

Stop Building a Business You Don't Want – Vision, Freedom & the Courage to Choose Differently – Shaun McCloskey: Ep #561

Guest: Shaun McCloskey



Shaun McCloskey .298) I didn't have a vision for my own life and I think this happens with a lot of people. You follow the advice of other people who don't have a life and then you follow in their footsteps because it looks good. As matter of fact, most entrepreneurs, if they only work 30 or 32 hours this week, they feel guilty. No one said that you have to work 40 hours a week. No one's actually, Henry Ford said that. That's Henry Ford's vision, by the way, from more than a hundred years ago. Decades ago, I hustled to grow my dental practice and real estate empire. Society patted me on the back and every new deal and patient reinforced the success they said I had.

Then my daughter Jenna was diagnosed with leukemia. Nine years, several intense chemo treatments and years of epileptic seizures, my daughter was given one more miracle, a life-saving liver transplant. In that hospital, I realized I wasn't successful. I had money, I had real estate assets and a business, but the only thing that mattered was time with my daughter.

In that hospital room, I decided to sell my business, leave active income and sustain my lifestyle with my real estate assets. Now, Jenna is healthy and all grown up and me, I am

teaching others to do what I did. And I continue to uncover the principles, strategies and lessons we can apply in business and investing to create ultimate freedom for what matters most to each of us. Welcome to the Freedom Founders podcast.

David Phelps .704) Last July, I hosted several conversations with colleagues and friends on how to build true lasting freedom, both professionally and personally. Today I'm sharing my interview with Mr. Sean McCloskey. He's an entrepreneur, visionary coach, and founder of Leadership Boardroom.

We discussed breaking free from societal scripts, building a life you actually want, and aligning your business with your personal values. Sean opens up about his transition from chasing success to defining significance, revealing how clarity of vision and the courage to say no became his ultimate path to freedom. If you're a driven entrepreneur feeling stuck or out of sync, this raw and insightful dialogue will feel like a mirror, a wake up call and a roadmap all at once. Please welcome Sean McCloskey.

Sean, thanks for jumping in. Hey, thanks for having me, Appreciate it. One of the things I talk about, and I know this falls right in line with your life and what you've learned and now what you teach and preach, I would say in a good way to other people, is the word freedom. What we look at today, we think about our nation, we talk about the freedoms that our nation and our forefathers have brought to us today, but also personal freedoms and how we are able to live our lives in a way that really is about freedom.

And a lot of times today, we live in a world where we celebrate more convenience and comfort. often at the cost of control of our lives, which is what you said many times before. It's like, is it all about the money, the wealth, building the capital base? And that's certainly a metric a lot of people look at.

But what you'll say, Sean, I'll say the same thing as is we're really looking at to live our life, know, a business or construct or career, whatever it is around our life. And and and you've had like I have to and many people that we know we've gone through different iterations of our **David Phelps** .53) zeal for building. like to build, right? We like to create.

We want that independence. We want to make the money. And we have a lot of context through real estate, certainly. And back in the day, I think it was around 2007, you had one of those epiphanies or wakeups when you were also building like everybody else.

And can you kind of take us back that far to like 2007, like 18 years ago, and what went through your mind and what kind of shift you went through then? Well, first of all, you just made me feel old saying 18 years ago. I'm good with that. think that was that long ago.

But yeah, so I had a real estate business. We were flipping, you know, maybe 60, 70 houses a year, depending on the year and built up a big team. know, I mean, back then, my expenses to run the business were just starting to go up and up and up. And we were closing more deals, but we got to a place where I don't know if you have worked with people you can relate with this or anybody listening, but It's more like 10.

Shaun McCloskey .858) We got to a place where we have to close deals every month because our expenses were high and we got payrolls and 17 employees and all this stuff. And that's not necessarily a bad thing, but that's not, that was never part of my vision. I was following a vision from a mentor that I had back then. And I was doing that because that was

the path that I was told to get wealthy.

And then once you're wealthy, then you can have it all. And so I was sacrificing a lot of life to build up this real estate business. you know, the, the, concept that was foreign to me was that the business is supposed to serve your life. And back then I was serving the business with all of my life.

And so I'm working 70, 80 hours a week and, you know, striving to close more deals because then we could make more money. And then someday when we do, then we'll be able to have the freedom and time to do all the stuff we want. The reality is that we could have had a lot more freedom than we had back then already. And so, but I didn't have a vision for my own life.

I was following. And I think this happens with a lot of people. You you follow the advice of other people who don't have a life and. And then you follow in their footsteps because it looks good.

The mentor that I worked with back then was making a lot, a lot, a lot of money. But what I didn't know after working with him for three years is he was pretty miserable. And here I am following in his footsteps, building a business exactly the same way that he built his. And unfortunately he ended up losing his family and his son kind of disowned him.

And it was a bad thing because he spent the majority of his life in work. And I got a pretty rude awakening when I saw that the guy that I looked up to the most. really didn't have it all together like I thought. And so I started making some major changes, got a vision for my life first instead of just building the business first and then hoping someday life would come.

And I said, I'm going to start living life at any expense. And I went a little bit bold with it. I made some massive changes within about six months. And within a year and a half, my literally everything in my life changed from the way I make decisions to the way I made money to the way I invested it or saved it or spent it.

the time that I spent with family, how I structured my calendar, all of that started to change when I actually got a vision for my life. And that's a big deal. So around here, we teach, get a vision for your life first before you build a business. Or if you're running a business, you need to press pause for a quick second, design what you want life to look like.

And there's 11 different categories in that. Everything from your spiritual life to your health to your family to your love to... **Shaun McCloskey** .252) my gosh, you're charitable, all of these things. If you can think these things through and it's not easy work, but if you can spend the time to think these things through and put it in writing, then you can build a business that serves that at the same time.

And it's not easy to do. It's simple. It's not easy to pull off. And what I found, especially back then, before I do what I do now, most people don't do that.

And therefore most people are enslaved to their businesses, enslaved to debt, enslaved to, gosh, obligations. their calendar that never ends, kids basketball games and baseball games and over committing. And I'm not saying there's anything wrong with basketball games and stuff like that, but you know, all of this stuff needs to be put into perspective and needs to fit in with your vision. And if you don't have one, how in the world are you supposed to build a business to serve it if you don't even know what it is?

Bottom line is I can sum it up in four words, life on your terms. So what are your terms? So. **Shaun McCloskey** .494) If you don't know what your terms are, how in the heck are you supposed to build a business that serves those terms?

Totally. Well, having that vision and having it laid out very specifically, your terms, as you said, in all those categories gives you a filter. And I look at it like every time I'm going to make a decision on anything, it's like, well, look at your vision. What did you lay out that was important to you?

And is this decision that I'm potentially going to make good, bad or otherwise? Does it fit within my vision? Yeah. It becomes easier, not totally easy.

And the other piece, too, I want to bring to the table because this is where it's not easy. **David Phelps** .81) you part of your bold vision and you've taken what you've learned and you love to instill that in others. I mean, you're a leader of leaders. Being a part of your leadership boardroom, you have multiple iterations.

I shouldn't say iterations, but you keep the groups small enough where there is a transparency, there is trust, there is camaraderie, there's collaboration, there's vulnerability, which of all those, probably that maybe is the one that we have a hardest time with is being vulnerable because we're supposed to play the part that we thought we were. So many times we show up to these meetings, conferences, seminars, whatever they are, and everybody's just trying to look the part. And how can you really get real with yourself if everybody's playing a charade? Yeah.

Yeah, and I'll tell you what man when you get in an environment where people are willing to be open and vulnerable you find out You know not everybody's life who looks really glamorous on the outside is quite as glamorous as it looks It's it's kind of like the Facebook life, you know You people don't post what they're struggling with most of the time they post pictures of their vacations and they're you all the fun that they're having with family and stuff but the reality is is that everybody has room to grow and Everybody's got some destination that they're not quite at yet. And then when you get there, you'll stay there very long. So You need to spend some time figuring out what that looks like and then hang out with other people who can help you get there, but really hold you accountable to your own vision. And that's not easy.

So that's what we do around here. We teach people how to have vision, then teach people how to design their life according to it. Then, so there's three components to this I should mention. You got personal vision, you got business vision for the company, and then you've got your role within the company.

And so if you can get all three of those to line up, you love life. You know, and that doesn't mean you're never going to have problems. You're not going to have a day where you wake up and you know your woe is me, but it means that more often than not you are excited. Your life is getting you out of bed instead of you forcing yourself to get out of bed.

If that makes sense. **David Phelps** .47) Imagine waking up one day and not having a practice to run. No patience, no charts, no 6 a.m. staff texts.

Just space to think, to breathe, live the life you've put off for years. But here's the truth. You don't stumble into that kind of an exit. You build it intentionally.

That's why we created the Exit Strategy Playbook, a free brutally practical guide for practice owners who want more than just a payout. You want peace, purpose, financial security, and a path that honors your values. Inside the playbook, you'll find how to align with your spouse, what your numbers really need to look like, deal terms that protect you, and how not to lose your identity when you hang up the coat. This is your literal blueprint for exiting on your timeline with no regrets.

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Download it now for free at [freedomfounders.com slash playbook](https://freedomfounders.com/slash/playbook). As somebody steps up, raises their hand. As you're speaking, how have they heard you? You speak a lot of places, you're out there in the field, a lot of people know you and run across people who are in that area of their life where it's not fun, it's not fulfilling in so many different directions.

And so they come to you and maybe even enter the realm of leadership boardroom, which is what I've enjoyed for many, years. And they first come and there's probably Maybe you're not, I had a little bit of that too. probably did. There's a little bit of, I'm coming here.

I've heard it's all good, but there's this kind of, I'll sit back with my arms folded for a little while and just kind of watch and see what's been, what's been, how have you, and I know you can't win everybody over, but how do you take that person who's like, okay, prove it pal, because you're telling me I can have a listen. I haven't seen it. Part of it is it's social proof in the room because you've got people who've been down the road. So you can look around, okay, well.

David Phelps .062) They seem like they're kind of like me and they've actually made some steps. So that's good. But you know, results driven world where it's all about results and multiples and EBITDA and revenue and profits. And how do you help shift that mindset and have people take that that really a bold move because you can't just like chip away a little bit at a time.

You've got to actually come in and say, OK, I must take my claim here. I'm going to talk about my vision. I'm going to actually do this. What is there a key to getting people to see that vision and actually grasp it?

Yeah, well, first of all, some people are more visionary centered than others. Like the way I describe it is Disney runs their operation with everybody in Disney works in one of three categories. You're either a vision here or imagine here, I should say, or you're an engineer or you're an implementer. And, you know, the visionaries think of the great ideas, the engineers design them and put them together and the implementers make them happen.

Right. So that's the way Disney does it. I want to learn that years ago. I found that.

Most people gravitate towards one of those as their home. And that doesn't mean you can't be all three, but as an entrepreneur, we're expected to be all three. Visionary, we got to see the future. We got to have the great ideas.

We got to know how to make it, turn it into like an engineered project. And then we got to either have a team to put it together. We got to put it together. So some people are visionaries and they embrace this process easier and faster because it comes more natural to them.

Engineers tend to not do this. engineers want, they want the vision sort of figured out and then they'll just figure out how we're to make this work. And then the implementers don't want to

hear anything about it. They're like, just give me the recipe and show me what to do so I can make more money.

And so, but when you get all of these three different types of people in a room together and they're at similar business experiences, the new ones start to see not only from the leader, how it's impacted me, because this whole process has massively changed my life, but they get to see the results of the other people that have been around for a while too. And so, you know, everybody comes in with their guard up at first because it's really difficult to be vulnerable in a room with a bunch of strangers for your first meeting. And it's also difficult to take advice that goes against the grain of what you may have heard elsewhere, but fits your vision. And when they start seeing it and they start seeing the results that other people have had and it's real.

They come around pretty quick. Some of them not so quick. Some of them take six months or a year to actually buy in and the longer they wait, the longer it's going to take. But you know, the faster they buy in, you'll get it.

David Phelps .726) Yeah, totally, I'm gonna just insert right now on behalf of people listening, best place to connect with you, leadershipboardroom.com. Yeah, yeah, so I'll put it out there. Another direction I wanna go here today, Sean, is almost exactly three months ago, you found yourself, I guess you woke up and found yourself in the emergency room or ICU. This was, you shared.

Yeah, it's great. **David Phelps** .806) you a lot of us who know you, were just praying for you because we heard this news that you ended up there. don't you give us a little bit of that and how that experience has changed you. We know obviously where you are and how you recovered from that, but give us some color.

Well, the craziest thing happened. was forgive being so blunt. went pee at three o'clock in the morning and from there on out, I don't know what happened. Somehow I blacked out and no, for those of all of you that asked me on Facebook, I wasn't drinking and I wasn't on drugs.

Thank you very much. They don't know why it happened, but I was in a bathroom that had a hard travertine floor and when I passed out, I passed out straight backwards and landed directly on the back of my head. Blew the back of my head open. and ended up in the ICU for a little over three weeks after that with two brain surgeries and they had to drain all the swelling out of my head.

was a really bad situation. My sister-in-law and brother who have a medical background, they were like, he's going to be okay, I'm pretty sure, but everybody else, including me, wasn't sure. It does a couple things to you. First of all, puts life into perspective real fast because for three weeks I was in the hospital and then for about another month and a half after that, I couldn't drive, couldn't work.

couldn't really do a whole lot of leaving the house or anything. I am back to normal, whatever you call normal, as of like the last two and a half weeks or so. But, you know, they cut a big, huge thing in the side of my head, pretty crazy. But the cool thing about that was, is what we teach around here at Leadership Board, I coach a lot of entrepreneurs, I have coaches on my team that coach.

All of my team stepped up and ran everything while I was gone. And I literally did nothing for two months in a week. And everything when I came back was running just as smoothly as when I left. And I owe that to my team in a really, really big way.

There's so many generous people that reached out and offered to help, which we had plenty of. It was just amazing. People are unbelievable. Put things into perspective real quick because I just turned 50 in January.

My father was the type of guy who was in the military for 20 years and he was a hard worker. He was not afraid of hard work at all. Very, very military. He retired as a major in the army and very disciplined, but he always said.

Shaun McCloskey .566) had this delayed gratification for life where if you work hard now, then we'll have a great life later. And in like Christmas Day, 1999, my dad died at 53 years old and we never got to do most of the things that he had on his bucket list. And we took a vacation every three or four years, something like that. And, you know, if that didn't put things into perspective enough back then, having something like this happens.

my gosh. But the cool thing is that when you are actually living your vision, and by the way, don't hear me bragging like, I'm living, I'm the perfect example. As I get closer to it, my vision changes and I have more work to do and maintenance to do, and it's an ongoing journey. This is not like you get fit by going to the gym once.

This is an ongoing thing. But because I've done the work like that, the team was just amazing. They stepped in and handled some things and if worst case scenario happened, not that I want to leave this earth at all tomorrow, but I'm living it. And there's something to be said about if something like that were to happen, not to leave this earth with 60 pages of regrets and things that you'd never got to experience and people that you never got to say, love you to, or I'm sorry to.

And that's a pretty big deal. So it was the first time I realized that how really truly how much this has impacted me when the doctor came in and had me sign the forms asking do I want to resuscitate during the surgery if I die. It's pretty big wake up call, you know, but most people don't realize the importance of vision until they get a wake up call like that. So I'm hoping that the audience that hears us today do some work and did you get started with it?

It's very simple. You just sit down with a piece of paper and you say if life could look any way I wanted it to look. And I didn't have to engineer it right now. I just get to dream it.

How would it look for health? You know, how would it look for my relationship with my spouse? How would it look with my relationship with my kids? If you have any, or if you have a spouse or, if you don't, how would that relationship with a spouse look?

Right? How would your, your charitable life look if that's important to you? You know, you can sit down and just start to write it out and you don't have to spend six months doing this. When I first started doing this, I would spend just one day a week.

Shaun McCloskey .418) My wife and I would go to breakfast on Thursday mornings and we would say, we're going to work on our vision from the time we ordered breakfast to the time breakfast comes. Cause I don't want to get overwhelmed by it. And that's all we did. And over time, just a little bit each week, that might've been 10 or 15 or 20 minutes until breakfast came.

First of all, we got a good excuse to go to breakfast. Second of all, we got to work on the vision stuff and pretty soon it became clear. And then you can engineer it. See, people think as an entrepreneur, People are trying to vision an engineer at the same time and it doesn't work that way.

Matter of fact, Disney doesn't allow the engineers and the imagineers to be in the same room at the same time ever when they're exploring new ideas. And the reason that they don't allow that is because the engineers in their, let's figure out how to pull this off brain are poopooing all over the ideas of the imagineers. And so if that happens enough times, guess what happens to the imagineers? They stop dreaming.

And that's what you and I do every single day in business because there's times when it's appropriate to be each one of these things, but not while you're dreaming. So just sit down and just start dreaming a little bit. You know, most people have never been given permission to even dream to that extent. And I'm telling you when you get it out of your head and get it in writing, even if you do nothing else from there, I've seen lives completely changed.

And I mean, in less than a year, I've seen lives totally change. when you just get it out of your head and get it in right. Start with that. Well, we allow so many of societal constraints, almost directives, right?

This is the way you do it. To your point, if you want to be this, that, or even even going down a technical career with academia, nothing good, nothing wrong with that. But it's always well, this is how it's done. Here's how you need to play ball in with your life and career.

Here's where you need to go. Here's the steps you take. It's always outlined out there in front. And the I love what you said about about not trying to get it all done right away.

David Phelps .87) That's our tendency. Okay, well, I'm gonna take this on now. So now I do this mission in one day. Well, don't try to do that.

It's the compound effect of iteration, you know, over time, just those short conversations with your spouse, you whoever's important in your life, your spouse will be definitely right there. You having those conversations just to start it because you've got to break the inertia. And if you're like me and many people are, or like you, Sean, in our poor behavioral days, and we still have to work on this, is my tendency is... Well, I'm not going to start something until I've got it all perfected.

Well, it's never perfect. Nothing's ever, in fact, until you start making some movement forward, you're not going to have anything that's going come out of that. You're just going to sit there in analysis, paralysis forever. And that's why being part of a group, a group that's well facilitated, like you've done for many years now, is that group's not going to let you do that.

Yeah, well, one of the things that we do around here too is we we try to encourage everybody and I do this myself. I rewrite my entire vision, all personal, all business, all of my roles within the business, and I rewrite it from scratch every year, at least once a year. I recommend twice a year because as you get closer to it, things will change. Things that you thought you wanted a year ago may not be as important today as you thought they were.

So that's going to change. You'll hit milestones that you may not have even thought you'd hit within a year. And so as you get closer to those, some of your dreams will get bigger. Some of your dreams will go, I didn't want that as much.

So we tweak this stuff all the time. And it's important to not only redo it every once in a while, but also to plan from within it. So here's an example of that. This is something that a mentor of mine taught me a long time ago that really, really changed my life.

said, once your personal vision is done, let's pull out a pretend weekly calendar and let's start applying the things that you say are important to you. Into this pretend calendar and let's see how long it takes just to live your life if you're living it how you want to live it and you start putting things in there like You know, I want to have dinner every night with my kids and I want to have quiet time just to read or you know I'd love to go play tennis once a week or i'd love to just ride my motorcycle here and there The idea is not to get a perfect calendar or a perfect day The idea is to see if I was living my vision. How much time does it take? And i'm going to fill you in on a little clue here.

I don't normally tell people this until they **Shaun McCloskey** .662) come to one of our three day events we teach, but I've done this now with thousands of people and I've seen their calendars filled out. When people fill out their calendars, now notice I didn't put the business vision in there yet. I haven't put work in yet. Put off the personal vision stuff in first.

And when you look at people's calendars, I can tell you they don't have leftover 40 or 50 or 70 hours a week. No one does. On average, they have between 22 and 32 hours a week left. to work.

So if you're working 40 hours a week, 50 hours a week, 60 hours a week, I can promise you something in your vision in your personal life is getting pushed far to the wayside. And here's what I say to people. Like if you're going to do that, which you don't have to do to build a business, by the way, but if you're going to do it, at least consciously choose what's going to go to the wayside. Otherwise you wake up one day, five years from now and you have no relationship with your kids and you don't know why it's because All of that time you said that you wanted to spend with them that it, you know, like if your vision said I want to be a good father.

Well, how many hours a week does that take? Well, at least take a guess and put it your pretend calendar because if not, you'll fill it up with work. You wake up five years later and you go, why don't I have a relationship with them? Well, it's because you had no time invested in that area.

You know, why does my health look bad? Because I have no time invested in that area at all. Why am I stressed to the gill? Because I don't have any quiet time anymore.

Everything in my calendar is booked up back to back. So 22 to 32 hours a week is not much according to society's view of how often you should work. As matter of fact, most entrepreneurs, if they only work 30 or 32 hours this week, they feel guilty. Exactly.

Shaun McCloskey .934) No, no one said that you have to work 40 hours a week or more. one's actually Henry Ford said that, but you didn't say that's Henry Ford's vision, by the way, from more than 100 years ago. So give me a break and get your own. from Henry.

Yeah, it's k a of lot of the con totally leave like the foo growing up. Yeah, we'll it was coming alive. the industrial age said, a week in the factory. well, that's what we do.

say 40, that's nothing. C you're not hustling if you'r 70. So what's wrong with yo **Shaun McCloskey** .102) Well, and the other thing too, real quick is, you know, work your butt off until

you can retire. And then those are going to be the golden years.

And here a couple of, a couple of problems with that. Number one, that's assuming that you're going to retire. I coach a lot of entrepreneurs that have no desire to retire because they love what they do. It's not that I do it 70 hours a week, but they love what they do.

Also, my dad didn't make it to retirement. He's 53 is dead. So there's that. And then.

If you're just waiting for retirement in order to have a life, something's really wrong with that. And I've coached many people over the years that are like, man, I got nine more years and then I get my pension. thinking you're, you're selling your soul for nine more. You already sold it for 20 something.

Now you're going to sell it for nine more years, just so you can get a paycheck. You get that building a business within a year or two. Let me break, you know, come on. Exactly.

Sean, you've always been very open and authentic about your spiritual life, your faith, which we all know you really appreciate that because you walk the talk. And one thing I know you said, and it might have been a text or maybe something you put out to all of your friends after you got out of the hospital, out of ICU. You said your mindset shifted from asking God, why did you allow this to happen to me? Instead saying, God, thank you for doing this for me.

That's a different way of looking at adversity. Why don't we just kind of end on that, but what would you say? Because we're all going to go through some difficult times in life, and how should we look at those? Are these wake-up calls that we should look a little bit harder at?

Man, there was actually three stages to that. When I first had the accident, I was saying, God, why did you do this to me? And then that shifted to why did you allow this to happen when I was in the hospital? And then after I got out, when you have a traumatic brain injury, there's some really weird side effects.

One of them was that for about three or four weeks after I got home, I would burst into tears and it could be five minutes or it could be two hours. And that could happen once today or it could happen all day. **Shaun McCloskey** .48) It was the weirdest and I didn't even know that was going to take place until I went back for my, my followup visit where they reminded me that they told me that in the hospital, no memory of it at all. So, but in that time, it was like, was, don't know how any other way to say this.

It was revealed to me, you know, I still got a lot of work to do, man. It was revealed to me people that. I had hurt, I had thought I was living a lot of my vision in certain areas. I really was doing a great job.

And there's also areas that I failed miserably. And I think I even got myself to a point where, you know, so much of the time as an entrepreneur, you need this nice little balance of operating in your head versus your heart. And what I realized after the accident is I had been operating in my head a lot more over the last year or so. And the best way to describe this, would say the accident and that crying situation, which was so odd.

It got me completely out of my head and back into my heart. And, and you know, when that happens, you start to get grateful for things that you don't even pay attention to like sunshine anymore. And, and you start realizing there's some friendships, some deep friendships that I need to pay more attention to. And there's still a few more, I'm sorry's I need to say, you know, there's, there's things that I have done that I'm not real proud of that still need prepare.

And this is really do think this is why this is an ongoing process. You've never just arrived and that's okay. You know, so many people are striving and saying one day when I get here, then everything will be great. Try to make it great today.

And that's really hard to do. You know, I know that everybody's going to have bad days, but the, idea behind that is to live as much of this as you can. And really I say life on your terms. It's really life.

You get to choose life on your terms, but if you can align that with what's got God has gotten store for you. That's pretty cool too. And that's another little area. You you have a wake up call like this and you go, God, am I really, if I saw you tomorrow, would you really say good, well done, good and faithful servant?

I'm not too sure. I still, I still got some things to do. By the way, that doesn't mean that you get into heaven by your works. I'm not suggesting that at all, but there's still work to be done.

David Phelps .288) Yeah. Yeah, better to have that experience through a traumatic brain injury than not, but you don't have to have that situation happen to start appreciating what's all around you a little bit more and start taking a little more quiet time and saying those I'm sorry's or I love you's and just encouraging people with a kind word here and there. They're starving for it. Absolutely.

Well, Sean, you're an inspiration to so many. I know to many of us who followed your lead and been in your mentorship and just your total influence. I know your community, your family, your church, everybody who's around you. We learn from each other and you're just a person we all appreciate.

Sean, man, we've been praying for you. Thank you, man. They worked because I feel great now. Thanks a lot, think about the conversation that Sean and had and Sean and I have been good friends for many years, been a part of his group and he's been a part of my group at Freedom Founders.

Just the real life discussions we've had has brought a lot of insight into my own life. And I love being around people like Sean. I reflect on my early years of chasing success without a real definition of what success was. To me, success was well building a bigger business, a practice that was making more money and...

David Phelps .61) having a better lifestyle and feeling more secure financially for my family. Those are all important things, don't get me wrong. But I didn't have a measuring stick for how much is enough. Meaning, it's easy to become so driven in life towards whatever success metrics we put in place and usually society will do that for us, that we miss out on some of the key parts of our life.

I mean, how many marriages today don't make it because of the stress and the... the separation of what was once a vision and a dream starting out in life. And then we have children and then many times we can't spend time with our children because we'll do that later when we have more time and we get the business better on track. I've been in all those places.

And if not for some of the wake up calls I had in my life, I might still be chasing. Today, while I'm not perfect at all, I'm much more intentional about focusing on the things that are real and important in my life. It's not all about the money. **David Phelps** .486) Sean spoke about the

power of saying no.

And this is a tough one. I know it's a tough one because it's a tough one for me. I generally wanna be liked. I wanna be thought of as a likable person.

I wanna be thought of as a contributor to worthy causes, missions, communities, wherever it is I might participate in, church, whatever. And so the tendency is for us to be liked, to look like that person who will... engage and give time to some effort. The problem is we'll get to the point where we'll say yes too often.

And by giving ourselves, giving too many yeses to too many people to two different, many different agendas can be really the downfall of having a purposeful life. And it doesn't sound like that makes sense. Sounds like we should just try to do everything. You can't, you can't.

You have to really have some filters, some guidelines on what you will and won't do at certain times. And it doesn't mean you have to be negative to somebody. I think we can be kind to a person who asks for our help or assistance and just let them know, I love what you're doing, love your mission.

For me right now, that's not gonna be a fit. That's a very easy way to say it without offending a person, but it's being true about who we are. You have to practice that. You have to be intentional about saying no, otherwise we get caught up in just, again, continue to say yes too often.

So practice the no because it can be a very powerful tool when we find our lives sometimes upside down because we've taken on too many yeses. As I've observed many high achieving professionals and business owners in my life, been around many and those who have really come full circle to really tap into a more fulfilling life versus the societal or industry success metrics that are put out there for all of us to look at and to strive for. It really takes some kind of a knees to the ground, wake up call. Something like I had my life when my daughter's health, her life was on the line and I had taken for granted too many years that she was just gonna be there and realizing that that wasn't within my power, that only God could control that and that I might not have more years.

I had to make a choice. What do I focus on? What's most important? Was it continue to build a?

David Phelps .07) a bigger business with higher profit margins and more money in the bank or in investments, or was it focusing on what was there today that could be fleeting and that was my daughter? Why it shows my daughter? I think you do the same thing if you're brought to that point. Deal with it as you must, whatever that circumstance is, whatever that crisis may be.

Hopefully it's not a long one, but if it is, use that opportunity to look at your life from the inside out and figure out really what makes your life more fulfilling in the long run. and you'll find that you'll be a happier person, more content person, and probably a better person just to be around. If you're inspired by today's conversation and you're realizing it's time to take ownership, not just of your health, but your time, your practice, and your future, then you're not alone. At Freedom Founders, we help dentists and professionals like you build a life of freedom isn't just an idea, it's a reality.

If you're ready to explore what that could look like for you, schedule a discovery call with our team. Let's talk about your goals, your vision, and how we can help you create the roadmap to get there. Start your journey. at [freedomfounders.com forward slash discovery](https://freedomfounders.com/forward/slash/discovery).

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