

- Ali Jafarian: [00:00](#) When you think about like attempting to be zero waste or just attempting to be more environmentally conscious is say don't do nothing because you can't do everything, do something, anything. And the concept there is like just start, right. And even if it is not willing to Costco, which is hard for a lot of us or not buying the things in plastic, you've got to start somewhere. Otherwise you're completely ignoring.
- Jon Vroman: [00:27](#) All right, front row dads. Welcome to the show. If you are new here, I'm your host John Broman and this is the podcast for family men with businesses, not businessmen with families. We are in search of a building, this brotherhood with high performing, hard charging entrepreneurial type men who want to succeed at home as much as they want to succeed in their businesses if not more. And so, uh, we're in the process of trying to find these guys, connect them together, have meaningful conversations and impact our families and the world I guess today is my friend and fellow front road dad [inaudible] out of Denver. And Ali, for those of you who don't know him, cause I know some of them, the guys listening are going to be members of the group, but there's a lot of guys out there who are, are not members of front row dads yet.
- Jon Vroman: [01:17](#) And you're learning about Ali for the first time. I'll tell you, first of all, Ali is just one of those guys who you meet and within just a couple minutes you're like, we're going to be friends for a long time. A good soul who has been with his wife Gabrielle for about 13 years as two kids. Everest and CEP IA the coolest. I normally wouldn't say the coolest names cause I really appreciate tiger and ocean, my boys. And I'm like, dude, Everest Zappia that's rad names, man. They take time to come up with those. Those are awesome. And uh, and so they, they may be the coolest names professionally. Uh, Ali builds software businesses and uh, but what's cool about front row dads is we don't spend a lot of time talking about that because, uh, one of our rules within the brotherhood is just no business. A lot of us are part of business masterminds.
- Jon Vroman: [02:06](#) We spent a lot of our days talking about our work and we need a little space to talk about things other than that. So that's what we're going to do today. So, Ali, welcome to the show, man. I'm glad you're here. Thank you John. Honored, honored to be here. Hey man, let's start with something easy because as we record this, do, we're right in the midst of the holiday season as we are know, chatting now. It's December 20th did what's going on in your world right now? Man, I, you know, what could we celebrate? What's good? How are you feeling about closing out 2019 and heading into a new decade? Wow. Yeah. Lots of

emotions. Yeah. And to be, you know, cause we're real here, right? So holidays especially Christmas have often brought a sense of anxiety for me. And that's, and it's, you know, there's, there's lots of joy, but there's also, yeah, anxiety of gifts everywhere. And just to get right to it. And that was actually one of the things that I dug into at the retreat.

Ali Jafarian: [03:00](#)

You know, in San Diego with some of the other fathers who gave me some just amazing and compelling advice on how to kind of navigate it better this year, which we're doing.

Jon Vroman: [03:09](#)

So,

Ali Jafarian: [03:10](#)

you know, in that case and in that scenario, definitely positive, positive indications. And then, yeah, just enjoying, you know, my, my children ever since separate four and two, they love the, just the [inaudible] and the nuances of Christmas, like lights. Every time we get in the car, every starts screaming, lights, light rusty and Mickey mouse. So that's, you know, just reliving that adult, how majestic it can be. Yeah. So that's, that's awesome. And then just having family around, you know, everyone was here for Thanksgiving and my mother-in-law and my father would be here for Christmas. So we're, we're pretty blessed. How about you?

Jon Vroman: [03:52](#)

Amen. I, you know, I'm really excited right now because as we record this, this will be my last day in the office before I turned my attention to the family and my, you know, my constant struggle and you know, since we are always honest here is my struggle is checking out. My struggle is that I really love my work. I love what I do. So letting go of that for a little while and just really focused on focusing on being present with my family, putting the phone away, putting the computer away. I'm so good at making excuses as to why I need to handle something in the office or whatever. And it's truly, it requires energy and effort for me to totally check out. So that's going to be my focus, man. It's just to be present with my family. I realized the one thing that upsets my wife more than anything this time of year is when I am like buried in my office for some reason. And telling her that there's a fire or some urgent reason why I need to be doing work. So my, I have a simple goal man. And that is just to be slowed down, right? Just to slow things down.

Ali Jafarian: [04:55](#)

Absolutely. Yeah. I can relate and I love that you're doing that cause it is a struggle. It's not simple.

Jon Vroman: [05:01](#)

Yeah, absolutely. And I love that. We love what we do. And I was interviewed yesterday, a really cool dude named Purdy who

had me on his show and he was asking like, what do I see as a big struggle with high performing entrepreneurial guys? And I see it within myself, I see it within my friends is it's easy to want to go do the work. We can often hide there too, right? Because sometimes the parenting thing and the marriage thing is tough and work is actually easier no matter how tough where it can be. Then dealing with those things in our lives. So we, I, I hide sometimes at work and I see other people do it as well and I have to be honest with myself about them. Hey, when we talk about, I want to stay on this holiday subject for a minute too because you brought up earlier about the anxiety around it. I've felt this over years that I'm sometimes happier on any given Tuesday than on a special holiday because I feel so much pressure to have to deliver. Like you must be amazing on this day. It's like if somebody were to just hand you a mic and say be,

Ali Jafarian:

[05:59](#)

it's a lot of pressure there. And what do you mean by anxiety? How does that show up for you specifically? You know, I've got a list of my own, but I'm curious for you. Yeah, so there's two forms and I will preface this with the brotherhood, you know, then I guess coming on a year now and joining as not quite a year, but almost, you know, that I signed up on the first interval this past year. It's been immensely helpful too to grow in these two areas. But I would say to quickly highlight the two aspects, it's the gift giving, the abundance that I mentioned because it's just everywhere. I mean, you turn on TV, you about your phone, you, your, you know, with peers, with social groups and just like all this stuff, which I think we'll, we'll talk about this today, but there's just so much and some of it's great because it comes from the heart and the other side is just materialistic, right?

Ali Jafarian:

[06:56](#)

Just stuff to have stuff. Black Friday, cyber Monday being so close to technology and online businesses. I've seen the depths of this. I've seen the data layers. I've seen like what's the underlying agenda here? And it's not all good. You know, I can tell you that firsthand. A lot of it's driven by, by material needs and financial agenda. So that piece is an in dating. And then the other side connects to what you just said, which is I've got anxiety. Where did, these are periods where family comes in. And given that our group is generally, uh, categorizes as high achievers, we've all learned how to be really performance in professionally and now in our homes, which is amazing. And what I found is that part of me has become more introverted, introverted as a result. So just learning how to focus and tackle one thing and then tech next thing, and then shift back into family.

- Ali Jafarian: [07:52](#) And so, well not new people, but when, when family and friends just are present so much more, it kind of takes me outside my comfort zone. Right? And you know, we were blessed to have a big enough house to have six, seven family members stay comfortably, but they're still in your zone there. They wake up, they're disrupting your processes and I know that that can sound like so arrogant in a way, but the truth is like we built some really healthy processes that are now standing on our family values and when people just come in and like, like trample on that, like I have to a lot of times cause and leave the room and just like center comes up. Those are the two, the two lanes that navigate both. Dude, I fully appreciate that. It's like I love when you come and visit and I love when you leave there is a sweet spot there. I mean there's a sweet spot to just about anything of how long you want to do it. Right? It's like dinners. How long is a good dinner? There is a sweet spot. There's a couple moments when I've left parties and dinners and things like that. Social gatherings,
- Jon Vroman: [08:56](#) right. I said to my wife, I think I stayed about 30 minutes too long. I think I overstayed by about 30 minutes. I should have just listened to my heart. But I think that shows up a lot around the holidays. You know, when you think about the presence piece of it, do you have any rules around that specifically relating to how many or a budget or a just how do you get from the heart and out of love? Because gifting is a love language for people at times. How do you do it also without overdoing it becoming like a massive consumer and, well we were joking earlier about all the packaging, right? The waste, right. How do you navigate that space? What rules have you put in place?
- Ali Jafarian: [09:36](#) Well by no means am I a master. I'm actually very much a humble student in this, this realm. And again, I actually learned some very recent tactics from brothers in the group in San Diego and one is a limit. So we, my wife and I, when we had our last lunch meeting, we talked about limiting and we were a little bit late to the game this year because, um, my mother-in-law is the gift queen. She was already like, Oh, already got things too late. But now, especially going into next year, we're going to be really intentional about saying, we kind of thought about categories. So like there's categories of gifts for our children. There is Mmm. Education, right? So how are they learning? There's like physical sports slash exercise. Like what things can they get out and do with their bodies? There is, I call it like raw entertainment, like action figures.
- Ali Jafarian: [10:25](#) Like they just want to play and they just want to stimulate themselves, you know? And then there's, uh, the, we're very

big. My wife is a previous teacher until she started staying home. So we're very big on books. So that's always a part, whether it's mostly still physical books for the children, but you know, they're becoming acclimated to iPad so they can learn in digital format. So we're trying to categorize and then limit to two to two and have a sense of total gifts. And then my nature of being a nerd at heart, I'm gonna like email my family. Like, here's the tallies, here's the spreadsheets pop in what you're going to do. Um, you know, let's lock in your gift and what you, so that we don't get seven Marvel action figures, but you know, and that way there's some sense of organization and we don't

Jon Vroman:

[11:10](#)

end up with 50 gifts instead of what we want, which is like 10 or something. Yeah. Yeah, man, I think that's great. And I think it's also important for me to say now because I want this show to be evergreen, right? So that if you're not listening to this two weeks before Christmas, that somehow you consider this like a waste of a conversation. These are, this shows up with birthdays. This shows up with any celebration or holiday, uh, in your life. And this is really a values conversation and a communication conversation. Um, and, and, and so for us, uh, you know, I was thinking about this with my wife too, about what are our rules around gift-giving. And so I'll buy this to Christmas, birthdays, whatever holiday, whenever gift giving, uh, occasion. Ours would be no plastic unless it's used. So we're not buying any new plastic whenever possible.

Jon Vroman:

[12:02](#)

I'm not going to commit that we're 100% on this, but we're trying our best to eliminate, we've said no to like 15 ideas because we're like just not doing new plastic unless it's used. Right? A number two would be we focused on experiences. How can this be an experience all by itself? Or another one. Another question is how do you make the thing experiential? Like in other words, maybe it's not an experience like a gift card to go, you know, uh, go-kart racing. But what if you could turn a gift into an experience itself? Like if you were giving the, my boys love swords, right? So you think I could just hand them swords or I could create an experience, shape and experience around that, either in the delivery of the gift in a, in a unique or special way. Like they're hidden somewhere special in the house.

Jon Vroman:

[12:50](#)

In other words, they, maybe they have to do a scavenger hunt to get them. Or maybe I set up a, you know, we watch videos on how to do fencing and we learned some technique. You turn something into an experience. So that's rule number two. The third one was shared toys. So you know, for the boys in previous years, we would do like, this is your gift and this is your

gift, right? They would each get yes. And we said, well, how do we, one of our values is building brotherhood within our boys. So one of the ways to do that is create shared experiences for them. So the majority of their presence this year are actually for the both of them, things they can do together versus that's mine. That's mine. It's like, no, this is ours. Right? And so that makes ruffle a few feathers this year as we introduce that new concept.

Jon Vroman: [13:41](#)

But we're happy to do that. Right? So those are the few rules that we put in place for this year. I think it's great too, John, that the starting point here is what you're talking about, which is having rules because we had no sense of rules and, and where this conversation Rose or, or where, uh, STEM from was that I, when my wife and I sat down, had a real conversation around this, we realized that we had different experiences in terms of receiving gifts and even giving gifts. She's shut, her heart is so much bigger when it comes to giving gifts cause she just, she's wired that way where I have to work towards it. Um, that's probably why it's sometimes I get anxiety. I'm like, Oh, this is work. It's hard work that I'm not a master at. I think how to get a great gift and you know, you start to do cycles, but I love that you're pointing out creating rules because if you don't do that, you're just going to keep going and, and this, it'll, it'll go somewhere.

Jon Vroman: [14:36](#)

You might not intend for it to go. Yup. Absolutely. Let's talk a little bit about, one of the reasons I wanted to chat with you today, and this certainly ties to everything we've talked about so far, and that is, you know, this is a very conscious group, front row dads, very conscious group. I often say that, you know, a really good dad will like go home and be present with his family. You know, really great dad is not only thinking about his family today, but he's thinking about the impact of the decisions he's making today. Um, years down the road, 20 or 30 years down the road. And I think a front row dad is somebody that's actually thinking about not only this moment, he's thinking about 20 or 30 years down the road, but he's thinking about the decisions that he makes and how they affect his kids and how that will affect the generations that follow.

Jon Vroman: [15:23](#)

He's thinking two, three, 10 generations down the road. And I just think there's a process there of just expanding your thinking and considering the true impact of all the decisions we make. And I think I shared this at the retreat that I read a stat somewhere that when you, whatever you feed your kids, whatever environment you create for them, right, it ultimately is affecting their development, will impact up to 18 generations

down the road. Right? From there, from a genetic profile perspective, right. Their genes are impacted and affected by the decisions we make today and that can impact 18 generations of people. So what a, what a cool thing to think about. We brought up at the retreat, this idea of, you know, of being more conscious about our world and the environment. So I wanted to ask you about this, cause I believe you're really focused on this as well as what's your take on the environment.

Jon Vroman: [16:24](#)

Um, you know, the, the use of plastic since we, we went there and other issues that, how are you addressing this in your house? Right? Yeah. This when to give some, some pre context cause yeah. This, this conversation gets real deep, real quick and it's powerful. Um, w and you brought it up the four ocean movement that the retreat, um, a little when we left that [inaudible] immediately in a hallway I started talking with some of the dads and started talking a little bit about zero waste concepts and this isn't as known yet as, as just being eco-friendly, but it's a [inaudible]. It's basically as extreme as you can get and very few people are actually like really a hundred percent zero waste. It is not easy to achieve but people are working on it and our family, we practice it as it's the best of our ability.

Jon Vroman: [17:15](#)

Just like you said, some of the things, to answer your question John, are like we're just extremely mindful now of what we waste. How will you know to your point, the things that we eat, the things that we use, the things that we keep, to give you another example of how extreme this can get, there is a even micro movement called the a hundred things and some of these people live their lives with 100 things. Meaning a shirt is a thing. These EarPods are thing. This watches a thing. Imagine the challenge, right, with an apply that with families like and so that's

Ali Jafarian: [17:49](#)

what I'm saying, there's, there's spectrums, right? And the way I look at it is that that's the end of the spectrum, right? If you're doing that, you know, you're living on the earth as minimal and as just w you know, a zero waste as possible. Whereas the starting point for a lot of us is let's start recycling like, or let's get off the plastic and let's educate ourselves via, for ocean. And some of the other, like the rich documentaries were just actually expose you to the, the raw numbers of what plastic is doing to the world. Right. And so, I'm going to digress here, but I just wanted to paint that picture that there's a really low, a wide spectrum. And the biggest thing, a quote my wife gave me, which I wanted to make sure I, I gave to the group and the audience is that when you think about like attempting to be

zero waste or just attempted to be more environmentally conscious, you say don't do nothing because you can't do everything.

Ali Jafarian: [18:45](#)

Do something, anything. And the concept there is like just start, right? And even if it is not willing to Costco, which is hard for a lot of us or not buying the things in plastic, you've got to start somewhere. Otherwise you're completely ignoring the situation. Right? Can you say that quote again? Sure. Don't do nothing because you can't do everything. Do something, anything. Right. And this doesn't just apply to what we're talking about today. I mean you can apply that to any sort of movement where you want to make impact in the world, right? It's like you can stand down and just watch or you can step up and just take a step.

Ali Jafarian: [19:25](#)

We often say in our community that you won't learn everything but you will learn something and that one thing can change everything. That's very cool man. What does it mean to you to be zero waste? How do you define that personally? Well I think to be zero waste means that like at all times you are just conscious of what you're using and more importantly what you're wasting. Cause this is, this is where it stacks up. This is where we see the buildup and we see why there's, there's a movement like for ocean and why? Like the United States has such a good waste management system, which is why we don't see some of it here in our country, right? Because we've, we've built a system to eliminate that waste or hide that waste. Whereas to be zero waste is to be always be mindful and conscious. Like what am I using? And so to give some examples of, break this down when you're eating right, are you eating all the food? You know, we have lots of friends unfortunately who when we go out to eat with them, they'd just let half the plate go back to the kitchen to be thrown away. And you know, it's like a dagger when you, when you've started living this life. Cause we're like, we're very intentional about taking leftovers home and we're very intentional about our children that, right? So

Jon Vroman: [20:47](#)

even if they don't eat their food at the meal, we're going to take it home. We're not gonna waste it. Right? So these are examples, but the other piece of it is my kids see me take other people's food home, dude. I am so like I'll be like, are you taking that? I'll take that home. That's really cool. I like this concept a lot and this is a, this a, I actually was bringing this mug. Um, this is uh, a glass mug from the zero waste store, which is appropriate for our podcast today and it's glass, right? And it's, you know, this is recycled materials. It's made out. That's not

the bad plastic notes. It's a type of recycled material and the little things that we can do on a daily basis. This is one of the things I want to talk about with you is that there's things everywhere everyday like having this coffee and taking it with me and then going, if I choose to go to Starbucks saying, Hey, would you mind using this?

Jon Vroman:

[21:48](#)

I brought it instead of another paper cup, another styrofoam that, another plastic whatever. Because what you find when you get into this mentality and you truly like buy in and re identify with being ecofriendly and trying to achieve zero waste is that it's harder and it takes more time. It's not more convenient. But to your point, and this is where it gets really good, it's the impact, right? It's like by doing that, by doing something, doing anything that is where you're truly driving impact, you driving longterm the facts that can sustain because it's way easier believe me to just grab the paper cup and go, but that doesn't mean it's better, right? Yeah. You know what I think sometimes about our decisions is that somebody somewhere is going to pay for that decision and we might pay for a certain decision with our time right now a responsible choice where we pay with intention and time and energy or we defer that to somebody else and force it upon the world, the, you know, mother earth, whatever, to pay for that decision.

Jon Vroman:

[22:57](#)

Right. When we make a decision to have another plastic bottle because we're just not being conscious enough to bring our own bottle alone. Right. And we just say yes because it's easier or more convenient. And I've been there many, many times though. But you know, the, the ocean pays the fish pay. And then ultimately I think if you believe that we're all connected, we ultimately pay the price in the end, right? So while we're, we have to recognize the how far this travels and when it travels far enough, it comes back to you one way or another, right? Like if you're, we're in San Diego, we're at this retreat, we're talking about the awesome organization for ocean, and we're talking about the amount of plastic that's put into the, the water now and, and how big of a problem that is. Because plastic doesn't break down, it just breaks apart, right? And it breaks into these tiny little particles, then they get eaten. And if you've had fish tacos, anytime in the last few months, you've most assuredly consumed plastic, right? And you're eating that toxin that is no doubt affecting you. And then 18 generations. So no matter what, when you support that industry, you are ultimately, if you play it out long enough, it is affecting you. And your kids. We have to know that piece, right? Yeah, you got it.

Speaker 3: [24:24](#) All right guys, I want to take just a quick second to talk about something really important now and know you're listening to the show because you want to level up your game at home, but if you want to take the next step within front row dads, I want you to do something today which is text the words front row dads to three 1466517673 separate words. Front row dads. It's not case sensitive. I want to send you a few things right away. First I want to send you a recording from a masterclass that I recorded with my good friend and author of the miracle morning, Howe L rod. He's a father of two amazing human beings and we recorded a show called the five habits of a front row. Dad, I want to send that to you because I think it is well worth listening to. Second, I want to give you 45 minutes of a mind blowing conversation that I had with a woman named Kim and NAMI and the show is titled have better sex, hugely popular.

Speaker 3: [25:11](#) This will rock your world and likely your spouses as well, but I want you to have access to this information. Number three I want to give you access to 1300 other front row dads inside of our Facebook group where you can ask any question, share any win and give any resource that you think could be valuable to the community. And lastly, I want to include you in one email I send out each week. It's short, it's to the point and I pull from my life experiences along with the insights for more than 135 members of our brotherhood. I want to give you the best of the best in each email. So all you have to do is just text the words front row dads to (314) 665-1767 and we will get you started today.

Ali Jafarian: [25:53](#) Another interesting fact, John, because and a lot of this stuff like said as as a humble continual student to this, I am just always looking for new things to learn and this that really, really hit me hard the other days that if you fly from one coast to the other United States of California to New York, you're using the same amount of carbon emissions just as a single passenger, right? Not, not the entire plane, but as a single passenger. Your, your portion of that flight carbon emissions is equal to driving around the country for a whole year, like in normal traffic scenario. And so think about that. It's like one plane ride equates to using your car the entire year. And so there's an education problem. Most people don't know that, but then there's, I don't care because that's convenient. And so this is the core issue, the topic to your point, it's like we, we generally choose convenience and it'd be, you know, this is how we're wired.

Ali Jafarian: [26:51](#) It goes in psychology and neuroscience, but it's making the conscious decision to say, to your point, is this the best

longterm effect? Cause I agree. It's like, and the food topic is huge in terms of, you know, what you said about the generations and then one of the things we learned from the show from Sasha Patel is like some of the food doesn't take as seven years, right. To leave to fully leave your body. And so if you don't know, that's one thing cause you just completely ignorant. But if you know, and then you choose not to make a better decision, then to your point, you're just, you're, you're sort of saying I really don't care about the future. And yeah, sometimes I just like to lay it out there. Um, you know, give the brutal honesty that that's what you're saying. You're saying I don't care because you're educated and now you're making the decision to be, to take the convenience. Yeah.

Jon Vroman: [27:42](#) Now that we've been talking about this as a family, Tatiana sent me a message the other day when she was at target getting something and she's like, plastic is everywhere. Everywhere. You almost see like once you become aware of it, dude, you, you can't unsee plastic. Blue can't problem. It's a, yeah. I'm looking for toys, my now my Google term is wooden toys. Uh, you know, as an example, one of the things I've just been experimenting with

Ali Jafarian: [28:11](#) that is awesome. Yeah, we did that last less Christmas actually Gabrielle, uh, intentionally searched wooden toys. I'll try to find it if you want though in the show notes, the vendor. But it was a cash register, you know, for our young children and they love it every week. Now granted it was like \$100 cash register. It's, that's the alternative. Is that making the conscious decision to pay more now to prevent all the, you know, the side effects of plastic cash registers in the future. Yeah,

Jon Vroman: [28:41](#) that's right. What other practical things are you doing? What's something that's easy to do that somebody listening, you know, might be able to just take that right away.

Ali Jafarian: [28:50](#) Sure. Yes. So there's a few, a few things we love to recommend. First you've got to start recycling. And I say that because it's like, it's so easy and the only legitimate excuse to not recycle is it. It's way too much money so that if you have to pay, cause I've, I've encountered at some places where it's just mind boggling that communities charge, like really, really, uh, uneconomical amounts to recycle. But other than that, like start recycling and uh, a tip, a strategy that I actually learned not too long ago is that you can't recycle everything. So just because it's plastic or it's cardboard or paper doesn't mean, Hey, just throw that in the purple BIM, you actually have to check on the back if it has the nice little recycled triangle with arrows, that's the universal

symbol saying this can be recycled. And also don't like a cardboard like lunchbox.

Ali Jafarian: [29:45](#)

It still has the macaroni and cheese aligned to it because what happens is that you create work at the plants where if there's too much and they can't quickly get it to a recyclable state bill, throw it away. So you're still just creating trash. So recycling, the next level is composting. And I don't think many people know about this. So composting out here in Denver is an additional service. Very economical. I think we pay like 10, 15 bucks a month for it or something like that. And it gives us this big green container that just like a recycling bin or trash bin that you take out to the curb every week. But what's beautiful about composting is that there's so many things you can compost from leftover food to types of um, cardboard. You know, and even like if you do a lot of yard work like me, you can put leaves and stuff in there.

Ali Jafarian: [30:34](#)

If you don't have a service that takes those things responsibly. So composting is like the next level of recycling and it's great because it's so much easier than having to figure out is this recycle? Not like, Oh, it's food, it's scraps. Throw that in there. Or it's, you know, some of the things are easy to compost. And then what this does, John, is that when you start doing the recycling, doing the composting in our house, the third bin is obviously the trash bin that is the least full. Every week we go to the curb, like in, actually we don't have that much trash. Most of our trash is from my daughter's diapers and we're almost out of that phase. So that's the beauty when you start to see the ship cause at first like Oh donut, a few things and you learn a little bit more and then the, the best part is the impact.

Ali Jafarian: [31:23](#)

So once we started composting weeks later, our neighbors came over to like, what's that green bin like? It's composting. They're like, what can we throw in there? Like food types of cardboard types of paper, et cetera. And then next week we see it outside their house and that's when you start to light up and you start to feel good cause like, Oh this is making an impact now because are the things that we've done other people are observing and they're doing, they're making the decision to do it right there. You know what I love about this? I love when you give me ideas about new goals and things to measure and kick ass at home. Yes. Measure it. Measure the trash. I've never thought about that dude. Like, you know, you think about all the things that you don't pay attention to because it's just not on your radar. I think about if you asked me like on average how full is the trashcan? I don't know that I could really tell you that. My guess is it's full and maybe I occasionally have noticed when

it's been less full, but I'm wondering like could we have this goal of having, you know, a half old trashcan or maybe even like could we get it to the point where it's like how low can you go right in the trash. And maybe we even like set a goal

Jon Vroman: [32:40](#)

as a family that if we have a zero trash week, we all go out to dinner or something like that, like or, or celebrate somehow and get these kids involved to be conscious about whenever I put something in that trashcan, does it really need to be there and monitoring that a little bit. So you know, finger on the pulse, if you will. I love that man. To me that's a real nugget of the show here because I've been very conscious we compost right? I'm conscious of that. We definitely recycle and just because we recycled, by the way, sometimes I look at the amount of recycling and I say I feel good that's going in the recycling. I also feel terrible about how much recycling same I'm actually doing. So I'd like to actually still cut our recycling and half, not because I'm not doing it, but because I'm just actually requiring less items to be put in tonight.

Jon Vroman: [33:24](#)

Right. You know, it makes me want to invest in those companies that are working on eco-friendly packaging. Like it drives me crazy that Amazon still sends out these packages that are not recyclable. Right? Like you know, or that even their deal with whole foods where when you order food from whole foods directly, they send these like silver or bubble wrap, you know, packaging materials that, I remember walking into whole foods saying, is this stuff recyclable? And the woman just kinda like cringed. Whole body shrank down and she's like, no. Right. Cause I know. Yeah. I'm like how, how is that possible that you guys are like, you're delivering, I just ordered food is a perfect example, right? You guys delivered six bags of groceries to my home for \$5. Huge fan. Huge fan of this process. But the fact that you just gave me like an entire trash bin, fill the trash that you're telling me cannot be recycled.

Jon Vroman: [34:20](#)

I've yet to use the service. Since then, I won't use the grocery delivery service because I literally, that's a great example. It's more convenient, but I will hop my ass in the car, drive to the store, buy what I need with, I bring my own bags. Right. And I feel better that way than I do about saving a little time and then delegating my problem, this problem to my kids and their kids. Right, right. It's just pushing off a problem. It's going, I don't want to deal with it. You deal with it. Like if you could literally see it like it's the same thing as literally taking your trash and just throwing it out the window. Like take your all your trash, drive down the highway, toss it on. I never do that. You go. But

that's, but just because you can't see it just because it's not in your way.

- Jon Vroman: [35:05](#) Just because it's not inconveniencing the person next to you. We're just taking it and dumping it somewhere else on this planet that has limited real estate that somebody else is going to have to deal with. Yep. It's a real challenge man. It is. Absolutely. And I'm glad you brought it, the bags cause that's such an easy place to start. And the biggest thing with bags, so to be clear, taking your your own bags to the grocery store is that for me I just was forgetting in the beginning. So now I just stuck them in the back of the SUV. So they have them, they're always there. We have like 10 of these and [inaudible]
- Ali Jafarian: [35:37](#) by doing that, you know you reduce, you reduce the bag usage left and right. And to your point John,
- Ali Jafarian: [35:44](#) I think a big part of it is the visibility factor. Is it companies like Amazon and everyone, they make it so easy to mask what's really happening and not enough people take time to ask the questions. Like, one of the things I love about what you do with your family when you got to eat is you ask where the food came from. Right? And so because it's so easy for, for restaurants to mask that or just not talk about it. And the effect as we've already hit on is, is it's longterm. I mean this, this is not something that we can sustain. And so with that concept of the things I always tell people is like, just sort of open your eyes and open your ears, open your mind like, think about what's really happening. Like where did this come from? Where is it going next?
- Ali Jafarian: [36:29](#) Right. And what, it's funny, it's kind of like, it's analogous to just starting to work out. People who just start to work out are always conscious about going to the gym. Cause there's healthy people in the gym, there's buff people in the gym, right? And you're just like, you're the new person in there. So I've seen this so many times where there's that barrier like, ah, I don't know if I want to go to the gym because you just feel inferior. The same thing with being eco-conscious like the first few times bringing those bags in. Like people kind of look, they give you the cause it's, you are the minority unfortunately. But now I'm proud I bring the bags in and like I kind of make a game of it or, or I'll like catch the cashier, they serve. I'm like, no, no, no. I got the bags.
- Ali Jafarian: [37:07](#) Like, and so they smile and they're like, Oh well thank you. The ones that are conscious about it. So you start when you really buy into this, and again, when you identify as someone who

cares, then you go from being shy to being proud. Right? And it's easy for people like you to say, where does food come from? I want to know like, and then you start to like bring the conversation more and more. And that's how movements like zero waste actually become known as, because people step up, they do something about it, even if it's baby steps and then people see it and then they actually react. Now one thing I'll say is that there's always pushback. So like people, cause my wife's also vegan, so you know, we live a pretty minimalist and lean lean life around here. And you know, people come in and they ask like where guys napkins, where your paper towels like Oh we don't use that.

Ali Jafarian: [37:57](#)

We have actual cloth napkins and we wash them every week. You know? So this is an example of something we do and believe me, even family members kind of look at you weird, but here's the best part. Again, when they leave, they talk about it. Sometimes they might talk about it in a negative connotation, right? Like you won't believe, you know, my, my daughter and my son in law don't have napkins. We want that go say that because at least people are hearing it, right? And then they might see an ad or a commercial about this or some representation of zero waste. I'm like, Oh, that's what they're trying to do. You know, all these little changes allow us to be

Jon Vroman: [38:36](#)

leaders with our kids. Uh, as well. When we, when we take away the napkins and put down cloth and they say, why are we doing that in here? Here's why. You know, I hope to raise conscious kids. I hope to raise kids that understand the world they live in and the impact that we make on it, all these leadership principles and influence principles are, they come from these daily actions, right? If you're really a conscious person, if you're really truly a leader, you don't just choose to be leader in very specific areas when it comes to making money or whatever it is. You just, you show up that way in all things. And I hope that's what front row dads becomes, is that group of just conscious men who have the balls to step up and have conversations that maybe previously weren't thought to be important for masculine kickass business guys to be thinking about like, you're, you know, that we need to just focus on, keep your blinders on and uh, you know, while Hey, I'm all for focus.

Jon Vroman: [39:34](#)

I'm also for an expensive, inclusive conscious thought process about our world that we live in. Hey, want to go? Want to circle back real quick cause something you also said I want to acknowledge you for is the composting piece. And no, I had Josh to Kell on my show quite a while ago. He was the man behind

the documentary called kiss the ground and one of my friends, Ryan Inglehart Reiland Inglehart sorry. It was a who's one of the owners of cafe gratitude. Really awesome restaurant chain, very conscious of food. You know, establishment if you will, is really neat, dude. He was talking about how a lot of our, our atmosphere problems are changed when we adjust our soil. In other words like we can literally [inaudible] what, what is killing us in the air into the soil, right? And that is where we can make the biggest difference in our CO2 problem.

Jon Vroman: [40:31](#)

Right. And uh, that led to the conversation of why it's important for people to and compost. Cause prior to this conversation, I never bought into it. I was like, sounds like a big waste of time. Or actually my, my thinking was I don't garden, so why the hell would I compost? Composting was only for gardening. The reality is what, what he said to me, I never forgot this, was that when you put organic compost, [inaudible] inorganic trash bag with inorganic materials, it does not break down. It does not break down into that rich soil that we desperately need as a society. In other words, we as a planet need rich soil. And the only way that can happen is if you put organic material with other organic material and let it break down. But when you have a plastic bag and you put food scraps and all this stuff along with your, Mmm, you trash regular trash that does not decompose, that does not break down and support our and our air.

Jon Vroman: [41:34](#)

Right? So I realized that this is something we all need to be doing. Everybody needs to compost. That should just be like a staple and a requirement for if you're a homeowner and you can somehow pull this off and I get people listening in, they're in the city and you're asking, how do I pull this off in the city? It doesn't. We could have a whole show, three day seminar on how to figure this out. But I think asking the question or understanding why this is so important gets us moving in the right direction. So we bought a composter, we are doing it now. We're not gardening, but I feel that's part of my contribution to the planet. And I think that's really important for guys to understand is how the hell does this make a difference to you, to your kids and your future generations?

Jon Vroman: [42:17](#)

Why does growing my food scraps in a pile in my backyard matters. Right. And when you start to truly understand that, and the short answer is that it is literally relates to everything that you eat and what you breathe. And uh, and, and how that will play out. Not next week but 10 years, 2000 years down the road. Yeah. That's amazing. And thank you. Cause I learned a little bit just from that piece and yeah, you're spot on. And you

know, one of the movies, a tangent from this, it builds on what you just said John. And then one of the movies that's been going around the group is the biggest little farm right now. Yeah, man. So good. And David recommended it and I remember watching it right when I got back. And so yeah, we've had some, some cheering in the, in the membership area, but this is, it highlights this concept of and not to, I don't want to ruin it for people cause you should watch that movie with your family.

Jon Vroman: [43:13](#)

It's an amazing movie. But the concept of hernia is that it's, it's all a cycle. It all has to coexist, right? The farm can't operate the way a farm supposed to operate if everything's not working in harmony. And that's the piece, like you're pulling out the compost piece in the soil is such a huge part of that movie and how this seven year cycle truly takes place. So that's spot on. It's like the food that you put into the composter is eventually going to get back into the earth. It's eventually gonna get grown back into some sort of food that either gets to the grocery store or to a farm, and then it's going to get right back into your body. So I love that concept, dude. So cool. Say that movie title again for everybody. Yeah, the biggest little farm there. It is. So good guys.

Jon Vroman: [44:01](#)

It's a great film to watch with your, with your wife, with your partner, with your kids. Like it is, it is such that you're talking about a movie, the videography, the storyline, the characters, the highs, the loving. It's just not a movie about like if you just are like, ah, I'm not really into foreign movies. No, this is an Epic tale. It is. It is an Epic adventure and it's one that everybody could relate to and it's just done so well. I didn't feel like, I just felt like a better human after watching them more connected to the planet. I felt more connected to the, I felt just literally more informed about maybe where I've come from over the last hundreds and thousands of years and how far maybe we've gotten away from what matters most. And, and it really like, I don't think I'm going to sell off my house and move out of Austin and get a farm. I don't think that's my future right now. Although we've changed stuff so much as a family. It could be, but it, but it definitely makes me, uh, it has helped me to reconsider what I could do

Ali Jafarian: [45:09](#)

in my current situation, which is really cool.

Jon Vroman: [45:12](#)

Ali recovered a lot of ground here, man. We've had a great chat. We've gone a lot of different places. Do, what else didn't we say that needs to be said? What else do you want to tell anybody out there listening or share?

Ali Jafarian: [45:21](#) Dude, anything you want a story, an idea, a strategy,

Jon Vroman: [45:24](#) a funny joke, whatever you want. Is there anything left to be said?

Ali Jafarian: [45:31](#) I don't have any jokes unfortunately, but I will. I think what I think the, the piece that I want to stick, especially with the dads because, and in an effort of, of empathy is that this isn't easy. And I'll, I'll tell you, I'll give you the quick synopsis of my story. My journey on, I'm trying to be zero waste and also trying to eat more of a vegetarian diet is like, I was super efficient years ago, right? Especially, you know, balancing professional career way before front row dads and I was wasteful but I was fast, I was good, I had everything scheduled. Mmm. The convenience one and we're in, this is society, right? Especially if you're in business, especially if you're a high achiever. Like you just learn to become efficient. Right. What I'm really mindful of now is that that doesn't mean it's better and sometimes it is better short term, right?

Ali Jafarian: [46:31](#) Cause you see the gains, you see things growing, whether it's financially, professionally, or any aspect of your life, but you don't see the longterm effects. That's sort of the recurring theme here where it becomes really important for us as fathers is our children because they're watching, right? And they're observing. And so the things we do, whether we're in a restaurant setting or we're in home, is how they're going to eventually live their lives and to your point, carry into the next generation, which carries into the next generation. And so I think it's really, really important

Jon Vroman: [47:05](#) [inaudible]

Ali Jafarian: [47:05](#) take time to consider your decisions. And especially as it relates to the environment. Do you need to drive or is there, is a more economical way to get somewhere? Do you need to fly? Is that trip necessary to go all the way across the country and within reason, right. You know, we all have livelihoods and we have to support ourselves, you know, so I'm not saying just cut this stuff out, but think about it. And

Jon Vroman: [47:30](#) that's where it all changed for me. Like my wife, I was lucky enough my wife decided to embrace the vegan diet and lifestyle a couple of years back, which kicked off a lot of stuff. John. Like that's how we learned. That's how we became more in tune with, with documentaries and you know, we could go on a whole nother tangent of, of food, but focusing on this concept of just thinking about your decisions, because I didn't use to do

that. Right? I did not. I was just like, what's the fastest, most efficient way I can get this done or I can get this. Whereas now know whether we're in target. Like you said, you'd just like inundated or it's like a, a completely different Biomet. I'm really trying to be mindful. Um, not just for me, but for certain kids. It's almost like when I'm making a note of is to how to be, the question for me is how to be an efficient and eco-friendly you got also, you know, I don't, I'm still obsessed with efficiency.

Jon Vroman:

[48:24](#)

I'm just, I'm just understanding the price to pay for some of those choices. Right, right, right. So, and I also, I thought about a sign I saw years ago, I don't remember who to credit or where I saw this, but it was think globally, act locally, and I love that idea also is it's powerful. Yeah. Just making some shifts there about local organizations, local whatever local needs. Just bringing it back and saying, how do we create more experiences, more, more joy? I still want to travel. I still want to see things, but, but it definitely changes how I do it or maybe even how I appreciate it when we take those flights so that it's not just, Hey, anywhere I want to go at any moment, I just pay a couple hundred bucks, hop on a plane, go done. But now it's like, Hey man, there's really a price to pay for that.

Jon Vroman:

[49:13](#)

So I'm going to, I'm going to truly make this an intentional decision and be conscious about it. I think that it just changes the way we behave. So thank you Ali for this great conversation, man. I look forward to continuing this dialogue and figuring it out. I think we both have admitted to being humble students along the way here. But I think my hope is that our community, our brotherhood continues to ask these big questions, make progress together, share resources and you know, I'm going to go back to what you said in the beginning. Don't do nothing because you can't do everything. Do something, anything. Right. And, uh, I really appreciate you sharing that with us today and let me and done, I don't mean that. Let me leave out high note. This said something that sparked, we are making a difference in the brotherhood. And what I mean by that is that I shared. So as part of our process, we make a lot of our own food. Um, everything from like creamer to a peanut butter is my big thing, right? I own making the peanut butter cause I love peanut butter. That's cool. A Vitamix. You got it. Yeah. You already know Vitamix is so powerful. You can, you can blend anything to base it. It's so, I love making the peanut butter again. It takes more time. It's not fast. Yeah. Yeah. I get value of it. Just enjoying

Ali Jafarian:

[50:28](#)

that process. And then I know exactly what we're eating. It's sugar, some a avocado oil. Now where this gets beautiful and

what I want to want to end on is that I shared this with my band and one of the brothers shared this with his wife and now she's like hooked and he's, he's like, uh, inspired this new source and hurt. It's just like passion, right? It's, she, she's just been like reborn into like, Oh we can. And he's like, I started cracking up the day. He's like, man, we're making mustard. We're making Mayo easy to make. Right?

- Ali Jafarian: [51:04](#) And so where it gets, where, where we end here, why it's important is that she now took this to her place of work at her place of employment and has like completely changed the system, right? So now the entire workplace there is not using these paper cups and there's like a recyclable coffee process, which now that's impacted scale, right? Because my wife taught me to be more mindful, so I started blending peanut butter, someone in the brotherhood watched and then now it's affecting all these lives. So I think that is such a place to, to think about it.
- Jon Vroman: [51:42](#) Do we, and we can relate to that. We can start talking about 60 million plastic bottles ending up in a landfill every day, every day around the world. That's almost like, that's so big. I can't even wrap my brain around it. We got it. But when you tell me that story, I track that. I follow that. Like that inspires me man.
- Ali Jafarian: [52:02](#) So happy. I was like, this is why I should and share it on Instagram.
- Jon Vroman: [52:08](#) We want to be influencers, we want to make an impact and to see that feels great man. We love hearing those testimonials and those stories and you know, we are meant to connect one to one. That's how big change happens. It's just a lot of little one to ones. So yeah, man. Very, very cool. While, um, if people wanted to say, Hey, reach out, find you where, where might they go connect?
- Ali Jafarian: [52:32](#) Oh, I think the best place is my personal website, [inaudible] dot com and just because I'm not a salon celebrity by any means, but this is where I'm taking time to be intentional about blogging a bit more and topics like this. So things around the life and family, you know, I tried to keep that separate from business so that would be an easy way. Otherwise, you know, I'd love to connect with people in the brotherhood who, who want to learn more about this as well. You know what, I'm going to link to
- Jon Vroman: [53:05](#) your post about the retreat, which I thought was one of the best breakdowns of our retreat. That's

Ali Jafarian: [53:12](#) there's no written

Jon Vroman: [53:13](#) and you did a fantastic job capturing the essence of what goes on in the front row dad's retreat. So if anybody's out there listening, wants to hear from, you know, Ali who attended and reported out on what happened, no w why it was important, then go check it out. I'll link to that in the show notes at [inaudible] dot com thank you. I'm humbled yet. Yeah brother. Good stuff man. Really appreciate you and I, like I said as we record this right in the midst of the holidays, so my best to you and your family, I just sending you guys lots of love and uh, I hope that you continue to breathe and appreciate where you're at and know that any guests that comes will eventually go to hear that. Yeah man, well enjoy the holidays and I won't be able to look at my trashcan ever again without measuring how much is in there and thinking about our conversation. Right. Appreciate you dude. I have a wonderful man. We'll talk soon.

Speaker 3: [54:09](#) Hey guys, if you haven't already done so, go right now to front row dads.com/facebook and join the conversation that's happening right now on line. We designed this group for guys who are entrepreneurial in their thinking that are high performing guys with low egos. We're looking for the dads that believe in teaching their kids how to think, solve problems and be real leaders. We're looking for guys who believe in being family, men with businesses, not businessmen with families. We're looking for the fathers who have great knowledge, but also believe that they have so much more to learn. And we're looking for men who want to add value by sharing their wisdom and those that are willing to ask the questions that we all need and want answers to. That's front row dads.com/facebook or simply go to Facebook, type in front row dads and you'll get to our group and what we put in there, links to all the podcasts and videos and other resources that you can't get access to anywhere else except for in this group. We want to give you the best ideas to help you with your marriage, balancing work and family life communication strategies with your spouse and also your children, travel ideas and even suggestions on the latest gear that would save you time and help you be more effective. We've got updates on upcoming events and so much more. Go right now to front row dads.com/facebook and join the conversation. I'll look forward to connecting with you there. [inaudible].