

In The Trenches_ Conversation with Rob Dube

📅 Mon, Mar 04, 2024 11:49AM ⏱ 1:20:49

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

entrepreneurs, people, feel, business, company, ceo, decisions, driven, discoveries, peace, person, eos, thought, disciplines, etcetera, happen, life, book, fear, running

SPEAKERS

Steve Divitkos, Rob Dube

S Steve Divitkos 00:01
Rob Dube, welcome to the show.

R Rob Dube 00:02
Steve, thank you for having me on. I've been so excited to chat with you and just enjoy getting to know you here just briefly before we started recording. So thank you.

S Steve Divitkos 00:13
Likewise. Likewise, it's great to have you. And maybe for those who might not know your story, can you can we just maybe start by having you tell us about yourself, the chronology of your career, and basically what has led you to what you're doing today?

R Rob Dube 00:27
Absolutely. So I always like to share two parts of the story. It's the outer story and in the inner story. And maybe that'll lead us into some of our conversation today. So the outer story is that when I was in ninth grade, I started selling blowpop lollipops out of my locker with my best friend, his name is Joel. I think our entrepreneurial bug was biting us at that time. And we would buy those things for a nickel and resell them for a quarter in our during our lunch period. And I like to share that story because so many people in some way relate to it. So maybe some of your listeners have actually done something similar. Or you maybe have known somebody who did that. And and in our case, we just kept doing it through high school and college with different businesses. And so it would just make sense that when we graduated college, here in the States, we felt unemployable, and started a business together called Image One. We were

remanufacturing toner cartridges for laser printers. Back then, laser printers were only about two to three years into the market. And this was a way for people to save about 50% on purchasing those things. They're still expensive to this day, actually, which is kind of funny. But the company, evolved into a Managed Print Services Company, which is essentially a copier dealer. It's still around, Joel, and I still own the company. But we put in place a succession plan a number of years ago and have a CEO who's running the company now. And maybe we'll talk more about that later. Maybe not. That's up to you. A couple of other things that happened along the way. In 2004, we were approached by public company, we sold the company and stayed on for 18 months, it was actually a three year contract. But a new management team came on, a new CEO, and he wasn't interested in the company anymore and wandered off the balance sheet asked us if we'd like it back. So we were one of those stories that you hear frequently of a company that sold and ended up getting it back at next to nothing. That was absolute dumb luck. Nothing to do with being a smart business person. It just had to do with circumstances and timing. So Joel, and I got the company back. And at that time, that was a point where I guess we had a unique opportunity to say do we want to do anything differently. And we decided we did, we wanted to put a greater focus on our culture, the totality of our team members lives. And we became very passionate about that. We decided we wanted to provide genuine care to everyone every day, every time that men, our team, our customers, you know, our stakeholders, ecetera, the communities that we were in and just in life in general. There was a very impactful business or book called Small Giants, Companies that Choose to Be Great Instead of Big written by Bo Burlingham, who was the former editor of Ink Magazine, which was very influential in that decision. I highly recommend it for people that are interested in culture based stories and how you can you know, really create a successful business by focusing on the totality of your your team members lives. Another thing that I'll share along the way as we segue into the inner story, is you know, I had a lot of stress and anxiety growing up. I experienced a bunch of trauma in my early age, sexual abuse, physical abuse, mental abuse, still hard for me to even get those words out of my mouth is as long as I've even been dealing with it and working on it personally. I took solace in sports growing up, you know, I would throw the ball against her my childhood home for hours and hours, just to escape and I'd have imaginary friends. I had health issues, tons of them I was on medication left me jittery. I was uneasy all the time. I had asthma was one of those things. I had a massive asthma attack at the age of 14, I was rarely alone and felt I was pretty sure I was going to die. And sadly, I actually felt like that might be a good thing at that time. Fortunately, at the time, my father did come home and you know, was able to get me the help I needed. As I segwayed into my early adulthood, and my 20s and running the business, I'd gotten married, my wife and I had a couple of kids. I was OCD, obsessive, compulsive, depressed, I was not present, constantly anxious. And fortunately, something pinged me in my mid 20s, where I just said, Something's not right here. Like, I am just not a good human right now. And I was able to start getting help, starting with therapy, which back then, wasn't quite as understood or maybe accepted as it is today, thankfully. And I share all that story just to say like, this is an entrepreneur's journey. This is not uncommon. Now, I work with entrepreneurs exclusively. And their story is different than mine, but it's similar. And so there's your answer to getting to know me a little bit.

S

Steve Divitkos 06:56

That's great. Thank you. Yeah, the outer world always seems clean and linear and upward, right. And yet, it is never the case, that the inner world is the same. And that's something that we're going to get into today. So you mentioned the name Image One. So I kind of have to start with this question. So many folks listening to this will be familiar with the name Gino Wickman. Obviously, you've heard of Rob Deeply. So he wrote the book Traction. Many, many years ago, I think it was written in 2011. And within that book was introduced EOS for the Entrepreneurial Operating System, which I know many of the folks listening to this will be familiar with. And I remember, for some reason, the name Image One just sounded so familiar to me. And I could not figure out where have I heard this company's name. And then I realized that Image One was a case study in Traction, and it was referenced very frequently. And then when I finally cracked the spine of my old copy, I was thinking to myself, that's where I've heard the name Image One, I know I've heard of this guy. So I just need to ask, that book was written in 2011. And you were referenced as a case study. 13 years later, now, in 2024 as we're recording it, you go from case study within Traction to now co author of a new book with Gino Wickman. So how the hell do you go from case study in 2011, to co author with the same guy in 13 years?

R

Rob Dube 07:40

It's so great, thanks for remembering that and trying to use your brain cells to find out where did you notice that name? You know, Joe, and I ran Image One from 1991 to 1999. By the seat of our pants, we did not know what we were doing. The company was, you know, we were a success. Despite ourselves. We met Gino through a through a mutual friend who said, you know, he might be able to help you. He was just starting this business. Actually, it wasn't even called EOS. And as you mentioned, it was the book was in 2011. So he didn't have a book or anything like that. And so we brought him in, I was super skeptical. And we ended up engaging with him on this process that is now called EOS. And once I bought into it, you know, it was off to the races. I mean, we just implemented EOS. And, frankly, the sale was so such having EOS implemented in the business really helped improve our multiple when we made the sale because they came in and they said, Hey, you're not even really a big company. But you guys are really operating like, you're on top of stuff like you got a good system for how you're operating the business. And they just weren't seeing that in our size businesses. And they were willing to pay extra because that reduce their risk, you know, because they knew that we were on top of stuff. And so Gino and I became fast friends, and what ended up happening was not only Was he helping us, you know, through the quarterly pulses and annual meetings and things of that nature. But he and I would just get together three or four times a year, like for a half day or a full day at a coffee shop, we would just talk about life. And so we just always stayed in touch. He's written, I think, six books, aside from the new book that's coming out, which I've co authored with him. And we're in every single books, I say that humbly, but he always circle back to us for something. And so we're in all those books. So our, you know, path together, you know, we've been on a path together, I should say, over these number of years. I can't believe, but yet I do, how big EOS got, I mean, there's 200,000 companies in the world that use this, there's 750, or something of these implementers out there that are, you know, teaching this and consulting on it. And Pacino and I were connected on a deeper level. And, you know, I was doing things at Image One, I think they were a little bit different. And he recognized that, just things that it was bringing into the culture. And when we completed the succession plan, and I was, as I always like to say, I had a really simple and easy life. And then he came and we got together. And next thing you knew we were writing this book, and we have this 10 disciplines business, and you know, then we are in startup mode. So but it's been really wonderful journey to be on with him. Now with him, it's just a dream come true.

S

Steve Divitkos 11:46

What a cool full circle moment that is. So the book is called shine, how looking inward is the key to unlocking true entrepreneurial freedom. It's coming out later this month, as we record this in March of 2024. And we'll get into the specifics of what the book covers. But before we do that, as you know, there are untold 1000s of business books released every year that focused almost entirely on the CEOs outer world, right things like hiring, firing profitability, etcetera. But there are almost no business books of which I'm aware of written about the CEOs inner world, which is why this book immediately caught my attention, because as listeners to this podcast, we'll recognize I spent a lot of time talking about this. So just tell us what compelled you guys to write a book about the CEOs in our world? And maybe more importantly, why do you think that there is still such a lack of these types of books?

R

Rob Dube 12:41

Well, okay, so to the first part of your question, I think both of us had a unique experience that was I'm gonna say threefold. First, Gino has done you know, 10s of 1000s of sessions with clients. And he had become masterful at getting to the root of the problem. And oftentimes, the root of the problem is what's going on with the CEO or members of the leadership team emotionally. The problem isn't actually the problem. And then he was dealing with his own set of stuff, you know, and he was on his own journey of trying to understand himself better after he sold EOS continued to be an EOS implementer. But as he likes to say, climb the mountain and looked around and surveyed, and kind of like you and I were talking, I think prior to the recording, it's like, okay, I think you said the glow wore off after two months, and you, Gino and I have all had that same experience and that's the point, the glow wears off. And then you're stuck with what? You, only you. And what do you do with that? And then I've had that experience in running Image One, where I said, I need I need to be my true self here. I'm not being I'm not leading this company, from my true self, I'm leading it in ways that other people are telling me to lead it through what I'm learning and through what I think I'm supposed to be doing. And I just said, I'm not doing that anymore. I need to change. You know, this is unique, and I'm going to show up authentically, like I don't have answers. I don't know what to say I don't you know, always have the perfect, you know, solution. I asked good questions. I'm halfway decent at that, you know, but just being vulnerable and just saying like, here's my stuff and just putting it out there and saying like, I'm struggling. I'm human over here. I'm not this perfect person that maybe you all want me to be or think I might be. And what I found was that people embrace that. They got to know me for the real person I was and I am. And that is just this ever changing, you know, person who is just trying to figure stuff out in life and who has struggles and who's had experiences and those experiences caused me to show up certain ways or be stuck at certain times. And so I had that unique experience. So I think when you bring those three things together, and through our friendship and our conversations, the two of us said, you know, we need to bring this conversation to the world and start opening people up to what entrepreneurship can become. Because it's such a special and unique thing to be able to do in this world. I mean, you think about all the people that entrepreneurs have an impact on. So how can we start changing that impact to a really, really positive one. As opposed to what oftentimes happens is, the entrepreneur is often a visionary, the CEO, they have a million ideas, they're driven, they're leaving a black trail behind them, because no one can keep up with their ideas, no one can keep up with their pace. You know, they're so resilient, and they wear people out. And as you build your company, and people are trying to keep up with you, you know, you're burning them out. And that's not the kind of life that you want to provide for your people, you know, you want to provide them with a place to come to work that feels like it's making an impact on their life. And that they can vibrate it at a higher level and be themselves and not have to be anything other than that, give them opportunity, and maybe that opportunity expands beyond your company. In other words, maybe you get them to a certain point where they reach a ceiling at the company, because the company doesn't have a place for them. And you set them free, and you're not attached to them, and you're not trying to hold them back. Because their skills are so valuable for you. And I could keep riffing, but I'll just kind of stop there to round it out and just say like, this is why we think this is important stuff. And it's important for the CEO, and the entrepreneur to really begin to understand themselves more deeply so they can free their true self.

S**Steve Divitkos 17:28**

Yeah, and I mean, as someone who writes at a smaller scale, about the CEOs, inner world, and certainly my own inner world, when I was a CEO, I'm to this day very surprised at how few resources there are. With respect to the CEOs inner world. I mean, as someone who's been in the seat, I now understand at a deeply fundamental level that when you put your head on a pillow at night, you're not worrying about should I raise my prices by 3%, or 5%? You're worried about, I'm an imposter. I don't know what I'm doing. I feel like a fraud. My fear of failure is high. What happens if I fail? What happens if I make the wrong decision? Like that's the stuff that matters. And I'm reminded of I'm a sucker for quotes. And there's two quotes that I'm reminded of, neither of which are mind neither original, but one was, culture is a macrocosm of the CEO psychology, which I think is only true in my experience. And then the other one, which gets right into the heart of your book is a CEOs ability to manage her own psychology is just as important as if not more important than her ability to manage her business. And that was certainly true in my experience, as well. So let's get into the specifics of the book. So Shine is based upon something called the three discoveries and the 10 disciplines. And apologies for asking such a redundant question. I'm sure you could put your mind on autopilot and answer this. But just to set the table for people who wouldn't who aren't familiar with this, can you just list each of the three discoveries in each of the 10 disciplines, and maybe just, you know, a 30 second explanation for each of them just so that everyone listening is kind of starting from the same place as you and I?

R**Rob Dube 19:16**

Sure. So I want to bring context here. So what I want to say first is with regards to the 10 disciplines and I'm going to circle back to the three discoveries if that's okay. What we want in our life. If we're going to hop on this journey of the psychology, I love those quotes, by the way, the psychology of ourselves, as it relates to how we're running our companies. We need to have the space in our mind and the time in our life to do that, to really do that. I mean, this is deeper work, so to speak. Not everybody's up for it, and I get that. But what the 10 disciplines do is just that they give you the space in your mind and the time in your life because it maximizes your vibrational energy. This is not the energy that allows you to go out and run a marathon or something, this is how high you're vibrating how you're showing up in the world, people feel your energy, and that translates into the impact that you're making. And it's little things, and it's bigger things. And then your ability to do this with inner peace, you know, because you can be driven and have peace, which is one of the three discoveries which I'll come back to. So these 10 disciplines are essentially a foundation that you create in your life or a framework, whichever word seems to resonate with the listener, you. And so the 10 are, we begin with ten year thinking. And this is where we just ask you to shift your mind from short term thinking, to thinking in 10 year timeframes. And because we want everything now there feels like a lot of pressure and urgency to be successful to have this to do that. And when you think in 10 year timeframes, you allow yourself to allow time to slow down. And when time slows down, you don't have that same pressure and anxiety weighing on you. And you actually make better decisions which are which align with your true self, because you're taking time to do that. Speaking of taking time, the next one is take time off. And this is where we're saying take at least 130 days off every single year. And don't think about work the entire day during those days. Okay, so 130, some people might go, Oh my gosh, so let me just say take every single weekend off, that's 104. Take every US holiday or Canadian holiday, I think there's a similar amount, not sure about the other countries and pick three weeks vacation that's

somewhat normal, probably for people. And most people at that point can wrap their head around the 130. But where they get stuck is not thinking about work the entire day. Because they're checking their email, they're checking in, they're reading business books that they want to catch up on. They're reading industry, news, etcetera. And what we're actually saying is no, we want you to turn it all off, like start to see the world in a whole different way. And we promise that when you come back, you'll be re energized, refreshed, you'll have better ideas. Okay, so that's take time off. The next one is Know thyself. And this is where we say be you 100% of the time 24/7 365. Your true self. Authentically you. You know we like to say Let your freak flag fly. People love that about you. I mentioned earlier vibrational energy, they feel your energy when you or me or anybody is not their authentic self, you pick up on that from them. And we want you to know thyself. So you show up as yourself. And that way people will pick up on your energy, you will also make better decisions because they will align with who you are. The next one is Be still. And this is sit in silence for at least 30 minutes every day. Now, there's another book I wrote about this, maybe we'll talk about it later. Maybe we won't, it's okay. But it's called Do Nothing, The Most Rewarding Leadership Challenge You'll Ever Take. So my way of being still on a daily basis is meditation. But that's not the only way. So I'm not stumping for meditation, it's just one way. There are many ways, find your way, journal, contemplate, prayer, etcetera. Do all three in 30 minutes. Point is we need to let our mind and our body settle. So we have clarity. But we're so busy, we can't actually, this is kind of funny actually, find the time for 30 minutes to let our mind and our body settle. That's hilarious. But we need to do that. The next one is know you're 100%. And this is where we teach deciding on and committing to the perfect number of hours per week and weeks per year that you will deliver your value to the world. See, you have some specific ways that you bring value, you probably already know those things, but you're not doing them in the time that you have allotted. In fact, you're only probably doing them 20% of the time. We want you doing them 80, 90, 100% of the time. And as such you have to commit to the perfect number of hours per week and weeks per year that you are going to commit to this. And this takes some thinking and it takes some paying attention to okay how many hours or the perfect amount of hours for you to work at each week where your vibrational energy stays high. So you're not leading yourself down a path of burnout. And for anybody that's burnt that birthed out which I am one of those people on numerous occasions, it hits you, you don't see it coming, you just keep plowing forward, and then you hit a point of exhaustion like you can't get out of bed. And I'm sure there are many that can relate to that who are listening now. So we want you to manage your energy. Next is saying no and doing it often. Saying no to anything that don't fit into those first five disciplines. And unfortunately, we're in a society where we have a hard time saying no, we there are books on saying yes, we just don't agree with those. It's so empowering to say no, because that means you're crystal clear. When you get presented with 10 times more of the opportunities than any other normal human being as an entrepreneur, as a CEO, as a visionary. Now you have now you get crystal clear on one of those 10, what are the two I'm going to say yes to. And even though the eight are really cool, too, you're actually going to say no to those it's going to feel so empowering to you. That's how you focus your energy to create greater impact. And that's where you find peace. Because when you're saying no to eight out of 10, you're moving yourself towards burnout, you can't do it all. And that leads me to the next one, which is don't do \$25 an hour work and never do anything that you could pay someone \$25 an hour to do or anything below your pay grade. So what we're asking you to do is look at your total compensation and divide it by the number of hours you're working and come up with your actual hourly rate. And then look at all the stuff you're doing. And see if your hourly rate is connected to that what you're doing. So if you're checking email, that's \$25 an hour work. Somebody can check and respond to all your email. And if you make 500 hours an hour, why are you doing \$25 an hour work? That makes no sense. I know that you think you're the only person that can answer your email. But I hate to tell you, you're not, someone can actually do it

for you, at least 80% of them. That's just one example of a whole bunch of things that you could do, not just in your professional life, but also in your personal life. Because when you delegate this stuff off, you're creating value to the world. And you're spending more time managing your energy, that vibrational energy that I've been speaking about. Next one, very simple. Hardly anybody does it. Prepare every night, before your head hits the pillow every night, just simply document the next day's plan, take out a piece of paper, write down exactly what's going on tomorrow. That's all you have to do, give it a good look over 5, 10 minutes. Then when you go to bed, your subconscious starts doing the work, you wake up energized, you know exactly what's going on, you hit the ground running. And you have ideas, solutions, you know, new things that came up as you were sleeping, as your subconscious was working, that you will bring in to that day without having to do any heavy lifting. The next one is putting everything in one place. This is another one that people have never even been taught in their life, which is to pick the one place that you will capture every idea, commitment, thought action item, and promise. This is like a yellow notepad or some sort of tablet like a Remarkable or an iPad or something along those lines. Or it could be Evernote, or some sort of software technology that you use one note, you know, whatever it is, but it's the only place that you're taking notes throughout the day. And at the end of the day, you know where all that stuff is. And then you put it in the right places you delegate it, maybe if you have an EA or to team members, where you need to get things on your calendar or on your to do list, it actually isn't creating more work. It's keeping everything in a consolidated area. So you're very clear on how to get this all off your plate. And what you need to do moving forward. And the last one is Be humble. And this is where we're asking people to view themselves as an equal to every person on the planet. Very important as an entrepreneur, CEO, visionary, because sometimes we kind of get ourselves on a pedestal. And we need to be very aware of that. I know that, I'm sure you seem very humble from talking to you and your listeners, I'm sure very humbled, but it's very subtle. And what I always ask people to do is really get into a mindful state and watch what's going on almost as an observer to your actions in your thoughts, your internal dialogue. What are you saying about that team member during your leadership meeting who's sharing an opinion or thought and idea and you're judging them? Where's your humility in that? Where's your openness? What's really happening there? So it's very, very subtle. And I encourage people to really pay close attention to that. And we always say, if you're a humble person, you're a grateful person. So express gratitude and have a gratitude practice, you know, every single day, with intention, you know, beginning the day, end of the day, middle of the day, all of them, just write down 1, 2, 3 things that you are grateful for. So I'm going to actually pause there, because that's a lot. And before I move on to the three discoveries, I just want to make sure I covered what you were looking for there. And if there's anything that you want to dig into, I'm happy to do that.

S

Steve Divitkos 30:36

Well, I feel like I could talk to you for the next six hours about each of those, each of those 10 disciplines, unfortunately, I don't have the opportunity to talk to you for six hours. But you know what, I think it would be great to actually go into the three discoveries, because there's one of the three discoveries that I really want to double click on with you. So maybe let's dive right into the first one.

R

Rob Dube 30:57

Okay, so I alluded to two of them along the way during our conversation. First one is I am driven, and what we want the entrepreneur vision CEO, visionary, to acknowledge in themselves, which they already deep down already know, is they are driven. And it is a blessing and a curse. There's actually a really great book called Driven by Dr. Douglas Brackman. And he talks about all of the science behind the driven and, and the psychological makeup of the driven. So great book to reference, I highly recommend it. You know, we have a gene that driven it's the D two D four gene, and it fires differently in us. And what it means is, we're never satisfied, everybody has this D2D4 gene, but only 10% of the population is where it doesn't fire in the same way where we just are never satisfied. And so think about that 10% of the population, eight plus billion people, let's just call it a billion. So about 800 million driven, they're not all entrepreneurs. So some percentage of that 800 million are entrepreneurs. And you know, if the whole world were driven, it'd be a crazy place. Because as entrepreneurs, CEO visionaries, we know how wackadoodle we could be sometimes, and that's the black trail that we leave behind ourselves. And so we're disrupting our team members. We're disrupting our personal life, you know, the important people in our lives. Because we have a million ideas, we can't settle down, we're anxious, we can't sleep, we're not getting enough sleep, we're always doing things to the maximum, like, you know, we're not just running a 5k, we're running an ultra marathon. Whether it be in business, or actually, it's like an actual ultra marathon, not that there's anything wrong with doing that, please do it, I'm all for it. But I'm just saying that's the way our minds work. And everybody is coming along for the ride, whether they want to or not. So we need to learn to manage our energy in our driven nature, and channel it like a laser beam. And so everybody can relate to that laser beam. And that's where the laser beam can cut through steel. You know, it's so strong. And that's where we want you to make great impact is when you take those 10 disciplines as your strong foundation or framework. And now you understand you're learning how to manage your drivenness, if that's a word, and you're like a laser beam, and so you pick those things that are most important to focus on. This is where you're going to make the greatest impact and find that inner peace. Okay, so the second one, our decisions are made out of love or fear. Okay, here, so love is your heart, fear comes from ego. Most leaders, entrepreneurs, CEOs, visionaries are making the majority of their decisions without their knowledge from fear. They're afraid that they're not going to keep up with their competitors. So they make decisions around moving into a new market, when that isn't really the way that their companies set up for success. But they see others doing it and they feel like that's what they should do. Maybe they feel like they have a long term team member who's excellent at what they do, but is absolutely disruptive to the culture, but they fear making a change in that part of their company, because they don't want to lose that knowledge that that person has. So they're working from fear. Meanwhile, the rest of the team is suffering, because you have somebody who's disruptive to the culture. And this translates into our personal lives too. You know, we may fear having tough conversations with the people closest to us, because we don't we're afraid of the outcome. We're not coming from a place of love, when we come from a place of love from our heart, we're coming from our true self, that authentic person where things are in alignment with us in our lives. Now I'll keep circling back to business. But we know deep down that this really relates to our life and the totality of our life. So when we're making decisions from love, to use those two examples, let's take the team members disruptive. We treat them with love, we give them soft landing, but we know the right thing to do is to move along, and to stop disrupting the culture. And so we do our best to work with them in that way, and bring love to the betterment of our entire company, we decide not to go into that other market just because other people are. Because we can be unique and special company and grow our company in a way that is more in alignment with what we're all about not following what everybody else is doing. Those are just two really like over simplified ways of explaining this. And then the last discovery, number three is it is possible to be driven and have

peace, because when you are making love based decisions, decisions from your heart, everything else falls into alignment, and then you feel peaceful. So what we're saying here is, you're driven is amazing, learning is an amazing trait. Once you learn how to manage it, and then make your decisions, from love from your heart, you're still going to be uber successful, because that's just your driven nature. But now you're going to experience peace as you're doing it. You're just going to have this feeling that most people can't even explain what peace is to them. It's just a feeling where it's right. It's what we like to say, a knowingness. And that is the ultimate. And that's what we're hoping to that entrepreneurs, CEOs, leaders, visionaries will begin to realize that they don't have to go down these paths that they think are the right paths, they have the answers within them.

S

Steve Divitkos 37:12

I'm particularly intrigued by that third discovery, which is it is possible to both be driven and simultaneously have a deep sense of peace. You talked about the word peace. And this might sound like a bit of an odd question. But can you expand a little bit more on what you mean by peace? Because I suspect it's not a lack of stress, a lack of problems or a lack of self doubt. Because these are all just inherently human things. So if peace isn't any one of those things, what exactly is it?

R

Rob Dube 37:42

That's a great question. I'm so happy you asked that. Because we actually ask people, words are so impactful. And peace is the word that we use, we say what's your word, you know, find your word. But you're right, peace does not equal, I have no problems. Peace equals acceptance, for what's happening in the present moment. And being okay, with what's in front of you. At this moment. It's knowing that the past is the past. And you can't change the past, and the future isn't here yet. So there's nothing much you can do about it, other than do your best in the present moment. So if one of your amazing team members leaves the company, all of a sudden you feel kind of out of sorts, like there's no peace feeling in that. But you can be with how you're feeling and have peace there. Because you're very acutely aware that you don't have control you never did. And part of what entrepreneurs part of one of the reasons why entrepreneurs get into what they get into is because they're looking for control. And I think once you realize you're never going to have control, you're not in control of anything. That's just letting go. And that's peaceful. When you let go and you allow things to unfold. That doesn't mean necessarily you don't have goals or you're not going in a certain direction. That's what we're trying to make sure we're very clear about which is your driven nature is to keep moving forward to keep you know getting better. That's part of our life's journey. You know, you're never gonna just sit back and rest. You know, Gino likes to say that he was afraid that peace meant you know, he'd have to be in a cave meditating all day long for peace. No, you know, you can run your business. I ran my business. I felt incredible peace. Once I was really clear about these three discoveries. I understood them analytically. I could embody them in my body, that's embody, I could bring that into my body noticing, when I was feeling certain emotions. And feeling into my body, getting out of my head, working my way through those things in my body. And when you do that, you feel peace, you feel aligned with what is happening in the present moment. You're not grasping on to what you want, or what you think should be, you're letting go to whatever is happening. And then, you know, you are capable, especially entrepreneurs, and the like, that are just so creative. You know, they just move forward. Okay, this is what I've been dealt with. Now, what do I do next? I sit with it, I let it settle, I process it. And I know I'm capable, to get through whatever the next thing is that I need to get through, might be hard, might not be as hard as I think. I don't know. You know, we make things hard. I had a conversation with somebody recently. He's been resistant to bring in his right hand person in EOS language, they call that an integrator. Years and years, he says, I know, I just won't find the right person I know, I just won't find the right person. And then his business goes through these ebbs and flows like all of our businesses, he's anxious, he's stressed, if only I had that right hand person, but I could never find just the right person. So he just took himself through this process for 10 years, of not even allowing himself to go through finding the person, giving the person a chance, because of the imagined outcome that he had in his head, which was just a fabrication. Nothing is real in our head. You know, we just have an idea. And we either move towards it, or we move away from it. And so when we can let go of that, when you know analytically, I need my right hand person, because I can't be all things to all people. It's impossible. I'm only one person, how can I just let go of my preconceived notions about what's going to happen, and put it out there. And if I find that right person, they, you know, if I should say, if I'm looking for that right person, I have trust that they will show up at some point in my life, I don't know when. And I'm open to going through the ebbs and flows of finding out. But I believe it'll happen. And once it does, I'm going to make greater impact. And I trust in that.

S**Steve Divitkos 42:42**

This concept of peace and acceptance for what is in the right now is actually a great segue into the next topic that I want to spend some time on, which is this idea of like what drives entrepreneurs based on, you know, in your personal experience as an entrepreneur, on a first hand basis, but also on a second hand basis, having worked with so many. So, like, I know that for a lot of entrepreneurs, they kind of find they find themselves playing for like a destination of sorts, and that destination could be an exit a certain revenue size, raising a certain amount of money, whatever the case may be. But your book suggests that there actually is no destination. And regardless of the path that one takes, it's basically all just one big long journey. And I'm reminded of another quote. And again, this is not attributable to me it totally stole it from somebody, and I'm probably going to butcher it. But it says something to the effect of when you reach the top of a mountain, you realize that it's nothing but you and a bunch of thin air. And so I guess, can you just expand on this idea that it's all just one big long journey and maybe tell us how and when you came to this realization at a personal level?

R**Rob Dube 43:49**

Okay, so in first, in the book, we write something we learned from a friend of ours named Justin Breen, who does work with many, many entrepreneurs. And he shared with us that he had met, he had yet to meet an entrepreneur who hadn't experienced at least one of the following things bankruptcy or potential bankruptcy, heightened levels of anxiety, depression, traumatic experiences as a child or a young adult. And then we got thinking about what Gino and I did, and we thought, addiction needs to be added to that list. You know, addiction is doing something in excess. It's not good for you. You know, working is a great example because we feel like heroes when we work more and we're more successful as a result or when we're the one who's sending emails at 11 o'clock at night when everyone else is sleeping, that feels for some reason, good to us. You're a workaholic. And then there's other things like food and drugs and gambling and foreign and alcohol and social media, etcetera. You go on and on, people get it, you know, that's addiction. So somehow, along the way, these high performing driven entrepreneurs, visionary CEOs, they have had at least one of those, usually, when I speak with audiences, it's like three, four, maybe even all five that they've experienced. So as I mentioned before, they're trying to gain control. So, you know, in my journey, I felt that, especially in the early parts that I shared, in the early part of our discussion, in my early 20s, and into my early 30s. And for me, meditation became a very useful tool. So once I really took on a serious meditation practice, I started to recognize as an observer, what was going on in my mind, and I started to notice the loops. And the stories that I was telling myself, one of my favorite stories that I like to share is there was a point in time after we purchased the company back or got the company back. And we had a very large client who was 20% of our overall revenue. And they decided to do an RFP. And they also had a secondary vendor who had half the business, we had half the other vendor had half. And so they were kind of pitting us against each other. So our company was either going to get double the business, or we were going to lose it all. And that created a great deal of anxiety for me. And then what was happening is I would get emails from our contacts over there, and they will be asking all kinds of questions. You know, can you provide us with the volume of da, da, da, from this time to that time, and there was, you know, all kinds of really specific, what seemed to be very odd and unique questions, in my mind, and so the stories were just rapid, unbelievable. And I would sit down to do my meditations. And man, I would just be lighting up and going down all these paths, which were none of the paths were good ones. In other words, none of the questions that they were asking, were leading to

great successes, they were all leading to great failures. I had my conspiracy theory had I had by scared had odd I had by, you know, everything's going dark head on. And noticing that, through my meditation practice, was very useful. And I began to realize as this went on, and it was a year long practice or a year long RFP that they were taking us through, I started to let go of what the questions were for, I started to let go of the stories are I had in my head. And I just showed up in every moment and tried to do the best I did. I tried to connect with them and understand things better, the best I could, knowing that I couldn't control the outcome. It just wasn't in my control, I could only show up and do the best that I could. And same thing with our team. The story ends well, because we won the whole contract. And that was really wonderful. And everything it felt, obviously, like a big relief to me. But so I wanted to share that with you, because he asked me about my own personal situation. And I like to share that story as a way to show how you can go from this place of great anxiety, to a place of letting go that leads to peace, actually. Because once I let go, I did feel peaceful. I just believed like, hey, whatever is going to happen is going to happen. And if we lose it, then we'll just do what we need to do. You know, we're capable, you know, I can't, I can't control any of it. And so that that just led to a great deal of peace.

S

Steve Divitkos 49:05

Back to that magic equation of acceptance equals peace. Speaking of the stories that we tell ourselves, I'm always interested in the question of like, what truly drives entrepreneurs? And I'm curious on your take. So if I were to randomly select 100 entrepreneurs and ask them, like, what drives you? Why are you doing this? I'd hear various answers with some sort of frequency. So maybe in the top three most frequently cited answers would be something like I don't know financial freedom, independence, autonomy, control, whatever the case may be. I'm curious, like, again, kind of riffing on this idea of the stories that we tell ourselves. Are we generally honest with ourselves when answering that question as entrepreneurs like set asked another way, are our stated answers, the same as the true maybe like borderline subcon hunches answers, visa vie, what is truly driving us to do this?

R

Rob Dube 50:04

Again, another amazing question, I compliment you. I think we do believe that whatever our motivations are our motivations. But to get to your subconscious point, I think when we spend time on a journey of understanding ourselves better, and we are willing to open up the space in our mind in the actual time in our life, which is our most valuable asset, that we begin to reconsider what we thought. And when we become our true selves, this is where this gets real. Because it shakes up everything that we thought we believed. So you mentioned the top three, those are great, by the way, you know, money, financial independence, that's the first thing I wrote down. Before you said, what yours were, I was writing down what I thought mine were. Independent. So okay, money that's going to bring you financial freedom, okay, when? Are you going to live your life or today, or you're going to live your life or 10 years from now, when you have that, you know, there's a lot entrepreneurs that say \$10 million, is my ultimate, because and that's just some. Some, it's more, so much less, but for some reason, a lot, say 10 million, then they can, you know, live off the interest comfortably, yada, yada, whatever their things are, but it takes them however long to get there. Okay, whatever, maybe you are financially free at that time, but are you free? What sacrifices you make along the way? The other one is

independence, this thinking that you're actually independent, you are not independent, you have no independence, you have no freedom, you think you do as an entrepreneur. You are so tied into your business, that it even hits your identity. Control, you have no control, I'm sorry. You don't have control of anything, just accept those things. That's just like a fact of life. Okay. You know, it's kind of funny what we make ourselves believe the stories in our head. One other ad that I put on or a couple more actually, you know, it kind of ties in the first one, money things. You have your things, your trips, your accolades, you know, people are looking for those things consciously and unconsciously. Once I get my dream house, once I go on my dream trip, you know, once I have the awards, and recognized etcetera, you know, sometimes these are things that people are looking for. Last one, which I think picked up a lot of steam, and I've been talking a lot more, we don't really write so much about it in the book, but his purpose, or as Simon Sinek said back in, I think, 08, 09, what's your why? Which is the third most viewed TED talk, I think, in history. And so entrepreneurs were running around saying, what's my why, what's my why? As I was, by the way, and I realized not too long ago, I started to ask myself, why is that so important to us? And why is it so important to me? Because every time I thought I had my why, or I thought I had my purpose. I start and that got me out of bed for a while. And then I'd wake up and I say, I don't know, it doesn't have the same quality, that glow, as you'd like to say, that it had before. And then I said, well, why? What is going on? I thought I found my purpose. And then I thought, Well, why am I so attached to having to know my purpose. So I'm making purpose sound really bad right now. But I think we can reframe it. I like that people want to attach their identity to a purpose. I'm here to change the world through X, Y, and Z. I like that. I don't want you to change that necessarily. But be careful of being identified, like deciding that's your identity. And what I will encourage you to think about is I'll use the example of the honeybee whose identity and whose purpose is tied up in the honey. But when they're out getting what's needed for the honey, they're sprinkling. They're sprinkling, they're creating life. They're creating life, but they don't even realize it. They're solely focused on getting what's needed to make the honey. And so they're out there and then they zoom back and they make and then they go back and they get what they need the zoom back meanwhile, they don't even realize the sprinkling they're doing. And what I say to entrepreneurs, in the like is your sprinkling, you don't even realize it. So if the honey is what makes you feel good, cool, go do it. But just know that you're sprinkling every single day and you don't even realize it in that is your purpose, your purpose is much simpler than you think it is. It's the sprinkle.

S

Steve Divitkos 55:07

You know, the second of the three discoveries, I also found to be incredibly interesting, you said that all decisions are ultimately rooted in either love or fear. And it's actually the fear part that I want to pick up on. Because I suspect that decisions rooted in fear are where most of our mistakes are likely to occur. But how do we know like deep down inside when we are making a decision rooted in fear, because when we're doing so I suspect it's not usually at a conscious level? So how do we go about making the unconscious conscious in this instance?

R

Rob Dube 55:38

Okay, well, first, let me I want to answer the first part of your comment, which is fear equals bad decisions. It depends how you define a bad decision. Empires have been created on fear. Okay, so if you equate success with building an empire, then fear might be the right path for you. In business, fear might actually work out in terms of creating financial freedom for you. And if that feels good, if that's your true self, and you feel peaceful with that, I guess fears your way. I don't think that's, you know, I say that like, kind of in a funny way, because I don't think that's how most people want to feel. They don't want to fear feel the fear. And they don't want to come from a hard place of ego. That's not usually in alignment with their true selves, about, you know, with what they really want out of their lives. And so I just wanted to say that because, you know, what the decision making is really about is just getting in alignment with who you are and what you're all about, you know, and what ultimately brings you that peace in your life. And I'm sorry to say, I can't remember the second part of your question, because your questions are so good. And there's so many paths I could go down. Yeah, different pieces of them. So tell me the second part again.

S

Steve Divitkos 57:07

Yeah, the second part is like, how do we know when we are making a decision out of fear? Because I suspect that we don't do so consciously. So how do we kind of like, flag ourselves or catch ourselves in that moment? If we can do so at all?

R

Rob Dube 57:20

A few practical. No, you can. You can. It's a practice. And so and that's a great question as a second part of what you mentioned. And so first, with your one place, this is where you have your foundation and your framework, you're in a meeting, a decision needs to be made, you're feeling a certain way you write down the feeling you're having, you have the you have the confidence to be your true self in the meeting and say to your team, I know everyone feels pressure to make this decision right now. And I don't feel like I can make the best decision right now. I need 24 hours, I need to sleep on it. And then you go back later in the day, and you look at what you wrote about how you were feeling. And you sit with that, you get quiet. Because the answer is actually not in your head. It's inside of you. You've heard this in a million different ways in your life somewhere along the line, you know, somewhere along the way on your path, and you get quiet, and you just listen. And when you're quiet and you listen, the answer seems to appear. And that's how you start making decisions from from your heart, from a place of love. And so you might go back to your team as an example. And they might say, they might be head based. And they might be saying to you, that's a bad decision. The numbers aren't adding up. We ran the spreadsheets, we talked to the people, we have the facts. Okay, there's two ways you can go with that. You can say I'm going to come from my heart, and I'm going to listen to them. And I'm going to let go. And we're going to go down that road or, and entrepreneurs are great at this when they really get in tune is they say I know what you're saying. But there's something I just know that you can't see what I'm seeing. So you're going to be mad at me. You're going to have I'm going to ask you for your blind faith and for your trust here. And that's the decision you make. Now, you go down the path, and no one on that decision. And no one can say whether it was the right or wrong decision because you didn't go down the other path. So you'll never know. You can't compare it. So if it doesn't work out so great, you learn a lesson. And they might say see we had the data, we told you so. No one told you anything so, because if you went down the other path you might have failed to you just no one knows there is no certainty everybody has to accept that. You don't know. It's like saying when you go down On the path of that, they listened to your intuition. And it was successful, where they say see, that's what, you know, that's what Steve does, he's got the greatest intuition, it always works out. Not necessarily, maybe if we took the other route it would have worked out even better, no one really knows. So it's okay, you just understand that's the path you chose. And however it works out, it works out in an entrepreneurship business. You know, it ebbs and flows, you keep going down, you're on one, you take down another path, you have many forks in the road. And a lot of times the forks have four or five tentacles to them. You're just trying to decide which one am I going, you know, the typical entrepreneur makes 10 times the decisions that a regular person does in their life on a daily basis. Who to hire who to fire, what market to enter new product lines to bring on who to partner with, you know, etcetera. And they're not small decisions. You know, they're not like, what should we have for dinner? Those are minor decisions that the entrepreneurs and the visionary CEOs are making. So know that about yourself and know why this superpower so to speak, of being able to tune in, is so critical to develop, it's the most important work I think one can do when you're running a company.

S**Steve Divitkos 1:01:27**

Because your book is primarily about helping entrepreneurs manage their energy and their psychology, I felt like I had to ask you this question, which might sound a bit odd. But over the past few years, I've noticed an explosion of online content that's basically tried to help entrepreneurs doing the same thing. But I wonder if maybe this advice has gone too far and has become counterproductive? Because many younger entrepreneurs in particular think that if they're not meditating and exercising and cold plunging and intermittent fasting and tracking their sleep metrics, then like they're not being their best selves. So can you just talk to us about how you have thought about the explosion of this type of content and like whether you think it's net helpful or net counterproductive,

R**Rob Dube 1:02:09**

So great, because it's like, you jump on the bandwagon, every three to five years, there's some new thing that you should be doing. Meditation was one of those things, by the way. So thank you for bringing that up and cold plunges is definitely one that's going on right now. Yeah. And I think being able to tune into yourself, and you know, just kind of going back to some of the things that some of the tools or some of the ways that we were talking about earlier, and just listening, what do I need? Meditation is not for everybody. You know, just because I meditate. That was just for me, it like seems to click for me. But so many people have a hard time meditating. And so what they end up doing is I should meditate. So now I try to meditate. And then people say, Hey, you teach meditation Rob, you're a longtime meditator. And I'm a failure at meditation. And I feel so big as like, No, you're not a failure of meditation. You're a success. Meditation isn't working for you, there's something else, I don't know what it is. Go try other things. Find your formula in life, and keep playing around with it, because we want to keep learning. You know, I used to run and I still do, but not like I used to. Running was like really therapeutic for me. You know, for many reasons, and runners in general will oftentimes say that. But now as I've gotten older and 54 Yoga has become more important to me. I didn't feel, I didn't read and hear others saying you have to do yoga. Now you have to do yoga, you have to do you. I just noticed. I tried it. I noticed I was headed, it was a different energetic feeling that I had vibrationally different than running. I still enjoy running I just am not logging the kind of miles that I used to because yoga became very important to me. People love the cold plunges, there are people that swear by them. I can't get into the cold plunges. I tried cold plunges four or five years ago, and I just said, these just I got connect, like, the dots aren't connecting in my mind. And in my body. It just wasn't. So I'm just not a cold plunge person. I'm not that person. And I'm okay with that. So when all these new exciting things come out. And we get caught up as entrepreneurs, especially in peer groups, because everybody's doing the next best thing, you know, and everybody wants to be at the forefront of it all. This is where I say tap into your true self just be very clear about what you believe works for you and doesn't, meaning try things. Like, you know, learn, like Oh, Wow, interesting cold plunges. Let me try that. Let me see if there's something to that for me and then decide, and don't feel like a failure if it's not working for you.

S**Steve Divitkos 1:05:17**

Yeah, yeah, I mean, one of your 10 disciplines is Know thyself. Here's a very practical way where it manifests. I just think like, entrepreneurs are born problem solvers. And as a type A overachiever kind of problem solver in my business and my personal life when I see a problem, for better or for worse, sometimes, for better sometimes for worse. I try to throw every conceivable solution at it all at once. But I guess one of the unintended consequences of this explosion of online content is that, you know, I just worry that in our pursuit of balance and peace, are we just like inadvertently further burdening ourselves and making ourselves feel worse, for not intermittent fasting for not getting sunlight within 10 minutes of waking up, for not having a three times a day journaling practice? I just feel like, you know, I'm on a bit of a tangent and a bit of a high horse here, but it just feels like I feel like the dial has perhaps swung too hard in the opposite direction, I guess what I want to communicate to folks listening is like, you don't have to do all that. Like, for me, journaling is my thing. And like, I don't have that many other things. But just the use of that one tool has really clicked for me. And to the extent that someone listening has one tool themselves, that kind of works, and maybe it's a tool that you don't see on YouTube channels, that's okay. Right. As long as it's your thing, and it works for you. That's pretty much all that matters, in my opinion.

R**Rob Dube 1:06:44**

You're so right on, I think that's great wisdom that you're sharing with everybody. You know, what came to my mind is shortcuts. And for some reason, the word is escaping me, maybe you'll come up with it. We're like, kind of gaming things in our life now. You know, we want the shortcut to meditation. We want the shortcut to, we want the shortcut to this. There are no shortcuts. Yeah, there really aren't. It's really, as you say, you know, it's really just paying attention to what seems to be what you need in the present moment. And there are a lot of things that you could do. If you're noticing your energy vibration low, and you're like, it's sunny out. I'm gonna go out in the sun right now I'm being drawn to that. Ground the sun, go take a moment and go be in the sun and just feel that thing, that big ball of fire that's 93 billion miles away. Feel it on your skin. And just be in awe of that for a moment. But do you have to wake up and run out part of my routine is I go get some for 10 minutes. I'm like, I gotta go get sun. Oh, I forgot I didn't get sun today. I'm all messed up. No, you're making yourself crazy.

S

Steve Divitkos 1:08:02

Totally. You know, there is no, there is no hack for anything this day. If I see, you know, one of those articles, like seven things that all entrepreneurs do before 5am. I think I'm just going to scream if I see another one of those lists, because the other thing that those entrepreneurs do is they avoid reading bullshit lists like that. Let me just say it once and for all. Anyways, let me get off my high horse here because there are a couple other questions that I do want to ask you. In the past, I have heard you discussing this idea of shedding your armor. And I really love this idea. And when I was a CEO, one of the areas in which I personally wore the most armor was with my management team and my employees more broadly, I never let them in. I never let them know when I was feeling vulnerable. I never let them know when I was stressed. And I came to regret a lot of that post exit. But I guess my question to you is like, how much armor did you use to wear when you were dealing with your own management team and your own employee base? And maybe how vulnerable should CEOs be with their internal stakeholders based on your experience?

R

Rob Dube 1:09:11

Well, to answer the question about myself, I'd say half the time I ran the company, I had the biggest suit of armor on that you could carry around. And because I felt like that's what leaders were supposed to do. Nothing affected them, you know? So I tried to be very level headed. Even when inside I was stressed, anxious, scared. And even when good things would happen, I would never just let my true enjoyment of it come out. Why? Because I was fearful that there was going to be something bad tomorrow, and I didn't want to get too excited. So I held back in those ways. And then when I started to realize this is not for me, this doesn't feel like my true self, I'm going to start letting this suit of armor, I'm going to start taking it off. And I did that analytically, unfortunately, at the beginning, but that was just part of my process, meaning I would talk to people and try to get, you know, peers or professionals to convince me that it was okay that I was going to take one piece of armor off and say that to my team, or else this hit, and this could be the ramifications, you know, I was still fear based of doing it. But what I realized is, once I took it all off, people embraced me. And as a result, we embraced each other as a team. And in other words, I gave permission to every other person to kind of come forward if they wanted to, they didn't have to. Some weren't uncomfortable with that, some people left the company because they didn't like what it was becoming. Which was people that were just being truthful about their feelings, and how and maybe some of the reasons they had feelings. And it to me, that was just more human, and it felt more in alignment. In as CEOs, once we all that armor off, we can go to our team, like I did numerous times and say, here's a major situation that's going on. And by the way, in a 10 year period of time, you're gonna have two years where you're gonna have major situations going on, like literally could put you out of business. It's a proven fact go back in history, you can look at it. And so, you know, am I the general, who's like, everybody follow me, I my style with the armor off was, I'm scared. I don't know what this could mean. And you're smart, and I'm halfway smart. So we got to figure this out together. Let's rally the troops, like what do we need to do to collaborate with our action plans, you know, etcetera. And, you know, in that, for me, made more sense. A big one for me was actually opening the books, doing full financial transparency. I had a suit at armor about that for a long time until my mentor Jack Stack, who wrote the book, the Great Game of Business, along with Bo Burlingham, who wrote that other book, as I mentioned, you know, he convinced me? Because I would say, Yeah, but yeah, but it's a, you're not empowering your team, you're not giving them all the information that they need to make good decisions. And as a result, they make worse decisions, because they don't know how to base their decisions. They don't understand how the numbers work. And so that was a really impactful thing for me to open up the books. And boy, was that freeing? Man. Because oftentimes, your people think, you know that your profits and your expenses are, either your expenses are much lower than they are or your cost of goods are much lower than they are, and ultimately your profits. And they think as the CEO or the entrepreneur, you're making way more than you actually are. Yeah, and it's so freeing when they see like, holy crap, like, this person is putting in a lot of time, effort and risk, they actually aren't making as much as I thought they were, in fact, what they're making is fair.

S**Steve Divitkos 1:13:20**

And that's a very common one, right, that the find opening up the books is a very common one. I know from secondhand experience, now, as an investor, but also firsthand experience, I had this exact same question. Eventually, I did what you did. And just kind of open up the books. But my fear at the time was, one of two things is going to happen, either people will realize that we're too profitable, and they're all going to demand raises, or they'll think we're not profitable enough, and we're on our way down the tube, and they'll start polishing up their resumes. And interestingly, neither of those things happen. And I have to imagine that the things that we are most fearful of, that tends to be the case, like in terms of me being vulnerable with my management team. I'm a bit embarrassed to say that prior to like, my last year as a CEO, when I finally learned the lesson, my management team often described me as a bit robotic, like they'd say, like, Dude, you're not a human, like, you don't show us any sadness, or fear or anxiety or anything like that. And of course, I was experiencing all of those things. And I was worried that, you know, they would think, oh, he's supposed to be the steady hand at the wheel, he's supposed to know what he's doing, etcetera. And then once I finally was vulnerable with them, I was surprised to learn that they they appreciated the trust that I bestowed in them in sharing these things with them. They kind of, not directly, but almost indirectly thanked me for like trusting them with this kind of information. And B, they weren't scared. They kind of said, all right, we got a problem. Like, let's get at it. Let's go solve it. So I just have to imagine that like the things that we're most fearful of, like, I don't want to say they never happen, because I'm sure they do. But in my experience, the things that we're most fearful of rarely manifest in the way that we think they will.

R**Rob Dube 1:15:11**

It's so true. It's so true. You're right, you're right. And you know, in these situations if a person is scared, because they see the profit, they might leave, okay, well, then they might leave. But then you have to say, Go back to your true self. What kind of company do I want? Do I want a company where once somebody sees the number, they're not on board with me anymore? No, you want the person who steps up and says, you know, I think about this guy, Marcus at Image one, the company, I'm not running anymore. But when COVID came, we were all on Zoom, like so many others. And we were trying to figure out what the heck was going on. I mean, we we provide copiers and people in offices who rent weren't gonna be in. And this guy, Marcus, who was a technician who was in the field, he worked in our in the field, he gave like the most, the greatest motivational speech about coming together as a team. And we'll work through this, and so on and so forth. And as a leader, I didn't have to say a thing. And you have a technician, who's giving the motivational speech, like just off the cuff. Can you imagine having a company like that? That's amazing. That's leadership, in my opinion. That's where you really see it shine.

S**Steve Divitkos 1:16:27**

So Rob, I think we have time for one more question. When I was leading my own company, I eventually came to find that the mood of the employee base eventually came to reflect my own mood as a leader. So when I was tired, or sluggish or worried, inevitably, over time, I would notice those same things within my employee base. And I was excited or optimistic. Again, I would notice those same things. So the question is, because we all tend to be our own worst judges, how might current CEOs better understand the truth of how they are currently showing up at work? And the reason why I asked that is, because when I was sluggish or stressed or anxious, I didn't know that I was portraying those things. I had a couple of honest employees kind of call me out on it. So like, how do we better get at the truth of how we are showing up for our people on a day to day basis.

R**Rob Dube 1:17:19**

When you have a strong foundation or framework in your life, you have the ability to have great awareness of your vibrational energy. And when your vibrational energy is low, which happens to everybody, you can raise it or enter in there are many ways of doing that. And we don't have to get into all that. But yes, how you show up as a leader is very important. And you can show up with a high vibrational energy on a regular basis, and you can get yourself in that state very quickly. It's not a challenging thing to do. But the main thing is just being aware of it. Now, you can be honest, as a starter before you get into tools in terms of how you do that, you could be in a simple weekly leadership meeting. And at Image One, we would go around and we would say, rank your energy. So everybody would rank their vibrational energy. So as a leader, if I had a 10, you were a six, everyone knew that. And you could even speak to it, my energy's low today, I think it's because I didn't sleep well. My kid has a cold, you know, baba, baba, bah, whatever the case might be. So my vibrational energy is low. And that gives the room their human energy, the opportunity to lift you up and raise your vibrational energy. And you will do the same for them. Because some days, many days, hopefully, you're going to be at a high vibrational energy and some of your team is not going to be and you're going to help lift them up. So we would always say like, we really want to be lifter uppers, not dragger downers, but I don't know how to help you lifter upper unless I know how you're feeling. And so that's part of what we need to do as leaders is open up the conversation and help allow people to, you know, be vulnerable. And how we do that goes back to the very beginning of your my conversation, which is, you have to be vulnerable yourself. And that gives people permission to do it. And the more you do it, the more comfortable they feel with it, because it doesn't seem weird to them anymore. It just seems like it is what it is.

S**Steve Divitkos 1:19:38**

Rob, what a treat this has been. The book is called Shine, How Looking Inward is the Key to Unlocking True Entrepreneurial Freedom. It's coming out later this month as we record this in March of 2024. Rob, is there anything that you want to leave the audience with anything left unsaid from our conversation that you really want people to to leave with?

R

Rob Dube 1:20:00

I always like to say, as entrepreneurs, we're lifelong learners don't stop learning. But what I do want to encourage you is to trust that the answer is inside of you. And find some time to be with that. When you are faced with your challenges and your successes, just know it's inside of you.

S

Steve Divitkos 1:20:25

Wise words. Rob, thank you so much for your time today. We really appreciate.

R

Rob Dube 1:20:31

I appreciate thoughtful questions and your preparation in the way that you go about this entire podcast. It's truly remarkable, and I see why it's a success.

S

Steve Divitkos 1:20:44

Thank you, Rob.

R

Rob Dube 1:20:46

Thank you.