

EPISODE 565

[INTRODUCTION]

[00:00:00] ANNOUNCER: Welcome to The Real Estate Syndication Show. Whether you are a seasoned investor or building a new real estate business, this is the show for you. Whitney Sewell talks to top experts in the business. Our goal is to help you master real estate syndication.

And now your host, Whitney Sewell.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:00:24.1] WS: This is your daily Real Estate Syndication show. I'm your host Whitney Sewell. Today, our guest is Sameer Sharma. Thanks for being on the show, Sameer.

[0:00:33.7] SS: Thank you, Whitney. Thanks for having me.

[0:00:35.6] WS: Yeah, I'm honored to have you on the show and looking forward to the conversation, just learning a little more about you and understanding just my own business and thinking about when my business shifted and some things that had to happen there. I know you were going to be able to help the listeners think through some of those same things and myself. But a little about Sameer, he's a high-performance mind and body coach. Certified personal trainer, third degree black belt in Aikido and gold and silver medalist in Tai Chi. I hope I'm saying those correctly. International Chinese Martial Arts championships. So, I'm glad this is a zoom call and we're not in person. I'm kidding of course.

But Sameer, thank you very much for your time and I know you also have previous experience investing in real estate and very knowledgeable in real estate as well. Ultimately, I know you're helping lots of people with just mindset and I mean, coaching them as well so I'd love to dive into that.

Give the listeners a little more about your background, who you are and let's jump in.

[0:01:33.6] SS: Yeah, like you said, I'm a coach. And with all my experience in entrepreneurship, business in the corporate world, in real estate, I also, all those years, I was an athlete, a martial artist, had a very strong interest in psychology, personal development and studied meditation for many years, still practice every day. All those things kind of came to a head and I wanted to find a way to combine all those experiences and skills into something very holistic and different that would help other people who have gone through similar things that I have, especially entrepreneurs who are trying to do their own thing and try to make their own mark.

That kind of led me to where I am today as you said, a high performing mind body coach where I combine my experiences in fitness as an athlete in martial arts and taking a lot of the principles that I've learned over, almost 25 years now. And what I realized was as my skill as a trainer and an athlete, a martial artist progressed, I realized the principles that make you successful physically aren't really any different than the principles that make you successful as a business person or you know, whatever it is you're trying to accomplish out in the world.

From that, I gleaned these very fundamental principles and when I started to sort of wrap them around this methodology of coaching, I realized this stuff works. It's not just for training. It works in the world because it changes and transforms who you are. You carry yourself differently.

My approach towards personal development is kind of through the body just because that's my experience. My belief is if I can change how you move and carry yourself in the world, that starts to inform your psychology and you can change your mindset through movement and vice versa.

[0:03:21.6] WS: Okay, I want to dive in there a little bit. I was trying to take a few notes, you said, fundamental principles just to help us be successful, as personal or business, I'd love for us to dive in to maybe some of those, if we have time. And then you know, talked about just the way you carry yourself can change so much.

But let's back up a little bit, maybe we jump in on a few other fundamental principles that you know the listeners need to know. I know you were also, you know, real estate long time. But I feel like whether we're a real estate entrepreneur or whether we have some other type of

business so many of the same things apply mentally. And like you said, the way we carry yourself or things like that. Help us to figure some of those things out? I'm sure you've done this enough where you know, numerous things that the listeners are probably dealing with right now, maybe in myself, just trying to grow a business and maybe back way up even to getting started.

[0:04:08.5] SS: Sure, okay. Let me try to see where we can start with this. There's a great quote by a psychologist meditation guy, his name is Jon Kabat-Zinn. He wrote a great book called *Wherever You Go, There You Are*. From that title. I'll segue into this by using that as a title that wherever you go, there you are.

The point is that, no matter what your pursuing out there, the common denominator is you. Who you are, your identity, your persona, the self-image you have of yourself, that's going to superimpose itself on every physical task, every deal you may be looking at. You're seeing it through that lens.

And I think where a lot of entrepreneurs, they get stuck as they think, "If I just follow this recipe. If I just do what my mentor or my guru said to do, send out X number of emails a day, look at 50 deals a day, run the numbers," then to some degree, yes, it's a numbers game. But that prescription assumes that you're going to get a similar result. For my personal experience and from people I've coached and clients, that's not the case. Because ultimately, why is it that you being an investor and me being a former investor because you're actively doing it, you have a very different paradigm than me who is not actively doing it. Your persona as an active investor is going to have a completely different lens through which I would see something. We're doing the same physical task but why are results different?

So, this leads me the point that whether you're an investor, whether – whatever is it you're doing, it is your identity, it is the person who you see yourself to be that stems everything. Everything comes from there. Most of the time, when we are in this sort of the hustle mode of doing and doing and accomplishing, we're just very task oriented. And we figure, "I'll just follow the recipe and I'll get the same results," and as you know and I know, that just doesn't happen unfortunately all the time.

So, what I encourage people to do is, take a step back from the doing and ask yourself, “Who is the being that is doing the doing?” Because the being, this dictates every result you could possibly want.

[0:06:10.8] WS: Please go a little further because it’s hard to figure that out. You said, who you see yourself to be, it’s so important to think about who you see yourself to be because everything stems from there.

[0:06:19.7] SS: Yeah. Basically, if you look at the self-image, yourself image is this blueprint you have in your head of who you are, who Whitney Sewell is as an investor, entrepreneur. There is this image, you could call it a script, this persona in your head of, “This is who I am and because I am this person, I do certain things.”

Those actions create habits. Those habits create results. If you want a different result, you must back track and say, “Who is the person, who is the identity, the persona that needs to show up, who would then naturally do those habits and actions and get the result?”

An example I commonly use is think about running to lose weight versus being a runner. Let’s say you want to get in shape and you’re a little over weight, you say all right, “I’m going to take up running, right?” Running is now an activity. It is a task on your to do list that you do. If you are not a runner then becoming, getting in the habit of running and doing that can be very daunting. There could be a lot of resistance and inertia around that activity.

But for somebody who is a runner, they don’t really care about losing weight, that’s not really a goal for a runner because it’s who they are. They’re thinking, “How do I shave 30 seconds off my mile?” or something like that. Their results are more performance-oriented now.

The identity of a runner as a completely different mindset and a different result and someone who is trying to run to get a specific outcome. Same, let’s take the idea of an investor. Someone who is an investor, naturally does certain things. They have a certain outlook, a certain paradigm to which they see deals, to which they look at the market versus somebody who is not an investor but who wants to invest. That’s a different slope he’s got to climb. That’s kind of what I mean in terms of identity.

And then how you create that identity, we can get into that also but that's really the larger lens to which I look at personal development.

[0:08:18.2] WS: Yeah, I mean, I can see all how that can change things completely if you say you are a runner or if you say, "I'm going to start running," or, "I'm an investor." It gives you a different level of confidence, right? If you've already been doing something or just mentally if you're telling yourself that.

How do we get there, I mean, it seems like such a roadblock, right? Or mental block for most people including myself, whatever it may be, whether it is investing, whether it's growing a brand or business or whether it is running, even. How do we do that and get past that mentally?

[0:08:45.9] SS: Yeah, it's a great question. And I don't have a prescription but I can give you principles. And then you can apply them to your situation. I think the very first thing people need to do is step away from the hustle. I know the hustle mentality and the whole crush it idea is very popular and if you subscribe to that, that's great, I got nothing against that. I personally have never found that useful to me. The problem with that is you can go down a rabbit hole so far that you don't even know what you're doing anymore. You're on a treadmill.

You're hustling for the sake of hustling and you're not asking why. More importantly, you're not asking, "Who is doing the hustling?" The first thing I think people can do if they want to start changing their sense of self if take a step back from your habitual patterns of activities, habits, things you normally do because they're getting you the results you already have.

If you want a different result, you need to create a different paradigm, different actions. That's surprisingly very hard for a lot of people, especially if you've been doing something for a while, that hustle that like, "I got to grind it out. I got to send out these emails. I got to do these things." It's very hard to disconnect from that.

And so, the very first step is create that space for yourself mentally and then physically to say, "Wait a second, is what I'm doing getting me the result and if not, what else should I be doing? How can I be different in order to do something else?"

[0:10:08.9] WS: Love that. I can relate because I'm one that says, "Okay, if somebody lays out a plan, this is what it takes and maybe it's a lot more than what you expected." And I'm just going to say, "Okay, how soon do we get started?" And I'm going to be willing to put the time in but maybe I'm not going to step back enough sometimes or quick enough to ask. You know, I'll tell you like I said, "Are you asking why or just hustling just to be hustling?"

Is it working or are you just hustling to be working hard not getting anywhere?

[0:10:33.8] SS: Yeah, unfortunately, in our society, that sense of the hustle, the grind is praised. We somehow – we put that on pedestal. We somehow think that is something to inspire to because that's a great quality. Again, I'm not placing a value judgement. I'm just saying, if you've been doing that, and it hasn't changed anything for you, it's time to pause and reflect. I think it was Mark Twain who said, "If you find yourself on the side of the majority, it's time to pause and reflect."

You know, if anything else, if you look around, I mean, let's just take the environment we're in now, right? The overarching sense right now is the sense of fear and contraction. People are hoarding, people are scared, people are looking for security. You can't get toilet paper, right? If everyone is doing that, do you want the result that everyone has? Can you take a different approach and say, "If everyone's contracting being afraid, can I expand and be more open?"

It's a choice. I think that's the first step is look around. Your environment, your world is reflection of what's going on between your ears. If you don't like what you see, start here. Don't try to get a result out there.

[0:11:42.4] WS: Okay. It's great advice, no doubt about it, starting with us, starting with between our ears and stepping back and really figuring out is this working? What's kind of a next step, what should we be thinking about to really go down that self-improvement path to figure this out?

[0:11:57.9] SS: My approach is based on four principles and the four principles are based again on my experience through movement, fitness, martial arts. Because I realize that these

principles aren't just physical. And they aren't just why I can throw somebody three times my size with no effort.

There's a reason why it works. The four principles for me are number one, awareness, number two, centeredness, number three non-attachment and number four is alignment.

[0:12:24.0] WS: What was the last one?

[0:12:24.9] SS: Alignment.

[0:12:25.6] WS: Alignment.

[0:12:26.4] SS: And I came to really appreciate and embody these principles from my physical practice. But then when I started using them in my work, in my personal life I realized, "Wow, these are timeless. These aren't just for martial arts, for movement or anything." I think if you want to start changing yourself, your identity, start looking at your world through these four paradigms. We can go into that if you want.

But awareness really starts with being self-aware. And we've touched on that a little bit about having the ability to step back and reflect upon who you are. Not upon what is out there but, "Who am I?" Because what's out there is just reflecting who you are. It is a mirror. So, becoming aware of yourself, self-awareness is really the bedrock that is where to start. From that place you can start to then be much more mindful and objective about your world.

And this is where my experience with meditation comes in. It is one of the first things you learn in meditation is that you are not trying to control your thinking. Your brain is going to think so if you have ever tried to meditate, you know how hard it is to try to make your mind go blank. You get caught up in the thoughts. Your brain is designed to do that. As long as you're breathing, you're alive, your mind is always going to create thoughts. So, the practice is not the cessation of thought. The practice is how do I create the space between myself and the thought so I am the observer?

So, I think Descartes got it wrong. It's not I think therefore I am. It's I am and I happen to think. So that practice though, "Can I be aware of my state in this moment. What am I feeling? What am I thinking? What am I doing?" And then from that objective place you can start to choose a better response.

The second principle is centeredness. If you've ever been in a yoga class or you may be tried martial arts or done something physical like that, sometimes the instructor will say be centered, find your center. That is kind of a very kind of cash word nowadays. But really centeredness is being centered in the self. So sometimes I tell people be self-centered. It is not selfish. It is actually a good thing. Being centered in one self means you are coming from a place of internal stability, internal power and not relying or being dependent on something outside of you.

So, when you are in that place of centered, there is also from that place creates a sense of calm and internal space. Because as you know, if you're an investor and you are looking at a deal and you are not centered, you are not within yourself, it becomes very hard to be objective and rational about the deal because emotions start to play. You start to be like, "Oh, is this a good deal? I don't know, can I run the numbers? Can I fudge the numbers? Can I make this work? Can I turn a five cap into a three cap?"

Like you know, you start to talk yourself into certain things but when you step back, when you are centered, your sense of awareness expands. You don't get tunnel vision but you start to see things much more broadly and objectively. From the centered place, now you can start to develop a sense of non-attachment. Non-attachment or you could also call it non-resistance. I think probably of the four, this is probably the most relevant for where we are today in this world.

Because right now, this sense of fear, this sense of contraction, we're attached to our fear. We are attached to the wanting, the grabbing. However, the minute you become attached to something you also become dependent on it and if that thing goes away, your sense of security, your sense of balance, your stability is also gone. So, the more we lean, the more we depend, the more we give up on our own sense of centeredness and stability.

And so, if we cannot be attached, if we cannot resist what's going on right now, you know people say, "Oh my god, it is so bad out here right now." I say, well that is a choice but the more you resist what is, the more you are not in a place to change it. You give your power away.

[0:16:14.6] WS: I like how you said it's a choice.

[0:16:16.3] SS: It's a choice yeah and then finally, the sense of alignment. And this goes back to what we are talking about identity is that the persona, the sense of self, you are today is not an alignment with the result you're after, getting there is going to be really hard. That's why if try to do a crash diet, that is why they call them crash diets, you crash and burn because the person who is trying to lose 20 pounds is a different sense of self than the person who already is 20 pounds lighter. And so that alignment of me with my goal really has to happen before I start doing the hustle to get there.

[0:16:50.0] WS: How much of all this is a choice?

[0:16:52.6] SS: I would say all of it.

[0:16:53.6] WS: That is what I expected you to say.

[0:16:55.3] SS: Yeah, a lot of times you don't feel it is a choice because the more we don't choose to be centered, the more we don't do these four things, the more we give up our sense of energy and our sense of self. And you know it is like you lean against something. If you are leaning against something, if all of our weight is there then you feel like, "Well if that thing is gone, I am going to fall." And the truth is yes you will, but if I can choose not to lean, if I can choose not to stand within my own sense of balance and center, then no matter what's around me, I am in a place to respond without any sense of dependence.

[0:17:30.4] WS: Love that. Tell me about your morning routine.

[0:17:33.6] SS: First thing I do, drink a big glass of water and then I sit down and meditate for 20 minutes. After that, I will do some kind of a movement, usually for me that is my Tai Chi practice. Then I will make a cup of coffee, sit down. I will either sit and read or I will write in my

journal and reflect upon where I am, what I'd like to accomplish today, what is important and go from there. So, that usually takes about an hour or so.

[0:17:57.7] WS: Nice, what about – I am guilty of this and I hear lots of people saying like, “Don't pick your phone up right away.” When in the day do you start to take in those distractions like that?

[0:18:07.1] SS: For me that is after that first hour block. And that is a hard habit to break but I don't pick up my phone. I don't get online until that's done because that is going to set the tone of my whole day.

[0:18:18.0] WS: Any pre-planning things that you do to help the day be more successful?

[0:18:22.6] SS: I think in the morning after I do my routine, I figure out what are the most important things I need to get done and I am not a big fan of to-do lists. I let the list create itself but again I stick to principle. And I say – Let's say these are the three aspects of my day. There is the physical aspect, there is the mental aspect, there is the whatever aspect and then I try not to pick more than three things to accomplish in a day in one of those three quadrants. And then if I can get those done, it was a good day and I don't worry about having to check everything off the list.

[0:18:59.9] WS: What's a way that maybe you are educating yourself or continuing just your self-improvement?

[0:19:05.6] SS: Yeah, I mean that is an ongoing thing. I am fortunate to have really great mentors and teachers. So, I am always trying to put myself in the position of a student, always trying to learn. I have teachers, I have mentors that I see on a regular basis, constantly reading my own practice of meditation. Looking at people who are more successful than me and seeing, “What are they doing? Is there something I can emulate or make my own?”

[0:19:27.6] WS: Awesome, well just a few more questions, Sameer, before we run out of time. What is a way that you've recently improved your business that we could apply to ours?

[0:19:35.9] SS: Probably I stopped following – I stopped looking so much out in social media and saying, “What is the latest tool? What’s the latest app? What is the hot new trend that I need to jump on in order to accelerate my business?” I think it is very easy to get into that shiny object syndrome and say, “Well I got to have this app and I got to have this kind of funnel page,” or whatever that is and those are fine. Those are tools and as long as you can keep that straight there is nothing wrong with them.

But something that I have done is really consciously not chosen to find the latest gadget, what is the latest productivity thing? I am just like, “This is me. This is what I do,” and I am putting it out there and so try to create more of an attractive kind of business versus a grabbing where I am reaching for more stuff. I am saying, “Like it, great. If you don’t like it that is great too.”

[0:20:26.3] WS: What’s the number one thing that’s contributed to your success?

[0:20:29.1] SS: Wow, great question. Being brutally honest with who I am, what I am good at, what I like to do and what I don’t like to do and saying, “This is my lane and I am sticking in my lane.” Everyone else, you know may be doing their thing and having great success doing this but I know this is my lane and again as entrepreneurs that can be very hard to do because we are always looking at what’s everyone else doing or what should I be doing?

And so just through a lot of trial and error and a lot of failure, I realized I can’t be that person. No matter how great his course is or how great his blueprint is for success, I have to do what is right for me. And I think the more you can embrace your own uniqueness and maybe even celebrate the very things that you thought you had to shun in order to fit in, I think that the more you are going to find that special thing that makes you unique that is going to attract people.

[0:21:20.2] WS: How old were you when you started martial arts?

[0:21:22.6] SS: 23.

[0:21:23.1] WS: What kind of martial arts can somebody start with?

[0:21:26.1] SS: What kind? Well, I have been asked this question many times and my answer is always, “Try them out. See what resonates with you.” I wasn’t looking to do martial arts, ironically. I will always love it because as a kid we watched the kung-fu movies and be like, “Wow that is so cool. I’d love to do that.” But for me it is always like it found me and I was just like boom, it just gelled. I was like, “I am doing this.” But if someone is interested in learning martial arts I would say take a karate class. Take a judo class. Take whatever and find what really connects with you and then go for it.

[0:21:58.6] WS: When should kids start?

[0:22:00.4] SS: I would say grade school. I think after 4th to 5th grade because I think if they start too young, a lot of the skill and the deeper stuff is lost on them. It is great if you want something after school for fun and activity, but I think you need to get to a certain age maybe around 10 years old I would say. I wish I had started that young but yeah, I would probably say around that age.

[0:22:23.6] WS: And how do you like to give back?

[0:22:25.2] SS: I like to share my experiences with other people whether it is giving free classes, whether it is doing personal training with people, sharing my knowledge and experience kind of like what we’re doing in some way I really enjoy that. For me teaching, I also teach martial arts. I am not paid to do that it is just something I love to do. So, teaching classes, really helping junior students come up is very rewarding for me.

[0:22:50.1] WS: Sameer, thank you very much for your time today. And I just think the mindset is so important and self-improvement and starting with your mind in any business endeavor. I love how you talked about or used the running analogy, am I runner or am I going to go running? You know it’s awesome. So, thank you for your time, thank you for the value you’ve provided to the listeners and myself. Tell them how they can get in touch with you and learn more about you.

[0:23:12.0] SS: Sure, you could always reach me through Facebook. I am fairly active on that and then if you want to know more about my coaching program and all of these things you can

go to my website, it is just my name, sameersharma.com. And drop me an email or friend me on Facebook and let's chat. I'd be happy to.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[0:23:27.0] WS: Don't go yet, thank you for listening to today's episode. I would love it if you would go to iTunes right now and leave a rating and written review. I want to hear your feedback. It makes a big difference in getting the podcast out there. You can also go to the Real Estate Syndication Show on Facebook so you can connect with me and we can also receive feedback and your questions there that you want me to answer on the show.

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[OUTRO]

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