

## Happy Hour Podcast

**I've really become very focused on what I can control. What I can control. And I've really tried to not exert my energy on all those things I cannot control. And when I found that, when I oriented myself that way, my life got a lot easier. (12:04-12:32)**

**They didn't actually need direction from me, 99% of the time to begin with. They knew what to do. What they really needed was the courage and confidence and the safety and culture to trust their own voice. (16:21-16:39)**

**But this book is about self-inquiry. It's about heightened self-awareness. It's about coming into your own voice, and really turning inward to find your personal power. (36:28-36:46)**

**Joel:** Hello, Kevin Hancock. How are you?

**Kevin:** Joel, my friend. It's great to see you. How are you?

[00:00:10] **Joel:** Very good. Thank you. Welcome to Joel. Fleischmann's Happy Hour Podcast, a remote version, episode number 31. I've got a Schlitz here made in Milwaukee.

**Kevin:** I've got a Stella in my hand, cheers.

[00:00:24] **Joel:** Cheers. We're making it through this. So, I often start podcasts by a) Who are you a little bit, and you're probably good at your elevator speech, but then what's our connection? How do we know each other? So do you want to take both of those?

**Kevin:** Sure. It will be my pleasure. So, you and I, of course, connected in the lumber in the industry. I'm in Maine and our company Hancock Lumber is one of the oldest family businesses in America. The company goes back to 1848 and I'm part of the sixth generation of my family to work for the company. I'm the CEO, we're an integrated forest products company. So we own timber land, and we grow trees. And then we have sawmills, and we manufacture lumber that we distribute throughout North America and the world. And then in Maine and New Hampshire, we've got a series of contractor lumber yards, and we've got about 600 people at the company. And I've known you now for a long time, it feels like, in a great way, just because of the amazing, innovative people oriented lumber company that you help lead. So a little bit about me and a little bit about how we've been connected. Yeah.

**Joel:** And for those of you, I'm assuming one or two people will be watching this from Maine at some point. So a little bit about me and our company is yeah, we go back. I think we might've met when our team leadership team is on a round table, or was on a round table, we're no longer part of that. But we met through that company through that firm, as we got to know each other and yeah, it's got to go back 10 years. One of my favorite dinners of all time was when you had your team down in Charlotte, was that North Korea was that New Orleans?

**Kevin:** We were in the Big Easy, Joel, it was a treat to be with you there, by the way.

**Joel:** That's what I thought. Yeah. My memory slips sometimes. So that's also really, it was one of my favorite all time industry dinners. I always remember that. It was a true connection. So I appreciate that we are also about 600 people. We are not fully integrated with mills, although my dad has grown some trees and sold them to a mill that we don't know for a fact came back and that we were able to use, but we'd like to think so. A small pretty big mill called Beaver lumber year in Wisconsin. But we were integrated in the fact that just like you, we have our trust plants and now recently in the last year we're doing an offsite construction, which means we provide the labor on a panelization, or we call it offsite construction and framing packages. So we're doing pre-built stairs, pre-built floors, pre-built walls with the windows in them, trusses. And we do full turnkey framing packages. And we are taking it from foundation through the top of the roof, including the windows and for days on many homes right now. So that's kind of the innovative stuff we're doing. But that's a little bit about me and our company here at Drexel.

So welcome on, we could talk about a lot of things. A little bit I want to talk about is you've written some books, you've done some things. A lot of it goes back and just so people know they're not trying to adjust their audio is that you do have a voice influx or it's a, is it a disease? Is that what you call it?

[00:04:04] **Kevin:** Yeah. Well I have a little-known neurological disorder called [spasmodic dysphonia](#), which I acquired back in 2010 at the peak of the national housing and mortgage market collapse. I'm convinced it was stress induced Joel, but it's turned out to be one of the biggest blessings of my life. So what started as a liability or figuratively, just a pain in the neck that made speaking difficult actually ended up bringing me a lot more deaths than it took away.

**Joel:** Oh, isn't that wonderful. Are you familiar with Inky Johnson? Do you know Inky? He was on a path to the NFL. And I know you're a sports guy as well. He played for the University of Tennessee. He was a first-round draft pick. Mom raised him, classic sad story of the mom, no dad, and just worked everybody on, hustled, small guy, 5'10". And he only had about three games left, and he said, "Mom, I made it". And he got hit real hard in a game and he lost, he couldn't use his arm. And he gives this speech saying, "No offense doctor, but I'm playing in the NFL". And they're like, no, you're not. And he was a very God facing guy, very spiritual. And he said, "I get it, God, I got you". And he's like, "God, you have bigger plans for me. I'm not supposed to be in the NFL, but I'm supposed to go help people". And he's a wonderful motivational and public speaker.

So when you said that, I thought of Inky because I just love that. We think we know what the spirit of the Lord sends us or what our vision quest is, as you might say, but sometimes, you know, there's bigger plans, right? The plans we don't know are even bigger so that I'm glad you started that way. A couple of things I want to talk about is where are you guys? I mean, I haven't talked about the pandemic and COVID on my podcast in six months, which feels great, but I do have to bring it up because we've had some crazy interesting news in the last seven days. Where are you guys at in Maine? Are you pretty much open for business, mask-free, normalcy if you will, or where are you guys out?

**Kevin:** We're almost there. Maine actually somehow has the highest vaccination rate in the nation, we've done really well that way. And we're within days of ending all of the masking requirements, which I know the people in our company are really excited about. It's been a

long time coming, and super hard of course on many people, in many ways, and many industries. And the lumber business has been fortunate to be one of those industries that ended up getting busier as a result of the pandemic. So many industries of course just went the other way. So we've been fortunate.

**Joel:** You are masked at work right now?

**Kevin:** Only inside our stores, everything outdoors in Maine now is unmasked. All our manufacturing facilities are unmasked. But public in the stores, we're still wearing masks.

[00:07:49] **Joel:** Yeah. Big, bad Drexel, we did not follow our state mandate and we only masked up if the client requested it. So we were masked at work for about three hours, and I read our governor's mandate that said the government employees and the government's office were exempt from wearing a mask. And I said, well, if they're exempt, we're exempt, and we went fully exempt from that three hours on. So a little leadership tool, if you give people really bad news once a year and then give them really good news three hours later, they tend to love you and adore you for a little bit. So I said, I'm gonna, I'm gonna give them really bad news, like we're wearing full suits and ties to work on a Friday, and I'll just reverse my decision on Monday. And then, you know, it'll look like I made a really good decision.

But interesting on that front, how are lead times issued by you guys? I can maybe speak first. I Joist is our number one hang up. We literally don't have enough. We're probably getting about 80% to 70% of what we need on any given week. Not nearly enough to survive this. So we're switching people over to the floor truss, it's making them wait, we're bringing a 3 1/2" flange and a much higher price point. That's our number one. Cabinets now are 12 to 14 weeks. And many other things, siding, lumber, everything's been tough. But I joist, for the first time ever, we had to tell clients we can't get your house started on time. I've never had to do that before in 30 years. How about you guys?

**Kevin:** Yeah, similarly wait times have expanded pretty dramatically in a variety of product categories. But really at the end of the day, one thing I love about our industry is it's always in flux. It's never the same in our industry. To be successful in our industry, you've got to be pliable and adaptable. And so everybody in the supply chain are builders, they're customers. And ourselves, we've just adjusted our planning process. So really it just comes down to communication. Everybody gets on the same page, you can make these lead times work. You kind of always have two choices. You can kind of complain about what's going on, or you can just roll up your sleeves and try to adapt and get good at what's actually going on.

**Joel:** Are you talking about your voice, or are you talking about the industry? Have you always been this positive? Were you born that way out of the womb? Did you have a light bulb moment? Was it something that just comes with wisdom? And as the stoics would say, like Marcus Aurelius, I know you just read a lot and you continue to learn and become more positive. Or what do you base your positivity on? And have you always been like that or was there some story behind your positivity? Cause even, I think I'm the most positive guy in the industry and then I talk to you, "it's just communication because we're always in flux". And that was exactly what I needed to hear today, so thank you.

[00:11:20] **Kevin:** Well, it's a great question. I mean, I've always been positive, but I think I'm more positive over time, but the root of it, Joel, is really interesting. I've really become very focused on what I can control. What I can control. And I've really tried to not exert my energy on all those things I cannot control. And when I found that, when I oriented myself that way, my life got a lot easier. So I really do not get caught up in things I can't influence, and I try to put my energy into what I can't influence. I wouldn't say I'm a perennial optimist. I just tend to always see the good in people and I tend to see the good in situations. I wouldn't say I'm naive, because I know there's a lot of difficulties, lots of challenges in this world, lots of things that aren't what they shouldn't be. But I do tend to wake up and see the opportunities and the light or focus on the light more so than the darkness.

[00:12:49] **Joel:** That's awesome. That's awesome. That is really good. I think everybody can own that. So 'control the controllables' is a wonderful thing. I have very few things posted in my office, and one of them is, 'control the controllables'. So I will say that you are probably one of the only people in the world that helped to lead a 600 person organization in a somewhat vertically integrated building supply company. So we're two pieces, you know, in a close pod. And so thank you for those wise words. Having said that, I'm amazed every day and I just told that to somebody else, it's amazing that our company, and, you know, when I started, we had about eight people and these days, how little influence I can have. I can have the best idea in the world, in my opinion, to change something. Because I was mowing the lawn on a Saturday morning, but this is it. And how difficult, rightfully so, I shouldn't be waving my magic wand and people waiting for me to dictate to them, but it is interesting, I think people think that you and I probably have more authority to do what we want within our organization. And I know how you guys are set up that you probably do too. Right? I mean, it's very difficult to start the vision and then actually lead it and do it overnight. Probably like you used to, I assume, like myself, when you were much younger and probably be much more naive. Is that correct?

**Kevin:** Yeah. Yes. I love that topic. Joel, my voice condition really reoriented my leadership approach. Prior to that, I was very much a traditional leader. I was at every meeting, presiding over conversations, first to arrive and last to go. And then suddenly I got hit with this disorder, which was much worse then, and I couldn't really talk. And when you think about it, if you're a CEO, what's your tool. It's your voice. And suddenly I couldn't use that. So what do you do when you can't talk? Well, it gets really simple. You listen.

And my big skill for protecting my voice that I acquired was to reverse a question. So if you'd asked me a question, I knew I was going to be able to give an answer. So start saying simply this, Joel, that's a great question. What do you think we should do about it? That was my approach around the company once I acquired my voice condition. After doing that for months, something really struck me. People already knew what to do. They didn't actually need direction from me 99% of the time to begin with. They knew what to do. What they really needed was the courage, and confidence, and the safety, and culture, to trust their own voice. That's when I fundamentally changed how I thought about leadership. And I said, you know, historically leadership has been about collecting power into the center, but what I'm going to do is push it back out, distribute power, share leadership. What if we create a work culture where everybody leads, which is really how it is done. And every voice was leaving the company. Once I flipped that script, my job got a lot simpler. It was to keep promoting that approach, that culture, honoring voice. Leadership got easier because everybody was doing it.

And the performance of our company took off. This was the other cool part. We just started doing better. And so counter-intuitively, the less time I was doing as the CEO, the better we performed. Really when you think about it, it makes perfect sense because everybody in our company, every single person at Hancock Lumber knows their specific job better than I do. And to really try to create a culture where it's safe for people to just go make decisions, trust their own voice, lead, that's when work and leadership started to get really fun for me and different and really, too, it's not just about building a better business, it's really about advancing humanity. Because what you do in that case is you're really helping everybody in your company self-actualize, come into their own voice, gain power. And those are not the lumber things, of course, those are life things.

[00:18:11] **Joel:** Yeah, I mean, I just was listening. Yeah, for sure. When I'm at my very best at meetings, these old big ears God gave me, I'm just listening and I'm helping them speak their true voice and guiding the conversation if I need to, a few potential coaching moments. But when I'm at my best, I'm pretty quiet in the room. Again, the opposite of what you think, as people think so wise words. You have a few things, I think at some point in your life and I don't know, even since I've known you, I feel you have found a higher calling to literally attempt in some way out of Maine the United States, the state of Maine, to change humanity's leadership style. So there's a couple of things that we want to touch on besides just the lumber industry. I, at this point in my life, I'm 47, I'm trying to get smaller. You're trying to get broader. It's just a calling, which I adore.

So I'm trying to be a microscope. You're trying to be a telescope. So you have a website, you have a weekly email that I filed. You have a book coming out. This will be your third book. Is that right? I hope so. Cause I read the other two. I really enjoyed books. You led me down a path recently or somebody did, but I've read a whole bunch on the Black Elks. I've always been called to some degree, before I met you, to native Americans and specifically the Lakota. And then I met you and I'm like, are you kidding? There's another guy like that? And I've learned a lot about that culture, which is super unique. But I don't know what I know. This is like, it's kind of your opportunity to roll out some of your humanity issues. And, you know, we brought you on here to get a bigger voice here in Wisconsin. And the other four people that are listening to this podcast, maybe five.

[00:20:14] **Kevin:** You've touched on the Black Elk and the Lakota tribe. Shortly a couple of years after I acquired my voice disorder, I began traveling from Maine out to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in the southwest corner of South Dakota, which is the biggest, poorest, most historically disenfranchised of the Sioux reservations on Northern Plains. It's a place I've now been to over 20 times. There I met an entire community that felt as if a piece of their voice had been taken or marginalized. And I put my own experience together with theirs and said, wow, there are lots of ways for humans to lose some of their voice in this world, their authentic self. And then I got thinking about leadership and probably across history leaders have done more to limit and restrict and direct the voices of others than liberate them or free them.

And that's when I had this epiphany that my own voice conditioned wasn't a liability, it was actually an invitation and a gift to try to create a different leadership model because this was something I couldn't just think about, I was running a company as a CEO and I could actually take these ideas and deploy them, which I'd spent an entire decade doing and saw what it did to our performance, but most importantly to the employee experience as defined by the

employees. So having done that, I'm now really trying to invest some energy and spread that leadership approach, that distributed power approach which I've been building out as you referenced through my website, which is called simply [thebusinessofsharedleadership.com](http://thebusinessofsharedleadership.com). And I really believe in the 21st century, the aquarian age, this is the age of distributed power. Think about it. Literally think about how energy was created and how it's going to be created. Think about the internet, think about the access to information that all humans have. We're really, I believe, wanting to move into an age of shared leadership, but our leaders who have control of institutions have been slow to adapt. We're still too often stuck in that old 'collect the power to the center' mode. This is where the disenfranchisement, I believe it's coming from. Because humanity is wanting something different. Everyone is wanting to commit to their own voice and answering this for me, Joel, is what I talk about as the higher calling of business. I mean, we're really in the lumber, but that's not our mission. We're really into logistics, but that's not our mission.

Our mission is to help everybody in our company come into their own true voice. And this might sound corny or idealistic or oversimplified, but how does humanity advance? It advances one human at a time. So where does that work take place? It's got to take place, not on TV, not in a distant capital. It's got to take place on a local level and where adults hang out. They hang out at work, adults work. So the place of work is actually, I think, a bit of a hidden prime conduit for advancing humanity, but it takes thinking a bit differently about the highest mission of a place of business.

[00:24:46] **Joel:** Yeah, absolutely. I mean, our mission, we say, is the supply happiness and you know, we talk about serving and loving and caring and yeah, I mean, I've said many things that I say when we do our shoe, which is our first day at Drexel supply happiness university. And I get the first hour to meet our newbies, we talk about having fun at work quite a bit. Which a little bit is about having your own voice. Why are we taught in our society that you can't have fun at work? You're going to be there 2000 hours a year, 10,000 hours in five years. You know, it's just bonkers that again, you said it's almost a hidden gem. We try to get better, maybe physically, emotionally, spiritually, but then work is work. Work is work. And in our industry specifically I think nationally, you know, we grew up with work hard play hard, which really just meant work 90 hours a week. And then once in a while, a party, instead of sleep. I actually came around. I used to actually say that a lot, 'work hard, play hard'. That's the Drexel culture. And somebody said, it's actually a culture killer. Work hard, play hard. It's actually true. It's like work up to the point of burnout, and they just have a bunch of beers. I get that. It is so true. People having a voice.

You know, I go back to even sports and how you were a basketball coach at one point in your life. And I was too. And, you know, it's so important to give that why behind it, that action and that benefit and to be a listener because when somebody buys into what they do and what I think God uniquely made them to do, and they find that right career path and that right vocation, and that could be sawing for you in a mill that could be building a truss, that can be doing anything, but your why is so much more important. I think the leadership comes down to a) how we're taught, you know, that always goes back to something there. I think you loosely mentioned it, but I do think it goes down to power and control. I think there's a fear of letting go. I really haven't referenced the pandemic in six months, but I even see that right now. Well, you know, if I let you guys all unmask and if I take care, no one's gonna need me anymore. We're back to normal. My power's gone. And I hate to use that. Cause I know it's a very hot topic and I know that makes me sound insensitive, but there's power in the control of

a leader. And you've been through that in 2010. I've been through that at some point in my life. I know you have done, I'm sure too. I have many leaders that have had darn near mental breakdowns because of that less leadership. They'll grow into their position. They'll form a team around them as our company has grown and all of a sudden, they realize they don't have day to day duties and tasks. And then it's the opposite of what most people think they feel useless. They don't think because they're not hard driving, running every meeting, running every topic, having every idea that now, Hey, I'm useless. And I'm like, no, you're the best version of yourself. This is kind of fun, and it shouldn't be, and I'm like, no. I do think you're actually empowering two people when you have your mission, Kevin, it's the leaders because I'm sure you know a lot of business owners and leaders like I do and spouses and families, and a lot of them have burned out and are not in a good place mentally. So the leaders burn themselves out, not knowing that. And I had a guy named Ken Wilbanks, you probably know Ken a little bit, industry stalwart. You know, he sat me down over a glass of scotch one night. He said, you know, you're really running hot. You're really a hot guy, you know? And I'm like, I got my Superman cape on. I'm like, yes, I am. I'm the hardest working guy in the industry. And he said it real slow in a Southern drawl and said, you know, but you're singeing everybody around you. You're burning so hot. You're burning everybody you touch. And he was absolutely right looking back. And that was quite a few years ago. And you know, you just got to calm down.

**Kevin:** Yeah, I love everything that you talked about, Joel. Another thing I think about is really for leaders, it's about transcending ego. When I was younger, I couldn't distinguish between myself and my role, like how I evaluated myself to perform in my role. And that's a really terrible trap, it's a selfish trap. And my voice woke me up from it. Our company is way bigger than me, and it's not about me and once you're able to come into your own identity and lose the ego in your role, the role gets so much simpler. It's just about helping people at that point, helping to set the right tone, the right culture, make it safe, make it comfortable. And then you just, I don't want to say, get out of the way, but it's close.

You know, it really comes down to trust and I do think we're all tired of bringing up the COVID examples, but I think it's a really powerful one. I mean, how does a virus spread? It spreads one human at a time. So no matter how many central government officials make pronouncements about COVID, what's it come down to? Individual human judgment, individual human responsibility. Fighting a virus is the ultimate endeavor in dispersed power. That virus moves one human at a time. And it is just so much easier to trust people than to not trust them and to feel like you need control because there can't be trust. It's just not a winning path, it's so much easier to trust. And when you place trust, what was the quote I saw the other day that I loved. "The best way to learn to trust is to trust", that you just take that leap. And I can't remember the last time I was disappointed at work because I trust it. I literally could not come up with a single example. I trust everybody at our company.

**Joel:** Right. And if you don't, somebody has had a conversation with them, we maybe just didn't hire the right person at the right time for Hancock Lumber. Right. I mean, that's just that, you know, and I go back to the virus. I think that control thing was so important that we learned as a society. And I think in 2021, it makes it much worse than even a hundred years ago or 500 years ago, is that we think we are in control as humans. Now we have all the science, we have all the computers, we have all the technology, we have all the knowledge, we will stop this virus. We can do it. And we're not in charge of this crazy circle spinning around. And the more we tried, the more we looked foolish, didn't we? Right? I mean, the

more we really did you know, even when I said follow the science and I'm like, well, which science, what science people are just trying to be in control of the virus. And again, it's human interaction one at a time, there's things that are just completely out of our control.

But Kevin, we're going to run out of time real soon and we even talked about any of your books. I'm a horrible podcast interviewer here, because I'm supposed to be promoting your books. I listen to enough pods, you know, we got to work that angle. So I'll just be blunt. We gotta, I got to get to your books. You've got a book coming up. So tell me about your three books and I'm really excited about your third book. I've read all three of your books or two of your books. I loved your first one the most, but you know, that spoke most to me, but go tell me about your books.

[00:32:58] **Kevin:** Sure. So my first book came out in 2015. It's titled [Not for Sale: Finding Center in the Land of Crazy Horse](#) and that Chronicles my first six trips to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation when I was really kind of spiritually searching for my voice in a place where lots of people didn't feel heard. Then last year, but the second book came out. I have a copy here. This is what's called [the Seventh Power: One CEO's Journey to the Business of Shared Leadership](#), and it's a bit of a travel learning book. It starts on the Navajo reservation, chapter one in Arizona and ends in Kiev, in the Ukraine, and seven stops, seven lessons about distributing power and sharing leadership.

**Joel:** From your perspective, your actual non-fiction true story perspective, right?

**Kevin:** Correct. Right. Correct.

**Joel:** I never leave this county that I live in Wisconsin, so I was so jealous reading the book. It was like a reality show. I was trying to look through you. If I traveled 30 miles, I feel like I went on a journey. So it was great.

[00:34:25] **Kevin:** Yeah, my third book just came up for presale on Amazon last week, it's called [48 Whispers From Pine Ridge and Northern Plains](#), and it's a collection of photographs I took on the planes accompanied by meditations, short meditations on a page, each one's 248 words, I play off the number 48 because Black Elk was guided on his great vision by the 48 courses of the four directions. And so I play off that number, but this book is about self-inquiry. It's about heightened self-awareness. It's about coming into your own voice, and really turning inward to find your personal power. You change the world first within you, that reverberates to the people beside you, and that ultimately impacts the world beyond you. But in a chaotic world where there's so much external distraction on TV, on social media, and politically, this book is about giving you back into yourself and recognizing that you are the light, and you are the path that you are your power and you have your own personal mission to find and follow. And that the world changes when we change ourselves from within. That's what this book really is designed to honor.

**Joel:** They're your pictures?

**Kevin:** Correct. I took every picture with a \$200 Camera that fits in my front pocket, it drives my mom crazy. Cause she's got like this \$5,000 and mine was just a little thing I stick in my pocket.



**Joel:** I agree. These are even more powerful. *\*shows iPhone\**

**Kevin:** They're becoming that way. Yeah, exactly.

[00:36:48] **Joel:** That's great. You know, a couple of observations on that, you know, you mentioned it and when you were saying it, I was going there. Be the light of the world. I say that often. Right? So that's in the Bible. I say that many times, be the light of the world and you were saying that like, and then I often go back to Mother Teresa of just saying, Hey, she said do it in the smallest waves to make the biggest impact. So again, you're going a bit broader, which I love, because everyone's called differently. And I read Mother Teresa and I like to change the world, open a door for somebody. Do the smallest detail, littlest things, and that'll make the biggest impact. Because the person who opened the door for you made them smile and made their day better, they went to work in a better mood and that changed somebody else's life. And if you have one human at a time, as you would say, right, and empowering those people to be the best version of themselves.

[00:37:40] **Kevin:** So, on that note, Joel, I get that topic in the book. If you look across all the world's great religions or spiritualities of indigenous faith, this truth shows up time and time again, the one you're speaking to. Gandhi said it as well, become the change you wish to see. It shows up in every faith. That is the path, but it's so easy to get stuck in what's out there. I worked with a really cool spiritual friend from Palo Alto, Stanford, he's right out of central casting. She's perfect. But she always tells me, Joel, she says, get back in your body and stay there. And so I'm really focused, you asked me about this earlier, once you acquire that orientation, the tire world changes. I can see the chaos. I can see the problems. I can see the change that's required, but where can I go with that? I can only go within and try to become something different. If I change, that is how the world changes. Once you realize that, everything starts to liberate, and clarity comes in and it's actionable.

**Joel:** And don't add to the noise. You don't need to add to the busy-ness and the noise of the world. It's the opposite. That's the devil speak. That's the evil forces, whatever you want to call it, that's the confusion in the world right now. We're trying to get better and we're trying to read self-help books. I got to do this and my kids gotta be in youth programs. And I got to do this better at work. And I gotta get back to meet this guy and lead times, and I got to take care of this problem and go to all my meetings and no. And now you're a better version of yourself. It's really contradictory to anything that you think. So I appreciate it. Well, I can talk to you forever. I'll give you the floor for a minute. If you have a question for me or something you want to wrap up with, or I have a question for you to close. So you have the floor. What did we miss? And in a few short minutes here.

[00:40:06] **Kevin:** What I really want to do is say thank you to you. I have been inspired by you since the first time I met you because of your authenticity and because of your independent authentic unique self. You really have self-actualized. I don't know, maybe if you realize how powerful that is to others, you just, by the way you carry yourself, give others permission to be their own unique human beings. And I've loved watching you insert those values into a big competitive growing company. So you've been nice to have me today. You've been nice to ask me questions today, but I'm really a super big fan of yours. And I think you're amazing, exactly as you are, my friend.

**Joel:** Well, thank you very much. I really appreciate that. People have said that to me before, asked me the reason behind that and Raina, she runs a blue door coffee company that we have that gives all the profits to charity. That's part of Drexel, but it's a wonderful coffee shop. And she said, Joel, I've never met somebody who doesn't care at all. She goes, you don't care at all if Blue Door Coffee Shop closes, but I've never met somebody who cared so much because you can walk in and say, "Hey, Raina, those coffee mugs need to be moved two inches to the left". Because it's kind of a distraction to the clients. And she goes, it's amazing. But I said that's true. Maybe because I never grew up wanting to work at the lumberyard, I don't totally care. I'm always like if I do something else it's going to be okay. So not being afraid to fail, maybe, is what you feel when you feel that I'm being authentic? Like it's going to be okay if I fail. It's just who I am. But thank you very much.

Now the last question that I ask everybody, I'm really curious about your answer is we always ask if you have one giant billboard, you can put anything you want on it. It's your billboard. We've had people say a piece of art, something funny, motivational, whatever it is, your quote, somebody else's quote. What is that billboard? What are you saying to the world and why? I know what it's going to be about, probably, but I don't know what it is.

**Kevin:** I love the question. Here's what I put on it. I put a question on it, and it would simply be this. "What if everybody on earth felt trusted, respected, valued and heard, what might change?"

**Joel:** Wow. That's great. I mean, we've explored that, but do you want to expand on that a bit? Just why is that?

[00:43:00] **Kevin:** Yeah, I would answer the question, I think everything would change. If you look at the root of all human challenges, humanity's challenges, I think they stem from people not feeling respected, valued, heard and safe. That's the root of it. Everywhere you go on this planet, when we have something less than what humanity should be, for goodness sake, our leaders of organizations could orient themselves around the pursuit of that ideal. To your point, businesses will rise and fall, they'll come and go while you've got it. Use it to do something valuable. And my 'use it' is I'm going to use our company to be a place where people feel trusted, valued, respected, heard, and safe, and sure that will enhance the performance of our company, but that's the outcome of a higher calling. And I think that we need to get on to the higher callings. And when you get onto the higher callings, performance tends to take care of itself. It's just an outcome of adding value to people's lives.

[00:44:40] **Joel:** Absolutely. Well, I appreciate you so much. I love you to death, man. You're a good friend from afar. Someday I want to come out and shoot those little, as you guys would say, those little moose in Maine and Kennebunkport. But we got to do that sometime. Okay. And you taught me something really wise before we get off. I invited you somewhere to do something and you said, wouldn't that be fun? Which is one of the things I constantly always use. That is not 'we're going to do it'. And that is definitely not a no, but it's definitely not a yes. So wouldn't that be fun, Kevin? Wouldn't that be fun?

**Kevin:** That would be so much fun, Joel.

**Joel:** That's fantastic. All right. Take care of my friend.