

Jerry: Hey, David. What a delight it is to open up my screen and see my friend David.

David: Pleasure to be here, Jerry. Pleasure. Pleasure.

Jerry: Um, uh, before we jump in, uh, why don't you just take a moment and introduce yourself to our audience?

[00:00:30]

David: Okay. Uh, my name is David McQueen. I'm an almost 50 year old gentleman living in London.

David: Born and raised in London, married to a beautiful woman, have been with her for 30 years, married for 23, the father of two beautiful daughters, I always will always prioritize my family when anybody asks me anything. So, those are the first things that, um, come out. But I'm also, um, what I call a leadership enthusiast. I love working with people around leadership. I have a company called Narratively where I teach people, leaders specifically, how to communicate. But, uh, the thing I'd really love to talk to you today about is the new, um, startup I have called Legacy 71, which is effectively a startup ecosystem for black founders in the UK who have started their own tech companies.

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Jerry: Yeah, so, I, I, I'm glad you went right to Legacy 71 because, you know, we'll put some context into this. I guess we've been stalking each other on Twitter for a couple of years.

David: Yes. [crosstalk 00:01:37]

Jerry: And then we finally met, what, in the, in November, I think-

David: Yes.

Jerry: In London.

David: [inaudible 00:01:44]

Jerry: And, and, um, it was like two very old friends re-finding each other.

David: Yes. Definitely. Definitely.

Jerry: Does that feel right?

David: One of my best memories of 2018, no doubt. No doubt.

[00:02:00]

Jerry: Yeah. Yeah. And so, and then, uh, you know, I don't remember exactly when I, I tracked Legacy 71, but when I saw your announcement, which, um, you know, and I, I, I heard you describe it as a startup ecosystem for black founders-

David: That's correct.

Jerry: Um, and ... I, um ... I just remember saying to myself, uh, "Yeah, so, let's, let's get it on. Let's, like, how do we help?"

David: Yes.

Jerry: I am, I am equally fascinated in understanding the whys of-

David: Yep.

Jerry: Uh, the whys, W-H-Y-S, um, of, of Legacy 71 and really, really this sort of sense of purpose. So, so, I'll jump back. I'll hand it back to you and just, just tell, tell us what Legacy 71 is. Tell us what Legacy 71 is aiming to do, and then we'll talk about why is it called that, and even more, like ... why is it needed? So, what, what, what is it?

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David: So, it's a, I call it a startup ecosystem. I originally called it an incubator, but I think it's more than that.

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

David: And, um, the, the essential bit is is that within the tech ecosystem there's been a lot of emphasis on coding. There's been a lot of emphasis on, um, these big unicorns that make the headlines and what have you, and, and I wanted to come at it from a different angle. What could I do within my specific community? So, being of Caribbean descent or the wider narrative of Pan-African decent. I wanted to see

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how I can plug a gap that wasn't there, and so I, I created it, created three kind of pillars. One was around community. So, how could we get fellow founders, often who didn't know how to either play the game or even start the company in this space. The second one was around courses. So, how could I provide education to make sure that those founders, instead of just getting excited about what's happening on the front page of Fortune, TechCrunch or all the other ones which obviously tend to highlight the, the outliers, how can they build a sustainable business?

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And then the third pillar was around capital. How could we ensure that, uh, and underrepresented niche of the tech, um, startup space could have access to capital in the way that so many others were able to get capital? And on those three pillars, those are the, those are the cores themes around Legacy 71 for black tech founders. And when I say black tech founders I should say in the board there, one of the founders must at least have a controlling interest. One of them must be a

black founder. So, it could be a black and a white guy, but at least one of them must be a, a, a controlling, um, founder and representative.

[00:05:00] And in terms of your second question and, and where I want it to go, you know, I want it to be, realistically I want it to be a multi-million pound company. And I'm not, and I think it should be very important here. I'm not interested in creating unicorns. I have no interest. I don't even believe that unicorns exist, and if they do it's way outside of my remit. So, as my logo's an elephant. I believe in creating elephants because elephants create community. They are large, sturdy animals who are wise, who represented loyalty and royalty and power. Um, and, and, uh, you know, I, I, again, without stretching the metaphor too far, often when an elephant is left on its own people try to [stoke 00:05:42] at them and try to steal the ivory, and my whole concept around Legacy's trying to protect that ivory, trying to protect that IP and create that community, um, and, and get people to see that it's not an either/or, it's a both/and.

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Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative). It, it's, it's, um, I, I've got a bazillion questions.

David: Fire away. Fire away.

Jerry: But, but, um, I just want to talk about the logo if, perhaps.

David: Yes.

Jerry: See, I saw the, the elephant and I was, uh, I felt moved. And, uh, the, the, the, uh, meaning I projected into it was, um, to reach back into, uh, African roots.

David: Yeah.

Jerry: Um, eh, was I seeing something that wasn't there?

David: Yes. No, no, you were seeing, it's an African elephant. Because obviously there's two. There's the Indian elephant and there's the African elephant.

Jerry: Right. Right.

[00:06:30]
David: And the African elephant has the larger ears and the ears are actually shaped like the continent of Africa.

Jerry: Right.

David: And so, yes, it is a spiritual connection. The, the elephant motif is very popular across Pan-Africa and Sub-Saharan African cultures. And there was something about those traditions that spoke to me.

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

David: [00:07:00] And, again, I wanted to be able to create something that when you saw the visual image it made you go, "Ah! What's that about? What's that connection to?" And, and, and as you rightly saw, many people look at it and they go, "Okay, I actually get it," because they see the black background, the see the gold lining and then go, "Okay."

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

David: [00:07:30] And, and so, you will see it's the, it's a black, it's a black, um, [back-lay 00:07:14] ... uh, a background, um, and again, there is that sense of royalty and calm, and then there's the gold overlay where you see the print of the logo, and that's about being able to create wealth unashamedly. I do believe when I look at the racial gaps between ... of, of, of blacks in the diaspora, especially in the UK, the US, or, or, or, or larger countries where we aren't the, um, the, the native, or, or the, the dominant population, is, um, we, there was a massive wealth gap. And for me, technology is one of the few ways I believe we can actually close that wealth gap, and so that's symbolic in the whole logo of saying we want to create wealth, but we want to do it collaboratively and we want to do it within the sense of the community.

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Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Well, and that speaks to the other phrase which, um, I'm not as, um, familiar with here in the States. But this notion of, uh, um, Pan-African diaspora.

David: Yeah.

Jerry: Which, you know, as, as I sort of sit with all of the words, uh, it just, it just feels, um, powerful and correct.

David: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

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Jerry: True in the way a wheel gets trued, but. Um, so, so, Legacy sift, 71-

David: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry: Um, if you're successful, it sounds like, uh, you'll, you'll have supported, um, a number of entrepreneurial teams, many of whom, uh, uh, have Pan-African roots.

David: Yes.

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Jerry: And, and, um, are, are there, will they be UK-based only or will they be, um, uh, tell, tell me about your regional reach. What are you looking to do?

David: So, the interesting thing about this, Jerry, I, so, I love, I love maths, I love-

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

David: And when I say Pan-Africa, I love reading about the history, um, the history of Africa before. You know, the richest man in the world. A lot of people look at Jeff Bezos, they look at Bill Gates and what have you, but the richest man in the world by a long mile was a guy called Musa Mansa, and he was the king of, uh, eh, I think it was, I'd say the ... I think it was back the 14 or 1500s. They, if they, when they take his wealthy and accumulate it up to modern day standards, he's like miles ahead of even Jeff Bezos.

[00:09:30]

Jerry: Ah.

David: Um, and, uh, and, and, the, there was something about the, he had his caravan and he would move from one part of Mali across to Mecca and, you know, and, and he, when he'd go, when he went, his presence would actually affect the economy because he carried gold and where, whatever islands and, sorry, countries he went to, it would actually affect that economy. And I thought about that and I thought, "You know, even though we want to start it in the UK, for me it's, all we're doing is we want to tap into other ecosystems." And there are ... Some of the templates that I have learnt have been from US ecosystems. I have had a lot of, um, individuals reach out to me, uh, across what I called the diaspora in the, in Europe and France, Germany. And I've had communities from back Botswana, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Ghana, Ivory Coast. They've also reached and said, "Do you know what? We'd really like to use the model that you're using to create this tech ecosystem."

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What I didn't even realize is like in a lot of countries like South Africa or Kenya or Mozambique or what have you, there's was a certain hierarchy of where the wealth goes, and a lot of it's still in white hands, and then you take it down another level and you've got, um, South Asian or Lebanese. Um, uh, more recently you have Chinese. And so, when you still filter down the indigenous or, or, or notable home-grown African wealth, often it isn't in the hands of the local people, and, and my idea was to be able to create a model that can be ... it's open. It's, it's something I make no bones about people taking the model that we use to work from themselves. So, the idea is that, even though I started here and I'm primarily focusing on UK, my dream is to be able to tap into the ecosystems across the diaspora.

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But also, to be honest, I, I want all humans to be able to look at what we're doing, and instead of glorifying the, the, the big ones that get these massive IPOs, which I think is good, I think there's a place for that, you know, there's a place for the big companies, but I would rather sit down. I would rather go to my grave knowing that, rather than seeking after those two billion dollars companies and getting really excited about that and getting my buyout, I would rather know that, "Oh my God, I was part and parcel of a journey or a story that created maybe a hundred

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companies that made a million in turnover," which means that there are more people eating from the table and breaking bread. That, for me, Jerry, is, that's why I say elephants more than unicorns. That is what I really. When, when this is all done and my, I'm gone and I'm just a memory, that's what I want to be left it. That's what my legacy will be, hence the word legacy as well.

Jerry:
[00:12:30] I, I, I really, uh, resonate with that and, and I think at some point we may have shared that, uh, among the many different activities that I ... the too many activities I get involved with, um, uh, is that I spend time mentoring and supporting entrepreneurs in, uh, the Tibetan region of China.

David: Yeah.

Jerry:
[00:13:00] And, um, because, uh, income disparity shows up there as well, where folks are living on, uh, less than a dollar a day, less than a US dollar a day, and, uh, families, and um, from what I have come to understand, uh, when you can lift a family out of that sub-one dollar a day level through the, uh, you said technology. For me it's a broader notion of entrepreneurship.

David: Yep.

Jerry: When, when you can lift folks there, then what you're doing is multiplier effect.

David: Yep.

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Jerry: And, and now it's easy for me in my privileged position to look at a third world part of the world, and so to say, "Hey! Here's, here is something, uh, that could be really helpful." Um, and it, and it has that, that overtone of, uh, you know, a white man reaching in to help, which is always interesting and challenging and complex.

David: Yeah.

Jerry:
[00:14:00] But, uh, what strikes me is that you're talking about supporting entrepreneurs. I imagine it in London, primarily, initially.

David: Yeah.

Jerry: And, and, uh, and of course, I mean this isn't really, um, a question. It's really an observation. And of course the needs of good entrepreneurial support systems-

David: Yes.

Jerry: Um, exist even in the wealthiest of communities in the world, don't they?

David:
[00:14:30] Yes. Yeah, yeah. And, and, and, and part of the education piece for me, and which is what, what, the, the course has been why it's such a key pillar is if, if I was to put

[00:15:00] my hand on my heart and speak to all the accelerator and incubator programs that I have experienced either as a pitch coach or gone in and got some leadership coaching and talk, spoken to individuals, the piece that I think is missing more than anything else is leadership, is strong leadership. People are so excited about building a product and rolling it out and, and getting, you know, uh, getting to market and getting these massive fund, funding rounds, and no one actually sits down and go, "Okay, let's really talk about self-awareness. What does it actually look like when you go and you race ahead and you get to 150 people and all of a sudden you got to start thinking about your hiring practices or your diversity and equality policy or your, the way you manage talent?" All the facts about co-founders. It may be brilliant now, but you may get to a point where you actually have to deal with conflicts.

[00:15:30] So, for me, that leadership piece, and I, I might mention it as being in about, being a leadership enthusiast, I don't believe that you can really drive sustainable stuff where people have a sense of wellbeing, be that mental or physical, as well as being able to contribute to an economy unless you've really got an understanding of where that leadership piece comes from.

[00:16:00] Jerry: Right. So, I, I, my, my next set of questions really come from a place of, uh ... I want to acknowledge again, as I, as I said before, you know, I am, I, I hit a, as Warren Buffet describes, the genetic lottery, right? I am a white male of privilege, and the privilege came regardless of whatever poverty I may have grown up in.

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David: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry: Um, uh, the privilege has manifested in the fact that I was able to work my way through that.

David: Yep.

Jerry: Um, and, uh, I swim in that.

David: Yes.

Jerry: It's, and, and so it makes it hard for me to see, uh, things. So, I try.

David: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry: And so, the questions are going to, uh, you know, really come from that place, and I want to acknowledge that I do not want to do that thing that white people do, which is ask black people to speak for all black people. (laughs)

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David: I tell you, I can only speak for Dave McQueen. (laughs)

Jerry: So, so, you know, that said, uh, from, from David McQueen's seat-

David: Yes.

Jerry: What are some of the challenges that may or may not be particularly, um, as, as folks seek to be the leaders they want to be-

David: Yes.

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Jerry: What are the challenges that may be, uh, particularly prevalent in the, the Pan-African entrepreneurial community?

David: Okay. So, there are, there are some, there are some are internal and some are external. Um, I, I, I'll give you a chorus that's probably very familiar in the, in the diaspora where we are taught from quite young that we've got to work twice as hard as white people in order to be able to succeed.

Jerry: Mmm.

David: Um, in my late teens I poured a hot, a whole load of hot water on that, and ever since I've been getting hassled from friends who tell me that I, I am living in cuckoo land because I don't believe that. And, and one of the reasons why I rejected that is because I, I entered the world of work and I realized I was working twice as hard as some people who were of color.

Jerry: (laughs)

David: And, and they were, they were more superior in terms of position than I am. I'm like, "What is this notion? This person has no sense around working twice as hard as this person and this, and, and, and why should I let race limit me?" And, and what I realized is that if you, if you're in that notion you're always going to feel inferior. If you feel that you've got to work twice as hard as somebody because of their race, you're always going to feel inferior and you've got to do this extra, go this extra mile, do this extra bit just to match up with somebody because of race. And-

Jerry: Okay, I've got, I'm going to ask you to pause on that one because I think you-

David: Go ahead. Sorry.

Jerry: No. I think you just said something super powerful.

David: Okay. Okay.

Jerry: Could you say that again?

David: So, I was saying that I, I, I believe that if you-

Jerry: Yeah.

David: If you, if you go in and thinking that you have to work twice as somebody based on race, you've already put yourself into an inferior position, you've elevated somebody because of their race, and you are ... in, in, in many ways you're actually creating, you're actually creating a platform where you already feel like an impostor, and I refuse to allow my journey to be dictated by someone else's narrative because of a social construct, which is race, which is real. Let's keep it real.

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Jerry: Yep.

David: But I'm not going to let the limitations of that ... And I, I, I'm aware of the, I'm aware of the constructs and how it affects me. I know if I drive down the road I'm going to be ... You and I drive down the road. I'm going to be, um ... There's a higher chance of me being stopped. Maybe five, six, seven times. Um, I know that, uh, there are certain things that will happen in that space, but I'm not going to allow it to limit my journey. I'm going to be aware of it, but I'm not going to allow it limit my journey. I'm going to be aware of it, but I'm not going to allow it limit my journey. And so, that narrative I had to challenge, and I always say it when I'm working with my entrepreneurs. They were like, "Oh, you know. Well, if I was white and I went to Watford," and I, I go, "Yeah, that's very true, but at the end of the day my mom and dad came to the UK without getting access to credit cards, with very limited access to mortgages, and they both managed to buy a house. Why? Because collaboratively in the community they all pooled their money together. They couldn't get it from the bank, so they pooled their money together. They bought houses, they bought cars, and they were able to teach lessons around not only surviving, but even more importantly thriving."

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Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

David: And, and, for me, part of the message within this ecosystem is to recognize when you're building your company, build a company to thrive, not to survive. Because if you're surviving you're always worrying, you really haven't thought, thought about the systems. And don't get me wrong, entrepreneurialism is the, is a, is a, is a very mad, you have, you have to be crazy to do this anyway. I think it's a real, a real rollercoaster. But the bigger picture is is that in me setting up Legacy 71 it's bigger than me, and because it's bigger than me it's about thriving and not surviving. And I guess the, the, the ... If I, If I can come to your point really quickly. I feel like I'm going on forever. But if I can come to your point really quickly about privilege, there's, there's, there's two ways I look at it.

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Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

David: I'm very privileged. My name is David McQueen. I walk into a room and no one's seen me, that door opens, okay? (laughs) But then I'm also privileged in that I've done some work with Richard Branson. That's opened a whole other door altogether. I've worked with major banks and technology companies, and I realize that privilege just allows me to go into spaces that a lot of other people can't. So, when I go there, I take young black men, young black men, and white, and young black men and women with me, and because of my passion for education I say young Asian women, young white people with me as well because I realize that just even having my name or even the way that I speak has allowed me to go into certain spaces.

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[00:22:00] But I also say on the flip side with the concept or the notion that you spoke about with white privilege also becomes a white burden. And, and let me explain it this way. There's a writer in the UK called Akala and he kind of elaborates on this. He wrote a book called Natives. I, I'll share it with you so you can share it.

Jerry: I'd love to hear it. Yeah [crosstalk 00:22:15]

David: And there's a powerful thing in there, and, and, and the notion is that so many people focus on white privilege-

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

David: And the pathway that it sets for people regardless of class. And let's, let's, let's take, we take that on board. But the flip side is is that, the burden is is that many people who are aware of white privilege will then think that because of being white that they will be able to get into doors or do certain things because of the notion of their skin, and that's unreal. So, then what actually happens is you go to go and run a race and the fastest guy on the pitch is, is the fastest guy in the race is a black guy. Or you go to go and do NFL or basketball, or you go and set up a company and, and, and you want to get into film, and you feel by the notion of your, your skin that you could be go into Hollywood and you can sail through there, you know, easily, and then when you get there you realize, well, no, you're behind Tyler Perry and Oprah and Ava DuVernay, and all of a sudden that notion of privilege gets pushed back because the burden is that you have an expectation which isn't a reality.

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[00:23:30] And so, for me, part of the conversation while we're dealing with race is let's be honest about this. Some structures have been set up to make people feel inferior or superior around their race. My thing is is look: If that's what you want to believe, I'm happy for you, but while I'm out here building an ecosystem I want to be aware of that but not allow that race conversation to be the primary conversation at the front of your mind.

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

David: Let's build stuff that can encourage wealth and wellbeing and recognize we're going to have hiccups along the way, recognize that some people are going to be quite tri,

tribal, recognize, and I'll put it out there, that some of these larger companies actually do not care about diversity and inclusion.

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

David: That's it. I have no interest, Jerry, in de-colonizing Silicon Valley because I'm too focused on building a village in London.

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Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Oh God, I love what you just said. And, you know, if I can reflect back to you, it's, it, you know, uh, the message I'm hearing, and I'm, I'm, I'm, I'm perhack, perhaps merging it with my own perceptions, but what I'm taking from what you're saying, David, feels such, so resonant with so much of what we talk about at Reboot anyway, which is: we're going to look at tough spaces. We're going to look at those issues, but we're not going to dwell on them. (laughs)

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David: Yep. Yep.

Jerry: Right? So, what we're going to do, because, because if we ignore those tough issues they actually have this deep, deep power to shape the conversation in unconscious ways.

David: Yes.

Jerry: But, um, but, you know, so if I'm, it, if I, if I were to approach our conversation without acknowledging the differences between us, or if you were to approach this conversation and, and, uh, and not acknowledge the intersectionality of your existence, you are a black man but you are a man.

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David: Yes.

Jerry: Right? Who, who is able to move in ways that perhaps another black man may not be able to move because of language or because of names. Um, if, if we don't acknowledge that, we actually give it more power.

David: Yes.

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Jerry: To, to, to shape our communities and our organizations in ways that are destructive to the individuals humans.

David: Yes.

Jerry: Am I seeing that correctly?

David: Totally. Totally. And, and, uh, and I ... I haven't got the energy for people to see me as a threat.

Jerry: (laughs) Oh God, I love that line. Say more.

David: I don't have it. Yeah. I don't have it.

Jerry: Yeah.

David: If, and if, and you know, and I've said to people if you, even when I set this up I said,
[00:26:00] "If you see me as a threat, maybe you need to have a, a, an internal dialogue with yourself as to why you see me as a threat." And let's break it down. Let's break it down. If, if, if by me saying that I am going to empower more black founders and tech companies to create wealth, to create jobs, um, which will be across the board and, you know, people across all races will be hired, and, and, and as a result we will find ways of creating, um, new solutions for individuals from a different lens,
[00:26:30] okay? Um, but at the same time what we're doing is we're creating these vehicles that will put more tax into the system. So, you can get all upset with me as you want, but when I've got five or ten people coming out of my incubator and they're creating jobs and that tax is being paid and you walk down the road and God forbid you trip on a, on a pavement, and I know the health system is slightly different in America-

Jerry: (laughs)

David: But you, you trip on a pavement here in the UK, an ambulance will come along, put you in the back of the ambulance, and they will take you to the hospital. We don't charge insurance like you do in America, right?

Jerry: Right.

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David: We have the benefit of the doubt that our National Health System, for good or, or bad, will take you to the hospital, and then if you're a citizen you'll be treated. I sleep well knowing that I'm part of a system that has helped people to create wealth so we can pay those taxes that can go into the community that can make sure that if anything untoward happen to you, that you're covered. So, if I'm a threat, I'm a threat because you haven't challenged the internal dialogue, and from the time you challenge that internal dialogue you realize I'm actually your friend, not a threat. Yes, I may be spes, focusing on a specific niche. And as I always say to people here, "Look, when I tell you that I'm pro-black it doesn't mean that I'm anti-white, and it's very important to know the difference."
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Jerry: Yeah. Uh, and, and what I'm, I'm hearing, the phrase that I just wrote down is, is something that we've been working with, which is this notion of communities of belonging.

David: Yes.

Jerry: [00:28:00] And, and, you know, and yours, and your, and your metaphorical story about the National Health System, and, and I don't, again, you know, it's a comp ... To, to, to live this human life is complicated and complex.

David: Yes. Yes.

Jerry: Um, but I think that, um, what I'm hearing you speak to is the fits, the sense that if you trip and fall in the street of London, in the streets of London-

David: Yeah.

Jerry: You feel enough belonging to know that you will be cared for.

David: There you go.

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Jerry: And that is not something that's available to the vast majority of humans on the planet.

David: Totally.

Jerry: And if we set that as an interesting metaphorical goal of how do we create systems of belonging, recognizing and working with the pieces within our, our ecosystems that work against that, then I think what we can do is we can, we can, we can, um, [00:29:00] uh, turn the, the experiences that we all have of race into a means for deeper connection-

David: Yes.

Jerry: Rather than, than, that, that piece that, uh, you know, um, that fragile guilt that white people can feel, or the sense of a burden-

David: Yes.

Jerry: That then twists and warps things-

David: Yes.

Jerry: In awful ways.

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David: And, and, and I think you may remember when we had our breakfast I, I made this quote to you. I said, "Look, I'm not interested in white guilt. The only times I want white guilt are when I have applied for a loan or a mortgage [crosstalk 00:29:36]

Jerry: (laughs)

David: That's the only time I want it, and if you want to do it then I'm totally fine. But, you know, the, the reality is I know my business that I have to approach, our net worths, um, angel investors, VCs, across the whole, um, um, private equity spectrum. I have to have conversations with individuals of white, um, Asian, black, all across the spectrum. I have to go there because the only color that I know, and I've learnt this a long way, when you're in a specific, when you're in a room and you can bring a certain narrative, the only color that matters to a lot of people, you say it in America, is green.

David: It's the color of money. Because what people are looking for is: What's that strong business model?

Jerry: Yeah.

[00:30:30]
David: And, and, and one of the things I've realized, and, and this really, really drives me, Jerry, is that look: Back in the day I used to be a club promoter.

David: One of the things I, I, I, even when we first started out it was more invitation only than, than, than anything, so it was almost like an elite thing. Uh, and over time it became wider. We, we opened it out wider. It was known. The, the beta stage was like, almost like so many other products. You have that beta stage and the excitement is caused and then everybody wants to be there.

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[00:31:30] And it really made me, when I was thinking about Legacy 71 it really made me think about that. That there are individuals who couldn't come to our club because they didn't even know where the club was. But if you did know where the club was, you got into the club. And if you knew who we were, there was more chance of you being able to get into the VIP section. And if you could get into the VIP section, there was even more chance of you being able to have a conversation with the DJ to start talking about the tracks you'd like to listen to over the night. And I think about this the same way in with the startup ecosystem. Some people want to be part of the system but they don't know where the club is. And then when they get to the club they don't know what the language is to actually even pass the bouncer.

[00:32:00] But once you know that language you get inside the club, and once you're inside the club you get familiar with what's happening. You get to dance. Sometimes because you don't know who's around, you're not dancing like no one's watching. You're dancing because you're really conscious about it. But then the more you get familiar, the more you dance like no one's watching, and then you understand: "Hold on a minute, there's a VIP section. I can actually talk to the DJ about my songs." And that metaphor for me is the startup person coming in, having an understanding about the language of customer growth and product development and marketing and metrics and being able to do an actual great pitch deck, and then being able to make your way up, and even being able to say, "Do you know? I

[00:32:30]

don't really like that DJ because his values don't align with the songs that I want, so I'm going to sit this one out." But when another DJ comes up, they can play the song and I'm going to dance like no one's watching because I know he aligns with me, or she aligns with me, and I'm going to dance like no one's watching.

And for me, that's the essence of Legacy 71. I want people to know where those clubs are, but I also want them to know how to get in.

Jerry: I, I, I-

[00:33:00]

David: Does that, does that make sense?

Jerry: Oh my goodness, that, that metaphor is so perfect and so powerful. And can I, can I share back with you some, something that I, that I've been sitting on for a few minutes, which I think may be also an undercurrent in here.

David: Okay.

Jerry: And that is the story of your parents arriving in London-

David: Yes.

Jerry: And not being able to get a credit card or a mortgage-

David: Yes.

Jerry: But turning to the community to figure it out.

David: Yeah. Yeah.

Jerry: And, and I was so powerful, and, I, I feel a thread of that.

[00:33:30]

David: Yes. Yeah.

Jerry: It's like, "Well, fuck it."

David: Yeah.

Jerry: "We'll make our own club."

David: Yes. Yeah.

Jerry: You know? It's like, "We'll find a way."

David: Yes. And that's why I was-

Jerry: Because we're, we're going to dance.

David: Yes. And, and that's why I was saying to you, Jerry, I, I, I honestly ... As much as I love the innovation that come, has come out of Silicon Valley, I don't care to de-colonize it. I don't care to pick up sticks and move to one of the most expensive places in the country to go and live so I can rub shoulders with people who don't even want to be around me. I don't care about that.

[00:34:00]

Jerry: Right. Right.

David: Because where is home for me is London. It's familiar territory. And yes, it's one of the largest tech ecosystems in Europe and has similar issues because when America sneezes, you know, England catches a cold. But there is something about being able to go, "Do you know what? Let me correct my own narrative here." You know, in the UK we've had so many different forms of underground music, and underground music that was created because it was never played on mainstream. You know, the equivalent of what you have is hip hop in America, is a, is a music style that we have in the UK called grime. And grime was a real rebellious underground, angry, black poetic, you know, sometimes a, like hip hop, a bit too misogynistic for my liking, but it was that voice, it was that poetry, it was the, the, the, the staccato over these dark, angry beats, but it was expression.

[00:34:30]

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Mm-hmm (affirmative).

David: It's become mainstream-

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

David: Because it was able to move its way through, and a lot of these artists performed with artists like Drake and Adele and, and all the other, you know, Beyonce and all the big mainstream artists, so all of a sudden they were able to pick up to it. The same way across West Africa you have Afrobeat, which was something that was, you know, Highlife, which was, you know, Fela Kuti many years ago. Those were the only artists you really knew. And then all of a sudden Beyonce started using songs with Afrobeats and, again, Drake got into it and Kanye West and all these other popular artists in the hip hop space picked up onto this genre. And what I've realized is often, when individuals don't get an opportunity to sit at certain tables, they start to make their own, and for me that's what Legacy is about.

[00:35:00]

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Uh, this, this system that I'm talking about with my parents. It was called pardner. It's, uh, they pronounced it pardner. That's the, uh, that's the kind of like colloquialism from the, uh, Caribbean sound, but it means partner. And effectively they would, it's, it's what would be now known as the, the, the English, the polite English term is revolving credit association. Okay? (laughs)

Jerry: Uh-huh (affirmative). Uh-huh (affirmative). Uh-huh (affirmative).

David: [00:36:00] But effectively it meant that you would have 10, 20 people, a bit like an angel syndicate, who would put their money together and they would pool their money together and they'd go, "Right, there's 10 of us. So, effectively we need 10,000 pounds to put down on a house. Month one, we'll all get together, and person one, you get your 10,000, but make sure you put in for the other months that come along. Month two, person two gets 10,000." So, by the end of the year we've raised a hundred thousand between 10 people, and 10 people have gotten to the property because collectively put money together to get deposits for a house.

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

[00:36:30]

David: [00:37:00] And that, for me, is incredible way of thriving as opposed to surviving because then people are like, "Well, hold on a minute. How did they get that money if they didn't go through this system that I set up, which should be credit cards, uh, mortgages and especially if I'm using my racial bias or class biases, it's going to be at a premium? Hold on. How, how come they were able to do that?" And that, for me, is the essence of saying, "Look, you know, we've got a model that says, 'I'm happy to go and talk to angels and VCs, but if you don't want to get involved, we'll equity crowd fund. We'll get a thousand people to put in a thousand pounds; we'll raise a million pounds. You'll want to talk to us in due time. Don't worry about that. Let's do things slightly differently.'"

[00:37:30] And so, as you said, there's definitely a thread of my parents saying, "How were we able to lift each other up and get into that swell, it was group economics, it was collaborative economics." And there are replications of it in the Indian community, the West African community, and in certain parts of the world I think it's called stop-bell in South Africa, susu in West Africa, in Pakistan and India, because when they traveled, that was the way they created, um, collaborative economics.

Jerry: Well, and, and-

David: And that, for me, is important.

Jerry: And, and not oh, uh, I think they also created their own table.

David: Yes.

Jerry: And, and, you know, creating your own club and creating your own table, um, because you, you know, there's, there's, there's the need. Um, so ... I'm going to ask a question that is more leading than I think any of the other questions I've asked-

David: That's fine.

[00:38:00]

Jerry: So, I'm going to lead the witness a little bit because I kind of know the answer to my question, but I [crosstalk 00:38:04]

David: I'm expecting it. (laughs)

Jerry: Um, the, the piece of the name that we have actually not talked about is 71.

David: Yes.

Jerry: Tell, te, tell me what 71 means.

David: Um, I love numbers. I think there is a significance in numbers. Uh, the, the ... There are certain elements of numerology that I, I think, although it might seem quite kooky on the one hand, I think is quite powerful. So, to, to, to give you a sense, my, um, I, I define as agnostic. Well, ignostic, I say, because I, I let people go and google that for themselves, but I define as agnostic in that I respect and revere spirituality across the board, but I don't tie myself to one god or one specific belief. Um, I'm, uh, my, my guiding light is namaste. The god in me reflects and sees the god in you. That's my principle.

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

David: Um, and, uh, and so when I was looking around, I, a friend of mine came round, and she had a tattoo on her wrist, and it was a seven and a colon and a one. And I was like, "That's really powerful," because I remember being a Christian. The world was created in seven days, and you go through that seven-day cycle, and then one, you start all over again. I thought that was quite powerful. And for some unknown reason I just googled 71 and I was like, "What does that number mean?" And it came up, so, in, in Judaism it's the number of wisdom, in Christianity it's the number of the Holy Spirit, in numerology it's the number for business continuity, and, uh, my dad turned 71 last year.

Jerry: Mmm.

David: And it's just like all these things aligned and I went, "Wow." And I sat down there and I wrote and I said, "Do you know what?" Uh, as you know me, I'm a man of story, I love narratives, I love being able to create intrigue around, you know, when, when you're talking to individuals, and I thought, "Do you know what?" When, when they, when someone sees a name, I don't know, McQueen and Sons, they're like, "Okay, so McQueen family's name." Or when they see, you know, um, I don't know, Barkshire Hathaway, you know, you look at these lovely names. But if somebody sees Legacy 71, they're going to be like, "Hmm. That's a nice name. What, what does that mean," and I thought, "Right, good." Because that's the starting point for me to tell you about our values, about continuity, about wisdom, about spiritual connection, and legacy in that it's going to be collaborative. We're looking to make this thing grow.

[00:40:30] Where, you know, there's this, there's this whole, there's thing in, in, in tech, in the tech space where everybody's looking for, you know, people go on pitch and the first thing they want to know is when you're going to exit. And, and I go, "Okay, you know, in the grand scheme of things, a lot of these guys who we really revere like Jeff Bezos, like Bill Gates, like Elon Musk, like, uh, Zuckerberg, or however we look at them politically, all these guys have been figureheads and totems at their organizations, Jack Welch. You name them. These guys have been figureheads at the beginning of their or, at the top of their organizations because they wanted to create legacy." So, rather than being, uh, don't get me wrong; I think if somebody comes along and sees your technology and they give you a two hundred million pound check and that could be life-changing for you, take the money and run, as long as you can give it back, for me. That's my thinking.

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[00:41:30] Um, but Legacy is about: What can I give to my children and to their children that can be not only something physical in terms of a vehicle, but a mindset? I want my children to know that there is abundance, and there is abundance in this world, and that even though there is a finite amount of physical resources in terms of love, in terms of community, in terms of humanness, there is abundance. And for me, this vehicle, you know, yeah, it's a business because I love doing business. But if, if I have to say the thing that resonates most with me is that humanity around legacy. That you can be nice and make money, you can be nice and impact the world, and you can also teach that to your children and to your children's children so that they can take it to the next level. That, that's what drives me.

[00:42:00] Jerry: Wow, uh, I, I ... I feel the truth of what you've just said. I feel it in my bones. And if I can reflect back, um, something else that I see, um, that I think is evident, um, but not, maybe not top of mind, is, you know, you, you are, um ... you speak about the legacy going forward, and you briefly touched upon, but movingly touched upon the fact that your father turned 71.

David: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

[00:43:00] Jerry: Um, what I see too is the legacy that stretches back behind you. The ancestors who are, have taught you and live within you. You know, um, I'll give credit where credit is due. I saw Springsteen on Broadway, uh, uh, a few, uh, months ago, and there's this very moving section where he talks about the difference between ghosts and ancestors. And ghosts, uh, have unfinished business and they haunt you.

David: Yeah yeah yeah. Yeah.

Jerry: Yeah, but ancestors stand behind you perhaps with their hands on your back.

David: Wow, wow.

Jerry: And, you know, when you speak of your daughters it's so moving. You know, before we started recording you showed me a picture of your, you and your daughters, and they looked at you, but, but, do you, but understand: you are their elder.

David: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

[00:43:30]

Jerry: And I am my children's elder, and my ancestors ... Now I'm going to cry. My ancestors stand behind me with their hands on my shoul, shoulders. And they, they're not pushing, but saying, "We're here." And so, that legacy stretches both ways. Forward to the future but back towards the past. And there's wisdom in that elephant, there's wisdom in that word.

[00:44:00]

David: Yeah.

Jerry: And so, that's what I see.

David: Yeah.

Jerry: I, I think I, I, I made the storyteller speechless.

David: Yeah. (laughs)

Jerry: (laughs)

David: You know, I, I, I always [inaudible 00:44:18] say, I am not, I have heard Jerry do these things time and time again. I am not [inaudible 00:44:23] will be no tears coming from my eyes, and you left it to (laughs) and now I've gone. But, you know, [00:44:30] they're tears of joy.

Jerry: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

David: Often, in a very patriarchal world, we forget how powerful the family is shaped by the matriarch being that backbone, being the carer, being the nurturer. And often there is a dominant narrative within the tech space of this real patriarchal, you know, Sun Tzu warrior dude. But when men have gone to the war it's always the women who has been hold, holding the family. And for me, being able to tap into that femininity as well as the masculinity part of my side, and being able to say that for both men and women, there are equal sides we can share, and there are people who have been before us who have paved the way. Man, that, oh my God, you have no idea, you have no idea how much, that's why I'm crying because that is ... [00:46:00] that has taken me to another place altogether. It, it, it, the, we on ... We are not limited by our past, but it does sure as hell help to shape our future.

[00:46:30]

Jerry: Amen, brother. Amen.

[00:47:00]

Jerry: So, I want to just close with just this ... There is nothing ... I didn't add to the narrative. I just reflected back what you were already telling me.

David: Yes.

Jerry: And maybe, maybe your grandmother was behind you, one or two of them, and they were speaking over your shoulder to me, maybe, and that transpersonal way. Um, but their hands are on your shoulders.

David: Yeah.

[00:47:30]

Jerry: And this work that you're doing feels super important, my friend.

Jerry: I want to thank you so much for the time together. I mean, every single time we're together it just feels like we go deeper.

David: Thank you.

[00:49:30]