

Speaker 1 ([00:00](#)):

My kids need to learn these life skills. Like I'm not going to be handing them a silver spoon. They're not going to be getting a pay out from dad. Like they're going to be working their way through life just like I had to work. Cause I think that's important. And so it led us to really make the shift in our family to go away from having groceries done for us to then teaching them how to grocery shop, like how to pick out produce, how to compare prices, things like that. It went from having someone else prepare all of our meals to us as a family, cooking our meals together and like having the kids learn how to do all the things. Chopping vegetables, breaking eggs, making rice, like all of these things.

Speaker 2 ([00:34](#)):

Gentlemen, welcome to the front row dads podcast. I'm your host John Broman. If you happen to be dropping by for the first time, this is the show for family men with businesses. And my guest today is my friend Ryan Laveck and I'm so grateful Ryan, because I think it was how, who might've introduced us, right? And yeah. And then getting to know you at our retreat and then getting to learn more about your work in the world. We had a nice chat at some point. We walked around the Lake one time, talked about life and I had read your book and was a huge fan. So the book for everybody out there who doesn't know the name and many will already is a I read, ask and then choose [inaudible] came out and just amazing work that you're doing in the world. So professionally you've had a lot of success and I want to congratulate you on that.

Speaker 2 ([01:22](#)):

But as everybody knows, that's not the point of the show today. And the cool part is that what you're doing with your family and how you're living your life personally, it really inspires me. And that's what I want to get into today. So you've been with your wife for 20 years, you've got [inaudible] two amazing kids, five and eight. And you know, one of the things that I sparked this conversation for me, Ryan, was learning about your family meetings. So I want to get into that really quickly. But before we do, just a quick question, what can we celebrate that's relevant or recent for you? What's going on well in your personal life that we can talk about? Gosh, that's a good question. My youngest son just started playing basketball and that's a lot of fun watching five year olds play basketball cause it's not like entirely by the rules.

Speaker 2 ([02:07](#)):

And I'll just say this, it was a 40 minute regulation game and the final score. The first game. Yeah. That's so great. That's so great. I don't know if I told you this, but my now ten-year-old started basketball two years ago and he went kicking and screaming like I didn't even tell him I signed him up for basketball. I just did it. That's actually a strategy of mine. Sometimes I say, what do you want to do? What are you interested in? What? And then other times I'm like, yeah, this is what we're doing. Right. I've actually found that works pretty well. Well he went kicking and screaming and now he absolutely loves it. Like he is begging me to go shoot around outside and it's been really a very positive thing. But the young kids play right after he does. All right. What lead do they play through or how did you get, it's a city league where we live. Yeah, it's definitely, it's like first experience, the organized basketball and so it's, it's a lot of

Speaker 1 ([02:59](#)):

fun because like there are a couple of kids that are just like a cut above everyone else. You know, like they're, yeah, it's a lower, it's a lower hoop. I think it's like at 17 but there's some kids that are literally

like two feet tall. The basketball, like they're holding it and it's like a giant like yoga ball, like equivalent size. Right. They're just like running and then they dribble every like 10 step and the amount of cheering per basket, like the per capita per basket cheering is crazy. Right? Cause there's not a whole lot of like scoring that happens. So when it goes in, I mean it is like UT stadium, like swarm it much down, like level cheering. So it's a lot of fun. That's awesome man. What are you loving about fatherhood right now? What's something that's going on outside of the basketball that you're enjoying?

Speaker 1 ([03:46](#)):

Yeah, that's a good question. You know, my older son, Henry, who's who just just her day just had a birthday. That was a lot of fun. He was very intentional about what he wanted to do on his birthday down to planning the day to effectively like the minute. So like he, he knew what he wanted for breakfast and then we have to take his younger brother to basketball and then we went to dart him up, which is like a Nerf gun sort of arena that our kids love to do. And I'll talk a little bit more about about that. So we did that. And then true food kitchen, which is like a favorite place. Um, I think it's a fair place of most of the dads in the dad's group here for sure. So that was where he went to lunch. And then after that he wanted to watch a movie.

Speaker 1 ([04:23](#)):

And then after that he went to the juice land. And then after juice land he wanted to get dinner at a specific place. And you know this movie you want it to rent on Amazon, like literally like we were like having to go from place to place to place. But it was fun, like the level of detail that he was planning the whole day around and the fact that his whole desire was around doing this and spending time [inaudible] the family and making it a family day as opposed to like I want, you know, this toy or this video game or whatever. Like the fact that he was really like what he wanted was that experience. So it was, it was fun for everyone. Is that your style? Is that like a mini you? Yeah. You know, it's funny, we joke about that. So my wife is like a super detailed planner, like the most organized person that I know.

Speaker 1 ([05:06](#)):

She's the type of person, like I'll paint a, a picture of contrast for you. So we met in college, we met our freshman year in college and when in our senior year we both wrote an honors thesis. Now she had her honors thesis done I think the first week of senior year. I wrote my honors thesis during spring break and uh, turned it in. Literally the Monday morning we got back from spring break, which was the due day and the paper was still hot from having it printed at Kinko's, so. Okay. And she looked on at front of gal and my son, Henry's definitely the plan ahead guy. Like he's definitely, everything needs to be planned out to the, so he gets that from uh, from my wife for sure. That's awesome. Tim urban. Do you know the blogger? Yeah. Is uh, weight,

Speaker 2 ([05:57](#)):

but why? Right. Yeah. Did you ever see his Ted talk?

Speaker 1 ([06:02](#)):

Oh gosh, I have it. It's been awhile.

Speaker 2 ([06:04](#)):

He's got this, he's got this funny moment where he talks about being a procrastinator and he talks about how he waited and waited to do this paper that was due and he literally wrote it like, you had a three

day Ben. He stayed up for two nights. He turned in the paper and then he got a phone call from the school and the school was like, we need to talk with you about this paper. And the second one, what's up? And they said, this is the [inaudible] best paper that's [inaudible] ever been turned in. And then he says to the audience, he goes, I'm totally kidding. That's not what they said. It was a piece of crap. It was total garbage. It was the best

Speaker 1 ([06:40](#)):

for a speech. It was so funny. I just thought that just came up. I wrote my paper 140 pages in seven days with a Cape red bull that I bought at CVS by my foot. Got me through it. Like literally like you hear about those ultra marathon runners who like red dot. Watched a game changers, you know, ran like these, you know, 30, 40 mile days through the Appalachian Hills for 46 days straight. Like I did that equivalent, but just like nonstop typing, you know, like 2030 pages a day with footnotes and citations. And by the end of it I was like, I don't even know what I wrote. Yeah,

Speaker 2 ([07:16](#)):

you've accomplished some really interesting things in your life and I almost want to get into all that because it's so tempting to travel down that road. Like you learned another language you like, you've done some really incredible things. I just, I, and I don't even know how to paraphrase, like what I read about in your book and learning about your life and your story. But what I'm trying to get at, the question that I want to ask, and maybe I'm doing a shitty job of creating context around this, but what I wanted to ask was with your intensity, with your skill set that you've used to build this incredible life through the business and through all the things that you've accomplished, what do you hope your kids model from you and what do you hope that they don't take away from kind of who you are and how you operate?

Speaker 1 ([08:01](#)):

It's a really interesting question and I've been thinking a little bit about that cause we had a, I had a few sort of interesting conversations with at least my older son, my eight year old that recently, the kind of led me to think a little bit about that. So yes, learn a second language. I lived in China for five years. I speak Mandarin Chinese. And so one of the things that we did with our kids at a very early age is we brought in a Mandarin tutor, a Montessori teacher from Taiwan who lived with us, who my younger son was immersed since birth in Mandarin Chinese and just basically every single day Mandarin Chinese. And we did that for a period of time and now they're both school age, so now they're, they're in school. But we did that sort of growing up cause we knew like sort of language acquisition was really important.

Speaker 1 ([08:39](#)):

So that's an example of being just very intentional whether or not Chinese ends up being a thing for them or not. Just having that experience of learning a second language and being immersed at sort of like that critical age that was, you know, very much sort of a life plan and an intentional thing. But the conversation had with my son recently, and I've been thinking a little bit about this, I, you know, saying what if daddy were to retire? Like, what if, like where I'm at, we're out of, you know, candidly at a point now that if we wanted to, if we said, you know what, we just want to, we're just gonna call it quits and we're just gonna, you know, get an RV and travel the country for a couple of years to do whatever. Like we couldn't do that. Like we're in a position that we could do that.

Speaker 1 ([09:15](#)):

And I just pose them the question. One of the things I, I thought I was going to do when I was a kid at one point was be an artist of some sort of either a painter or a cartoonist or something like that. Just love visual art. And it's sort of one of my skills growing up and we're talking about this and drawing and said, what if daddy just quit and became an artist? What do you think about that? And his immediate response was, no, that'd be a really bad idea because you wouldn't make any money at all. Like you would not be able to make anywhere near the amount of money that you're, you know, you're making now. And then it just, I kind of pose a question back to him and I said, but Oh, what if the point of money is to be able to do what it is that you want to do with your life?

Speaker 1 ([09:51](#)):

Like what if that's the means to that end? And it hadn't ever occurred to him like it was sort of like a question that you said. Hmm, interesting. Like he didn't really have a response to it, but it just kind of made me aware of the fact that we probably live a life. My wife and I co founded the business together. A lot of our conversations that the boys hear us [inaudible] revolve around the business in some way, shape or form, something that's going on. They've been involved in our events. Like we run live events as part of our business. They've been on stage before, they've experienced it. They've had roles at the live events, they have jobs in the business. So we have a separate company that does fulfillment. So they are employees in that company. So they stuff envelopes and put stamps and you know, load books into boxes when we're shipping books out from our house and our office and things like that.

Speaker 1 ([10:36](#)):

So they do that type of work. They've had that experience, but it just occurred to me that like they're so immersed in the business, which I think is a good thing cause they can, they think in terms of creating a business as a way to generate income and well as opposed to the paradigm of I need to go get a job, which is like I'm very happy that that's instilled in them in a very young age like their go to is, okay so what business am I going to create? Like they're always thinking about what my business is going to be as opposed to who am I going to work for, what job do I want to have, which is, which is nothing wrong with that. But I love the fact that they have that level of agency that they feel empowered to be able to do that.

Speaker 1 ([11:13](#)):

But then there's that flip side of it and it's sort of like you, you said something in the group that had a big impact on me and it changed a lot of what we've done in the last year. And I've mentioned this to I think in one of the groups, but I haven't, I don't think we talked about this in a conversation and that's sort of money allows you to do a lot of these things, right? So money's allowed us to, for example, have a cook that prepared our meals at home and you know, took care of a lot of the errands and things like that. [inaudible] there's the dark side to sort of outsourcing your life, which is when you've got kids. Like I grew up working class on the first of my family to go to college. My dad worked for the post office growing up.

Speaker 1 ([11:51](#)):

He was a postal shipping shipping boxes on the back of a truck and my mom cut hair as a hairstylist. So I grew up super blue collar. Parents didn't go to college. We had none of that stuff growing up. And it led me to think like my kids need to learn these life skills. Like they're not, I'm not going to be handing them a silver spoon. They're not going to be getting up. Yeah. Pay out from dad. Like they're going to be working their way through life just like I had to work cause I think that's important. And so it led us to

really make the shift in our family to go away from having groceries done for us to then teaching them how to grocery shop, like how to pick out produce, how to, how to compare prices, things like that. It went from having someone else prepare all of our meals to us as a family, cooking our meals together and like having the kids learn how to do all the things, chopping vegetables, breaking eggs, making rice, like all of these things and now dollar per hour work.

Speaker 1 ([12:44](#)):

This is definitely like below a CEO pay grade so to speak. But I think it's the most important work as a dad that we can be doing. And you're the one that lit that sod up in my brain. And it's definitely been a, a paradigm shift. Like literally just as a point of reference before you and I got on this interview, I just made dinner for the family that be ready tonight. So like that's been a huge shift that's come from this group. It's come from specifically in this case, comes from the group. And I think it comes from just a different perspective you have when you know, when you look at the world through the eyes of what your kids are saying to you, what they're reflecting back and saying, gosh, like am I my living the life that [inaudible] inspire them in the way I want them to?

Speaker 1 ([13:28](#)):

Right. Like, if, if he wants to be an artist, I want him to feel like he can be an artist, not like, Oh, I need to stifle that dream because it's not a, uh, a way to make enough money. Totally. So that's great to hear. That's really great to hear. And if we were just chatting, which I'm treating this conversation like we were, and there's not thousands of people listening, but there's a local company called the lettuce. Do you know about this? Uh huh. So other people might have one in their area that's like this, but what did they do is they deliver meals that they, it's all sourced locally. It's all organic, all healthy. And what they do is they deliver the materials that it takes to make the dinner and they give you the recipe. So what you still get is the food prep and the chopping and the cooking and all that, but you just have exactly what you need to be delivered to your front door.

Speaker 1 ([14:20](#)):

And the thing I really like about this company, and I'd encourage other people to look for this too, is everything is recyclable. So the containers, they deliver everything and we give them back when the person comes and delivers the next week's meals. And we just leave a Kohler on our front porch and they just deliver them and drop it off. And it's been fantastic. So a couple nights a week that gets delivered. So it's sort of like an in between where we used to get already prepped meals delivered to the home. But one of the things that drove me crazy about that was the amount of packaging. Oh gosh, the ice packs.

Speaker 2 ([14:52](#)):

I don't wanna throw any companies under the bus, but Oh man, I can get this giant box like a, I dunno, a fricking safe is being shipped in the thing. Yeah. With all the ice packs and packaging. It's like, you know, just like a few little individual meals in the middle of the box. Yeah. You're, you're filling out your trashcan with so much stuff. [inaudible] as fulfilling as that was to open a package and have a meal ready to go. Like I loved that. I, I stopped that delivery because I was, I wanted to throw up every single week that I threw that stuff away. So what's the a I'm just looking up. It's lettuce. Yeah. Just like the vegetable. Let UCE I think, but a play on, let us, I think also, so I think that's what it is. I'll let you know. Cool. Anyway, local guy who uh, I think he, he hit it big in Silicon Valley and then came here and started this deal.

Speaker 2 ([15:38](#)):

So very cool. But that's really good to hear man. I'm really excited about that. And I think that is something that really does come up in our community quite a bit is how much privilege do we provide for our kids. Because I've noticed, and I dunno if I shared this whenever I shared that idea in that article or if I made a comment about it, but something I think about often is like we have this regular conversation in our home about our housekeeper, which I love and I'm definitely not letting go of Norma cause it's like my happiest day of the week when she comes. But I've heard tiger say like, you know, complain about normal, like Norma put something somewhere where it shouldn't have been. Or he'll say things like, well it's no problem that that broke, just order another one on Amazon, it'll be here tomorrow.

Speaker 2 ([16:20](#)):

All these little clues that I realize that as much as I want to speed things up in my own life, as much as I want to be productive, that there is a [inaudible] like we said, you know, a dark side to that. So, so glad you brought that up man, man. Yeah. Yup. Let's talk about what I teased about in the beginning and what I wanted to get into is this family meeting concept. Maybe you could just tee that up. Maybe you could let us know a little context about, or if you just take it away dude, like how did you come up with the idea of what does it look like now? Because I'm really fascinated. I want to hear how that's going. Cause I crave this and we're not doing it yet. Well I'll tell you so. So I'll tell you sort of how it started and then I'll, I'll kind of provide some context.

Speaker 2 ([17:03](#)):

So like in our business we run our business and we have a very specific meeting rhythm that works really well. So the way we run our businesses, we have a quarterly management planning sort of a meeting. We have an annual planning retreat and uh, once a week we have an a weekly management team meeting. And then our company is about 50, 60 people right now. So we have a management team and then we have individual departments meet on a weekly basis, sometimes more than once a week. And then on a daily basis we have a sort of huddles and the huddles is just like a quick check in. So what it means is like you've got sort of rocks, pebbles and sand, right? You've got four times a year getting together in a really big intentional strategic way. Weekly, it's a bit more sort of the bridge between the strategic and the, and then daily

Speaker 1 ([17:50](#)):

is tactical and that meeting rhythm is really important and it works really, really well. And so that's sort of been operating like a well oiled machine over here [inaudible] in terms of how we run our business. But for years we didn't really have anything like that in the way we run our home. And few years ago I was introduced to this concept through Jim Scheels and it's this idea of the family order meetings. And in our family we call it special days. And the kids came up with that name and it's for anyone not familiar with it. I'm sure you've probably talked about it in past interviews, but just the short version is once a quarter ish, you get together one-on-one with each of your kiddos. They get to plan the day. The only rules are there's no screen time, something that they get to pick. You do it together.

Speaker 1 ([18:29](#)):

And at the end of it you have a meal where you get to discuss and just have a conversation and sit down and they sort of, you know, pick where it is. And so we had been doing that for a few years and that was something that was like a huge win in our house. In fact, so much so that if anybody who's listening to

this, if you're not doing this with your kids, and I don't care if your kids are one years old or 21 or 31 or 41 years old and out of the house, I have friends of mine who have kids at every age and the spectrum and everyone who does it says it's the absolute single best thing you can do for the relationship and your kids. So our kids, they look forward to these days more than even their own birthdays. Yeah, like so much.

Speaker 1 ([19:05](#)):

So like it's, when's the next special day? What's the countdown? There's a, you know, the whiteboard, the countdown and the special days. What are we going to do, the discussion, are we going to do this and we do this and you know, my wife and I, we just have two kids. So we swap out. Like Saturday will be me with kid one and my wife will have kid too and then Sunday will flip-flops. So it's like I'm a mom first. I went dad for, you know, whatever. Like the whole thing. It's like such a discussion and that's been awesome, but we didn't have anything that really connected in between there. So then fast forward to last year, I attended my first dad's retreat, how Al rod invited me and connected us and that's how I was invited to the group. And I sat down with a few people, the two who had the biggest impact.

Speaker 1 ([19:44](#)):

I want to give them a shout out where Mike McCarthy and Justin Donald, just about what a family meeting should be like. I got the concept of like, all right, let's sit down and have a family meeting, but like, what the hell do you do? Like in a family meeting? And uh, so walked away from that retreat, super fired up, super excited. Like the CEO sort of in me was like, all right, we're going to do this. At the same time, I knew that if I went in guns blazing in the house, like this would be met with a little bit of resistance, right? Like, okay guys, here's what we're going to do. Once a week. We're going to sit down and we're gonna have a board meeting and blah, blah, blah. So it kind of had to ease into it. It was a bit Rocky at first, right?

Speaker 1 ([20:20](#)):

Like there's a little bit of skepticism, you know, especially my wife and I would expect anyone, any spouse who isn't in that environment, so have that same sort of level of skepticism. Like what is this like, you know, if somebody's not in that environment, not having those conversations doesn't hear the context is only hearing it firsthand from you, not from everyone else. [inaudible] implementing it and the type of impact that's had on their life. And so I sort of picked what I thought were the best pieces, what I learned from Mike, what I learned from Justin and other conversations I had with some of the other dads in the group. And so we started it out and we now have I think seven components, seven sort of pieces in the family meeting. And I'll, I'll explain what they are in just a minute. But we started, my plan was, all right, let's start by using something that I teach in, in, in our business using the power of micro commitments to just start with adding one of these things a week, over a period of six or seven weeks until we've kind of layered each of them on top of one another.

Speaker 1 ([21:19](#)):

And so we started this when my kids were four and seven, just a bit of context. And what we do is once a week, Sunday mornings we get together as a family after breakfast and we have a flip chart in our house. This will make it a lot more real theoretically. So this is basically our family meeting agenda, safe nurse. And I'll, I'll, let's walk through each of the pieces. So this is what it's evolved into and what we do is, you can see here, this was a kitty themed meeting, my older, so basically our schedule is, so we make breakfast, eat breakfast, I don't eat breakfast, but I make breakfast for the family. I clean up. And other

than cleaning up, usually my two kids are setting up the family meeting, which means that they do the outline and we have this whole flip chart.

Speaker 1 ([22:04](#)):

We were like maybe two or three of them now, just basically saying everything that we would say [inaudible] you keep a record of it and you have, what did I say? Seven, seven components. First component is just the dates. So define the dates were recorded. I'm an outbreak down each of these, one by one on next is wins, gratitude, weekly challenge, family values, family goals, and we go ahead. So that's the, that's what we're looking at here. So we start things out with wins is something we do at our company. Every meeting we start out with wins, just positive focus, right? It just the way to, you know, what was like the best thing that happened to you this week can be anything at all. Be a small win, big win. And it's great, you know? And it's something that everyone gets to participate in. So we started there.

Speaker 1 ([22:48](#)):

Then we'll do a gratitude exercise, which is really gratitude focused on each person in the family. So who's going to go first? Okay, Bradley. All right. So you know, Henry, what's one thing that you're grateful for about Bradley this week? And the only rule is it has to be something specific. It can't be like, he's a good brother. It needs to be on Tuesday. Bradley let me play with his, let me read his book. And he was really generous and thoughtful, you know, something like that. So we write that down so everyone has sort of a bit of the spotlight on them for a period of time. That's awesome. Then after that, this is something I learned from Dana Abraham who's, um, one of my, uh, clients and she helps families with, uh, she calls them super kids. The reality is, um, children that have super gifts but also have certain super challenges as well.

Speaker 1 ([23:35](#)):

So a lot of children who are on the, the spectrum kids you have just, just challenges, right? In some way, shape or form. And what she taught me was the importance of teaching your children about the ability to solve problems about problem solving. So we as a family pick one problem that we're going to work together collectively to solve. And sometimes it's Bradley and Henry are fighting and what do we, what solution do we come up with or not? I'll give you an example of like solutions that we've come up with. So one of them was, was a bit chaotic, picking the kids up from school, coming home. So we decided and everything we treated we treat as an experiment. So he said, all right, as an experiment, let's just create an afterschool checklist that will stick up on the wall when we walk, when we come home.

Speaker 1 ([24:25](#)):

And we have to go through that checklist first cause it just felt like, you know, go home, go to the bathroom, wash your hands, unpack your lunch box. It was like the same thing every single time. And then now that's evolved into do the checklist and then they know, right? So checklist is come home, you'll take off your shoes, hang up your jacket, go to the bathroom, wash your hands, take your lunchbox out of your lunch bag and put it in the sink and then have a snack. Right? So it's like a sort of a thing and we've started implementing checklists in times of transition. Yeah, in our house, your kids are a little bit older, but like at that age, transition is really tough. Like we're going from one space to another. So I learned that from Dana. So that was an example of a challenge.

Speaker 1 ([25:04](#)):

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 one four, six, six, five one seven, six, seven, three 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 is 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.

Speaker 1 ([25:42](#)):

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. 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.

Speaker 1 ([26:34](#)):

This week's challenge is we watched the documentary game changers as a family. Have you seen it? Yeah. Yeah. So we this week are doing a seven day vegan [inaudible] [inaudible]. What's fascinating about it is it's my older son who's the one that suggested it. He like after watching the documentary said let's do a vegan challenge this week. I can't wait to hang out with him. So yeah, I mean it's been three being chili, vegan Keene was stuffed peppers. I just made a, a chick pea coconut Curry. And so we eat pretty healthy to begin with. Like we don't need a ton of meet, but just to go all in on this, it has been fun. So like that's an example of like, how do we improve our health? Let's do a seven 80, you can challenge and then we have, um, animals lives have been spared.

Speaker 1 ([27:25](#)):

Get out. Yeah. And I'll tell you like, listen, we were, my wife and I were begging for, we ate vegan for about two years and then we stopped eating vegan and then we kind of ate, you know, it's still healthy but not entirely vegan and uh, you know, the kids aspire to, to try it out. So here we are, man, that's challenged. Nexus family values. So family values. We started this as, this is one of the first things that we started when we started rolling this out. Basically what we would do is we just, I tried to explain to kids what family values were, what a value meant. We have company values in our company and try to explain what they are and we really just sort of let it or form organically like what are our values as a family and just let anyone suggest them.

Speaker 1 ([28:05](#)):

And, uh, we ended up starting with a list of maybe four or five. Well before we knew it, it, it blew up into a list of 19, like 19 and we would spend so much time just trying to remember what they all were and that was kind of the challenge. And we ended up as part of this weekly family meeting over Thanksgiving this year. Had our first full family annual planning retreat. Well we got away from home, we brought the flip chart with us and uh, we went through an annual planning exercise. So we look back at our wins

from the past year, just like all of our wins and celebrate all the wins from the year. We created a family vision board for like the vision for our future and where we want to go and things we want to do and everything like that. And then we went through the process of distilling our 19 family values down to five.

Speaker 1 ([28:48](#)):

And so like when you have a four year old helping you form family values, some of our family values are things like we help nature [inaudible] like that's it. Or we are friends like that's like we're good friends. And so anyways, so like one of our family valleys is uh, has uh, evolved into kind and respectful. So that encompasses probably three or four of the family values that we sort of distilled some things down. And so we've, every week we pick a family value just to kind of put under the spotlight and we talked about like, what's an example of this and how can we do a better job of this and what does this mean? And we all brainstorm ways, how can we do better? How can daddy do better getting better, more kind of respectful and things like that. So we did that. Then we do sort of our family goals for the week.

Speaker 1 ([29:31](#)):

These are sort of distilled down from our annual family vision, right? So like we have family vision. Like one of the things we've been really focused on, one of our family values is mind and body. And so from that we have a goal as a family to read more and we each have like our yearly sort of book goals that we have. And we distilled that down on a weekly basis to the number of pages we read, honor individual books. And the key part in all this is it can't come top down. Like it all has to happen. Just like if you're running a company, totally tell your employees. All right, so your goal is you need to do, you need to read 50 pages of your book. It's all right. So w what's your goal for the year? I want to read 50 books. Okay, awesome.

Speaker 1 ([30:12](#)):

So that's like how many books per week is that? Oh, it's about a book a week. Okay. So if you're gonna read a book per week and you're going to read this book this week, how many pages do you think you need to read per day in order to do that? Oh, I need to read like 30 pages a day. Okay, cool. So when are you gonna read those pages? Oh, I'll do like 15 before breakfast and I'll do like 15 afterschool. Okay, awesome. So let's write that down. So we were kind of practicing that level of what I said is so obvious for some people, but I work with high level entrepreneurs and you'd be surprised at how many people in life

Speaker 2 ([30:43](#)):

struggle

Speaker 1 ([30:44](#)):

with that act of setting a vision, creating a big goal, breaking that goal down into rocks and tasks and then executing on each individual task. Like that skill is so valuable for life. And so we try to get practice with that. And then the last one is the most boring one, but it's very important or very practical. We just do week ahead. Well we can add as we literally just go day by day, just like all the shit that's happening. Right? So okay, set Thursdays. Bradley soccer practice. Henry has yoga on Wednesday of daddy's traveling this week on this day. So mommy's got to take, you know, the kids to school and pick them up. Doctor's appointment on this day, like literally just going. So there's no surprises of like, Oh crap, wait,

yes we do that. And then we end with a family hug. The dogs involved like the dog, the dog's involved in the dogs trying to help someone's leg.

Speaker 1 ([31:33](#)):

Well we have like a four and a half pound Chihuahua rescue. So like her humping the leg just feels like there's like, exactly. Yeah, there's not much of leg. It's more with helping but uh, so and that and then kind of get on with our day. And so that's it in a nutshell. It takes us about, depending on how quickly we get through it, 30 to 45 minutes. It's not like a huge commitment or anything like that. But I'll tell you like that's been one of the best things for us as a family and it's cool man. Right out of, straight out of front row ass.

Speaker 2 ([32:05](#)):

You know, Ryan, one of the things I want to compliment you about is we talk about, or I've mentioned before, I should say bringing your work home. Like sometimes we say leave your work at work, right? Don't bring it home. But this is an example of you bringing the best of your work home. You know the principles that you're using at the office that you're now able to bring into your home. And I think that's really, that's, that's inspiring to me. I'm curious as to do you or your wife or maybe your kids ever experienced the pushback of too much organization, too much flip charts, too many, too many checklists. Does anybody in your family

Speaker 1 ([32:40](#)):

get to the point where they're like, can we just hang out and just be whatever and not plan everything and think about everything and reverse engineer everything and you know, is that, what does that show up? You know what's, what's funny is like we've really highlighted on the key structural pieces, but the reality is we have a lot of time that is fully unstructured. So like for example, a typical weekend for us would be we have, if it's soccer season, kids have soccer games. Saturday mornings we come home and then typically we try to do this, hang out the rest of the day. Like I, I need weekends to unwind. The kids need weekends to unwind. So if it's a summer, we're just hanging out by the pool where, you know, pools right there. We're going on the pool, we're hanging out riding bikes, shoot hoops outside.

Speaker 1 ([33:24](#)):

Maybe like doing the trail behind her house, maybe just chilling if it's, you know, whether it's cold, like it's been a rainy, it's just like we're hanging out and watching movies together as a family or playing board games or Lego is a big thing in our house. So you know, building Lego, so pretty unstructured, you know, for us I'm like okay, pretty big introvert. Like I'm not drawn or driven outside of work to [inaudible] hang out calendar, like you know, dinner with this group over here and hanging out with this person. Like I don't have that drive and my wife doesn't either. Like we're both sort of home bodies and spent a lot of time with family. So we touched on it. If you were to just here in on that like 30 to 45 minutes or like the checklist coming home from school, you'd feel like, gosh, the structure everywhere.

Speaker 1 ([34:06](#)):

But what I've learned is when you have structure, and this is true in business too, we have structured, if you keep places as guideposts, then it allows that room for a lot of non-structure in between. So that's kinda been our least R M O you know, one of my friends, Allana Pratt, she's an intimacy expert. She was just on the show and she, she said something about it's used, we're using this phrase as it relates to a man in a relationship with a woman. She was saying banks of a river. Hmm. Like a lot of times like, you

know, we've, we say the rock is an example to be for your wife. She was saying just be the banks of a river. And I love that. All the analogies or examples that fit into just sort of like some things that, yeah. Create a lot of room for free flowing things to occur.

Speaker 1 ([34:57](#)):

There's a couple of guides. Okay. I'll give you one, like a perfect example of that. So one of the things that I learned from my friend Michelle [inaudible] is a great way to engage conversation at dinner with your family. Um, especially with your kids, like the act of having dinner together is important. There's sort of structure around that, but keeping the conversation preformed so it's not like, alright, this is yet another meeting. But one of things I learned from her is a great way to have new and fresh conversations every night with your family. And that is to do something called the question of the day. So question of the day has become a thing in our house where basically it's, if it's your day, like John, if it's your day, you get to come up with a question, your honor, you get to come up with whatever the question is.

Speaker 2 ([35:38](#)):

And the question is oftentimes something like, what was one thing you did today that involved the color yellow? And it's like, it forces you to think, right? What did I do? Yellow, gosh, I don't want you to banana. Oh, I hadn't been in, Oh I made add banana and still cut outs for breakfast today. Oh cool. What did you have for breakfast? Like it just creates this jumping off point into the conversation and then it's like yellow and it's like, Ooh, I've got a good one at school today. I use this yellow, blah blah blah blah blah. Right. And so it just, this sort of question that forces you to look at the day through this lens instead of like, how was your day? Good. How was your day? Good. Like that same sort of question and because it's sort of rotates, like when you get to ask the question like you really look forward to, you're like all got to come up with a good question.

Speaker 2 ([36:26](#)):

And sometimes like as adults we're like, crap, I gotta to come up with the real quick. But the kids love it, right? So it keeps the conversation fun and fresh and at the same time, not like structured, but just like enough to get the conversation going. So it's not like same thing every day. So that's an example of a, the banks where it gives you just a little bit. Yeah, that's right. We do. Thanks to Joe Sanok. He, he introduced me to happy crappy. Did you ever hear me talk about this? I don't know. I bet there's lots of ways that people do it. They do the peach and the pit, the thorn in the Rose, whatever it is. It's high, low, right? What was the high point? What was the low point? We do happy crappy cause it just, the kids love the way that sounds, but we started actually adding in like happy crappy and then we try being silly as a family but we now call it happy, crappy, healthy told me.

Speaker 2 ([37:18](#)):

It's just if you could just sit around our kitchen table, there's a lot of laughing and just being goofy. The healthy part is how did you help someone or how did somebody help you that day? That's been a neat addition. So I think what we try to do is, um, we like that a tradition of having a question that we review, but, but I like that we're evolving it too. Helping peace is a, is really good. I tend to, I want to throw things in there that I, I feel like we need to improve upon or talk about or bring attention to. It. So that's great. I like that it is in question of the day and we're going to experiment with that man. Throw in and like none of these things are like forever, right? It's like just, yeah. Well it's like play season. Exactly.

Speaker 2 ([38:00](#)):

Play for play with it for a bit and then it has its place and you kind of move onto the next thing. Well, I think it's, you need to be smart enough to know when to add something. You also need to be smart enough to know when to stop it and not just hang on to ritual or tradition because you think that's what needs to happen, but right. Is it serving? Exactly. Yup. Totally. That's cool man. That's really cool. What are you, Brian, let's talk about, uh, and we've got a couple more minutes here left, if that's okay with you. Do you, what are you excited about man? What's pulling you forward right now? What is your, what is your personal vision for the next whatever months? I don't know. Whatever

Speaker 1 ([38:36](#)):

you want, wherever you want to take it. You know, the time that we're recording this, that's sort of at the start or end depending on how you look at things of a new decade. Right. And so I've been sort of working as I've been an adult, this is my, this will be my third decade that I'm a real true adult. And so I've sort of looked back at the last two decades. So 2000 to 2009 or 2010 and then 2010 to 2019 and that first decade for me it was like learn to earn. And so I was in college for the first few years and then my first jobs out of college and I kind of, that's where I learned the game of digital marketing online building an online business. I built our, launched our business, we launched our business in 2008 so it's sort of at the end of that.

Speaker 1 ([39:17](#)):

So it was like this, this decade of learning a whole bunch, working a bit, and then launching our business. And then this last decade, 2010 to 2019, depending on how you look at it, has been really focused around just being a CEO. So building our business into what it's become, I really focused on on that [inaudible] this next decade for me is a decade that I think is a, is a shift. I feel a shift in identity, um, away from, uh, active CEO to a investor and steward of wealth. And so it's a totally different sort of mind shift. And for me it's sort of like the last decade was a decade where working hard to make money and this next decade is making money work for me and for us. And that, that shift, that paradigm shift has for me personally is one of the things I'm most excited about because it's unlocked a whole lot of potential and possibility.

Speaker 1 ([40:11](#)):

Like it's unlocked. This, the conversation I started with with my son, like what if dad or to become an artist? Like what would you think about that? You know, like what a dad does, you know, does that instead? And just those types of conversations, right? And everything that comes around it. So that's kind of one of the things I'm most excited about in the next sort of like [inaudible] the decade horizon in the next year. I'm really excited. We're, we're planning a trip to Europe with the kids, uh, in, uh, toward the end of the year. And we are, you know, actively kind of talking about all the things we could, you can't do all of Europe in a single trip, right? So it's really about picking and choosing and London, France, I'm speaking in London at an event, I just got invitation to speak at like this 5,000 person events in Germany.

Speaker 1 ([40:54](#)):

So it's like, as it Germany, like on the roadmap, you've got to do Lego land and like Denmark, you know, you gotta do Lego Lambert's, huge Lego family. So there's that. Everyone's pushing, you got to do the Mediterranean and you got to do like, you know, that's that whole thing. And so it's like you can't do it all. I've recently got back from the dinner and Amsterdam was like, the must do. And everyone's saying,

you gotta do Iceland on the way back home. And we've only done one other big trip like this with our kids. It was taught Australia a couple of years ago and it's a big trip, but it's like really [inaudible] act of planning it out and our kids are involved in figuring out like what is it going to be and where are we going to go and all that. So in the next year that's something that the kids are really looking forward to and I know we're looking forward to it. That's awesome.

Speaker 2 ([41:33](#)):

Would you consider this, are you going to world school? Are you going to be on the road long enough to where we've talked about things like that? I don't know that this is the year that we would do that. We've definitely you discuss like is it going to be a two week thing, is it going to be a four week thing or what are we going to do? And if it's a four week thing, we're both in a place that we will be doing some work while we're away. It's not like a total like sort of sabbatical, you know, step away from the business entirely. So I think that's like one of the things that we're, you know, starting to figure out what makes the most sense. But the cool thing is it's just having the flexibility, like having the, the ability to be able to make that choice.

Speaker 2 ([42:13](#)):

Right. We, we could theoretically we could move to Europe for six months if we wanted to really wanted to do, I don't know that it's something that we want to do, but like theoretically we could. So yeah. So that's something that we're really excited about this year. That's great man. I'm, I'm inspired by the travel conversation anytime somebody I yeah, I can talk about that all day long. We talk right now about going to Bali this summer for a month with the kids and doing a, an adventure there and renting our home. So that's, that's on the table. So I, my ears perk up when people start talking about where they want to go, what they want to do. Tim nikolayev who I think you met. Yeah, maybe at the event. Yeah, he does this with his family. Every summer they take two months, they go the coolest places. They are renting a Villa in Tuscany or whatever it is that they're just creating these Epic adventures. They were in the South of France last year. They're doing Japan this time, you know, uh, and, and roping in some, you know, some athletics to it. And I think it's just really cool man, when people get a chance to do this. I remember reading about it for the first time that I was exposed to all this was Jimmy buffet talking about how, are you a buffet fan at all or I'm not like a, you're not a parent ed. Sure.

Speaker 2 ([43:30](#)):

Fair enough. All right. So I was a huge buffet fan when I was younger. Not, not so much anymore. Not my crowd. Like a 10 year old, like, like a 20 year old Jimmy buffet fan. It's interesting as I was, I remember when I was introduced to Jimmy Buffett, I remember the guy who played a Jimmy buffet song for me, it's like, you're going to, you know, check this out. And I was 16, 17 and then I just got into it. But in my early twenties I was a total parrothead go to all the concerts I would show up with like the inflatable pole, the blowup shark. I was, I was all in on that. But what I thought was really cool about Jimmy buffet was that he's not only an average musician, he is, he's a, he's created this wildly successful enterprise in his life, business Epic, but that he really wanted to travel with his kids and you know, be on an airplane and have these world, these world adventures with his family.

Speaker 2 ([44:25](#)):

That really inspires me. And you know, the thing that I know, um, you're buddies with Dan Martell, right? Yeah. I just talked to [inaudible] today. Funny enough. That's funny. Yeah. So Dan, you know, when he was on the show, he said, everybody's homeschooling their kids, whether they realize it or not.

Yeah. And boy, that really stuck with me and you know, I'm just going to circle this back to a, a props for you, man. Great, great work. And thank you for sharing it with us all today because you're really showing up for your family and you're really doing some very cool things that I for sure am going to take an implement in the Roman house and you're going to make a big impact on our family's life and so thanks man, for just being a great dude. I have a thousand other questions I want to ask you how you get it all done.

Speaker 2 ([45:14](#)):

I mean, my biggest question, I don't even want you to answer this. I just want you to know that I want to know the answer because I know that there's no time to answer this. [inaudible] dude, I look at your life. Sometimes I look at what you've built. I look at this company that you've built. I, I hear you investing this time with your family and I just, I want to go higher. How do you do it all? Yeah. I want to look at your calendar. I want to see. I want to, I want to model, I want to shadow you for a week to see how you're balancing all this and then you seem to be such a nice person when I talk with you. I'm a terrible human being and the secret honestly is, is that's it. That's my focus, man. I've got two things that I focus a lot of my time.

Speaker 2 ([45:52](#)):

One is our business, which I love. I realized that I'm, or to create, I love creating things. I'm a creator, whether that's through art, creating a business, creating software, whatever it is, like I'm a creator and so I need that part of my life. And then really if I've got things going on good at home, like I'm pretty happy. Like I don't, I don't have any, I don't play golf. I don't have any crazy, you know, hobbies that are really time consuming. Just playing Lego my leg with the kids on the floor. Yeah, I mean there's beauty in simplicity in that way. That's great Brian, thanks for being here man. Really appreciate it. If people want to go connect with you, where do they find you? Yeah, I mean best way to connect is um, you go to ask about the.com that's uh, one of our company websites and pretty much every social media handle.

Speaker 2 ([46:33](#)):

I'm asking Ryan Laveck so asked as in the book and our brand, Ryan Lubeck has in my names, you can find me on Facebook or wherever. Ask Brian about. Yeah guys, you gotta check out the work he's up to. It's fantastic. And um, yeah man, this has been wonderful. Thanks for the chat buddy. Uh, anything that you want to say to say, you know, send us off anything. That's another opportunity to give you a huge shout out man. I'm super grateful. [inaudible] just today it was just at an event and I wore my [inaudible] a front row dad's hat. I can't tell you how many people ask me like, what's that all about? And it's just so easy for me to talk about it because it's had such a, the groups had such a big impact on me. That's a group that I've been looking for for a long time. And I love what you're all about and I'm really grateful that you've created that group. And like we were talking before we hopped on the air. I think there's this whole other level that is there that's waiting to be unlocked and I think there will be a time,

Speaker 1 ([47:28](#)):

well we'll look back at this interview and people who know, you'll be able to say, I knew John Roman went and what you've done is amazing. I think there's this whole other level that's like Epic that you can reach and I think you've got all the ingredients and uh, I'm excited to be able to say that I was part of it. Um, at this stage of its growth and development. Thanks brother means a lot to me. Thanks for being here today and sharing some time with us.

Speaker 3 ([47:50](#)):

Hey Sean. Hey guys, if you haven't already done so, go right now to [front row dads.com/facebook](http://frontrowdads.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](http://frontrowdads.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](http://frontrowdads.com/facebook) and join the conversation. I'll look forward to connecting with you there. [inaudible].