

Episode Transcript – Finding the Right Mentor and Setting Non-Negotiables in Your Salon

Opening Take [00:00]

Todd: All right. What's up everyone? Welcome back. Happy Monday or whatever day you listen. Thanks for listening. By the way, we've noticed a big spike in downloads and in in traffic for the podcast, so that's great news. What's up Jenny Pop? How we doing?

Jen: we are doing.

Todd: Alright. Literally nobody calls Jen Jenny Pop. I don't know why, but I said it last week and I was like, that was kind of funny.

We call Gwen Gwenny Pop, our daughter. I think that started with basketball.

Jen: It

Todd: way. Today we are talking about, I think, Jen, you had some stuff you wanted to talk about, which was what We talked about it at lunch

Jen: and finding the right mentor and just some

Todd: right.

Jen: help people.

Todd: Right, right. So finding the right mentor, and then we dealt with a little bit of a scam while we're at lunch.

So we'll touch on that. And then I wanted to talk about what I talked about on our last newsletter, which was non-negotiables. I think that's a good thing, [00:01:00] but

Jen: read.

Todd: Oh, you did? What'd you think?

Jen: That was great.

Todd: Okay. Well then great.

Jen: Lots

Todd: All right. Well, let's, lots of what?

Jen: Lots of insight and helpful tips and questions to ask so people know where to start and kind of how to gain some traction moving forward.

Todd: I, I, I think so. I think it's important for businesses to have non-negotiables.

Jen: Yeah, I would agree

Todd: Those are, those are essentially, those come from your core values. I would, I would hope

Jen: they should.

Todd: so. All right. Before we kick things off, we always start with our opening takes, opening takes.

Jen, what do you.

Jen: Okay, so I'm gonna keep it real. This last week as a business owner has been a little doozy. I like to share this stuff 'cause I think it resonates and sometimes I think people feel alone, right? And they're like, no one understands whatever most people do, but you just feel alone. So. We have dealt with this week.

Let's just start with our [00:02:00] dryer, not drying our laundry for the, like 10th time. the dryer people supposed to come out, but then they can't come out 'cause someone called out sick. So we have to do all the laundry at the house and drop it off that's what you do because you own a business and you show people that you can show up and get them all set. in the meantime, we also have to keep our staff updated. Let them know like, Hey, dryer's not working. All the laundry's done. We're dropping it off here. We'll pick it up tonight. They're coming to fix it tomorrow. la la. But keeping them in the loop too so they understand what's happening and why. On top of that have had some just employment decisions that

were tough for me to make and for Todd's guidance on sort of like where. Directions we needed to go and we had to let an employee go this week or last week. And that is never easy. But when you put the business first and you have a mission and a core value and a vision, it's clear as day when that decision arrives on your plate that you need to make it not comfortable, not fun. But when you have your business set up with those [00:03:00] core, core principles to start, you understand really early or really fast when you need to make these decisions and they need to be made pretty fast. And then on top of that, as we're gonna get into, we had this scam come our way. So,, owning a business, I feel like some people are like, oh my God, you're so lucky.

You get to make your own hours. If you think owning a business is about making your own hours, you have another thing coming. 'cause that is not at all what it's about. You're working all the time. Curve balls are set, you're are thrown your way constantly. And it's really how you deal with those and how you show up as a leader and how you show your team like, we got this, we're gonna get through this. This is how we're getting through this. And you deal with a smile even if it's not easy. This week for me was just kind of a few curve balls and coming out of it better than ever being uncomfortable, but growing from that and leading a team.

Todd: Okay. I have a question. So what I've been trying to do is really leave alone. The opening takes like we just have them and move on. Do you think though, that most people [00:04:00] think I'm just gonna do hair. Keep all the money. And that's why they struggle with salon ownership because the majority of people that come into owning a salon are either people that were commissioned, employees that went rental, and now they're boss babes.

And I know I pick on that term a lot, but it's funny, it's kind of comical. And I just think that they think from people that we've talked to, they're just gonna have their own business.

Jen: I absolutely think that, I think a lot of people don't realize that it

Todd: You don't set your own hour. You, you are thinking,

Jen: it's,

Todd: I'm just gonna do hair. Your are thinking. If you come into, say, say you're somebody that's a commission employee and you're like, I'm gonna have my own business. I'm gonna rent a chair. First of all, you're subleasing a chair from, it's, it's not really like a business.

You can't sell it. You can't do anything with it. So I understand that it is its own business by definition, but it's a very limited business and for good [00:05:00] reason because the majority of people, well, luckily I should say, because the majority of the people, people that are doing this have no idea what they're doing, which is totally fine.

I don't think you need to know what you're doing to start. You need to start and then figure stuff out, right? If you, if you spend all of your time figuring stuff out in the beginning, you'll get paralysis by analysis and you'll never do anything.

Jen: Definitely.

Todd: then if you just start, but you don't do anything after, then your business is already beginning to fail or move backwards.

The Reality of Business Ownership [03:00]

I'll say fail might be a little strong, but it's beginning to move backwards. If you don't educate yourself from day one,

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: by the end of week one, you're already, you're, you're less, you're further behind. If you don't, if you aren't actively progressing.

Jen: So, interestingly enough, the people I've met with that are going out on their own running their own business, most most of them are, are trying to open a salon with employees that I meet with. And yes, I, I don't see, I know that they think they're gonna keep more money [00:06:00] than. Than they're even able to because of just numbers.

But anyway, the other side of that though is they think that they're going to give away all of this stuff. They think the salon I worked with didn't do these things, so I'm gonna do all of this stuff. And it's quick that I'm like, okay, if you do this, if you give. An hourly wage that you think is gonna motivate someone that's way more than you can afford right now.

What's gonna happen when they don't do the work? And what's gonna happen when they wanna raise you? Leave no room for that. And they're just looking at the things like that they feel they didn't get and they wanna give more, but not understanding that. Then when they get in the business, they realize. hard it is to like make a profit to, to grow a business.

And they've already set themselves up to be in the negative because they think they're supposed to give more because they're not coming from a place of a business owner. They're coming up this emotional space that they think the salon I was at didn't treat me well enough, so I'm gonna treat everybody better.

And then they get into it and the numbers don't lie and those numbers don't work. And yes, you wanna give [00:07:00] everybody everything, but you've got to set your business up for. A strong foundation that maybe in the future can do all the things you wanna do today, but today you don't have a business yet. So like you're not there yet.

Todd: Yeah, I, I think I agree with all that. Where I was coming from is people think I'm just gonna work the same amount of hours that I'm working now behind the chair, except keep all the money.

Jen: I meet with

Todd: But here's the thing,

Jen: That's their mentality. Yes. I'm keeping everything

Todd: but here's the thing. You're doing everything.

Jen: And even still, you can't keep it all because you still have to

Todd: No, no, no.

Jen: your taxes, your insurance, your rent, your product

Todd: Product insurance, lawyers.

Jen: out, in what you're saying, they should keep more because you're wearing more hats.

You're not just now the technician. You're the technician, you're the manager. You are, you're just wearing so many more things, which you should get paid to do if possible, but you also have to be able to manage money and understand what that looks like.

Todd: Interesting. Yeah. I just, I, I, for [00:08:00] some reason I was like, we need to talk about this a little deeper than just this

Jen: It's great.

Todd: and, and yeah, the truth is you don't. The truth is you don't get to decide your hours when you're a business owner.

Jen: you're working 24 7 ish.

Todd: Maybe like two or three years ago, the word boundaries was like nauseatingly, popular, popular buzzword in the industry.

And it is important to have those things. But look, when someone calls you and they're like, Hey, the power's getting shut off. You have to act on that. You don't go, oh, I'll be back tomorrow at 10. That's my schedule. You know what I mean? So when you're a business owner, you don't make your own hours.

It's, that's, that's

Jen: this.

Todd: a, it's just such a misguided thought.

Jen: This is a really good point. So what I've done with this boundaries is we are closed at eight at night, right? So I know once we're closed, I should be off the clock because there shouldn't be anything happening until we're open again. So, Todd and I are very much available through a communication that we use when the business hours are open.

Now, what I did do was I have clients that still [00:09:00] text me, good or bad, don't care how you feel on it. I don't mind it. It doesn't bother me. So what I did was I turned off my text message notifications. So if a client texts me, unless I feel like looking at my phone, I don't see it. That's the boundary I set. Now, on the other side, the app we use for our staff, everything gets pushed through from eight 30 in the morning to 8:00 PM at night when we're open. So they have complete access to us in the way I set up my slack, because that's. That's first. So clients now have a reduced access to me, but staff does when we're open.

And then obviously when we're not and we're closed, those are my hours off and that's how I was able to set boundaries to work in where we are at. Hello.

Todd: Yeah, mine mine. My,, quote unquote, boundaries have always been, if there's an emergency, reach out. Other than that, though, everything should go in Slack and that, like, that's just how we run our business. So I, I hope that helps someone out there. All right, so my opening take is to not just follow the crowd

Jen: Love.

Todd: [00:10:00] and I keep seeing all this BS of, of, so right now it seems like a lot of people in the industry, the hair industry specifically, are slow.

So they'll ask in these Facebook groups and other places, I'm really slow. What can I do? And the advice blows my mind. It literally confuses me because the majority of it is, there's really nothing you can do about it. I saw today, just take a vacation. There's nothing you can do, which is mind blowing to me.

That means that you are okay with your business just performing poorly. There's nothing you can do. You're just blaming. Somebody else. You're blaming the universe, you're blaming client spending habits. You're, you're not being proactive. It's this very defeatist sort of position to take, and I do not know.

I, I know it's a fault of mine. I do not know why it bothers me so much. I, I, I can guess at it. And my guess is that people are giving [00:11:00] trash advice. So what you're doing by saying there's nothing you can do, just accept that you're slow during these periods. What you're doing is you are creating the next wave of people that believe that for no reason, our salon is not slow.

Mentorship: Finding the Right Fit [08:00]

Our salon is beating itself quarter after quarter, year after year. So while. While July might not be our strongest month, we're beating July. Every July, we're still showing growth and we focus on how can we know there are lulls in the hair industry. We know in the Northeast at least, and probably around the, the whole United States, July is when people take vacations.

They're not around. They don't need their hair done. So by knowing that we can prepare for the future, I, and I really don't think it's that complicated. I think that's what irritates me even more now. Now that I say it, it's not that complicated. But you're just so willing to give up. [00:12:00] And if you are one of those people, you either need to do, do one of two things in, in my opinion.

And. Don't listen to me for anything, right? You listen to me if you want. I hope to help people out there, but you either need to get it together and figure it out or give up and move on, because what are you gonna do every single year? You're gonna be like, oh, it's just slow. I'll just go complain on Facebook.

That is so silly to me. So.

Jen: not equate to a solution, I will say. So what we do do is we. don't just take a vacation in July. July is the month we plan a vacation and we coach our staff to do the same because it's a great month to enjoy a week off and you're not getting hit with clients needing to get in where other months are just super busy.

They don't have to do that. But when they're asking for advice, July is the month. We're like, if you wanna take a week and not really miss out on anything, it's a great month to do that. And most of our staff takes off a week at some point in July, and we do too as owners.

Todd: And we're not doing, so [00:13:00] education is massive at our salon. If you've listened to our podcast for any amount of time or even last few episodes or the first few episodes, education is massive. We don't do a ton of education in July. We want people to, and when we do, we constantly get messages from the staff that are like, dammit, I wish I was there for that one.

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: we're like, we'll, do it again. No big deal. But you have to be proactive. If, if your business person, if you're an entrepreneur, your job, your goal is not hair, it's to solve problems for your business. And so when you come across a problem for you to just go, eh, I give up. I, I don't know. Just it's always slow.

It's slow for everyone. For you to accept that and you to just mail it in like that, you probably shouldn't be doing it. Sorry to be so blunt, but it, it, that's just, that's how I feel. So I'm not even sorry. That's the truth. If you wanna be an entrepreneur, if you wanna write CEO on something, you need to be a problem solver.

It's slow. [00:14:00] Okay. Why People are on vacation. Okay. A hundred percent of people, no. Then how do you market to those people that aren't on vacation? I don't know. Well, who can you talk to figure it out? That's how the conversation should go. Not it's slow. Yeah, I'm slow too. Oh, okay. Then what is that?

Jen: Drives me insane.

Todd: Good.

I'm glad I drive someone else insane. It doesn't drive the 99% of people posting it constantly insane.

Jen: a problem, I wanna get to a solution or a solution based conversation as soon as possible. Feel what you gotta feel, be down, what you gotta be down for. But I want to look at how do we, how do we fix this? And I want that conversation quicker than most probably are ready for.

Todd: End. It is 100% okay to feel frustrated. It is 100% okay to feel down. It is 100% okay to go, wait, is everyone experiencing this? But the truth is every time you say every, or things of that [00:15:00] nature where it's just so, it's so precise. I don't know the word I'm looking for. It's never gonna be everyone. Like I see a lot of the answers on those Facebook groups are, everyone's dealing with this. It just is what it is. And I'm like, okay, not everyone, because we're not. And I know for a hundred percent sure with a hundred percent certainty, that was redundant, that other salons are out there that are like us, that are doing just fine.

Jen: Right.

Todd: They're their goals, beating their numbers, and

Jen: was actually an up month for them.

Todd: they're hitting their, I forget what I was saying, but go ahead.

Jen: No, just what I said.

Todd: That was just it. Yeah. Okay. Cool.

Jen: to salons that July was a busier month for them than their June or their May was. So there are salons out there that July is a good month for them

Todd: Mm-hmm. I think people flip when it's gonna be busy too. 'cause a lot of people are like, well, December will come and then that'll save us. But December doesn't necessarily mean busy.

Jen: and one month will not save you.

Todd: No.

Jen: find December to be on the slower [00:16:00] side. November. Sure. December. Mm. Not always what you think it's gonna be.

Todd: Yeah, I, so I've been tracking month to month our business progress services and things like that. And I'll probably continue to peek at it, but. What I'm really looking at now, 'cause we have enough data from opening in 2020 to being whatever with the pandemic to 2021 to 2022, where we had a bunch of staff leave because we made some major changes in our business.

I've been looking at it month to month, but now I've started to more pay attention to the quarters and pay attention to the the macro picture because that's how you need to. Especially if you want to do something else. And if you are saying that you are an entrepreneur, then owning a hair salon is not gonna do it for you.

It's not gonna scratch the itch. Eventually you're gonna want something else. You're gonna want more because I want a challenge. I want something else to repair. I want something else to fix. I want a problem. Solve something else and create opportunities for other people and more people. So whether that's [00:17:00] expanding and opening a second location, whether it's.

Doing something like franchising or whether it's something like a food truck, who knows what you might get into, but it's, it's gonna be a constant pursuit. All right. Let's jump in. Jen, why don't you talk about this scam that we dealt with, because it's kind of silly. We don't, we can be quick with it.

Jen: so I did deal with this once in my last business and I fell for it like hardcore. So today a scam is always just there to basically confuse you, speed up, like your kind of reaction time and the way you're thinking, and in a way that you make bad decisions. So. I'll actually just explain how it went down. 'cause these are, it's at some point you're gonna, you're gonna go through it. So we get a call from one of the staff, Brooke calls me, Hey. And we're at lunch with, with the fam. So like, we're already in like a different scenario and, something just called I get set my own hours, right?

Yep. So, and Oliver's playing on my phone, Roblox, and I see Brooke's name and he is like, you don't need to talk to Brooke. And I'm like, I need to talk to Brooke. Why is she calling me? Because this is a rare occasion. [00:18:00] So. She's just like, Hey Eversource just called, they're switching out some meter.

They told us any clients after three 30, we need to reschedule today. What's up? And now it's, it was like 2 45 ish, I'll say. So,, we're talking less than an hour of time. I'm like, okay, gimme a hot minute. Let me call my my landlord. So try to go to the source right away. I call them and they're like, Nope, we don't know what you're talking about. And if Eversource was doing that, we would've let. So I'm like, okay. Call back, Brooke. She's like, they left this number for you to call. They said they sent a disconnection notice of something else 20 days ago. So now it went from changing a meter to this disconnection. So I'm like, what? So I'm on the phone, I call the number. The guy's like, we're gonna shut off your service for late payment. And I look at Todd, I'm like, we're not behind. Everything's paid. It's automatically drafted out of our account. So I, I'm so confused, but I grabbed my debit card because now I'm so confused and I'm stressed.

I'm stressed out. 'cause when I had talked to Brooke, I could hear in the back, like, should we be moving our clients? What are we doing? And I'm like, [00:19:00] everyone, give me a minute. But again, they create chaos and confusion. So you're like off your game. So. The guy I'm talking to says to me can you drive to a town over and you can make this payment?

And I'm like, no, that's 40 minutes.

Todd: A town over.

Lessons from Bad Mentorship [15:00]

Jen: Yeah. Or, and it's 45 minutes from here or more. It's, it

Todd: Yeah.

Jen: the time of this disconnection. Notice where or where we're gonna lose power. So I'm like, he's like, all right, hold on. me call the guy that's disconnecting you and let me see if he'll kind of figure this out for you.

I wanna work with you. So I'm like, okay, can I just make this payment through you guys? Because if I can just use my debit card, get it set up, whatever's going on, I can figure it out after. I just don't wanna not have power. So he puts me on hold and Todd looks at me and goes, scam. Hang up. And I'm like, but what if?

And he's like, what number did you call? And I was like, I called the number that they told me to call, and I'm like. You're right, hang up, let me call Eversource directly because is this even ever source's number? And so in the meantime, the landlord's calling me back 'cause she's like, we take scams very seriously.

[00:20:00] Like what can we help you with? So now like I look at Todd, he's like, I'll handle the landlord, stay on the phone with Eversource. I look up ever source's number. It's completely different. And when I call Eversource, they recognize my phone number, hang on the line. Like completely different experience. But still I'm like. we losing power? Are we not? Like what's going on? So in the meantime, Todd reaches out to the staff on Slack and it's basically like it's a scam. You guys are all set. Like, just don't worry about it. Jen's on hold and I'm dealing with landlord. Ends up when I finally talked to Eversource. So like, we would never do anything in that short of time.

You would definitely get a bunch of different ways of communicating anything. Good thing you didn't pay anybody, but you're like, you're all set. So then we turned it into a joke with the staff. I was like, Hey, it's 3 31. We made it, we still have power. But the, the point here is, is it would be very easy and where we see. So many salons just struggling and having so many problems to add. One more problem on whatever that day has already developed in front of you to just like try to fix it when. It doesn't, it's not [00:21:00] real. I luckily the phone came, call came into me, so I, we pay, I pay the bill. So I know like that's not possible, but it still tripped me up.

Even though I knew that I was not owing any money, I still almost tried to give the guy my debit card. So it did help that. I was obviously sitting across from Todd and he was just like, stop, stop, stop. Stop. Check your brain. But these scams are out there and it is really easy to fall into it really quickly. And we would've, I, I don't know what would've happened after if we had but luckily nothing came out of it. And here we are. beware of scams.

Todd: Yeah, keep your eyes and ears open, and when somebody gives you a number and says, here's the number, so three people gave us that number and it was the incorrect number.

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: They even give us an extension

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: I'm like, that's not ever source's number, but thank you. That is a made up number and it appears that it's ever source when you call them. 'cause I called you, but it's not them.

Jen: Yeah. And I honestly, at the beginning of that call, I wasn't even listening to anything. I was so frantic about [00:22:00] keeping the power on, like, this can't be shut off. We have, we have a really busy day. Which is what they want. That's exactly what they're looking for. So,, hopefully we had decided to talk about this today just 'cause. We hope it helps somebody not get in a situation where you actually do lose out on money and you do something that you're like, why did I fall for that? You hear about scams all the time, but they're really good at creating confusion and chaos and, and you just kind

of gotta get ahead of that. So hopefully this just helps somebody, like when that call comes in and be like, wait, give me a second here.

Like, I need a minute.

Todd: It's really important to pay attention to the details with things too, like even the phone numbers just 'cause someone gives you the phone number. I had two different people, three different people give me the phone number and it was the incorrect phone number because it's the phone number that the scammer provided.

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: So if you don't crosscheck, and they were like, no, that's ever source's number. I'm like, no. It's literally not. I searched it. It's not their number. It's nowhere on their website. It doesn't exist. And the second number was disconnected by the time we called it back.

Jen: they told us to go for payment was not even where the office [00:23:00] is located.

Todd: Yeah. It's in a separate town. Completely.

Jen: chaos is there, but you have to like take a breath and. Understand what's happening in front of you. So again, share just so that hopefully we can help some people.

Todd: Definitely. And. Don't let it get to you because it for a second it bummed me out because I was like, we're at lunch with our kids. It's summer vacation and you just took 20 minutes away from our children so that we could deal with you and you didn't get anything out of it. And neither did we,

Jen: Nope.

Todd: I didn't get the satisfaction of punching you in the face.

'cause I guarantee you they're scamming some old lady or old man right now.

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: And that's what really like ticks me off that that taking advantage of people is just drives me crazy.

Jen: on the other side, we were, like I said, at lunch with our family, so we turned the conversation as a teaching experience. Like our oldest son was asking a bunch of questions and, hopefully it's something that maybe they hold onto in the future, but this is what happens in business. So they get to experience all of it with us.

Todd: What was our next topic? Mentorship. And you wanted to talk specifically about mentors that [00:24:00] don't fit.

Jen: That. And so my first thought here was, I'll, I'll tell a brief story. So a couple years ago, years ago, we started dealing with some of you, if us, this my dad's wife, she had dementia. She passed away this year and. We were working on a bunch of things and I kept saying to my dad like, you need to have some conversations with these doctors, whatever.

And then finally one day I'm like, dad, why are you not making these phone calls? We need to help. Doris Flat out simple looked at me. He is like, I don't know what to say. I'm so embarrassed. I have no idea what to say when I call them. like, all you say is I need help. You are calling them. They're the experts.

They're the specialists, they're the ones there to help you. You don't have to have any answers except, Hey, I need help. And then explain what's going on with Doris. And he's like, even thought that it was that easy or that simple. So we,,

Todd: It's not,

Jen: because it's not, but it's also

Todd: it's, it's, it's very simple. It's not easy

Jen: And he just was

Todd: because nobody wants to feel stupid.

The Power of Asking for Help [20:00]

Jen: So.

Todd: that breaks my heart that people even feel that way [00:25:00] because obviously this is our family I'm talking about. So losing a family member, losing Doris is heartbreaking in itself. But to think that there are so many other people out there suffering and dealing with things like dementia and Alzheimer's and whatever, and they're just like, I don't know where to go.

I don't wanna sound stupid, so I'm not gonna reach out when like, Jen, you're, what you're saying is just reach out and say,

Jen: I need help.

Todd: I need help.

Jen: And, and you'll find the right people who then can help you. They don't need any other information. So, and, and, Todd and I touch these people all the time that need help. And for some,, they're reaching out and they're at their like, end. Like I, they're like, they feel like they're, they're lost, they failed. All of these things are going on, but it's you. You gotta feel, I guess that uncomfortable making that first connection. There's lots I wanna talk here, but first was like, if you don't even know what to do in your business or how to get it right or make it right, you may not need to. You just need to find the right person to come up with a strategy that will work for you, you business, [00:26:00] your staff. There's so many mentorship companies out there that it's a black and white here. Do this. It'll work. If that's your, if that's your jam, those are the people you should be reaching out to. If you're looking for something to help your business the way it works now, but like make it better, then you have to find someone that doesn't have just a template to hand you and say, do this.

And all you have to do is interview people that are out there looking to work with other people to help your business better. And all you have to say is, I need help. Like when if you come on an onboarding call with Todd and I, he has four pages, three or four pages to ask you a bunch of questions. So you don't even have to know where your flaws are.

You don't even have to know what's not working. When you answer the questions, it'll be very apparent. What, what are your pros? What are your cons? What are your weaknesses? What are your strengths? It's just getting on the call. It's having the strength and the courage to just get on that first call and then try other people too. I think people get so frozen and I don't know what to say, or I'm so embarrassed that I'm not running [00:27:00] some successful business. Move on. Get over that. Get over yourself. Get over everything you thought you were supposed to do. The sooner you do that and you reach out and ask for help, the sooner you'll get on track.

Todd: Yeah, even if you start out on the wrong track, it's still progress and there's still a lot of lessons. So Jen and I have worked with business mentors across different industries. I've worked with restaurant mentors and coaches when I was managing restaurants. I've never owned a restaurant. No, thank you.

I have people ask me all the time because I happen to know how to cook, and so they're like, would you ever open a restaurant? I've had people offer to partner with me. I just, I don't think I have it in me to run a restaurant because. To be honest with you, I love them. I love restaurants, and I think it would require more than we have time to run because we have kids and stuff.

And I think I would have to ignore my kids, ignore my wife, ignore all other businesses to make a restaurant successful. So that's the biggest reason. [00:28:00] We've had coaches and mentors with the gym that we owned. We've had coaches and mentors with the past salon that Jen owned with the business partner, which actually, let's touch on.

So we had someone, I thought that this group was gonna be great because we started working with this person and they assembled this like power team or super team or whatever. And this person was working with like oil companies and shit. Like she was working with like. Big corporations. And so I just

thought, well, she's just gonna tell us what to do and we're gonna do it and we're gonna be a big corporation.

Well, fast forward none of that applied to our small business. Very, very little of it applied, I'll say. 'cause there's some good stuff that came out of it. Sure. Yeah. I think you fired somebody that wasn't a good fit. So that was a,

Jen: the end of that salon,

Todd: it did, it did begin the end of that salon and then.

Jen: it. And there was other factors too, but she definitely was part of it.

Todd: [00:29:00] Yeah. I, I think it's important to, when you are searching for someone, do not ever let someone come in and just take over. And that's what happened there. And that, that's perfect. The way you just summed it up, like that person crushed that business because they didn't understand the business. What they were trying to do is they were trying to push their own agenda.

And I see that a ton in the hair industry too. I don't think it's industry dependent. I think it's across all industries. People in the hair industry though, the co a lot of coaches that I see, a lot of mentors, whatever you wanna call yourselves, business gurus, whatever, are pushing some sort of agenda. They're trying to amass a populace, a population, a, a, a following so that they can say, oh, we have this many people. Look, it works. But if you really ask the people that work with those groups, like, is your salon better? Some of them will tell you it's not. I've heard through the grapevine, we're not talking specifics here, so I feel fine saying this, that [00:30:00] some companies that offer mentoring their mentors don't even run profitable salons.

Jen: Hmm.

Todd: They're struggling,

Jen: Right?

Todd: but they're telling you what to do.

Jen: in or believe in the things that they're teaching or telling those people to do. Shame on you.

Todd: Because it's more about spreading the message than it is about truly helping

Jen: And you're

Todd: now.

Jen: of people in a weak spot.

Todd: Four. Sure. Yeah. And I am no way, shape or form saying that Jen and I are the best business mentors in the world because we're not

Jen: Yeah. No, but

Todd: business Mentors probably are someone else.

Jen: best place.

Todd: Yeah. What I, yes, what I was gonna say is we truly want to help the individual

Jen: Yes.

Todd: and that's what we care about and that's what we focus and that's what gets us fired up. We just had a call with someone this morning and I don't remember the last time I've been as fired up. To be honest with you, we have a call on Friday, I [00:31:00] believe you said, and with another business owner that would like some mentorship, and I am absolutely fired up to learn about, I don't even know this person's name fired up.

I just wanna help. I want to hear

Jen: Yeah.

Todd: story and I want to find out what's important to them, and then I wanna build a plan of attack with them, not from a template. Again, nothing wrong with a template. If that's how you choose to move, go for it. I don't care.

Non-Negotiables: Why They Matter [26:00]

Jen: grow out of that though, and you'll eventually realize that you wanna run your business your own way. And now you'll have to figure out how to do that,

Todd: Right. So your, yes. So instead of being handed a template, learn how to build a template

Jen: Yeah, do it now because you'll

Todd: and then you can go Yes. Because then you can, you can self-correct in the future. My goal is never to have somebody that pays us to mentor them for life. My goal is to get people to where they need to be. We've had people that have, we've mentored for three plus years, I believe, all the way [00:32:00] down to people that we've mentored for one month and that have said, what?

I just realized I needed a little clarity. You guys gave me that. I think I'm good to take it from here. I'll call you guys if I need you. And while some people will be like, that's not a great business plan, we didn't start this. Like, we don't even know where this. Hello Hair Pro, like mentoring. Hello Hair Pro Education. We don't even know really where that's going yet.

Jen: Because we don't have an agenda. Our agenda is just to help people with whatever it is that they need.

Todd: Yes, yeah, for sure. I will say it's growing and things have ticked up and we've getting, we're, we've been getting a lot more inquiries

Jen: very exciting.

Todd: over the past, like few months. But it's been like, I've heard people say this before in the past, like. Other people that are like, I've created content for like four years, five years before anybody gave a shit, before anybody commented on anything.

And to be honest, what are we at? We're at almost four years with this podcast

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: and just now [00:33:00] people are like, I'm finding your podcast. Holy crap. Like, I need your help. I need this, or I wanna talk to you. Or Can I come shadow you? Or can I just come hang out? Or can we just talk or whatever. And the answer is always yes.

If we can make it work, we'll make it work. I think Jen's message though with, with mentors is don't let them take over.

Jen: Yeah, be very careful.

Todd: Don't let them push their own agenda. You need somebody that's working for you. You have to understand that a mentor, a business mentor is somebody that especially if you're paying them, but it's somebody that should want to grow you, not grow them.

Then the other thing, and I know this is important to Jen, is you can feel like you're kind of stuck. Like you're obligated.

Jen: Yes,

Todd: You're not. You're not at all.

Jen: move on

Todd: Don't.

Jen: ready.

Todd: can, yeah, you can just move on. Hey, this isn't working for me. Hey, I'm gonna take a break with this. Hey, I don't wanna do this anymore. Hey, fuck you.

You hurt my business. That's always fun to say.

Jen: Yeah, and we've, we've I think you had better luck

Todd: think [00:34:00] we've gone through all of those too.

Jen: I think in the, the gym world you had a lot better luck with mentors. I've never had good luck with mentors. That's why I think this really like, inspires me because anybody I've ever worked with did nothing good for where I wanted to be and never was there for the vision I had at all. and.

Todd: There's a huge disconnect too, because you don't have to necessarily run a salon to mentor a salon because business is business at the end of the day. A p and L is a p and I.

Jen: Well, yeah,

Todd: You money.

Jen: take in the

Todd: you bring money,

Jen: whoever you're talking to, you can create a plan.

Todd: correct? Yep.

Jen: Like I said, I've just never had good experience, so for me it's really important to bring to the table. I use the word customized often, but customized to each person we talk to and each salon is treating it, its its own 'cause they're not the same and the needs aren't the same. Some people come with great strengths and different weaknesses and vice versa.

Todd: Agreed. All right, let's touch on non-negotiables real quick and then we can wrap up.

Jen: Okay.

Todd: [00:35:00] So last week I put out. An email about non-negotiables. It was my newsletter. If you're not on there, 3, 2, 1, pro push. Click the button,

Final Thoughts [35:00]

Jen: It was really good.

Todd: click the button at the bottom of the show notes and you can sign up. So

Jen: do

Todd: Jen and I have been watching the bear.

I think we, we just finished right? We just wrapped up season four.

Jen: we did.

Todd: So again, if you've listened to us at all, that I'm, I like dig the restaurant industry. I love hospitality and all that stuff. So. I really enjoyed that series and I found it inspiring. And is some of it dramatized for television?

Hell yeah, of course it is. Why? Because it's television. You gotta be able to see through that stuff. Don't be silly.

Jen: People love drama.

Todd: But in one episode, the Bear passed out. Carmy passed out a list to everyone and he had Sugar photocopy it

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: and gave a list to everyone and it was non-negotiables. I thought that was so cool because I, I, I think that if you did [00:36:00] that in your salon, you would freak out because you're, you would be like, my staff is gonna quit.

There's no way that they're gonna go for non-negotiables. But in this episode, the character that did this, if you're not familiar with the bear, was basically like, I don't care. This is what it takes to run the most successful restaurants in the world. There's no room for people's feelings and all that stuff.

When it comes to your business, you need to lead from two places. You need to lead with both sides of your brain. You need to lead with the logic side that makes sense and does what it's gonna do and is math. And then you need to lead from the other side, which is how do I make this connect with human beings?

But it doesn't mean that you ignore the non-negotiables because you think my team won't buy into this. That's a leadership issue. That's you not being able to explain to your team the [00:37:00] why or what you're trying to accomplish, or better yet the growth that you're trying to provide for them. And I think

the, those are all great reasons to have non-negotiables.

Now we don't have a list. We have a handbook. And we have rules, but we don't have a list of non-negotiables. I am working on one because I believe that it's just, it's that important and I don't think our staff is gonna have an issue with it. I think actually it will help some of our staff. That's like,

Jen: by it.

Todd: yeah.

Or when you look at your coworkers, right, there's always gonna be that coworker that never cleans quite as much as you do. Right. They never clean up that I always clean up that they never sweep this area, but I sweep this area. They never do this for their clients, but I do this for my clients. There's always gonna be that person, right?

And they're not trying. They, they might be, but odds are they're not trying to be malicious and they're trying to hurt you. They're just doing what they believe is right. [00:38:00] So when the leader comes along and they're like, Hey, here's this list of non-negotiables, I don't even want. I don't even really want feedback.

They're non-negotiables. And that comes from the leadership that just shows strength. And then when you explain the why behind it, and I don't mean explaining it every day, if someone's just gonna complain constantly, they're probably not a good fit for your team because the best salons in the world don't operate that way.

They operate from the top down because they know what it takes. And if somebody can't see that and they can't buy in, unfortunately, in the past we've had people. That don't buy into what we're doing, no problem. They leave to go somewhere else because they think the opportunity is better. The grass is greener over there.

They get there and they, they understand now at this point, they've been deceived.

Jen: Mm-hmm.

Todd: That's tragic. We don't want that happening to people. So you've gotta be a leader and you've gotta step up and you've gotta explain to people why you have these non-negotiables. [00:39:00] And why they matter and how it's gonna impact them and their clients in the future.

Jen: I think

Todd: Do you have anything else to add? Go.

Jen: Just real quick, but we talk a lot about you need a mission core values, but you need a vision. And I think the vision with this non-negotiables works hand in hand. 'Cause where do you want your business to go? Like what, what does that look like? And your non-negotiables really push you in that direction and it makes sure you have the right team.

I have been accused by a past employee of having expectations too high. Like someone actually asked me like, do you think your expectations are too high? And I remember looking right at her and I was like, they're actually. Really low still. They're not even where I want them to be, but this is where I need you guys to meet in order to me to push you to where I need you to be. So I'm like, if you think this is too high. I'm not so sure you're gonna last here because this is just the stepping stone. But those expectations come from a place. These non-negotiables come from a place of the vision of Hello and where we want it to be and what we're trying to accomplish. [00:40:00] So without that vision though, I think it could be very difficult.

So that's why those things are so important to have those kind of, not kind of those beginning foundation things. So you can put these things into practice and, and explain like. Where they are, where they need to be and what you're trying to achieve with them. I, I set the bar high. It's just where I'm at and I don't think there's anything wrong with that. I also, when we were opening, had to set the bar at a place that I needed people to meet so I could set it higher. That's just where that's at. But Todd and I have a vision of where we wanted to be and things that we want done, and we clearly now have a team that is capable of doing all of those things.

Todd: I have a quick story unless you want to say anything else.

Jen: I'm good.

Todd: So this was, I, I wrote this in my newsletter last week. So Jen, you already heard this, so apologies. But for people that haven't heard, back in the day, I worked at a fairly high-end restaurant. We weren't fine dining, but we blurred the line for most people.

A management position became available and I jumped all over it. I was super stoked about this. I beat out another candidate and [00:41:00] he became salty. Understandable. He then began showing up late, leaving the rest of the staff to pick up his slack. He did a bunch of other stuff too. I explained to him that regardless of how he felt about me, that he couldn't continue to act this way.

The very next shift, he showed up late. At this point, the staff is watching. I met him at the door and I told, they were literally watching. I met 'em at the door and I told 'em I wouldn't tolerate these actions any longer 'cause it wasn't fair to the team. And I told 'em that since I was the person responsible for the team, I had to fire him.

That was my first time firing somebody. And it sucked. But the staff was watching. Later on, our head chef pulled me aside and explained to me that he understood how difficult that was for me. But he also appreciated me stepping up because the restaurant was better off as a whole. Our relationship was amazing from that point on, and he taught me a ton about food and restaurants over the next year or so.

So if you take those difficult decisions and you do them now because they're non-negotiable, you'll get [00:42:00] to where you want to be faster if you put them off. You're just delaying

Jen: Yes,