

EPISODE 583**[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 Vahan Yepremyan. Thanks for being on the show, Vahan.

[0:00:33.3] VY: Thanks for having me, Whitney.

[0:00:35.2] WS: Vahan is a business attorney, speaker, author, serial entrepreneur and children's rights activist. His mission is to empower and support conscious entrepreneurs and ventures. He loves adventure travel. His last two were climbing Mount Kilimanjaro and living with the bushman of Hadza tribe in the wilderness for a week.

I don't think I've had any guests on before that could say that, Vahan, I'm looking forward to hearing all about that on the show and for the listeners are as well and maybe some things that you learned from that and how that's helped you since then.

But give us a little more about who you are and where you're located, your focus and let's jump in.

[0:01:14.3] VY: Excellent. Thanks for having me, again. I am located in Los Angeles. I'm a serial entrepreneur as you mentioned. I have several ventures including a film production and distribution company, real estate development company. My main business and venture is my law firm,

where I represent ventures and entrepreneurs from early startup to pre-IPO, very passionate about entrepreneurship especially given my background. I was born and grew up in former Soviet Union, the country where entrepreneurship was illegal. You basically get thrown in jail for being an entrepreneur or an entrepreneurial mindset.

You know, it was encouraged to – Don't think outside the box, follow the herd, don't question authority. The whole country basically worked for the government and I moved to United States when I was 17 as a refugee and a lot of those beliefs and mindsets were set in me growing up. You know, basically North Korea on steroids. And I had to work on that on my beliefs that I've formed from early childhood and the mindset. I've discovered how – what we believe in and how our mindset is, how that determines both our actions and our results and our emotions and everything else.

And so, as I stopped focusing on that and seeing how that changed what I do and how I achieve it. I had the firm for about 22 years. I am passionate about entrepreneurship because I think most of the biggest problems in the world and challenges will be solved by entrepreneurs. It won't be the politicians. It won't be the governments. They're more invested in status quo and preserving what they have. I think it's conscious entrepreneurs who are not only motivated by bottom line, but making a difference. They're innovative. They think outside the box. They're resourceful, whether it's the environmental issues, whether it's certain health issues, I think I put my money on entrepreneurs.

And so, that's where I put my focus and attention is supporting and empowering them, whether it's through legal representation or business consulting, through speaking and sharing, whatever I've learned I my lessons. And you know, I don't come from a place where I figured everything out and I know everything. We're all going through this, especially in these times, interesting times, we're all trying to figure out as we go. This is a new uncharted territory.

We're dealing with – it's not just one crisis you know? We've got the coronavirus pandemic and then the economic downturn that's already started and will surely follow and will take a while for us to recover from. And it's affecting probably I would say 90 to 95 percent of the businesses, whether it's directly or indirectly. How do we do in this situation? What do we focus on and where is our mindset?

And so, I really believe – besides legal education, I also have a business degree. And going to business school, they teach you a lot about all the external stuff. How to put together a business plan. How to raise funds. How to do PR or branding or scaling. They don't really focus on the entrepreneur, the person who is actually doing all these things and making all these decisions. And your awareness, your emotional intelligence, your belief system, all of that affects how you show up in your business in front of your customers, in front of your team.

Especially in situations like this where as a chief emotional officer, you have to be strong, you have to be there. It's an opportunity to show up and support not only your customers but also your staff, you know? Your team, your army.

Yeah, I'm excited to share and some stories and some experiences. We're all in it together and we're all trying to figure it out together. So hopefully, I have some stuff I saw will resonate and help some people as they go through these challenges.

[0:05:14.5] WS: No doubt. I have no doubt that it will, Vahan. You know, you were talking about how you would bet on entrepreneurs, you know, to figure these problems out and to make these things happen. And I was thinking about how entrepreneurs are entrepreneur usually because they can fix problems and they don't always see it maybe as a problem like a lot of people would. You know, you see things totally differently. And I know with me personally, and so many people that I've met, what you believe, how you see things, like you talked about it, it affects how you show up, right?

It doesn't matter if you're showing up as that CEO or whether you're showing up and you're the only employee, right? It makes a big difference. And between your ears, how you show up and what you – how you see things and I think a lot of times that's where it starts at. I know it did with me, you know, with my mindset and before it really started seeing more success in business.

But you know, why don't we back up a little bit and you know, you are big on just bringing personal growth and improvement to entrepreneurs and you know, why don't we just cover a little

bit about how you've done that? What's been some of the biggest things in your entrepreneurial journey that's helped you experience the most growth to show up the best way?

[0:06:25.0] VY: Several years ago, as I mentioned, I had my law firm for about 22 years and year after year, we'd experienced some growth, you know? Some years bigger, some years smaller, but we've continued to grow. Last maybe three or four years before the lock down, we've experienced a considerable growth. Having nothing changed in the business except me. And except my limiting beliefs and certain things that have to do with me.

I believe that your business is a reflection of yourself, of the entrepreneur. Whatever beliefs you have, limitations you have, that will be reflected in the business. As you lift and you work on yourself, that's going to be reflected in the business. And you cannot help it. It's just like looking in the mirror. Similarly, you know, sometimes there's a problem in the business that has to do with the business. It might be supply chain. It might be changing market, disruptions or something. But very often it also is the person.

Trying to fix the business without fixing the person doesn't work. It's kind of like trying to fix a reflection in the mirror without changing the actual, you know, the source of the reflection. As I start really diving into personal growth and really looking at some of the beliefs I held and diving into mindset and you know, how do we interpret things and the words we use and thoughts we entertain in our head, you know, we all have these little negative self-talks and stuff, we need to be aware of that.

As you start paying more attention to that, your realm of possibilities expand. You know, getting rid of limiting belief doesn't necessarily make you an exceptional entrepreneur, but it will give you a better chance of becoming one because you're not limiting yourself. You don't have that luggage that you're carrying yourself, whether it's fear of failure, which paralyzes you, whether it's lack of trust in others which result in you not delegating enough and that results and not being able to scale your business. Things where you fully entertain where you know, making money is not easy, you have to struggle and you have sacrifice.

If you believe that the only way for you to make money is that you have to suffer, struggle, and sacrifice, you will find a way to do those three things so you can make money, okay? I've seen it

on my clients because as I start seeing my businesses change and really take off, I start applying this with my business clients.

And I had a client who had one of these beliefs that money doesn't grow on trees and there is no free lunch and all this stuff. He had this amazing intellectual property that he had invested time and energy in developing and he was running his own business for over 10 days or 10 years. A group approached him to license the IP and take it overseas and his reaction was, "What do you mean? They just going to write a check and just give it to me? That just doesn't – people don't just give you money. There's no free lunch." And I'm trying to explain to him, "This is not free lunch. This is your tears and sweat and blood and sacrifice for 10 years."

[0:09:37.5] WS: Payoff.

[0:09:39.9] VY: Yes, this is the end. They're the ones who are getting something for nothing, for free. Not free but you know. The easier way of just writing a check. They don't have to put in the 10 years of what you've done.

Anyways, it was a struggle going back and forth because for him, in his realm of possibilities based on his beliefs, that was not something that happens. We almost lost the investors because – not investors, the people who wanted to license the IP. And they wouldn't understand the issues. It's like, "What's going on? You need more money? We're working on it." And eventually at the end, what I did is, I asked the guys to give us the actual check that he would be cashing in because there was an upfront payment for licensing and then ongoing multi-payments moving forward. It was a pretty nice chunk of change upfront. And I had to sign something that we would not be deposit it or cash it until all the documents are signed.

So, I take the check and I pass it on to the client, it was a Friday afternoon he comes to my office and said, "Look, hold on to it until Monday. Bring it back if you don't want to do the deal or come back and sign the paperwork and take the check and deposit." He's like, "Just keep it. Let's talk over the –" "No, take the check with you." I wanted him to sit with this check and really process and say, this could be his, you know?

It calls me on Saturday he goes, “Are you working tomorrow?” “I don’t know. Tomorrow’s Sunday.” And he goes, “Okay, I’ll be there first thing Monday morning.” I want to do this. He signed the deal. He got the money, I want to say, three years ago. He’s in about four or five countries now in dozen cities. He makes more money from the licensing deals than from his business. He has more free time. He had some health issues because he was just working so hard in his business because one of his beliefs was you have to sacrifice and he hadn’t taken vacation for years. Now he’s considering selling the business because it just doesn’t – you know, the ROI just doesn’t make sense anymore because it’s making so much money from the licensing.

You look at that and someone’s reality completely changing, just based on changing the certain belief or a set of beliefs. And this is what your mindset and your beliefs can do, keep you holding on to certain things that don’t serve you or adopt.

What I’ve learned is you know, we get to choose the meaning of things that happen around us and it’s a very empowering thought. You have a choice of you could be a victim, especially in this crisis. It’s very easy to sit there, especially since everyone’s going through this and say, “Poor me. I built this business. Now, through no fault of my own, it’s shut down and I don’t know what’s going to happen.”

“My life’s ruined. My credit’s ruined. My business is ruined. Everything’s ruined. Poor me.” Or, you can look at it as what are the opportunities out there? Yes, this is going to be tough and I’m not underplaying the difficulty that everyone’s going through. Whether you own a business or whether you work for a business as an employee, this is tough times.

But we also keep in mind that more than half, I think about 65% of Fortune 500 businesses were created during depression or recession. Disney, Chevron, IBM, Fed-Ex, Whole Foods, Apple, Microsoft. They were all created during those times.

Let’s look at just the last recession that it’s still so fresh and so traumatic in a lot of people’s minds. And it was a very difficult time. I’m going to go through the list of companies that were created during this crisis. Just to appreciate the level of opportunities that present to us in this challenging time. WhatsApp in 2009. It was sold to Facebook in 2014 for 19 billion dollars.

[0:13:23.7] WS: 19 billion?

[0:13:24.7] VY: Venmo was created in 2009, sold in 2015 for 26 million. Groupon, created in 2008, Instagram, 2010, Facebook purchased it for a billion. Uber, valued at 47 billion. Pinterest, Slack, Square. I mean, the list goes on and this is created times where people are panicking, stressing, crying and sitting in anxiety paralysis.

We have a choice. What does this mean? Is this you know, there's a – they say there's two characters in Chinese that symbolizes crisis. One is opportunity and one is disaster or crisis. We get to choose which one we focus on and where our energy goes. We do have to acknowledge this is serious. We have to acknowledge what the health risks and financial strains on the economy. And you know, as we were chatting earlier, I think there's a huge problem that's going to be coming up as the economy goes down or in the downturn of the economy.

It's going to create a lot of people in extreme poverty. It's going to add to that in over a hundred million people are going to join that list. It's going to result in people dying from hunger or in astronomical numbers. It's a serious situation. And sitting in fear, being paralyzed will not solve or help that.

Wherever your focus is, wherever your energy is, you'll find what you're looking for. If you're looking for bad news, you're looking for something that's going to keep you down and keep you feeling sorry for yourself. You'll find it. There's plenty of it. You know, turn on the news, you know, scroll through Facebook or whatever, you know? There's bad news after bad news.

Or you can focus on the positive things. How people are reaching out and doing good things, helping others you know. Singing through their balconies whether it's in Italy or New York or getting together and spending time together, you know? We put ourselves – you mentioned that I travel a lot. And I love adventure travel so you know climbing Mount Kilimanjaro or being out in the wilderness in Africa. We put ourselves – I put myself in those challenging situations because it helps me learn about myself. Helps me learn about how I am, how my mindset is, how I deal with challenges, how can I push?

You know, climbing Mount Kilimanjaro, you have 50% less oxygen, it's freezing, you know, the water in your backpack is frozen. The high altitude, you know, your heart's pounding. Your nose and ears are bleeding. You don't want to take another step. And it's all mental now. At that point, it's just one more step. And so, you'll learn and you learn how far you can push yourself and you learn how much, how stronger you are than you think. I create these artificial scenarios where I push myself to learn what I'm made of and how far I can push myself.

Here's an opportunity where the world, the universe has put us in this challenging situation without us planning it or paying for it. Actually, we're paying for it. But you know, what an opportunity to learn about ourselves and how we react. Learn about our teams. Learn about our business and thinking about what is my business going to look like coming out of this? And will it be destroyed or be stronger and maybe leaner?

We talk about essentials. Now I can see now – We've cut a lot of fat out, right? You know, maybe we don't need this. Maybe we don't need this. My priority is my team, if I can keep my team and I can still provide some value to my clients, that's my focus right now. As we go back to hopefully a new normal, not the old normal, my question's going to be, how much of that fat that I cut, I want to bring back and how much of it I want to leave it behind and be a little more essential? You know, focusing on more essentials.

And so, what an opportunity and like a case study for us to experiment and do we need so many of this or do we need that? Can we live with – you know, we're learning that we don't need as much as we think we need. And this is something I learned from the Hadza tribe, you're out there you know, your concern is water, food and safety.

[0:17:38.5] WS: Survival.

[0:17:39.4] VY: Survival, right? You're pretty much in present. And I was there for seven days and we didn't take any food from outside, any shelter or any weapons or anything. And so, we basically went there to live like they do with them as part of their tribe. Basically, survive and learn from them. You quickly forget all the necessities that you have back home that you feel like you can't live without. And all of a sudden, all of that is irrelevant.

Another interesting lesson from there was, before I got there, my biggest question was, how am I going to go through seven days without taking a shower? That was my big problem in my head. I get there and then the first night we go to sleep and they don't have any shelter. They're nomads. They move around. And so, they make fire, they sleep around the fire. And you're in the wilderness so they have leopards and lions and tigers and snakes and whatever. Hyenas laughing, you can hear at night. And two of them from the tribe stay up at night with their bows and arrows, guarding the fire and guarding you.

All of a sudden, the shower becomes less of a problem, making through the night becomes a priority, right? I'm thinking, how am I going to sleep for the next seven days? Am I going to wake up, you know? And then, as we start going hunting and I realized that things that they're killing and eating, I'm not going to eat and I'm not going to partake in some of the stuff you know, from bush babies to baboons to you know, things that I'm now thinking okay, "Food's becoming kind of an important thing now." I actually ended up not eating for six days.

All of a sudden, the shower is not a problem.

[0:19:25.7] WS: Least of your concern.

[0:19:26.7] VY: Least of my concerns. Sleeping. I get some sleep, not enough food. You know, and then, you go on this hunting trips with them that are between 15 to 20 miles a day into the African heat, up and down and the bushes that have thorns and they stick into your skin and pull, I was all scratched up by the time I got back. There's only so much water you can take with you because they move really fast and you have to move with them.

And so, within an hour you run out of water and you still have four, five hours of hiking up and down and you're sweating. And you're parched, they'll stop by and drink from little things here and there. And I can't drink that because I'm not used to that and all of a sudden, the water becomes – like forget the food, forget the sleep, forget the shower, if I could just have a little bit of water, I'll be fine for the next week. And just taught me how grateful we should be for whatever problems we have today because they always could be worse. They could be and actually we see –

[0:20:23.4] WS: But those people that tried probably didn't see it, is that bad though? You know they didn't see it as a horrible day. You know before we were recording, you know I wanted you to highlight on this, they always have fun. They're always happy. And to most of us, if we were in that predicament, I mean we wouldn't survive very long if we weren't amongst other people like that, who are used to it.

[0:20:45.8] VY: Exactly. And what really carried me through those days was for them this was just regular life, right? And this is just another day just going out and doing what they do. Obviously, they are used to it and they have been doing it for generations. They live, the Hadza tribe lives like they used to live thousands of years ago. They make fire with sticks. They speak in clicks. So, their life has not changed for several thousands of years.

And so, they are used to it and they're built for it and they know what to do and how to survive. We don't. But what really helped me get through those is just being around their energy and being around the joy that is an overarching theme of everything they do. We schedule fun and joyful time in between our work and errands to run and do this and, "I am going to have fun here and I am going to go out and have fun or I am going to stay in and connect with family."

Connection and fun and joy is not something they schedule in between hunting and between making fire. It is they have fun and connect while they are doing this stuff. And just being around that is such a lesson of, "Why don't we have that? Why don't we bring in more joy and fun in everything we do?" You know kids running around and playing with things like rocks like the latest toy. And they can play for hours with this rock they found because it's got a little shine on it. And have so much fun.

So, one of the lessons I have bought in this is to bring in more joy and fun in everything we do not say, "Okay, I got to do this and then I am going to have fun." No, you know? Before the travel ban or restrictions, sometimes you get asked, "What are you travelling for? Is it business or pleasure?" It is like we are distinctly separating those two.

And as an entrepreneur, your business should be a pleasure and pleasure should be approached as business as well, where you intentionally plan and say, "Look I am going to have fun," whether it is with your team, whether it is with your clients, whether it is your brand. Being

a little playful, being a little – especially in these difficult times we all could use a little bit of that. So yeah, I mean so many lessons there.

[0:23:05.2] WS: You know earlier in the conversation you highlighted and I really made some notes to this because I thought it was a great quote but you know you said trying to fix the business without fixing the person doesn't work. And then, you also mentioned that your business, you experienced a lot of growth recently and you were the one that had to change.

And so, now that we talked about numerous experiences now that you've had and especially being with that tribe and different places you have been, what was it in you specifically that had to change for this growth this most recent growth that you have experienced in your business?

[0:23:42.6] VY: One I think was radical responsibility. Knowing that everything that happens to you, to your business is as an owner of the business it is my responsibility, not pointing fingers, not being a victim of, "Oh, it is the market. The things that is changing. It is the new times. It is this person. It's this employee or it's this competitor."

No. Taking responsibility. And not in a way where you are blaming yourself. But it is just the first step of empowering yourself of saying, "Look, this is my business. I get to decide what the circumstances mean and where are the opportunities are." And so, your business is not doing good? It's not trying to look for somebody to blame but say, "Hey, how can we fix it and is that have anything to do with me or how I show up in the business or how I think or how I hold myself back or hold my team back?"

And so, I think taking responsibility for your business and not having that kind of victim mentality of, "The business is not the same as it used to be." You know things are changing. Things are different now. Millennials or the economy or the technology is changing. Yeah it is and it is disrupting stuff.

For example, a distribution company, a film distribution company that we have. Back in the day for me to distribute a film, it would have to be – The role of film that cost \$25,000 each. So, for me to do a theatrical release across 100 theaters would be prohibitively expensive for me. Now

because of the technology, it is a Blu-ray DVD that costs me a couple of dollars. Like it would be five to \$10 shipping, I don't even want it back. The theaters just destroy it.

And all of a sudden, I am a player in the game where 10 years ago I wouldn't have been or 15 years. And so, as much as technology is disrupting things it is also creating opportunities. So, I think taking also charge of where is your focus? What are you looking at? Are you looking at the problem or are you looking at the solution? Are you looking at the opportunity? Are you looking at what's wrong?

[0:26:00.5] WS: Was were something that you were studying or something that happened or anything that helped you through that, helped you to change your focus or take that responsibility like you are talking about?

[0:26:10.4] VY: Yes. I was married and I have an eight-year-old beautiful daughter. And a nice house and businesses and everything else. And at some point, my ex-wife and I decided to separate. Amicable separation and we are friends and everything is fine. But I saw my world change very quickly from having that picturesque life to where now, I find myself as a single dad. Sold the house and things started changing. And so, I wanted to look at myself and see is it something that I am causing. Again, responsibility, what am I responsible for? Why is this happening and what did I do?

And so, learning about myself and initially wasn't business oriented where I need to grow my business so I am going to do some personal growth. It was just I really need to understand who I am, what my values are, what success means to me. I found myself at a place, at some point, where on paper everything is great and I am successful but I didn't feel successful. And kept chasing certain recognitions, certain things. But I didn't get to place where I feel I am successful.

And so, I had to sit down and this is most part of the process of why don't I feel successful? And examining what is success mean to me? And I realized that what I had taken as success was a borrowed definition of success from culture, from movies, from books, from society, from whatever, right? And so that wasn't my definition. It was borrowed and I was trying to chase that. And because it was not aligned with my values, I wasn't feeling it.

And so, I sat down and started writing and making a list of things that make me feel successful. Spending time with my daughter. Quality time with my daughter. It makes me successful. You know adventure travel and doing photography and doing some art stuff make me feel successful. Charity makes me feel successful. You know taking my mom on nice trips make me successful. Speaking and sharing and teaching makes me feel successful.

So, I realize that I was in the wrong – again, I need the business for me to be able to do these things. But now the picture changes. I need to restructure it in a way where I have some time that I can spend travelling or spend time with my daughter, spend time travelling with my daughter or doing things that I want to do to make me feel successful. And so, then I start restructuring the business in a way where I could operate without me.

Some people need or want to be in there and that's where they get their definition. So, I am not saying my definition is, it is just my definition, right? So, everybody gets to decide. As long as it is not borrowed as long as it is yours and as long as you put some thought into it, of, "What does it mean to me?" And things change. And all of a sudden you know you are realizing that you can have both. The mentality was, "Okay, I need to do this so I can do that." No, I don't like the word balancing but you have those two worlds coexist at the same time you know?

And so redefining what success meant for me and not just in business. And anyone in business, what is success of your venture means to you? Is it just profits?

[0:29:30.7] WS: Kind of your 'why,' right? Your why. Your mission behind what you are doing. And if it is always a shiny object there is always one shinier, right?

[0:29:39.0] VY: And that is one of the – you set a goal and I have clients who cash out and exit and this is something they've worked for for years and like that's it. I am off to the beach somewhere, drinking pina coladas and watch sunsets. And within a couple of months they call and say, "I need to get into something else. This is not working for me, I am bored." And so, why are you doing it and it has to be bigger. The goals are moving targets.

It is interesting when I was climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro the goal was get to the top. And so, it took us about five and a half days to get to the top. And it was the journey and the lessons and I am

actually writing my second book is going to be about the journey and the lessons learned from it. And one of the lessons is you get to the top and this is your focus and your goal. I need to get to the top. As soon as you are on the top, after taking a couple of pictures, and you are there not more than 20 minutes because it is cold and the pressure and the lack of oxygen.

You just want to take a couple of selfies to acknowledge that you made it and then get your butt down. When I am there and a good friend of mine climbed with me, we looked at each other and said, "Okay, what's next?" And then we decided to Fuji Mountain in Japan and I realized all of a sudden, my goal was moved. I just reached it two minutes ago, it put me weeks of planning and five and a half days of pain and suffering. And right when I got there even before I had time to enjoy to really take it in, all of a sudden that target had moved. And now I had another goal.

[0:31:18.0] WS: Is that mountain lot bigger?

[0:31:19.3] VY: It is not. So, Kilimanjaro is the highest freestanding mountain in the world. Fuji Mountain is the highest mountain in Japan. It is not higher. It's different. And so, for me it was interesting because I realized that as we say and it sounds cliché, but it is about the journey. It is about those five and a half days of what I have learned about myself about my friendship and looking at life and looking at what drives me and it is not about just reaching the top.

You know even if I didn't reach the top, I would have all of those lessons. And even when I reached the top, it was like, "Yay! We're here, what's next?" And so, do not postpone one, both celebrating your small little feats and achievements but also get where you need to get in this process in the journey rather than when I get there. When I get there, I'll be happy. When I get there, I'll relax. When I get there, I would do the charity that I want to do.

Do it now. Do it now in little steps, little things. Little things add up. And as they say the way you do anything is the way you do everything. And so, as you do these little things, do it as if they're big things and they'll add up. And it is good to set goals.

For me, I found more valuable is raising your standards, not raising your goals or bigger goals. Because, if you raise your standards your goals will raise naturally. And so, looking at not, "I

want to make that much money. Like what kind of person am I and what kind of stuff that person does out there, right?”

[0:32:58.1] WS: That is a great segue into one of our last questions I always like to ask the guest on the show is how do you like to give back. And I know you are really big on giving back in different ways. But what is one way that you give back that you would like to share, Vahan?

[0:33:11.7] VY: Again, since we are talking about entrepreneurs and business, I very much encourage businesses to put charity as part of their vision and mission of their business. It used to be where you go off and build a great business and make a lot of money and then you take some of the money and you give it to charity and you start a non-profit or whatever.

Times have changed. And now, as you are starting your business if charity or giving back or contributing is not part of that business as a foundation, forget about doing the right thing. It is bad business. It is bad business because people care how you do your business. Customers care and look at you and say, “Who is this person and what values do they have?” And forget the customers, your team.

One of the things we have is as a firm as a company, we sponsor kids. And we have a bunch of kids that we have been sponsoring. Every quarter we add a new child from different – my team I think we have about they are from 12 or 14 different countries or nationalities in my firm.

And so, they all choose kids from different places they’re from and they pen-pal and we pay for it. So, we’ll pay for it. But they feel like the part of this effort and it gives them more purpose as they show up to work. It becomes something bigger. And so, it helps build team building and loyalty and it is just the right thing to do.

So, what I would say is chose a charity that you care for, something that really makes you get excited when you do stuff. It doesn’t matter if it is \$5 or \$500 or \$5,000, just make it a habit of giving a little bit back. You will be surprised at how far a little bit will take somebody, even if it doesn’t change their economic state just knowing that somebody cares, somebody that they don’t know cares and has written a letter or sent them a package or send them some money for food or whatever.

It could change their life because you don't know what they are going through at that moment what they're considering, what kind of things they are thinking you know from suicide to taking their drastic action and everything else. And one, we talk about charity as something where it is this third-world country, you know you help people out there. Charity could be somebody you know. Your neighbor, somebody, a family or friend that's going through difficult times. And it doesn't have to be just financial.

[0:35:47.0] WS: It could be time, right?

[0:35:47.9] VY: Time, right. And so, one of the things that you're asking to circle back, one of the things that really changed my business was when I changed the questions I was asking. So, as a refugee and as an immigrant of this country and I love this country and it's given me so much. And I am so fortunate and grateful to be here, as I came in the American Dream, my natural approach was so many opportunities, what opportunities can I take advantage of? What can I get? What can take from all of these opportunities?

When I changed that to what value could I provide and what do I bring to the table rather than what from? it changes your approach to business and mentality. And all of a sudden instead of thinking, what can I take from this person or this client or this customer or this market or this business or this country, it's what value do I have to offer because the money will be – if you provide something of value, the money you'll get paid for it sooner than later and you will get in proportion to the value you provide.

And so, if you focus on that rather than how much can I charge? And what can I get is what value do I have that I can deliver and provide? It will change your business just in that kind of mentality and mindset of what does this person need and how can I be valuable to them? And so, that will help your business. And if you can expand that into your surroundings whether it is your immediate surroundings or extended surroundings.

You know the tribe that we are talking about, Hadza Tribe, they refer to their tribe and they're not all related obviously, but they refer to themselves as family and they act like it. For seven days I could not tell whose kid is, whose parent is and whose kid is whose. Because everyone was

helping everyone and kids were going to all these adults and playing with them and sitting on their laps and playing with their little jewelries and all of that stuff.

And that kind of mentality that I think especially in these times, we need to adopt and we are all in this together. And it is an opportunity to just take a look at ourselves and from going bigger units to just isolating to just about me and my immediate family to this is this world in it together. You know how something that originated in China can affect all the families all around the world?

[0:38:11.7] WS: I think it would help all of us if we go spend a week with the bushman of Hadza, you know?

[0:38:16.8] VY: I think so.

[0:38:17.9] WS: It would change our perspective about lots of things, no doubt about it. Vahan, I am grateful for you time, grateful for you just sharing and just talking about this entrepreneur mindset and things like that because it is so important and when I started changing my mindset was when I said my business started to take different levels and just understanding the importance of that and where my focus is and so I talk to my five and seven year old. I try to, just thinking through those things on what do we focus on? But, Vahan, how can people get in touch with you and learn more about you?

[0:38:50.5] VY: I am on Instagram, Vahan Yepremyan, my website is vylawfirm.com. I have a book coming out that I co-wrote with Shelly Lefkoe of The Lefkoe Institute called *Self-Made: The Surprising Solution to Success When You Have Tried Everything*, and we talk about basically limiting beliefs and mindset and entrepreneurship basically bringing those to two worlds together. It should be out in a couple of months. And I am happy to share and contribute in any way I can.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[0:39:19.0] 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 feed-

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[OUTRO]

[0:39:59.6] ANNOUNCER: Thank you for listening to The Real Estate Syndication Show, brought to you by Life Bridge Capital. Life Bridge Capital works with investors nationwide to invest in real estate while also donating 50% of its profits to assist parents who are committing to adoption. Life Bridge Capital, making a difference one investor and one child at a time. Connect online at www.LifeBridgeCapital.com for free material and videos to further your success.

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