

KH 00:05

Whatever your mind can conceive, and you believe you must be able to achieve, and so there's nothing to stop me when I was getting door slammed in my face on my bicycle, trying to sell driveway sealing said, I just got to shift it a little bit here pivot because these people want this. Yeah, I haven't figured it out yet, right? So don't give up. Just keep plugging and enthusiastically acting upon is one of the key parts of that whole process.

SD 00:38

I want to start, Kevin, everyone's gonna know exactly who you are world famous one of the original sharks, over 22 businesses 21 businesses now that you've taken one over 100 million Yep, 21 businesses that you've taken over 100 million dollars, you are the guru when it comes to entrepreneurship, and I'm chasing you with everything I've got. I love it. You always want someone to look up to. But let's start with your first business when you were young. Let's talk about what was your first give us a crazy story of business when you were a kid.

KH 01:12

So I was I started in my dad's restaurants my dad actually had was a bartender and he wanted to be an entrepreneur saved up enough money to open Harrington's Irish Pub. So when I was in there, at 11 years old, I started barbacking, dishwashing, serving all that, but not only that, my dad said, Look, anybody can do that I can pay you by the hour, I want to bring you in the back, I want you to see the numbers, I want to see where they want you to see the cost of this business where the income is coming from the profit in the bar side of the business. And food being a little tighter because of the high food costs. And so he taught me how to be an entrepreneur. And then when I turned 15, he said, I think it's time you got to go start a business. And I found out that a neighbor of mine that not next door, but somebody had been in this black topping business and doing very, very well in it. And I've heard the story of it. And in Cincinnati, Ohio where I grew up, if you had a crack in your asphalt driveway and water got in there and then frozen the winner triple the size of the crack. So I would knock on doors. 15 years old driving my bicycle, I found out I couldn't drive from door to door because if I'm sitting there with my bike, they're looking at me like, wait a minute, what's going on here? say, Are you the owner of the company? And you know, so? So I drive in a neighborhood park my bike somewhere, and then I would walk the neighborhood. And And the key thing was this because the very first time I did this, actually, I my sister bought a home and she says Hey, come on out to my neighborhood and give it a try. Because you know, I live out here. So I did. And I got 20 people that said no, no, some slam the door. Some said I'm busy eating and this and that. And then I was so dejected. I'm like I hadn't made a sale yet, right. So I told my sister I said, You know, I think we got it. I got to come up with something unique. And I think maybe because people kept asking where have you done a job that I can go take a look at. I'm going to do your job for the cost of materials. I said to my sister, my brother in law, and it was like 10 bucks. Okay, so I said I'll do your driveway, put a sign across there. But I'm gonna take a picture before and a picture after. And now I'm going to go back into the same neighborhood and see how many people I can get. We did over 20 jobs in that neighborhood after I did the first one. So it became a credibility issue because I was you know, 15 years old knocking on someone's door and you're thinking how good a job can this guy do. But we did an amazing job as I had training and, and

and and also some of the best product in the marketplace. So that was really my first kind of entrepreneurial thing and I was doing 10 driveways a week all summer long. Wow. And a lot of fun.

SD 04:12

That's awesome. Okay, so you had the spark? I mean, there's two types of people batteries included in Batteries not included. You were completely batteries included. So what what was it about business in general that made you excited about getting into that world versus doctor or lawyer or accountant or teacher? What What about business made you want to get into that?

KH 04:32

So what when I looked at other professions, and when I was in grade school, I wanted to be a fireman. And that's a great profession. But also it's a question of are you going to be happy with the finances? Oh, you know, I mean, ultimately, people have to decide, do they want to build something and be very, very successful and along with that comes financial gains etc. Or did they want to just, you know, be happy in their day to day life and in the community, etc. And so for me, I said, I want to build something, I want to build something big, I want to build something global. I just, I actually was I'm not an inventor ideal with inventors. And I've licensed hundreds of products, but I would actually try to invent stuff around the house, because, like, I know, I just had this, you know, like, I would wake up with a passion to do something and be productive and solve problems, right. So when, when the problem that I solved when I got into the end did my next, you know, I say my next venture wasn't my next one. But because I had I after I, after I did the driveway sealing that was only a summertime business. I got into college, I needed something full time. So I started so what what, what's your route? Well, heating and air conditioning. So I started installing furnaces and air conditioning systems. And what I did was, I went to the courthouse, and I got a list of every real estate transaction in Cincinnati, Ohio, where I was born, cross referenced, it got their phone numbers, we call them and we said congratulations on the purchase of your house, we're going to come out and clean your furnace for free and give you a free safety check as a welcome gift for buying your house. And 80% of the people said, When can you get here, and of course, we go out. And every single home, we went to had a pilot light that would that would burn 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, of course, we would clean it because that's what we told them we're going to do. But we'd also show them that there was new technology called a spark ignition Spark, when the furnace needed the pilot light to go on, then the pilot light went on, and then the heat went on saving you 20% on your heating bill. So I had the rights to this back in the 70s. And I was selling 15 of these a week while I was a freshman in college. And by the time I got to the end of the first year at 25 employees, six trucks going out every single day while I was going to school. And I did that for two years until I just couldn't take school anymore. So I'm a college dropout, I hate to say but I had, you know, the equivalent of a \$5 million business my freshman year in college. So I loved every bit of it.

SD 07:28

Yep, I love that. And you said solving problems, right? solving problems for a profit. I think that what you just touched on is i what i what we are so interested in teaching kids about, right? Because they go through this assembly style school structure. And they're not thinking about solving problems around you, right, find a need fill a need in the community, what can you do to solve a problem? That is how people should be thinking because I think we bit kids don't realize in 10 years, half the jobs are going to be made up, they're going to be new industries, new technologies, problems solved by men and

women like you and I and so that's a brilliant thought is find a problem and solve that problem. That's a great way to learn.

KH 08:09

That's how inventors work. They you know, they walk around the house and look at things they're having trouble with and and, and solve it and create the product that I deal with inventors on every level like that.

SD 08:21

Yeah, and every inventor needs a multiplier, right? And it's, you know, because it's just as hard I think, to invent something as it is to find the right channel to serve people with the invention or the or the problem solving. Right. marketing to me is one of the hardest things in the world. And I'm a born marketer. And it's it's every day I'm learning about behavior science and learning about what channels to try throwing spaghetti against the wall to see what sticks. What what are your thoughts on on marketing? What are your thoughts on? What can people do to kind of learn, okay, I've got a great idea. I've got a cool product. You know, we work with a ton of people that have inventions and new ideas. What's the best way for them to get that out to the world? Or think about getting it out to the world?

KH 09:04

Yeah, I mean, look, there's in the old days, because because I I was I created this world have As Seen on TV and infomercials and

SD 09:16

other of webinars and infomercials. This is you are

KH 09:19

Yep. Hey, so you know, thank you. But like I was sitting there watching my cable TV when it cable first came in to my city, Cincinnati, it was 30 channels. I got to channel 30 and nothing was there. It was the Discovery Channel. I called them and they said, Oh, discovery is only an 18 hour a day network because it has a problem. It doesn't have enough money to produce 24 hours a day. So six hours a day is dead airtime. And I said what so that's a problem. I said, Okay, if I'm the TV station, the cable company, how do I solve that problem? Well, let's get six more hours. But it doesn't have to be entertaining program. It Could be selling programs that can make money self liquidates itself. So I didn't want to produce movies or television shows, I wanted to produce shows that sold products and provided an income stream for the TV station. And for me so that was a problem solving situation I got six hours a day on Discovery Channel on a nationwide basis back in the early 80s. And that created the infomercial industry and again solving a problem in the marketplace and and and then we got more time and more channels. And then we went global we were filling airwaves in Europe, Latin America, Asia, the Middle East, etc. So it's you just never know where it's going to come from. And so I hope I answered your question. I'm no yeah,

SD 10:46

it actually that moves perfectly into thinking like mindset. Okay, we got to talk about this book for a second mentor to millions. This is your newest book, USA Today. Number one bestseller, right? You just get well,

KH 11:00

we hit we hit New York Times, we hit Wall Street Journal number two, USA Today was pretty close to that. But I don't we don't have the last numbers yet. But it It was huge in number one on Amazon in nine categories. I love it.

SD 11:15

I love it. I journal is

KH 11:17

data. It's on how many books are sold, we're number two to Dan Rather. And I feel pretty proud about that. So

SD 11:23

that is fantastic. I mean, I literally bought hundreds of these things I'm given I know. There's our friends. I love the book, not just because I love mark, but the stories in here are fantastic. And you talk about curiosity, you talk about mindset, you talk about have a plan, make an action. I love the mindset part. And I think what you're touching on is your mindset from very early on, was thinking through finding problems finding channels, there is a there is an answer to a lot of unknown solutions in the world. So tell me about mindset in this book, when you when you think about how to approach a situation in your life, right mindset you have to have

KH 12:00

so i i couple different things. And and Mark, Tim and I both were fortunate, you know, I met Mark through a mutual mentor of both of us, Zig Ziglar, Zig had mentored Mark Zig had mentored me when he passed away. And I connected with Tom Ziegler, and like, hey, Tom, you've got all these amazing assets that Zig created, what's the plan? And and then he hooked me and mark up and said, You guys should talk. And then I started mentoring Marc along the way, but I think Zig had an unbelievable mindset. And it was nice same mindset, and that I learned from him. You can get everything in life you want, if you just help enough other people get what they want. And so that was a true mindset for me. And, and I think that it was also so so the concept of not having to always be you know, getting something out of people, but right back, right. And so I started the entrepreneurs organization. And by the way, we called it the young entrepreneurs organization when we first started it 1987 Michael Dell, Ted Leonsis, myself, Vern harnish, a handful of guys, we said, we want on young entrepreneurs to be able to network with other young entrepreneurs. And, and to this day, now we changed the name to eo along the way because we all got older, and we in the beginning, you had to be under 40. Right? Now, I'm way above that. So we changed. We changed the name to entrepreneurs organization, we're in 150 countries, all around the world cities. I mean, you name it, from India, to China, to Europe to Latin America. We empower entrepreneurs, and this is me giving back to the entrepreneurial community. But I also have one other mindset thing that's important and this came from Napoleon Hill, and thinking Grow Rich was one of the one it was the first book I read, that shifted my mind and and until it basically

Napoleon's concept, it I'm going to say it a little bit different than he does. But whatever you vividly imagine, ardently desire, sincerely believe and enthusiastically act upon must inevitably come to pass. And so that that's I wake up every single morning with that mindset. And I have since I was 15 years old, because that's what I learned from Napoleon Hill, is that whatever your mind can conceive, and you believe you must be able to achieve and so there's nothing to stop me when I was getting door slammed in my face on my bicycle, trying to sell driveway sealing, I said I just got to shift it a little bit here pivot, because these people want this. And I haven't figured it out yet, right? So don't give up. Just keep plugging. And enthusiastically acting upon is one of the key parts of that whole process.

SD 15:17

Man, I love that this exponential thinking and this vivid thinking is so cool. We just had this story. Travis actually 10 years ago, he helped me launch apex, the largest school fundraising franchise in America. Now we've served 3 million kids, but I remember vividly, it was literally, we were talking, I think we're having a having dinner at some restaurant in the middle of Dallas somewhere. And we thought, wouldn't it be cool to help a million kids with leadership and fitness and learning these life skills that now we have my first sale, calm and now stuff? And we just sat there? And we thought that would be unbelievable. And then we thought, Well, how do we even get there? And then we literally started thinking, Okay, here's what the company looks like, with a million customers. Here's what the company has to have in terms of leadership in terms of teams, you know, we've just worked backwards. And then we got all the way down to what we're doing tomorrow. And I think it was like 2016, or 2015, we hit our millions, and it was like, boom, and then we hit 2 million within a year and it was just

KH 16:15

like, boom, boom, boom, put a plan together, she had the vision, then you had the plan, then you had the execution. I don't know how you got it funded if you needed a lot of funding, but that's an you know, that oftentimes is something that is a hurdle that entrepreneurs run into. And and so that's why

SD 16:32

high schools we had schools pay us 1000 bucks to book their spot. So we ended up getting our first 50 grand and booking fees and that helped me build the site and everything else now with with happy with the biotech company. We raised eight and a half million dollars. And now we're you know, doing our IPO here pretty quick. It's going to be a ton of fun, but that's a hardware investment growth, right?

KH 16:54

That's fantastic. No, my

SD 16:55

my thing is just find something you're passionate about that solves a huge need and go after it. Just like Napoleon, Napoleon Hill enthusiastically with a clear vision. It's bound to happen. I love that backlight.

KH 17:07

Yes, I wake up every morning I feel you know, like ready to rumble ready to go.

SD 17:13

And I got to ask you this too, because we have a ton of you know, entrepreneurs in their families that listen biohackers people who love to hack their mind. You do not look your age, sir. How old are you? You got to tell? I

KH 17:28

just had a birthday last week and I turned 64.

SD 17:32

Okay. Well, Happy birthday.

KH 17:34

Thank you. Thank you. Okay, nice. I feel 64 But thanks for saying I don't look 64 But okay, I feel great. I you know, you get little, little, little tweaks and arthritis here and there. But I'm good. I work out I eat right. I don't drink. I'm just you know, I I said years ago, I want to live a long life. And as one of my father when he was 90, I sat down with him. And he's like Kevin, he said, If I hadn't known I was gonna live this long. I did start taking care of myself a lot better, a lot sooner. Okay. Yeah. His last few years weren't so good. But he lived till he was 93. So I got some good genes. And I just believe that you, you know, you're given a body and you should take care of it. And the longer you're going to be around the the more important that is for sure. So yeah, and that to say Thanks for the compliment, though. Yeah.

SD 18:28

And it comes back to mindset, right? I mean, I'm 34 Yeah, Dad 64. Same as you. And I love that type of thinking as you get one body start early and think you're gonna live a long time, right? We do this, we do this exercise in Strategic Coach with Dan Sullivan. He's one of my closest mentors, he The first thing, the first thing we do is how old are you going to live? You literally write down a death age. Then he says, What if the day before you died? You were doing exactly what you wanted? You were healthy as an ox. You were in your passion. You were in your unique ability. You had enough cash confidence to make it for the next 50 years. You think you'd die the next day? No, there's no way. So I did. What we did is the lifetime extender principle like that. Everybody said, You know what? Maybe I'm not going to die it at like my dad or my grandpa or my uncle or whatever they think in their minds. Maybe I'm gonna live to 100 hundred and 30 140. Right. Dave Asprey says he's gonna live to 180 I think is his number. Oh, wow. Yeah, but Dave,

KH 19:32

good guy, Chad. Love Dave. He's one

SD 19:34

of our main advisors for for happy, and he's been phenomenal in this thinking. And he says, you know, you have to think long term about your life. Right? The two, the two professions that die the fastest after retiring, are doctors and insurance actuaries. It's because they live their whole life calculating death. And they think that when am I going to die? It's based on that stat here because of this age demographic. And I that's

KH 20:03

funny, a good friend of mine who's an actuary, he's probably figured it out. And when he gets to that year, he's going to be, you know, starting to feel not so good, right? Because he's conditioned it in his mind. That's, that's crazy.

SD 20:16

And how many people out there think the same way? Because their relative or parent died the same time? Right? Yeah, uncharted territory, it must be biological. I'm not going to make it.

KH 20:26

So you know, when you said how long you're going to live, I automatically thought, you know, my dad leaves 93. So I should be able to live longer than that, you know, right. You know, so I'm gonna go very about left. Hey, I don't know about 180. But let's go north of 100. Right?

SD 20:43

Yeah, you're gonna have to implant your brain in some blood boy to get out and get to that level. But I hope Dave makes it. That'd be fantastic. And I think you I think we can and But again, it's mindset, right? The funny joke that Dan Sullivan tells is, Hey, I might be wrong. His goal is 156 is Dan's goal. He's like, I may be wrong, but the day after I die, who cares? Like it's, it's all how you think about it. Right? Right. And so so the same is the same principles true in anything in your life, whether it's your family, whether it's your business, whether it's your health, whether it's your your mind, your mentality, your spiritual life. So I love that man. This that's like the best topic. I feel like you could be teaching everybody about today.

KH 21:25

Yeah, absolutely.

SD 21:27

I had one more big thing for you. about family. Okay. Tell us about your being a crazy, okay. I'm saying crazy because I'm one to being a crazy entrepreneur. I don't want you to think Yeah, that's right. My I don't have a you know, I don't have a I don't have a clock. I just I write and I go, and I do the things I love. And I solve the problems. I see. How do you raise a family in that type of an environment? everyone listening? This is almost all of our entrepreneurs are busy, hard charging families? Yeah. What's your advice?

KH 21:59

It is a little challenging. I mean, I'm one of six kids, myself, Cincinnati, Ohio, my dad, mom, we all eight of us lived in one home. And it had two bathrooms, I said, the six of us had one bathroom. And my parents had the other and we fought like crazy to see who got in there first in the morning and all that good stuff. But you know, it's my dad, as an entrepreneur, he was in the restaurant business. And it was it was a tough business, it took him away quite a bit, because he was open till two in the morning, and they opened at 11 o'clock for lunch. So he would get home at 3am and then leave at 10am to go you know, and literally work that that whole shift for many, many years. So I would see him on a daily basis, but he wasn't there for for dinners, and and obviously worked so hard to sometimes but uh, weekends he was it was tough. So I realized I want to do something different. And so like, Yes, I have

in my I have two boys now. One, they're both grown and out of the house. But 32 and 22. And I and I think that as I grew up as an entrepreneur, my father ended up retiring from the restaurant business, and I said, Hey, Dad, would you come to work in my business? So my dad worked for me for like, 15 years, and and then I brought my brother into the business. And then my brother had children and one of his kids join my two boys are in the business now. And so I you know, as an entrepreneur, I believe that if the family is it, you know, it can be part of it. And this was Mark, Tim discovered this, he incorporated my family. And so, for me, it was, I never went to that formality. But my father, me, my brothers, my, my kids, my nephews and nieces, we're all in the business, right. And so I like to have many of the, of the family members be able to participate along the way. And so, so it's important though, that you also have separate time that is non business and I do a lot of just, you know, like I I keep my life by a calendar, and I count like this, you know, I'm probably going to go see the World Series. And you know, and go go travel a little bit and earlier this week, I was in Chicago playing golf at one of the greatest golf courses in America Medina golf course in Chicago, and three weeks ago, I was at whistling straits, so I get to do my private things that I like to do, but then I also have the exact same things that I do with the family. And so this weekend, I'll take my wife along for the for the trip. So you know, it's important that the family is part of what you're doing because if they feel alienated is not going to work. You're going to build the business all over yourself and not have a happy home life. So it's important to to be transparent with all of that, and make sure that you put reins around it to the best that you can. Because I know, Scott, you're a crazy entrepreneur like I am. So sometimes it gets tough, right? If you're at a dinner and a very important call comes through, and you're not supposed to take it, you know, what do you do? Well, maybe you get back to them later then. Right? So it's, it's challenging, but family is what it's all about and that in and that's why I learned the hard way with not having some of the best partners in the world, that heaven family was the one way to make sure that it all came together in a very powerful fashion.

SD 25:41

Yeah, I love that. And I remember, you know, my first business was in third grade making beat geckos and little key chains and things like that I grew up in this world for generations of entrepreneurs. My grandpa was Reagan's bank chair. And, you know, we just have this mental mindset from a young age that you're going to, you know, your money is going to have its place. It's not, it's not the idle, it's a tool, you know, you're going to learn profit, you're going to learn grit, you're going to learn delayed gratification. That's, you know, this is why we mentor thousands of kid entrepreneurs, because yeah, all their families want the exact same thing you just said, right?

KH 26:17

Yeah, no, I love what the program you're doing. It's it, because kids too often, like my dad, he did mentor me. And he said, Kevin, that I want to show you the operating side of this business, the financial side, and I want you to be ready to get started in the business. Very few people have a father like that. Right, right. I mean, they're they're busy that if they're running corporate this or that they're not, you know, telling their kids what to do and how to do it in business all the time like that. And so I was a lucky guy. And I think that's maybe one of the reasons why I've ended up being very entrepreneurial. And, and, and as you say, crazy entrepreneurial. Okay.

SD 26:59

Yep. It's a life sentence, you might as well enjoy it. I do think I'm unemployable i think is the synonym for entrepreneurs. So Right, exactly. All right. Well, we don't have much time. I know you're busy. And we really were honored that you're here with us today. Any last advice to the you know, the families out there that are listening in on this? Whether they're entrepreneurial? They're, they're hard charging? What do you got for him?

KH 27:22

I say this because I run through airports and people hate the stopping. Hey, you're that guy from Shark Tank? I've got just one question. I mean, young entrepreneur, how can I be successful? What is there any guarantee? And I said, No, there's no guarantee. But let me tell you what I learned early on. And it involves mentoring, because I said, I was growing a business, and I needed capital. And people say, Oh, go to the bank and get lines of credit and get some you'll get some loans. And I did and five banks told me no, no, no, no, no. And so I thought, well, I got this great business is profitable, why can I get money because there was no security. So I ran into a banker that had retired, he was the former bank president, one of the biggest banks in my city. And, and I and I kept talking to him, tell him about my business and the problems I was having. And he said, I'm going to do something that I don't know if it's me who's ever done this, but I'm going to mentor you, I'm going to get you a bank line. I know how he says, one of the guys that turned you down, I'm going to get him to give you the money because I know how to talk to bankers don't. So we got a \$3 million line of credit. And we built we tend x the size of the company. So I say you need mentors, you need a dream team. And one may not be enough. And so as I built my businesses, I've surrounded myself with smart people. Now, I didn't do this in the very beginning. And it cost me because I was as a young entrepreneur, I thought every dime I pay out is less than I get. No, you need a good support team. You need a good CFO, you need good operations people. Yeah. And I'm not saying go hire five full time employees and all the profits are gone. You can get some of these people for free mentors, you know that a lot of mentors are doing it because they're giving back to the entrepreneurial community. They're giving back to the youth out there. So if you're a young entrepreneur, if you're starting a business, don't go it alone. And I think this is why Scott they tune in to you and they you you mentored these people, and then maybe like I don't do you teach all aspects you teach digital marketing and all that kind of stuff. So yeah, though, they need someone like you. And for those that have you, they're lucky for those that don't, they need someone like you or like me in their life to be able to guide them along the way. At least in the beginning. You don't need you don't need someone forever, holding your hand ever. every step of the way, but you in the beginning, I say it's most important because you can learn along the way from those mistakes that the mentors have made. And one last thing that I want to say is that always begin with the end in mind. So you're building a business, what's the goal? Oh, well, some people say just want to build it. Well, do you want to sell it? Do you want to cash out? Do you want to take chips off the table? If so, there's things you need to do along the way. And one of them is just making sure that you've got people that have had exits and no valuations and things like that. So begin with the end in mind. And, and get it get a get a good dream team around you. And you're going to be have a much better chance, a big, big success

SD 30:45

as well said, I cannot I can't even put \$1 amount to just to me personally, not to mention my network and my family and friends to what mentorship truly means. I can't tell you how many people in my life took me starting young and just said, Here's here are the mistakes I've made that were costly,

financially, family wise, and what have you. And I have been able to learn vicariously through them. And I cannot put a price tag on that. It's I'm so thankful to my wife, I look at my three kids that are young, I look at our network, I look at the you know, six businesses, I look at my life and I and I immediately think of the 42 people now that have literally taken me from A to B to C to D on my hero's journey. And everybody needs that everybody needs that.

KH 31:32

I can track mentors to billions of dollars of sales that have happened for me, so it's, it was definitely worth it. And you know, the guy that brought me that first \$3 million line of credit he said i'm doing i'm not charging you anything just now after it's done, maybe we'll sit down and talk if you want to do business with me, but I love mentoring. I love being a mentor. I love having mentors. And and I just want to thank you for having me today. It's been really cool to connect and I for those the young ones out there that are listening, the old ones out there that are listening. I hope you picked up a few tips from our conversation today. But definitely get get some good advisors and board of advisors and and some good folks around you to help you build that dream team.

SD 32:16

Yeah, and that's that's the book mentor to millions Kevin Harrington and Mark, Tim, make sure if you're listening to this grab to at least copies. Give one to a mentor in your life today and then read the other one yourself. You can see that in our show notes. We'll give you guys a link directly to buy. And Kevin, we thank you so much for this. It's been a fantastic day. Great to be here. Thank

KH 32:35

you, Scott. Thanks, guys. Good scene yet, keep doing what you're doing. It's really impressive. I love I love what you're doing. And maybe there's maybe there's a way for me to help some of the young entrepreneurs that that you're dealing with there too.