



**Ray Edwards Show, Episode 592
Ray and Sean Spill the Beans**

[00:00:00] Announcer: Ray Edwards Show, Episode 592. Ray and Sean Spill the Beans.

[00:00:10] Announcer: The Ray Edwards Show. This is the podcast for Prosperity with Purpose.

[00:00:18] Kris Edwards: Hello, welcome to the Ray Edwards Show special edition this week because this is the return of Sean. Now if you're new to the podcast, let me explain. Sean is Ray's former co-host and current son, but a couple of years ago, Sean had to leave the podcast to focus solely on the coffee shop that he and Ray own together in Spokane, Washington. Why a couple of years ago? Hmm. Let's see what was going on. Oh, yes, the pandemic. Now that brought a lot of changes to service industry, can't work from home people and Sean and Ray are going to discuss those changes, how they got through them, how it's changed business for them. And it's a really great conversation. Recorded live in Ray's living room. All right, so let's jump in and get the story from Ray and Sean.

[00:01:02] Sean Edwards: I feel like the last time we were doing this we, we were like recording 'em at once where we like had all the sound bites and stuff and

[00:01:08] Ray Edwards: it was like doing a live radio show.

[00:01:09] Sean Edwards: It was, I mean, it was kind of fun,

[00:01:10] Ray Edwards: Now it's

[00:01:11] Sean Edwards: cause it was kinda like doing a radio show.

[00:01:12] Ray Edwards: Now we're just sitting in the living room, winging it.

[00:01:15] Sean Edwards: Times change.

[00:01:16] Ray Edwards: Yeah, Times have changed. It's the last time we've done this, so let's kind of back up. Oh, three years ish or so?

[00:01:23] Sean Edwards: Three years . I wonder how, how, how many of the people are listening do you think remember?

[00:01:30] Ray Edwards: I don't know. We have a lot of new people, so we have probably a lot of people don't even know

[00:01:35] Sean Edwards: who I am.

[00:01:35] Ray Edwards: Who you are. This is my son Sean, in case you haven't met him.

[00:01:41] Sean Edwards: Hi everyone.

[00:01:42] Ray Edwards: He's um, he's my business partner specifically in a coffee shop we purchased together in 2000 .

[00:01:47] Sean Edwards: 17.

[00:01:48] Ray Edwards: 17.

[00:01:48] Sean Edwards: Isn't that crazy?

[00:01:49] Ray Edwards: That's nuts.

[00:01:50] Sean Edwards: And I mean, and for the first two years, I was doing both. I was on the podcast with you, traveling, doing workshops, seminars, that sort of thing. And then also working the bar at the coffee shop. Um, and then the pandemic hit.

[00:02:02] Ray Edwards: Yeah.

[00:02:03] Sean Edwards: And we kind of had to

[00:02:04] Ray Edwards: divide and conquer,

[00:02:05] Sean Edwards: divide and conquer to keep things, keep things going

[00:02:08] Ray Edwards: or just divide and survive.

[00:02:10] Sean Edwards: Yeah. So I also wonder how many people on the list remember that whole, like when we first bought the shop and all of that, cuz

[00:02:16] Ray Edwards: a lot of things have happened.

[00:02:18] Ray Edwards: A lot of things have happened. Anyway. Hi. Hi, guys. Nice to, nice to, nice to talk to you again.

[00:02:23] Ray Edwards: Good to have you back on the show. told you we'd get you back here soon, three years ago.

[00:02:27] Sean Edwards: Three years ago .

[00:02:29] Ray Edwards: So here we are. It was, I mean, it was a crazy time. The pandemic, as it unfolded, I'm sure we don't have to go through this whole thing, but a lot of people had this experience of, it started happening. We were like, Well, this will be over in a week or two,

[00:02:40] Sean Edwards: two weeks, two weeks to to, to stop the, or to slow the spread to flat. Two weeks to

[00:02:44] Ray Edwards: flatten the curve

[00:02:45] Sean Edwards: curve. That's, that's what it was.

[00:02:47] Ray Edwards: So, because most of our listeners are probably operating digital businesses.

[00:02:53] Sean Edwards: Yes.

[00:02:53] Ray Edwards: Let's kinda walk through what it was like to be operating a non-digital business in a, in a state that seemed to have different policies from other states. I don't wanna get into all that. Let's just talk about what it was like

[00:03:05] Sean Edwards: from the pandemic,

[00:03:06] Ray Edwards: from the start than during it, and then

[00:03:08] Sean Edwards: Yeah,

[00:03:08] Ray Edwards: maybe we'll get to some learnings.

[00:03:09] Sean Edwards: Yeah. I mean, a lot of, A lot of it seems like a lot of businesses and a lot of jobs went virtual. Uh, they went online and I, I think that that's, you know, there's a lot of people Oh yeah.

[00:03:20] Sean Edwards: We probably wanna close that. For those of you that aren't watching the video and there is no video, so that's all of you.

[00:03:27] Ray Edwards: Yeah. None of you. If you're watching the video of this, I want to know how,

[00:03:30] Sean Edwards: how. Yeah. Fbi. Hi fbi. For those of you that aren't the fbi, Uh, we just had to close the patio door to the office

[00:03:40] Ray Edwards: Cause it's too noisy

[00:03:41] Sean Edwards: cause there was road, road noise.

[00:03:42] Sean Edwards: So yeah, a lot of businesses moved virtual and, uh, you know, there were tons of people talking about the benefits and drawbacks to that transition in business. But running a brick and mortar business, a service industry job, that was not an option. There was no virtual version of a coffee shop. I mean, you could, you could mail beans to people, but like

[00:04:00] Ray Edwards: that doesn't help people who are on their way to work or not work.

[00:04:03] Sean Edwards: Yeah, I mean,

[00:04:04] Ray Edwards: that was the whole thing too. People didn't know what to do with themselves.

[00:04:07] Sean Edwards: Yeah. So I, you know, my experience of the initial phase of the pandemic from a practical part being the service injury, I think was different from a lot of people's experience, uh, especially if you have an online digital business because instead, Instead of staying home and working from home and trying to shelter in place and stop the spread, like I, that was not an option. Like the state, our gracious overlord and benefactor allowed our particular kind of business to continue to operate in a limited capacity. And for that, we gave him many graces and alms and thanksgivings. Um,

[00:04:38] Ray Edwards: made many sacrifices.

[00:04:39] Sean Edwards: Made many sacrifices in his name and glorified his effigy and

[00:04:44] Ray Edwards: yes,

[00:04:44] Sean Edwards: and bowed down before. The God of the state,

[00:04:47] Ray Edwards: what did that look like?

[00:04:48] Sean Edwards: So, I mean, it was crazy people, people were coming into the shop. So for the first few, no one was, like it was dead. And that was really because people were freaked out like in that early, early stage of the pandemic. Uh, when the, the states were doing shelter in place orders, and I realize some states never did that, but a lot of states did. Shelter in place orders. It was freaky. You got all those like false stories of the National Guard being deployed and like shutting down grocery stores and stuff like, which didn't happen anywhere.

[00:05:16] Ray Edwards: It was.

[00:05:16] Sean Edwards: And there's always a rumor of like, Oh, the governor's gonna do this next. The governor's like,

[00:05:20] Ray Edwards: Right.

[00:05:20] Sean Edwards: Soon the, National Guards are gonna be marching through the streets, keeping people in their homes. You know, It was, it was freaky. Um, and, you know, I actually remember hearing that rumor and at that point, the rumors, there was this weird publicity cycle with the, the, everyone had figured out. Once a rumor got out, it was pretty certain, like a day or two later it was gonna happen. So there was a rumor that a shelter in place order was gonna be issued in Washington.

[00:05:43] Sean Edwards: And we didn't know what that was gonna look like. We didn't know what businesses were gonna be allowed to stay open, which ones had to completely shut down. And I remember we had, we had shut the shop down for the day, like any other normal day at that point. And I went back to Revel at night. It was dark.

[00:05:59] Sean Edwards: And I remember walking around the shop legitimately wondering if that day was the last day it would ever be open and we didn't realize it because you know, if you're gonna be forced to be closed for an indefinite period of time, and there were no stimulus packages being talked about at that point. It was just,

[00:06:14] Ray Edwards: nobody knew what they were doing at that point.

[00:06:16] Sean Edwards: No

[00:06:16] Sean Edwards: government, non-government. It's just none of was,

[00:06:19] Sean Edwards: right. It's just, it's like we're scared, so shut everything down. And it's like, well, how are we going to stay afloat if we can't even operate as a business? And so I remember that was a pretty emotional kind of visceral, surreal moment of walking around the shop and being like, Was today the last day we were open and we didn't even realize it. Fortunately that wasn't the case, but we were allowed to continue to operate in a limited capacity. We couldn't let anyone sit inside. But we could do to go orders. And so that's what we did. And so for the first few weeks, people were freaked out and also people didn't know that we were open. That's the thing that we really ran into.

[00:06:49] Sean Edwards: Everyone just assumed we were closed, and so we were blasting on social media, our email list, everything. We're open, we're open, we're open. We had our front door. I mean, it was cold, you know, we're still snowing out.

[00:06:57] Ray Edwards: Yeah,

[00:06:58] Sean Edwards: we, we opened our front door.

[00:07:00] Ray Edwards: I remember that. I remember being walking inside the shop thinking how cold it is.

[00:07:04] Sean Edwards: It was because it, we had enough people tell us, and we started, you know, as employees, we wouldn't park out front in a limited parking space because we wanted reserve that for customers. But no one, we were open. So we started parking out front and propping our front door open just so that people driving by it would catch their attention cuz the parking lots were empty. It's like, Hey, look, there's some cars in that parking lot, and it worked. And then after about a month of that man, things got nuts. It was crazy how busy we were at times. So other times it'd be dead. But I mean, other times, you know, you have 10, 12 people in line. You have the phone ringing.

[00:07:38] Ray Edwards: Yeah.

[00:07:38] Sean Edwards: You have our mobile app dinging.

[00:07:40] Ray Edwards: When did that, When did we get the mobile app? When did that start?

[00:07:42] Sean Edwards: It was actually fortuitous. We got that right before. We started that in January of 2020.

[00:07:46] Ray Edwards: Like three months before the stuff hit the fan.

[00:07:48] Sean Edwards: Yeah. So we had people saying like, Oh man, this has been so weird. This has been at home. It's been like a two month vacation or whatever. And I'm just like, I do not know what you're talking about.

[00:07:56] Ray Edwards: No, your, your workload just quadrupled and never went backward.

[00:07:59] Sean Edwards: No. Yeah. Right. And so like, I mean, we had to lay off all of our part-time staff and so it was just me and our manager at the time, Katie, we were doing single coverage. So one of us would be there from morning until about noon or one o'clock, and then the other person would show up around noon or one o'clock and close. and we were just doing that. And then one day we would each pull an all dayer to give the other person a day off. -Um,

[00:08:20] Ray Edwards: that was so crazy.

[00:08:21] Sean Edwards: It was wild. Yeah. And, and so, you know, sometimes you're dead and you don't see a customer for 45 minutes. And then, like I said, then you just get reamed. And it was, it was crazy.

[00:08:29] Sean Edwards: You know, people talking about, Oh, I just get, I'm just working at home. It's so weird.

[00:08:32] Ray Edwards: Like chilling, taking it easy.

[00:08:34] Sean Edwards: like, I don't know what you're talking about. I'm working harder than I've ever worked.

[00:08:36] Ray Edwards: Yeah. and you did. I mean, I'm quick to tell people if you had not put in that kind of Herculean effort, the shop would not have stayed open. But I don't think, maybe I'm wrong about this, but I don't feel like keeping the shop open as a like set profit, center of profit. I don't think that, I don't feel like that was your main driver. I felt like you had something else driving you to keep it going. Keep people, I mean, I know you wanted to stay in business.

[00:09:00] Sean Edwards: Yeah, I mean, I mean, initially the primary thing was to just like, we gotta keep this thing alive

[00:09:04] Ray Edwards: at first.

[00:09:05] Sean Edwards: At first. But then it became, well it became very apparent. Um, people were making comments to us very early on that it was. , this was the, like, we heard it over and over again. People saying, this is the one thing I let myself do.

[00:09:17] Sean Edwards: I go to the grocery store to get groceries and I come here, and we heard this phrase a lot. It's, it's a little taste of normalcy. Hmm. Because I think people, again, we forget, it was so long ago and there was, it got so political. You know, then there were the, that summer there were the Black Lives Matter protests and there was the election later that year. I think it's easy for a lot of us to forget what it was really like that, that first month or two.

[00:09:38] Ray Edwards: Yeah, that's why I wanted to do this little stroll down memory lane cuz it was a very surrealistic, weird time.

[00:09:44] Sean Edwards: And we all had our opinions on like, you know, politically how this should be handled and how it shouldn't be. But it was also like, we didn't really know like what was happening. Like was this virus like no more deadly than the flu or was it like really deadly? So there was a lot of uncertainty and a lot of, like, there was no testing. People didn't know.

[00:10:02] Ray Edwards: Right. We knew so little.

[00:10:03] Sean Edwards: We knew so little. We didn't know who had it, who didn't any, Anytime someone had like a sore throat or a cough, we wondered if, you know, it's like all of that.

[00:10:10] Ray Edwards: Yeah. It's like on the one hand it may be nothing. On the other hand, it may be a hoax. On the other hand, it may be we're about to become the Planet of the Apes.

[00:10:16] Sean Edwards: right. Yeah. Or like, you know, Or you're gonna kill your loved ones.

[00:10:19] Ray Edwards: Yeah.

[00:10:20] Sean Edwards: Because, you know, maybe I'm young and healthy, but you're young and healthy, but you have elderly parents.

[00:10:24] Sean Edwards: You're living with someone with a- you didn't know. So they, they would say it was a taste of normalcy. And so we just, we just drilled into that and

we just kind of plowed into that. It's like we are giving people a little taste of normalcy and we're a little beacon of hope. Like, so let's just be happy. Let's be normal.

[00:10:41] Sean Edwards: Let's smile, let's laugh, let's, let's be a place that people can go and just have a few minutes of not being in the pandemic. And it, it was so funny cuz sometimes those lines get so long and it's single coverage, like I was saying, just one person there, me or Katie. And at first it was like, I'm so sorry, we, I'm so sorry this is taking so long.

[00:11:00] Sean Edwards: I'm so sorry. You know, it took me 20 minutes to get your drink and over and over again we hear people saying, Oh, take your time. Like I've been at home. That's all I do. Like the longer you take ,

[00:11:11] Ray Edwards: the longer I can stay here,

[00:11:12] Sean Edwards: the longer I can stand here and not, and not like be in my house or my apartment.

[00:11:16] Ray Edwards: Yeah.

[00:11:16] Sean Edwards: And so people were really gracious and accommodating on that front. and so that, that was so it was, it was, it turned into kind of this like, Hey, we are giving people a little bit of normalcy and they're scared and they're afraid and we're giving them a little bit of light in kind of a dark time. We also became kind of therapists

[00:11:38] Ray Edwards: Now, say more about that. How do you mean?

[00:11:40] Sean Edwards: I mean, people were scared or they were frustrated, you know, or they, whatever. They're either afraid of the. Or they were angry and afraid of the government and how the government was responding. And I, you know, I've said this for a while now, but working at coffee shops or that industry, you're on the front lines of the culture, wherever you're at. You're getting, you're getting everyone. You're not like for us anyway. You're not just getting one side of the political spectrum or one religious group, like you're getting, everyone's coming in there and everyone's so emotionally charged. It was also funny to notice different things about human behavior where they would just assume that you agreed with them, and they would just start rattling off some grievance or fear or

[00:12:16] Ray Edwards: Right.

[00:12:17] Sean Edwards: Or conspiracy,

[00:12:18] Ray Edwards: expecting you to just say, say, yeah.

[00:12:20] Sean Edwards: And they just thought, I'd agree with them. And early on I learned you can't argue with people. That doesn't work. And so you just got really good at saying things like, Yeah, man, the world's crazy right now. Which,

[00:12:31] Ray Edwards: That's very noncommittal,

[00:12:32] Sean Edwards: noncommittal ,but someone who's just like unloading their frustration on you,

[00:12:35] Ray Edwards: You're like, Ya, damn right it is,

[00:12:36] Sean Edwards: you know, it, it seems very like affirming to their position, but you're not actually like technically agreeing with them and so

[00:12:42] Ray Edwards: that's true. I, I, I really feel this is a big point. I mean, I think a lot of us learned some valuable communication skills. During this whole time, Cause we learned something I say might set somebody off in a way I would be sorry about later.

[00:12:56] Sean Edwards: It doesn't really matter.

[00:12:57] Ray Edwards: Right.

[00:12:58] Sean Edwards: I mean that's the other thing you discovered too, is like that that was a big eye opening, kind of more on a, a broader worldview perspective, I guess for me was like convincing this person in front of me of whatever my position is isn't gonna change a thing.

[00:13:14] Ray Edwards: It doesn't help me. It doesn't help them. It doesn't help the people around me.

[00:13:17] Sean Edwards: Like, it's not gonna change the situation. It's not gonna like, it's not like, Oh, if I can convince this person who's standing in front of me, then our governor will finally listen and will stop, you know, doing the crazy things that he's doing. Like, no, like none of that, it matters. And so just putting that aside and, and realizing that I'm basically , there's no point. And you're just kind of making yourself feel a little better in the moment, but ultimately it just, It just help divides people and push people away.

[00:13:43] Ray Edwards: Yeah, and I, what I feel like I came away from that whole experience with was a real sense that people just want to be heard and seen.

[00:13:50] Sean Edwards: Yeah.

[00:13:50] Ray Edwards: And recognized.

[00:13:51] Sean Edwards: Yeah.

[00:13:52] Ray Edwards: And you don't have to necessarily agree with them, but you can say very little and they think you do.

[00:13:57] Sean Edwards: Yeah.

[00:13:57] Ray Edwards: And if you're listening, that's what really I think, feeds people.

[00:14:00] Sean Edwards: Yeah. So it was, it was primary goal, keeping the shop open. Secondary became very early on just being a place of normalcy and giving some, some people kind of some hope in a very kind of turbulent time. And then obviously things just began. Evolve from that point, Like I alluded to earlier, like the landscape emotionally just changed as the summer came in and the, the George Floyd situation happened and the, the protests, uh, began to occur and then the election was going on. Um, all of that, it was, it was a wild time.

[00:14:33] Sean Edwards: And here in Washington for a lot of that time, it was still to like, we weren't able to be at, to fully operate. There was a brief window in the summer where they, where they let us have people sit down again.

[00:14:43] Ray Edwards: Yeah.

[00:14:44] Sean Edwards: And then in the fall they shut us back down and sent us back to, to go only, and we were like that for another six or eight months. I can't remember until like well into 2021.

[00:14:54] Ray Edwards: Did you learn anything about being an operator of a small business during this time?

[00:14:59] Sean Edwards: Ah, God. I mean, it was, Yeah. I mean, I'm sure everyone who, business owner, operator has, has their own story and uh, their own things that they learned.

[00:15:09] Ray Edwards: I mean, for me, just as a, I, I, I don't feel like I was inside. I mean I was inside this cuz we talked pretty much

[00:15:16] Sean Edwards: a lot,

[00:15:16] Ray Edwards: a lot. But I mean, you were doing it and I was busy in our digital online business and it's very different worlds.

[00:15:23] Sean Edwards: Right.

[00:15:23] Ray Edwards: So what do you think some of the things are, you know, both businesses pretty well. What do you think some of the differences are for your local bricks and mortar operation, like a coffee shop. What was different for you?

[00:15:34] Sean Edwards: I mean, from a retail service industry perspective, just obviously the big thing is you gotta treat your customers well.

[00:15:40] Ray Edwards: And you can't do that through an email or an auto-responder.

[00:15:42] Sean Edwards: No, no.

[00:15:43] Ray Edwards: Cause you're face to face.

[00:15:44] Sean Edwards: You're face to face. And, but, but also on that you've gotta, you've gotta treat your employees well. There was a lot of turnover occurring in that time. And a, and a lot of different businesses and in service industries and we avoided a good bunch of that. We had our own share of turnover, but I mean, there were places still to this day, they cannot hold on to people for more than a couple months. Uh, and just churn, just people just walking off the job.

[00:16:12] Ray Edwards: I think lots of businesses have discovered we had to become better. Employers.

[00:16:17] Sean Edwards: Yeah.

[00:16:18] Ray Edwards: Because our workers were no longer willing to put up with our inadequacies in that area.

[00:16:22] Sean Edwards: Yeah. And I think, I'm not trying to tout our horn like my horn, but we, we avoided a, a portion of that, and I think it's just, Coming down from treating your employees well and making them feel respected and valued and listening to their opinion.

[00:16:38] Sean Edwards: And, uh, yeah. So we, we had some turnover. We had some, we had some personnel issues, but for the most part, we avoided a lot of that trouble, which I just chalk up to yeah, just treating your employees well, being aware of what's

going on, not trying to wear them. Encouraging them when you can, but also just being like real with them.

[00:16:58] Ray Edwards: Yeah.

[00:16:59] Sean Edwards: Just being honest about where things were, what was happening, and like not putting on like a fake veneer of Oh, everything's fine, everything's great, but also not, not also putting the burden on their shoulders, but they, they then they feel like they're in it with you.

[00:17:12] Ray Edwards: Yeah. And I, I have to tell you, I was, I learned from your approach, there are points where I would, I would be thinking about somebody working at the coffee shop and there was, they were having a problem of some kind. Well just fire that person. Let's go hire somebody else.

[00:17:26] Sean Edwards: Yeah.

[00:17:26] Ray Edwards: And you were, you seemed so patient with people in so many instances where you would talk through it with them and work with them to help them overcome some particular challenge they were having. And I think that's one of the reasons we had people stick with us while other people had so much turnover. Cuz you cared you, I mean, you honestly, you didn't just say you cared, you did things that proved you did care.

[00:17:46] Sean Edwards: Yeah. Yeah. And I mean, thank, Thank you. Thank you for that. Yeah. And we did, I mean, there were a couple instances where your advice probably would've been wise. There were some issues with some people where I, I walked through a lot and was very patient with them, and shouldn't have been, but

[00:18:01] Ray Edwards: Yeah. But I mean, I gotta tell you, if you're gonna make an error, I, I really believe I've come to believe in the, the power of error on the side of compassion.

[00:18:07] Sean Edwards: Yeah. So I, I feel like I just got better in that, in that period of also sacrificing for a greater vision. Like that, that's kind of a theme that developed too, was like, Well, what's more important here? That, that I vent my frustration or that the shop succeeds? You know, it's like what's more important here that I get my day off? Or that the business stays open?

[00:18:33] Ray Edwards: And you begin to see the interconnectedness of all that cuz you realize, well who cares if the business stays open? Well, the employees care.

[00:18:39] Sean Edwards: Employees care.

[00:18:40] Ray Edwards: Our regular customers care.

[00:18:41] Sean Edwards: Right.

[00:18:41] Ray Edwards: Our families care.

[00:18:42] Sean Edwards: Right.

[00:18:43] Ray Edwards: There's, if you pull the plug on a business, you pull the plug on a lot of people.

[00:18:47] Sean Edwards: Yeah. Because I mean, back up a step, one of the things that's, that happened there during all that craziness is there was just a lot of exhaustion and frustration at times. You know, employees, it was just, I just got done singing their praises, but employees getting sick, employees needing time off, employees, whatever.

[00:19:05] Ray Edwards: Many of us were ill-equipped to deal with the anxiety and the uncertainty

[00:19:09] Sean Edwards: Yes.

[00:19:09] Ray Edwards: Of everything that was going on. And then every, all, all the emotional triggers were like pumped up a hundred times their normal feeling size, if that makes any sense. Like the amount of anger and frustration we dealt with was magnitudes larger.

[00:19:22] Sean Edwards: Yeah.

[00:19:22] Ray Edwards: And it, I think it wore on all of us. And that's what you were seeing.

[00:19:25] Sean Edwards: Yeah, and it was, And it's so easy for me personally at times to be like, Oh my God, don't you realize I have to deal with enough? Like just do your job,

[00:19:39] Ray Edwards: and that that works until you try to apply it to yourself from a position outside and maybe slightly elevated above you where somebody, I had people I was going to expressing some of my feelings and I realized, Oh, and they feel that way about me. They're like, Ray , I got enough stuff. Why don't you just deal with your stuff and and move on?

[00:19:56] Sean Edwards: Yeah. And so it just became, it's like, okay, what do, what do I want here do is do I, do I want the short term emotional release of getting, of like expressing my frustration or burning my team out? Or do I want this place to succeed? And just kind of

[00:20:11] Ray Edwards: long term.

[00:20:12] Sean Edwards: Yeah, long term and just kind of, Obviously you can't do that forever, but there's a certain amount of like, okay, I'm willing, like am I willing to continue to kind of die to myself to make this thing work? And that that develops a certain, I feel like that develop, I think, I think it develops a certain amount of, It forces you to approach things differently. Um, yeah.

[00:20:32] Ray Edwards: So how, how do you think we're approaching things differently with Revel 77 in particular? By the way, that's the name of our coffee shop.

[00:20:38] Sean Edwards: Revel 77 Coffee.

[00:20:40] Ray Edwards: Spokane, Washington,

[00:20:41] Sean Edwards: Spokane, Washington. It's a good one.

[00:20:43] Ray Edwards: You should come by and get some coffee.

[00:20:44] Sean Edwards: Absolutely. You should.

[00:20:45] Ray Edwards: So how do you, how do you feel that you're, you look at the business and the future of the business, as we think about what we do next, how do you approach that differently than you did in 2019, for example? Do you have a different perspective or vision for the future or what you're trying to accomplish?

[00:20:58] Sean Edwards: Yeah, absolutely. I mean, I feel like there's, there's definitely things that we've learned over the last few years about what needs to change in order to be successful. There's also just a different way of doing things. The pandemic made me have to get better at just making hard decisions of like unpleasant decisions of like, well, our hours need to change, and that's gonna be hard for people cuz it's gonna screw up their schedules. It's gonna either take hours away from them or it's going to add hours. And it's like, well it doesn't matter. Like I, I think it was really easy for me before the pandemic, and it's still a temptation now to be like, Well, I don't wanna up, I don't want to cause undue burden on my staff. So instead of making these decisions that they might find frustrating. Um, I would kind of back off the decision and not do it. Now I'm just like, you know what, it doesn't matter. Like this needs to happen. And it might sound silly. Some people listening are like, Well, yeah, you gotta make hard decisions. But in

the moment when you're working with these people every day and you're, you are, you do feel like your back's up against the wall a little bit. Like, it's like, well, if they quit, it's hard to hire people right now. Like you do feel a little backed into the corner a little bit.

[00:22:01] Ray Edwards: Yeah. If I, if I, this person quits or if I let them go, that creates a real ongoing problem we have to deal with right now.

[00:22:08] Sean Edwards: And then personally, me too, because it's like, okay, I can, I can offload some of those shifts to, to our other employees, but not all of them, which means I'm gonna have to pick up some of those and it's, anyway, so just learning that at the end of the day, it's like you've gotta make the right decision for the business and, and try to navigate that as well. So I just feel like I'm better at just making the decision. Be like, Okay, we need to do this. And one of those being, um, you asked about the vision of the business is we need to roast our own coffee. Like that's in order for us to really succeed, that's become a majorly apparent to me over the course of the last couple years.

[00:22:43] Ray Edwards: Okay. So a lot of people listening who are not in the coffee business are probably thinking right now. Why? What? Why's that? Why is that a big deal?

[00:22:49] Sean Edwards: Or they probably might be wondering, like, I thought you were, you own a coffee shop. Like some people just assume that if we've run into that, that if you have a coffee shop, you are roasting and we aren't. There are a lot of coffee shops that don't. They get their beans from other roasters, and that's what we've been doing up to this point. And there's a place for. But you need to roast, uh, for margin reason. It just gives you better margin on your product. You, you're able to make more money.

[00:23:15] Sean Edwards: And a coffee business is a small margin game. I don't think people realize, not just coffee, but restaurants, bars, breweries. You, you may go into them and they may seem really busy. You may be like, Oh wow, this place is doing really well,

[00:23:29] Ray Edwards: but it costs money to be doing that well.

[00:23:31] Sean Edwards: It costs a lot of money. And then it's like, they might be busy in that moment, but are they busy all the time? And I think that's another thing, you know, we get, we get people coming into the shop saying, Oh wow, you guys are really busy, must be doing really well. And you wanna be like, Yeah, thanks, it's, it's great. But you also realize, well there are also several hours throughout the day were like, we get one or two customers, you know, like in that time period.

[00:23:54] Ray Edwards: Yeah.

[00:23:54] Sean Edwards: And so it, it all there, all that's say restaurants, coffee shops. I don't think people realize just how thin margins they can operate on. And so anything you can do to, to widen your margin you need to do. And pretty much anyone who's been a success in the coffee game, I've noticed roast their own coffee. So we need to do that. But we are, do not really have a space that can facilitate that well. Uh, it was not, the shop was not built out to roast. It doesn't have the infrastructure to do it. And so there just came a point a few months ago, four, three months ago, where I was like, Well, I'm looking at the numbers.

[00:24:28] Sean Edwards: I'm just looking at everything. It's like, Hey, we gotta do this. I've been twiddling my thumbs trying to figure out a solution, and so I just went out and, and got a couple of, I, I just, I. Hired a contractor to chop up our counter to move some sinks around. Um, uh, decided to, to buy this new kind of coffee roasting technology that's not really widespread but is, is cheaper and smaller.

[00:24:50] Sean Edwards: Throw it in the back of the shop and like, well, we're just gonna figure this thing out cuz we have to. And, um, we have, and we're, we're, we're, we're making roasts down there. We're not fully roasting our own stuff yet, uh, we're still experimenting, trying to figure it all out,

[00:25:04] Ray Edwards: but once we get our roast perfected, you'll have an opportunity to sample it. Cuz I mean, let's, I gotta be honest, the coffee shop fuels the intellectual firepower of the digital online business cuz caffeine. It's kind of like the spice in dune.

[00:25:22] Sean Edwards: Well, I mean, coffee shops for, for centuries,

[00:25:24] Ray Edwards: Yeah.

[00:25:25] Sean Edwards: Have been the place where people go and discuss intellectual things

[00:25:29] Ray Edwards: and develop philosophies, develop political agendas, develop revolutions.

[00:25:34] Sean Edwards: Yeah.

[00:25:35] Ray Edwards: Mathematical theorems. I mean really. Coffee shop. If you have a problem in your life, you should come to the coffee shop.

[00:25:41] Sean Edwards: I mean, yeah, they, they, they offer, as Howard Schultz of Starbucks likes to say, it's a third space and it really is. It's one of the things I love about working in the coffee shop is the customers and the people coming in, getting to know them and, and offering them a space to, to live their li like to live a part of their life. That

is, I don't, we've all experienced it. You go in, you, like, you wanna read or journal or sit down with a friend, Where do you go? You go to a coffee shop, like

[00:26:08] Ray Edwards: Yeah, I mean it's kind of the spirit. It's a different kind of business. It's a bar, but on the TV show, Cheers. The title, the theme song was you want to go where everybody knows your name.

[00:26:18] Sean Edwards: Yeah.

[00:26:18] Ray Edwards: And for a lot of people this is like that.

[00:26:20] Sean Edwards: And I've often said that, uh, we as a baristas working in a cafe, you are like daytime bartenders, but you don't have to deal with drunks, U-usually, usually you don't have to deal with drunks, . Uh, but I mean, that's what happens. People come in, they talk, you get to know them. That's, that's one of my favorite parts about the business is, is you have these regulars and they come in and you laugh and you joke with them, and then, you know, they tell you about what's going on in their life and you get to know 'em and, and it just gets, you know, it gets real. And then they have a place to come with their friends and their family. And so, Yeah, it's, it's a lot of fun. But in order to be successful, so for Revel, Revel needs to roast and our current space is not really built out for that. We've, I made some, some cowboy decisions to , to kind, uh, to rework the space a little bit.

[00:27:09] Ray Edwards: Shooting from the hip.

[00:27:10] Sean Edwards: Yeah. Kind of shooting from the hip, you know, shoestring this thing jury rigging, the whole gorilla warfare kind of figuring this out cuz we're, we're not space-wise, equipped for it, but we're making it work. And um, so right now we're trying to get that going and I'm excited about that. Uh, it's just another aspect of the coffee business that's exciting. You get to, you get more creative control of your product.

[00:27:33] Ray Edwards: Yeah. And then simultaneously we're working on the digital marketing side of things with social media and. Reworking some copy ideas, like as we talk about roasting, we started thinking about maybe we sell special blend of coffee, like for the, for the copywriting community we have online.

[00:27:48] Sean Edwards: Yeah, absolutely. We think about things like that, so, Well cuz we've had, I mean, when we first bought the shop, we had people asking us, Hey, we'd love to buy some coffee from you guys.

[00:27:55] Ray Edwards: And of course, I mean, as marketers we realize, people ask us for a products, what what should we do? We should ignore them and go do something else.

[00:28:00] Sean Edwards: Yeah. Well, I mean, but part of the, part of the problem that we ran into, well I ran into was that, well, I mean, we are not, it's not our coffee. It's someone else's coffee.

[00:28:09] Ray Edwards: Yeah.

[00:28:10] Sean Edwards: And so it's like, yeah, they could buy someone else's coffee from us, but it, it just, it seemed, it's like, or you could buy it from them, like, and probably get it for cheaper .

[00:28:22] Ray Edwards: Yeah. So there's that whole ethical dilemma, but soon we'll have our own roast. So chances are we'll send you an opportunity to get some coffee from us.

[00:28:31] Sean Edwards: Yeah, so that's, that's, that's fun. It's also a challenge

[00:28:35] Ray Edwards: I think that illustrates for anybody though, who runs a bricks and mortar business is you, you know this already. If you're still in operation and you were back in 2019, you're still here now. You've learned a lot of this yourself already, and yet I'm continuously reminded of other things that other businesses did during the pandemic that helped them, that I, I'd look in or I hear their story on a podcast I think, Oh, we could probably do something like that in our own business. So I love sharing these ideas and thoughts like this just to kinda get the juices stirring. If you've got a local business, don't write off the digital marketing stuff. Don't, don't write off what you've learned maybe about recurring memberships. Find a way to make that work. Like there's, there's a lady, uh, Mary-Claire Fredette that is somebody I met through Stu McLaren. She has a membership training for massage therapists to teach them how to develop their own membership program, so that they have, you know, maybe their 30 or 40 regular clients who pay them every month like clockwork on automated billing. They don't have to think about it. They just schedule their massages. So she's helped a lot of therapists who otherwise would suffer, you know, feast or famine, dips and peaks and valleys and their income. Now they've got it stabilize because they learned from somebody else who did it themselves, how to set up a system that provides them regular recurring income. So just different ideas, I think a lot of us were forced to adopt during that whole crazy time. That still, there's ideas that we haven't implemented that I look at other businesses and I think we should try that.

[00:29:57] Ray Edwards: Yeah, absolutely. And I mean the recurring, recurring revenue thing is, I mean, that's another reason why I was like, we have to roast because we can do the same thing. People love coffee, people want coffee. Um, have a recurring, I mean, a lot of roasters, they do that and that's one of the ways that they a baseline level of income is that they just sign people up and they have a, they have a membership program and they get coffee, and so we wanna build that out too. But again, I did not feel great about doing that, um, if it wasn't our coffee. Also, there just wasn't a lot of

money to be made when we're buying wholesale from someone else. Um, there's just not a lot of room on there. But yeah, doing, doing the, the, the weekly membership, or not the weekly, but the membership things, um, online training courses, all those sorts of stuff. Those are all sorts of things we've thought about and are trying to explore. And for us at the, at the coffee shop, I feel like roasting our own coffee opens that up for us to be able to do that easier.

[00:30:48] Ray Edwards: Yeah, absolutely. It, it's, um, I think the other thing for me that I've learned that applies to both of our business, is the value of just being okay with doing better slowly over time.

[00:31:02] Sean Edwards: Yeah.

[00:31:03] Ray Edwards: Not trying to do, I was always trying to do everything at once. Look for the big, the big wins. Swing for the fences. Do a million-dollar launch. And you know, most of the time we probably, instead of trying to hit a home run, every time we're up at bat, we need to shoot for a single. Yeah. Just get on base and make a 1% improvement and then do the same thing tomorrow and the same thing next day. And so I'm okay with going slower and building those foundational successes, like starting with our people. Brian Dixon, our friend, Brian Dixon, wrote a book called *Start With Your People*. That's something you've exemplified during this whole thing. I'm really, really proud of you.

[00:31:36] Sean Edwards: Well, thank you. I, And I think, you know, maybe taking this, I don't, maybe taking this in a slightly different direction. You can edit this out if you don't want it, but I, I think that the pandemic for both of us also resulted in, it, it wasn't just practically how do we survive?

[00:31:55] Sean Edwards: There was also a deeper inter transformation that occurred.

[00:32:00] Ray Edwards: Yes. more than one.

[00:32:03] Sean Edwards: Yeah. Right. And I, And I feel like that for both of us plays out in how you are running your business now and how we're running the shop now. I mean, you go through something like the pandemic and yeah, I don't know. It changes. If, if it doesn't change you, then I don't know

[00:32:19] Ray Edwards: if you were paying attention.

[00:32:20] Sean Edwards: I, Yeah, I don't know. Like what, what were you doing,

[00:32:23] Ray Edwards: what were you doing that time? Because for me, what I felt like was every day I was getting an X-ray or an MRI done of my life and finding all these

little tumors and fractures and, and weaknesses that I, I realize, Oh, I've gotta deal with this internally in myself.

[00:32:38] Sean Edwards: Yeah.

[00:32:38] Ray Edwards: Um, Tony Robbins says, The, the number one biggest choke hold on any business is the psychology of the owner and founder of the business,

[00:32:50] Sean Edwards: right. I believe that

[00:32:52] Ray Edwards: it, because, sure, it affects everybody in the organization. It's a top-down effect that if you've got a person who founded the business and is still running the business, who has a, you know, some deep psychological wounds or things that they haven't dealt with, that gets transmitted to everybody in the organization. So it's kind of, it's, I feel like it's your responsibility as the owner or the, or the operator of the business to get yourself healthy and then help your people become healthy.

[00:33:18] Sean Edwards: Yeah. And I,

[00:33:20] Ray Edwards: and I don't just mean, you know, washing your hands and protecting yourself from germs. I'm talking about psychological health

[00:33:25] Sean Edwards: Ya, remember when we were washing our groceries and stuff like that?

[00:33:28] Ray Edwards: Oh my gosh.

[00:33:31] Sean Edwards: Uh, we didn't know. We, we didn't know.

[00:33:35] Ray Edwards: We didn't know. We didn't know. We didn't know what we didn't know.

[00:33:36] Sean Edwards: We didn't know what we didn't know. Uh, you know, I was talking with a friend recently that they had gone through their own trial During the pandemic, I, they lost a family member. And, uh, I, I hadn't lost a family member fortunately, but we were talking about the results of those trials. And like I, my trial in that conversation over the course of that conversation was just dealing with the feeling of utter powerlessness,

[00:34:02] Ray Edwards: mm-hmm.

[00:34:02] Sean Edwards: when, when your governor just put the stroke of a pen, says, Yeah, you can't operate your business anymore. Um, you know, like, That was, that was shaking. That was like, what?

[00:34:18] Ray Edwards: This can't happen in America.

[00:34:19] Sean Edwards: You can't do that. Like,

[00:34:22] Ray Edwards: And he was like, Watch me.

[00:34:23] Sean Edwards: Yeah I can. Yeah. Watch me. And the other part that, I mean, I personally found troubling was also the people that were

[00:34:28] Ray Edwards: so willing to just believe whatever they were told.

[00:34:34] Sean Edwards: Well, it, it, it became, it became very clear in retrospect and while it was going on. We don't need to get into the politics side of it, but the, the, but the being a, I studied history in college and have been a fan of history. and we've seen over and over again, and especially in the 20th century, how fear can drive people to accept political ideologies that do not end well.

[00:34:58] Ray Edwards: well put.

[00:34:59] Sean Edwards: And, and it seemed so not only were you faced with the powerlessness of, of realizing, oh my gosh, like this can just happen. The government governor could just change things and then to see so many people cheering that on.

[00:35:14] Ray Edwards: Yeah. I think as personally, as I look back over history and I think about the, the great events that happened, like when great evils rose up and people had to rise against the evil. Like we think about World War II world, it seems clear who the good guys, who the bad guys were,

[00:35:28] Sean Edwards: the bad guys, right? Yeah.

[00:35:29] Ray Edwards: And if you study a little further, you find there's more gray area perhaps than you thought. But the point I'm trying to make is I always thought, well, I'd, I'd certainly know which side was the right side. I'd be on the side of the right,

[00:35:38] Sean Edwards: right?

[00:35:39] Ray Edwards: Not, not, I'm not talking left and right. I'm talking about the correct side.

[00:35:42] Sean Edwards: Correct side. Yes.

[00:35:44] Ray Edwards: And I've come to see, that's easy to believe of myself, but in truth, as I look around things that are happening right now that are analogous to those times, I realize I am easily swayed.

[00:35:55] Sean Edwards: Yeah.

[00:35:56] Ray Edwards: And so is the majority of the population. So I mean

[00:36:00] Sean Edwards: Right.

[00:36:00] Ray Edwards: Richard Feinman said the first rule of, I'm paraphrasing him now, but he said something like, The first rule of science is don't be fooled and remember you are the easiest person to fool.

[00:36:09] Sean Edwards: Ha. No, I mean, it's, it's so true. And, and so I know that early on, encountering that, that sense of powerless. of whatever sense of control I had over my life.

[00:36:26] Ray Edwards: Yeah.

[00:36:27] Sean Edwards: Like was just shattered. No, don't get me wrong, I do believe that you an individual responsibility and that you have a choice and that you need to like, like I'm not falling into fatalism here

[00:36:39] Ray Edwards: Of course, but you're What I hear you saying. We're not in control of as much stuff as we think we're in control of.

[00:36:44] Sean Edwards: No, no, no, no. And in fact, I think a lot of people who got angry during the pandemic, and I think a lot of people are still angry and are arguing about these things. It's they do it because it gives them this, I would say, false sense of control over the events around them. But anyway, that, that feeling coming up to coming up face to face with this, Hey, you know what? The world does not operate like you thought it did. Uh, you do not have the level of control that you thought you had, and what are you gonna do with that? And it, it, for me, it sparked a, a spiritual renaissance. I'm very thankful that that's what occurred. But I mean, you're really left with two choices. Well, either you have to like, it's, it's very bleak. You know, it's like, well, if I don't, if I don't have the control, I thought I did. What am I supposed to do? And it, it pushed me into this place of God kind of used that in my life to be like, Okay, well either I got a given nihilism and that nothing matters and that it's all meaningless. Or I have to believe that that God's in control. And it, it forced me into a position of being like, Okay, well I thought I was in control and I'm not, and, and God must like if he's in control, like I

believe he's in control. So I but do it. I realized I did not actually believe that there was a, there was an extent that I did not actually believe that. I believe that, that I had to, that I was in control and, and it's like he ripped the handlebars outta my hand, like the, the reigns outta my hands and showed me they weren't attached to anything. You know, it's like

[00:38:22] Ray Edwards: it was an illusion of control.

[00:38:23] Sean Edwards: It was an illusion. And that even though it was discomfoting and hard and turbulent as that was, it allowed me a, a place of freedom to, to then go, Okay, well, I mean, I'm gonna work as hard as I can. I'm gonna do everything that I can. But ultimately, ultimately this is in God's hands. And do you, you remember Lost, right?

[00:38:46] Ray Edwards: Oh, yes.

[00:38:48] Sean Edwards: Do you remember the character Desmond?

[00:38:50] Sean Edwards: Yes. The, the Australian,

[00:38:52] Sean Edwards: The Australian guy. Yeah. Yeah. So, I don't know if you remember much, but toward, in the last season or two, you know, it began slowly being revealed that when people died on the island, they didn't really die,

[00:39:03] Ray Edwards: right?

[00:39:04] Sean Edwards: They went to this like

[00:39:06] Ray Edwards: other place,

[00:39:06] Sean Edwards: this other place that is, there's still people to this day are debating about what that was, but he, for whatever reason kept jumping back and forth. I don't know if you remember that.

[00:39:16] Ray Edwards: I do.

[00:39:17] Sean Edwards: And so he would show back up on the island after he like died. And they'd be like, How are you here? And and there came a point where he just like, people would say, Well we need to do this, this grave, super dangerous thing. And he'd be like, I'll do it. And they're like, You will? And he's like, Yeah, it doesn't matter. Like it doesn't matter. Um,

[00:39:35] Ray Edwards: gosh, I had forgotten this.

[00:39:37] Sean Edwards: And there were so many instances like, it doesn't matter. And like at the time, the other characters didn't understand it. And they didn't see it. Like, they felt like the all this weight was on their shoulders and they had to figure this out. But he knew It was like, Okay, fine. You, you die on this island and we're just going, we're going over to this other place and it's fine.

[00:39:52] Sean Edwards: Like it doesn't matter. And so he would just do these crazy things in the, in the last season or two, cuz he knew what was going on.

[00:40:02] Ray Edwards: He knew that he was, he's gonna be moving on to this other place.

[00:40:05] Sean Edwards: And it didn't. And it ul it, it, it, like, it mattered, but it didn't matter.

[00:40:08] Ray Edwards: That's, you know, I haven't thought about Desmond in this regard, but this, what this idea that we're talking about right now is so important to something that I've definitely picked up during this whole thing is I feel like I've come through to this side of things with that I have this, I have these two feelings. One is what I'm working on is important. The people I'm working with are important. I'm gonna do the best I possibly can with this task, and then I reach a certain point where I feel like, and what happens next doesn't matter.

[00:40:34] Sean Edwards: Right. And so, yeah, exactly. And so that's one of the big things I felt like God did in my life is he brought me to this place of being like, Okay, it ma it. At the end of the day, it doesn't matter. Like it doesn't matter. Um, it does matter. You should not just like, You shouldn't just like live on your couch living on welfare or free money or whatever, Like that's not what I'm saying.

[00:40:59] Ray Edwards: Right.

[00:41:00] Sean Edwards: But what I'm saying is like whether Revel 77 is successful or not, ultimately does not matter cuz where I'm going after this, it does like, I'm not taking that with me.

[00:41:13] Ray Edwards: Right, well I think what matters is are we doing the best we can with what we've been given?

[00:41:19] Sean Edwards: Right, exactly. And are we trying our best and are we trying to live virtuously? Are we trying to do good? Are we trying to follow God? Are we trying to treat people around us better? Are we trying to grow, um, ourselves to become better people and who God made us to be?

[00:41:35] Ray Edwards: Right? All those things matter.

[00:41:36] Sean Edwards: All those things matter. But how you get there doesn't matter. Like, and so if where you're at, if you know, for me it's owning, for us it's owning a coffee shop, for you, with the, with the online business, it's, it's, it's the, I'm gonna do the best I can, but it's also in God's hands. It doesn't matter.

[00:41:54] Sean Edwards: Like, I'm gonna try as hard as I can and I'm gonna fight like the dogs to make this successful. But from a place of, it doesn't matter. Like

[00:42:03] Ray Edwards: Yep.

[00:42:03] Sean Edwards: Like, yeah. Like kinda like Desmond. Yeah. Okay. Let's do this. This is

[00:42:06] Ray Edwards: I'll do it.

[00:42:07] Sean Edwards: I'll do. But because I know that God's gonna use it to, to, to, to do the most good, to the most people, I trust that that whatever happens, he knows, he sees something that I don't, that even if even it involves my business failing, um, even if involves a pandemic, even if it involves like all the crazy stuff that happened, like he's gonna use it for the most good, for the most people.

[00:42:33] Sean Edwards: Like, he doesn't necessarily mean he authored it, it doesn't necessarily mean he said, I want this, this pandemic to happen,

[00:42:39] Ray Edwards: Right.

[00:42:39] Sean Edwards: But I'm, I'm allowing it to happen because I can use it to, to touch hearts that would not be touched otherwise.

[00:42:48] Ray Edwards: Right.

[00:42:49] Sean Edwards: And so, just like in your own personal life, it's like, okay, I'm gonna work hard and be successful in this business, but at the end of the day, it might get taken away and it doesn't matter.

[00:42:58] Ray Edwards: And that's okay.

[00:42:58] Sean Edwards: And that's okay. Cuz what, what really matters is what God's, what's what's going on inside each, All people, like in their hearts, in their souls, are they responding to God? Are they responding to goodness? Are they responding to truth?

Are they running from it? Are they hiding from it? Are they rejecting it? Are they rejecting reality? That's it doesn't matter if, if I have a super successful business, like that's, that's not gonna bring fulfillment ultimately, but developing the character to run a successful business can matter.

[00:43:33] Ray Edwards: Yes. It's not about do you achieve the big, lofty goals you have for yourself, for your business, but it is about who am I becoming in the process of working toward those things because

[00:43:42] Sean Edwards: I've really come. Yes, absolutely. And I've really become, if your philosophy, you've heard me say this a bunch of times now, if your philosophy or your theology or spirituality doesn't work in a concentration camp, it's wrong. Like your worldview, your sense of purpose and security and drive. If it's, if it doesn't work when everything's been taken from you, in this world, on this natural world, it doesn't, it doesn't, it's not real like, like it, it can't work. Um, it only works in a certain context that you might be lucky enough to find yourself in. But if, like, if God is real and, and, and it's true, which I believe it is, then the spirituality, the way of life, the way of living in our life he would give us is that it's gotta work in every context, in every situation. So if your worldview or your spirituality shows you, you think you have this control over the world and you just gotta pull yourself up by the bootstraps and you've gotta, you've gotta do this and you've gotta do that. Well, that doesn't help the person who's been loaded onto a train car. .

[00:44:52] Ray Edwards: I feel like that's the end of the podcast right there. Cause what more can we say that matters more than that? That's so, so important. If you're, Say it one more time. If your philosophy

[00:45:00] Sean Edwards: or religion like doesn't work in a concentration camp , it doesn't work. It's not, it's not real. It's not true. It's not of God. Cuz he's gonna work everywhere.

[00:45:12] Ray Edwards: Okay. That is something to chew on.

[00:45:16] Sean Edwards: So, I mean, I say all of that because it affects how you run your business as well to bring this, bring this all back around.

[00:45:24] Ray Edwards: Yeah. I, I agree. And I, I think it's important for me to say, at least lest that anybody, listen and think, well, Ray seems to think he's achieved total enlightenment. I only have to remind myself of this stuff about 800 times a day.

[00:45:36] Sean Edwards: Oh, absolutely, absolutely. No, absolutely. This is a constant growing and learning and having to remember and reflect. Um, cuz I mean the, the, the, the frustrations and the annoying things of running a business or living life are a constantly present. Uh, but, but just remembering that it, it re just remembering these

things. Remember what's important, what's really important? Do you really have control, Like what's actually happening? Like what's really important? And it gives you a level of freedom cuz sometimes, you know, some frustrating things will happen at the shop. You know, like a, like another coffee shop stand opened up down the street from us offering more competition and it's just kind of in this place and now it's like, well it's all from the providence of God, like God, if, if that's gonna hurt our business, then his will be done and good will come out of it and it will be all right. Which keeps me from operating from a place of fear and from a place of, of, of fear, which would be bad for my employees, would be bad for my customers. And I just ha I have to continually remind myself to live in that place. I'm a better boss and better business owner when I am detached and I have faith in God in that context than if I'm not, if I'm fearful, and I'm clutching and holding onto it for dear life.

[00:46:54] Ray Edwards: Yeah. Yeah, that's that's right. And I, I think for those of you who, if you're not a believer in God, if you're not a religious person, but maybe you're, maybe you describe yourself as spiritual, but not religious or however you define it. I think there's a, there's a phrase from the stoics, I think I'll pronounce this correctly, Amore Fati.

[00:47:12] Sean Edwards: Oh yeah. Amore Fati, something like that's like

[00:47:15] Ray Edwards: love the fate you've been dealt.

[00:47:16] Sean Edwards: Yeah. Love your fate.

[00:47:17] Ray Edwards: And that means it doesn't mean to be fatalist, it means the things you cannot control that are just circumstances you have to face, look at it and think, How can I use this? What can I learn from this? How can this be for me instead of against me? And it's then that to me begins to sound a lot like faith.

[00:47:36] Sean Edwards: Yeah. It's like why was this put in front of me? Why was this trial? Why was this hardship put in front of me? And because I believe it, we have an all, we have a loving God who's trying to break into all of our hearts, to deeper levels, to bring deeper levels of freedom and healing and, and holiness in our lives so that we're living more wholesome, uh, fulfilling me. Meaningful lives. And so I think everything to an extent is put before us. It's either allowed or it's prescribed by God, and either way it doesn't matter. It's like he's going to use it as difficult and as challenging as it might be, it's like, why did he put this in my path? Why did he allow me to encounter this? What does he want me to get from this situation? And going back to my, what I was talking about my friend a few minutes ago. What I've gained out of the pandemic and I, Hey, look, I don't want a pandemic on anyone. People died. Lots of people died. Millions of people have died, and it's really sad. So I'm not wanting or wishing that that would ever have happened,

[00:48:37] Ray Edwards: right.

[00:48:38] Sean Edwards: But the work that I feel God has done in my soul, And in my heart, I wouldn't trade for anything. It was hard. It was brutal. It was nerve-wracking. It was stressful. It was, it was, It was one of the hardest seasons of my life, and I'm sure of a lot of people's lives. But I wouldn't get, I wouldn't trade it. I wouldn't trade what I got.

[00:48:59] Sean Edwards: That's what I'd say I would, I would say, Hey, let's maybe not have but have a pandemic. But I would not trade what happened in me. I would not say, Hey, let's go back and undo that. I would not want to do that.

[00:49:10] Ray Edwards: I can only agree with that. Maybe we should do this again. This, I I, when we sat down, I wondered are we gonna have enough to talk about for a whole podcast? And now I feel like I could go on for another six hours or so.

[00:49:22] Sean Edwards: Yeah. Well, we've, we've talked like you made the comment a month or two ago, like, uh, we can get together and have coffee. We, we were doing that more regularly, uh, recently. That's been a little bit more intermittent, but it's like, we should be recording these conversations we're having.

[00:49:35] Ray Edwards: Y'all let us know if you wanna hear more. If you have comments or questions, put those below wherever you're listening to this. I was gonna say where you're watching it. Again, if you're watching it.

[00:49:44] Sean Edwards: Yeah.

[00:49:45] Ray Edwards: Let us know where that is.

[00:49:45] Sean Edwards: Yeah, I would really love to know.

[00:49:47] Ray Edwards: We don't, we're not conscious of operating any cameras right now.

[00:49:49] Sean Edwards: Yeah. So if you're watching this, I've really, really wanna know how you're doing that,

[00:49:54] Ray Edwards: or maybe I don't.

[00:49:55] Sean Edwards: Well, yeah. Yeah.

[00:49:58] Ray Edwards: Okay. I kind of let us down a rabbit trail there, but , this has been really good. I'd like to have you back as soon as possible.

[00:50:04] Sean Edwards: Sure. Absolutely. It's been a while. It's been fun.

[00:50:07] Ray Edwards: Well, I think we're done.

[00:50:09] Sean Edwards: Okay.

[00:50:09] Ray Edwards: It's a mic drop moment.

[00:50:10] Sean Edwards: All right, well, um, keep your feet on the ground

[00:50:13] Ray Edwards: and your ankles right above them.

[00:50:15] Sean Edwards: Toodles.

[00:50:17] Kris Edwards: To get the show notes, transcript and links from this week's episode, visit rayedwards.com/592.

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