you click this link and buy something from them, I'll get a commission that's affiliate marketing. Right. And then the great thing about affiliate marketing is. You don't actually have to create anything yourself.

[00:26:36] Yeah, yeah, exactly. You know, you can just, you know, start promoting other people's stuff and you get paid for it. Yeah. A lot of people don't realize. So the biggest affiliate program in the world is Amazon. Yeah. Uh, Amazon, you, anybody can sign up as a free affiliate and, and immediately get a link to promote any product on Amazon, to anybody else in the world and get paid a commission.

[00:26:56] I say in the world. I mean, there's like a few countries like [00:27:00] South Sudan, I think. Take links or something, but, uh, or North Korea, you can't be an affiliate marketer, North Korea. I know that. Um, but, uh, but it's pretty, it's pretty much everywhere else. 22% of all commerce on the internet happens through affiliate links.

[00:27:13] If you could believe that. Yeah. So that's how you started making a, a lot of money as an yeah. I paid off half a million dollars in debt in 18 months. And that was coming from being a musician who never made more than like 50 or 60 grand a year. So then you founded antra well, so I was an affiliate marketer for like five years, and then I had an agency for five years and the agency did really well.

[00:27:38] We did, we grossed about 30 million in five years in that agency, which again, just, I was a piano player who started getting good at this stuff. It was like mind blowing money, you know? And, and that's gross. I mean, I, that was like, I had bills to pay and stuff, but, uh, and so then I sold that agency in 2018.

[00:27:56] And I had, at that point, I had done well enough that I could, I [00:28:00] could reasonably consider a modest retirement at 39 years old. And I was seriously considering like, maybe I should just be with my kids, but I decided, uh, if a, if a broke jazz musician can go from where I was to where I was in 10 years. Um, and I looked around the world and I saw, I look around and I see so many people, hardworking people that are struggl.

[00:28:23] You know, the middle class is dying. Like I don't have to be the one to say that. I mean, you know, people, I there's, people make a hundred thousand dollars a year now walk around, like they're broke cuz they are. And so if, if high school dropout broke jazz musician, Jeff could be retired at 39 years old.

[00:28:39] And my hardworking neighbor down the street who makes, you know, has a good job. What's supposedly a good job, but still is paycheck to paycheck. Barely. I thought maybe I have something to offer the world. And so I started putting out videos and I ultimately started creating courses about how to become an entrepreneur in the modern world.

[00:28:57] And, uh, we launched our first course in [00:29:00] 2019, and that was about 110 million in 260,000 students ago in three. Amazing. It's crazy. Yeah. Yeah. I mean, you obviously know how to market. I do. And, and, and honestly, and I picked a, I picked a good time. I mean, uh, little thing happened in 2020 that sent about 40 million people home from work, going online, worried about money, worried about making a living, worried about their job.

[00:29:27] If their job was still gonna be there. So, you know, you make your own luck, right. Opportunity meets prepar. Yeah. Yeah. Well, there were a lot of narcissists home watching YouTube as well. so we both had a good couple years. Yeah. Yeah. So I'm curious because, you know, I'm, I'm watching these videos and I mean, I'm sorry, I'm reading this book and, and, you know, I'm curious about what drives people.

[00:29:55] Yeah. And, you know, So I'm curious [00:30:00] to know what drove you initially. Was it, was it fear or was it like anger from your, you know, your bullying experience? Was it hustling to prove your worthiness as Brene brown

talks about? Um, was it a combination, you know, is that something you've ever even contemplated?

[00:30:22] Oh, I've, I've contemplated the hell out of it. And I'm glad you asked. I've ID, I've basically identified my life. I've broken it into kind of three phases as far as primary motivation. Um, well, four, if you count childhood, you know, in childhood, like you say, for a while, it was just wanting to be accepted and, uh, belong.

[00:30:44] You know, Adler says, uh, who was kind of Freud's strongest pupil said that the primary driver of human personality is, is in this order. It's belonging. And then it's differentiation and then it's meaning and purpose in that, that order. Right. [00:31:00] And I kind of lived that out. I think I wanted to belong for the longest time and eventually it just threw my hands up, said I don't.

[00:31:05] Um, and so then from there it was actually sort of survival. My, my. Um, you know, the thing about the broken system as I call it in my book, which is education, employment, and retirement, all sort of working together on the mind of, of the populace is it basically kind of makes you this implicit promise that, Hey, you won't have to worry about the first few levels of Maslow's hierarchy.

[00:31:32] Right? You won't have to worry. First of all air and food and water, you won't have to worry about shelter and basic safety, if you know, and then you won't even really have to worry about connection as to the third level, like love and connection and belonging in the world. And you won't even really even have to worry about the fourth level, which is like, uh, esteem and respect.

[00:31:55] As long as you follow the script, as long as you go to school, [00:32:00] get good grades, borrow the money, go to college, get the degree, get the job, fund the 401k, get the promotions, run the plays that we taught you. We'll give you the first four levels of Maslow's hierarchy. And then all you gotta do is hang on until you're 65.

[00:32:17] And then you'll be free enough, then you'll be free and you can worry about the fifth level with just self actualization. Granted, you'll kind of be like old and kind of banged up and maybe a little stressed out. You might not enjoy it that much, but at least you'll get there. Right? That's like the fundamental promise of the system.

[00:32:31] And when you, when you say no, I don't want the deal. You go all the way to the bottom of the hierarchy. You literally gotta figure out how to eat. You gotta, I mean, my very first piano gigs, I was literally playing. There was a little, little restaurant called the reggae hut on Almeda road in Houston, Texas, and I was getting paid in jerk chicken.

[00:32:53] They would pay me with a plate of jerk chicken, rice, and black beans for, for a couple hours of piano. I mean, you're you're I was playing for [00:33:00] food. So I had to build the hierarchy for myself from the ground up. That's the entrepreneurial trade. Now the, the other side of the trade. I also got to be self-actualized on day one, I'm being creative, I'm being expressive.

[00:33:12] I'm doing something I choose to do. Right. I'm not being, I'm not having to clock in. I'm not being told what to wear. I'm not, I'm not at risk of getting canceled. I'm not at risk of getting fired. Like, so I it's, it's a it's, you know, you make that trade. But, but anyway, my point is. Uh, the first, the first driver was just to survive.

[00:33:31] It was to get good enough at the instrument to be able to build a functional life. And that took me several years, like many years, like about half of my twenties. But once I got, frankly, that probably took all of my twenties, but once I got to where I started making money, late twenties, early thirties, it totally shifted cuz now I, now I didn't need to survive anymore.

[00:33:52] I was, I was okay. And it became all about proving people. I will prove these [00:34:00] a-holes wrong. All these people that shamed me and judged me and scored me and criticized me and doubted me, like, I, you know, how have you, have you seen, um, the, the Michael Jordan documentary? I forget what it's called, like the game, you know, how he's like always making up adversaries in his mind.

[00:34:15] Like he needed somebody to prove wrong or to be better than, yeah, that was me all. I mean, I wasn't probably as good at my craft as he was at his, but, but it was the same psychology of like, it was, it was me versus them. And, um, and then I think that it, that literally carried me, I would say that started to erode in my mid thirties because, uh, I, my wife and I started doing, we, we did therapy.

[00:34:39] We did enough of it. I got. Embedded with my family. And, and I really started to learn. There's a different skill set. You have to develop if you really want to be complete in this world. And especially if you want to be any

good for other people. And, uh, so it started to chip away, I think just by virtue of having a family and working on myself.

[00:34:57] But if I'm being honest, I don't think I shed [00:35:00] all of the, I'm gonna prove something to people baggage until probably a, just the last, even since I started. I think so entre started as an experiment. You know, how we always hear on the internet, like, or not even just on the internet, but like you go to masterminds, you go to, you have the, you listen to podcasts, you read books and people talk about, you know, give more than you take, you know, the market rewards you for creating value.

[00:35:28] And, and we like, it's almost like these cliches about value and giving and leading from a place of service and all, and like people, we talk a good game about that stuff. And I talk a good game about. But I remember at 39 when I was like, okay, I've got enough money that I'm actually like, I could retire, but I think I have something that I could really do.

[00:35:50] That would be a good force in this world. And I was like, you know, what, what if I actually go all the way with all these like, feel good platitudes that all these [00:36:00] entrepreneurs say myself included, but like, For being honest, nobody really commits to like very rarely do people really fully commit to those things.

[00:36:10] And I was like, I wonder what would happen if I just started giving? And I literally didn't ask for anything in return. And I started making video and I was like, and it was almost like a thing I had to prove to myself that I even had the willingness to do because we rebel against it. Like as humans we're wired to our own self-interest and it's.

[00:36:26] No, surely I cannot be that altruistic. Right. And so I started just making videos and I forced myself to sh I would shoot a video that didn't sell anything didn't ask for anything that could actually help people. And I would put it on the internet and then just to prove to myself that I was not regressing into my.

[00:36:46] Selfish human nature. I would spend my own money to boost the video, to force it out in front of more people. So I'm paying to push my video in front of a bunch of people and of, without a [00:37:00] product to sell and without any sort of even opt-in mechanism, like there was nothing I could get for it. And it was like, it was like, it was literally putting my money where my mouth was.

[00:37:09] Right. And I kept doing it. And after almost a year of doing. I had this big audience that was watching the videos and that people were sharing the videos and people were commenting on the videos because it was like, it was like, I can't believe this. Guy's making all this content and he does, he's not selling anything.

[00:37:29] And so eventually it was, the market actually starts to want you to sell something. There's like, because humans also have a law of, of an aspect of reciprocity. Right. Right. So by summer of 2020 of, of 2019, I had an audience of about 2 million people that were watching or sharing my videos. And I was getting messages like Jeff, this is great stuff, but can, do you have like a course or can I hire you as a coach?

[00:37:55] Or like, can I basically, can I buy something from you? So I created a [00:38:00] course and, uh, that was the first that was when entre officially started was that course. But I created that course in response to the Goodwill that I had created by giving, without asking which even that was really just. A sort of a self-inflicted social experiment to see if I could actually be a decent human being for once in my damn life.

[00:38:19] And, and, and, uh, now, so now I'm so drunk on the Kool-Aid of like give, give more than you get, because it works so well. I mean, and that may sound weird. That may sound kind of contradictory of like, oh, well I give, because. I end up getting more than I would if I was asking before, without giving, I don't know how to explain it, but it just, at the end of the day, like what kind of a world would it be if we all just gave and focused on reciprocity, but it is true.

[00:38:48] I mean, I know it works. Yeah. I mean it works gazillions of dollars. I've got 25 million views and two years on YouTube. Yeah. Yeah. And, and look at what I mean, [00:39:00] talk about. To some degree, a thankless endeavor is like helping people deal with these controlling, animalistic people in their life. What other lawyer is out there giving free advice every day?

[00:39:14] Not, yeah. And to be fair or to be clearer in, I mean, you don't won't brag about yourself. I will. It's not like you were some bum lawyer before. For a client. You were like a top 1% highly rated attorney in California. Well, in Florida, but yeah, Florida. Sorry, but yeah, I mean, one of those coastal states. Yeah.

[00:39:32] I mean, seriously, I've way more business than I could ever take way more. I mean, seriously. I mean, I don't practice anymore, but literally if I sat

down behind my desk right now, I would have wait way, way too much work. Within a day. Yeah, it's crazy. It's I mean, this whole thing of like, give, like, just give, give value, help people solve [00:40:00] real problems and money is a lagging indicator of the value that you're producing.

[00:40:05] Like it's all true. It's just against our nature to try it long enough to find out how true it is. I mean, I think a lot of us will try it for a. Even in, even for me, I'm not, I'm no, like Saint, I had to basically be financially independent before I had the balls to actually try it for, for a long period of time.

[00:40:23] Yeah. All right. So tell us about your book by the way, in case you've wondered why I have one painted fingernail. If you're seeing this on YouTube it's cuz