

Nick Kennedy:

Your job is not to be the hero. Your customer is the hero. You're the guide to help them get to what they want to. And to the extent you do that, you shouldn't have many problems. And to the extent you don't do that, you're about to be found out. And one little lie, one little lie, like a drop of sewer in a magnum of champagne ruins the whole thing.

James Robert Lay:

Greetings and hello, I am James Robert Lay and welcome to episode 228 of the Banking on Digital Growth Podcast. Today's episode is part of the Exponential Insight series, and I'm excited to welcome Nick Kennedy to the show. Nick is a serial entrepreneur and an executive coach helping good leaders grow into great leaders so that they can become fully integrated spouses, parents and business people. He is also the author of the book, The Good Entrepreneur, and today we are going to be talking about how financial brand and FinTechs can level up their leadership potential in the age of AI. Welcome to the show Nick. It is good to share time with you today, buddy.

Nick Kennedy:

Hey, thanks for having me on. This has been a long time coming and I've been excited ever since it came up as an option.

James Robert Lay:

And getting to engage and have some conversations back and forth on LinkedIn, I've been looking forward to this myself. Before we get into talking about leadership and coaching and what I'm going to call the age of AI, what's good for you right now? Personally, professionally, it's always your pick to get started on a positive note.

Nick Kennedy:

Oh man, kids just started back to school. We had a lovely summer up in the mountains of Colorado and got to ride my bike every day and lost 15 pounds. So I'm feeling pretty good after getting on that bike and being up in the mountains and that thin air up there has been really, really good. And celebrated 24 years of marriage with my wife this summer. 18 of them were good and several of them have been hard as marriage goes sometime. And my kids are healthy man. So health all the way around. I'm very, very happy.

James Robert Lay:

I'm right there with you. So our four just started back to school and 16 years we're working on 17 now of marriage. We had two years of bliss, four very challenging years, I would say 10 years of recovery and then I feel like we're finally, finally just opening up a new chapter and it's been a journey. And I think that's the beauty of everything is if you just kind of take a step back and realize life, marriage, business, entrepreneurship, digital, whatever it is, it's all going to be a journey. And you wrote a book about this. You've been on a journey. You wrote a book titled The Good Entrepreneur. And I know that the vast majority of our dear listeners, they might not be entrepreneurs per se, but they could bring the entrepreneurial spirit or entrepreneur spirit to their organization because as you write about in the book, clarity, vision, purpose, transforming failure, these are all entrepreneur traits, but I see that those are the same traits, financial brand, FinTech leaders can apply in the age of AI. Agree or disagree?

Nick Kennedy:

I 100% agree. In fact, the word entrepreneur is a French word and it means the bearer of risk. So my whole point of the book is to say that for too long we have created a much too narrow definition of what an entrepreneur is. If you're taking a risk, you're an entrepreneur. And so that could be you opening up your own restaurant, that could be you opening a dry cleaner, that could be you taking a risk trying to move from a director position to a vice president position in a very large multi billion dollar corporation. So according to the very definition of an entrepreneur, when you take on a risk, you're an entrepreneur. And not only that, almost everything good that we have has come from an entrepreneur or somebody who took a risk. Right.

You like a Tesla, someone took a risk to build that. You like your lights, someone took a risk to create lights. You like clean water, someone took a risk to create clean water. Everything good, we had the Zoom, we're talking on the microphones were using, somebody took a risk to create these to say will the market validate them? So absolutely agree, it's across the board entrepreneurs everywhere.

James Robert Lay:

Interesting point you make about risk taking because 20 years in financial services, working, coaching, training, financial brands, FinTechs, risk aversion I would say is more of the cultural norm within this vertical. How would you address that, this idea of risk and maybe risk aversion? Because as I look ahead to this decade, 2020, 2030 and beyond, we're moving at an exponential rate to where I think we're going to have to become a lot more comfortable with risk. But how would you deal with that in a risk adverse vertical like financial services?

Nick Kennedy:

I mean, I always start with my clients and ask them, what's your end goal? Where do you want to be in 10 years? And if the answer is you want two and a half percent growth year over year, then that's one answer. If you want to quadruple where you are 10 years from now, it's a whole nother answer. And so you start with the end in mind. And to the extent you get to that point, then you can have a very clear definition of how to get there. The problem we have is that when I started out businesses 20 years ago, I had nothing to lose. I mean, I was willing to bet at all because I wasn't going to be any worse off than where I started. And you put a little bit of change in your pocket and suddenly now you have to have life insurance and you have to have the right mutual funds and you have to have the right manager.

Same thing with businesses. When you start a business you've got nothing to lose, but as it grows now you have a team of attorneys that are doing risk assessments and actuaries, who are looking at the numbers behind it. And so the question is not what should you do around being risk averse or lean towards risk. The question is, what do you want to go to? And then you align your risk strategy that way. But I will say this though, the people who win are the people who take chances and work on it to do something that hasn't been done before.

James Robert Lay:

And I like the way that you frame that. It's where do you want to go? Or one of the questions that I ask is, how do you want to grow, G-R-O? What are your goals? What are the roadblocks that stand in the way of those goals? And then what are the opportunities to overcome those roadblocks to ultimately move towards and make progress towards those specific goals? But you mentioned something about purpose. How important is purpose when it comes to thinking about future growth, whether that be personally or professionally or organizationally, because I think they're all interconnected. Purpose

provides meaning. You know, ancient wisdom without purpose the people perish. What's your take on purpose in the age of AI?

Nick Kennedy:

I think about Viktor Frankl who famously wrote the book, Man's Search For Meaning. He was a Holocaust survivor and he ended up becoming a psychologist and he says, a calling is not so much what you're going to do for your whole life, but what are you going to do in any particular moment. You're called to go do in any particular moment. I tend to think that wealth is no longer about necessar... And it's not only about how big your bank account is, it's about freedom anymore. COVID has taught us that. That you can work from a lot of different places and have a lot of difference. We're seeing this in the gig economy, everything's kind of changing in real time. I think the ultimate wealth is to be able to say, if it's not a hell yes, it's a hell no. Right. And so in order to do that in to know what I'm really into or what I'm really not into, I've got to create filters.

And if I can create those filters, if I can... As we were talking about prior to recording, if you take pause long enough to know where you want to go, then you can create some filters to directionally push yourself that way. And so I think whether you're talking about a person or a business, it's all the same. There's no difference between a personal life and professional life. And to the extent that there is, and there's a delta between it, that's called incongruence. And that's where anxiety comes from. And that's where frustration comes from. And that's where we have start to have these issues. But to the extent I'm the same person in my home as I am on the day speaking, that's when I'm a healthy individual and things are going well for me. And so I think the calling component to it or the purpose component to it is everything. You don't ask yourself what you're supposed to be doing because you already know. You just have to figure out how to get there.

James Robert Lay:

That's a fantastic point about congruence versus incongruence, or harmony versus discord. I want to roll the clock back here just a bit for context for the dear listener, because you have been on an entrepreneurial journey to get to where you're at today as a leadership coach, helping good leaders become great leaders. Let's hop to the DeLorean of your mind and take a trip back in time to get to the point to where you're at, but maybe from a different perspective, lessons learned, lessons learned along your own growth journey as a leader. What might be one or two that just like, ah, that moment, that moment in time it really hurt, it really stung, but I was able to transform that failure, to transform that pain into the seeds for future growth?

Nick Kennedy:

Golly, that's a good question. I feel like I should have a glass of whiskey to pontificate and a pipe on that question. That's a good one. Look, I can tell you off the top, the top of my head, one of the biggest mistakes I made as a leader was assuming that I had to have all the answers. Pride is my favorite sin, and pride is effectively saying I have what it takes and what I know now having built and been part of building, and building several companies and selling companies and having reached a lot of heights in my career is that I'm not enough and I'm not enough and I need a community. And as a CEO, I thought I have all the answers and all the investors and all the board members and all the employees needed me to have it. And the reality is to the extent I asked for help was to the extent I was a healthy individual.

So I think if I could go back and tell myself anything, it would be don't be afraid to ask for help. Don't be afraid to acknowledge that you don't know the answer. In fact, it's one of the greatest credibility builders

you can have when you're trying to, for a salesperson, for anybody, but mainly for a salesperson when you're trying to sell somebody on something, if you say, I don't know, it brings the ultimate credibility because you're acknowledging some weakness around it. I think it's a big piece.

And then I think the second thing I would tell myself is don't let it become your identity. I was so wrapped up in my success that I didn't know where I began and my career ended and to the extent my career was going well that's awesome. And to the extent my career wasn't going well, man, that was a existential crisis in my life that extended to my children and my wife and my mental health and my emotional health and all the other things that came along with it. Those are the two things. Don't do it alone and make sure it's not your sole identity.

James Robert Lay:

I think there's so much to take away from that perspective. One, as a leader we tend to think or feel that we have to know at all. But I think one of the greatest permissions that we can give ourselves is to not bear that burden and we can transform that. I mean, even Socrates, he defined wisdom. The only true wisdom is knowing nothing. And I've been spending so much time studying, we'll call it the ancient writings to see how they apply in this modern age of AI, because I think there's so much practicality that we've kind of forgotten some of the basic principles on that point. And if we could transform needing to be a know it all to being a learn it all. Lucky there's always something new to learn. Even in our most challenging times, it's a great way to transform our own mental perspective around that.

And then two, not having to do it alone. You mentioned community. I think the more that we can surround ourselves with people who share a similar journey with us, the easier it becomes. I mean, even in Lord of the Rings, Frodo, he didn't take the journey alone. He had Gandolph guiding him, his coach, but then he had a whole support system to make sure that he got to his final destination to achieve what you were mentioned before with Viktor Frankl, his calling. I want to get your take on this. Leadership, it really evokes a lot of thoughts, ideas, maybe some feelings and emotions. When it comes to the word leadership, what's a common belief others have about leadership that you might disagree with them on?

Nick Kennedy:

We seek as leaders and as I work with leaders to see results very quickly. And I think the best leaders are well into the grave before we actually see the best results. My first job out of college was at working for EDS for Ross... Actually Ross Perot wasn't there at the time. But he might as well have been. I mean, the stories people would tell about Ross Perot while walking through the building of EDS while he'd been gone for several years at the time I was there, I mean, he just was this larger than life character. And it wasn't about the record profits EDS was creating, although clearly was very profitable, made him a billionaire. What it was about was the personal affect that he had on people's lives. The most popular one or the most known one is the story of him rescuing the EDS employees from Iran.

If you haven't read the book On the Wings of Eagles by Ken Follet, it's unbelievable what he did. He basically asked Jimmy Carter to get him out and Jimmy Carter couldn't. And so he wrote a blank check to a guy who started the Green Berets, a guy named Bull was his nickname, and they went over and busted him out. Right. That's just who he was as a person. And that is one story out of, I guarantee you a thousand stories, people will talk about it. So when you think about leadership, I think most of us think

Nick Kennedy:

We don't have this view of our legacy. And the reality is entrepreneurship started 80,000 years ago when somebody on the shores of Morocco started trading snail shells. Took these snail shells, colored them, put holes in them and made jewelry and they found those several hundred miles inland. First time in human history in which we traded or bartered services for goods. They took a risk, they went to the tribe down the way that they didn't know and took a risk to go do that. And at the time, homo sapiens and Neanderthals roamed the earth together. Neanderthals who were stronger, bigger, had bigger heads, the whole nine yards should have become us. And they died away. And they died away because they didn't figure out how to work together. So when you think about community and leadership, we have this opportunity to think about long term.

I'm standing on the shoulders as an entrepreneur of hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of generations with the hope that I make it just a little bit better so that my children's generation will be able to hold it a little bit better for the next generation. And literally humanity needs it to happen that way because it's been... I mean everything changed in 1760 when Thomas Savery created the steam engine. Up until that time, life expectancy, childhood death, GDP per capita, you name it, literacy, it was flat. And 1760, we have this exponential growth on all of those things. So I mean it really is a humanity issues when you think about leadership. It's not about you, it's about the legacy you're leaving behind as you build a foundation for the next group of people.

James Robert Lay:

I love that you brought up 1760 and the steam engine and the exponentiality that came out of that. I don't think unless you, back to your point about pausing and just reflecting for a moment, we lose perspective of everything that we've experienced in a relatively short amount of time when compared to the macro. And so I've said this since early 2020, probably the very first few podcasts that I was starting to read what was going on in 1918, what was going on in 1919, what was going on in 1920, trying to figure out what might happen next for us. And then came across a fantastic book called The Fourth Turning that gives some really interesting perspective. This was written back in 1997 and was very prophetic of what we're experiencing today. The fourth turning being that period of time that we're in now.

Its essentially that there are like four seasons. This is kind of like the period of winter right now. You use the word hope before and I think my hope is what comes after winter is springtime, it is expansion, it is growth and I think it's so easy in the period of winter, it's cold, we tend to contract within ourselves and we have to be more mindful and aware of that contraction to continuously expand outwards. Otherwise, we're going to go inwards and we're going to find ourselves alone. We're going to lose our sense of self, we're going to lose our sense of community.

Personal question for you here. As a leader, how do you handle and how have you handled all of the exponential changes that we have experienced and I predict that we will continue to experience, for us to say for the coming decade, things that we can't even begin to fathom considering the internet is about to just turn 30 years old more or less in 2024?

Nick Kennedy:

You said it I think several times in this conversation we go back to look at history. I mean, there's nothing new in this world. There's nothing new. We have behaviors around it. When Adam Smith wrote about the invisible hand, he actually only used in The Wealth of Nations the term invisible hand once. He's only

used it like seven times in all his writings. Thousand pages, he uses it once. But we use that term. But what he talked about with the invisible hand and the market working the way it should work, if I was the baker and you were the butcher and I came to you and I said, I want to pound to meet and you gave me two thirds of a pound and I got home and I looked it on my scale and I found out your scales were fixed. Well guess what? I got to come back and I have words with you.

That was the invisible hand, because we lived in a community at the time there was probably less than 50 people. Well the internet changed that because now I can do business with anybody around the world. But it's still the same principle because you might be able to cheat me once but you're not going to cheat me twice, most likely. And I'm going to leave reviews and we're going to have that cycle kind of going back into it. So I think about... When you talk about moving from winter to spring, I love to ski. I ski in Colorado frequently with my family and friends. The worst time to be in Colorado is early spring because it's still cold and muddy and you can't go mountain biking and you really don't want to go fishing but it's not cold enough to go skiing because the snow has melted. It's called mud season.

That is necessary for the water to get into the ground for the green leaves to come out in the spring. And then ultimately in the summer, and then in the fall, which is my favorite time in the mountains, which is when the leaves actually turn yellow because the sugar is going back into the roots to save the trees. But the point is like that's the seasonal change and I think what you're going to have is a lot of change and that's why entrepreneurship is so important. Because if you stay the track and you don't understand what's changing, then you're going to not be on the track very long because things are changing really rapidly. So it's even more important to pause longer. Ironically, the quicker the decisions need to be made, the longer we need to pause.

James Robert Lay:

I called them the four seasons for exponential growth, learning, thinking, doing, reviewing. And back to your point, before one of the challenges to be aware of that you experienced was attaching your identity, we'll call it attaching your identity to the doing. This is what I do. We are human beings, we are not human doers. And when we attach our identity to doing, I feel that in the age of AI, it's the doing that is probably the ripest for any type of disruption where when we create the space to review and reflect, to learn about the experiences that we've had, to then think about how we can do even better in that next season, that next period, that is a way to navigate some of the complexities but also with what you're doing as a leadership coach, helping good leaders grow into great leaders.

And I think this idea of coaching, it's such a... It's a topic that... It creates a lot of emotion. I see the value or that's the biggest waste of time ever. I want to get your take on this. Why do leaders need coaching? But maybe add to that, why might leaders need coaching now more than ever in a world full of exponential change?

Nick Kennedy:

To answer your first question, why do leaders need coaching? Why does Tom Brady need a coach? I mean, name anybody, any great athlete, they all have these coaches. And what a really good coach does is they create a space for the player, the leader to be able to be awake enough to understand all the different dynamics to make the right decision in that particular moment. So when I think about my clients, my leaders are all C-level executives some of whom are... They're all incredibly successful, some of whom are incredibly wealthy and they're always searching for the next level. And my job with them is to help them get quiet enough, to create experiences where they can get quiet enough to hear what's

going on inside of them. I don't have the answers for them. My job is to ask the questions to get the answers inside of them out into the open and to remove the chaos, the anxiety, the opaqueness that's going on between the ears so they can get clarity around them.

And I think it's really important. Now I have to admit, when I was a CEO running businesses, I did not have a coach because as I mentioned earlier, I didn't think I needed help. I mean, it was... And I was completely ignorant. I just have to tell you I was completely ignorant. And to the extent you hire a coach or get a coach in your life, you're going to benefit. I've never met anybody who's hired a coach who hasn't said exactly what you said to me at the beginning of this, prior to us starting recording, which is 10X the value. You spend 100,000, you're going to get a million dollars worth of value, you spend 30,000, you're going to get 300,000, you spend 3000, get 30,000. That's my goal. I do a money-back guarantee. If you don't get 10 times the value out of what you're paying me, then I'll give you your money back.

And it's because you get to take these high... You're basically starting with these thoroughbreds who have gotten to where they've gotten to. Right. They've gotten really far by themselves and all you're going is I'm going to get that next 20% out of you. And how are we going to do that? Well that depends on what you need. A lot of listening. I'm a professional listener at the end of the day. But when I can listen and then reflect back. So I do one on one coaching and I do group coaching. So this month in my group coaching, we have something called confirmations and affirmations. So everybody in the group hand writes to everybody else in the group, to other leaders in the group confronting them about something that they need to hear.

We're learning how to confront well and healthy and not offensively. Here's something I've seen in you. Right. We've been together now for eight months, so we know each other pretty well and here's the affirmation I want you to see you double down on. Well, what does that mean? Well, no one ever gets 10 other people reading off to you confrontation and affirmation and then handing you the note that you get to put into your file for later reviewing. That's gold. Changed my life. When someone said to me early on, hey, you should write a book when I went through a process like this. And I was like, oh geez, I'd never thought about that before. So I think that kind of feedback when you do coaching with someone is what you get and you should expect. You should expect nothing less than 10 times what you pay for.

James Robert Lay:

It's so funny you talk about writing the book, but in 2012 was in a very, very dark place. And my wife said it's the business. And I've talked about this on podcast, but it was the business or the family and I've never played by the rules. It was a poster, Robert Frost, two roads diverge in a yellow wood and I took the one less traveled and that has made all the difference. But I always looked at that poster as a freshman in high school, my wife actually happened to be in that class. We met on the first day of high school but we were not high school sweethearts. But I always looked at that Robert Frost poem and that poster, one path went that way, one path went that way. And it is almost like I was given it a choice. Business, family, you got to make a choice.

But I remember when I was in ninth grade looking at that poster and I was like... I was not interested in this path, I was not interested in that path, left or right. I wanted to see what was down the middle. It's like I want to go out and blaze something new. And that's where it's like, okay, I want both. I want business and family. I need help. I'm stuck. And I worked with David C. Baker who wrote a great book that you might enjoy called The Business of Expertise. And he said back in 2012 you need to write a book. And I'm like, how am I going to write a book? And it was just so funny because eight years later-

Nick Kennedy:

You do it.

James Robert Lay:

... with the support of my wife wrote the first book, I'm writing the second book. And I think that right there, if I go back in my own journey, had someone not told me that, I don't know if that would've ever happened. And that's my whole point of being able to reflect back of like, wow, all of this... And that's why I keep investing back because I see the value creation. And it might not be immediate, it might not be that day, that week, that month, that quarter or even that year. But what I have found is I play a game in decades. That alone, if I can look back over a decade and see I started here and now I'm up a little bit higher than I was before. That's progress.

And so I want to get your take on this because when things get challenging, when things get tough, one of the very first things to get cut in organizations is either marketing or it's training, development, maybe coaching. Number one, why do you think that is? And then number two, is that dangerous? Because it's almost like we're making a decision in the short term thinking about coaching, training, development as an expense in the present moment. But really training, coaching, development, that's an investment for continued future growth. And so it's almost like we're making a poor choice because of what's going on in the present. What's your take on that? Why does this happen and is this a bad thing?

Nick Kennedy:

I think it happens because of what we talked about earlier, we have short term thinking. We have a requirement, a board meeting coming up. We have a quarterly report to report to the street. We have short term thinking regarding that. If the market hits you hard, then you might not have a job to worry about. So I think it's okay in certain situations. Is it hurting you long term? Absolutely. Because what you need when you're in the trenches is someone to come alongside you and help you. I will say this, to the extent anybody's contemplating cutting, coaching or training along those lines, every coach I know is involved in it because they love the people they work with. So the extent it's a budget issue, call them and just say, Hey, can you work with me for the next three months? And they most likely will do that for you.

But yeah, I think it's incredibly dangerous. Especially when, what does Charlie Munger say? When fearful dive in and buy and when not fearful hold onto your money. That kind of thing. I mean, it's the same thing with marketing and right now interest rates are going up, funding is drying up, people are holding on to cash a lot more. Well, then you got to double down a little bit regarding what's the value you're providing. At the end of the day, I'll Lord of the Rings, your job is not to be the hero. Your customer is the hero. You're the guide to help them get to what they want to. And to the extent you do that, you shouldn't have many problems. And to extent you don't do that, you're about to be found out and maybe go find another career somewhere else.

James Robert Lay:

Yeah, and I think that idea of playing the role of the helpful and empathetic guide is such a key aspect and it's almost like the way that I see the transformation of financial services... And it'd be interesting to get your take on this because it's like if you could build a culture of coaching within a financial brand, is there a possibility for that culture of coaching to begin to spill over into the public space, into the lives of account holders, to truly put the transformation of people over the commoditized transaction of dollars and cents. And that's where I think with what Jeffrey Kindle and I have talked about on this podcast, the

idea of niche. Because when you have a niche market, you can really position around expertise and guidance and then coaching is the next natural step with that. But that will not make sense. This idea of coaching will not make sense if there's not a culture of coaching established internally. First, is there an opportunity there to establish that culture of coaching within an organization so that it just kind of spills over naturally because it's the cultural norm?

Nick Kennedy:

Yeah. And the one thing I would just think change a little bit is I don't think it has to be over. I think profits first. Never less than profits but so much more. So if you're not making money, that's oxygen. You don't have a business. Right. So first go do that. But I think the long term view is culture is just your team agreeing on what kind of company they want to work in and if what they want to work in, and I hope if you're in the finance world, is about ultimately enabling your clients, your account holders to go fulfill their dreams. So imagine the person you've hired right in the front teller to, imagine if there's a piece of software to do some of these just like you're doing, prompt some leading questions, to ask them, the clients to understand a little bit more.

Imagine if you can track that. Imagine if you can suggest to them, hey, we've got this new product that will help you save up for your wedding. It will help you save up for your first house. It will help you save up for your first car or help you pay down your debts around that. Imagine if that was the transaction as opposed to, well how can I milk this relationship for as much as possible? Because what ends up happening is every relationship's built on trust and one little lie, one little lie, like a drop of sewer in a magnum of champagne ruins the whole thing.

And so to the extent you can create trust by genuinely wanting to know how I can go help. Man, that creates a whole different world. I mean, imagine if that was your bank, if that was your technology to enable that, that was your culture. You'd be overwhelmed with people coming over to you because it's no longer, oh, just the big bank that's trying to get everything they can out of me. It's somebody who actually cares about what I'm working on. So I think, but again, you have to have a long term view. This almost has to... You almost have to think about it post yourself.

Like what am I going to do that posts me being and running this organization will still be here. That's the 100 year question. Jeff Bezos is trying to build a clock out of New Mexico that's going to be accurate for 10,000 years. Now that might just be an ego project, but you think about the engineering side of that, right? He's thinking well beyond himself.

James Robert Lay:

Well, you posted something on LinkedIn a week or two ago that really connected with me because my wife is Lebanese and it was about olive of trees and the olive tree takes eight years to bear fruit and then can live to be over a thousand years long. What are you working on that will take eight years to bear that fruit and then can create value long after that? When you shared that, I said that is a beautiful way of thinking about things when we do get kind of stuck in this short term perspective because of all of the chaos that's going around us right now. How do you play a long game, as we start to wrap up here? How do we transform our mind to think maybe legacy to use your words coming out of your book?

Nick Kennedy:

I mean, a couple very simple practical things is read lots of books and read lots of books by authors who are dead. Because the reality is if we know our history, we'll know that as chaotic as it seems right now,

there's never been a more peaceful time on the face of the earth. There just hasn't been. We've never had more wealth. There's never been more people fed, there's never been more people who have learned how to read books. Even though we have a lot of bad things going on in this world, this has been the most prosperous time by far in the history of humanity. But when I just open up my Twitter feed and I see the flooding going on in Dallas and I see the chaos going on in government and all I think, oh my gosh, the world's ending. The reality is we are in a much better place than we ever were.

So I think the simplest thing is read a book and read a book by an author who's dead. Because if they're dead and they're still publishing it, there's something valuable there. And we get to know our history. And history is the ultimate antidote to anxiety because there's nothing new in this world. So I think long game, when you think about the olive tree and the eight years that... I mean, the question was because what are you working on that you will not see anything for eight years? What will last well beyond you? Man that is a long term thinking in 2022. So I think that's it, man. Find history and learn it and then apply it to your calling and your particular expertise of what you're working on.

James Robert Lay:

You know, there's one author though on that note I would recommend for the dear listener, he's still alive, Peter Diamandis, back to your point of we are and it's still a very, very good time, which is his book Abundance because it really does make that case. I think it's so easy to get sucked into all of the negativity which is wired into our brain. That's what kept us alive when we had all of the bears and the lions and the tigers. But what's happening up in your neck of the woods in Dallas is now impacting us here in Houston. And I only knew about that because of a friend. And I turned off the news a long time ago for those specific reasons. I wanted to take control and sovereignty back over my own mind.

And a lot of that has been rooted in a practice that I call digital stoicism, because it's not like we can escape digital technologies, but we can transform our relationships with them to where they don't run us. We do our best to run them and create value with them versus the other way around. Nick, this has been a great conversation. I really appreciate your thinking. If someone wants to continue the dialogue with you or just connect with you, say hello, what's the best way for them to reach out and do so?

Nick Kennedy:

I mean, the best way is to go to my website, which is just simply nickkennedycoaching.com and all my socials are out there and everything's out there as well, and some...

James Robert Lay:

Where can they get the book?

Nick Kennedy:

Anywhere books are sold, Amazon, Barnes and Noble. You can listen to it if you like my voice and find it pleasing. The audible version was read by myself. So if you like to do that as well, it's on Audible. It's called The Good Entrepreneur, 12 principles for creating a principled business and a long term legacy.

James Robert Lay:

Get the book, connect with Nick, learn with Nick, Grow with Nick. Nick, thank you so much for joining me for today's episode of Banking on Digital Growth.

Nick Kennedy:

Thank you for having me. It's been an honor and privilege.

James Robert Lay:

As always, and until next time, be well, do good, make your bed.