

Mike Paton:

Hello everybody. Mike Peyton, with the Lead Now Podcast. And today it's my great pleasure to introduce my longtime friend, Brett Kaufman, founder and CEO of Kaufman Development, a residential real estate development company committed to creating spaces that optimize the human experience. Brett was named the Ernst & Young's Emerging Entrepreneur of the Year in 2014, has been honored with Smart 50 and Fast 50 awards, and was recently listed at 657 on the Inc. 5000. Brett's an investor, coach, and speaker. And his goal is to create communities filled with meaning, interpersonal connection, and belonging. Brett, welcome to the show.

Brett Kaufman:

Thanks. Mike Peyton, Peyton, as I affectionately refer to you, but it's a pleasure to be with you, buddy.

Mike Paton:

Yeah. It's great to have you on the show and I've been watching all the work you're doing from afar. Enjoying the difference you're making with a lot of appreciation. Let me start by asking you to describe Kaufman Development where you've been? Where you are? And what your hopes are for the future?

Brett Kaufman:

Yeah, sure. Yeah, thanks again for having me. It's fun to be doing this. You know, we go back a long time as we were both in different lives doing different things and it's been fun to kind of watch you grow and to grow together. And this is awesome to do this with you. Kaufman Development, so I founded Kaufman Development. It's been about 10 years now, really with the belief that I could find a way to love my work and my life and that they could be integrated and that I could provide that same experience for other people where they worked and where they lived. Building communities that allowed people to connect to their passions, to their hobbies, to the things that appeared to be outside of work and where you lived and where you worked. And certainly for me, those things were saved for the weekends, for vacations, for retirement later in life.

I was working kind of corporate America and kind of worked in production environments, environments that weren't really entrepreneurial. And I wanted to create a company where I could show up to work and wear jeans and t-shirts, and laugh, and go for runs in the middle of the day with my colleagues, and just love what we did. And really provide an opportunity for other people to have that same experience. And so that's kind of what Kaufman Development was based at the time we used language like philanthropy, sustainability, wellness, and innovation. Today we're using language that's similar, but it's about consciousness, it's about creative expression, impact and wellbeing. And it's really providing experiences that allow human beings to optimize their life, and their environment, and their relationships. And so we're building real estate communities, but we're flooding them with content and opportunities for people to enhance their lives.

Mike Paton:

I am guessing that when you started sharing this idea with others, like most entrepreneurs, you ran into a lot of people who either didn't understand or didn't think it would be possible to be successful with what you were doing. Yes or no?

Brett Kaufman:

Yeah, no question. And it's funny because the process that I went through to arrive at wanting to do this work had me so convicted that this was what I was going to do and that there was a place in the world for it that none of that ever mattered to me. The only time that mattered was when, like I would go out to get a bank loan and 9 out of the 10 bankers would say, like, I don't get it. Nevermind. No, thanks. Then it was like, all right. Well, shit I need a banker. Other than that, like I never cared, because I really had that kind of belief that this was what I wanted to do and that it would work.

Mike Paton:

Yep. Well, for most of us, the more naysayers there are, the more resolute the conviction. Yes?

Brett Kaufman:

Yeah. I mean, I don't really feel that way completely because sometimes that's really tough.

Mike Paton:

Yeah.

Brett Kaufman:

When you have to kind of really try to get people to get it, that can be really exhausting and tiring as an entrepreneur to have to explain things over and over again and have people not really understand it. And then when it's done, they go, ah, this is great. Can we host our event here? And so you're like Okay, fine. It would have been nice if you got that at the beginning. But as Dan talks about, we're both big Dan Sullivan fans, Strategic Coach. He talks about free zone frontier. And so that's really what you're talking about and that I love. Where I see that there's an opportunity that I know it there's a need for, and nobody's in that space then it's like run to that area.

Mike Paton:

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Fair enough. Give us a sense of size or scope. How many units, square footage, whatever you use to describe the size of your business? How many employees?

Brett Kaufman:

Yeah. Well, we've kind of gone up and down, both in numbers. We sold a big portion of our portfolio last year, so our company now has made up about 35 people, we manage probably about 500 units, a couple hundred thousand square feet of commercial space. We have a lot on the drawing boards, so we're starting a second phase to our gravity project, which is kind of our latest and greatest. And really where my passion lies that second phase is the another 450 units and a couple hundred thousand feet of office fixed-use retail, so we've got a bunch on the drawing boards. Another new brand that we're building, which is a entirely wellness focused community. The entire community is going to be built around creating wellbeing opportunities for our residents. There's kind of a lot that is coming late this year and into next year, but that's kind of the scale. I mean, in general we've built over 10,000 units and probably a million square feet in commercial space.

Mike Paton:

Mm-hmm (affirmative). Okay. Thank you. And what does your role in the organization consist of? What's your typical day or week look like?

Brett Kaufman:

Yeah, I mean, in kind of EOS terms I'm the visionary and really what's kind of happened is I've really squarely put myself in my unique ability. And so my role in the company is really limited to a few things. I'm really energized by that visionary part of the work, which includes the design, figuring out what the buildings should look like, what kind of buildings we should put where, really getting into the nuts and bolts. I just was on a meeting prior to this, with the landscapers. I still love the kind of creative aspect and that's kind of where I spend the majority of my time. The rest of my time I would say is really kind of on like the high level creation of the business, so I'm interfacing with my integrator, the president of our company who's running day to day and we're just solving problems together.

And there's a lot of just kind of like ideation well, that's a problem. Let me think about how we could maybe fix that. What could I do to maybe help there? And so I do a lot of that kind of stuff. And then kind of just out there talking about the business.

Mike Paton:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Brett Kaufman:

And kind of sharing with people. I've launched my own podcast and doing a lot more speaking and really trying to share what we're doing with the world, kind of this new CEO. That's kind of my role and that's what I love to do.

Mike Paton:

Yeah. That's great to hear. I want to change the focus to your thoughts about leadership and I know through your podcast and through your participation with groups like Strategic Coach, you're surrounded by leaders all the time, community, political, sports, et cetera. What's the earliest recollection in your life of recognizing someone is leading? Or recognizing a leader? Who was it? What were they doing? And what do you remember?

Brett Kaufman:

Yeah, that's a great question. I think that kind of, I tend to... in my podcasts, I ask people to go back to the very beginning and talk about childhood and oftentimes people will say that in hindsight, they can see things the way they see them, right? When you're a kid, when you're young, I wasn't thinking about leadership, right?

Mike Paton:

Right.

Brett Kaufman:

Like leadership was not at all on my radar until like I was well into my adult career. Like I was not a leader, I didn't know from leadership, I wasn't interested in leadership, I didn't know any leaders, right. This is all kind of in hindsight, but I think pretty clearly for me the answer is my mother, when I was 10 years old, we had grown up in a household that was pretty chaotic. My dad was an addict, abusive. It was really kind of just all over the place. And my mom had managed having two young kids, and putting on a smile, and giving us a nice life, and kind of shielding us from what she didn't want us to see. Until there was a point in time where she just couldn't do it anymore. She just knew it wasn't safe and that it

wasn't healthy for her or for us. And she moved us, she got us out of that city, out of that house, out of that life. And she picked up and moved us to Columbus.

And it's funny, kind of thinking about it now, as I see friends of mine who are getting divorced, and who are single parents, and who are kind of going through that part of life, right. It's very difficult. You've got to manage a lot of things, right. And I didn't really understand that you know what she was doing. And to me that was leadership. She had courage, she had strength, she did some selfless things, and she really led by example. Not just getting us out of there, but then like go forward, like got to kind of dust ourselves off and keep going and realize life is good, but we're not letting it get us down. We're going to make the best of this. And we're going to do that every day. No question. That was kind of my earliest recollection of watching somebody lead without really knowing what that was.

Mike Paton:

And then when you find yourself in leadership positions or opportunities today, and you've got to make a call, or you've got to provide guidance, you've got to show courage. How does that hindsight recollection affect you?

Brett Kaufman:

Yeah. I mean, I think what it did for me was really kind of ingrained just the idea that you have a lot to be thankful for always. That there's perspective, that you can access strength and that you can really kind of choose how you want to be with whatever is going on in your life. And that you can be strong to not let things get you down, not let things really level you. Now I've had to do some calibration on that because for most of my life I kind of misunderstood and kind of spiritually bypassed the pain or the hard parts. I would kind of jump to life is really good. I don't really need to feel that feeling. And I've kind of had to learn something... You've got to give the feeling a minute too, before you start to just kind of go to next. But my mom was a part of that.

Certainly in hindsight, I've had to do a lot of work to really understand these things right. To really understand what it means to lead, to really understand what it means to kind of... those things are learned. And for me, I've learned a lot of ways there's been a coaching program that I've been involved with for 15 years now that taught me how to know who I am, what I believe, what my worldview was, what my identity is, what my purpose is. And those things really guide me as a leader. I know kind of in my core who I am and what I am willing to say yes to, what I'm willing to say no to, when the hits the fan what we need to do. Most of the time I mean, I'm not perfect, but that kind of learning that kind of work, those kinds of modalities, coaching, Landmark Forum, meditation, therapy. That's kind of how I've learned who I am. And once you know that then you can leap.

Mike Paton:

What do you tell the listener who is afraid of that kind of work, Brett?

Brett Kaufman:

Well, I think that, that's okay. I mean, I think it's scary. I mean, this is, this is tough, tough, hard work, so if you're not afraid of it, then I don't know, maybe you're stronger than I ever was, so scary, scary stuff. I think that the best thing that you can do if it's scary, if it's scary to the point that you're not sure you want to do it. Is just start real small, just do something. The only way forward is going through and so you got to take a step. Baby steps, and that's really where I think you can kind of start to see that that fear can serve you, that you can do this, but you start small, otherwise it's too overwhelming.

Mike Paton:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Brett Kaufman:

And it's very difficult to punch through.

Mike Paton:

Yeah. Thank you for that. Who's the best leader you've ever watched work? Somebody you worked for, with, or seen leading.

Brett Kaufman:

Yeah. You know, I think that I've been really lucky. I've seen some strong leadership in my career. I have learned nobody's perfect, so I can give you a lot of different names and poke holes in every one of them. In Columbus, Ohio, Les Wexner is by far the probably greatest leader this city's ever seen. And I've had the pleasure of working for him, and with him in business, and in community work both from a Columbus standpoint, from a Jewish community standpoint, and in business. And man that guy knows how to lead. He knows how to really drive towards a big, big vision and not stop until it's done. And I've been able to learn a lot from him and watching him work. Again, nobody's perfect. Certainly he's been through some really challenging times over the last couple of years and no question, a flawed human being, but from a leadership standpoint I've really seen him do some incredible things in this community.

Mike Paton:

What are the kinds of things you think he does behaviors, characteristics, attitudes, attributes, tactics, strategies that make him such a successful leader?

Brett Kaufman:

Yeah. I mean, I think it starts with curiosity. He's an incredibly curious human being and I'm actually like curious to a point, like for example in the Kolbe language, right? Like I'm a 9-Quickstart, I'm a 2-Fact Finder, right. I'm not going to like ever know as much about any subject that he knows a ton about. Art, guns you name it, right.

Mike Paton:

Yeah.

Brett Kaufman:

Like you could ask him about anything and he could tell you the history. They'll send books that are like... I'm like, where's the time, first of all. But you know, he is super curious and hungry to learn, to know and he's also really passionate about the history behind each one of these subjects. And then I think once he's got a vision, real clarity on what he wants. He's been curious, he's heard it all, he's learned it all then he knows, and here's what I want to do. And then it's just like, and that's where we're going. And there's no hesitation about that. That's exactly where we're going. And by the way, here's how we're going to get there, so let's go.

Mike Paton:

Yeah.

Brett Kaufman:

And then you're either on board or you're not, but there's no hesitation.

Mike Paton:

Yeah. Great. Thank you for that detail. That's helpful for us 8-Fact Finders just so it just so we're clear. How about the flip side have you ever worked with, or for a lousy leader and describe what that felt like?

Brett Kaufman:

Yeah. My first job out of college was at Huntington Bank. We both have some HBAN in our blood and I thought I saw some really poor leadership when I was at the bank. It was nothing I actually knew at the time. In fact, what I decided was that's just kind of how business worked. That was like just work, like you just kind of did the things that... I didn't know any different. I had never worked in any other environment, but you know, the poor leadership looked like a lot of clock punching at first. You were in on time, you took your full hour lunch, you were out on time, you took your vacation, you kind of passed the day, and there was no other kind of enthusiasm, or grit, or energy that was anything beyond like what was required in the day.

And then as I moved into kind of more of the investment banking side of things. There it was like all about face time, who's the last person to leave? Who's going to go out for drinks every night? You know, there was just like a lot of bad examples being set everywhere. I'll never forget when I was first working at Huntington, I wanted to take the High Holidays off for the Jewish holidays. I'm not a super observant Jew, but I wanted to take this one day off to go to synagogue. I had done that my whole life, the holiest day of the year. And I went to my boss and said it's Yom Kippur, I'm going to be off and he was like great, but you're out of vacation days. And I was like, Oh, you need a vacation day for that? Like I didn't... right? And so this was like to me it's like, Oh, don't worry about it, you know?

Mike Paton:

Right.

Brett Kaufman:

You've done a good job, you've worked hard, you've stayed late, you're up to... Like take the day off but that's just not how that world worked, right.

Mike Paton:

No.

Brett Kaufman:

And so these were like big aha's for me. First of all, I happen to love the leadership at Huntington Bank today. It's a very different place than it was. It's fascinating to watch kind of Steve Steinhauer, who I think is like another one of those guys I would put up there with Les Wexner from a leadership standpoint, runs the bank today. But I am so fortunate that I had that experience because it really shaped me embodying what I did not like so much so that I knew I had to go start my own thing down the road.

Mike Paton:

Yeah. And if I'm summarizing. I'm hearing, it's a check the box, follow the procedure, don't use judgment that kind of stuff. Let's apply some common sense. Let's reward people who are working hard. That would be better than just that checking the box mentality.

Brett Kaufman:

Yeah. I mean, I guess it's kind of inherent and just in like risk management or banking in general, but it's so down the middle that there's no freedom in it.

Mike Paton:

Yeah.

Brett Kaufman:

You know, there's no willingness to lose or win big, that it's so constricted. And that kind of leadership to me, I think is like it's paralyzing. You can't really get anywhere if you're going to really play it that down the middle.

Mike Paton:

Yeah, so put that positive and negative experience with these two polar opposite approaches to leadership in a box and shake it, and out comes your personal leadership style. How would you describe what you aspire to as a leader? Again, we're all flawed and we all make mistakes. But on your best day, how do you hope to show up as a leader, Brett?

Brett Kaufman:

I mean, I think it's a good way to phrase it because I am definitely a work in progress and I don't show up in my best day every day, but I love the strong vision. I love kind of having big, bold vision that really gets people energized and excited. And to me that's how we recruit, that's how we retain it's all because people want to be a part of that big idea. They love the idea that they could go somewhere where they're aspiring to do big things, and unique things, and purposeful things, that to me is kind of maybe number one. What I've learned to do as a leader, which was really hard for me is to delegate, and trust, and let go, and just be kind of... Like even with my kids, this is a great learning that I've had is that it's like, it's not entirely...

With my kids, it's not my journey, it's their journey. I'm there to support them, I'm there to love on them, I'm there to give them what they need. And that's true as a leader at work too, everybody's on their own journey. We all know thanks to EOS like we know where we're going, right. We know what we need to get done in the next 90 days, right? And so it's like, how can I support you? How can I help you? How can I just be there to help you get what you want to get done? Because it's all part of the same thing. That's what I've had to really pivot on. When I first got started, it was like, no, no, no, get it done. You know, I'm up your ass.

Mike Paton:

Yeah.

Brett Kaufman:

I want to make sure. Now it's like I've pivoted into just kind of how can I help?

Mike Paton:

Hmm. Interesting. How did you make that pivot? What were the moments along that journey that made you realize how important it was and commit to the hard work?

Brett Kaufman:

Yeah. I mean, I think part of it just comes with experience and kind of maturing. And a lot of it really comes when you let go of fear, and kind of worry, and doubt. Which for me came with having success. When I didn't have any money or I was just getting started things were very scary, and fear was how I led. That was kind of my whole being. You get to a certain point where you're like, okay if somebody makes that mistake, it's not going to kill me, so you can let go easier. You can trust easier. And then it's not just kind of like, it's just become who I am and it's not who I used to be.

Mike Paton:

Right.

Brett Kaufman:

And that became through a lot of therapy, and a lot of mistakes, and a lot of other modalities that have just kind of got me to start to settle into who I really am, and let go of all that other kind of attachment, and kind of stuff that maybe it was leftover from childhood or maybe it was based on other things. But it just wasn't really me and that has just taken a lot of personal work to get there.

Mike Paton:

Yeah.

Brett Kaufman:

And I still am working on that, you know? I'm still working on that.

Mike Paton:

Yeah. And I definitely see an indirect correlation between perfectionism and effective leadership. In that the more afraid you are of anything going wrong, the less likely you are to empower others, tolerate mistakes, create an environment where people are encouraged to try things outside their comfort zone, et cetera. And so for me, therapies have been a big part of that journey as well, because I've had to learn to tolerate my own faults and the faults of the people around me through a lot of hard work, for sure.

Brett Kaufman:

Yeah. Yeah.

Mike Paton:

Your company is committed to wellness. And when I hear you talk about yourself as a leader and other leaders you respect. Wellness is a big part of it, so I want to spend more time than I would with other

guests delving into that subject. Why do you think it's such a novel idea that, that's part of a business like yours?

Brett Kaufman:

Yeah. I mean, when I first started... There's some trends that have really come our way, which is great. I've said many times that if real estate developers all start building communities that are aimed at consciousness that have meditation centers, and yoga, and clean eating, and opportunities to learn. Like if that becomes the thing that everybody's doing, that would be great. I'll go do something else, right? But we wouldn't start there. When I first walked into the bank in my jeans and my t-shirt and said I want to build this community and we're going to do meditation, and have community gardens, and composting and all the stuff that we were doing, Inspire The World Day. They were like, yeah, so what's the net operating income and can you show me the rents? And how they comp out to the rest of the neighborhood?

Mike Paton:

Where do you put yoga on the spreadsheet again?

Brett Kaufman:

Yeah. Right. It didn't belong in the proforma. Today those guys are the ones that are calling me and saying I'm interested in meditation, or they show up at an event, or they loosen their tie and they... The world is a very different place, same for kind of our philanthropic events and really, I guess to answer your question wellness is... We say wellbeing now.

Mike Paton:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Brett Kaufman:

Because we're not just focused on the physical self-

Mike Paton:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Brett Kaufman:

We're focused on the whole self, and so that encompasses fun, that encompasses art. It's different things for different people, some people prefer meditation, some people prefer yoga, some people like to cycle, some people like to run. I mean it's a lot of different things that kind of make up the wellbeing of the human being. Therapy, coaching all of these things, there's a million different modalities. And to me it really just comes like why wellness, why wellbeing? It's because that is my passion. I want to see human beings live well, be well, be healthy, be happy. I get joy in trying to have some small role in making somebody else's life improved, happier, better, more successful, thriving, whatever. That's the thing that I love to do. And so that's why we do that as a company. That's the reason why, now it also happens to be like a really good place to be right now. I mean, it's a very trendy and thank God this is a good trend, but I also think it's a Free Zone Frontier to be building communities this way.

Mike Paton:

Yeah. And my experience over the last 15 years, working with thousands of entrepreneurs is your ability to be great at something for a sustainable period of time about which you have no passion is minuscule at best.

Brett Kaufman:

Yeah. Right.

Mike Paton:

And so if you love it and you're excited about it, you're going to be great at it. And if you don't, you won't. And so thankfully the rest of the world seems to be catching up with you Brett.

Brett Kaufman:

Yeah. And I've kind of said to our team over the years is like we were first kind of building like big amenities, big gyms, big community rooms, all this kind of stuff. Working off of iPads and ditching the business center and creating meditation spaces. When people started to catch up to us and they were starting to do that. My team would say like, Oh, they've got better amenities. Yeah, but they don't actually care. They're not passionate about it. They're just doing what they think they're supposed to do, so we're going to keep innovating. We're going to keep doing what we love, because this is actually who we are. This isn't like we're trying to catch a trend, this is who we are. We built the whole company on people that love this work, so it's easy when it's authentic.

Mike Paton:

Yeah. Let's talk about the biggest win or your biggest success as a leader. What have you high fived with your family about the most in your career?

Brett Kaufman:

Well probably not as much of a high five with my family on this. To answer your question, but the thing that I high five the most with my coworkers or maybe just even on my own. There's nothing that makes me happier than when somebody leaves our company to go do something that they love. We say that we want people on fire either with us or somewhere else. Where we don't want them is in the middle, kind of dead man walking, right? We want people that are on fire either here or somewhere else, so every once in a while somebody will stop me on the street or come up to me at a restaurant and say like, Hey, I'm living my... We call it Opus. I'm living my Opus. Like I got it because of working with you for you in this company. And now I have a life that I love, and I love my work, and it's one.

When that happens and I've been fortunate enough to see that happen a bunch. And a lot of people catch fire within the company too, I've had co-workers get married, fall in love, right. There's all kinds of life transforming moments that happen when you're in kind of a growth centric environment. And to me, that is like the ultimate high five.

Mike Paton:

Yeah. Awesome. And then any moment that you wish you had back, any leadership challenge point where you were stuck? Or flat out failure that you wish you could do over?

Brett Kaufman:

Well, we definitely don't have enough time to tell you all of those. I think when I was first getting started, I was just really tough on people. I think I was really tough on some people that were kind of high up in the organization, contractors, some friends that I did business with, I was so worried about kind of failing. I was so worried that we would not perform and that I don't know what would happen, we would lose money or something bad would happen, I don't even know kind of what it was, it could have been anything. That I was not that nice to people. I had this kind of like, I love what I do, I want everybody to love where they work, I want to build communities where people love where they live and yet I wasn't really being that nice all the time.

And I think I had it kind of confused that, that was what was necessary to perform at a very high level. That I later kind of learned that you don't have to do it that way, you just don't. And I think that kind of was where I was weakest. You know, I was just a little too hard on people.

Mike Paton:

Was that a realization that happened gradually over time or did something happen to trigger that aha?

Brett Kaufman:

Oh, it just came over time. I mean, it really just kind of came with my own transformation.

Mike Paton:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Brett Kaufman:

And just kind of doing my own personal work. And then like I said, experience and just maturing, and having a few bucks in your pocket doesn't suck. You don't care about every penny when you have a few more, so it just came over time.

Mike Paton:

Yeah. Interesting. One of the reasons I was so excited to talk to you today is because you play a very active role as a leader in multiple parts of the world, community, spiritual, family, business. And so I want to talk to you about anything you notice in terms of similar characteristics or different characteristics between say a business owner being a leader and a community leader. What do you see in common and what do you see is different?

Brett Kaufman:

Yeah, I mean, I think kind of going back to the answer I gave you about my mom and kind of some of the stories I've shared just as it pertains to being a father. I don't think there's a lot of difference really in kind of what it takes to be a leader in any of those areas. I think if you kind of look at the leadership of our country, or if you look at highly successful leaders in sports. I think you've got to have the same kind of set of tools. And I think really you got to really know who you are number one, you got to really be pretty clear about who you are and what you're trying to accomplish. And I think like if you watch the Michael Jordan Last Dance that was kind of a fun quarantine thing for me and the boys. Jordan gets kind of mixed reviews, right. Not a lot of people liked it, but he didn't care. He knew who he was and he knew what he wanted to accomplish.

And I think there's probably a piece of him that like in hindsight might go, I would have done that one differently or maybe I was too tough on this guy. But at the end of the day he's like trophies, I

wanted trophies and I got them and I knew what it took. And I think that's true like with your kids, I want loving relationships. I want really close, deep, loving relationships with my children. I'm not looking for kids that are going to like go to Ivy League schools or work on Wall Street. That's not what I'm trying to accomplish here. If it was, I'd be up their ass but it's not. I want them to be like beautiful human beings, so I just try to love on them as much as I can.

Mike Paton:

Yeah.

Brett Kaufman:

And so I think it's kind of knowing who you are and then knowing what you want. And that is the common trait for leaders, no matter where you are in the world.

Mike Paton:

Appreciate that. Thank you. Last question for the younger, less experienced leader, business owner, community leader, somebody who sees potential in themselves and wants to make great things happen in the world. What advice would you give them to grow and flourish as a leader?

Brett Kaufman:

Yeah. I mean, I think it's a bit repetitive, but I think it really starts with you. You really got to do your own work and you really got to try to tune out the noise. And leadership to me is about really being able to go forward towards your goal, towards what you want to accomplish without worrying about everybody else. And it's a fine line because along the way, like for young people I could say, get a mentor, right? You have to listen to people, right? There's a lot of wisdom out there, so you want to listen. You want to listen to people that you trust, people that you admire, people you want to be like, and then you want to just also ignore a lot and be your own person. That's kind of the nuance, and that's kind of the dance, it's in the paradox. It's how do you listen? How do you be curious? You know, like we talked about. Like really, really hungry, really, really curious, and also kind of tune out a lot.

Mike Paton:

Yeah.

Brett Kaufman:

And you know, I think for young people, you just start at the bottom. You start get into the thing you love as fast as you can and whatever spot you have to go to get there, don't wait for another day, don't wait until you have enough money, don't wait until X, Y, and Z happens like no right away. And even if you're wrong, even if you end up realizing you don't want to own the restaurant, you don't know why you're a busboy. Like, okay, fine. You'll learn what you need to learn. I did not follow what I loved when I came out of school, but I learned so much along the way.

Mike Paton:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Brett Kaufman:

That serves me still to this day.

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Mike Paton:

Yeah and in fact-

Brett Kaufman:

There's no wrong.

Mike Paton:

Yeah, the mis-

Brett Kaufman:

Nothing is wasted.

Mike Paton:

Well, the mistakes are faster learning journeys too, right.

Brett Kaufman:

Yeah.

Mike Paton:

Knowing what you don't love helps you narrow it down to find what you do for sure.

Brett Kaufman:

Yeah.

Mike Paton:

For sure.

Brett Kaufman:

Yeah.

Mike Paton:

Brett, I could spend another hour talking to you, but I won't in honor of your time and ours. Before I let you go, please tell the listener where they can go to find out more about you and Kaufman Development.

Brett Kaufman:

Sure. You can visit any of our websites livekaufman.com, gravityproject.com. My own personal websites, Brett-Kaufman, Brett Kaufman on Instagram. You can find me kind of on all the social channels. Yeah. Yeah. Thank you. It's been awesome to do this with you and I love seeing what you're up to and being a part of it.

Mike Paton:

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Yeah. Well, I appreciate you making this a great experience for me and given the listeners tons of gold. Please pay attention, Brett's doing amazing things in the world. And if you want to be your best self learning from him as a mentor would be a great idea. Thanks again, Brett.

Brett Kaufman:

Thank you.

Speaker 1:

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