

**Ep #262: Dr. Nathan Ho - Leveraging Through  
Collaboration**



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## Ep #262: Dr. Nathan Ho - Leveraging Through Collaboration

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David Phelps: Hey everyone, it's Dr. David Phelps of the Freedom Founders Mastermind Community and Dentist Freedom Blueprint Podcast, here with a really good friend of mine today is Dr. Nathan Ho. Nathan, how are you?

Nathan Ho: I'm doing great. How are you David?

David Phelps: Super, super. Hey, I'm so glad to have you back. I was just checking to see in our last podcast that we did together for a Dentist Freedom Blueprint Podcast and it was podcast number 208 so if you want to go back and pick that one up, that was some months ago and it's good to have you back because you know Nathan, you really inspire me. You inspire a lot of people. We're a generation apart. But your inspiration in your attitude in the midst of what I feel like are a lot of compression industry, a lot of marginalization, a lot of commoditization. You know, there's issues out there. They no question. But you know, dentistry is not alone. Dentistry is not alone. We just feel it because that's where we all are. It's where our colleagues are dealing with insurance, and corporate, and staffing issues, and my goodness, and then patients have high,

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high sometimes unreasonable expectations. We have a lot of pressure to deal with day in and day out. And so I was just commenting when we jumped on a few minutes ago that you always show up with a smile on your face and you just made a comment about that. Give me, reflect back on that again about smile amidst all the stress. What does that do for you?

Nathan Ho: You know what? Dentistry is perhaps one of the most stressful professions, it's such a stressful environment. So when we smile, our body releases adrenaline and that's usually solve all the stress and all the problems that we have. As dentists we supposed to smile, to show our patients our teeth. Right?

David Phelps: Exactly, exactly. Show our teeth. A smile just changes everything, changes your attitude, it changes the attitudes of people around you. It's sometimes hard to remember that some people were more natural about it. You are one of those people that other people have to think about it, right? Think about how you can, what's the word I'm looking for? D, D, not deactivate, but you know, reduce the tension, right? Reduce tension with anybody you're dealing with. Just by that smile, can kind of break that tension down. It's easy to do, but it's also hard to remember to do it sometimes for some people. So anyway, I just, I love that about you. You know, we talked on our prior episode a little bit more about your, your backstory and I think a lot of people that were born in this country kind of grew up in this country, never felt maybe the hardships that people like you did, your family.

David Phelps: I know other people like you that they are immigrants to this country and how difficult coming over for you, your

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family and the gratitude that I think I see a lot more to immigrants and I see in natural born people here that kind of take things for granted, and then when tough times appear like, "Oh my gosh, what do I do?" What's your feeling about resilience and perseverance in life and the fact that nothing ever goes exactly the plan. There's curve balls, there's things that we can control, things that we can't control in our lives and our practices. How do you look at it that in your life, because I know you run across the same thing. Not everything goes exactly the way you want to. How do you and your lovely wife, Quinn, maintain your kind of attitude going forward?

Nathan Ho: You know what, David, we came from nothing. Our family used to grow up in a very poor family. After the Vietnam war, my dad went to, the Communist put him in the reeducation camp. And so my mom raised five children with no money, no job. And then when my dad that came home, they have three more kids. So raising eight childrens, no money, no jobs is actually pretty tough. So everything that we going through when we came to the US to me it's a great opportunity and no obstacles or hardships bothers us at all. For most people for a lot of things, they feel stressed over. But for us it doesn't bother us at all. And we know that for anything that's hard out there and projects that we have to spend a lot of time and effort to overcome, I know that if we were to engage in it and keep going at it over time it will get easier.

David Phelps: Yeah. Very well said. You've been in practice how many years now, Nathan?

Nathan Ho: 11 years.

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David Phelps: Just 11 years and something I've seen you do well and again, this is not an easy thing to do for a lot of people, but you know, being a partnership, you and your partner, Dr. Chuong Do and then you have another dentist with you now in your practice?

Nathan Ho: Yes, we have an associate, we have two practices, a main practice and a satellite practice. It's a satellite practice where we put our associates.

David Phelps: I'm a big believer in collaborations, be that partnerships, or strategic alliances with other companies, or people that have your patients. That's something that we learn, through business and marketing skills. And typically we grow up in our education system all the way through college, and graduate school, dental school, professional school, whatever it may be, and the success toll tag or getting to that point where you succeed, you'll pass the grade, pass the boards, pass the licensing, whatever it may be. It's all on us, right? There's no cooperation or collaboration of working together to get through school. So it was, so we're not used to teaming up, right? Putting together teams, it's not our natural. You seem to have done that well. Again, there's always pitfalls, nothing's perfect, but how do you speak to that? Being able to have a longterm partnership that from, at least from my point of view, seems to be working well. Now you and your partner, Dr. Do had brought associate in place. How do you manage those kinds of relationships?

Nathan Ho: I not only have a dental partner, but now I have a program partner and a business partner. As you know, I also have an awesome life partner as well. Right? So I have a lot of partners in my life to answer your questions. I think the

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most critical thing is to find the right partners that is ethical, that have integrity, and to operate in a way that that is basically ethical. People cheat ON one thing will most likely cheat on other things or in other business engagement. So, the key is to find quality partners that will support your visions and share the workload that you have to put in to build a company.

David Phelps: And have you ever made a mistake or maybe just not chosen wisely in any kind of a prior partnership or collaboration? Or it didn't go exactly the way you hope because maybe there's something you missed about the person you were thinking about working with? It could be a small project, it doesn't have to be a full partnership. Is there any anytime in the past where you thought, "Ah, I kind of missed the mark on that one," and then lessons you learned from that?

Nathan Ho: Not really because even though I'm young, but I learned from people like yourself and so many speakers that will come and speak at the Dental Win-Win Summit. So I learned from their mistakes and failures and I basically just prevent them. Right? I read a lot of books as well. So when I engage in a projects or a business or a partner, I try to really analyze it to make sure the projects and partners are the right project and partners for me to engage with.

David Phelps: You mentioned a couple words that I think are certainly part of our English vocabulary, but something that a lot try to avoid and that is risk, and failures, and mistakes. You said those three things, trying new things, trying something that's outside of our normal comfort zone of not always playing it safe. Controlling everything or just

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doing what we've always done is kind of a safe route to go. Right? What would you say about taking risks and what would you also say in terms of taking risks when things don't work out? So you mentioned failures, making mistakes, kind of testing things. What's your attitude about that?

Nathan Ho: To do anything extraordinary, we have to do things that haven't done or at least you haven't done. And so if you were to have an idea then most likely if you were to try to, for example, if you had a project idea and you tried to build it, most likely you won't know everything about it. So, there are risks involved, right? But the key is to try to take calculated risk, so that way you can get in and if something were to fail, it won't screw your life or you won't lose all the money. Like, for example, I partner with a programmer to build an online reputation software to help business owners to get more online reviews and grow the business without having to spend more money on marketing. And over time we evolved that into a customer engagement and marketing technology platform. So now we have business texting with CRAM and leads management, web chat, SMS base and referral system. But if I didn't start with the online review management software, then I wouldn't have you thought about building business texts CRAM, a web chat, and a referral system, right? So you have to get into a project or make your idea become a reality. And from there you can build upon it and figure things out as you go along.

David Phelps: I think what's unique about what you've done and you're speaking of EnvisionStars of course, something that a lot of people who know you know that your outside dentistry business. What you were able to do was you saw a

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problem, no business online reviews, right? You saw that as a big problem. You saw a void in the marketplace, you saw something that a lot of business owners struggle with in dealing with that and you took that on. And again, to our discussion here about partners to collaborate, probably wouldn't be to do it all by yourself. You have a program or as a partner. Now you're a smart guy. I'll bet you can do programming. But if you tried to do the programming, and build a vision for EnvisionStars, and have a dental practice, and be a father, and head of household, something probably would have broken by now, do you think?

Nathan Ho: I wouldn't say broken by now. I would say it's impossible because no one can be anything great by himself or herself.

David Phelps: S let's talk a little bit about that. By all means you're a successful person. Now again, I don't say that we don't all have challenges and we have, we are always trying to do better in what we do, in all realms of life, we're always doing better. But you're a survivor. You persevere. You've got the attitude. What was it that drove you, besides seeing a problem, that being online business reviews, what, besides seeing that problem, what drove you to seek to want to solve that problem? Where did the spark come from?

Nathan Ho: Okay. In my dental practice we are getting most of our new patients from all online reviews because of our reputations with our patients. So all the times, even though I spend a lot money on direct mails, marketing, Facebook marketing, websites, or patient referred by other patients, most of those patients actually went on



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Google to read our reviews before they come in. And even the ones then intentionally go on Google to read our reviews. They go on there to look for direction to office and that's when they see our reviews. There were some patients that came in and accept the \$20,000 plus treatment plan only because they've read our reviews before they came to us. And one time my Massage Envy sent me an appointment confirmation and it said type C to confirm the appointment type D for directions, and when I type in D, it took me to the Google map listing for directions and that's when I saw the bad reviews. So these days, most people, even though they see your marketing's online, they look at your website, most likely they will go on Google to look at your reviews before they come in because they have options. There are so many dentists out there, there are so many businesses out there. So they would want to research about you before they spend money and trust you,

David Phelps: You're so right. The reviews just drive everything today. And online is where it's at. It's easy to find those reviews and 100% whether I'm looking for some kind of service provider, or auto mechanic, or I'm looking for a restaurant to eat at. Yeah, the reviews is where you always go. And then you read those reviews, and I'm looking for an experience, I'm looking for people who say they that they provide great service and then there's always going to be a few negative reviews, but you expect that because you can't please everybody. So that's kind of par for the course, but I'm looking for dominant reviews to show that the company, the business is providing well. If that's what I see, I'm going there. Just to your point, you were going to get a massage and you saw some negative reason and it made you say, "Whoa, wait a minute. Why am I going

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there?" Maybe, right? You change course and same thing can happen to any of our colleagues in dentistry. If you're not monitoring, and managing, and having the capability of attracting the very good reviews, the five star reviews from your patients who rave about you, then you're missing it. You're missing the opportunity, right?

Nathan Ho: That's right. I use Siri to search for a business and Siri told me, "Okay, this business is 2.3 miles away with 2.7 star rating." So these days, even Siris would tell you the rating before it tells you the directions.

David Phelps: You just can't hide anymore, can you? You can't hide if you're not providing exemplary service or being able and willing to step up and those customer satisfaction issues that again, they're going to happen. None of us are perfect, but many times if you get it a poor review, not a five star review, and I know you would do this and we do this in our businesses, you reach out to that person, say, "Hey, so sorry your experience wasn't what we would expect. Let's see what we can do to resolve it." Right? You do that a lot of times when people come back and say, "Wow, I first gave this company, this product, this service, a two star review. But you know what? They stepped up." If I see that I'm going, "Okay, I'm in, I'm in. That's a company that cares."

Nathan Ho: That's right. And when you have a lot of reviews and you get several negative reviews, it doesn't affect your rating that much. Currently our practice has 664 authentic, well-written reviews. So if we were to get one or two negative reviews, it wouldn't affect us that much. But if dentists or practice owners that have a 15, 20, 30 reviews and they

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have one or two negative reviews, it's going to drive the rating down a lot.

David Phelps: So I know people are probably thinking this is something they need to do if they haven't found a way to do it. And you've just made it super easy. So let's go ahead and give people the link, the place they can go to learn more about EnvisionStars because I think you've done a fantastic job with your partner in putting this together and you continue to evolve it every time I talked to you, you're making new inroads to make it easier and more robust. So where's the place to go?

Nathan Ho: [www.envisionstars.com](http://www.envisionstars.com). When practice owners go on there, they can try out the software for 14 days for free and it's not just for review. We have referral system, we have business texting ,and we have web chat, a complete system for dentists or practice owners to use to grow their practice without having to waste money on marketing and if they are already marketing then they can try to get the highest return on investment on their marketing dollars and effort.

David Phelps: Fantastic. Well something else I've seen you step out and take some risk in life and that is putting on a large conference for dental colleagues. Your first one was the Dental Win-Win Summit last year in Dallas, Texas. I was honored and pleased to be there. You brought together quite a group of really great presenters, a lot of great sponsors and fantastic attendees from Texas and all over the country. That was some risk because Nathan, I've been doing conferences and events for about 10 years and I certainly know how difficult it is to go and sign a contract with a hotel where you're guaranteeing that

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you're going to pay, not some small dollars but some big dollars to rent their space in anticipation of having so many attendees and then that's where the work starts. Right? Your great idea then has to turn into work. You stepped right up to the plate, you and your team and had a full out conference. It was fully loaded and got tremendous, great reviews from last year. You're doing it again this year in April. What was it that kind of again pushed you forward to, to take that risk and do something that was your first time out?

Nathan Ho: You know what, I just have a passion to help my colleagues out there because dentists are not marketers. Dentists are not business people. We didn't get any kind of business training in dental school. Over time I just gained some knowledge I just want to share. But I had the idea of leveraging other speakers with different expertise to bring their knowledge to teach at the same event, to help other dentists out. So that was my passion because I know that I can't even carry, like Jim Roan said, right? We can't even carry three people on our shoulder, but we can help 1,000 people. So if I were to help 1,000 people through the event, then that's my motivation. And if I were able to bring in 10 other speakers and perhaps maybe we can help 10 other thousands, I mean 10,000 of dentists out there.

David Phelps: What are the dates for this year's Dental Win-Win's Summit?

Nathan Ho: So this year it will be on April 17th and 18th in Arlington, Texas.

David Phelps: And that's a Friday, and a Saturday?

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Nathan Ho: Yes.

David Phelps: For people who maybe typically works Friday or a half a day Friday, let's talk about why it might be a really good idea if they considered taking off that day, rescheduling and coming. Let me go first, then you go. I will say that many times I've signed up for conferences or mastermind groups, well in advance because I had good intentions, looked like something to go and then the time comes near, busy schedules and things come up and I'm thinking, gosh, "It's going to be kind of troublesome. I have to go travel, maybe I have to get on a plane or I got to drive and maybe I'll just pass on this." And then once I get there to wherever I'm going, then it hits me in the face.

David Phelps: It's like I know why I'm supposed to be here. If I take away one or two great ideas that I'll actually go back and implement, that's all I need. One or two. I don't need, I'll listen to everybody, but I'm looking for the one or two great takeaways and I'm also looking full a connection. Again, I may intentionally want to actually talk to somebody who is going to be there. It could be a presenter, it could be a sponsor, it could be an attendee who's going to be there.

David Phelps: Those hallway discussions, which always happened in every great meeting, when you attract great people like you do, those can also be great. And sometimes you don't know what's going to come out of this. So that's why my point is you may not know right now why you might want to come to the Dental Win-Win Summit in April this year you might be thinking, "Well, it's just another conference, I'm busy, it's springtime." I get all that, but here's the thing, you get those one or two takeaways. You meet one

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or two key people who can be a driver to you. You can connect with you leverage what they've got to tell you. Well heck, Nathan, that's what you do. I mean, you've connected with a lot of people and our mutual friend, you mentioned already, Dr. Mike Abernathy, and how much has that connection that you made some years ago meant to you?

Nathan Ho: You know what? When I started my practice, I was struggling to produce 20, 30, \$40,000 a year. But when I started to work with Dr. Abernathy, we jumped from 40 to 60 to 80, and guess what? And then we continue to grow after that, after we started working with Dr. Abernathy. So it is not just 20% or 40% a year. It's, if you count the whole lifetime, then it would be 1,000,000%. You know what I mean? So if they want to come to the Summit, then they get the opportunity to learn from, from you how to create freedom in life so they can have more freedom and options to spend more times with the loved ones.

Nathan Ho: They can see Dr. Abernathy with 30 years of experience and learn the system that he had created when he was in practice. And learn from doctor Edward Zuckerman, right, who's better to learn about Facebook marketing, then the father of, the founder of Facebook. And then Dr. Douglas Lomell, a very well known asset protection will be there, and Dr. Emily LeTran, the high performance coach, Richard Stowe, an ESPN radio host. He is great at story telling and, and how to, and he will teach about the greater vision excellence beyond personal and professional profit and leaving a legacy. Dentists, our colleagues will be able to learn from Dr. Travis Campbell. He is just an extraordinary dentist and he is so

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knowledgeable in the insurance game. So he will teach us about how to file insurance.

Nathan Ho: So our claims will get paid almost every single time and Trish Jorgenson will be there. Dr Gregg May will be there. Dr Gregg May, he's an extraordinary dentist that rate with case acceptance and he will teach us how to increase our case acceptance to over 90%. So if we were to learn one thing from Dr. Gregg May, we might be able to close a \$20,000 case by Monday and think about I have that right. So this summit will have different extraordinary speakers with different expertise. If you add all the experiences together, it would be over 220 years of experience. Imagine how many books and how many seminars and how many dentists, consultants you have to talk to in order to learn that much knowledge from just event. So, I'm just too excited.

David Phelps: Oh I can tell. You've done such a great job last year and I know this year will be no exception at all. It's really about working smarter, not harder. I mean everybody that we talk to, they're all hard workers, but yo want to leverage the opportunities and leverage the knowledge and experience of other people who have figured things out. We don't have to go do it the hard way. Because the hard way takes a lot of time. And the other thing I'll say about the presenters, that you have coming, now I know probably at least half of them, and I'm sure this goes for the other half that I don't know that I want to get to know, but everybody that I know from that group, Nathan, has a backstory. You mentioned storytelling. Well, I'm not talking about just telling stories I'm talking about challenges and things that didn't go to plan in one slide.

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David Phelps: I know everybody has that. So when you're talking about great speakers who are going to give a lot of great experience, every one of them has gone through some tough times somewhere, in personal life, business life, sometimes both. Those are the people I like to learn from. I don't want to just learn from people who say, "Oh, I was an instant success coming out of school. I've never had issues." I want to actually learn from people who are like me, who are not perfect, don't always do the smart thing, the right thing, the best thing. I want to learn from those people. And I think that's what you put together really, really well.

Nathan Ho: That's right. And we try to cover all aspects of dental business. So it's not just practice management, its not just marketing, its not just case acceptance, it's everything. The most important thing is to be able to be there to connect with these speakers so they can contact them after the event. Right? and like you said, we can also connect with other attendees as well because there will be a lot of successful practice owners that will be there to learn and connect with all of us.

David Phelps: Yeah, it's really, really good. I'm a big fan of always having a plan B. Right? In life, and practice, and everything. We focus on what we think is the best path, the right path, and that's great. And we go down it, but I'm a big plan B guy and I see, the thing I love about you Nathan, is at a very young age you're also a plan B guy. You have your practices, right? You have your partnership there and it gives you some freedom to do some additional things outside the practice. Which EnvisionStars is one and through your, your beautiful wife, Quinn, your other partner you're involved with. So I



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love the fact that early point in your life you're already building some plan B in place because you never know. You never know when you might need to have that plan B in place. Something comes up in your life that forts your ability to produce active income in one area, well you've got something else in another area. So it gives you kind of like an insurance policy to be doing that. I'm a big fan.

Nathan Ho: Yes. We actually try to plan more than that and be on plan B. I would say plan B, plan C, plan D, plan E and we like to stop at plan F.

David Phelps: I thought you might do the whole alphabet for us. I don't know. I wouldn't doubt you could do that. I think you do that. And again, really the only way to have multiple plans or plant multiple seeds that can grow maybe at different rates, different times. The only way to really do that is to learn how to collaborate with other people. It's what we say at the top of this interview is the ability to find other people that you can, well, just what you call your platform. It's win-win, you've got to create win-win collaborations, win-win partnerships, win-win joint ventures, so that everybody gets something out of it. We try to control everything ourselves. We tend to lose, we tend to lose the opportunity to be more, not just have more but, but to be more in life and that means having more time.

David Phelps: A time is the thing that I think everybody really wants. Right? We work hard so hopefully we can, we can leverage and get more time off because in the end time was a thing that slips away fast and we can't actually buy that back. We can always make more money. We can have more dental practices, we could buy more real estate. We can do those things but we can't get time back

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and so we're always exchanging what we're doing at any given time, exchanging that time for what we really want and you've got to find some balance. Collaboration, I think is the key to do it and you have really set the mark high in doing that very, very well.

Nathan Ho: Thank you, thank you David.

David Phelps: All right, well listen, it's always great to catch up with you and I'm really looking forward to being at the Dental Win-Win Summit this year. You've got an all star cast and I loved being there last year, I'm going to love being there this year and just being in the energy and excitement that you bring in all the people and the sponsors that will be there. It's going to be a great conference and I hope I get a chance to, to meet as many people there because I know you have a big group coming.

Nathan Ho: You know, usually dentists would have to fly all over the countries to learn from these speakers. This year we bringing all of them to come together to teach at one event. I am super excited and the registration costs is not that much at all. I've seen events out there that charging thousand and thousand of dollars with a one or two main speakers. We have 12th and the fee is just 749 for early bird. It will go up to about 997 soon. I hope many of our colleagues will sign up and attend event, learn from more speakers and also to network with other attendees as well.

David Phelps: All right, well we are just almost exactly three months out. I would jump on the early bird, lock it in. Don't procrastinate. It's easy to put things off because you think you have time, but lock it in today. Get your calendar set because that's the way you move from where you are

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today, transform to the next step. You've got to mingle with other people and learn from some of the best. So Dr. Nathan Ho, thank you so much for your time today.

Nathan Ho: Thank you so much for the opportunity, David. I always appreciate you and your team. You have done such an amazing job to help dentists find a freedom in life because there's nothing better than having more options in life so we can have more time to spend with our family and loved ones.

David Phelps: Well said. Thanks Nathan.

Nathan Ho: Thank you.

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