

Ep #357: Ken Wimberly - Building Your Legacy Today



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Welcome to the Dentist Freedom Blueprint, a podcast about freedom—freedom from expectations of society and the traditional path to success that has been ingrained in us from our early years, I'm joined by mavericks, renegades, and non-conformers to discuss an anti-traditional path to financial freedom, freedom of time, relationships, health, and ultimately freedom of purpose. My name is Dr. David Phelps. Let's get started.

David Phelps: Good day, everyone. This is Dr. David Phelps of the freedom founders mastermind community and Dentist Freedom Blueprint podcast. Today, I'm going to enjoy this conversation as much as you are because I've had a little bit of a preview. My guest today is Mr. Ken Wimberly. Ken, how are you, sir?

Ken Wimberly: I'm so good and so honored to be here with you. Thank you.

David Phelps: Well, like so many good things in life, we came together, met through another connection. We talked about that on our first call and some of my best people, some of my best friends came through other people and I think that's why we're here today. But I want to share you, your message with my tribe because that's what we do here and that's why the podcast is, I think makes it fun. I get to interview and get to know cool people and I get to take the same thing out to my audience. And we resonated on a lot of different areas. I'll give you a little bit of a theme of what we're going to talk about today. It's going to come something maybe a little bit different, but I think something very good for every one of you, because I know who you are. You're just like me and you're like Ken and like a lot of us who are hard drivers, and we want to

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build security for our families. We're busy doing those things because we think it's the right thing to do and sometimes it's not.

So before I go further, a few facts about Ken. Hey, you've got a lot of fun facts. You competed in 10, over 10 tough events. That's awesome. You've also had some business setbacks as I have as well, personal bankruptcy in business back in 2001, you lost your home to a short sale, had amassed a lot of debt in that great recession of 2008. These are all things we could relate to, but you also paid off over \$350,000 in debt between 2012 and 2014. So again, the turnaround, kind of the mess to success, what we learn from those things. That's why I love people like you is because you bring the reality to the world. None of us has it all figured out. We all have setbacks.

You've run five full marathons, a lot of half dozen... I have dozen. Half dozen half marathons. I just made that one up. You build a commercial real estate team that was ranked number one commercial team, 2014-2015 in the entire Keller Williams commercial organization. I mean, that's top shelf right there. You're an equity owner in five different operating businesses. So you're definitely one of us. You're an entrepreneur. Got your hands in a lot of different things as we've talked about. You've been a commercial real estate investor since 2006, you read between 15 and 20 books per year and you've been actively practicing Hal Elrod's Miracle Morning since 2015. There's more here, but we can take the whole podcast and talk about all Ken's cool stuff and cool, I mean everything.

But today we want to focus on Ken is what... We're going to title this podcast, The Legacy of Love. So let's go there.

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And I think way I want to frame this up is what I earlier said with all of your attributes, all of things that you've done, the things that our audience does and works really hard, the thing that we don't want to do is go through life and miss the most important things, which are really not things, they're people and the connections to people and how it's so easy to make up the excuse that my business is for, in this case, my family, this business is for my family. I mean, we do that. I've done that. I still do it, Ken.

Ken Wimberly: Yeah.

David Phelps: So talk about that. Talk a little bit about your background and the role models you had growing up, and then we're going to morph into what you've discovered on your entrepreneurial path and your family connections.

Ken Wimberly: Yeah, sure. Thank you very much. So I guess going back to role models growing up, I didn't have the most ideal role models growing up and I wanted them. I grew up in a single parent household, that the first memory of my life was my parents getting divorced and was raised by a loving mother who was also an alcoholic. And so she spent as much time out of the house, running around at the bars as she did in the house with her two kids. So I really was seeking role models in my life and I didn't know I was seeking that in my life, but I felt that something was missing as I was growing up. And because of that, I actually ended up volunteering and going to military school when I was just a young man at 12 years old and found some role models there, found discipline and structure there.

And one positive role model as I was growing up was my grandfather. He was an entrepreneur. He owned a steel erection construction company. And I do remember

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certainly as I got older, I was fascinated, kind of just going into his office and listening to him and listening to him talk to suppliers and vendors and employees and running a business. I thought that was something really neat, something I one day aspired to have and do on my own. My uncle who worked for my grandfather as my grandfather passed, my uncle Franco became the patriarch of our family and he has been a phenomenal role model to me as I've become a parent and a business owner of myself right there. So had some of those.

I had my own children, my first child in 2002 and was scared to death, had no clue what to do and I think I was 31 years old at that time and still felt just too young and under prepared to have a child, but I tell you what, the moment she was born, I felt this incredible sense of love and connection and just spirituality between us and so that was a beautiful thing. And at that time of my life, I was, you kind of alluded this a little bit, but I felt like I was living a little bit on autopilot. At that point I was doing what I thought was supposed to be doing, business wise, just marriage wise, business wise, everything. I wasn't living my life. I was living other people's lives or society's life or what I felt like was supposed to be that. And as I look back on that time for a bunch of year, about 10 years, honestly, until I was, I think 39, 40 years old, that was kind of my life.

I was a good dad. I don't want to diminish that. I was a good dad and frankly, I had started capturing some stories and moments for my children, way back then, but I wasn't real aware of who I needed to be and who I later became at that time. So I had a bit of awakening, both spiritual and physical in my late thirties, early forties as really, I heard someone, I heard Gary Keller on stage one

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day, talk about a big why in having a purpose in your life. And that was the first time in my life, I had ever heard that concept of living with a purpose, with a greater power to kind of pull you through the rough times. And it took me a couple years of soul searching. I talk to people about this all the time, like, oh, how do I just find my purpose? And it's not an easy thing to do. It takes a lot of deep soul searching, I think, to really determine what your individual purpose and your big why, your kind of guiding light is.

And when I decided that, when I kind of understood what that was, my entire life began to change and started living with intentionality. And I will be completely transparent. When I defined my purpose, it was much more aspirational than reality at that point. In my purpose, just to be clear is to be the best possible example for my wife, my children, and for others who might look to me for inspiration, because what I've learned over the years is that people are watching and you don't think they're watching, but they are and whether it's employees or team members or maybe people you never even knew and frankly you don't know personally, but they're watching you and your story and your life and the way you live can have an impact on many other people.

So that framework of being that best possible example for that group of people in all areas of my life and that's health, fitness, wellness, personal relationships, love, caring, benevolent, spirituality. And it's kind of like a living document, if you will. This is my big why, is a bit of a... The most recent thing I've added was adventure because I found, that was a few years ago, I added adventure onto that. That's important that I show that as an example to my children, I'll get myself out of the comfort zone and go do things that scare me to death and I'll do them because

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I think it's something I deep down in want to do. So I threw adventure there.

So anyways, I had to find that purpose. It kind of just started me on a direction really, as a father and entrepreneur. And yeah, I was 39, 40 years old as that happened and from there... I'm 50 today and the last 10 years of my life have just seen exponential growth in terms of, so all those businesses you mentioned, those streams of income, that's all been in the last 10 years. It's been accomplished in the last 10 years. And so want every listener here to understand that if you're not where you want to be today, you can be anywhere in the world you want to be in the next probably five to 10 years. And that's an absolute reality in fact, right there.

David Phelps: It is. And I'm so glad you say that because I think a lot of people, and I think I felt this way as I was like you, evolving through life and not having a greater why or a purpose and again, kind of on that treadmill and not really building relationships, role models, didn't seek those out till later. Well, you were a little bit forced into it, as you said, I mean, you went to the military, you got some discipline, some guidelines, some guardrails. So I mean, that was wisdom on your part at a very young age. What I find about you Ken, and I want to make this point because I read a lot of your fun facts. You didn't include all your highlight reel. It's not your sizzle reel of Ken out here looking great.

And unfortunately that's a lot of time what we see in other people. And I think the lack of authenticity has as many times comparing ourselves to other people who, they have had successes, maybe they're successful right now. Absolutely. In certain areas, maybe not all. And they're

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showing up like that and we think what is wrong with me? And you led with, yes, I've made some turnarounds, I've made some comebacks, but boy, I call it like being in the deep hole. You said, I've been there, I've been where I was looking up and going, how do I climb out of this one? Only our family responsibilities-

Ken Wimberly: Yeah.

David Phelps: ... And it has to do with finances and it could have to do with health. And I mean, all kinds of things can put us there and we think what's wrong with me. What did I do to deserve this? Or why did I make these mistakes or bad decisions? And you come around and say, look at me, look, I got flaws, I got scars, I got battle tracks on me, but hey, you too can overcome this. And through that adversity, I want you to talk a little about the diversity, about being there in places where this is really stressful. How did you, through mindset or collaboration or who, what helped you get through? And I'm sure part of that is how you developed your bigger why and your purpose today, that that was the character building that got you there. Give us a little bit of that, because I know that's there and I know you can pour that out.

Ken Wimberly: Not only that, I don't want to give the impression that that adversity is a hundred percent gone in my life because it's not, it still shows up in different aspects of my life. I had a really challenging year, a year or so ago with my older son. And it was tough going through that as a parent. There are seasons as a parent that are much more challenging than others. And for those that have little kids, I always say between the ages of about four and a half and 11, it's just the golden years right there. And, but I had a really challenging season a year or so ago. And

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sometimes they still pop up today, but from way back in following bankruptcy and having to shut down our business, let our employees go, let them down, let our suppliers down, let my partner down. And it was hard. It was really hard. And it felt like those dark days might never end.

I'll be really honest with you, and just looking down a dark, deep hole and I had to really look inside. I had to look at just my belief and something greater than me, an opportunity greater than me out there. And I honestly, for a couple years I just put my nose down. I said, okay, look, I can't turn it around overnight, but I can put one foot in front of the other. I can still work. I have my health. I can work. I can go, I have this certain skillset, which was the restaurant skillset at that time. Said, I can go, become, I'm employable. I can do some things. And so that's what I did.

I just went back out and started putting one foot in front of the other and then I saw opportunity in the real estate world from there. I said, well, frankly, I was working 70 hours a week for \$50,000 a year, like this will not work. I've got a baby girl on the way and I'll never see her. And so I got out of that restaurant business into the real estate business and I mean, hey that was hard. I jumped right into commercial real estate, not residential. And anyone, I'll tell every... I talk to dozens of people a year about getting into the commercial real estate world that approached me. And I tell them all, you expect at least one year, maybe two before you make any significant money and maybe a year before you make any money at all and maybe two before any significant money. And it's a grind to go through. That's what I did.

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I'll tell you what, I've always believed in, I mean, I feel so blessed to live in the United States, to live in the land of opportunity here. And I always believed in myself and my ability to create opportunity. And sometimes it doesn't work out, restaurant business is one of those examples, and sometimes it does. And so with the real estate business, I saw the opportunity and I knew it was going to take a while, but some people were kind enough to teach me, hey, if you do these things over time, you will be rewarded for it. And I did those things day over day, over day, over day, over day and I started slowly building a pipeline of people and contacts and opportunities there. And after a year I actually made my first \$1,800 in that first year. So, and then after two years I made six figures and then it started to grow from that.

So but the adversity, this stuff, it's kept coming, right. Sometimes you get ahead of yourself. Let me say this. We back up on the adversity, because you said something about the transparency and vulnerability. I used to not, I used to keep all that stuff, all the bad stuff boxed up and hidden away because I felt like that was, just like I said, it was the bad stuff. It was not who I wanted to be, but once I kind of opened up that box and I just laid all the cards on the table, and I said, this is me. It's the good, the bad and the ugly. And let me show you some of these cards, because some of them are just really bad decisions that I made. Some of them are immoral decisions I've made or just poor judgment decisions I've made.

And as I lay all those on the table and say, well, this is me and this is who I've become because of recognizing that and laying out who I wanted to be and now starting to live in alignment with who I want to become, my life has

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opened up and flourished because of that honesty and the transparency and the willingness to grow, to accept who I have been and to look at who I want to become and I'm always evolving. I'm a big fan of the word Kaizen, constant improvement right there. And as I started kind of looking that way at my life, things have gotten better.

David Phelps: That's great. And so you found mentors, mentors, you could believe in, mentors that in this case, in real estate that said follow this plan, it's the long game and because you believed in them and they believed in you because you obviously showed up in a certain way, then that's what got you moving forward, at least from a financial standpoint into what many different endeavors that you've been able to be involved in over the last number of years. What I want to go back to now, Ken is family because you and I are on the same thought process that as we evolve in life and we learn a lot of lessons and hopefully we gain maturity and wisdom along the way, who are the first people we like to be able to impact with that?

Well it's our kids, right? You've already spoken about your kids. Let's talk about that. You are, as any young father apprehensive, am I ready for this? And we're never quite ready, but we figure it out.

Ken Wimberly: Yeah.

David Phelps: The good and the bad and the ugly again. Right? No parent is perfect. But when did you become really cognizant of the fact that you wanted to be a better father, better spouse, improve certain role, when did that start to come into bearing for you? And then let's talk about how you moved forward with that aspect in your life.

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Ken Wimberly: Yeah. A lot of that started happening around the same time period that I was defining my big why, my purpose of... I wanted to be that great example as a father and so I was like, if this is who I want to be, I need to start showing up like that. How do I do that? And so around that time, I got involved with a mastermind group called GoBundance and GoBundance had a family component of that called FamBundance and started really pouring into that with myself and with my family into that. And there are all kinds of role models and mentors and people going through the same kind of stuff and people wanting the same kind of stuff. And then I got enrolled, involved in another group called Front Row Dads, which was just another amazing group.

And I didn't even know that stuff existed in my past life. And so as mentors and role models, there's a whole accountability ecosystem right there where you can get involved in education ecosystem and a great place for transparency and authenticity and questions and growth. So as I started seeking that out over the years, man, I've learned so much and so much from others. And I figured out that I don't have to have it figured out and I'll never have it all figured out, but you know what, there is a network and a resource out there, resources out there that can be there for almost any situation that comes up. And so that really helps. I got involved in those groups and it really helped me to dive in as a much better, more authentic father, more involved father and just really cares about and has dove deep into my relationship with my family.

David Phelps: And how old are your kids currently, Ken?

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Ken Wimberly: My daughter is 18 and freshman in college. My oldest son is 17, a senior in high school. And then we have a five year old who is in kindergarten.

David Phelps: So give me your definition of legacy, Ken.

Ken Wimberly: Yeah, I think legacy is that we leave behind and for me, my most important legacy to leave behind is how my children show up in this world. And I think how the example I've set, the lessons I've tried to leave for them, the mentors I've helped to put in their life right there and the environments I've helped to put them in. I think, when I look at how they show up today in life, I could not be more proud, more happy, more honored by the lives they're living.

David Phelps: I love that. I want to be involved in how my kids show up. You didn't say anything about money, assets, trusts, blah, blah, estate planning stuff. I mean, I'm sure you have some, but that's not really your definition of legacy, is it?

Ken Wimberly: It's not mine. It's not. I think, when I look at the legacy we leave behind, I've heard it said as your kind of legacy is like a wake behind a boat, right?

David Phelps: Uh-huh (affirmative).

Ken Wimberly: And that wake can be a really positive force or it can be a really damaging force. And I hope that when people look at the legacy of Ken Wimberly, they see it as a positive force of love and intelligence and kindness, right there.

David Phelps: So that force that you want to leave behind to impact the people you want to impact, that's not something that you wait until you're at the end and maybe write your memoirs, or you're doing that right now, is my point.

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You're living that legacy every day. And most, a lot of people don't think, they think again, it's the resources, assets, the estate planning, and don't even think about really what you want to leave behind, so that takes me to my next question. We know that you're very entrepreneurial and we know that you're a person of purpose and want to have impact beyond your own family.

Ken Wimberly: Yeah.

David Phelps: And I know you've been working very hard on something behind the scenes that is in certain iteration right now. So I want to dig right into it.

Ken Wimberly: Yeah.

David Phelps: Let's talk about the Legacy of Love app application.

Ken Wimberly: Yeah. So, the legacy journal that we created in our company's Legacy of Love Inc and we've created an app called The Legacy Journal app, and it is a mobile app that is designed to allow people to capture and document and the journeys that they're having with their spouse, with their children, with their families and keep it all in a very safe, secure place. We're the kind of the antithesis of social media and perfect as social media's getting such a black eye these days, we're just a private platform for people to easily capture moments, memories, and lessons, and they can review these things because here's what we know. Time is fleeting. Moments will come and go really quickly right there. And as much as we think, or we'd like to think, oh, I'm going to remember that forever, reality is there's so much data that comes at us on a nonstop basis that at least for me, sometimes it's difficult

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to remember what happened last week or the funny thing my kids said two days ago that I thought I'd never forget.

And so what we've done with Legacy Journal has made it super easy that you can jump in, make a quick little entry or a note, or take a picture of the birthday party you were at, or several pictures of the birthday party you were at. And what's been cool for me with that birthday party idea is I've documented with my children, if we've gone to a party or we've gone to a vacation with people, write down the names of everyone who was there, because oddly enough, four or five years later, I might not remember exactly who those people were. Some of them were close friends and some were just associates right there.

So anyway, it's this safe, secure, digital place to do that. And that came out, this what's now a company and a product was a solution to a problem. It was a real problem that I had. I started writing journals and stories to my children when Grace was, again, she's 18, she was just one year old. I started just writing the little stories of what was happening in her lives, the little milestone she was having, what I was feeling as a father. I mean, it was a brand new experience for me. And so I'd just slow down and I would write some of this down about once, maybe twice a month. I would write down a story. And then when Knox actually still in the womb, I wrote his first entries and I did it in a word document long ago.

Actually I debated, do I do it in pen and paper or digitally? And frankly I could type faster than I could write. So I started digitally. So for a bunch of years, I did it in a word document and then I did an Evernote for a while. I sometimes put the notes on my phone. And so the problem I was having is I had all these different sources

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that the kind of stories were and some of them, if you put too big of a file in there, a picture or something, it would crash and you lose your data. And so I was like, how do I fix this problem? And a bunch of people were telling me, because I'd shared the idea of journaling with others and like, Ken, you should develop something.

And honestly, I figured by the time I had the bandwidth to do that, that it would already be out there. But when 2018, I had some things happen and made some changes in my businesses. I was like, I think I've got the flexibility to pursue this right now. And so I started doing it and I didn't see anything out there that was doing what I thought should be done. And so we and Earnest went into it and really dove in deep into the tech world and created a product that is now Legacy Journal.

David Phelps: So is the way the app works, is that typically, do people have the app in all of their family members that they want to include? Are they all included within that app? Or is it something that you get to share when you want to share? Or how do people use it?

Ken Wimberly: Yeah. People are using it in different ways. So the way I did it for a long term and I had my wife and I both in as what we call scribes. So we could each make entries to all of the... so had all of my children, my dog and cat as family members in there. And so we could... Any journal entry could be attached to any of those because sometimes I'll write one journal entry that is apropos for all three children and others, it's just one on one that I would write, but any one entry can be attached to, as one of those problems I wanted to solve that was tough to do before. You can do that. And, but my children, the way I have it set up, they can't go in and read or see them until

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the time that we decide to gift it to them. And for me, I wanted to do that at high school graduation.

David Phelps: Okay.

Ken Wimberly: That was kind of my time. But other people are using it as their real time journal. They go ahead and add their children in and so it's real time. Their children can see it. I know that we've got some people where husband and wife are using it to journal back and forth to each other. And that's been a really kind of cool use case right there. They're kind of tell me that, look, we use it just to kind of write back and forth to each other that things that maybe you don't want to say at the moment, or we just feel it's more appropriate to write it down. And so there's lots of different use cases for the app.

David Phelps: I love the idea that you're able to capture everything in one place as you said, particularly we have notes and pictures and things that we want to say or, and they're all over the place. And to have them in one platform where it's there and it's private, it's not social media, like you said, people use that for a lot, but social media may not be what it is in three years, four years, five years. It might be totally changed and that may not be there. So I think it's very relevant that you have something that people can actually put a real footprint on and say, hey, this is something I want to create for my family, my legacy.

Ken Wimberly: Well, and the other thing that I've noticed with photos, because you mentioned kind of all the photos on your phone. I don't know you, I've got 18,000 photos on my phone and sometimes it's really hard to go find what you're looking for right there and these, I know you scroll for four minutes before you can find it.

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David Phelps: Right.

Ken Wimberly: And it's just the nature of the beast. And so what I've kind of gotten used to saying that the photos become a little bit like white noise. There's just so many of them there, it's hard to find anything. They say, if everything's special, nothing's special.

David Phelps: Right.

Ken Wimberly: And so the beauty of this is that we're taking... You're not going to document everything in your life otherwise than it's nothing special, but you take just one of those moments, a week or one a month and write a little story about that, write the event, your kid's baseball game, that he hit his first hit or he got an out or whatever it was, or it could be the little thing, man. I've got a lot of stories in there where my kids have just said some of the funniest stuff. I'm like, I need to write about that. And so I'll just spend five minutes. I'll jump in and write a quick little thing.

And I'll tell you David, the coolest thing for me is getting to go re-read those over the years later. And it's like, I'm re-experiencing the moment again. And as I was putting together, Grace's entries to gift it to her at her high school graduation, I may had tears in my eyes. I was just reading through all these entries and it's her life. It's my baby's life to read through that. And now she's got those. She's away at college and if she's having a rough day or she just kind of needs a little pick me up, she can read through those and look at the love from her father and the stories of her life.

David Phelps: I think it's beautiful, Ken. So where can people access, find out more about it, get involved with the app?

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Ken Wimberly: Yeah, please. We're certainly on the iPhone Apple store and on the Google play store. So you can find the app in both places, you learn more about us at legacyjournal.app. So it's dot A-P-P.

David Phelps: Okay.

Ken Wimberly: And we've got kind of a good little, a bit of our history of our company, whatnot on there. You go learn a little bit more about us there.

David Phelps: Outstanding. I really appreciate your time today. To me, this is really the most important work that we can do as role models, as those who want to really live and leave the legacy we want to leave to the people we care about. This is the time. It's not something to wait.

Ken Wimberly: Yeah.

David Phelps: Right now is the time to do it and having a way to do it easily, that's the other part is, if it's hard to do, then we don't do it. Right. And you made something that's easy to do, there's no excuse. I love what you created, Ken.

Ken Wimberly: Let's be clear on this. None of us knows how much time we have. I can tell you, in the last 90 days I have had, including just yesterday, my brother called me just yesterday and says one of my great friends, lives in the neighborhood, my age, so he is in his early forties, passed away overnight. No one knows what happened. And that is one of six stories I've had in the last 90 days of something similar to that of people under the age of 50. So none of us knows how long we have. And so to think, oh, I'm going to get to that, I'm going to get to that is not a successful strategy.

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David Phelps: No, not at all. All right. Well, Ken Wimberly. It's legacyjournal.app. Thank you again so much for being here. We're going to come back and do some more future podcasts because you have a lot of depth that we can glean from. And I thank you again so much.

Ken Wimberly: Thank you so much for having me. I really appreciate it.

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