

Jerry (01:44):

Well, welcome, Nitin. It's good to see you. Good to meet you.

Nitin (01:49):

Thank you. Thank you.

Jerry (01:49):

Why don't you take a minute and just introduce yourself to us?

Nitin (01:54):

Sure. Um, so my name is Nitin, I'm the co-founder of Interstride. Um, it's a platform to support international students that are studying in the US, um, and really I built this company from my own experience as an international student. I came, uh, to the US from Nepal, um, at a pretty early age. So I came to the US when I was 17, and, uh, so in the last 20 years having gone through the undergraduate experience, the graduate experience, um, had to leave the country a couple of times because of visa issues. Um, so it's been a lot of- a very challenging journey, but rewarding one at, at, at the same time.

Nitin (02:35):

And so, so through this experience, um, what we, me and my cofounder realized there's a way to optimize this, this experience for, for the next generation of students who come, and which really, you know, took us away from our career to start this company. And what we want to do is partner with higher institutions and employers and, and other players in this space to make sure that international students who leave their home and family and, and spend so much, uh, resource to, to gain quality education, they deserve the best and they get the best out of this experience as well. Um, so that's really what, what, um, I'm doing in, in my (laughs) lifetime, and keeps me going.

Jerry (03:23):

Well, and thank you for that. And, and I have a little bit of background, um, but why don't you, why don't you, m- share a little bit more about what brought you to reach out, um, to, to come on the show?

Nitin (03:39):

Yes. So there's a couple of things. I, I think generally I have this, this personality where I'm very afraid of failure. Um, you know, there's a sense of doing the right thing, trying to make sure things are going in the right direction, and, um, always achieving and making sure that things are... You know, I'm, I'm performing at the top of the level and, and then the second is, the- in a couple of years ago, so we started this journey almost three, three-and-a-half years ago with Interstride, um, and a couple of years ago my co-founder who is also one of my best friends, he had a sudden cardiac arrest, um, uh, during Memorial Day weekend.

Nitin (04:22):

And same age as me. He was, I be- I believe 35 at that time, and perfectly healthy individual. Um, ended up having the cardiac arrest and next day when his wife, uh, messaged me saying he had some sort of a

heart attack, I didn't really, you know, think it was anything major. Because I just didn't think it could be anything serious, but later found out that, you know, because of that cardiac arrest his, his brain was completely damaged because there's no oxygen, um-

Jerry (04:56):

Wow.

Nitin (04:56):

... and... So as a result, he ha- he passed away, um, which was a huge setback to me as an individual, um, because he was such a close confidant and, you know, I was talking to him almost on a daily basis. We were keying in 500 text messages per day and making four phone calls, um, and suddenly it was, there was this huge vacuum because I'm already away from my family in the US, and this was a person who was almost, you know, almost like my partner, um, or, was a partner, a business partner, but like a life partner as well, in, in some sense. And I was lost for a long time in terms of what exactly is the purpose (laughs) that you where... life can just vanish in a minute.

Nitin (05:39):

And we both had this great vision, and, you know, this partnership that we wanted to solve something. Um, so it was almost starting all fresh and, and having this resilience to start off again, alone. Um, so, you know, I have been able to carry on from that journey, uh, from, from not having him as a, as a partner, but that sense of excitement for, for that, that thrill that was there and that camaraderie with- together with someone, um, that's missing. So, how to go about it and find the tru- alone, individually, and keep that spirit in me, um, that he and I... His legacy is also part of this, um, mission.

Jerry (06:23):

Wow. It's not a common cofounder story.

Nitin (06:34):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry (06:35):

And, it's not something I haven't experienced before or seen before. And so, I'd be happy to have the conversation with you about that, and I think, I think, um, maybe we can start with... Tell me his name.

Nitin (06:56):

His name is Christian. Christian [Eger 00:06:59].

Jerry (07:01):

And, and you said he was your best friend. When did you meet?

Nitin (07:06):

So, I met him in 2010. We attended the MBA program together. Um, it's a very similar to me, his... He came as an international student to the US. Um, attended USC as an undergrad. Um, we met at Berkeley

during our MBA program, and very similar background. We both went to financial services sector, um, not really fulfilled in our corporate creation. And so that's... We really, the, the bonding factor was we both loved playing tennis, watching tennis, um, so we were, you know, tennis, uh, we started off playing tennis and then, just, we hit it off on many different levels.

Jerry (07:46):

Mm. I imagine you miss him.

Nitin (07:53):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry (07:56):

Yeah. What was he like?

Nitin (08:04):

Well, Christian was, was a very humble guy. Maybe one of the, uh, most humble people I've met in my life, and, just a genuine, authentic guy that, you know, was a really... Wanted everyone to, to be happy. He was a very happy person. Um, just not even an ounce of evil in him. Um, and very hard working, diligent, family-oriented. Um, he has, uh, two kids, a girl and a boy, right now they're six and... Or, sorry, seven and four. Um, and just very strong work ethic, um, from their- his Austrian roots.

Jerry (08:44):

Mm.

Nitin (08:44):

And, uh, and then, and, and a very good friend. Um, so, just overall, I just miss that side. He's such a genuine character.

Jerry (08:55):

What's it been like for you these last few years?

Nitin (09:01):

Well, I would say a little bit lonely, uh, to be working and, and carrying this over without him. Um, uh... Also, just, you know, that energy that I... So we had a nice balance where he was this patient person, um, always very stable and, um, grounded in, in certain way. I was a little bit more energy and we, we had a nice balance between the two of us. And so, sometimes I, I've missed that energy from him where he had that patient, stable approach and looked at the big picture, and not, you know, focus so much on the business side of things, but like just connecting to the vision and the mission.

Nitin (09:47):

Um, so, from, from a personal side, and... I definitely miss him as a friend, as, you know, as a, as, as someone who was very close to me and I lo- shared my life stories and everything that happened day-to-day with him, what, what stressed me, and, so that's, that's gone. Um, from a business side,

obviously, he had skills and, and experiences that he brought and the value that he brought to the business, and that's gone as well. (laughs) So, it's, it's been difficult to say none the least, but, you know, that's, I, I keep thinking that his spirit is still there, his energy is still there, and wherever he is, um, and is supporting in that, that way.

Jerry ([10:27](#)):

Yeah. And, and I think, in, in one of your notes to us, you talked about the fact that you felt like, um, it was just hard to keep going.

Nitin ([10:39](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry ([10:40](#)):

Am I remembering correctly?

Nitin ([10:43](#)):

Yeah. It's... I think more than hard to keep going. I think it's, it's the joy that, you know, that the, that camaraderie or that, that teamwork with him, the, um, the partnership, is, is what's not there anymore, right? Um, what does keep me going is the fact that I'm still very closely tied to the vision and mission of supporting, because it stems directly from, from our joint experience. Christian had the same experience. He experienced the same challenges of being sent out of the country. Um, I experienced that same thing where, you know, despite doing everything right, um, we were, we had to leave the country.

Nitin ([11:22](#)):

And so, we, we understand being, and, uh, um, what students go through and, and when they come, they leave their family. So that, that's what keeps me going and keeps me tied to, to making sure that this vision is a success. And now, there's an added factor of keeping it alive also for him. Um, his legacy is in this, in this business, is, and is part of this company, and I, I not only want to do it for myself but definitely for him as well, to say, "Look what we started." Um, but I, I definitely miss that, that, that interaction with him. The, the joint, um... Yeah. And so, sometimes, not having that... And, and also it's so hard to replace. You can't just create that relationship with, you know, a new fou- cofounder for example.

Nitin ([12:09](#)):

I can't bring in anyone to the company and expect that, and, also, there are pivotal moments, within our growth where I tried to bring in some of my other friends, but it's just... It's not the same. The energy between two individuals is so unique that it's hard to replicate, and, you know, it's just almost, uh, a fortunate accident that you meet some people in life where you click with them so well, um, and when that magic is gone, it's just gone.

Jerry ([12:41](#)):

You know, um, a couple of things occurred to me. One is that, it's, um, well, first, I, I'll just share my condolences in the sadness, at the loss. And it's clearly, um, you know, so many conversations we have as coaches are (laughs) about cofounder relationships that go awry.

Nitin ([13:09](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry ([13:10](#)):

This is a relationship that, that partnership, um, that, that can feel deeper than just business colleague.

Nitin ([13:21](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry ([13:22](#)):

This is a relationship that was going right.

Nitin ([13:25](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry ([13:27](#)):

And, um, and, the other thing that strikes me is that grief has no, uh, statute of limitations.

Nitin ([13:40](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry ([13:42](#)):

Right? It has no place where it just runs out. Um, and it continues to impact you.

Nitin ([13:53](#)):

Mm.

Jerry ([13:55](#)):

Years later. And, I just wanna acknowledge that that's true for you. Um, and I caught a glimmer of something, and it could be a projection on my part, so just reject it if it's not right, but I notice, Nitin, that you, in addition to being organized around a fear of failure, as you've identified, which tells me that you're a pretty high achieving person who made your way, m- somewhat stubbornly, somewhat persistently (laughs) to the United States, and you just kept going.

Nitin ([14:47](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry ([14:48](#)):

But, uh, you also felt energized and inspired by the idea of helping out people like you. Or people like you and Christian, who are going through the same struggles. But now you carry an additional burden which is, uh, to live up to his legacy... or to maintain his legacy. And, that my first reaction was, to look to your shoulders and see how burdened they might be.

Jerry ([15:26](#)):

What's it like carrying that responsibility?

Nitin ([15:38](#)):

I wouldn't say there's a burden, and I don't feel I'm burdened by, you know, because, again, just bringing his energy back, um-

Jerry ([16:01](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Nitin ([16:01](#)):

... or just thinking of Christian, he's, he's not the type of person who would burden anyone.

Jerry ([16:06](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Nitin ([16:07](#)):

(laughs) And, so just knowing him, he's one of those... And like, even, keeping that energy with me, is anything. He's one, he was one of those people who would take your burden away, um, anything that was difficult, um, anything that was challenging, he would do the challenging part and give you the easier thing to do. So, that makes me feel much lighter about, you know, where even having him part of this... You... I mean, not that he's here in, in, in physical, but I just have this idea that his energy is floating around, um, very much so, and, whichever realm that (laughs) is.

Nitin ([16:43](#)):

Um, and it doesn't burden me. It doesn't- he doesn't burden me, and the idea of keeping his legacy doesn't burden me because, again, he was so humble I don't think there's any... A lot of his legacy he had also relies on, you know, the- a person's ego where your name is supposed to last through time and generation. But nothing lasts forever. And I think both of us were not doing this, or not doing this, I'm still not doing this for my own, you know, like glamour or ego or... It's just something meaningful, and you do it from day-to-day, what keeps you up and makes life interesting, and, and same for him. I, I just don't think he, he would care about Christian's name being associated with the business, or, um, ultimately, what does that even mean, right?

Nitin ([17:28](#)):

So, I think we had that mindset where it's... It wasn't like really to, to stand out and say, "Oh, we started this company." So, I, I d- I don't feel burdened by that, um, but maybe just burdened by the fact that it's me by myself as opposed to, you know, two people carrying the weight. Um, so, yeah, I...

Jerry ([17:53](#)):

I appreciate that distinction, and... and I loved how you lit up when you talk about his energy still being there.

Nitin ([18:02](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry ([18:04](#)):

I think about the people in my own life who have passed away, whether it's my parents or relatives or grandparents or friends or even my therapist, long-time therapist with whom I, I talked for almost 30 years. Someone asked me the other day, do I miss her? And I said, "Well, no, 'cause I talk to her every day."

Nitin ([18:31](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry ([18:32](#)):

And, uh, you're smiling 'cause I think you know what I mean.

Nitin ([18:35](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry ([18:36](#)):

It's like, I, I can hear her voice.

Nitin ([18:41](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry ([18:41](#)):

Um, sometimes she says, "Good job, Jerry." And sometimes she says, "No, you can do better than that, Jerry." Especially where she acts a bit as my mentor in the work I do as a coach. I'm curious what Christian would say to you, or what he possibly does say to you, m- when you step into the burden of feeling alone.

Nitin ([19:14](#)):

Yes. So, I, I have that, you know, conversation, w- with myself, (laughs) at least, and, um, I, I do feel his, his energy and I've, I've spoken to his wife many times and I always tell her, and I don't know what she thinks about it, but I always tell her that, you know, "I always feel Christian's energy is there, so, and which has kept me going ever since." I mean, people have t- you know, like recently with this, even with this incubator, when they hear my story about, oh, losing the co-founder a couple of years ago and being able to continue despite that. Um, they think it's some sort of resilience.

Nitin ([19:51](#)):

Um, but, I, I don't think it was resilience. It's just, you know, having that energy and, and making sure that I was talking to him. I was looking for that reinforcement for him to say, "Okay, good job. You- you're doing the right thing. Just keep going one step at a time, and, and you'll get there," you know. And what

is that final destination, right? No one knows. Um, it's not, it's not something monetary. It's just making sure that you're... you have a goal towards that vision and mission again. Um, and just taking even small steps are fine, but making that gradual path as opposed to questioning yourself, and, and doubting yourself and, and, and doubting the abilities that you had, have as, as an individual as well.

Nitin ([20:36](#)):

Um, so, I, I, I do get that constant reinforcement from my, my conversations of, from that energy, as you mentioned, where he just tells me to be patient to keep going. And part of it was his energy again, right? He was this very patient person, and I was always rushing, I was like, "Hey, we need to hit revenue that lines. We need to, you know, we need to make X amount of dollars by this time to go to the next level." And he would say, "You know what? What are you gonna do once you get to that point? Um, just, just take it easy, and you..." Um, so, so I do think that has helped me quite a bit, um, in being resilient.

Jerry ([21:14](#)):

Would you mind if I read something to him? And, and this is gonna come from my own book.

Nitin ([21:26](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry ([21:26](#)):

Um, and, you know, your, your conversation, um, and the things you reference reminded me of this, and, and, so, you know, I'm sort of feeling that maybe, maybe this will feel resonate for you. This is from a chapter in the book called, uh, *Heartbreak, Resilience, and the Path to Equanimity*.

Nitin ([21:53](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry ([21:57](#)):

The heartbreak of every day. "Here's a fact to break your heart. Chestnut trees, parents, children, friends, lovers and dreams all die. Our children stepping into our footprints' struggle following their way through to adulthood, bearing skinned and scarred knees, broken hearts, and the imprint of wretched disappointment. They manage this while navigating the unrelenting compulsion to find the person they were born to be. Toiling against forces that would have them someone else. The resulting heartbreak becomes a means of self-discovery and ultimately self-creation. A CEO develops a rare blood cancer and funding for the company is threatened. A fiance calls the- calls off the wedding a month before the ceremony."

Jerry ([22:57](#)):

"A marriage ends when a spouse dies. Customers reject us. Investors abandon us. Our companies, the embodiments of our wishes and dreams, crash and burn after years of riding the roller coaster. Our ability to love and be loved, to feel safe and that we belong, is challenged daily by the everydayness of heartbreak and struggle. We struggle with these painful realities. A birth, old age, sickness and death, trying desperately, usually vainly, to see the heartbreak of every day, not as evidence of our own



unworthiness and unlovability, but as life merely unfolding as intended. That struggle exacerbates the everyday pain. We struggle to accept the roller coaster for what it is. Life.”

Jerry (23:56):

“The point of riding the roller coaster isn't to be better at riding roller coasters. It's to learn how not to board the roller coaster at all. Resiliency isn't the goal. It's the path. The goal is the equanimity of a warrior. The first step on the path of resiliency and the movement towards the warrior's equanimity are taken by having your heart broken open with the everyday skinning of your child's knee, the dismembering of a tree, or the death of a spouse.”

Jerry (24:34):

You know, listening to you process, m- made me feel like I was watching a warrior who stepped into equanimity. What I'm sensing is a man who never forgets his friend but has learned how to move beyond the grief. Who has learned, um, that beyond resilience is a sense that you're gonna be okay.

Nitin (25:19):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry (25:21):

And, that the company being okay is an example of you and Christian being okay. And I'm curious if that has any resonance for you.

Nitin (25:37):

Yeah, I, I absolutely think, you know, you're, you're dead on. I mean, before this event, I would rely so much on Christian's stability for my own stability. Um, he was that positive energy which I relied so heavily on, um, to give me that base, stable base, because if anything went wrong Christian was my guy, and, I, I relied on that. But once he was gone, the whole foundation was shaken. And I had to rediscover myself, uh, because who was my, you know, who... What would give me that stability?

Nitin (26:16):

And, in some way, this unfortunate event gave me the opportunity to find my own base, uh, or create that situation for myself. And, part of that, was, (laughs) really, a difficult journey for six months, um, of self-discovery and identifying your, your true core and your strength and... But after passing through that grief, I was able to find that, that core inside me where I could do it all by myself.

Jerry (26:58):

What do you think gave you the means and the capacity to move in that way? To f- to, to discover that core?

Nitin (27:14):

I think part of it was, again, coming back a little bit about the fear of failure. (laughs)

Jerry (27:24):

Mm.

Nitin ([27:25](#)):

You know? Um, as I mentioned, I, I want to, to not fail, so there is that underlying factor. I don't know if, if that was the right approach or not, but it was just, uh, an instinct that was just something where I had to continue because there was no backup for me. There's nothing else. I mean, what else would I do? Fail?

Jerry ([27:52](#)):

Failure's not an option in this regard.

Nitin ([27:54](#)):

Exactly. And, for me, I, had a limited network in the US, for example. Limited social family ties. Um, and I didn't want to just sob about it and, and see that as an excuse for not moving forward. Um, so, I guess, a little bit of it was just pure desperation, um, where I had to keep going and having that, that combined with the little bit of mindfulness or in the past I've always meditated. Um, you know, I grew up, uh, in a Hindu family and so part of, uh, what you're taught through the Indian Bible, which is the Bhagavad Gita, is to continue doing the labor but not expecting fruits of the labor.

Nitin ([28:44](#)):

That's like the first paragraph of the book, right? And, and that's really the idea that I grew up with, to continue doing the work but not expecting fruits from the labor. Um, and so, in this case, what was my duty? Well, my duty was to continue doing what I was doing, and not looking back. And, and combine that with that energy that I created from Christian's, you know, passing away, and his, his embodiment of, um, of the business, and just him, uh, being present around me, I just was able to carry on. And I still have that same aura today where I think it gave me a little bit of a momentum to carry on and to continue and, and use that as a force to, to strengthen my own, uh, thought process.

Jerry ([29:38](#)):

You know, what I'm hearing is, uh, a man who is able to reach in and in some ways reach into the past-

Nitin ([29:45](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry ([29:46](#)):

... um, the, of the stories of our childhood in the resource that spirituality can give us.

Nitin ([30:00](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry ([30:01](#)):

And the, and, and, and then to, to tap into one of the world's great, great wisdom traditions, Hinduism, and even specifically, the Bhagavad Gita.

Nitin (30:17):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry (30:18):

And, uh, why does, um, the Bhagavad Gita tell us to labor on.

Nitin (30:34):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry (30:34):

Why does it say that? What is the benefit of doing that?

Nitin (30:39):

Well, I think the biggest thing there, and I can go on and on about (laughs) this, this spiritual philosophical conversation, but the biggest thing is not to be distracted again. It's a very simple thing, right? As an entrepreneur, for example, eyes on the vision and the mission, not to think about the dollars, not to think about investors, not to think about the stakeholder, but the vision itself. So, if you've embarked on the journey, and this was a message in the book, really, it's the- it's Krishna, the god, giving this advice to a warrior, who is... And this brings us to a point about the warrior. (laughs) Um, so the warrior's Arjuna in this, uh, in the book, right? And he's telling Arjuna to keep fighting, and he's fighting against his cousins because they are fighting for the throne, um, two families.

Nitin (31:28):

And the other family is, is the Kauravas. Um, Arjuna is fighting for the Pandavas. And so, he tells them to kill the cousins. It's fine because he is in the- on this path of, of becoming a warrior, and in order to become the king, that's his path. And so, not to think about anything else, about the relations, about anything, but focusing on that mission of, of becoming the king, or fulfilling his duty as a warrior.

Jerry (31:55):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Nitin (31:56):

So, I think a lot of times, you know, people are... This might sound like I, I know everything, but I, I don't. I mean, this is again, I've taken this to heart, but, but I feel a lot of distraction comes from so many different things in life, like monetary, social acceptance, validation, but all those are, those are noise, right? And ultimately your focus needs to be on the vision because that's the ultimate North Star, uh, for anyone. And, and that's what the book tells you because it's, it is that central premise, um, of any individual.

Jerry (32:33):

Mm. You know, I, I think back to your first assertion about the fear of failure. How does Arjuna overcome his fear of failure?

Nitin ([32:53](#)):

His fear is the doubt of, you know, killing his cousins. And he has no doubt in his abilities. Um, he knows he is a great warrior. He knows, you know, his, his skills. Um, so he has absolutely no doubt about his, his skills that he is the best warrior. His reluctance or doubt or hesitation comes from if he's doing the right thing. Um, and that was his fear, whether he's doing the right thing by killing his cousins to take the throne which is, in his mind, also very superficial, like, what is, you know, the throne?

Nitin ([33:31](#)):

Um, but his... He overcomes it by just, again, through the wisdom, relying on this wisdom from Krishna where God tells him, "Just fulfill your duty. This is your reason for existence and on this planet. And do what you're supposed to do without questioning it." And that gives him that comfort of mind. So, a little bit, I guess, is ignorance, (laughs) just not over-questioning, um, every little thing in life, but fulfilling your reason of existence. Um, and, and in his case, that was very true because, uh, God told him, uh, Krishna, Lord Krishna tells him that to follow this, plainly, um...

Jerry ([34:18](#)):

And in doing so, um, leaving aside, you know, in our modern sensibilities the notion of killing family members is a little bit of a stretch, (laughing) but, but it's a parable, right? It's, it's, it's a teaching story, and, um, the lesson is appropriate. And what I'm hearing is that, um, the lesson is that to fulfill his purpose... to labor in the pursuit of the purpose... actually, not only for him, but for you, created the path through the heartbreak, through the resilience, which, I, as I often say is a kind of false grit, it's kind of a grin and bear it. It's a kind of, I'm gonna take a punch. But this is true grit. This is the grit that comes from understanding purpose, and understanding that actually beyond failure or success, is the labor towards the mission.

Nitin ([35:26](#)):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry ([35:29](#)):

And that, even at the loss of your beloved friend, your other, your partner, the one who created the balance that by accessing all of that, by going deep into that own sense of purpose, you've arrived at a place of equanimity. You've arrived at a place that, it's not as if the scars are still not there. They're of course there, even from the very first hello that we had I could feel it.

Nitin ([36:10](#)):

Hm.

Jerry ([36:10](#)):

But that is the strength, as I often say, of the brokenhearted warrior. And, when this case warrior had having nothing whatsoever to do with violence and having more to do with understanding labor and duty and focus and purpose. Am I naming something that feels true to you?

Nitin ([36:39](#)):

Absolutely, That's what's, you know, kept me going so far. I mean, it's been almost two years-

Jerry (36:56):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Nitin (36:57):

... um, since Christian passed away, and, uh, the first year after his, uh, his funeral, I mean, it was just so difficult and I barely had time to even process everything because I had to continue working, I had to, you know, m- make sure that company (laughs) was still operational and, and the clients were happy. And so, there wasn't even... But I was able to somehow process it through, to counseling, through, through making sure there were outlets to, to grieve, um, speaking to his wife, um, but coming out of that now, slowly and eventually, I do feel much stronger.

Nitin (37:40):

Um, not just, not just from an emotional standpoint but just like deep psychological, you know, stability as I mentioned earlier. Um, it, it gave me that opportunity to where everything gets shaken and then you, you realize you can still fall on your feet, um, and so, that's, that's exactly how I feel where things can go wrong, and things will go wrong, but I have that ability now to at least manage myself and manage my emotions and manage, um, all the [inaudible 00:38:12] went around it.

Jerry (38:13):

Yeah, if I can harken back to the little reading I did, the notion that things go wrong is evidence that you're actually living, right? Because, um, wrong, primarily means unplanned. Wrong means, uh, in a disappointing way.

Nitin (38:36):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry (38:37):

Right? Um, and, uh, that is actually the norm. Um, things can go unplanned in a, in a, in a wonderful way. (laughing) Right? Um, and again, that is the norm. Um, and I think what wisdom traditions, uh, like Hinduism has done for you, like your family, like your ancestors, what they h- have given you is a broader and deeper understanding, uh, and the ability to, to sort of step back and, and admire the roller coaster, not necessarily get sick on the roller coaster.

Nitin (39:22):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry (39:24):

And, you gave yourself the gift of grieving.

Nitin (39:28):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry (39:31):

So that you could move through this.

Nitin (39:33):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry (39:36):

So, so, maybe what will be interesting to do now is, somewhere out there someones gonna listen to this recording and, uh, they, too, maybe, have just lost a co-founder.

Nitin (39:53):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry (39:56):

Or, a lover. Or a parent, or a child. W- What might you share with them from your experience? 'Cause if you recall, one of the hardest parts you seemed to ha- experience was the aloneness.

Nitin (40:13):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry (40:14):

And so, what can you do, what would you say to them, in their aloneness?

Nitin (40:20):

Yeah. I'm, I'm in no way, you know, an, an expert who, (laughs) who can sh- who can sympathize with, with losing maybe a family member, and I lost a friend so I know what I went through. Um, and part of my experience was one of shock in the beginning where it was something, you know... It is one thing when someone is of age and it's, it's natural, it's inevitable and you expect someone to pass away. But when you're 35 and you're in, in healthy, um, in perfect health, it's, it's not a thing where it's completely taken you off guard.

Nitin (41:02):

And, for me, part of what was to process the understanding of, you know, that this is natural, even though it might be, might, you might think of it as unnatural, but, you know, ultimately, there are no rules. You know, you don't have to be 90 or 100 to pass away. I mean, the same thing could happen to me, and Christian could be the one who was carrying on this work, right? Um, and there's absolutely no rhyme and reason, so just accepting that fact, that there are no rules to this and, like, we can't fight, or there are no answers to seek. No one is going to give me answers.

Nitin (41:41):

So, it took time to accept that, really, um, that, you know, at some point, but also the fact that regardless of where he was, that, again, coming back to that spiritual- spiritual side of things, that his energy was

still there. And making, uh, constant effort to also seek that energy, not just expecting it to come to me, but, you know, again, like, like you did, asking questions, um, and asking for help as well. And I say, "Christian, look, I need your help here." (laughs) And, like, "You're gone, you left me, but I do need your help."

Nitin ([42:16](#)):

And, you know, it reciprocates in some way, and it's hard to explain, and it, it does sound a little bit of a sixth sense, or, you know, something supernatural, but it, it's not. It's, it's very much there, and you feel it and maybe it's purely psychological, but it helps. And it helps a lot in, in moving forward, in, in carrying, um, and going ahead in life, and, and, and making sure you're going it together with the person who you've lost. And so, I, I just think, rather than, you know, dismissing the person has gone, it's, it's just keeping that, that positive energy. And, and for me what helped a lot was seeking external help. So I, I did go through counseling, you know. There's a lot of taboo and, and personally, I was also of this idea, "Oh, I don't need counseling."

Nitin ([43:06](#)):

Um, but counseling does help a lot, and, just bringing those emotions back, so what that relationship meant to you. Um, why was it so important? And what was it about Christian that you admired so much, in my case. Um, just understanding the beauty of the relationship that you went through together during this brief moment you have, you know, on this planet. Um, and appreciating the fact that I had the chance to meet such a great individual and such a great relationship that we were able to forge for the brief duration of that time. Um, and, you know, there's that gratitude that I have towards him, towards, towards the nature that created that environment, and everyone else who, who participated in that.

Jerry ([43:49](#)):

Mm.

Nitin ([43:50](#)):

Um, so, I, I think gratitude, in the end, is the answer, um, as opposed to being angry at the person leaving.

Jerry ([43:58](#)):

Mm. You may have called yourself not an expert, but I think that was expert advice.

Nitin ([44:08](#)):

(laughs)

Jerry ([44:09](#)):

Because it came from your heart, and it came from your lived experience. And, uh, I... have profound gratitude for you. Um, I think today you've given me a sense of who Christian was, who he is, how it was forward, and, um, you've really laid out a path, um, so beautifully. A path to wellness from pain. And, uh, I'm really admiring of the man I'm seeing before me, you know.

Jerry ([44:58](#)):

Um, I wanna thank you for coming on the show and sharing a moment with us. Um, I- my hope is that the conversation just sort of reaches out to somebody and just provides them a little bit of a sense of companionship and camaraderie. Um, and the knowledge that even with unexpected and devastating loss, um, that, that, that we have that strength as we labor on-

Nitin (45:35):

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jerry (45:36):

... to go forward. So, thank you for coming on the show.

Nitin (45:40):

Thank you so much, Jerry.