

Financial Independence call with Isabel De Los Rios

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CB: Hey everyone, this is Craig Ballantyne. Welcome to your monthly Financial Independence call. And this call is really special to me, because we have a really fantastic person on who has an amazing story and who's going to really share a whole bunch of great information with you about how she got up and started. So everyone, please welcome Isabel De Los Rios to the call, who runs The Diet Solution Program. Isabel, welcome to the call and tell us about yourself.

ID: Thanks Craig. I love talking about my business and how it started. So thank you for having me on here. I guess you could say it was about three years ago. I had a product and it wasn't going anywhere – The Diet Solution Program. And I'm going to make a really long story short. I found a business partner. We worked and worked and worked for about two years, without too much success I guess I should say. But we really just kept at it.

And I'm excited to share those details with your listeners. And then it exploded. It absolutely exploded to where we are right now. It is a very successful business that has given myself and my business partner a lot of financial freedom. We can pretty much work from wherever and do what we want. I have nine employees here in South Carolina. He has 11 employees in Denver. And we are just thrilled and happy to continue to do what we're doing every single day.

So it was just a real explosion for us, and really life-changing, absolutely life changing for both of us. I'm also a mom. I've got two little ones, a two year old and a four-month-old and a wonderful husband. And that's it. That's pretty much me.

CB: That's fantastic. And like you said, it was only three short years ago that we first met, and you guys were talking about your ideas. And I knew when I had a first call with you, when I first got introduced to you, that you were definitely going to succeed because you had a fantastic attitude.

Let's go back to the time when, as you mentioned, you weren't able to sell things as easily as you are today. Back at the very start you were trying to actually go to seminars and sell your nutrition program in person.

And actually, before you answer that, let me just say one thing to everybody listening. That even though Isabel is in the health and fitness world and she sells a nutrition product, almost every single piece of advice she's going to give you, and probably every single piece of advice she's going to give you, will apply no matter what industry you're in. So please don't think that just because she's in the nutrition industry that her advice doesn't cross the boundaries into your marketplace.

So with that in mind, keeping an open mind, let's go and hear from Isabel about where she was when she first got started. It might have been even before you started working with your business partner.

ID: At the time I was a personal trainer and a nutritionist. And I was running what most people would consider a successful business when you're a trainer and a nutritionist. And I had a full book. And I had two other trainers there working at the small studio that I owned, and was making a pretty good profit every month.

But my breaking point was when I was waking up at 4:30 in the morning to get started on my day and not coming home until after 8:00 at night. And I really just one day was like, "Is this really what I wanted? Is this what I worked so hard for?" And I just was really missing out on life.

So I knew I had to do something else. And that's when I started getting into more self-development books, and researching what other people had done that was successful. And to your point, Craig, a lot of those people were not in the health industry.

So my whole thing is take a look at the people that are living life the way you want to live it, and then model the things that they've done. You don't need to recreate the wheel. So a lot of the people that I was reading their books or following their strategies really had nothing to do with health and fitness.

So there at that point I had this idea I was going to write a book and I was going to make millions selling this book, let's say, at the book store. And I had no idea what it took to publish a book, how those people made money. I would say now looking back the easy part was actually writing the book, even though I thought at that time, "Oh, this is going to be the hardest part." But that really was easy because the information just poured out of me. I was really passionate about it.

But then I just didn't even know where to begin. So I put it on a website. And here I thought, "Okay, now it's on a website. People are just going to want it. And the sales are going to come rolling in." Nothing. People did not know who Isabel De Los Rios was, had no idea what The Diet Solution was and nor did they care, I think.

So then I had to continue to look for people who had been successful online. And that's when I found you and people like Mike Geary. And just kept on searching and researching and modeling what you guys had done, and then just kept at it.

CB: So at this point you're still working solo in the story here?

ID: At that point I was still working solo, until I came to you and you said, "Okay. Well, these are the things that you need to do in order to get this thing to sell." And that's when it became obvious to me that I was lacking in the web-based skills that I needed, as far as the technical computer stuff, the business management stuff. I really kind of had to look at myself and say, "You know what? You are a nutritionist. And there are a lot of things that you don't know, and you're missing all of these pieces." And instead of trying to

master those pieces, I found someone who I knew had all of those skills. And that's my business partner, Jeff.

CB: Okay, great. And so let's say – sorry, you go ahead.

ID: Oh no, no, no, no. I was just kind of going to go from there. But you go ahead and I'm sure I'll get it all in.

CB: Okay. So working with Jeff, he is kind of your strengths where you are weak, and obviously vice versa. So tell us a little bit more about that.

ID: People ask us a lot – and that's what I was going to start to talk about. We have a very successful business partnership. And we get asked about it all the time because it has been over three years now. I think most people that know us know that there's no arguing. There are challenges, but it's just a successful partnership.

So yeah, I went to Jeff because he had these skills that I needed. And instead of saying to him, "Well, I'll give you this percentage of the profits," or, "I will pay you this amount," I wanted him to have as much of a stake in the business as I had. And also, we were friends in college. I knew him. We had worked on other projects before.

So usually when people ask me, "I want to take on a business partner. What are the things that I should look out for?" Number one, you have had to have worked with this person in some sort of environment before, because you need to make sure that you can work together. So a lot of people, you just may not mesh with them and that's okay. They have a way of working and so do you. But you need to make sure that you can work together. So I would suggest find a project, work on it and see if you can even do it.

Number two, you do have to know them at least enough to trust them. You have to be able to trust this person a hundred percent. So you have to ask yourself, "If I was laid out in bed for a complete month, 30 days or even 60 days, would I trust them that they could run the business or find the resources to make sure that our business didn't go down during the time that I was gone?"

The other thing is there's trust involved. So that takes you back to the trust. You have to make sure that you know this person. What kind of person are they? Do they manage their money well, because money makes people nasty. And that's usually what breaks partnerships is fighting over money. It doesn't seem to be anything else except that. So then it gets back to the trust factor. So that's just always worked out well. Jeff has had a lot of experience in project management. We really needed that. And a lot of technology experience, which I also needed.

CB: Fantastic. And I'll just add my two cents about working with partners, because I had been kind of a lone wolf for many years. And then just in the last about two years or so I've started to work with a couple of partners.

And I was actually in a position where I knew these guys so well that we actually looked for things to do as partners. It wasn't like one of us said, "Hey, I need a partner. Who should I pick?" It was, "I've picked a partner. Now I want to pick the project." And so that's actually kind of the optimal situation to be in. And it's almost like what you guys were in. You and Jeff had that background. So that's fantastic.

Let's say someone doesn't know anybody who can really fill that partner role. Is there any words of advice, or even just motivation or encouragement or actual how to steps, that you would suggest for someone to go who's looking for a little bit of technical help?

ID: The first thing you need to do – and I did this when I came back from my meeting with you, Craig – was I made a list of the things that I knew I was good at and I could handle, and then a list of the things that I needed that I just knew that I had no experience with. And then define it. And some of those things Jeff didn't even have the skills. So we did have to find other people that could fill those roles.

And that's where other people in the industry, and outside the industry, really came into play. Because we would ask, "Who did your website? What are you using as a newsletter software?" Or looking at what somebody was doing online, and just following all of their tracks. You can look at the bottom of anyone's newsletter and see what they're using to send that out.

And that's what we were doing. We were really just kind of navigating around successful websites and just piecing them apart, and then saying, "Okay, this is powered by this. This is where we can find this skill." And that's kind of how we fit in the holes.

CB: I'll say one thing about you and Jeff, is you're certainly one of the most networked partnerships that I know. You guys in the past have gone to a lot of seminars and conferences and met people. And you're probably the most likable partnership I have come across as well. You guys are just really fantastic people, and people want to help you and people want to be a part of your mission and your business.

So speak a little bit to the getting out there and getting to know people, whether it's contracting people via email. How did you get people to pay attention to you back at the start when you were kind of looking for a little bit more help than you could give in return?

ID: We were persistent and we also just showed up. If we knew that the most successful marketers were going to be at an event, even though at that point we really didn't have any money we kind of figured it out and we showed up. And Jeff was actually more adamant about that stuff than I was. And I would always say to him, "Well, you know, this conference call costs \$2,000 each and what if people don't pay attention to us?" It didn't matter. We were there. And people remembered us just because we showed up.

So it's really what it takes. Look for and find where are the most successful people hanging out. What are they doing? What are the conferences they're going to? You may go and maybe only talk to one person. But trust me, more than that one person noticed that you were there. And you may go back the next year and be in a better place and someone may say to you, "Hey yeah, I remember last year we had this and this conversation." And even if you go for three days and you have a conversation with someone for five minutes, it's unbelievable what that five minute conversation can turn into.

So for example, Jeff went to – I can't even remember, we've been to so many different conferences – but he was on a buffet line. And there was a guy in front of him who was paying attention to Jeff's conversation with someone else. And somebody was teasing Jeff about his food choices. And, "Isabel is going to yell at you for that," or something like that. And the guy in front of him started teasing him as well.

Anyway, the guy in front of him now owns the print shop that does all of our hard copies. And at that point we didn't know how we were going to implement a hard copy strategy. He already had the whole system in place. And they started talking over some joke about banana bread. And I would say last year that added – let me see, if I had to do the math, maybe about a million dollars to our bottom line just over that conversation. And here they weren't even in the conference room. They weren't even at a networking session. They were just in line getting food, and that's how that happened.

CB: Yeah. And I would say that I'm not the most extroverted person in the world. But even when I go to seminars, I always come away with some contact or some meeting that moves my business ahead. So if you're a shy person, it's pretty tough to go to an event where you're packed in a room with 300 people for two or three days and not come away with something very valuable. So I definitely recommend being open to that, because I think you'll agree, Isabel, knowing people is a huge, huge, huge, huge, huge part of growing your business. Right?

ID: Oh, it really is. We would definitely not be where we are today if not for all of our contacts and all the networking we've done. I would even say it's, I don't know, 90 percent of the reason we've been successful. Maybe it's more than that, 95 percent. That was really how we got ourselves rolling and going.

CB: And it helps that Jeff's such a fun guy to hang out with too. He definitely brings another level of networking to all the events he goes to. That said, you guys are also very persistent. And you had been very persistent from the start. Because as you mentioned, you went through a period of time, even when you had the partnership going, that things definitely hadn't exploded yet and were kind of going along at a moderate pace.

So why don't you tell us a little bit about just the mindset that both you and Jeff had during that point, how you motivated one another and how you based your action "Keep on going" on your vision and plans for the future.

ID: Just to kind of paint the picture there, in order to really work on this business the way it needed to be worked on Jeff had to let go of his full-time job, which was paying him very, very well. It was six figures at the time. I had to stop training. Because if we wanted to create a business like we have today, we really needed to put everything into it.

So what he did is he relied on his savings. And he had saved up to purchase a home, and said, "You know what? I'm not going to purchase a home. I'm just going to live off of these savings." And I, thankfully, had a husband who would just figure anything out month by month. We were selling stuff on eBay, just the things we had to do in order to make it month by month. It's kind of funny now, but not funny back then.

So that's where we were. And it takes a lot of faith to do that, because after the first year you're still in the same place. Then it's about a year-and-a-half, and then you're like into two years.

We created exactly what we wanted this business to look like three years ago when we got together. We had that picture in our head. We wrote it out. I actually sent it to Jeff in an email. We have a ClickBank product. So I went on ClickBank and I printed out what the ClickBank page looks like. And then I moved around where The Diet Solution was, which was like number 72 at the time. ClickBank products, they get rated by how many they sell and which ones are the most successful. And I cut and pasted and I put it into number one.

And I printed that out for myself and for Jeff, and put it up on the board. And we just read that vision to each other when one of us would lose it. Because when you start running out of money, you lose it a lot. And we just kept that vision alive. And we read that little paragraph that we wrote now, and to me it almost makes me want to cry. I'm a girl, so I cry. We wrote that three years ago. We stuck to it. We didn't let anything deviate from that plan. And that's what we created.

And you hear about these things all the time and these motivational books. And I think a lot of people read them, but they actually don't do it. When it says to you "Write out your vision". And really write it in the first person and feel it and read it over and over again. People will say to me, "Oh yeah, yeah, yeah. I read that in such and such book." But did you do it? And you really need to do it and stay with it.

And I'll never forget. Bob Parsons, the CEO of Go Daddy, said this at one of Yanik Silver's seminars, "Just when you're just about to throw in the towel, you're just about to give up. That's when your business is going to transform." And that's really how it was for us. After two years we were kind of like, "What are we doing here?" And that's when everything just really exploded for us.

CB: That's really cool. And I had never gotten the full back story on that. First of all, I didn't know that Jeff had taken his savings for his house to keep afloat. And then I didn't know that you guys had that really powerful vision. That is an incredible story.

And I certainly have lived through something like that this year as well with getting involved with Early to Rise. Having written that down and communicated my exact vision several years ago, and now to have achieved the exact same thing.

Like you said, it's almost a cliché or it almost sounds a little bit cheesy, but some of this stuff really does happen when you are really focused on it and you move with action towards it every day. So I'm very happy for you guys. And I'm very proud of that. And that's a fantastic story and fantastic motivation for everyone listening.

And like you said, a very important point is to actually go and follow through with it. And when you read about writing your vision and reviewing it all the time, you have to do that, in addition to taking action, of course. But don't just read a good idea and let it simmer. Make sure you use it. So that's really cool.

Let's go back in time a little bit as well, and talk about the product design. Why do you think your product has been so successful? Were you filling a gap in the marketplace? Obviously you're very passionate about this. Was there something different about what you had to offer? Was there some type of secret recipe involved here?

ID: I'm sure most people realize that the world has no shortage of diet books. So I wouldn't necessarily say I was filling in a gap. But what I have said to other people is that the difference between my nutrition program and all the ones on the shelves is that I wrote mine. And I think people more and more now are looking to follow someone that they can relate to and that they like. As opposed to I really, really like this program, now people are starting to say things like, "I really, really like Craig. And I like to see what he's doing and what he's up to."

So I think that's more the direction that the Internet is going in. Because I even have my people that I kind of, I just like them and I like to read what they write. And let's say the financial newsletters I read. There are plenty of other financial books out there, but it's more that I actually like the person that's writing it.

So I think that that's why The Diet Solution has become so successful. People see a real person who has a family, who speaks candidly about that family and her struggles, and how I feed my children and how I struggled to lose weight. And here's my mom. She's a diabetic. So they are kind of relating to me. And of course, I really try and give them the best information I have. So that really helps as well. But I just really think that people are looking for someone to relate to.

CB: Yeah. And you have a lot of people who now just love you and relate to you in a very positive way in your membership community, where you have literally over 100,000 people now?

ID: Yeah, yeah. We have over 100,000 people in our membership community.

CB: And that's really just been building for over a year now?

ID: Yeah, about a year. It's been a year, yeah.

CB: That's fantastic. So what is it about how you communicate with your particular audience? And I ask that in a way so that someone who has a completely different audience, like let's say your audience is maybe a little bit skewed towards a 45 or 50-year-old woman. What are the lessons that you take from communicating with your audience that a guy who communicates to a 35-year-old male audience could learn, like in terms of feedback and in terms of consistency and authenticity in how you provide your messages?

ID: It did take me probably the whole first and second year to really learn this, but I couldn't fake it. I couldn't try and be someone else. Because when I did people would feel that. And also, you're not going to please everyone. So a lot of times I would change my voice a little bit because I would get some negative feedback that would come in from some of our readers. But then it would turn the other people away because they were like, "Well, that's not who I thought Isabel was."

So what I realized is I really just have to be me. Which is why whatever it is that you're selling, promoting really has to be something that you live and are passionate about, and that you love and can really talk to people about. But you can't fake it. Don't try and just do what everybody else is doing.

But I found that when I deviated from really just being me, that's when people didn't really read the newsletters. And Craig, you know this. There are going to be haters. There are always going to be haters. But there are also going to be people who love you. And you just have to be yourself.

CB: Yeah. And I think it's important to note that as our listeners grow their business, as you go from 100 readers to 1,000 to 10,000 readers, what's actually going to happen is when you receive feedback, you won't receive feedback from the 99 people who loved the message because they just don't think to respond and say, "Hey, I really liked the email today." They just think that you know that you wrote a good email, and you know you delivered a great message.

And so the 1 out of 100 people, or 1 out of 1,000 people, or 1 out of 10,000 people, whatever it is – in your case it's probably 1 out of 100,000 people – but the one person who does have a complaint is the only person who might reply to that message. And so people have to understand that even though their feedback might be negative, they're just not hearing from the majority of people that loved the message. Provided that you do as Isabel said, which is be authentic and write the message that you really believe in. And don't change your voice, because when you change your voice all of a sudden you alienate those 99 people to try and please that one person.

And so it's a bit of a trial and error, as you mentioned, to learn it. But it's a really great and important point. In order to communicate properly with the people, you want to be saying the right stuff to the right person, to the right end user. Anything you want to add to that?

ID: No. I completely agree 100 percent. It was really difficult for me to receive the negative feedback in those first couple of years. And you just have to remember, your words and your advice are helping more people than hurting. And if that is your intention, keep doing that. And like you said, Craig, in the beginning I didn't really think about all the people that had benefited from that particular newsletter. I was just only focusing on the two people that may have emailed me some negative comment. So just focus on the people that you're helping, because it's probably a lot more than you think.

CB: **Yeah. And absolutely being yourself is going to attract the right people into your life. And it's going to be a lot easier to please the people that have been attracted into your life than trying to please people that just aren't the right fit for you.**

So back to product creation. For a lot of our listeners who may be struggling a little bit with this right now. What would you recommend to people who don't really have a great idea, or don't really have an idea at all? Because it seems like you have more product ideas than you have time for now. So what is it about your mindset to all of this that allows you to have a lot of great product ideas?

ID: The first thing is don't think that the market is too saturated in any area, because new products, new books are constantly coming out. So again, an area like diet and nutrition, it's so intimidating to most people because the world is just beyond saturated with that kind of information. I hear this all the time and it just kills me. People go, "Oh, no, no, no. But there are enough of those. It wouldn't even be worth it anyway." So that's not the case and that's not true.

The other thing is you do have to find something that you really, really do have a passion for and enjoy, because if you're going to wake up at 4:45 a.m. to get this done you better really love it. And if you're going to write about it and you're going to really teach people something, they have to feel from you that you really love it so that they'll trust your information.

The other thing that I still do is I still go to the bookstore and I just go through the best sellers. And again, a lot of times it has nothing to do with my particular field. I also like to read finance books and investing and I also like self-development. So sometimes even just a title will spark an idea for a newsletter or a new product, because let's say a financial investing product is titled a certain way and it's five steps to – I don't know – anything, I can usually relate that to how I teach people how to eat healthy.

And then I also really think about areas in my life that I have struggled in and where I've had to learn how to resolve certain issues. So for example, just having children really brought up a lot of different issues during pregnancy, and then after I had the kids, and

then feeding the kids. And I'm thinking, "Wow, I really had to research and figure all this out. I'm sure there are plenty of people that would appreciate this information. So where in your life have you struggled where you've had to do your research, and find the answers and share that with the world.

CB: Yeah, that's fantastic. Really just bringing value to people and adding value. And I think another point is people underestimate the value of just showing up again, which is something you said earlier in the call when we were talking about attending seminars. As many people that want to do this, or as many people that even are doing this, that have websites and stuff up there, still a lot of people are not actually showing up and continuing to take action.

So while there may be all these books out there, people have stopped everything associated with a book as soon as the book has been done. But unlike yourself, who actually started the hard work when the book was done, you've succeeded but they've struggled, because again, they haven't done anything since. So I think there's so much value in simply showing up and taking action on a daily basis.

And then one of the things that you said, which is kind of funny, which can maybe bring us to some time management productivity stuff here, is that now you are back to the before 5:00 a.m. wakeup time. But things have changed quite a bit because now you have two young kids, and also it's a whole lot different when you're waking up at 5:00 a.m. to work on something that is yours, as opposed to work for somebody else. So why don't you tell us all your secrets about how you get so much stuff done when you have two kids under the age of two-and-a-half, right?

ID: Yeah, yeah. They're both pretty teeny tiny. Well, what I figured out, and what I really needed to figure out after my second son was born, is that there is a system and some sort of strategy to just about every single thing in your life. You just have to figure out what that system is – whether it's making breakfast in the morning, whether it's making dinner, whether it's getting some writing done early in the morning. You have to be super disciplined. You just have to be, especially if you work for yourself. And also, look for those systems.

It's easy for me to talk about nutrition related things, because obviously that's what I do. But for me, feeding my family healthy, I would never just cut up one cucumber if I already have the knife out. If you are cutting, just cut a whole lot of stuff. And that's kind of how you need to perceive your business and your life. If you already do something how can you systematize it.

Also, a lot of times you have to ask for help and you have to delegate. And I'm not saying that that's going to be to all paid people. There are probably plenty of people in your life that can help you in some way. Who are those people? It may be family. It may be friends. But really think these things through. And you may be able to help them one way. They may be able to help you another way.

I think about that when my Christian, my first son, was born. I didn't have the money for a nanny or a babysitter. So I really had to cut some deals with girlfriends. They wanted to go to the supermarket. I wanted to work on my business. So we kind of had to get creative there.

But then also speaking of paid people, sometimes you have to go out on faith a little bit. And even when Jeff and I were making no money we hired our first employee because it was no longer profitable for us for me to be responding to our customer emails. That was a task that we could pay somebody \$10 an hour to do. And even though we couldn't really wrap our minds around hiring an employee at that time because our finances didn't really say that we could, we had to do that so that it would alleviate my time. And I could do things that would make more money than the \$10 an hour that we were paying someone else.

So you may need to do that in your life. If it's spending way too much time doing simple tasks, you may need to find a college student and pay them \$8 an hour. And if that frees up some time it will be well worth it in the end.

CB: I want you to tell us what happened when you hired that customer service person, because I'm hoping you're going to say that, "As soon as I did that I got all these extra hours and I was able to grow the business. And quickly that paid for the person that we hired." Hopefully you're going to say that.

ID: I'm not just saying it because that's what you would like for me to say. But then what would happen is we would make a couple more sales. So then we were moving ourselves forward. And some months it just kind of evened itself out. And some months it created even more profit. But what it never did was put us under.

So it was always, always moving us ahead. And sometimes you do. You have to go out on faith. But once I was able to work on things that I was good at, create more videos, write more newsletters, get my name out there more and not be tied in front of an email inbox, we were able to move our business forward.

What really was successful for us is when we changed our sales letter to a video sales letter. At that point my first son was just really, really teeny tiny. I just had had him. He was still waking up in the middle of the night. And I remember that's when I just found a girl in the neighborhood to babysit Christian. I paid her. We didn't have any money to pay her, but somehow Stuart always found it. And it gave me the ability to work on that video sales letter and really accelerate the deadline we had set for ourselves, because then I was able to work on it more and more. And that really exploded our business.

And I think about what if I hadn't just hired someone to babysit. I think she was coming like two hours a day. It wasn't even that much. But boy, did I make the best of those two hours. I just worked and worked for 120 minutes straight, and didn't stop until she told me she was leaving.

CB: That's fantastic. And that's a great mindset. You don't have to hire someone for all day or anything. And you just kind of squeak out whatever time you can get and really focus. And you made a really great point when you were talking about the cucumbers, is the batching of activities.

So why don't you tell us now how important that is for batching your writing, or any other activities that you have, for people that might not be familiar with this mindset of focusing on one task for a certain amount of time, or even for a certain day.

ID: I don't want to take any credit for that because it's something you taught me, Craig. And basically what I saw was that I was shifting around from one task to another task too much during my day. So I would go from writing for only 45 minutes to an hour, and then answering emails and then setting up a meeting. And each time I would shift from activity to activity. There was a lot of time lost. So what was it, Craig? There's like a 15 minute setup time before you even start.

CB: Yeah, essentially.

ID: Yeah. So now you've lost those 15 minutes. What I do now is I designate two days a week to just writing. That's it. And I kind of put a little timer on so I get up after 50 minutes, use the bathroom, get some water and then go back. And I'm already in the swing. And even when it's time to take a break when my iPhone goes off, a lot of times I don't because I'm just so into it that I don't want to stop.

But if I had set up my day the way I had before and stopped at that moment and then gone into a meeting, I probably would have lost my train of thought. I would have lost that momentum. So if at all possible, if you can batch the things that you need to do into specific days. So for me it's two days of writing or crating videos. And then the other days are setup days and I respond to emails. Or I may research whatever topic I want to write about. So I may spend some time perusing the Internet and books to research whatever topic I'm going to sit and write about the next day.

And that has just worked phenomenally for me. I was struggling to get two newsletters out every single week. And now in one morning of writing, I can write four newsletters easy. I don't send them all out that week, but I have them all ready to go.

CB: That's fantastic. Fantastic. All right, that is very helpful. Let's see, what else should we cover here? Let's rewind a little bit, and tell us about when you made your first sale. So going back to the days when you and Jeff were just kind of getting going here. What was the feeling like when you had your first sale? And then what was the feeling like when Mike Geary helped promote your product and you had that big promotion? Tell us about that, because this is really going to encourage our listeners who are just getting started who maybe haven't had their first sale yet. It really is a game changer when you have a few sales come in.

ID: Yeah, it really is because it shows you that it works. So it's proof. I had gotten in touch with Mike Geary who already had an established list. And he had, I don't know, maybe at that time 300,000 or 400,000 on his list. And I was persistent. Mike Geary's the kind of guy where you can't really find him. He travels a lot. And I just was persistent. I try not to be annoying. So I guess there's a fine line between annoying and persistent.

And then he finally promoted us. And oh my goodness, Jeff and I thought we were going into retirement. We joke around and we call it the F5 game because F5 refreshes your page. And we would just keep refreshing the ClickBank page and just seeing this number go up from \$1,000, \$2,000, \$3,000.

The first day of this promotion we had made more money in just a couple of hours than I had in a whole month of my business as a trainer. And although it didn't stay that way for two years, it was just a promo and it lasted for about two days, it really showed me what was possible. There it was. There were tangible results. People told me that this was the kind of money that you could make on a daily basis on the Internet. And there I saw it firsthand. It was proof.

And that really did help us along for the next two years, because we knew it was possible and we kept remembering what that was like. And we kept remembering the F5 game. So then we attached that to our vision. We know that this can happen. It's not just a fluke. It happens every day and people do this in their business every day. So that was a funny couple of days.

CB: You guys are such a cute pair, you and Jeff. It's so funny to hear about all the games and visions that you guys have. But it's so fantastic, because it just reminds people. To use analogy, it's kind of like a sports thing or it's kind of like watching statistics and stuff. And you just go back and you look and you see what's working. And you make the changes and you improve things, and you keep motivating yourself with these little visions and stuff like that. And so it's really powerful to show that coming from this start of a struggle that you're able to do that.

So what are some other kinds of words of wisdom that you might have for people who are struggling, no matter what their level? Because I'll admit, I had bad days. I have bad days still in these times, where it's just like for some reason or another that it just happens that all the forces conspire against you and there wasn't a whole lot of sales in your business. Some days are just not great sales days. Or something else comes up and puts you off track.

What can you can to people who are experiencing those on kind of a level of just getting started? And what mindset tips are you guys still using every day to keep yourself on a positive level and to encourage your team?

ID: I really am just so adamant about writing out your vision, writing it like you're living it right now. And in those moments where it's so tough, walk away from whatever you're

working on and read it. And read it until you feel it, and you feel like you are truly living it in that moment. Because I had one that was written for our business, and then I had another one that was written for my personal life. And I still carry it around.

And I have a new one. But I have an old one with me because what's amazing to me is that I am living what I wrote three years ago, even in my personal life, like sitting on my front porch in my home in South Carolina. I was living in New Jersey at the time. It's just amazing to me.

And I just can remember in those really tough moments where the only way we were going to get the bills paid that month was if Stuart sold some more things on eBay. Again, we joke about these things now because they're funny to us now. And he has these eBay, what are they, like super seller certificates or something like that. He's like, "No, I love these things."

But I would just find some quiet time for myself and read those visions until I felt like I was truly living there, like I had this million dollar business, like I was living in this home in South Carolina, like we were stress-free and not thinking about money. And then I could go back in front of the computer and just work because I knew what I was working towards. I could see it. I could feel it. And I knew what the point was.

And I think a lot of times, even if people sit down to write that vision, they sort of – life can wear you down, like you said. They lose it. So you have to read it. And something that I do every single day, and I shared this with you Craig, is I still read "The Science of Getting Rich" by Wallace Wattles every single day because I need to keep my head screwed on straight.. And I would highly recommend this little tiny book to absolutely everyone, "The Science of Getting Rich". You can get it on Amazon. And I read it every single morning, even if it's just two pages. I could probably sing the thing, I have it memorized.

CB: I think that's a very important point that you bring up. Why don't you share with us why you read it?

ID: Like I said, to keep my head screwed on straight. I come from a very poor background. My parents are immigrants from South America. It was kind of rough growing up. And sometimes it's difficult for me not to fall back into that broke, poor mentality because I lived it for so many years.

So here, even though I'm experiencing success here now for almost two years, that still was 30 something years of feeling like there wasn't enough, feeling like even if I got a little it was going to be taken away from you. So other people may be struggling years of financial stress.

So I know for me that's really important, because it's very easy for me to fall into the, "Oh, it's not going to work out because of this," or, "Oh, it costs too much money and there isn't enough." So that's my issue, if you want to call it that. But for me it keeps me in that abundant mindset. And I need it. I just need those little words every morning.

CB: I think that's fantastic. And I come from similar stuff, very modest means. And it's difficult, I'm sure, when your parents see your success. They probably have a hard time understanding where all this money is coming from. And is this really going to last and is this some type of thing that they should worry about for you? I imagine that that was something that you had to go through with your mom and your dad quite a bit for a while.

ID: Yeah, and other families as well. It was really, really difficult for them. So that's also challenging. When people see success then they have other people around them that will stress for them. So I can tell you that I have enough people in my life that do the stressing for me that I don't need to do any of it, because they see this business that they think, "Oh, how long is that really going to last?" And you can't let that stuff get to you. So that's really another reason why I read the little book almost every day.

CB: And hopefully this is the problem that we'd love our readers to have, that they were so successful. But I think you telling your story is really going to resonate with a lot of people listening to this call, your story throughout this entire call in all aspects.

And so let's talk about how your story back in your fitness business was so important. And to anybody out there who's a little reluctant in telling their own story. Why don't you talk about just how important it is?

ID: I think that that's why people gravitate towards not only the products but continue to follow me, is because I was where they are right now possibly. I struggled with my weight. I had a mother who was overweight and diabetic. And here I had to struggle to find the right information, and I tried all different kinds of diets.

And there are a lot of people that have very similar stories. But you have to really be willing to share the real personal stuff. And of course, don't share anything you're not comfortable with. But for me that was really important, even the emotional stuff. The parts where at one time I thought I was going to lose my mom. And I lot of people may be there in that place.

So that was really important because I think, at least in my industry, people have a hard time listening to someone who has no experience. They may have just read it in books. And then you just kind of look at them and you're like, "No, you don't really know where I am right now."

So for me in particular that's why my readers, they love my newsletters when I talk about how my son won't eat his vegetables, or how I have a family member who no matter how hard I try I can't convince them to eat healthy. Because that's where people are and that's the stuff they need to hear. So don't be afraid to share your personal stuff. People want to hear it.

CB: Yeah. And I think that's another very great example of showing up. You're showing up and you're telling your story. And so many other people aren't going

to show up and tell their story because they're too scared to. That's the type of thing that will set you so far ahead of all the other people who might create a product. But they're not going to share their story, they're not going to be persistent, they're not going to try and squeak another hour or two out of the day by spending \$20 on a babysitter. They're just not going to do these things. And the secret of your success is having done all these things, and finding a way around all the obstacles.

I thought I knew the back story of your success. But I've learned so much on this call. And it's been really, really cool to hear all these extra little steps that you took that I didn't know you guys had gone through. And it's very, very inspiring, and I hope that all our listeners are inspired by this as well. It's very, very cool.

ID: Well, thank you. I enjoy telling it. Not because I want to brag about it, but because I really want people to realize that it actually does not matter where you are. Like where you're starting. It doesn't. If you see someone that is living a life that you want, they're making a good amount of money, they're living somewhere that you would like to live, they're working in a way that you want to work, they call their own shots, if it's possible for them it's possible for you. And sometimes I have a hard time really convincing people of that, but it's true. There's no reason why that person can have that and you can't.

And I'm actually glad that we struggled now as much as we did. I'm really glad that Stuart and I can share our funny stories about how we figured out how to pay our bills, because I want that to be a true testament to people. That if you really focus on something and you really want it, and you'll do anything possible to make it happen, it will happen without fail.

And that's basically the gist of "The Science of Getting Rich". I'm not giving it enough justice. But it's just if you stick to that vision, and you don't deviate from it, don't move from that path, it will become a reality. It will.

CB: That's fantastic. And I think I'm going to be on Amazon pretty soon buying a copy of that book for myself. So speaking of books, I always like to ask people what are the three books you're reading right now. And I'm not going to let you list "the Science of Getting Rich". But what are the three books you've read in the last year, or last couple of months, that have really stood out as something that you think our listeners would benefit from?

ID: Oh goodness. Okay, so that means I have to subtract all of the parenting books about discipline. Let me subtract those. A lot of the books that I'm reading now as far as mindset and encouragement, they're really rereads because they really help me. So one of them, I read bits and pieces of it, is "The Answer". And what is the guy's name? Now it just kind of left me. And it really just talks about creating your vision. And he encourages you to wake up every single morning and read that vision over and over. So

I went back to that book. Why can I not think about that guys' name? But if you Google "The Answer" I'm sure you'll find it.

CB: The name of the book is "The Answer"?

ID: "The Answer", yeah. If I had my laptop –

CB: I'll look it up as you go through your head here.

ID: Yeah, so that was really helpful. The other book that maybe a lot of people have not heard of is by a guy who runs a blog called "Zen Habits". Have you ever heard of this blog? And he wrote a book called –

CB: I just interviewed Jay Ferruggia an hour ago for my fitness list. And literally he said the exact same thing. He was rereading this guy, John or Peter or whatever his name is, the guy from "Zen Habits". He's rereading that same book you are. What's the title of it?

ID: It's called "Zen to Done". So Z-E-N to Done. And it's basically just how to get things done. And I'm constantly trying to maximize my time and be more efficient. So I'm very attracted to time management type things. But I love this guy's blog, because it's just about simplifying your life and keeping it simple. And I'm always looking for ways to keep my life more simple.

This is my theory on it. The reason why movie stars and entertainers who make millions of dollars end up going crazy is because they just complicate their life too much. And you know what? It doesn't really matter how much money you have. It's a lot better if you just keep it simple.

So "Zen to Done", I'm carrying that around. I'm trying to minus the nutrition books because I'm carrying around "The Paleo Solution" and a book called "Wheat Belly". I'm doing a good amount of research on wheat. And then – oh my goodness, I'm probably reading too many child rearing books and – I don't know.

CB: That's okay, because I did find the author of "The Answer". It really ties into our entire call today, because it's John Assaraf, right?

ID: Okay. Yes, John Assaraf. How did I not remember his name?

CB: He's the guy from "The Secret". And if you watch "The Secret", he's the guy who has the dramatic example of as he was going through his old notes he found a picture of a house. And he realized that that house was on his vision board back in the day. And then he realizes that this is the actual house that he's now living in. You watch that and you go, "Come on."

And then, you and I have both lived this in the last couple of years. Myself with the Early to Rise acquisition, and you with all the success you've had. And that

vision you had written about sitting on your front porch at your house in South Carolina.

And so it might be a little bit hard for people who are just getting started to understand and maybe believe any of this. But you've got two people on the call here, plus the guy who wrote that book and a lot of other people who really have achieved the exact thing they had written down or had put on their vision board and stuff like that. And even if you don't achieve the very exact thing, it's a big step in helping you get towards it. So fantastic stuff. Anything you want to add there on that note?

ID: No. Just really that, which is they show it in "The Secret". And I was actually going to say the book "The Secret" because it is downstairs in our kitchen in Spanish, because I purchased it in Spanish so that my parents could read it. So we've sort of been reading through "The Secret" a lot.

I guess I assume now that a lot of people have read that book and watched that movie. It seems so out there, but it is just so true. The formula is really this easy. Create your vision. I mean really create it. Write it down exactly how you want it to be. Wave your magic wand. And then just continue to work towards it. It seems like such a simple formula, and it is a simple formula, but that's really the formula right there.

CB: Yeah. Always be taking action and be persistent and showing up. I think when you said showing up, I think that's a really, really, really important lesson for people to keep in their mind. Not just to show up for work, but to show up and to take action and to get out there and to put the personality and the story into your business.

So Isabel, you've really inspired me on this call. And I really believe that our listeners are going to be very inspired by this call. And so thank you very much for taking time out of your super busy schedule. I know just how busy and in demand you are. So thank you very much for being on the call.

ID: You're welcome, Craig. My pleasure.

CB: And thank you everyone for listening. And Isabel, just tell people where they can read your newsletters and even how to get on your Facebook page, which you guys have thousands and thousands of members.

ID: On our website, TheDietSolutionProgram.com. So it's TheDietSolutionProgram.com. And then our Facebook fan page, if you just put in "The Diet Solution" it will come up. We've got over 25,000 members on there, a very, very active page. So come and find us there. Join us on there. Check out our website. And I always appreciate feedback. That's how I learn. I always appreciate it.

CB: All right, fantastic. So thank you very much everybody, for being on this month's Financial Independence call. We'll be back with another call next month.