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CTRL+CLICK CAST #83 - Success from Failure with Erik Reagan

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Preview: If you're not growing, then you're probably not trying new things. If you're not trying new things, you're probably not failing, and I think that failure is a necessity for success.

[Music]

Lea Alcantara: From [Bright Umbrella](#), this is CTRL+CLICK CAST! We inspect the web for you! Today our friend Erik Reagan returns to the show this time to talk about finding success through failure. I'm your host, Lea Alcantara, and I'm joined by my fab co-host:

Emily Lewis: Emily Lewis!

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Emily Lewis: We are so excited to have Erik Reagan back on the show today. He is a musician turned web developer turned entrepreneur. He co-founded a brand and interactive design studio called [Focus Lab](#) about seven years ago and more recently he co-founded a second company called [Watson Works](#), which helps people learn to communicate and collaborate better with others.

We're so glad to have you back, Erik, welcome!

Erik Reagan: Oh, thank you. It's great to be back.

Lea Alcantara: So Erik, how is your 2017 going so far?

Erik Reagan: Oh, it's a bit early, but I am excited off to a good start. It's been a while since spoke. I was actually kind of curious about what the last topic was when we chatted, and it was weird listening to myself.

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]



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Erik Reagan: Because in the intro, I talked about how I have an awesome wife and daughter and a second child on the way. Well, that second child is now three, and like time just flies, so it's weird.

Emily Lewis: Yeah, that was back when you talked to us about developing for multiple environments.

Erik Reagan: Yes, yeah. But yeah, 2017 is off to a fun start. We've got a lot of things going on this year that we're trying that are new and a lot of things we learned from last year as a business that we're excited to kind of double down on.

Emily Lewis: And what's with this Watson Works? This new company, how did that come about? I mean, and why did you need a second company? [Laughs]

Erik Reagan: [Laughs] Yeah, oh, I didn't need it. The idea is that the world needs it. So that was born out of something that we do at Focus Lab. We put a lot of emphasis on communicating with one another, collaborating with one another really well, knowing one another's kind of personalities and then also taking that into knowing the personalities and communication styles of our customers so that we can work better together and work together better. So it was initially going to be something that we kind of wove into another product that we already had in place, but then the more my partner Bill [Kenney] and I thought about it, the more it seemed to make sense as just its own separate company.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]



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Erik Reagan: It was different enough from what Focus Lab does at its core that we didn't want to make it a part of Focus Lab. We don't want to spread ourselves too thin to where we're not effective in the things that we do. So we decided it made more sense to create a second company, a new company, with a different person running it.

Emily Lewis: Oh.

Erik Reagan: So I don't run the company. I am basically an investor and an adviser to the company and so is Bill, and we have a third partner who that's basically his full time job, that's what he does. He's building up this new company, Watson Works, and we kind of quietly got it off the ground last year and now, after kind of it being in place for about a year, we're really kicking it into high gear this year. Our third partner, his name is Andy Cabistan, he graduated with his Master's degree and now he has basically two jobs, trying to start a business and get a Master's degree.

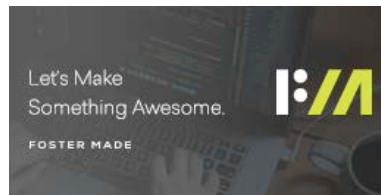
Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Erik Reagan: And so now that he's got that knocked out, this is going to be hopefully a pretty fun year for learning and growing that second company, but I definitely did not need a second company.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Erik Reagan: And I don't run a second company either.



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Lea Alcantara: Interesting.

Emily Lewis: So in that role as an adviser, is it kind of like you just literally just offer advice or do you expect you'll get called into actually work one on one with the client or anything?

Erik Reagan: Yeah, that's a good question. So essentially as we start this thing off, the understanding is that I'll still be on the ground level here and there doing things, like as an example, I'm building the website stuff right now myself.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Erik Reagan: And one of the services that Watson Works provides is in-person training or consulting on communication and it's specifically across teams, so we will teach groups of people how to work together better, and I'll go occasionally to those. I'm not doing much of the teaching. I'm more like a teacher's assistant, if you will, and just kind of contributing to the conversation.

Emily Lewis: Facilitate.

Erik Reagan: Yeah, but most of what I'm doing is helping solidify the vision of where this thing is going and making sure that Andy has the tools he needs to get there.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]



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Erik Reagan: With Focus Lab, even though we're only seven years old, we've learned plenty.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Erik Reagan: We've made plenty of mistakes and Bill and I can bring that to the table for the second company. Hopefully, different mistakes will be learned and they can learn from the things that the Focus Lab did wrong or just learned over the years. So it's about the business model ideas and testing, encouraging and supporting this third partner Andy and for now, a little here and there on the ground level, but the idea is that the involvement is pretty minimal in the long run.

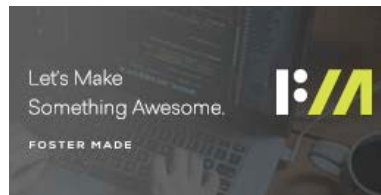
Emily Lewis: I love that. Lea, it sounds very paying it forward.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, absolutely, and it's really perfect for today's topic because I think we're going to dive into how you even decided to go this route with other projects and such, and you mentioned mistakes. So considering the topic of the day is failure, let's just dive right into it, let's define it for our listeners, because I feel like everyone has their own definition of what this means. What is failure? How would you define it?

Erik Reagan: Yeah, I mean, at its core, I think it's pretty simple to define. It's just not meeting a desired or intended outcome.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]



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Erik Reagan: I think it's pretty basically defined.

Emily Lewis: And this topic came on our radar because you've actually talked about this I guess the past couple of years at a couple of conferences, and I'm just wondering, have you met anyone who has different definitions from that, or very narrow definitions of failure?

Erik Reagan: Yeah, you know I don't think I've even had the topic of defining failure come up.

Emily Lewis: Hmm.

Lea Alcantara: Interesting.

Erik Reagan: I think when I'm talking about it, I'll use one of the sponsors at Peers as an example. I talked about failure at Peers last year, which is, hands down, my favorite conference to attend in a year. I was trying to break down potential facades or barriers of what people might perceive of successful person or successful company and just be really raw and transparent from a stage about my own failures and how I dealt with them and encouraged people in ways they can deal with failure. So the failure that I've been talking about from a stage is not "I failed to test this thing before I launched a website and it was like an email didn't get sent or something."

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Erik Reagan: It's not little things like failed to... Like a good example I like to use is failing to put on deodorant. [Laughs]



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Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Erik Reagan: I mean, that's a form of a failure in a way.

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Erik Reagan: Because you did not meet a desired or intended outcome.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Erik Reagan: But when I'm on a stage talking about the kind of stuff and even potentially here today, the stuff that I try to focus on is the failure that really sticks with you that has an impact on your life that last more than a day or an hour or even a week.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Erik Reagan: And when I'm at conferences talking about failure, we're not really defining it. I feel like there's maybe an understanding of what failure could be, and what comes up is more about a person's story, their experience with that deep failure that they were thinking about while I happen to be talking about it. So I hadn't really had any different definitions. I haven't sought them out because they haven't really come up.



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Emily Lewis: Yeah, it's one of those things that when you first said, "You didn't meet a desired outcome," I was like, "Huh, I did all the time and I don't think of it as failure." [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: Like I often don't meet the desired outcomes, but I just shift so I guess I don't look at it as failure. Failure like it seems like it's such a harsh, bad word as opposed to, you know?

Erik Reagan: It does.

Emily Lewis: It's just part of life.

Erik Reagan: Yeah, there's a stigma to the word.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Erik Reagan: It's almost inappropriate in a way.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Erik Reagan: I mean, I think that failure is just part of our lives. It's not a big deal.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]



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Erik Reagan: Now, some of the things that we fail in or the failures we experience are a lot more hurtful or impactful than others, but at its core, I still think that there's an overlap between failing to meet a deadline and failing to pay your mortgage.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Erik Reagan: Or make enough money to pay your mortgage.

Lea Alcantara: So on the flipside then, have you heard of any different definitions of success? Like what about success, how would you define it?

Erik Reagan: Yes, success is, if I just kind of flip failure on its head and say that technically the antithesis of failure is probably meeting a desired or intended outcome, to me that's a simple answer, but success is actually one that I think people vastly differ in the way they define it.

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Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]



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Erik Reagan: Because culturally, we have so many different things and people that we paint as successes or successful, and I think that there's a portion of like it's maybe my definition of success that's just missed there and it's the desired or the intended part.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Erik Reagan: I think that success is one of those things that nobody can define for you, that you have to define for yourself.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Erik Reagan: So if you see a peer of yours who has a company that has 50 people on staff and they make \$10 to 12 million a year, whatever the case is, and like you look at them and you think, "Man, they are really successful. I am not successful." But your goal was just to literally travel the world and make enough money to pay for that, and you're doing exactly that, then you are just as much a success as somebody else who might have had a different desired or intended outcome. So the word "success" I think really needs to be defined by the individual.

When you get into kind of organizational success, then that's where maybe some other people are involved and you kind of need to be unified on what success is and looks like. But when it comes down to the people, individuals, it's a very fluid definition that should start with you.

Emily Lewis: I agree. I think in the same that failure has some connotations with it, I think success does as well, and I think your point about comparison, comparison of what success is, comparing



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your success to another is a problem in today's society, especially with the prevalence of social media and everyone putting their good foot forward in that. But I agree that I feel like in the same way that failure has connotations, success does too, meaning when I think of the word "success," it seems grand in my head.

Erik Reagan: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: It's like a big deal as opposed to, "Oh, I managed to do what I've planned to do for the week in terms of making sure I got to the gym." I don't ever view that as a success as like, "Oh, I did what I thought I would do," but in a way, it's success.

Erik Reagan: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: And being able to acknowledge those things is also important as well to see successes even in "smaller" situations.

Erik Reagan: Yeah, absolutely.

Lea Alcantara: So let's talk a little bit about the business aspects. You talk about how there's a slightly different tack over organizational success. With that, how would you define what goals if success is about achieving specific goals? How do you define what goals to pursue for your business?



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Erik Reagan: Yeah, I think that it's one of those things that start with much bigger questions, simple questions, but difficult to sometimes answer, so "why are you even in business" is a good place to start.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Erik Reagan: If you don't know why you're in business, why you own a business, why are you a freelancer, then any goal that you set is going to be probably a result of something that you think you're supposed to do because either somebody else is doing it or you read an article about why it makes a good goal or something like that. But if you go big enough picture to think about why you're even in business, why you own a business or why you work for yourself, why you work where you work, then that's I think the more powerful approach to coming up with goals.

So you start with maybe you have a long term vision or mission for yourself, for your family, and that should, in my mind, directly affect your career path and things that you do professionally, and from there, you can start breaking down that longer term vision or mission into achievable goals that actually relate to that and if you don't start there, I think that your goals are probably, even if you don't recognize it yet, being shaped by other people and not yourself.

Emily Lewis: I understand the question about why you're business, but when it comes to defining those goals, especially since you've been in business for seven years, how do you define the right



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goals in the sense of I know that sometimes I establish goals and I almost start too granular? I almost feel like I should start more like an umbrella, a theme level to define the goals and then kind of create objectives within those goals. Sometimes I've done the objectives first and never really had the goal to tie it back to kind of thing.

Erik Reagan: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: So how have you gone about that process?

Erik Reagan: Yeah, I think it has changed over time. I think in the past five years or so, I've learned, read about, tried a few different approaches to actually defining goals and aiming for them, some successfully, some not, but the themes that seemed to come up every time I'm kind of looking at different ways to goals is that the goal, first off, I have to be able to relate it to that longer term vision or purpose of what I'm doing and then there are just some criteria that the goal needs to be in my mind a good goal. A goal needs to be specific.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Erik Reagan: If it's not specific, then what are you even really aiming for? I think it was Zig Ziglar who said, "If you fail to plan, then you plan to fail."

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]



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Erik Reagan: So planning these goals out is a part of avoiding the failure or achieving this success depending on which lens you're looking through. But a goal also needs to be measurable. It needs to have a solid time limit on it.

Emily Lewis: Oh.

Erik Reagan: In my mind, if I think Focus Lab as the organization, we have some long term plans, and if I wanted to just put a number on it, we will say 5-year plan to be a certain type of company that operates a certain way, and if I want to figure out how to get there, then I'm going to need to slow down and think about it and maybe even talk to some people who are smarter than, and that's really often the case, and from there I get to decide, "Okay, well, if I want to be there in five years, then in the next two or three years, these are the types of changes that I probably need to make in my business, and to make these changes, I probably need to do these smaller set of changes."

So maybe kind of what you're describing as goals versus objectives, and if you don't break them down into things that are specific and things you can measure, things that have a time limit, then your goal is not going to really be likely happen. So for me, as an example, a concrete example, Focus Lab is launching a SaaS app this year, which is directly tied to one of our longer term missions of kind of how we want to shape our company and launching an app like that has a lot of different things we need to do, which we are breaking down into kind of a project-based set of goals that have measurable things within them and have time limits and things like that. So I don't know if that helped in any way or if that even answered the question.



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Emily Lewis: I think it's useful to understand that there's a process behind it. It's not just like you sit down and you write it down and that's it. There's discussion and brainstorming, but what came to me when you were describing that, I'm curious, do you typically set goals out five years? Do you go beyond that? Is there a point at which you shouldn't plan that far out because it's sort of unrealistic to think you could think that far ahead? Or is that really critical for that long-term goal setting compared to like shorter-term goal setting?

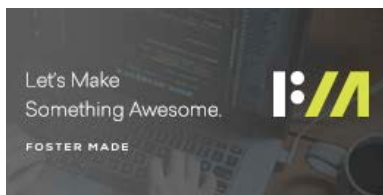
Erik Reagan: Are we talking kind of organizationally or...

Emily Lewis: Yes, business-wise.

Erik Reagan: Okay, yeah. So I feel like that that's going to kind of depend on who you ask. Focus Lab does not set really long-term goals that are very specific because I feel like that's almost – I don't want to say a waste of time, but there are so many other factors involved that I can't even pretend to predict that I don't want to try and create goals that are ten years away, you know?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Erik Reagan: The traditional business answer is that, yeah, you'd create yourself a little 3-year, 5-year, 10-year plan and you work on it. My answer is probably a bit different because everything that I do at Focus Lab is somehow influenced by me as an individual, not that Focus Lab operations director Erik Reagan, but just Erik as a person, and a big part of who I am has to do with my faith, for example, and that influences how I set goals or don't set goals, and so one of the things that I think



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might be a little different from some business owners is that I don't actually want to set goals that are that far in advance, and that's a totally different topic for a different podcast episode, but I know a lot of people set goals that far out. I'm not one of them and Focus Lab is not one of them, but I know people do it and some people do it successfully, but that they probably have more experience than me.

Emily Lewis: Lea, I'm curious, before you and I got together, did you do like long-term forecasting goals or things like that with your business?

Lea Alcantara: No, not really. I feel like I had long-term ideas like that was tied to personal actually, just like Erik is in what I think success means to me, in general, but I feel like, because there are so many other factors that can affect how you pivot your business or even my own interest in what I want to do on the web it's so vast that I just have more of a general idea, but it never sat down and broken down specifically like, "Okay, so then by X, this should happen and by X."

I think when I was younger, I thought there was a whole bunch of things that I wanted to do, but I feel like in my own philosophy, that you can get stuck if you just are too rigid about those types of things and you can actually stunt your growth or your own success level if you're focusing on specific things, because there are other opportunities that come up that might be better for you. So I feel like sometimes when you have like a 5- or 10-year plan, that's just assuming that everything stays the same.

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Emily Lewis: Right. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: And I don't think that's realistic relationship-wise. I mean, if you spoke to me five years ago, I was still living in Edmonton. I had no idea I was going to move to Seattle and then ending up starting a business with you, right?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So no, no, I've never thought of it that way. Whenever I thought about success or my business, I wanted my business to succeed, but it was in service for my life to succeed, if that make sense.

Emily Lewis: Oh, yeah, like Erik was saying, it's got to be based on your own personal definition of this stuff.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: I think that I heard the 5-year, I've even heard 10-year before, and neither seemed to make sense to me. I know you and I sort of set goals for a year.

Lea Alcantara: Yes.

Emily Lewis: I mean we have grand schemes. [Laughs]



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Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: We make goals for like a year.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: That's pretty much as far out as I think make sense for what we do.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: But I think you're right, Erik, I think it really just depends on who you are, what your business is and where your strengths lie.

Erik Reagan: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: Maybe setting 5-year goals is something that really helps you.

Erik Reagan: Yeah, and if I could give a more concrete example, with Focus Lab, we don't have a timeline on this because I don't know how long this kind of thing should or could take, but we want to be a company where 100% of our monthly and annual operating costs are covered by product-based revenue.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]



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Erik Reagan: And that our client-services revenue is icing on the cake. There are a number of different reasons for that, and we would like to do both of those things. I think we do both well and I don't know how many people on staff we'll need to really get to that point. I don't know how many years I should expect for that to take. I know how long I would like for it to take or not take.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Erik Reagan: But at this point, I couldn't tell you whether that's on a 3-year map or a 5-year map or what have you.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Erik Reagan: What I can tell you though is that we have that across our company as an aware vision or milestone that we want to reach, and we're working towards it because we've broken it down into steps that we think are logical and we're going outside to other expertise and other people to say, "Hey, this is what we want to do. This is how we're currently structured to get there. Are we missing something that you see or are we doing something a little off that you see?" And we just get people who've got more experience than we do to kind of guide us in those ways.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Erik Reagan: But there's no time limit on that big kind of vision of where we want to go, even though we know want to go there.



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Emily Lewis: So with that in mind, let's just take that example. So you described goals as having a time frame and being measurable, so when you're describing this grander vision, you've mentioned that you've had some steps. Are those like milestones that you can measure? How do you know if you're heading in that direction if you haven't really set like a time frame on it?

Erik Reagan: Yeah, I'm glad you asked that. So I don't know long it's going to take me to get to that finish line, but I do know that today my ratio of products to client service revenue is one number and so maybe this year, we're going to aim to get it to a different number and see if we can hit that goal.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Erik Reagan: If we can hit it easily, then we'd recognize, "Oh, well, maybe we can grow this a little faster, and if it's really far off, then maybe we were too ambitious in this one step of the path." Even though we don't know how long it's going to take us to get all the way to that 100%, what it's going to take us to get into the double digits or into 20% or something like that, we know what the steps should look like to a degree, we know how to measure a ratio of product revenue to client service revenue, so this year we're trying to increase it to a new goal, and that's kind of our measurable goal that gets us to that path. I imagine that as we get further along, that we'll start to get a clearer picture of, "Okay, now this actually looks like it's 18 months away or it's 2-1/2 years from now or something like that."

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]



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Erik Reagan: But for now, it's so far away that we don't know how to measure it yet.

Emily Lewis: That makes sense, and I feel like also by taking a more measured approach to it, it's almost like you're setting yourself up for success in the sense that you haven't said, "Well, in the next year, we're going to do X."

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: You recognize that you don't quite know what the X value is just yet or how long it's going to take to get there, so by not making it a very narrow time frame, you're allowing yourself to find successes within it versus if you said, "Well, if we haven't done it by one year, then we failed because that was our goal."

Erik Reagan: Right. And one thing I would add is that with that approach and let's say we're trying to go from like 10% to 15% of our revenue being product based, if I get to the end of the year and I hit 14%, then technically based on the goal at being 15, I failed, but I've still progressed.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Erik Reagan: I'm actually fine with that.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: Right. [Laughs]



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Erik Reagan: Like failure, that does not hurt me in any way.

Emily Lewis: So would you still consider that a failure, I mean, I guess based on the strict definition?

Erik Reagan: Yeah, if I would fail to meet that goal, but I would have succeeded in progressing.

Emily Lewis: Okay, good.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: I like that nuance.

Lea Alcantara: Do you know what this entire conversation reminds me of is client discussions about project timeline, right?

Emily Lewis: Totally.

Lea Alcantara: Because I feel like what's happening here is defining exactly what the endpoint is and that making realistic assumptions over what that means, and then testing to see if that actually makes sense because I feel like what's a problem is between agencies and clients and businesses is that they set arbitrary goals as in, "Okay, a year from now, it's got to be this X number of revenue." Why did you decide it's going to take one year?

Emily Lewis: Or X revenue.



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Lea Alcantara: Right, exactly, exactly. So it just seems rather arbitrary, and at this point, it seems like, “Okay, so here’s the bigger vision. Here are the steps to get there. Let’s see if we succeed in these original steps and how fast and how easy it was to even achieve that smaller goal and then adjust so that the bigger goal is more achievable. Does that make sense?”

Erik Reagan: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: Is that anything you had to work with clients on, especially branding, I mean, it’s a little bit harder I think to define concrete results of like a rebrand or something.

Erik Reagan: Measurable results.

Emily Lewis: Exactly.

Erik Reagan: Yeah, yeah.

Emily Lewis: And so how do you have those types of conversations with clients to set the goals and figure out whether a goal was met or not?

Erik Reagan: Yeah, so we have a questionnaire that we start with and we kind of reinforce some of the things that our client will tell us in that text-based questionnaire, in our kickoff meetings with them and then sometimes continue to bring the topics up through our project, and one of the things that we put a lot of energy into is, and we’re still continuing to get better at it, not to imply that we’ve kind of nailed this thing down, but fully understanding some of these expectations of us.



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What do they expect us to bring to the table? What do they expect the results to be? In their mind, what have they paid us for? And the more that we can understand these things, the better we can either show the success along the way or help prepare to measure it at the end, and we're pretty – blunt I guess maybe is not the best word, but we're pretty...

Emily Lewis: Direct.

Erik Reagan: Yeah, we're pretty direct when it comes to brand work being fairly subjective. So there are definitely measurable criteria, that certain aspects of a branding engagement have, but it's a lot of subjective work, and there's not a lot that gets measured in a branding project with a team if it's literally just something that we're doing from a branding perspective, but we usually take that into other avenues as well that become more measurable, whether it's video stuff and it's trying to give you an ability to watch something or if it's a website conversions increasing and things like that.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Erik Reagan: But yeah, it can be tough if you are working with a client who has a certain expectation of results that you are not actually trying to deliver or offering to deliver, but it's unspoken and so you get to a certain milestone or certain maybe a finish line and the client is kind of like, "So this isn't what I thought was going to happen. I thought that I was going to end up with all these additional followers or likes or my sales were going to increase or whatever," then you have to say, "We weren't trying to drive traffic to your site. We were actually just trying to make the experience of the site better."



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Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Erik Reagan: Or whatever the case is, seeking out those expectations has been something we've learned a lot about, we failed a lot at, we've gotten a lot better at, and I think we continue to improve on.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So in regards to when things are not working, either internally for Focus Lab or for clients, at what point do you understand that you're failing as in, "This isn't working, let's pivot, change, try another tack"? Because I think something that's even harder to understand is even if you've broken everything down to smaller goals and everything, how do know when what you're pursuing is the wrong pursuit?

Erik Reagan: So I think I heard a question I was ready to answer until that last question, that last part of the "how do you know when what you're pursuing is the wrong pursuit." That sounds like a really like deep question. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]



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Erik Reagan: So I'm going to pretend that part wasn't there and I'm just going to go backwards a little bit. So I think that it really comes down if your stuff is measurable, if you've broken things down that are measurable, if you have project milestones and you're getting close to the milestone and you recognize that the work is not even close, that's a good indicator that that's going to fail, that actually meeting that deadline is going to fail. If you are working towards business goals, and I'm going back to my example of revenue ratio of product to services, if I'm in November and if my goal is to get from 10% to 15% and I'm at 11 and it's November, then that's a little late in the game to really try and change much to get that 11 to 15.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Erik Reagan: And so along the way, if you've got measurable goals, then you should be able to look at them and look at the timeline assigned to it — which might be like a milestone in a project — and say, "Okay, at this point, it's Friday and next Friday I have to show this particular feature to a client, but nothing is working yet. Can I do that by next Friday or am I just way off?"

Sometimes we have our head down so long that we don't think to look at the progress we're making or not making, so creating a habit of regularly just looking up and just checking the progress of things, assuming that you've made a goal measurable and has a time limit on it, then you should be able to see that kind of failure coming. But there are failures I think that you don't see coming, you kind of get blindsided by them sometimes. If I could just go off into a totally non-business context...



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Emily Lewis: Sure.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Erik Reagan: Let's just say that somebody has a very poor lifestyle when it comes to health. They don't really exercise, they eat really poorly. They might get to an age where that catches up to them and they suffer an intense kind of medical emergency. That might not have been something that was terribly important to them over time, but looking backwards kind of hindsight, they may have control over those decisions, what am I eating, what is my activity like, and that, in my mind, is also could be a type of a way of failing. I intend to live as long as my life allows me to.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Erik Reagan: But I'm not actually investing in my body in the way that would imply I intend to live a long life. So I think some failures do sneak up on us, but if you're thinking about intentions that we have and picking your head up every once in a while to just take a look at progress or lack of progress, then you should be able to see stuff coming more often than not.

Emily Lewis: I feel like the word "intention" is very appropriate here. I feel like, to take the analogy back to business, Lea and I would do things like, let's say, with marketing, we would do some marketing stuff or we thought it was marketing, but we weren't intentional about it.

Lea Alcantara: Right.



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Emily Lewis: We didn't set goals. We defined milestones, but more like deadlines like, "Oh, we should get this stuff done." It wasn't get it done and reflect if you had made progress, it was just get stuff done and crank stuff out.

Erik Reagan: Right.

Emily Lewis: So we were feeling productive, we think we're doing stuff, we think we're marketing, but it's only after we decide to be intentional about something and then we find success in it, and then we realized we were failing before.

Lea Alcantara: Right. [Laughs]

Erik Reagan: Yeah. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: We didn't even know we were failing when we were failing because we didn't set goals.

Lea Alcantara: Right, right.

Emily Lewis: We didn't measure. We were just doing stuff and it was only when we became intentional and set a goal and found success through it that we realized the previous attempts were essentially failures.

Erik Reagan: Yeah, that's interesting. I can see that.



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Emily Lewis: I think how many times a year do we say to ourselves, “Why are we just now figuring this out?” [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: I know. I guess at the end of the day, as long as we figure it out, that’s the important point, but Erik, I do want to put you on the spot with that question that I put towards you about figuring out what to pursue and whether it’s making some sort of sense. So I’m actually going to use an example that Focus Lab has worked on, so I remember you guys years and years ago started Sidecar for a totally different iteration than it is now.

Erik Reagan: Yeah, right.

Lea Alcantara: Because I remember at one point you started it and then it was completely shattered, silence for a while.

Erik Reagan: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: Then a few years later, new life was breathed into it, so at that point, I feel like that’s one of the examples of try to pursue something, didn’t work out, and then you decided it was going to work out, but for a different goal.

Erik Reagan: Right.

Lea Alcantara: Like how was that process? Like how do you decide not to pursue it back then and then to reopen it years later?



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Erik Reagan: Yeah, man, that could be an entire hour-long conversation, yeah. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Podcast. [Laughs]

Erik Reagan: So for some history, I guess, Sidecar first came about as an idea for Focus Lab to create CMS add-ons and to sell them and to create kind of a revenue source based on that.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Erik Reagan: We've done a lot of add-on development for ExpressionEngine and that was kind of the focus at the time was that Sidecar could be the ExpressionEngine add-on arm of Focus Lab. So what I did was I started talking to a bunch of different add-on developers who were already kind of doing that, people who already made money, sold add-ons, people who just distributed them for free, but still supported them, and I talked to – if I remember – maybe five or six people for pretty long periods of time. I mean, I basically was interviewing them about their experience in add-on development sales, revenue model and all this stuff, and Focus Lab, we had no desire to get away from client services and we still don't, but we did want to diversify our revenue because that just was a healthy practice. It's something that we knew would be beneficial to us in some way, and so to not just have to rely on the client projects every single day of the year.

So in the research phase, I noticed how many developers were dissatisfied with their own operation, in how it was performing or how profitable it was versus how profitable they want it to be, what



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different expectations were of customers and what they felt should have been a more appropriate expectation. So I got a pretty clear picture during this research phase that I did not want to start an add-on business. The biggest thing that came it down to was if we started one, I wanted it to basically be the gold standard of dependable software, really well-documented software, pleasure to use software, and then support to be just topnotch.

And for support to be topnotch, in my mind, as a customer, I need to be getting responses really quickly, and what it came down to are these two things, the model seemed less than favorable, the business model side of it, specifically around trying to do it just with ExpressionEngine and what the ExpressionEngine market was used to at the time, and then the way that I wanted support to function, it was going to be expensive and it also did not align with my own goals at home.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Erik Reagan: I knew that basically at the size of our company at this time, it was maybe six or seven people, that pretty much I would be the person responding to support requests whenever they came through.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Erik Reagan: And I, as a customer, liked when my request get quick attention and I want it again to be that gold standard, but to be that gold standard, I would have needed a bigger basically support team to make that happen, almost segmented off in different hours of the day, and we didn't have



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that. We didn't have the ability to do that and I wasn't willing to provide that and take away from family time, so during that research phase, we just decided, "Okay, this is not a good idea for us. It might be a good idea for other people, but the way we would want to do this, we can't do this.

Focus Lab is relied upon by a number of staff, and within those staff members, we've got family members who also kind of rely on the income, and this is kind of a risky thing to try and it's just not the right time or the right model. So we tailed it, but we love the name.

Lea Alcantara: Aha.

Erik Reagan: So a couple of years later, we had a new idea that was not add-on related. It wasn't software related at all. It was, in fact, design related, and we kind of revived the name Sidecar and totally went a different direction on the brand side of it and it is a source of product-based revenue right now and it doesn't require support basically. The support required when you sell a design product is vastly different than the support required when you sell a technology product. So we did that on purpose.

Some of the ideas we have for our current Sidecar involve support needs that we are unwilling to really offer so we haven't done those products yet, but the products that we do have out are basically you buy them and you can use them and there's almost no documentation needed, and it's something that you can't really break across one server to another server. That stuff is just not applicable with these products. So Sidecar was an idea a few years ago. We recognize we are on a



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path for failure if we try this, so we didn't try it, and then a few years later, a new idea was birthed and we just love the idea of the name Sidecar and we kind of rebirthed that.

Lea Alcantara: That's pretty cool, like, I mean, I think it's interesting that you've done enough research and I feel like that's something that a lot of us in the design development world kind of don't do because I think a lot of us get into this industry because we love it and we think, "Oh, this will just be a nice side thing, and then fast forward, it ends up being more than we could handle perhaps, so on and so forth.

Erik Reagan: [Agrees]

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Lea Alcantara: So I think the lesson here is to do your research. In order to help put your company into the right path for success, you need to do your research and maybe do a smaller test before you invest all this time and money and effort and stuff into something that isn't actually in line with your overall goals. But one thing that I heard from your entire story there was your emphasis on how this affects your home life and as well as how it affects your staff's family as well.

Erik Reagan: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So you've spoken about failure in all these conferences and I feel like you've been very open about how work affects your home life. So how do you pursue success in your business while also having a successful/healthy home life?



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Erik Reagan: Well, that's a good question. I will start by saying I don't always get it right. It is one of those things that is really easy to talk about and much harder to practice. So I really enjoy making things. I think earlier on in my career it was making music, and then it became kind of making websites and software, and at this point, the things that I really enjoy making are building teams and just like processes around this whole business stuff, and the point is, I love my work and I love being able to work, going to work, and it's easy for me to default to work if I'm bored. But my approach to most of the business stuff is that actually for me, the goals, the vision and all that stuff, it doesn't really start with the business. It doesn't start even with Erik.

It starts with the other things in my life, and I mentioned faith earlier. Family is a close second to that in terms of what impacts the things I do, and I made some commitments to myself and I also made some commitments to my wife and kids with this whole business stuff and my kids don't really understand the commitments, they're too young, but a lot of that has to do with how I'm present, and if I'm present, and if I have a desired business outcome, that the only way to get to it will require some type of presence, sacrifice on the family side, that's a really big discussion and decision that I'll be making with my wife, like it's not something that we will take lightly.

So at work I'm not going to just say, "You know, this year I'm going to double our revenue this year. That's a big goal. I mean, but this is the right year for it, so I'm going to go do that." Well, that would be no small feat, and to do that, one of the few ways that I know to do that is to spend more time doing things, but that would really take away from that commitment to my wife and to my kids, being there for them, and honestly, one of the things I wish I remembered where I heard this so I cannot take credit for this, but maybe some of you listening will know and can hit me up on Twitter or



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something, but I really believe that I don't know whether or not my biggest investment to the world is going to be something I create versus someone I raise.

So what if my biggest investment on the world is somebody I raise, then I need to actually be present to invest in my children, and to do that I feel like I need strong partner in crime, and that would be my bride, and these things are really important to me and I've said this to my staff, I've said this to a number of peers, "If, not that I'm anticipating this happening, but if Focus Lab crumble to the ground today, I'd be fine. I'll be distraught, but I'll be fine. If my family crumbles to the ground, that would be way, way more impactful on me than the business."

Family is definitely a much bigger priority to me and the goals that we set at Focus Lab, if it seems like they are going to require more than I am willing to provide, then we adjust then, but at this point, that doesn't happen and then vice versa. Sometimes the things that we want to do at work mean that I come back home and I say, "Hey, this is something that we want to try and do and it actually means I might need to travel a little bit more this year," and so we're going to talk about that and there's kind of an ebb and flow, a seasonality to where the emphasis is of time, and you hear the phrase "work-life balance" thrown around a lot. I think don't think that exist. You have a life. You don't have a work life and a home life, so there's just a seasonality to that, and as long as I remain aware of my priorities, then I should be in pretty good shape, and I've got a lot of people who love me around me willing to call me on it when I'm not sticking to them.

Emily Lewis: I feel like the point — I don't have kids — but I do feel that the point about bringing your partner in to what your business goals are, letting them know what's going on is key, that



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communication is so important for making sure that, like you said, if Bright Umbrella fell apart, I'd be pretty upset, but I'd be far more upset if something happened to my partner or someone I love, something happen to my home life, and so I feel like one of the things that I do that I hear you do is that communication, that ongoing communication, keeping my partner informed about what I want to do and where he is and where we are in our life and how our personal goals sometimes, we have to find a way to prioritize them differently, depending on what the business goals are, and the same in his life, he doesn't even own his own business, but he has a job that takes up a lot of his time and is very important to him.

Erik Reagan: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: And so I think even just someone, if they're not a business owner, keeping that home life open and everyone knows what's going on and everyone feels like they have a sense of where their significant other stands can also not only help you make decisions and take the next steps to do different things, but you just feel also supported that someone understands that what your priorities are with your business, and Lea understands what my priorities are with my personal life, so it's the same.

Erik Reagan: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: That communication is like foundation of it.

Erik Reagan: Yeah, that's true.



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Lea Alcantara: This reminds me of [our episode with Carl Smith](#) actually.

Emily Lewis: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: When Erik mentioned there's an ebb and a flow, so sometimes, yes, you do have to travel a bit more and maybe not see your family as often as you would have liked or ideal, but maybe that's priority there at that point in time, and then other times it's like, "No, we have to say no to certain business things, so that you prioritize your family at that time because there really is no work-life balance."

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: There is just the ebb and flow and discussion over what needs to be prioritized at this point in time for specific agreed-upon reasons, you know?

Erik Reagan: Yeah, I mean, a good example that comes to mind for me is there was a conference I really wanted to go to last April or May and it happened to fall on the last week of school for my daughter, so I would have been missing her ballet recital.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Erik Reagan: I would have been missing kind of like the closing ceremonies kind of deal. There are multiple things at her end of the year that I would have been missing if I got on to this event, and the



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event was definitely a nice to have, not a must have, for our Focus Lab operations, so that was just an example of where I really did want to go, but that wasn't the order of my priorities.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Erik Reagan: It wasn't crucial to Focus Lab's living or success or whatever, and I really wanted to be present for the recital and for other things. I want my daughter to remember me being there because I was there.

Emily Lewis: I feel like if I recall correctly, Lea, [Carl described it like a triangle](#) and every morning he looks at his triangle. That one corner is him personally, one corner is his work, professional life, and the other corner is his family, and each day he looks at what the needs are and he turns the pyramid and whatever is at the top gets the most attention that day, and so it's sort of adjusting to see which is most important on a given day or week or whatever time frame.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, I think that's how he described it. I thought it was really interesting, but I think the emphasis that nothing will be absolutely ideal each time and you do have to take a step back and be like, "Well, what's the point here? Like what is my priority at this point in time for very specific reasons?" Right?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]



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Lea Alcantara: So I think that's very interesting. Now, what I'm curious about is that we've talked about different types of failure and defining failure and like mistakes and all those kinds of things, but do you think failure is actually necessary for success?

Erik Reagan: Oh, absolutely. Yeah, I think it was Winston Churchill who said this, and I'm probably going to butcher this, but it's, "Going from failure to failure without the loss of enthusiasm."

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: When was that?

Lea Alcantara: It's fun.

Erik Reagan: I really like that because I think that we all have a lot more failures in whatever size they come in than we do successes, and we talked about how success is defined for each of us, by us, hopefully, but I do think that regardless of what it takes for you to get to your success, that an ingredient that we both share in our successes is that we failed along the way. If you're not failing at something, then you're clearly not trying things that you haven't tried before, and that's one of the core needs of any type of growth. I want to be growing in some way, whether it's learning a new thing or it's growing the easy type of growth as we talk about in business, it would be like revenue or your company size, but what about just growing as a communicator? That would be great.



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Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Erik Reagan: So if you're not growing, then you're probably not trying new things. If you're not trying new things, you're probably not failing, and I think that failure is a necessity for success.

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Emily Lewis: Really, I know I said this at the beginning, but I almost feel like maybe we need to make failure not such a bad word.

Erik Reagan: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Emily Lewis: Because I think about all the things, I still do not view any of the missteps of my past as failures.

Erik Reagan: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: They just don't feel like failure as how I've grown up to perceive it as a concept. They just feel like those were the things that had to happen for me to figure out the new way because you learn, and so if you can redefine failure, especially if failure for someone who's listening feels like a



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blow to an ego or they take it personally, like there's something wrong with them, that that's just not the way I think failure should be viewed. I think it should be like that's how you learn or you learned.

Erik Reagan: Yeah, we need to detach failure from us.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Erik Reagan: We are not failure. We may fail along the way, we will fail along the way, and we have failed in the past, but I think the biggest reason that failure is a hard word to use or to claim ownership over or whatever. It's because we tie ourselves to it.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Erik Reagan: So one of the things that I really learned from and remind myself of, when necessary, is part of the conference talks that I've been doing is that failure is an event, not a person.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees] An event.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Erik Reagan: And I think that one of the reasons that the word feels so bad is that so many of us think that we are failures, but that's not the case at all. You are not a failure. You just failed. So knowing that failure is an event and not a person, and that's Zig Ziglar quote, by the way. I love Zig



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Ziglar. He buckets wise things into little statements, it's amazing. If you acknowledge that failure is an event and that is not you as a person, then that word starts to lose a bit of the stigma.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: What's interesting is, as you were talking, actually, this reminds me of an article. I don't remember the actual article. If I do find it, it will be in the show notes, but defining failure as a person is actually a modern construct.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Erik Reagan: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: That before the Industrial Revolution, nobody, like you can define something as failing like a machine has had a failure, but no one ever defined a human being as a failure, and that because of this modern construct of a person being a failure, that has affected a lot of people in how they pursue life or career goals, right?

Erik Reagan: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So I just find it interesting that because it's a modern construct, it's possibly not something that's even natural for humans to think about as opposed to a learned perception or concept. So the reason why I'm bringing this up is that if it's something that's learned then you can learn not to think about events in certain things as a part of yourself as well.



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Erik Reagan: Yeah, I'd love to read that, wherever that is.

Emily Lewis: Erik, I'm curious, do you feel the same way about the word "success," like an event can be a success, but a person can't be a success.

Erik Reagan: Yeah, yea. So I think that those two things are directly tied and I hate to be Mr. Quotastic today, but I like quoting people who are smarter than me.

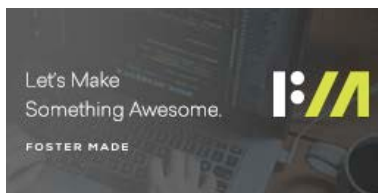
Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Erik Reagan: And so I'm going to go back to Winston Churchill again because he's another guy who says a lot of smart things or I guess I should say said a lot of smart things, but one of the things that he said is that "Success isn't final, and that failure isn't fatal," and I think that in the same way that I cannot call myself a failure, I can also not call myself a success. I may have had a success. I may have been successful in a thing, but I am in myself not a success. You are not a success. This doesn't seem to jive. So yeah, I think you're spot on.

Emily Lewis: Oh, I love that. I think redefining how we perceive it, I think that's really an important part, and almost my head is thinking that failure and success in a way, they're just different sides of a single coin. They're all one thing; you need one to have the other in a way.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Erik Reagan: Yeah, exactly.



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Lea Alcantara: It's that perspective, right?

Emily Lewis: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: So what advice would you give to anyone who has faced or is currently facing failure?

Erik Reagan: So I'm going to assume that we're kind of talking about that tougher failure because the advice could vary based on what's going on.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Erik Reagan: But if it's that really tough stuff, the first thing I guess I would say to somebody who is currently facing that is simply that statement from Zig Ziglar, that failure is an event, it is not a person. If you are currently just in the thick of that failure, don't disappoint in word and say that you are a failure. You may have contributed to getting there. I have contributed in getting to some not fun failures in my life, but that didn't make me a failure, so look for the people around you who can love you, support you and remind you that you are not a failure, but failure is an event and just work out of it. It's going to be hard probably, but it is worthwhile, there is another side.

If you're somebody who has not really faced that failure, maybe you're, I guess, just young enough to have not hit something really bad or fortunate enough to have not hit a deep failure, I would just say still remember that when that kind of thing happens, that it's not you at your core, but it was an event,



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and then knowing that failure can have such a deep impact on somebody, just be aware of those around you who might be going through something like that.

Emily Lewis: Yeah.

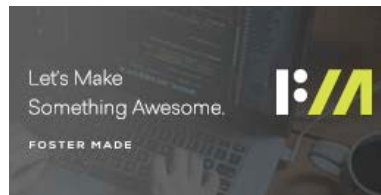
Erik Reagan: They might need you to be their support in that time.

Emily Lewis: Compassion.

Lea Alcantara: Right.

Erik Reagan: And if you've already been through it and you're onto the side, then you're even more prone to that awareness and just be there for one another. That's one of the things that I love so dearly about Peers as a conference is that it's an event that somehow manages to fuse learning and growing as a person with the gaining of support from your peers, your friends who have been there done that, maybe can warn you about something that you don't see coming or can support you through something or teach you after they've been through something, and like that event is the epitome of this type of supporting one another and it's in their right, in the name Peers. So yeah, if you haven't gone through something like that, it can happen. If it hasn't happened yet, then just be ready if it does, but support those around you.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]



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Erik Reagan: Because there are some things that we go through that we just can't do or we can't carry on our own, and sometimes people don't know how to ask for that help, so just be aware of when you should just go and help somebody else.

Emily Lewis: All right. Well, so that was advice for someone who is facing failure. What advice would you give to someone who is doing well, currently on the upswing?

Erik Reagan: I think it's just going to come back to acknowledging that you aren't invincible. You're not a success.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs] Right.

Erik Reagan: You may have been successful, which is awesome, congrats, high five, but just don't assume that's just who you are and be ready to try and repeat your success, be ready to maybe shift a little bit from feeling like that success to learning some hard lessons, but I just like the way that Churchill put it, "Success is not final." It's not over so you never really know what could happen next.

Emily Lewis: Yeah, I completely agree with that. I think the one thing I would love to add to that for our listeners, and this is again, learning from your mistakes from the past, is when you are finding success, try and look at it reflectively.

Lea Alcantara: Yes.



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Emily Lewis: Like look back and try and see what did you do right. Did you ask someone who's smarter than you or something? Did you reach out to someone else? Was there something you did that kind of helped you get find that success that you could replicate or make a part of other things that you may do, whether it's professional or personal?

Erik Reagan: Yeah. And I think another question that you could ask yourself is, and this is something that is really hard to ask yourself, you might need some outside perspective, but were you successful because of you or in spite of you?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: Very good.

Erik Reagan: I mean, if I look at myself, if I look at Focus Lab and our growth over the years, there's absolutely no way that I could say that I did this. There were so many people involved, and what if, what if those people and the circumstances were just right so that the success was in spite of Erik, in spite of Erik's shortcomings or decisions, or you know?

Emily Lewis: Right.

Erik Reagan: I'm just kind of being a little dramatic, but just consider that, if you've been successful once with something, that's cool. Now, let's do it again and see how much of it was you or how much



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of it were things that you did, and then I think, Emily, what you said is really important. A lot of times we look at failure and we kind of try to dissect it and say, “Okay, let’s work backwards. Let’s see what we did wrong so that we don’t do it again.”

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Erik Reagan: But with success, we don’t often enough look backwards and say, “What did we do right so we can do it again?”

Lea Alcantara: I think I’m going to add my two cents and just jumping on you guys about it. Success is about defining goals, so you can think you’re being successful like how Emily and I used to blog with no points.

Erik Reagan: Right.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: And because our short defined goal was blog, get it on deadline, that’s success.

Erik Reagan: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]



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Lea Alcantara: So we could think we're actually being successful then marketing when it's absolutely not because we're pursuing the wrong goals and defining the wrong meaning of success.

Erik Reagan: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So my advice for anyone who thinks they're on an upswing, and I'm glad that's happening, reflect and see what you're actually being successful in. Are you successful at being busy?

Erik Reagan: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: Or are you successful?

Erik Reagan: Right.

Lea Alcantara: Are you successful in actually growing your business or having a better life for you and your family, et cetera and so forth? Right? Because, again, Emily and I were successful in blogging. [Laughs]

Erik Reagan: Right, right. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]



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Lea Alcantara: But that doesn't mean we were actually marketing properly. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: I love this conversation for the start of the year.

Erik Reagan: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: I think it has set everyone's minds to thinking about themselves, their personal lives and their professional lives just a little bit differently so that we can head into the new year feeling that we have some optimism about how we're going to manage successes and failures.

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Lea Alcantara: Absolutely, but before we finish up, we've got our Rapid Fire Ten Questions so our listeners can get to know you a bit better.

Erik Reagan: Okay, pressure is on.

Lea Alcantara: Are you ready, Erik?

Erik Reagan: Yes.

Lea Alcantara: Yes, okay. First question: introvert or extrovert?

Erik Reagan: Introvert.



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Emily Lewis: All right: the power is going to be out for the next week, what food from the fridge do you eat first?

Erik Reagan: Pineapples.

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: What's your favorite website for fun?

Erik Reagan: For fun, I don't associate websites with fun very often.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Erik Reagan: I don't know. I guess for fun would be my hobbies. Right now, I'm learning a lot about woodworking, so woodworking forums.

Emily Lewis: What's the last thing you read?

Erik Reagan: The last thing I read, *Warren Buffet Speaks*.



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Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: What's the best piece of professional advice you've ever received?

Erik Reagan: Failure is an event, not a person.

Emily Lewis: What's the worst piece of professional advice you've received?

Erik Reagan: I don't keep track of it, I don't know.

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: What's your favorite color?

Erik Reagan: Blue.

Emily Lewis: If you could take us to one restaurant in your town, where will we go?

Erik Reagan: Food is not important in my life other than consuming it. I'm not the best person to ask, but probably a new spot called The Atlantic only because we were related to it launching.

Emily Lewis: Cool.



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Lea Alcantara: What's your favorite board game?

Erik Reagan: Hungry Hungry Hippos. I don't know.

Emily Lewis: Oh, awesome. [Laughs] All right, last question, Hulu or Netflix?

Erik Reagan: Netflix.

Lea Alcantara: Awesome. So that's all the time we have for today. Thanks for coming back on the show, Erik.

Erik Reagan: Awesome. It's great to be back and I appreciate the opportunity. It's good chatting with you.

Emily Lewis: In case our listeners want to follow up with you, where can they find you online?

Erik Reagan: Yeah, online, it's Twitter, Facebook, all the social stuff, the username is just "[erikreagan](#)," and I have a [little newsletter](#) that I write occasionally. I don't have a site that it goes on right now, but you can just find that under my Twitter bio, but yes, just "erikreagan" at all the different socials.

Emily Lewis: Great. Thanks again for joining us today. This was a great conversation.

Erik Reagan: Awesome. Thanks for having me.



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[Music starts]

Lea Alcantara: CTRL+CLICK is produced by [Bright Umbrella](#), a web services agency obsessed with happy clients. Today's podcast would not be possible without the support of this episode's sponsors! Thank you, [Foster Made](#) and the [Peers Conference](#)!

Emily Lewis: We'd also like to thank our partners: [Arcustech](#) and [Devot.ee](#).

Lea Alcantara: And thanks to our listeners for tuning in! If you want to know more about CTRL+CLICK, make sure you follow us on Twitter [@ctrlclickcast](#) or visit our website, [ctrlclickcast.com](#). And if you liked this episode, please give us a review on [iTunes](#), [Stitcher](#) or both! And if you really liked this episode, consider donating to the show. Links are in our show notes and on our site.

Emily Lewis: Don't forget to tune in to our next episode when Lea and I are going to kick off a CTRL+CLICK series this year. We're going to do a few episodes aimed at demystifying what we do for clients starting next month with a client-friendly chat about web design. Be sure to check out [ctrlclickcast.com/schedule](#) for more upcoming topics.

Lea Alcantara: This is Lea Alcantara ...

Emily Lewis: And Emily Lewis ...

Lea Alcantara: Signing off for CTRL+CLICK CAST. See you next time!

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Emily Lewis: Cheers!

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