

Jerry: Hey, Erin. Hey, Ti. It's really great to meet you and, uh, get a chance to talk, and I'm super excited to have you on the show.

Erin: Thank you so much, Jerry.

Ti: Thanks for having us.

Jerry: Sure. Why don't we take a minute, um, and just, I'll, as I usually do, ask each of you to introduce yourself, give us your name, rank, serial number, your name title ...

Erin: (Laughs)

[00:00:30]

Jerry: ... and, uh, uh, tell us what Kip is.

Erin: I'm Erin. I am the CEO of Kip. That means I do all the random things (laughing) that need to get done to make this company run, sometimes including getting tissues for therapists.

Jerry: There you go.

Erin: (Laughs)

Jerry: There you go. And Ti.

Ti: I'm Ti. I am in charge of ... I'm the other co-founder of Kip. I'm in charge of all the technical things and the product decisions at Kip, and I make sure the servers don't spontaneously self-combust.
[00:01:00]

Jerry: (Laughing) A very important job (laughs). Oh, that piece, it, it, by itself, especially in light of all the tears that may be shed.

Ti: (Laughing)

Jerry: And, and what does Kip do?

Erin: Um, so we think of ourselves, we're a full-service, full-stack, um, therapy service, and ...

Jerry: Mm-hmm.

[00:01:30]

Erin: ... we provide mental health service, um, that's measurable and outcomes-driven and evidence-based.

Jerry: Mm-hmm.

Erin: Um, and we offer, we take care of the whole process of answering, sort of solving the two problems people often have when looking for mental health services, which is, how do you find a high-quality provider, and most importantly, how do you know that your treatment is actually working?

Jerry: Mm-hmm.

Erin: [00:02:00] So we both have a curated, um, network of high-quality therapists practicing evidence-based, um, therapies and the latest cutting-edge, um, methods, and we also give you the tools to measure your outcomes and track that you are making progress and you're indeed getting better and improving.

Jerry: [00:02:30] Oh, this is super exciting. As you know, I, uh, I've been very open with my own journeys around mental health issues and, um, it's a, it's an important theme, uh, in everything that we do and, um, as I've, um, been clear about, one, one of the more important things, and I think you would, you'd agree with this, one of the more important things is to talk with honesty about our experiences so that we can de-stigmatize the experience of seeking help.

[00:03:00] Um, it, I, I always find it fascinating that, um, if you have the flu, you don't feel ashamed for going to the doctor to get a shot, um, but somehow, because they are mental health issues and, and they are still health issues, we, we stigmatize the experience of it, but we'll, we'll, we'll cycle back to that, um, in a moment.

Jerry: So tell me what would be helpful to, to talk to, talk about today.

Erin: Gosh, everything in a startup. Um, I think communication. Uh, communication's always the one. I think it's a constant challenge ...

Jerry: Mm-hmm.

Erin: [00:04:00] ... um, that comes up in running a company every time you have a, a faster change. When it's, you add a new employee, you start working with a contracting company, which we started doing for ...

Jerry: Mm-hmm.

Erin: ... some growth work. Um, it just throws everything out (laughs) into play. It just changes all, every process, and you have to then learn and tweak and, I think that's

where a lot of the big issues arise, at least for us have, um, that's where a lot of issues, uh, have come up, and then we need to constantly like be aware of and change it.

Jerry: Ti, what would you ...

Erin: Yeah.

Jerry: ... what would you say with regard to that?

[00:04:30]

Ti: Um, so I think of it in terms of, um, writing code where, when you start out, you're the only person working on it and you sort of are intimately familiar with all the gibberish that you might have written, even if it's not the highest-quality things, and then as more hands, um, touch it, you have to learn how to communicate a little bit better and more clearly about what every piece of the thing that you're working on is actually doing, uh, because you can't just rely on your own repository of knowledge in your head to make it run anymore.

[00:05:00]

Jerry: I love that analogy. Uh, I'm gonna steal it and use it to describe other ...

Ti: (Laughs)

Jerry: ... um ... Um, so what I'm hearing is that there's this phenomena that, that happens and has happened, which is that, as the company has grown and established itself, what you're finding is that the, the ability to clearly, um, communicate and stay in-sync, um, as an organization, gets undermined. And, and like code, right, 'cause, 'cause, 'cause like any other language, when whe-whe-, if I'm a coder and I write code, I have a dialect in my code, and all of a sudden that code matches this other code and we're putting it together 'cause we're building a system, except that it kind of, the transitions between the two dialects don't really work. Am I naming it right, Ti?

[00:05:30]

Ti: Yeah!

Jerry: Yeah?

[00:06:00]

Ti: That's totally correct. You'd speak fairly close to the same language, but it's just a little bit different, and that's where you can have, um, miscommunications and things sort of not quite ... falling apart a little bit (laughs).

Jerry: Nah. And Erin, are you smiling?

Erin: I am, and partly because Ti, one of the reasons this company has been such a good and fun journey is that Ti and I are very different, and so we have these different

[00:06:30] skillsets, but then when you get to communication with different skillsets and different personalities, just how we work together, it just ... it so easily clashes, and you're both learning how to, you know, communicate more effectively, but then also how to grow as a person to communicate differently ...

Jerry: Mm-hmm.

Erin: ... but you meet the needs of the other person. It's not just about, you know, learning to communicate effectively, it's, but how do I effectively communicate but also with that person's needs in mind, and do I need to change a little bit in this way that's uncomfortable so that the other person has, um, an easier time? It's-

[00:07:00]

Jerry: Mmm. So, notice what's happening right now. It, and, anh, uh, uh, notice what's happening for each of you right now, and ... Ti, how were you feeling as Erin was speaking?

Ti: Um, is, is it the right word to say that I feel very cared for? Um, 'cause I think she-

Jerry: Ahh. Sure.

[00:07:30]

Ti: Part of my working with Erin, this has always been both a point of, um, uh, well, you know, warm fuzzies and also frustration at times where I'm like, "Erin, I appreciate it, but you don't always have to be taking care of me and holding my hand. It's okay. You can just, um, you know, you, you can take, stay, take a step back and think about yourself a little bit, and ...

Jerry: Yeah.

Ti: ... that's okay."

Jerry: Yeah, yeah. So, so, notice that, and Erin, how did you feel when I stopped you ... and brought it to Ti?

Erin: I expected her to say that (laughs).

Jerry: Ahh. So that, the-

Erin: And that's because I've been-

Jerry: That's familiar.

[00:08:00]

Erin: Yeah, 'cause we've worked on this (laughs).

Jerry: Right. And so, so, how does it feel, 'cause that was an expectation, how does it feel hearing it again?

Erin: I think it feels, ah, it felt good. I appreciate the positive, and I also appreciate the reminder of, wait, step back, I don't have to do all the things I usually try to do (laughs).

Jerry: So any shame or guilt or ...

[00:08:30]

Erin: No, but that was a-

Jerry: ... [inaudible 00:08:34]? Go ahead.

Erin: No, no shame, but partly 'cause I've worked sh-, I have been working on this issue ...

Jerry: Okay.

Erin: ... consistently.

Jerry: Okay.

Erin: U-um ...

Jerry: Okay. So-

Erin: But there was shame, and I think ...

Jerry: There used to be.

Erin: ... there was, or used to be shame.

Jerry: Yeah.

Erin: Maybe still a little bit of, "Oh, I did it again."

Jerry: Yeah.

Erin: You know? I, I definitely have those moments where that's really all of these things we worked on our practice, right? And so ...

Jerry: Yeah.

[00:09:00]

Erin:

... there are always moments when I do something, I go, "Oh, I thought too much about what she was thinking in that moment," or ...

Jerry: Yeah.

Erin: ... wait, I catch myself and, I'm no longer, I think especially when I'm in a, like very much in work mode, busy mode, I don't have time to dwell on it, so I go, "Okay, stop. Don't care about it." Just, you know, that's probably not the best way (laughs) ...

Jerry: Okay. So-

Erin: ... but, you know, don't worry about it, but ...

Jerry: I-I-I'm gonna use a real coaching technique and start to interrupt even a lot, right? Um, and it's great 'cause as a guy from Brooklyn, I have this like mental excuse why it's okay to interrupt people, so ...

Erin: (Laughs)

[00:09:30]

Jerry: Um, so, what I heard you say before, Erin, was that, y-, there's this striving that you have which is, to be effective in your communications, and, for those communications to be well-heard. Is that, is that a fair description?

[00:10:00]

Erin: (Pause) I think ... yes, well-heard, but also so that they're relevant.

Jerry: Uh-huh.

Erin: I think, um, probably from my past experiences working with many engineers on a small team, um, and having to learn a new language basically and a new communication technique of, okay, you triage things, you don't just tell people things. You have an order of operations (laughs) in which first you, like, is it a high-level thing to share? Should I share it in Slack or as a bug report, et cetera. I think I'm maybe hyper-aware of trying to learn this new language to speak (laughs) effectively.

[00:10:30]

Jerry: Mm-hmm.

Erin: Uh, and then I have, there's probably an element of perfection in there, but I do care a lot about, am I wasting that person's time? Am I bothering ...

Jerry: Sure.

Erin: ... them too much?

Jerry: So, so I'm gonna bring our attention to a larger context here, which was that, um, we, we began by talking almost a theoretical intellectualized concept of, as the company grows, how do we maintain effective communications within it? And quickly, and partially 'cause I led us there, we ended up in a conversation about the two of you communicating.

[00:11:00]

And that, I just want to name that. So you both just nodded 'cause, you know, we're just cor-, recording the audio, and, and, uh, Ti, I wanna check with you. Does that feel like that's what happened, just now?

Ti: Yeah, roughly.

Jerry: Yeah. And Erin, that felt like what happened? Right. So, I wanna, I'm gonna play a little bit. Why did we end up talking about the two of you?

[00:11:30]

Erin: Oh. (Laughs) Probably 'cause, at this stage of our company, the communication and ability for us to work together as leaders is the most important thing, and it ...

Jerry: Ahah, that's right.

[00:12:00]

Erin: ... and because of probably all of, the major issues or hiccups have all at the root cause been, something happened in our chain of communication, in our understanding of what the other person said that then led us down some random path. And, right now, we're at that point of growth where it really can't be the like, like the, the, those communications are, aren't as easily fixed 'cause ...

Jerry: Yeah.

Erin: ... we're working with too many other people. We're working, we have higher, um, there's a higher cost to things not working because then someone we hired works on something incorrectly, or a timeline has moved that's actually crucial.

[00:12:30]

Jerry: Ti, how were you feeling as, as Erin was speaking?

Ti: Um, I was more digesting, sort of thinking about this whole, um, communications thing and how it, it does start with, um, the founders and how it radiates out from there, and the sort of mistakes and misunderstandings that can come when there is even just a tiny breakdown in communication sometimes.

[00:13:00]

Um, it reminds me of, um, it, a little bit of this, um, there's this online simulation called the Evolution of Trust where they're basically playing that prisoner's dilemma game and, you know, do you choose to copy what the person did or do you choose to do something different in terms of, you know, how you act in this prisoner's dilemma problem, and how in, when a communication breaks down even just once,

[00:13:30]

that could cause the whole system to just fall apart and, um, de-tangle and, that's what I was thinking about just now and it's, um, it's fascinating.

Jerry: I-I-I, I could not agree with both of you more. And in fact, the right thing to focus on is actually the communications between the two co-founders, for some statistically relevant reasons. 89% of startups fail. That is, go out of business or merely return investors' capital. So two criteria: merely return the capital, if you raise a million dollars, you return a million, or the vast majority of that 89% fail within the first two years. The number-one reason for failure is running out of cash.

[00:14:00]

Jerry: The number-one reason for running out of cash is co-founder conflict. The number-one way to mitigate co-founder conflict is exquisite, well, strong communication between co-founders. It's sets culture, it's sets direction, it creates the conditions in which raising capital is enhanced. Let's put it this way. I have seen co-founders who regularly fight, including a pair who fistfight.

Jerry: Most fighting co-founders must end up resolving the relationship by splitting. Mmkay? And I know a little bit about your background, so I have a feeling that there's a deep sense of purpose behind this company for each of you. Okay?

[00:15:30]

[00:16:00]

Don't worry, I'm not gonna make you cry. But, it would be tragic, especially because of what you've sacrificed, I didn't have to know, I just know you've sacrificed, you're two incredibly intelligent women who have a mountain of choices available to you, and you've chosen to try to do the impossible, which is to launch a business. Okay, not quite impossible, only at ni-, 89% chance of failure. Right? It would be tragic if that failed in part because the ability to be with each other was undermined.

[00:16:30]

So focusing on this, get this right, establish as a cultural norm, and it'll flow. Does this make sense?

Erin: It make-

Ti: Totally.

Erin: Yeah, it makes a ton of sense. Um, and, in the past when we've had conflicts, probably the biggest problem with conflicts is that you often don't have time to resolve them in a really effective way.

Ti: I very much, um, empathize with that statement of we ...

Ti: ... are in a conflict, but you're like, "Okay, let's just move on onto the next thing. We gotta keep walking forward. There's no time to stop and ...

Ti: ... take a break and analyze it."

Ti: So, easy to ...

Ti: ... fall into that.

[00:17:30]

Jerry: Easy to fall into that. What's the problem with that? (Pause) Let's put it this way. You have this big honking elephant in the room, and you choose not to resolve it because you're too busy figuring out the product strategy. How effective a thinker will you be ...

Ti: I mean-

Jerry: ... [crosstalk 00:17:54]?

[00:18:00]

Ti: Back to (laughing) affinity for analogies, it's kind of like, you know, you have this desire to just keep marching on and moving forward, but it's sort of like, every time you run into one of these conflicts and you don't resolve it, it's kind of like you accumulated mud on your shoes that you'd never scrape them off, so they just get heavier and heavier over time and slow you down as you walk.

Jerry: My God, she's a poet.

Jerry: That's a better analogy than my elephant in the room.

Ti: (Laughs)

Jerry: That's fine. In fact, can we change the mud to a big steaming pile of shit?

Erin: (Laughs)

Ti: Sure (laughs)!

Erin: Yeah.

[00:18:30]

Jerry: [Crosstalk 00:18:28]. That's right. That's right. We're famous for an exercise we call Red-Yellow-Green where we get people to start meetings with this Red-Yellow-Green, and a former bootcamper and great, great CEO named Bart Lorang wrote a big, a, a beautiful blog piece about this, and we've written a lot about it. Uh, my co-founder Ali's, uh, newsletter speaks to it, uh, the most recent newsletter.

[00:19:00] Here's why it's so important of recognizing what's going on. The feelings behind it, and Erin, this is important for you to, to-to internalize because of the work you do with your therapists, the feelings do not go away even if we stop talking about it. Right?

Erin: Yup (laughs).

Jerry: [00:19:30] The feelings actually, like Ti's mud on the bottom of your shoes, just grow, and your ability to slog through and make decisions is actually impeded. So even though it's counterintuitive, it's only counterintuitive because the anxiety of getting shit done is so large that we convince ourselves that, and I'm gonna quote you, Erin, "We don't have time to resolve this right now." Actually, you have no, nothing to do but to resolve this.

[00:20:00] Now, resolving may take a few days. That doesn't mean you don't make decisions during those few days, but one of the things you want to do in those moments is acknowledge that we're gonna come back to something, that we just hit a steaming pile of elephant shit, and we need to come back to it.

[00:20:30] "Are you good to come back to it?" "I'm good back to it." "Are we, are we good? Are we good?" "Yep, we'll come back to it." "When are we coming back to it?" "Great." "And, when we come back to it, can we make sure that we've done some, a little bit of processing internally before we come back to it?" Do you hear the language in there?

Erin: Yeah.

Jerry: Yeah, you're both nodding. How does it feel when I ni-, when I mean these things?

Ti: Feels on point.

[00:21:00] Jerry: Right. So, we were talking before about the dialect difference between two different-wired people, who come together a-, for complementary reasons. Lord knows we don't need two CTOs. Lord knows we don't need two CEOs. Right? We each play our position.

[00:21:30] And, and Ti, you're a great CTO because of who you are. Erin, you're a great CEO because of who you are, including your dialect and the way you communicate with

each other. But those, those, those points of overlap are really, really key. H-how many employees do you have?

Erin: We have two employees ...

Jerry: Mm-hmm.

[00:22:00]

Erin: ... and 15 therapists that ...

Jerry: Okay. So, so-

Erin: ... we work with.

Jerry: So you're communicating with the therapists on a regular basis.

Erin: Yep.

Jerry: Have you ever communicated different things? The two of you, have you ever sent different messages ... either to contractors or to investors or ...?

Ti: Probably sometimes. I'm sure we have.

Jerry: I mean, on the receiving end, if they're skilled, they'll make sense of it. Just like children will make sense of different messages that they receive from their parents, because parents are wired differently. Each individual is wired differently.

[00:22:30]

[00:23:00]

But as the company grows, the potential for mixed messages, different messages, will start to grow, and so for ea-, the-the-the goal for you i-, i-i-is not to, how do we always stay in alignment, but how do we, with resiliency, return to an aligned position when we stumble or when we quite naturally, not negatively, come at things from different perspectives? How do we reconnect? To use a phrase, does that feel on point? You're both nodding.

[00:23:30]

Erin: We are nodding. I think, uh, one of the, the positives in having a shared purpose with Kip and having it be so deep and passionate is that that has helped us through some of the times where we've had a conflict and not so, well, not taking the time to resolve them quickly enough, is that we've always had the same goal, and so-

Jerry: I'm super happy to hear that. How does it help you?

Erin: Maybe it's plus that and then the trust we have in each other to be doing, making the right decision, it helps us in that we then, um, we've made the, you know, you never know if you make the best decision, but (laughs) we've made good decisions.

[00:24:00]

We've, um, you know, when there's a problem, we'll delegate it and someone will fix it.

[00:24:30] I think there's not as much, um, even when there's conflict, we, ah, w-, have the trust in, in the other person to say, okay, you know, "I'll let go and let you resolve it and let us work through that," that it doesn't, it doesn't become this kind of constant conflict that just never goes away. Um, it's still there, the mud is still there, but it's not, Ti, you have better analogy (laughing)

Erin: What is the analogy I'm trying to explain here (laughs)?

Ti: [00:25:00] Um, I think, so how I view this is, when you have that trust in each other that you both have the same end goal, the same intentions, the same purpose and drive, is that you're trying to get to that same destination, and maybe from where you're standing, you see two slightly different paths there.

[00:25:30] Um, and, when you're in the weeds of it, it's sometimes hard to realize that the other person is trying to go to the same place as you, um, just by a slightly different path, but then when you pull back and remember that, then you can talk through, why do you think this is a better path, um, versus the other, and having that trust that you're both going to the same place is really helpful, um, in sort of negotiating those paths together.

Jerry: [00:26:00] What I heard is, um, a shared sense of purpose, and remembering that shared purpose. And that's key, is remembering that purpose, that sharing of purpose. Creates a basis of trust. So when the frustration or the, um, confusion or the disappointment that can arise when miscommunication occurs on this alignment, and it occurs, by being able to return to, "Oh, wait, wait, this is Ti." "Oh, no, no, this is Erin."

[00:26:30] Kip is so important to Erin because of the story that I know about her. Now because of that, I know that even though I don't like what she said or how she said something, I can still trust her. Am I naming that well?

Ti: Absolutely.

Jerry: [00:27:00] Yeah. So, I think what we've just extracted is there's something really important, that good, functional communication between partners is actually really rooted in trust, in shared experiences, in openness and vulnerability, 'cause I can't know that this is really important to you unless you've shared openly and vulnerably with me that this is in fact, important to you. Right?

Erin: Yeah.

Jerry: There's another aspect here which I think it's, it's important to get to, and we once did a podcast with, with, um, a beautiful couple from a group called the Center for

[00:27:30] Collaborative Awareness. It's called the Blueprint of We. And the, and one of the basic messages of co-founder communications here is to really understand ourselves and to be able to communicate that to the other.

So I wanna play a little game with us, okay?

Erin: Okay.

Jerry: Ti, when Erin ...

Ti: Yes.

Jerry: ... gets scared, what does she do?

[00:28:00]

Erin: Be real. You can say whatever you want.

Ti: (Laughs)

Jerry: Mm-hmm.

Ti: She sort of holds her breath a little bit, um, and then you hear this like sudden exhale and then inhale as if she's catching her breath (laughs).

Jerry: Mmm. And, and, uh, how quickly will she share with you that she's afraid?

Ti: Um ... Depends on the day ...

Jerry: Mm-hmm.

Ti: ... I would say. Sometimes ...

Jerry: Mm-hmm.

[00:28:30]

Ti: ... um, she'll say it, sometimes requires a little bit of nudging and sometimes, you outright have to say, "This is what I'm sensing from you. Is that true?"

Jerry: Mm-hmm. So you can lead her along. Um, Erin, how did Ti do?

Erin: Ti did pretty well.

Jerry: Right.

Jerry: So, so here, so-so, now watch, Erin, when Ti gets angry, what does she do?

Erin: Oh, geez.

Jerry: Or frustrated, we can soften the word a little bit.

[00:29:00]

Erin: She's actually (laughs) really direct. Um ...

Jerry: Does she ...

Erin: So-

Jerry: ... become more or less direct or is it the same?

Erin: She's direct. She doesn't raise her voice. 'Cause, when I get frustrated, sometimes I'll raise my voice and she'll check in with me and say, "Erin, you're raising your voice," and I'll say, "No, I'm not!" and then I'll realize ...

Ti: (Laughs)

Erin: ... that I'm raising my voice (laughing), and then I'll stop raising my voice (laughs).

Jerry: Right, right.

Erin: Um ... So she's actually quite direct. Um ...

[00:29:30]

Jerry: There are, there are generally speaking two places in which we speak from. We either speak from the back of our throat or from our belly. You know that f-, that-that feeling? I'm gonna speak from my belly. I'm gonna speak from the back of my throat! You hear the difference?

Ti: (Laughs)

Erin: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry: Right? So-

Ti: Yup.

Jerry: So, when Ti gets frustrated or angry, is she speaking from the back of her throat or from her belly?

[00:30:00]

Erin: I think from her belly.

Jerry: Did that feel right, Ti?

Ti: Yeah. I think, I think Erin's right.

Erin: Ti's ... Yeah, Ti's vely, very (laughs) emotionally aware and resolved (laughs).

Jerry: There's a settling in, which is Ti's way to deal with whatever the threat is that has created the anger. "What do you mean you shifted the deadlines? What, do, you, mean?" Like sometimes people will even slow down. Sometimes people will stop breathing.

[00:30:30]

[00:31:00] So notice, not only the dialect between the two of you, different, but the way you respond to things that would trigger your fight-or-flight mechanism, slightly different, because I bet you we can reverse, 'cause we don't have too much time to do this, but, right, um, Ti could describe, um, uh, Erin when Erin gets angry, and Erin can describe Ti when Ti gets afraid. Right? Just like you can, you can describe when you're sad, when you're feeling overwhelmed, when you're stressed. Right?

[00:31:30] Now I'm bringing your attention to this. So this is another aspect of your communications, uh, toolbox. You know each other. You know each other. Now sometimes when we're really frustrated or scared, we may know the person, but we don't wanna pay attention to the fact that we know the person.

Ti: (Laughs)

Jerry: Right? So now watch. When Ti is frustrated, Erin, what's the best way to approach her?

Erin: I think I'm still figuring that out. Um, but-

Jerry: Yeah. You-

Erin: (Laughs) To be, to be honest, um ...

[00:32:00]

Erin: But, usually it's with calm logic and just talking, you know, talking through things, if they're needed.

Jerry: Right. So, should you, you-

Erin: And if not needed, not to talk (laughs).

Jerry: So, so let me give you, let me give you, um, some shorthand. Should you be, be speaking from your belly or the back of your throat?

Erin: Definitely my belly (laughs).

Jerry: Ti, would that work well for you?

Ti: Definitely (laughs).

Jerry: Definitely!

Ti: (Laughs)

[00:32:30]

Jerry: So, "Ti, I understand that you're angry. Is that right?" You see what I'm, I'm talking about? Ti, what else can you tell Erin about approaching you when you're frustrated?

Ti: Um ...

Jerry: What advice would you give her?

Ti: Yeah. I think in those moments, I respond to calm and definitely belly-talking and logic of if you break it down into this irrefutable logic for me, then that has a very, um, strong effect in getting me back on track and calming me down.
[00:33:00]

Jerry: What if it's logical, but it's not quite irrefutable?

Ti: Um, that works, too. Um, I think, i-it, it is a tall order to ask for it to be always irrefutable. Um, I think-
[00:33:30]

Jerry: Mm-hmm. Thank you for recognizing that (laughing).

Ti: Um, and I think logical definitely helps. Um, I think it's sort of, when you're angry, it's, you're very much tapping into the more emotional, impulsive parts of your brain and forcing yourself to think through, um, reason and logic. Even just that process helps to break out of that sphere and be able to talk through things and, um, approach it in a more reasonable manner.
[00:34:00]

Jerry: love the, the expression here. I love what's happening here. Ti, um, I just wanna, uh, bring your attention to pronouns, and in the, and in the description that you said, you said "you" and you were describing for, you know, a kind of universal thing, and I wanna acknowledge and create space for the fact that everybody is different.

[00:34:30]

Ti: That's true. What I really mean is me (laughs).

Jerry: Yes! Yes! And that is A-okay to say, "This is what I need." Okay? And this is the way, "This is the best way to approach me." Uh, what I will say is that I imagine that this

is probably the best way that you'll approach others, when you find them being angry, because it works for you.

Ti: That is probably true.

[00:35:00]

Jerry: Right. So, now, let's try something. When Erin is afraid, what's the best way to approach her?

Ti: Um, I think similarly, I'm figuring it out. My general approach is, um, it, I think it's easy to project ourselves onto other people. Um ...

Jerry: Mm-hmm. Go to the ...

Ti: ... in my-

Jerry: ... head of the class. She'd figure that one out.

[00:35:30]

Ti: And my general approach is in this calm, logical, um, demeanor, but, um, I think my hunch is, um, with Erin, sort of acknowledging and empathizing with what might be causing fear is actually more effective, um, in making her feel, um, that she's being listened to and that her feelings are being acknowledged.

Jerry: How does that feel, Erin?

[00:36:00]

Erin: I think that feels very accurate, um, with the addition of, in addition to the acknowledgement, I often need something to either remind me that I h-, have the ability to get through whatever I'm scared of, um, or to like get that kind of confidence tick back up.

[00:36:30]

Wh-whatever's scaring me, just this reminder, um, she often goes, "You've got this," and for whatever reason, when people text me "You've got this," I've had advisors text me that, just that little additional phrase (laughs) of "You've got this" reminds me that I can do it. And so, absolutely, the, what I usually want when I'm scared is a little bit of empathy and understanding, with the addition of a little confidence boost.

Jerry: Mmm.

Jerry: Ti, is, does that feel like something that you can meet?

[00:37:00]

Ti:

Generally yes. I think what sometimes makes this difficult is, um, we sometimes will end up in these states simultaneously where I'm frustrated and Erin is afraid. So we very much tap into how we would respond to ourselves (laughs).

Jerry: Yes, yes. So, when we're distressed, which covers both fear and anger, we regress to our most basic response mechanisms. So when we're distressed, we regress. Mmkay?

[00:37:30] The way we wanna break that cycle is to remember who we are, remember what we're about, go back to the trust, if possible. If we can't in the moment, we separate and come back, and we can look at each other and say, "I'm leaving, but I will be back," so we don't trigger abandonment in the other fer-, person. Right? And then we come back, and we think about ...

[00:38:00] Ti made this, this really, uh, wonderful connection which is that this can work except if I'm also in a triggered state. And the thing to remember about both fear and frustration is that they're actually rooted in a very similar experience.

[00:38:30] Ti, when you're frustrated, what is it that you, uh, are frustrated most often about?

Ti: Hmm. (Pause) Most often about.

Jerry: Or is there a common denominator to the, to the stories, to the times of frustration?

Ti: I think I get frustrated when things don't seem to make sense.

[00:39:00] Jerry: And what's, what's so frustrating about things not making sense?

Ti: (Laughs) Um ... It's an interesting question. Um ...

Jerry: So things don't make sense. What's the consequence of things not making sense?

Ti: I think I try to build a model of the world at every step of the way everywhere I'm going, and when things don't make sense, I don't know how to model it.

Jerry: Right.

[00:39:30] Ti: And I find that there's a basic understanding that maybe I'm missing.

Jerry: And when you, when you realize that you are, that your logic is flawed, maybe even refutable, and that your mental model isn't perhaps as accurate as you'd like, how does it feel?

Ti: Frustrating (laughs).

[00:40:00]

Jerry: What if it turns out that you were wrong? What's at stake in being wrong?

Ti: Um, a lot, right? Um, all the work that you've put in so far, um, all that you've invested in it, in whatever direction you were moving in.

Jerry: Mm-hmm. Would you say that you are concerned that the work you put in ... or ...

Ti: Um-

[00:40:30]

Jerry: It's, there's generally a moment just before the anger flashes ... and it's a kind of realization moment. What's that moment?

Ti: Um, I suppose it could be a moment of, you know, when there's a lot at stake and you're wondering if you were moving in the right direction after all, um, and ... you know, having that fear of, did you just waste all of this time and effort?

[00:41:00]

Jerry: What word did you just use?

Ti: Fear.

Jerry: What word does Erin use more readily?

Ti: (Laughs)

Jerry: Right. So this, this is the point. Yoda said two emotions th-, are there: love and fear. Anger almost always, except anger at injustice, and even that has a quality of fear, frustration is often a response to fear. "Are you telling me that I just wasted my time?" is both an expression of anger and the fear that I wasted my time. "Are you telling me that we're not gonna hit this deadline?" or that, what did you say before, that this server's no-, is gonna, uh, uh, self-combust?

[00:41:30]

Ti: (Laughing)

[00:42:00]

Jerry: Right? That's my fear is that the server's gonna crash. But really the fear is that what's gonna happen to Ti, if everything you thought was true about the world turned out to be false? Holy shit. At a minimum, I'm gonna have to go back to square one and create a whole new mental model of the world.

Ti: Yeah.

[00:42:30]

Jerry: And at worst, maybe I've been wrong. And that's a really scary thought. Does this have any resonance?

Ti: (Pause) Yeah.

Jerry: So, the reason I'm hanging out with this, 'cause Erin's been very clear, and also with
[00:43:00] a lot of the energy, we can, we can know clearly that this anxiety is there, but in the
dialects that you each carry, not only do you have a shared sense of purpose, but
[00:43:30] you have a shared sense of fear. "Holy shit, what if this whole thing collapses? What
if we were wrong? What if this has all been a waste of time?" Do you feel it?

Erin: Most definitely (laughs).

Ti: Yeah.

Jerry: I bring your attention to this fact because sometimes, because we outwardly
[00:44:00] manifest things, we are convinced that we're so different. In fact, that was one of
the first things you said to me: "Jerry, let me tell you, we're so different." But what I
see are two brilliant women who give a shit about something really important, and
differently fight the good fight for something really important. Now you tell me if
I'm crazy, but is what I'm seeing true?

Ti: Sums it up pretty well.

[00:44:30]

Erin: Yeah. It's what started this, really, shared conversation about the same thing.

Jerry: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. How are you feeling about trust right now?

Erin: Pretty darn good (laughing).

Jerry: Right. Right.

Erin: 'Cause now I'm crying a little bit, too. You said ...

Jerry: Good.

Erin: ... I wouldn't cry (laughing).

[00:45:00]

Jerry: I tried. I didn't ask you about your parents.

Jerry: But, what we did was we reinforced this sort of bridging here. Right? I wanna bring
[00:45:30] your attention back to this sort of shared knowledge of, "I know this person. Oh, I
know this person." Right? The, the level of emotional intelligence that each of you

have is really off the charts, and I wanna congratulate both of you. And Erin, you got this.

Erin: (Laughing)

Jerry: Right? I can't guarantee you that this company is gonna succeed, but I can guarantee you, you can have one hell of a ride as you try. And you can make a dent in the world, regardless of the outcome of this company by trying, because trying matters, especially in the realm in which you're operating. And now you're gonna make me cry.

[00:46:00]

Erin: (Laughs)

Jerry: So before we wrap, is there anything that, uh, you'd like to add or say as we start to wind down here?

[00:46:30]

Ti: I think that last point you made really resonated. Erin and I do talk, um, often with each other that, regardless of the outcome, we'll either make this work and build the better world that we want to see, and if we can't and we're going down, we'll at least make a really big splash on the way down.

Jerry: That's right. That's right. And the thing is, I'll speak like the older guy that I am here, okay? The elder. You don't get just one bite at the apple. This is a lifelong journey you're on. I can't tell you the number of entrepreneurs I've known over, oh, my God, I'm going into my third decade of doing this, where two or three times ...

[00:47:00]

[00:47:30] Just yesterday I was talking to a guy I met when he was 21, he's 44 now, and I found him at Internet World, which is a show that existed before you guys were even born, and he's on his fourth company in the same space, two of which succeeded wildly, two of which failed, or one of them failed, and now he's on the fourth. Right? We get up, and we keep going. That's resiliency. So ...

[00:48:00] I want to thank you both.

Jerry: It was, it's an honor to be with people like you guys. It really is.

Ti: Thank you, Jerry.