

Partnerships, Practice Deals, and Pursuing Adventure – Freedom Through Relationships – Dr. Jose Vicens: Ep #566

Guest: Dr. Jose Vicens



Dr. Jose Vicens:

I'll tell you something, David, there's two types of when you have to make up a decision. 98 % go one pile and 2 % go in two piles. So 2 % pile is the ones that if it goes wrong, it's catastrophic. You know, getting married, buying a house, going into business. So this was a 2 % because if things go wrong, it's catastrophic for me and for her. And those are the ones you spend on advisors and consultants.

Dr. David Phelps:

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. What happens when you stop building your business just to sell it and start designing it to live fully now? In today's episode, I sit down with my good friend and fellow Freedom Founders member, Dr.

Jose Vicenz, an orthodontist from Puerto Rico who's not only built three thriving practices, but also carved out space for bold adventure, like joining a 54-day expedition to the most remote island on earth, combining ham radio, adventure, and humanitarian service. We're talking about strategic partnerships, smart exits, and saying yes to once in a lifetime experiences without waiting for retirement. Stick around. This one might just change how you think about your freedom.

Jose, thanks for joining me. I've been looking forward to doing a little bit deeper dive with you personally. We've had opportunities in the group, in Freedom Founders, to do some cohorts and some discussions, particularly around exit strategies, we had a number of people in that group, it was a lot of fun and last summer when we did that, you brought a lot of good, I'd say a lot of good questions to the table.

You have been a person, as I've gotten to know you over the last several years, that you're very, you've always been very thoughtful, insightful. I would say that you think things through and you run your life, your business with your family. You run it based on what you want in your life. And that's kind of the opposite of what most people do.

Most people let the business, in this case, the practice, kind of own them and then they take the scraps of what's left over. Well, can I squeeze in a little time off here? Can I squeeze that in? You've been the exact opposite.

So let's give everybody in our group a chance to, those who don't know you, a little bit of your background. Obviously you're specialist, orthodontic specialist. You practice in San Juan, Puerto Rico. three practices with various interests in those practices.

Let's kind of go back in time and how did you get there? Orthodontics, ■ San Juan, and then let's talk about the structure of your practice and we'll dig into some of the other questions I've got. How's that?

Dr. Jose Vicenz:

Absolutely. Absolutely. Thank you. Thank you for the invitation.

Not San Juan. I don't practice in the city. I'm more of like a guy from the outside. I come from a town in the southeast part of Puerto Rico.

So it's about 45 minutes southeast of San Juan. I grew up here. My mom's a dentist. But you know, I knew I wanted to be a dentist when I was in high school.

So I went off to school at Purdue University and I had the requisite requirements to be accepted to dental school. So I show up there. was... 16 at a time.

And I told my advisor, hey, I want to be a dentist and this is what I want to take. And they said, well, okay, maybe you could do it. Maybe you'll take an extra year or so. And then I said, no, this is what I want.

So I took two years there. I came home for the summer and did my summer program. And then it came time to apply to dental school and I wanted to come home. So I went to Puerto

Rico Dental School, University of Puerto Rico.

And that one, it was weird because I was 18 at a time. I did my four years there. And then after that, I went into pediatric dentistry. And this is a cool story because when I was a third year, my mom, had a, knew Jerry Sampson, who was an orthodontist, pediatric dentist guy that teaches courses and things.

And, and he said, Hey, you know, your course is coming up. Can I bring my son? He's a third year dental student. And he said, okay, fine.

So I show up and there's like, you know, a couple of orthodontists. They were the reps from UNITECH taking the course as well. So very basic, so I spent the day there. And what do you think we did after five o'clock when class was done?

We went to a hospitality room that they had and started drinking beers. And there was Lawrence Lim, which was the director of pediatric dentistry at Brookdale Hospital in New York. So I got to meet the guy while drinking beer. And it's like when you say your network is your, I mean, your network is your network and it's all about relationship.

And that's how I got into pediatric dentistry. By then I was married, had a little newborn. And then three more years of orthos in New York. And then after that, you know, graduated 2008, came home and my mom had little four chairs in the back of their office.

And I said, all right, I'll take them and started an office, a practice from scratch. And then in meantime, I was two days working with another guy in town and, you know, wanted to buy that practice, but that didn't go, that didn't work out. So at the end of the game, I was just, you know, one part-time job. So here's how things get interesting.

Before I finished, I showed up to the town of Seba, which is just north of Umacao and I this guy, spent a day with him. He was probably like seventies and not really in a good shape. was like hands were shaking, things like that. So I, after spending the day, I said, Hey, you know, Dr.

Hey, if you ever think about selling this practice, let me know. And then we started, you know, going through numbers and trying to work things out into the summer. I was a year into practice and I bought that place. And that was tiny.

That was about the size of probably about the size of this room here. Very, very small. And we have four chairs in there. That was probably the most efficient, productive, you know, per square meters in the world, because it was just, it was run very efficient.

So from there it went off and then I ■ bought a new, I mean, it was too big for my mom's office. And then we started colliding and it was time for me to move on. So bought a place in town. Build it nicely.

That was about 10 years ago and moved in there. Very nice facility, two stories. That's a big office. And that's how I ended up with those two practices.

So then the fun thing comes around because, you know, I'm starting Freedom Founders and I see all these happy people who just sold their practices and they're like, they're like, you know, I'm happy. don't have to work anymore or whatever. And then the weekend of my blueprint, I'm actually buying a third office, which I thought you were going to slap me when I told you that, but, it was such a great deal. So, so I had.

Dr. Alina Kolod, she's my partner coming in and she's going to help me with the two practices. So I said, this thing comes along and she said, just go for it. Okay.

So negotiated three weeks later, we got it done. We bought it and that's her practice. So I'm not only helping her, but I kind of like became the DSO in some shape or form because even

though she's starting right out of school, but I was able to bring in systems and operations and how things are done efficiently and profitable here in their local business. So happy for her, I know three offices and my wife said, you're supposed to calm down. I'm the exact opposite.

Dr. David Phelps:

Wait, ■

Dr. Jose Vicens:

Yeah, she knows how it works. But it worked out well and so far it's been two years in the partnership and she's buying it and things are going great.

Dr. David Phelps:

So you brought so much good stuff here. What's great about interviewing you, Jose, is I can ask one question and you can run for 15 minutes. Good. Well, it's good. It's good. love it. Now I can go back and try to pull the cool stuff. There's a lot of good things in there.

Let's go right to the last practice where Dr. Alina joined you.

Dr. Jose Vicens:

Absolutely. Like me me David Phelps, you know

Dr. David Phelps:

She's buying in. Well, she's right out of residency. So did she put any money down? she... You bought it and you set up the pathway for her to buy in from the get-go, correct?

Dr. Jose Vicens:

Exactly. So what we did is, is I put the capital, I bought the widow off, took care of that. And then in our agreement, basically she's paying, you know, half of the practice and then a little buy-in, you know, chunks by chunks. And then we're going to remain 50 50 partners for about 10 years.

And then after that, she buys me out whenever she chooses to. So it's a win win everywhere. You look at it.

Dr. David Phelps:

Dentists don't burn out from dentistry. They burn out from carrying a life that feels heavier every single year, while pretending everything's fine. If you're exhausted from being the solution to everyone's problems, if your marriage feels the stress, you won't admit. If you're terrified of waking up five years from now in the exact same place, then hear me. You're not broken. You're trapped in a model that was never designed to give you freedom. This coming January, we're opening something brand new, the Exit Optional Blueprint Experience. Four weeks online of live intimate work with me, followed by a private in-person

blueprint weekend that has rescued marriages, reset careers, and given doctors their lives back.

If you want to buy back 10, 20 hours a week, cut your dependency in half, get aligned with your spouse, and finally build a future you trust, this is your window. Only 20 doctors will be accepted and the deadline is January 5th. If the weight has gotten too heavy. If you know something has to change, text BLUEPRINT in all caps to 9722036960 right now.

Again, that's BLUEPRINT to 9722036960. Well, there's so much here. One thing you said at beginning is your network is your net worth and everything you told us in 10 minutes, everything was built on relationships, was built on your network, built on people that you met, you became friends with, camaraderie and a network where people know you, you know them and that's where opportunities come from, right? I mean, you can't force things to happen. You have to kind of be in the mix and people have to know who you are and have a respect for what you bring to the table. And obviously you've had that. And I think that's a big reason why these deals that maybe seem to fall in your lap. Well, they fell in your lap because you did the work in the front end.

You continue to do that. And I know that about the rest of your life, which we'll talk a little bit about your travels because you keep a broad base of friendships. I'd say you're a very well grounded guy, but you're not very grounded because you're always on the move. Grounded, but not so grounded.

So the other thing that that I want to dig into a little bit because yeah, you said when you came to your blueprint weekend, know, it's like everybody, you and you're not old by any means. mean, you've been, this is 2008. So this is, you know, this 2020, almost 26. So 18 years really in private practice.

I mean, that's, for a lot of people, that's maybe half a career, maybe two thirds, give or take. I mean, if you just want to look at conventional and. You're not conventional. So I'm not putting in that bucket.

I'm just saying, I love the fact that you look at everything differently, but putting together deals, particularly the partnership. So a lot of people, particularly those that are highly trained engineer types, like we are, come from, you know, that kind of training and analytical. Well, a of times we're not cut out to put together partnerships very well. And I'm not saying you, cause I think you do that extremely well.

you've got a gift at that. But What's been, have there been, what are the pros and cons so far? Two years down the road with this partnership, right? Two years.

So give us a little bit, mean, not everything's perfect. I mean, obviously things are working, but what things did you have to work out along the way? And is there anything that you would have done differently from the outset when you put this deal together with Dr. Lena that you wish you had done?

Just anything to give us some flavor.

Dr. Jose Vicens:

I'll tell you, add to that. I teach at the ortho program. So I know that, you know, people graduating and things like that. So I've been trying to get somebody to come help us. So Alina was the fifth one and she actually did not train at the Puerto Rico program. She trained at the same program in New York where I went to. So with her, it was kind of different. I knew her as a dental student, you know, very sharp lady, wanting to do her GPR.

And then she called me one day and she says, you, yeah, you know, thinking about doing ortho. coach me, tell me about it. And I, you know, did my thing. And I did something that I remember, which was, I was complaining to my program director.

He wasn't taking anybody from University of Puerto Rico. And he told me something very simple. said, have you called me about it? And I said, no, well then do for the next time.

So when she comes along, I sent him an email and I said, Dr. Faber, I got this lady. She's awesome. She's great.

The only thing I'm going to ask you is just to give her an interview. And that was it. And she was like, chief resident. I mean, He loved her more than he loved me.

I mean, that's how good she was. for her, I knew her already. then when we sat down and the day when she actually came toward that new practice before we said, go for it. I was very transparent about it.

And I sat down and I said, Alina, you're a great girl. I like you a lot, but this is to make money. So as long as we're clear about that, we're not going to have any issues. And we set it out, a scheme of how we're to do the distributions and all the other details.

And she said, you know, Let's just do it. And it worked out great. Concerns? I I have to learn how to work on a almost weekly basis with another colleague, which is very different than working with, let's say, a staff member or a consultant or anybody like that, because you have to make sure it's people you like.

And if somebody that you like, and they like you, I mean, things are going to work great. We have one guy here who had a partnership for 30 years. until one guy returned and I told him, Hey, Carlos, what was your secret? And he said, I had plenty confidence and I was a hundred percent confident on my partner.

And I think that's where things come from. As long as you're clear with that and it's all going to work out.

Dr. David Phelps:

Yeah, I think we've all, whether it's potential partners or associates or even staff members that we have to hire in our business and practices. We first kind of form, you know, kind of a gut feel, you know, instinct. Like I said, do I like this person? And to the extent that we have the opportunity like you did to work with someone, to see someone's character, you know, in the clinic and see leadership qualities, see their aptitude, see their technical skills, and you can start checking those boxes.

And so that's a big piece of it for sure. And also, you know, a big part, obviously, in our arena and health, anything in health care, it's a people business, right? We all, it wrapped up the technical skills, which are important, but it's a people business and relating to people, whether that's your staff, your patients, the parents, that's a huge part. You can watch and see that she could do that too, right?

I mean, you're checking that box and you're like, okay, she's going to fit in the culture because that's who you are. You're very authentic or easy to talk to. can see parents and kids enjoying but you've got to find someone that has those, at least a good bit of those qualities also, otherwise not gonna fit. So you check those boxes and you set up the capital formation and the buyout distributions and that's been good.

Now, what if you had set something up in good faith with her and Dr. Lena not having any business experience, but she's trusting you, obviously, you set something up. What if six

months, 12 months down the road, she came to you and said, hey, You know, this, formulation we had here have here for whatever reason, and I'm not going to make something up, you know, is, working for her, you know, whether it's, I don't know, you know, the, buy-in is too steep, too fast for the amount of money she's making. I'm not saying that's, that's the case, but how, how would you, with someone you liked, would you, would you go back and try to reformulate something if you thought that the initial arrangement could have been done better based on the market or Maybe it's the situation with the person, again, not saying in this case, but the person is just not being as productive as they can be. How would you go through something like that if it came to play?

Dr. Jose Vicens:

we did is actually I had a an attorney who was also a dentist. She was the one to draft the documents. But I told her, Alina, I think this is fair, but you find your your consultant. I mean, find somebody to consult with, because I don't want this to be an issue later on, you know, as you start to learn.

So so I think that worked out really well. And with her, you know, if there will be a case where we have any issues or whatever, hey, let's sit down. everything we could talk about things. I mean, it's not like it's hard to wring a stone.

Now, I There were a lot of things that my attorney put on that contract that were pretty much one sided and protected me. But on the other hand, I look at it and I'm like, I mean, this is not like all my eggs in one basket. it's like, you don't have to do that. I mean, let's just make it good for her.

mean, because if it's not good for her, she's going to do something else. And we looked at every little aspect, you know, what happens if whatever she gets sick, what happens if I get sick, you know, what happens if I die, what happens if... you know, all those scenarios to try to think of what could potentially go wrong and then have a plan for that so that we don't have to have questions and things.

Dr. David Phelps:

I think you bring up a very valid point there. It's important that we have attorneys that draft final paperwork, documents, contracts, agreements, because they know the statutory language to put in. And again, we know we have to have those. Unfortunately, we have to have them to protect our interest.

And then, yes, you have another party who also needs some protection. You're the one that holds the cards. I don't mean you hold it over her head. You didn't do that.

But you have the opportunity. ■ The way I look at it, you should have probably more protections, but still, as you said, you went down item by item and looked at everything that was in that original contract, which your attorney representing you, hey, that's what they should do. They shouldn't want to give you the control, but then you had to look at it from her standpoint and say, what in this contract maybe seems a little too heavy handed or doesn't look like it provides for her. And so you kind of lended that and talked through it and kind of modified it before it became inked, so to speak.

Dr. Jose Vicens:

I'll tell you something, David, there's two types of places where you can put a, when you have to make up a decision. 98 % go one pile and 2 % go in two piles. So 2 % pile is the ones that if it goes wrong, it's catastrophic. ■ So this was a 2 % because if things go wrong, it's catastrophic for me and for her.

And those are the ones you spend on advisors and consultants. you know, getting married, buying a house, you know, going into business, those sorts of those. Yeah.

Dr. David Phelps:

So go back to the Blueprint Weekend where it's like, okay, you're telling us you're going to buy this other practice.

Dr. Jose Vicens:

I was like, are you? He said like, are you sure you're in the right group? And we're like, okay, I guess it's blueprint. You got to figure it out.

Dr. David Phelps:

I just do it. Well, but here's what I think today and I kind of want to get your take on this and you know I haven't spoken about this directly, but I think I can insinuate this more so today than I did even a couple of years ago. As I see the overall economy, the marketplace in general, globally, US, it's all kind of tied together and I see as we know, there's a lot of volatility, there's a lot of uncertainty, right? It's like.

Everybody's trying to figure out, how do you navigate this both in one's own business, pending that, you know, possible recession. Healthcare is pretty insulated for the most part. So I think that's a good thing that we have in dentistry and overall healthcare. It's not recession proof, but pretty resistant.

But still that's something you have to look at. I think we have to look at the fact that if there is a more hardship for the middle class, which is typically, you know, our staff members, how are they going to do? You know, with things that happen to them. that's becomes.

indirectly an ■ issue that we have to, we can't fix everything, but we have to be aware of it.

But the bigger picture for me is, and I was just thinking about this, I've talked to some other docs ■ recently who, people are always trying to figure out, well, how do I exit this thing that I built? Whether it's one practice, one big flagship, or like you have multiple practices, and how do I exit this thing? And how do I exit it sooner so I have more freedom in my life?

Because essentially that's what we always want, we want freedom. My thinking is this today and tell me how you think. think that keeping your, let's say, figuratively your hands on the pulse or keeping yourself tied to a business, a practice with some interest in it, you know, like you have, could be, you know, a majority interest, could be a 50-50, could be even a minority interest based on where you are. To me, it's like having that asset for longer rather than trying to exit sooner.

gives a lot more certainty, a lot more of a foundation for the future because a good business will have an inflation hedge to it, the income reduction. I mean, if costs go up, mean, eventually the costs to the patient unfortunately go up, the value of the business at least will maintain some level versus exiting. Okay, I make this exit. You've got three practices to exit.

Probably won't exit them all at the same time, but eventually there's gonna be an exit for you. And you'll know when that day is. I know you're working towards that. You've got a goal. At that point, unless you're doing anything else for active income, which you may or may not wanna do, you may be done. And so now you've got all your eggs out of your practice, the equities out of practice. It's in different kinds of investments. Could be financial products, could be alternative assets here, there.

And now you have to make that work. for the rest of your life, if you're not gonna go back in an active income, not gonna go back and practice ortho or anything like that. How do you see that? you see any opportunity for you to maintain, whether it's with Dr.

Alina or somebody else, some kind of a ownership in a practice longer than you thought you would two years ago when you're kind of looking at your timeline, or is that something that you think, nah, when I'm done, I'm done?

Dr. Jose Vicens:

This It could be there, but it comes to a point where the math just, there's no really a point for it. Cause there's other things that I want to do. And if the officer are a drag that prevent me from doing those things, then you have to let go. But if they're run nicely and it's just, you know, doesn't require much time from you then, you know, why kill the goose if it's still laying eggs.

You work less and Hey, you know, they, they, only did one start instead of five. Like we normally did. Hey, great. You know, it's not a problem.

And I think that's where I'm heading. I have the third office, which is small. only go there twice a week. And I think that's going to end up, I'm only going to at the end of the game, just working that office for two days a week.

And maybe I could hang in there for a couple more years. ■ But it's just not stressful. Now I'll tell you something. The other day we had a, which was really, really cool.

We had a financial, know, general economic talk from Puerto Rico economics, and they showed her data, you know, economic activity in Puerto Rico. And then it goes from like, you know, 2019 COVID, you know, the big spike in 2021. And I'm looking at that chart, you know, with a big spike in 2021. And I look at my starts in my practice and it was exactly the same chart.

So I'm going through a mild period in my third practice. Am I losing sleep over it? No, because I still have the other ones. And the other thing is, you know, as long as I have interest in this practice, it's if it's like I'm my own service provider where I have control of everything.

unlike other practice. So I'm a general partner in this adventure. At some point I'll be a limited partner somehow and I'll be maybe, and then maybe I continue to teach at the university. Maybe I go travel some more.

Maybe we do, you know, something else or whatever. The good thing is that it gives you opportunities and by having time and those opportunities, then I get to choose how I want to do things. Now, after, you know, being sacrificed for so many years and just trying to grow these practices and finally, you know, they're going to flourish and we're going to eat the fruits out of it at some point.

Dr. David Phelps:

You spent your career building a profitable practice that actually impacts your community. Now private equity calls, DSO sends shiny offers, and suddenly everyone has an opinion about what you should do next. If you're a dentist thinking about selling, transitioning out, or just trying to figure out what your practice is really worth, you don't need more noise. You need a circle of people who get it.

This is why we've built a new private Facebook community for dentists who want straight answers. answers, real comparisons, and the confidence to negotiate from strength, not fear. No jerks, no sales vultures, just Dennis sharing what works, what doesn't, and what to watch out for when the too good to be true offers show up. Inside the new group, you'll get access to tools, field evaluation resources, and conversations with docs who've already been where you are.

You're not up against one buyer. You're up against an industry that does this every day. Together, we level that playing field. If you want support without judgment, clarity without the pressure, and a community that protects its own, you belong here.

Go to [freedomfounders.com slash exit-ready dentist](https://freedomfounders.com/slash/exit-ready-dentist) to request access to the private Facebook group, Take Back the Leverage. Don't transition alone. That's [freedomfounders.com slash exit-ready dentist](https://freedomfounders.com/slash/exit-ready-dentist).

Dr. Jose Vicens:

you

Dr. David Phelps:

There's a lot of sacrifice putting these practices together and keeping them running, but you also don't make travel an afterthought in your life.

Dr. Jose Vicens:

Absolutely not.

Dr. David Phelps:

I think, tell me if I'm wrong, but I think you'd carve out on your calendar, travel before anything else goes in there. Is that?

Dr. Jose Vicens:

Absolutely. I'm trying to figure out my 2026 travel plans. There's plenty of stuff there. Also, I've been able to go to places where nobody goes to.

I'll tell a quick story. In 2023, I went to the island of Bouvet, which is the world's remotest island. And nobody knows about that. People are like, what?

Did you get on an airplane? Like, no, there's nothing there. What do mean? Yeah, it's only penguins.

And things like that. this little island... It's about half of Manhattan and it's halfway which between South Africa and Antarctica. So it's a Norwegian position.

This is a good story. So I'm also a ham radio operator. So the things that we do, which is really cool as a amateur radio operator, there's three hundred and forty countries. So your

goal is to contact all three hundred and forty.

So some of them, let's say, you know, the lower forty eights, that's one country. You know, Hawaii is its own country. Alaska. Those are easy because there's plenty of people there now. If you want to make a bouvet, consider one of them. And at that time, Bouvet was ranked number two most wanted. The last expedition was roughly 30 years ago. So I got an invitation from a Norwegian guy, a good friend, and he was pulling a team together.

I'm thinking about it. I'm like, maybe yes, maybe no. So I just had finished reading a book, which is called, I Die with Zero. And essentially, the moral of the story is you die today.

You leave a million bucks in the bank account. That's a million dollars worth of work. You did not get to enjoy. So it gives you a bunch of details and stuff.

So I'm thinking to myself, I'm 42. I'm still healthy enough. I got the money. I can figure out the time.

Maybe they would have invited me five years ago. I didn't have the time. I'm raising a family. They invite me five years from now.

Hey, my back hurts already. I can't really do it. So, okay, let's go to it. So it's a lot of hard work. So I started prepping for it. You know, go to the gym trainer. did weekly hikes. took cold showers for about a year and I was ready to go.

I mean, it's hard to train for cold when you live in the Caribbean. yeah. So we went on the trip and it was, you know, San Juan, New York, London, the whole people, everybody gathered in London, the Europeans and the Americans. And we took a military flight from London to the Falcon islands in South America.

There we got on a sailboat. We sailed two weeks west, going through South Georgia. you places where there's nobody. And then we finally got to the island, we spent about two weeks there doing our thing.

And then we took a 10 day sail back to Cape Town, Africa. So I was going for 54 days. That number is still embedded in my forehead. I mean, whenever my wife talks about that.

But it was just a trip of a lifetime. And if I hadn't said yes, I'm sure there was never going to be another opportunity after that.

Dr. David Phelps:

So 54 days, yeah, that's a long time. That's way longer than most people would ever take, even on their biggest vacation, right? So a few things about that. Obviously, you were planning physically, mentally to be prepared for it, but what did you need to plan for in terms of your businesses?

And at that time, two practices, right? So what did you need to do to set up so those practices would keep running? What happened there?

Dr. Jose Vicens:

So we did no partner yet. I mean, this is before her. So I talked to my staff. have one of the front desk, you know, and she started doing, taking care of all my normal stuff.

But then I had four very good orthodontists locally who I called them up and I said, Hey, you know, I got this stuff coming up. Are you able to help me? So we're able to cover the office roughly all, but maybe five days of clinical work. So that was still there and things were going fine.

Of course, there were a million stuff that I never knew about until I came back because I'm like, hey, honey, everything's fine. Of course, they don't want to worry you with anything else. But then we came back and I think I paid the price a little bit because I had to do lot ■ of patching and getting things fixed back up.

Dr. David Phelps:

■ Be more specific, patching.

Dr. Jose Vicens:

Little issues, know, oh, this employee had an argument with another one. Okay, we got to take care of that or whatever patients are, you know, just, just simple stuff. I mean, nothing serious that would collapse the operation, but, stuff that had to take care. So I said, paid the price.

I had some staff member that left after that. They didn't like what's going on or whatever. They feel like they don't belong here and they left, but those were casualties and, and, but I was willing to take those casualties. for an opportunity to do the trip of my life.

And that was, it was well worth it, I tell you. So yeah, so that's where we are. mean, we'll continue to do these things and as long as we're able to, we'll just keep it going. know, life is a game about collecting experiences.

And I wanna play that game really hard.

Dr. David Phelps:

Yeah. Well, I think you're very wise because we know too many people that put off those experiences to someday in the future when everything's going to be right or out of their business, out of their practice. as you said, too many things happen. Just too many.

Health issues, we lose people along the way. mean, it's just, if you don't take some opportunities, that's why that book, Die with Zeroes is a great foundational book to kind of swing the pendulum back the other way. We're all about like... Well, I need to build up the big mode.

need to make sure everything's good for the family and I need more more and more. It's like, but how much is enough, right? Well, you need to be cut out. So I love your attitude about that.

Dr. Jose Vicens:

I'll tell you, if I didn't read that book, I would not have gone to lecture. That was the tipping point in my decision process.

Dr. David Phelps:

Is that right? You would have done it. Wow. Well, you know, I tell people, you know, everything we do in life, the behaviors that we have, the way we think is all about our mindset, you how we think.

And if you think a certain way, I'm not judging anything right or wrong, but however we think our beliefs, that's going to drive what we do. And sometimes we need to have a vision or see

another viewpoint. Let's put it that way, whether it's a book or a mentor or just seeing someone else do something and consider the options there because it's said life's short. can be too short and if we don't take the opportunity, we'll lose the opportunity. I've got one last question for you. If you could go back to your younger self, maybe when you were, you used talk about 18 or 20 or 22, somewhere in there, what would you tell that person back then, what you know today, would there be anything you would tell him to do differently or to be aware of or to... ■ Even though you've lived, you live a great life. Would you tell them anything to be aware of or to focus on what you know today?

Dr. Jose Vicens:

You know what, I'll be honest with you. I would just say keep going. You're doing great because there's really nothing I would change. ■ yeah, because, you know, I get to enjoy life. Yes, I worked hard. Maybe I should have relaxed a little bit, but you know what? Those were the right decisions at the right time. And they were the ones that are providing the great stuff that I'm able to do today. And I wouldn't change a thing about it.

Dr. David Phelps:

Well, that's great to hear. I did not expect to hear any regrets from you particularly.

Dr. Jose Vicens:

absolutely not. No, the only regret right now would be not traveling enough maybe, but you know, life's about a balance. So I gotta, I think I'm more on one side. I gotta kind of come back a little bit, but I got stuff lined up.

You know, I'm working on a next expedition that I'm organizing with another friend and that should be coming up in the next couple of months. And then after that, we're just going to continue to do great stuff and leave an impact in this world. That's what it's all about.

Dr. David Phelps:

what it is about. Jose, I appreciate the time. It's been a real pleasure just to know you and watch how you work and orchestrate your life and great conversation this evening. So thank you for that.

Dr. Jose Vicens:

Absolutely Dave, thank you so much and it's great to be here and you keep doing great things.

Dr. David Phelps:

People often ask me, hey David, how do you balance preparing for the future without deferring meaningful experiences today? That's a conundrum that affects every one of us, particularly those of us, and that's many of us that are listening today. We're hard drivers, we're achievers. We built our lives on purpose and meaning and identity and being fruitful and

■ bringing service or products of building.

We're builders, we're orchestrators. And boy, it's hard to get out of that kind of a drive. And there's nothing wrong with that drive. Good character, ■ good work ethic is what builds this country.

But that drive can also cause us to obviate the best parts of our life, which are the experiences, our relationships, the people we care, we love, our kids, our spouses, our parents, nieces, nephews, other friends, community. It's easy to put all of them aside and say, I'll just wait till I get this amount done or this amount of net worth or this amount of an equity position. and we'll keep moving the goalpost. So how do I do it?

It's not easy. And I have to have the leash snapped on me from time to time. No question, my wife will do it. But I guess I got my wake-up call when my daughter was really, really sick over 20 years ago.

And that was where I really had that wake-up call where I had to really consider what am I doing? I'm driving, I'm successful by society's standards. I've created a good lifestyle for my family, created the financial security that they need, but. Because of all that, I wasn't able to be present and my daughter was slipping away literally right in front of me and I didn't want that to happen.

So the checkup is from time to time, you've got to look at balance and look at your calendar and see where are my priorities. If your calendar is always with your business objectives first, then that's where your priorities will go. You've got to seed in or build in front of your business objectives, experiences, those moments, those times, just like Dr. Vesens has done.

He builds his calendar out in advance and plugs in those experiences, whatever they may be in advance and then works everything else around it. That's the way we should do our life. If we'll just allow ourselves to do it and give ourselves permission to do so without feeling guilt. My own passion for exploration and adventure in my own life really started back about 20, 25 some years ago when my father, with whom I had had a lot of adventures as a young man. growing up in Boy Scouts. My dad was an Eagle Scout, I was an Eagle Scout. We did a lot of camping trips together, whether it was with Scouts or otherwise, and just enjoyed that time when I was a teenager growing up at home. Once I left home and went to my academic progress to college and graduate school and into my own life, well, then I lost that connection with my father, at least in terms of taking those trips.

I I'm moving on, right? That's what young adults do. But when I was 40, he... granted me a birthday present.

And it was like, David, let's get back to what we used to do, at least once in a while. So we went on a whitewater rafting trip ■ in Colorado, Utah. And subsequently we started doing that every year. Well, then we started bringing family members, ■ my sisters and some of her family and nieces and nephews.

And we started building and cousins and we started to build this coalition of people that became regular trips, whether it was whitewater rafting or bicycling in Europe. And we made this a really a regular thing that we've done through the years. We had a little bit of a pause during the COVID era when traveling abroad was difficult, traveling anywhere was difficult. But other than that, we really enjoyed that.

And Candace and I to this day, we continue to take those kinds of trips with friends. We could do a small group, larger group, but there's always a place to go. And I think that kind of exploration, it's fun because it's active. I love to be active.

I love to be outside. I love to be in different places with people I love and enjoy doing things with. If you can do those things, man, life is the best. And you don't wanna put those off because someday we're all gonna be in position where we can't do those kinds of physical travels and adventures.

We're gonna be more sedentary and we don't wanna lose the opportunity. So don't live life with regrets is my main mantra to you today. If you feel the tug listening to Jose's story, the kind that says, I want that kind of life too, well, don't ignore it.

Dr. Jose Vicens:

you

Dr. David Phelps:

He didn't wait for the perfect time to live boldly. He made intentional decisions. He found the right guides and he learned how to lean into a community that supported his vision of freedom. At Freedom Founders, that's exactly what we help doctors do.

Build a life that's not just financially independent, but fully alive. Our community is designed to meet you exactly where you are, whether you're just starting out to plan your exit or you're ready to repurpose your wealth for greater impact. This isn't a one size fits all. It's not theory, it's a tribe of real people taking real steps towards freedom together.

If you're ready to stop deferring life and start building a future with clarity, confidence and purpose, then let's talk. Schedule a discovery call with my team. No pressure, just a conversation to see if this community is the missing piece of the puzzle for you. Go to freedomfounders.com forward slash discover.

That's freedomfounders.com forward slash discover. Your freedom won't build itself. But the good news is, You don't have to do it alone. As always, be sure to click the subscribe or follow button, and I'll see you next time.