

Jerry: Hey Matt. How are you? It's good to see you. It's good to connect with you.

Matt Tara: Nice to see you too, Jerry.

Jerry: Yeah. Why don't we just take a minute and why don't you introduce yourself and talk a little bit about perhaps how we connected.

Matt Tara: Yeah, sure. My name is Matt Tara. I live in Boston, Massachusetts. And actually, I just
[00:00:30] stumbled upon you via my wife who was an avid listener or is an avid listener and, I had interesting ... Probably three or four months ago this past summer, and I've kind of gone through an interesting ... That was when I was going through a rushing moment I think.

[00:01:00] I was running the business called Tucker Blair. We were an e-commerce, um, fashion apparel, accessories business based here in Boston. And to answer your question, you know, we, I was going through a, you know, and by [inaudible 00:01:01], still I am in many ways, having a tough time figuring out what I wanted to do with the business, myself.

Um, you know, I probably talk about it more but I was kind of faced with a tough moment of what am I ... Is this really what I wanna do and I had been running the business, um, for about four years. And so I was kind of in that phase where it wasn't the new thing but it wasn't this old established business.

[00:01:30] And so anyways, that's, that's why I came across you and my wife said, you know, you'd be a good person to talk to about my journey and experience and how, um, you know, similar people you talk to and probably in some ways very different. So.

Jerry: So in a sense, you came to us because ... I'm going back through my notes and reading something-

Matt Tara: Yeah.

Jerry: ... that Nicole, your wife, had written. Uh, we struggled with sadness and feelings of
[00:02:00] failure ... but we also wanna be smart and we wanna, about how we proceed to preserve our sanity and future success.

Matt Tara: Yes. Yes.

Jerry: Did you know she wrote that?

Matt Tara: Um, I don't, I don't remember her writing that exactly. We talked about it. I've never heard those words but yeah, it was well-written, I guess. Yes. Very, very well written. Yeah.

Jerry: So I'll say it again, we struggled with sadness and feelings of failure but also wanna be smart with how we proceed to preserve our sanity and future success. And so your wife, someone I imagine with you-
[00:02:30]

Matt Tara: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry: ... reached out and said, in effect, "Could you talk with Jerry? Or, "Jerry, could you talk with Matt?"

Matt Tara: Yeah, I mean it's just hearing that, it brings back a lot of ... I don't know, I'm already ... It's very emotional-

Matt Tara: Yeah.

Jerry: Yeah.

[00:03:00]

Matt Tara: Yeah. It's very emotional and so I think, um, God, you know the who- the whole, this whole process has been ... The worst part about it is I don't wanna make it a big deal. And I keep coming back to the fact that ... And we talk about what happened to business. You know, I didn't ... The quick story is I didn't have to leave it. It was doing fine but it wasn't, I guess, the rocket ship or this big thing that I had dreamed it would become or could become, I guess.

[00:03:30] Um, so anyways, I guess, when I hear those words, it's just, god, I, ... Even talking to you today, I go, well, I think I'm, I'm past it now and [inaudible 00:03:32] not past it. It's not o- It, it just changes. So uh-

Jerry: So, so-

Matt Tara: ... a lot of-

Jerry: So ... Yeah, a lot of feelings.

Matt Tara: Yeah.

Jerry: So what I'm gonna recommend is counterintuitive. It's counterintuitive, brother, to that feeling that you have, which is let me get past it, let me get past it, let me get past it. No, it's kinda like, you know when, when you're driving along the road and there's a speed bump?

Jerry: You have two choices when you come up to the speed bump, you can speed up or you can slow down.

Jerry: Right, but nobody wants to stop pause and go slowly over the hump.

Jerry: We just wanna get through it.

Matt Tara: Yeah.

[00:04:30]

Jerry: And I, and I have a feeling ... just even reading her words back to you cause you just sort of go back to that time. Is that right?

Matt Tara: Yeah. I mean it, um ... So before this, I had had ... So my story's a little interesting, right because I, before I did this business, I'd worked in the venture business.

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Matt Tara: The private equity business. So I'd spent the 10 years of my life working with
[00:05:00] entrepreneurs that are like LeBron James of people in different ways and some-

Jerry: Yeah.

Matt Tara: I thought were total idiots, some I thought were just flashy, young hoodie wearing
[inaudible 00:05:07]. Um, and so I don't know, I guess I came in saying like, I, I, I couldn't possibly fail or I-

Jerry: Right, 'cause you had all this background, you had all this knowledge.

Matt Tara: Yeah. I do- I don't even know it. Yes, uh, it's not ...

Jerry: Hmm.

Matt Tara: I thought I knew a lot more and I, I got this [inaudible 00:05:29] team, really
[00:05:30] successful people constantly and then you think, "Oh well, how can I ... If I'm even a half as good as this guy, I still can be pretty successful." Um-

Jerry: And that, and then what happened?

Matt Tara: Well, so I, so I worked the firm and then they gave me ... you know, I raised money
from them and then from friends and family, myself, to be quite honest, a lot of
money I had and there's a lot of encouragement to you know, to do this and that was
[00:06:00] great and, um, and then about two, by, about a year ago, um, I had a call with, um,

my boss and one of my in- investors who was a, you know, on the board and they just ...

Basically, the words they said were, um ... and a little back, a little back [inaudible 00:06:11] in the business and we had been an online business selling like preppy accessories like Vineyard Vines. And so the idea was to kind of build that out.

Um, and I realized about a year in, it's kinda funny being an entrepreneur, a real ... A year in that, online acquisition wasn't gonna work for us. It was too expensive-

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

[00:06:30]

Matt Tara: .. and we didn't have enough money. We didn't raise \$100 million like labor and to, to spend into oblivion. Um, and then we went into wholesale and the wholesale world in retail has just ... the bottom is falling out-

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Matt Tara: ... just many ways. Um, so anyway, so we had to call with our investors and they basically said, and my old boss literally goes to me, he goes, "We hate seeing you drowning in your waders." It's like, the guy who's fishing, there's a little water and um, and then all of a sudden he wakes up, and I remember these words, and then he drowns. And he didn't call for help.

[00:07:00]

And he goes, " I also don't want you to ... You're 35. I don't want you to be 40 and I don't wanna have someone be like, 'So what happened to Matt? and like, 'Oh, he's still doing that thing? What happened to it?' Oh, it's a, you know, it's \$1, \$2 dollar business and he's plugging along and it's like wow, I don't want you to be that guy either."

So I had that intervention and that countered my, like, incessant need to just not give up and be persistent, all this stuff. So I don't know, to, to get back to your original point, the note with Nicole was kind of the ending of all this and it was like-

[00:07:30]

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Matt Tara: ... and to her trying to say like, "You've gotta reach out to somebody to ... who can empathize with you." because what I also realize is you're so ... you're alone building a business but you only get ... if it's successful, you get a minute of credit. When someone ... maybe this is a press release and you say, "They got bought for \$500 million." and that's probably unfulfilling in a way too but like, no one calls, no one is ... I mean we've only gotten complaints.

[00:08:00]

You know, when you run out of business, you owe people money, people are mad. We've only gotten complaints. I did it the best way I could but there's no clean way.

So I don't know. All ... everyone I, you know, people I used to ... my invest- No one talks to me. It's a pretty lonely life afterwards, you know?

[00:08:30] No one says like, "Are you okay? I'm looking ... I just had a baby a month ago. I'm looking for ano- new job and I kind of have to, like, move forward and, um, I'm interviewing for jobs and I wanna be a better investor, you know, going forward. And I hope this experience I know well but you know, it's just so funny. There's just not a lot of ... I don't know what I expect but no one calls and checks in, like, how am I doing.

[00:09:00] I mean to be quite, I spent a lot of my savings on this, like done, you know? And that's a ... It's a weird position when you, like, always feel pretty financially secure and then you go through this experience that you give everything because I think that's what you think you should do. And then you kinda have to, like, walk away and you don't have much to show for it. Um, so it's a lot.

Jerry: So-

Matt Tara: It's a lot to unpack.

Jerry: It is a lot and you're carrying a lot. And I want you to know that I hear ... that I hear a bravery, you know, what you're saying. I hear the hardness. I hear the loneliness. I hear this wish to be understood. Um, I hear this, this desire not necessarily to be pampered but be connected with. I hear a strength and I hear that it's hard.

[00:09:30]

Matt Tara: Yeah.

Jerry: 'Cause all, do all those words sound?

[00:10:00]

Matt Tara: Yeah, I think the biggest I have resonance is I don't wanna make this a big deal and I don't ...

Jerry: That's the second time you said that-

Matt Tara: That's the biggest thing. I know. I just don't wanna be a whiner, like I don't-

Jerry: You don't wanna be a whiner.

Matt Tara: Yeah.

Jerry: So-

Matt Tara: And-

Jerry: So that-

Matt Tara: ... I don't know what I'm looking for.

Jerry: Y- you're looking for relief.

Matt Tara: Yeah, and this is a thing it's not like we're run- I could have done this. I could have kept working.

Jerry: You could have run this into the ground to the point where you were homeless and penniless but you didn't-

[00:10:30]

Matt Tara: Yeah, and I almost, I'm almost ... I didn't get quite there but we ... Yeah, i- it was ...

Jerry: Right.

Matt Tara: Yeah. Yeah.

Jerry: But this, you know, there's this funny thing going on for you. Tell me if this got any resonance. It's like you are ... you're acknowledging that it's hard and that it's been hard and that there's a loneliness when you're in the middle of it and there's a loneliness when there is ... when it ends. And that you've got a newborn and you've got the task in front of you of having to kinda reconstruct your life and then there's this voice that keeps coming in and saying, "Matt, stop making it a big deal. It's not a big deal. Stop! Yeah-

Matt Tara: Yeah.

[00:11:30]

Jerry: ... Whine ... Don't whine, Matt!"

Matt Tara: Yeah. I, it's so funny. I think that's my inner voice and I hear different-

Jerry: Yeah.

Matt Tara: I hear either crickets from everyone else, my friends don't say anything, nothing. I mean one of my friends, I think, came over when after I say, I'm, I'm kinda closing up shop. He's like, "What's gonna happen? I'm like, "I'm just gonna try to close it up. There's nothing more to do." He's like, "We had a great time doing it." (laughs)

Jerry: Right, right, which doesn't-

[00:12:00]

Matt Tara: That was only [crosstalk 00:11:59] nice that anyone said to me. [crosstalk 00:12:01]-

Jerry: Right, right. So, so let's, let's, let's put aside just for a moment what other people are saying.

Matt Tara: Yeah.

Jerry: Let's talk about what, you know, the voice is saying to you.

Matt Tara: Um ...

Jerry: Don't make a big deal out of it, Matt.

Matt Tara: Yeah, I just ... Why'd I do to why'd I ...

Jerry: Keep going.

Matt Tara: I just felt ... I feel why'd I do this, I feel reg- what I ... I was ... How could I make such a
[00:12:30] ... Uh, the whole thing, I don't know. I think a lot of regret maybe but, but happiness. Um, I think a lot of the feeling I have is I, I gave up and I could have tried harder and-

Jerry: Okay, so it's-

Matt Tara: ... everybody-

Jerry: ... so, so the level of criticism I'm hearing, the inner criticism, it's really complicated.

Matt Tara: Yeah, I'm very self-cri- I'm, you know, you just sor-

Jerry: [crosstalk 00:12:50] but, but it's, it's actually multilayer. You're critical for having
[00:13:00] done it in the first place. You're critical for not having finished it. You're critical for not, uh, succeeding and you're critical because there's a part of you that wants to be, um, because you wanted to be acknowledged for a deal. Let's not call it a big deal but it is a deal.

Matt Tara: Um, yeah. I mean all of it true. Yes, yes, absolutely.

[00:13:30]

Jerry: So, so let- let's do, let's do something.

Matt Tara: Okay.

Jerry: Let's stop at the speed bump ... and let's go slowly over the speed bump.

Matt Tara: Okay.

Jerry: Okay. So that kind of contorted, twisted, lots of different vectors and that criticism, that is fucking hard. And I'm not gonna make a big deal out of it, I promise you but we're gonna go slowly over that speed bump. That is fucking hard.

[00:14:00]
Matt Tara: ... Okay.

Jerry: Right. Tell me about your baby.

Matt Tara: Um, well, he's about a month old today, so born in October 1st and-

Jerry: Mazel tov.

Matt Tara: Thank you! Um ...

[00:14:30]

Jerry: What's his name?

Matt Tara: Uh, William. Um-

Jerry: Okay.

Matt Tara: So yeah.

Jerry: So this is unfair but I'm gonna do it anyway.

Matt Tara: (laughs)

Jerry: Okay, fast-forward 35 years.

Matt Tara: Yes.

Jerry: William is 35-year-old entrepreneur, would-be entrepreneur.

Matt Tara: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry: What do you want his inner critic saying to him?

[00:15:00]

Matt Tara: Um ... His inner critic. I, I ... And so, uh, I'm not quite sure how to answer that. I just want ... I, I guess I want people to feel proud of what they're ... Make. I want people that ... He needs to feel proud of what he's doing at the moment and-

Jerry: Even he's [crosstalk 00:15:14]?

Matt Tara: Yeah. And I f- I guess that's my regret that's reflecting on myself. I feel proud of what you're doing at the moment and I think that's ... it's easy but I've learned from ...

[00:15:30] Yeah, you've learned lessons as you progress to your career, not to look back, so we'll focus on the future. But I think one that I learned for myself is you gotta be happy with what you're doing even if it's not perfect. And I had-

Jerry: Yeah.

Matt Tara: My other job, I was always, like, "This is the worst job ever." I worked in, like, a very, you know, what a lot of people would, you know ... do have to give their left foot to-

Jerry: Let's go back to William.

Matt Tara: [crosstalk 00:15:45] it was worst job ever. Yeah.

Jerry: [00:16:00] Let's go back to William. William calls up his dad. His dad is 70. And he says dad, "I don't wanna whine. I don't wanna complain but all I hear from my friends is crickets. And there's a part of me that says why did I even do this. There's a part of me that says I should be proud of the fact that I tried." What advice a 70-year-old Matt give 35-year-old William?

[00:16:30] Matt Tara: Um, gotcha. I mean obviously, is if I say ... I just ... I think what I would say is there's two things you got to figure out. And these are maybe things I've heard. Are you happy doing what you're doing? And that's different from, is this an idea that could work? And if it's not working right now, what's the, why aren't you, why is it not working? And is that just the too late, you know, um, to the market. The market's not big enough.

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

[00:17:00] Matt Tara: The product sucks. I mean I can do all those things but, um, I think you do really, like, what you're doing and if ... 'cause you've figured out the business issue, um, but that being said, I asked myself this question, if I was making a million bucks a year and the business just always small doing what I was doing, would you still be happy? That's another question too 'cause I'm not, like, someone who needs a lot of money, you know.

[00:17:30] So I knew you gotta ask ... I would say, outside the money, those are the two things. Are you happy doing what you're doing? And if it's yes or no, that's one answer and then the question is, is this actually gonna work in a way that's tangibly enough for you? 'Cause well, one person's success could be totally different than another person's. Um, and that's fine. So that's ... I mean that's, that's what I would say.

Jerry: And what, and what, what would you wish in giving that advice to William from your 70-year-old self to your 35-year-old son ... In giving that advice to William, what

[00:18:00]

would you s- what would you want him to internalize ... as he looks in the mirror and thinks about himself?

Matt Tara: Um ... I probably would say there's more to yourself than just ... Don't let the business or your entrepreneurial adventures take over yourself. It's so easy to happen, I think.

Jerry: Yes.

[00:18:30]

Matt Tara: And tying up, like, who ... That that's, that's the biggest thing, I think. Don't, don't confuse business with pleasure and unfortunately, in entrepreneur, they, they're, like, one and the same but um-

Jerry: So here you are, this tangled knot with various vectors of self-criticism, where you're looking to friends who, quite frankly, sound like they don't know what to say 'cause on the one hand, they're probably picking up a vibe from you, which says, "Don't indulge me in my whining." So-

[00:19:00]

Matt Tara: Yeah.

Jerry: ... they don't say thing and then there's this other thing that they may be feeling, which is the ... they're both for the grace of God go I, because if I come close to somebody who's in pain and suffering, some people won't even acknowledge it because if they acknowledge it, then they have to acknowledge the potential of their own loss.

[00:19:30] So they're all these ... There's all this silence around you and in the midst of that silence, what I'm asking to do is reach deep down inside yourself and give Williams/yourself, the advice that you kind of know already.

[00:20:00] Sure, they may have been words that you heard from your own father, from a grandfather. I think of male lineage because I think it's such a powerful lineage as it relates to work but it could have been come from your mother. It could have come from a book. It could have come from a teacher but there's there's, there are lessons [crosstalk 00:20:02]-

Matt Tara: Here's the thing. Yeah, I mean this is the thing you say about your parents and your father. Like, my parents, this is probably a part of it, they're just like, "You got a kid now get a job. Like, apply to a hundred places and just get a job. Like, it doesn't matter what you do, just get a job." and like, didn't work out-

Jerry: [crosstalk 00:20:20] Get a job, didn't work out, pick yourself up. You got a kid, stay focused.

Matt Tara: Yes.

[00:20:30]

Jerry: Got it. So how do you react to that?

Matt Tara: Uh, hmm, I don't know. It's just, it's, it's so complicated. I guess, you're right. There's a lot ... There's so many different vectors, as you said, of, of emotions. Like ... I'm talking about it through 25 hours. It's just, like, or ... It never is gonna end. It's just so many different things, you know. And, um, uh ...

[00:21:00]

It's so funny. I talk to smart people-

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Matt Tara: ... who don't, who know me or I met or I'm talking to and they go, "That was a great experience. Congratulations." So from the people I thought were gonna be critical-

Jerry: Hmm.

Matt Tara: Like, "Oh my god, what'd you do for the past four years, you're doing this?" And it's, like-

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Matt Tara: Look I got a gold star on my resume. So that was, like, unexpected but then I just ... I don't know. The whole thing is just, uh ...

Jerry: So-

Matt Tara: Uh-

Jerry: ... but let me, let me bring you back to something.

Matt Tara: [crosstalk 00:21:25]

[00:21:30]

Jerry: So you hear these voices. You have these internalized parents. You have the true existing parents. You have your inter- Your inner critic. You have the, the, the words around that people are saying all around you. And then I'll bring you back to the wish that you had for William at 35. There's something implicit in that wish of that, like, finding his way in the midst of the storm of all these voices.

[00:22:00]

... I'm gonna give you language. What do you know to be true about a man named Matt? What do you know to be true about that guy?

Matt Tara: Uh, I've never, I've never had a desire to ever give up anything I've done and-

Jerry: He's persistent.

Matt Tara: ... inner persistence that is to the core. Um ...

[00:22:30]

Jerry: Here's something that I know-

Matt Tara: I know I want-

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative)?

Matt Tara: I mean I want something that's ... I, [inaudible 00:22:34] the reason I did this is I wanted something that was about ... that I could build that'd be about me and then I could be instrumental in being really successful. Like I wanted something just big and it wasn't enough just to do something, so.

Jerry: So, so what I know to be true about this, this man Matt is that he is, um, he's got drive and sometimes that drive is healthy and sometimes it's unhealthy. Sometimes his persistence is healthy, sometimes his persistence is unhealthy.
[00:23:00]

Matt Tara: That's [inaudible 00:23:05].

Jerry: Right? Just like you've heard me say in the podcast of the episodes, we all have a superpower and Marvel is very good at teaching us that every superpower has a dark side.

Matt Tara: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry: Right? So the superpower here is drive and persistence and, and don't stop and make a big deal out of it but sometimes that can cause Matt to hit that speed bump at 50, 60 miles an hour, bottoming out the car ... or sometimes Matt drives further than he should.
[00:23:30]

Matt Tara: Yeah. I would say it's more a lot of that results in me doing things that I'm probably not ... It's, like, most people wouldn't do things they're not good at. And I'm kinda, like, knew this from my childhood where my mom had me do horseback riding, lacrosse, football, swimming, soccer, you know, French classes. Like, I tried to do everything. I'm running a business where I'm taking pho- I'm directing photo shoots. I'm designing products in Asia. I mean I'm a finance major. I didn't, I didn't, I didn't do my own books 'cause I wasn't, you know.
[00:24:00]

[00:24:30] So this, like, need to kind of be, like, the Leonardo da Vinci of life. It's, um, that's where I get in trouble because not only am I persistent and I'm, I have drive, I'm doing things that I'm not, like, innately good at. So you get beat up along the way and that to me is, like, what this business exemplified. Like, you're gonna get, you're

gonna get your ass kicked if you're on the NFL football field and you're not even player. You're gonna, like, get seriously injured.

And I feel, like, I ... In this experience, I just drove myself to, like, get injured a lot, um-

Jerry: Was, was, was there anything on this experience that you got that was a benefit?

[00:25:00]

Matt Tara: You know, it's funny. Um, yes. It's, it's probably the least two things. Um, what real empathy from building a business means 'cause that's really ... People talk about it and I listen to other entrepreneurs talk about it and it's never a straight path. And if you haven't gone bankrupt, like, three times, you probably don't have a successful business.

[00:25:30] And people, like, only talk about success in life. So I think that's one thing and then the other thing is I have a newfound appreciation for working with really good people because I've had, I had bad people that I work with, bad, bad people. And actually just not good at their job people and they're both tough. And, um, I just wanna go say that people, the only thing that matters here is, the, the guy involved.

I'm, like, that's so stupid. Like, he didn't have a business idea. Nobody's a good person. We're gonna give him money. And I was like, "Well but it's, like, him and I think his cell phone and his car, like, how are you gonna give this guy money to do something?. Don't worry, he's a good person. He'll figure it out. Um, I kinda understand more what that means, so [crosstalk 00:25:58]-

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Jerry: How about this, you were an investor ... I think you know a little bit more about how to pick a good entrepreneur now.

Matt Tara: Oh, absolutely, yeah, yeah.

Jerry: And what does it actually take, right? One of the biggest complaints that I hear from entrepreneurs is that investors just don't understand how hard it is.

[00:26:30]

Matt Tara: Yeah, and that statement almost kind of not ... I'll say, kinda pisses me off. That's not even ... It's, it's harder than that statement is. I think ... 'cause, like, you don't know ... I mean I woke up and I, like, had ... I think I, like, almost, like, dry heaved one morning. I don't even know what it was 'cause I had ... We owed money. We had, like, no money in the bank account and, like, if we didn't get this order, like, I didn't know we're ...

All this stuff kinda comes down on you and it's never fun stuff. No one's like, "Hey Matt, you did a great job last week, like, great sales number." Yeah, it's, it's so

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multi-dimensional, especially when you're running a startup. You have no support. There's no, there's no air support.

Jerry: You, you woke up with dry heaves and as an investor, you had no idea of what it meant to actually have those dry heaves.

Matt Tara: Yes, and why you would.

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative). And guess what? You know now.

Matt Tara: Yeah, yeah.

[00:27:30]

Jerry: This ... So what, what we're trying to do right now is extract the reality of the experience in, in response to that inner critic.

Matt Tara: You know, when I, when I was listening to you talking about this, I just, I still think about this and wish I was still doing it and we were ... I was working harder making it ... Like, that's my ... When you say that, I don't know why that is, I just still think, like, now that I'm kind of trying to feel what my next step is gonna be, I still have moments where I'm, like, let's go.

[00:28:00]

Jerry: Well, here's-

Matt Tara: It's all I can think about. I don't know, I don't know. That's just, that's my gut reaction.

Jerry: He- here's something to remember, you haven't stopped growing and learning. You haven't stopped, in a sense, participating in the startup world, even if you're not doing T- TB anymore, Tucker Blair even if you're not doing ... even if you're not gonna land a job as an investor again but you'll land some other job. Everything that you experience negatively and positively, you get to carry forward.

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[00:29:00] See the problem with below it has the speed bumps is that you're actually going so fast. You're so concerned about not making it a big deal that you're not internalizing the lessons, painful and otherwise, that you just went through. And that, my friend, is the bigger tragedy here. That's the bigger failure.

... Here's a truth, business is dying all the time. Statistically speaking, 89% of venture backed businesses will either fail or simply return their money, which from an investor's perspective is failure.

Matt Tara: I, I know. See I know all this but I think I'm different or I thought I would be different-

Jerry: Yes! You thought you're gonna be different and guess what-

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Matt Tara: That statistic, that's even low. I think it's 90%-

Jerry: [crosstalk 00:29:32]

Matt Tara: (laughs) I think that's low. I know this.

Jerry: Well 89% is pretty damn close to 90 but-

Matt Tara: [inaudible 00:29:38] whatever, oh yeah.

Jerry: ... but here's the thing, you got, you got a wake-up call. You can be terrific with the best idea, with the best investors and still fail because your timings off or because two motherfuckers fly an airplane into the World Trade Center and destroy your business and that wasn't their intent.

[00:30:00]

[00:30:30]

There are so many factors that go into success and failure that to spend the time beating oneself up, beating oneself up, it creates a kind of, uh, narcissistic infinite loop. The very thing that you're trying to get away from. Again, this is counterintuitive. What I'm saying is spend more time with how painful it was so that you can extract the lessons, so that you can then close the door.

And you can say to yourself, "Fuck, that was a hard ride but I'm a better man because of it."

Matt Tara: Yeah, I mean, I thought I did that for a month, uh, and we kind of ... July or August or last kinda month and I thought I kinda took August off and did that. And then, (laughs) and now it's like-

[00:31:00]

Matt Tara: I had a my baby and I'm, like, okay, Matt. It's, like, back in business and I think that was my ... I had, like, this-

Jerry: Why am I laughing?

Matt Tara: I, I don't know.

Jerry: I, I kinda did that for a month, Jerry. Do you think you can, like, sh- like, like, compress grief and lessons?

Matt Tara: No, but I just ... I don't know. I just, I gotta, like ... I feel like I gotta, like, put it in the closet and, like, [crosstalk 00:31:29] like the winter coat. And that's what I feel like and I, I don't wanna keep thinking about it but then-

[00:31:30]

Jerry: But then you have no choice.

Matt Tara: It's like an old ... It's like old news. Like, "Hey Matt, you already had this problem. You talked about it, like, you know, you talked to your wife about it. Like, she doesn't wanna keep hearing about it. Like, do, do something else-

Jerry: Okay. So, so, so, so the reframing I wanna give you is that, that by staying with it, you're not prolonging it. You're actually speeding the, the point at which you will get past it. By staying with it, you allowed your inner being to catch up to what happened to be able to then not have to carry it forward. Right?

[00:32:00]

[00:32:30] The ... you know, let's, let's talk about it in terms of grief for a moment. You know, the most common association with grief is, uh, the, the death of a loved one, okay. And imagine we're at a funeral, you know. I was raised in the Catholic tradition so we had funerals and, and that sort of stuff. Imagine someone comes in and says, "So it's been three days since your mom died, you're done? Because, you know, you got a baby. You gotta get going." Right?

You merge sense of self with Tucker Blair rightly, wrongly, whatever.

[00:33:00]

Matt Tara: Oh, and it was ... I was the person and I live in a s- We live in a neighborhood where I, I know a lot of people and it's-

Jerry: Right. So, [crosstalk 00:33:05] everybody saw you through the lens of Tucker Blair.

Matt Tara: Yes,

Jerry: You're a life was through the lens of Tucker Blair and then, you know, come on, you gave yourself a month, get over it. Get over it.

Matt Tara: I just wanna talk about it. Like, I just talk with myself.

Jerry: Yeah.

Matt Tara: And I don't ... Like, I don't know what I expect. I don't know what I ... You know, I can talk to my wife obviously but god, there's no one to talk to about it. And I don't
[00:33:30] wanna talk to, like ... Uh, that's the hard ... I guess that's why-

Jerry: That's the hard part, that's right. And, and so what you're speaking to is why we need real peers. Peers means people who have gone through a similar experience. People who can relate empathetically. People can look at you and go, "Yep. Fucking hard, man." and you just know that they-

Matt Tara: Yeah. Look, people say that but it's not ... I need, like, more. (laughs)

Jerry: What do you need?

[00:34:00]

Matt Tara: I, I just need to talk about it. It's like, I guess it's with, with someone passed ... So I, I never really had any, thank God, yet, no one's passed yet that's close to me. I've never gone to that experience but-

Jerry: Ah.

Matt Tara: ... it's, like, everyday, I wanna kind of say something about it. Like a fond memory, like this was fun. This is a mistake. Like I wanna ... I don't wanna relive it but I just ... I want it to be accessible all the time.

Jerry: All right, so heres-

Matt Tara: And I don't know who to do that with 'cause it's ... That's what-

Jerry: So I'm gonna give you, I'm gonna give you a pragmatic practical suggestion with that, okay? And I'm gonna give you an invitation I don't think I've ever done to somebody in the podcast. You can write an email to me every day. (laughs) You can write an email to me every day. I may not write back, doesn't mean I don't care. Just means I'm busy.

Matt Tara: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry: But you can get ... I can guarantee you, that I will read it.

Matt Tara: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry: ... Okay, because journaling is probably not something that comes naturally to you but the process of writing it out ... is part of the process here but you have to make one promise to me and that is when you find yourself coming up to a speed bump and you have the impulse to go quickly, I want you to slow down even if you, what your write to me today is exactly what you wrote to me yesterday.

[00:35:30] And there's a softness that just came over your face as I said that. What's happening for you?

Matt Tara: Um, (laughs) ... I think it, that, (laughs) ... It's funny. The biggest part is I feel like no one cares about this whole situation and that I'm making a big deal about nothing. And I think that-

Jerry: Matt.

Matt Tara: ... [crosstalk 00:35:49] that, that someone does care 'cause it, it feels ... Um, god, I keep saying thi, I don't wanna make a big deal out of all thing. And I feel like when you said that and someone actually cares, this is something that can, can exist with me even as I kind of do other things.

[00:36:00]

Jerry: That's right.

Matt Tara: I don't need to, like, let it go. I don't need to, like-

Jerry: That's right.

Matt Tara: ... pretend it didn't happen or, like [crosstalk 00:36:10]-

Jerry: And you don't I don't have to be alone in being impacted by the experience.

Matt Tara: Yeah.

Jerry: I do, I do actually care about you even though we've just met. I care about you because you're a human fucking being, even though you grew up in Boston and probably like the goddamn Red Sox. (laughs) I'm teasing.

[00:36:30]

Matt Tara: Yeah, I know.

Jerry: I care about you. Here's someone else who cares about you. "We struggle with sadness and feelings of failure." What was the pronoun she gestured, she used?

Matt Tara: We?

Jerry: We. She didn't write, "He struggles with sadness and feelings of failure." She wrote, [00:37:00] "We want to proceed to preserve our sanity and future success." Who else is in there with you?

Matt Tara: Nicole, yeah.

Jerry: Amen, brother.

Matt Tara: Yeah.

Jerry: Sometimes in the midst of our own pain, we fail to hear the crickets that are actually [00:37:30] out there ... You're wish to not be alone is a beautiful understandable wish. There's a tagline we use in everything we do at Reboot, which is, "No, you are not alone even though sometimes all you hear are crickets." Sometimes all you hear is the lack of [00:38:00] response from the world.

... You wanna know why I do this? For this. Yeah, that breath that you just felt.

Matt Tara: It's just so funny when you say that 'cause it just made me mad because I was thinking about all the people who gave me money and how no one ever, like, called and said, "Hey, what's going on?"

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Matt Tara: I don't know why that was my response but I guess I was about being alone. I got all
[00:38:30] these people that said they were gonna support me and be an investor. And, you know, maybe I did [inaudible 00:38:34] get their money back in the right way but I'm also, I also lost a lot of money and when you said that, it made me mad 'cause I wish someone would just call and ...

You know, one guy kind of did and then I ... but no one ever said anything. It's amazing.

Jerry: And you wish they had.

Matt Tara: Yeah, or just say, "Hey, what's, like, your next thing?" Um, you know or I don't know
[crosstalk 00:38:56]-

Jerry: Or just how about this, how about this, Matt. How're you doing today?

[00:39:00]

Matt Tara: Like, I haven't talked to you. It's someone (laughs) ... It's just mine ... It's just ...

Jerry: Yeah.

Matt Tara: It makes me mad 'cause, um, obviously, we're talking together and you, obviously, shouldn't be empathetic about this process but it makes me so pissed off that I had
[00:39:30] 15 people that were willing to write a check to me, that never ... Most of them never even called, you know. And, and I expect them to run my business that's not what I ... but, like, it was really quick. It's, like, when someone dies, you call them. You say, "Hey, how you doing?"

Jerry: How are you doing? That's right. So-

Matt Tara: [crosstalk 00:39:34]

Jerry: I'm, I'm, I'm gonna give you an admonition, okay? Here's an instruction from an older
[00:40:00] brother. Don't ever forget this because there will be a time when you're investing in other people's entrepreneurial startups. Don't ever forget that that empathetic connection pre-funding while the operation is underway and if it fails, how important that is. Don't ever forget this. That's the gift of that pain.

You can get locked in the bitterness of it and you have every right to be angry. And extract from that that lesson. Okay, so now what I ... Now I really know what it means to be a good investor and a good board member.

[00:40:30]

Matt Tara: Yeah, I don't know why it's so ... It's, it's ... (laughs) You see I'm getting, uh, like, upset about it. I don't know why it makes ... It's the most painful thing over the whole thing.

Jerry: 'Cause you feel disappointed. You feel abandoned.

Matt Tara: Well, I feel abandoned. Yeah, I feel abandoned. I think that's-

Jerry: [crosstalk 00:40:42]

Matt Tara: ... the hardest part 'cause you're, like, the shiny ... you're the cool person and all of a sudden, it's like they moved on in other ways. And there's nothing wrong with that but I'm not looking for someone to, like, move in with me and counsel me every day. I'm just looking for some-

Jerry: You're just looking for someone to care-

[00:41:00]

Matt Tara: [crosstalk 00:40:58] something. I mean it could be as simple as a note. And I feel like I've just been, like, brushed off and just dismissed as either incapable or a bad steward of their money or, like, he was negligent or something.

Jerry: Yeah.

Matt Tara: And that's how I feel and that ... So when you say, like, "Hey, you reach out to me." like, it's not necessarily the fact of, like ... It's just the fact that somebody would, again, that what you said, you're not gonna respond every day with a three paragraph. I don't expect you to but someone who say, "Hey, you can do that." That's [inaudible 00:41:29] but I'll read it and I'll interact when I need to and ...

[00:41:30]

Jerry: And never ever forget-

Matt Tara: [crosstalk 00:41:35]

Jerry: That's right. And never ever forget that there's a value in listening. Not fixing, not solving, not changing, just truly staying present and listening. That's what we're talking about. That's what your wish is.

[00:42:00]

Matt Tara: Yeah, I feel like I'm so much better off now or I don't know if this is my pipe dream but if I had just two or three people that would just ... yeah, and whatever.

Jerry: Yeah, and that doesn't sound like whining.

Matt Tara: [crosstalk 00:42:09] No. I just I don't know-

Jerry: Well, it's, like, I, uh, uh-

Matt Tara: [crosstalk 00:42:11] by next thing and you know, [crosstalk 00:42:13] I'm trying to do my next thing. I need, I need so- You know, I need people support. I, I, um, I don't need handouts or, like, but god, I need-

Matt Tara: ... someone would just say,

Jerry: ... I hear you.

Matt Tara: ... "How you doing?"

Jerry: Just this morning I texted somebody that I haven't been in touch with in four years, three years and I read some news reports that touched upon this person. I imagine that they were going through a hard time and all I did was I said, "Just thinking of you." No fixing, no judging, no advice giving, nothing. And they wrote back and they said, "Thank you. I can feel your love." I haven't talked to this person in three years.

[00:43:00] Where did that come from? because I know that there are times of my life when people have done that for me and there are times in my life when people didn't do it for me. And I remember the differences. And there are times in which I will remember to do that and times in which I won't. I'll be so caught up in my own stuff that I won't remember.

[00:43:30] But that's the opportunity. You know, the word, compassion, breaks down into com being with passion, feeling, being with the other person's feelings. Not fixing them, not changing them, bravely staying present and saying, "Whew, yeah. What a ride, man. How are you doing?" That's compassion ... and there's nothing whiny about

[00:44:00] wishing for compassion. It's not making it a big deal for wishing for empathy.

Matt Tara: ... Yeah, I mean that's ... Gosh, I can't underestimate just thinking about how much that would mean to me.

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Matt Tara: Uh, i- it's, like ... I think, you know, whe- when you're in your business, you, you kind of like it but you're so busy doing stuff that you're kinda, like, "I don't need that, you know-

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Matt Tara: ... I don't have time for check-ins." and you still do in a different way (laughs) um, but you're kind of working away. Tomorrow is a bigger day, next big thing is going or you got a headache and it's just kind of getting through it but, um-

Jerry: So, so I- I- I- I'll close with this, with ... So you said, you know, when you're in the middle of it, you don't necessarily have time for the check-in. So from my lips to God's ears, someday you will be launching something new. You'll either be running a business or you'll have launched a business. Imagine this, people need compassion and empathy every day of their lives even in the midst of a thriving business, even in the midst of a failing business. Every day, a little brief, "How you doing?" with true compassion, with true empathy.

[00:45:00]

[00:45:30] Imagine having a business where that was as part of the business as anything else as I drive and I wish for success ... That's the opportunity. That's another lesson to extract from this experience ... Does that have resonance with you?

[00:46:00]

Matt Tara: Yeah, I think we all kinda go through our lives and we just ... Again, what I'm trying to do, it's okay. It's not a big deal anymore and I keep just remi- It is still a big deal and that's okay and that's kinda-

Jerry: Yes.

Matt Tara: ... and I, I-

Jerry: It is a big deal and it's okay.

Matt Tara: Now, I say that now but, like, there are moments of weakness or you know (laughs) ...

Jerry: That's right.

Matt Tara: My mom calls me it's like, "What are you doing?" and I kind of, like, have to put it away but I just have to keep reminding myself to, like, this will be a part of me in a better way but I got it, like, don't resent it. Don't be mad that it wasn't something bigger or better. It is what it was and I need to, like, like, lean into this, like, keep looking at it. It's uncomfortable. It's, like, I'm still [crosstalk 00:46:41]-

[00:46:30]

Jerry: That's it.

Matt Tara: ... I'm still looking at it. I gotta still look at it and it's not ... It doesn't have to be ... It can be ... I don't know if fun's the right word but it can be an enjoyable experience in making you just feel better, you know? And that I gotta, like-

Jerry: And, and, and I'm about to give you maybe the highest compliment I can give somebody. Now you sound like a Buddhist teacher. That's exactly right, my friend. It doesn't have to be ... and we're not talking about fun but there is actually something powerfully important about that process if you can lean into it. And it helps having a friend lean into it with you.

[00:47:00]

Matt Tara: Yeah.

[00:47:30]

Jerry: So I think with that, we're gonna sort of close and wrap but I wanna thank you for showing up. You know, if you feel any relief it's because you were willing to lean into it and let me stop you at the speed bump.

Matt Tara: No, I think ... Yeah, I do. I just need to remember to carry it with me. That's-

Jerry: Yes.

Matt Tara: That's the thing.

Jerry: Well, well the good thing is we recorded this.

Matt Tara: Yeah.

Jerry: (laughs) So you'll be able to come back and listen to it.

[00:48:00]

Jerry: (laughs) So I wanna say thanks to you and thank you to Nicole.

Matt Tara: Yeah, thank you so much.

Matt Tara: We really enjoy, um, listening to what you do and, um, just talking with you is ... It, i- it was good. I- it's good-

Jerry: Yeah.

Matt Tara: ... to be able to share this stuff because, um, keeps going on.

Jerry: It does indeed.