

SOS#21: From Attorney to Seeker: Journey Beyond the Veil with Ricky Patel

Ricky Patel: 0:00

you don't have to go 100. Go 80, because that 80 will last a lot longer and that 20% put it towards things that allow your brain to rest, your body to receive what it needs, to nutrition, meditation, mindfulness. If you invest that 20%, that 80% will not burn out, whereas when I went 100%, eventually it was too much and then my body, my mind were like, hey, we need a break.

Marcus Arredondo: 0:26

I'm excited to share today's episode featuring my friend, Ricky Patel, a fearless attorney, entrepreneur and strategist who built his career by leveraging obstacles into opportunities.

Marcus Arredondo: 0:35

From a young lawyer drowning in student debt to leading a class action lawsuit in one of the biggest payouts in US history. Ricky's journey demonstrates time and again the value of persistence, adaptability and definitive action. But his most notable transformation didn't happen in the courtroom. It happened during an ayahuasca experience that forced him to confront his past, reconnect with his daughters and strip away the noise clouding his judgment. The conversation was so engaging we decided to break it into two parts, which we've included here as one episode.

Marcus Arredondo: 1:02

In part one of our conversation, ricky shares how he went from scraping by to sitting in a private meeting with President Obama, how a political fundraiser he felt unqualified for in the first place skyrocketed his career, and how the legal battle against British Petroleum in 2010 took him from five clients to over 3,500.

Marcus Arredondo: 1:19

He also reveals the unexpected clarity he found through ayahuasca, how it reshaped his discipline, relationships and daily approach to living. In part two, he talks about how a simple joke on social media about PPP loans turned into millions in white-collar legal work. How he used the power of misinformation to pass never-seen-before legislation providing insurance protections for the people and businesses of Puerto Rico, and why he took on NFL star Dalvin Cook's high-profile case, securing a not-guilty verdict with zero prior criminal defense experience. He also addresses the cultural identity crisis he faced when going through a divorce, how he grieves failures and what success means to him. Perhaps most importantly, ricky reveals the true passion that drives him, his foundation called it's For the Kids, and the powerful moments that made him realize that giving back is his greatest legacy. Having seen firsthand how Ricky blends strategy, influence and heart, it's clear his impact reaches far beyond the courtroom. Let's start the show. Ricky Patel, thank you so much for being back on. I'm excited to have you back, welcome.

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Ricky Patel: 2:19

Thank you for having me, Marcus.

Marcus Arredondo: 2:20

So you have an illustrious career that spans. It starts with law. I mean obviously, most notably, we'll put you on the map. Was the BP oil spill right, and I want to get into that, but you've navigated a lot of terrain since that time. That was 2014, something around there, or was that?

Ricky Patel: 2:39

earlier what the BP oil spill. Yeah, it was 2010. 2010.

Marcus Arredondo: 2:43

And you've got your hand in a lot of businesses. I want to talk about partnerships, I want to talk about those businesses. What got you going on that? But I'm really interested in sort of what makes the engine tick, and you and I have had some separate conversations about this. That we've alluded to and I only know sort of the tip of the iceberg. So I want to jump right into ayahuasca. I know that you've had an experience through that and sort of the convergence between that spirituality. But I sort of want to open the mic and see where you go with this, because I'm extraordinarily interested. There's a lot of science behind this that I'm finding increasingly compelling. There's a lot of support from everybody, from Tim Ferriss to Michael Pollan. There's documentaries about this that are coming out more and more. I know it's helping a lot of military vets. So I'll stop talking, but I want to dive in there.

Ricky Patel: 3:37

Marcus, speaking of dive in there, the equivalent of what we just did starting this podcast, is me telling you that I may want to become a Navy SEAL someday and you throw me in the middle of the ocean. So this will be fun. Let's dive right into ayahuasca. So number one I think the first part of any of these journeys or experiences, are the why. Right, like, why did I, ricky Patel, go and experience ayahuasca? Did I, ricky Patel, go and experience IOPs? So it's very, very important to first understand my background. As far as who is Ricky Patel, can I relate to him, or is this a person that's just open to all this stuff?

Ricky Patel: 4:15

Okay, so I have probably smoked weed five or six times my whole life. This was in college, a big mistake. Every time I did that, I would fall asleep and I would end up missing my 21st birthday party and so forth. Okay, so this was obviously before you know all the strains and everything else. Back then it was one of your roommates had something, they rolled it up something, and so I want to put that up in number one. Okay, besides the smoking up, marijuana and, like I said, after that, I don't know if I ever smoked marijuana again. After that, I had never experienced anything. So no mushrooms, no other types of drugs, no hallucinogenics, nothing Zero For alcohol. After my first daughter was born in 2013,. I would probably have a cocktail or a couple of glasses of wine a week. Why that's important? Because I want people to hear from a person that's not just like hey man, I do everything let me just go out and try.

Ricky Patel: 5:20

This is like super, super skeptical about everything. I don't like that feeling of losing control, you know, even like back, you know. So it's up to 12 years ago, 12 plus years ago. If I had some drinks with some friends and I'm getting home and I'm just like, oh man, I'm really feeling buzzed or drunk, I would hate that deal. Yeah, and I was the one at the safe door water my face or trying to get my face. So, with that being said, I think that gives you the base layer of, uh, the type of person I am that went into this. Okay, so whoever's watching isn't thinking this is a guy that's been doing acid since he was eight years old or something. Um, I, one of my best friends, was struggling quite a bit and he decided to go to a place called Rhythmia. Okay, and we're going to go into Rhythmia also. He decides to go to Rhythmia as a place to try and get help.

Ricky Patel: 6:10

So when you go to Rhythmia for ayahuasca, people come there from all different ranges. And people come there for alcohol addiction, drug addiction, sex addiction, trauma, you know, loss of life, like people who've lost their children, people who've lost their parents, something major or significant that's happened all the way to people just saying I want to go down the rabbit hole. Spirituality, I really want to see where this goes. The wall is stopping me from getting any further. Where can I go? I didn't feel like I was at any of those phases Until I went to arrhythmia. I really felt that my life was as close to a perfect life as I would have hoped it would have been. So you could have had a notepad and wrote down a checklist of all these things. What is it that Ricky would have wanted? And I had all those. I had always been very spiritual. My family's been religious, but just the spirituality part of it is just believing in you know, there's something higher than me believing in doing the right thing and believing in leaving something more than what I came with behind. Right, make this place a little bit better. So I wasn't per se going there saying, oh my gosh, I've, I've done all this. You know, yoga for 30 years in India. Now I need to get out. It wasn't like that. Everything was fine. 30 years in India, now I need to get out. It wasn't like that. Everything was fine, except for one thing. So this was one of my best friends who went there. He's the biggest skeptic you would ever imagine. He's a hedge fund manager. He's extremely smart. He's the least spiritual person I've ever met and he went there to placate people around him and so forth and came back as a changed person.

Ricky Patel: 7:46

One of my rules is, with my friends, before I get off the phone, before I leave the room or whatever else, I remind people that I care about, that, I love them. That's always been like a very big thing for me and this friend of mine. I've been telling him I love him for 12, 13 years. Every time I leave he's like okay, okay, bye, all right, okay bye. And I received a call from him after he got back from Rhythmia and he's like brother, can you come to Miami? And I had this rule If you're in a close circle and you know how busy I am, if you say to me, will you be at a place?

Ricky Patel: 8:26

That means that's serious, because you wouldn't do that arbitrary. Yeah, flew over there. Uh, walk into his place. He gives me the biggest hug and it's just like I love you so much and I was like where is my guy at? What is this about? Right?

Ricky Patel: 8:34

So we sit down and he tells me about this journey that he's had and all the stuff over there. And then he looks at me and says when I was in there, I got a message that you need to go. And in my mind I'm like listen, I'm glad that everything worked out for you. I have no idea what this WASCA, whatever it is that you're talking about. If it worked for you, great. But I don't even like to take Tylenol Advil For me. If I need to sleep off, I'll sleep off. So whatever you're talking about, that's completely out of the room. And he's like look, you trust me. He's like go out there in two weeks. And he's like go by yourself, all right, I do trust you. Remember, if I go there, I come back. And this is something that is completely off the radar for what I would expect. Trust is out the window, sure Right.

Ricky Patel: 9:24

So I don't research ayahuasca. I don't research at all because my concern was that I'm going to start researching and there's always going to be pros and cons and if I go in there with the cons, I may switch up the experience with fear, and I don't ever like to guide with fear. I always like to jump into things, knowing what the downside is, but still understanding there's different experiences for different things, right? So I go to this place and we can dive into this as deep as you want. However, the first night of drinking ayahuasca so it's a cup, okay, it's like a shot glass the shamans at Rhythmia are the ones who, 5,000 years ago, their ancestors created ayahuasca. So they come from Colombia, over there, and they're called taipas, and these are all the documentaries you watch. These are guys that they pour my drink. They pour Tyson, joe, robo All these guys are there with us, right? So they actually pour their drinks out, so they pour it into a cup, they bless it and you drink it.

Ricky Patel: 10:22

And let me tell you something If I had to describe the taste of it, and people who have done ayahuasca will be like yeah, mate, it's not that bad I would describe it as if someone had mud and tobacco spit and licked in the stomach for like a month. It's horrific. It's horrific. And it's beautiful, in that same stance, that you know what you're about to drink and you give it the respect that it deserves, right? Um, I drank it. I went. There's mattresses everywhere, okay, really comfortable mattress in what's called maloka. It's like a, a big circle room with windows and all the windows open so that the wind can go in and out.

Ricky Patel: 10:56

Okay, uh, I drink it, I I close my eyes and, uh, five, six minutes later I open them and it looks like this Pac-Man things going on. And I remember this immediate feeling of thinking oh shit, I broke my brain. I've broken my brain, like what is happening? Full freak out mode, and I'm just like laying there and I'm like, okay, if I close my eyes, and I close my eyes and I could see my hands through my eyelids and I'm like, no, this is not possible. So I'm like doing this and like trying to like mess around my fingers and I'm seeing through my eyelids, and so I put a pillow over my face and I could still see my fingers and I can. At this point I was like, listen, you've got to go deep now. You've got to start going to breath, work and yoga and all this stuff that I have studied deeply, and I was like we've got to calm the step.

Ricky Patel: 11:46

What was happening was it wasn't per se hallucination, it was the opening up of these um sensory levels that that are created for a reason. Okay, let me explain something, marcus. Um, I'm not sure if you believe reincarnation or whatnot. I'm just going to give you an example, as if you do. If you were reincarnated, let's say, 500 times, and one of those experiences, you were a slave child who was tortured and so forth. When you were brought back in here. If you did not have this barrier today, so that these memories and

stuff they're there but they're not coming through, it would prevent you from living every day, because every moment you woke up you would experience the trauma and suffering of everything from the past, right? So when ayahuasca comes in, it does this, okay, and so it's not that you're per se traveling and stuff, it's just all of these things, everything's embedded. So, you know, I oftentimes I can have a discussion with people who are spiritual or people who are scientific.

Ricky Patel: 12:43

Right, the scientific people who I speak to, who are not as spiritual, I explain, uh, the theory that we cannot destroy energy, right, just be converted. And so, if you think about this, here's one of the big things, especially for women. So, uh, when, when a woman is born let's say, the first woman ever um, she is born and created with all the cells inside her and the eggs that she has, men we're creating. So it's, it's different, but they're created with the eggs cells inside her and the eggs that she has. Men, we're creating seeds, so it's different, but they're created with the eggs that they have from birth.

Ricky Patel: 13:09

So imagine trauma, pain, suffering, everything that they're experiencing, that embeds inside the tissues and cells. It's not just dissipating, so when they have a child, they pass along that energy to the next person who has the same eggs. So you can imagine this trauma. This generation of trauma keeps passing down, okay, and those pieces keep going like this. So it may be stuff that has nothing to do with you that causes you to one day everything's going fine and you're just having a bad day and you cannot figure out why you're there, right.

Ricky Patel: 13:36

So, ayahuasca, what it does is it opens up all of this stuff, and I remember when all all the pac-man stuff kind of ended because that was like a the opening for it. This only happened a few times. It doesn't happen every time. It gives you free will. Here's what I mean by free will is you have the opportunity to experience some very, very, very dark stuff, okay, and if it gets too much, stand up and go for a walk, and so it's the craziest thing. It's not like mushrooms and all these other things where, if you're in a bad trip, you continue to go through it. You can go outside and go for a walk and stare at stars and stuff, take a deep breath, process what you've seen, come back, you lay down and you're back in Okay. So it is one of those things where I felt comfort in that.

Ricky Patel: 14:27

But at the same time, we are taught, when we are experiencing the dark stuff, try not to okay. This is unlike a nightmare or a bad hallucination or anything like that, the way, how it works. For me it was like a screen, like a movie theater screen, okay, and for everyone else it was different stuff. And in there I would start seeing um, these things that are happening, okay, um, an example I'll give you is it went back to when I was four years old and I was playing outdoors in like schoolyard and we're playing with a tennis ball and this, the kid that had a tennis ball. I grabbed the ball from the center and I picked his hand, okay, and then the kid just disappeared. I just continued playing with the tennis ball. It was his tennis ball, but instead of it showing just that fragment, it actually followed the kid and it showed this kid and all the stuff, and so it allows you to see things that you may have forgotten and whatnot.

Ricky Patel: 15:17

Okay, what is it that you did intentionally, unintentionally, and so forth to other people? Because we're always concentrating on what other people have done to us, right, and it allows me to go and almost rectify things. So inside of your system, you're seeing these things where you're like, oh man, damn, that was a really piece of shit. I can't believe I did that. It gives you a chance to go back and kind of make these corrections so it's no longer traumatic. Do you see what I'm saying? These decisions like me.

Marcus Arredondo: 15:41

Yeah, I think you did a really beautiful job of describing the idea of expanding consciousness, because that's a little bit of an abstract term that you put into sort of more concrete terms. That I think is a lot more relatable, and I think we could talk about that specific experience or example for a long time. But I'm really interested in exploring for me personally. I have come to realize I've been meditating for the last 10 years, but I've sort of doubled down over the last year. I'm a big TM practitioner. I've seen a lot of benefits from that. Not to suggest this is the same thing, but the impetus might be a parallel, which is that I want to break away from the default networks that are inscribed in us that we're unaware. That is there.

Marcus Arredondo: 16:26

I think Sam Harris talks a lot about waking up. Right, it's the idea of disentangling yourself, decoupling what has been ingrained in you and actually having that free will that you allude to of do I want to participate in this aspect, and so I think that is extraordinarily profound to participate in this aspect, and so I think that is extraordinarily profound. What I would like to ask you to focus on is how has that changed your perception in your approach with your daughters, your approach with your business practice, with how you wake up in the morning, where and how is that coming to fruition within your day-to-day life?

Ricky Patel: 17:05

Yeah, what a beautiful question. So number one, let me explain. I've done ayahuasca 30 times, okay, so I could probably write-

Marcus Arredondo: 17:11

So what sort of cadence is this sort of like a check-in, a cleanse, is it-?

Ricky Patel: 17:17

It's different. So here's the thing. The best way to put it is you're a real estate guy. So imagine you went and you purchased a building that's 89 years old. Okay, all the pipes are busted, the paint's falling off, the furniture's destroyed, everything else. Okay, that's what ayahuasca is. The first week you get there, you got going and do major fixing Okay. But the second time you come in, you're like, maybe I'll add a TV here. The next time you add so what do I mean by add?

Ricky Patel: 17:44

You're now able to go internally into your system. So for me, I've been able to work on sleep patterns, heart patterns, all these things. So I have anyone that measures like sleep rates and so forth. I, like my HRV, used to be in the twenties. It's now in 160. Okay. So ACI levels eight. Okay, I can speed up and slow down my heart rate at any point. I can focus on breathing my breath. Work is through the moon and I'm big on all these devices. I use sleep aids and all this stuff, right?

Ricky Patel: 18:14

So what I mean by that is, every time that you go to ayahuasca, you've removed all the junk, you're going back there and you're learning, you're gaining wisdom, you're able to see what is inside of me what's happened. So, for example, I got to the point where I, when I will go to rhythm and say I don't know what else to do One person saying don't eat that carbs you don't say eat it. You almost say don't eat meat, be a vegan. There's so much stuff out there I don't know who to trust. And you know what happens you drink the cup and all of a sudden internally says this is what you need, exactly what you need, and this is how you follow it. I don't. I don't need to rely on anything else.

Ricky Patel: 18:48

And I follow the patterns and I do testing. So I do full blood testing, um, uh, three times a year. I can Dexa scan once a year. So all this stuff and incrementally, every time I've gone to Iowa, you will see these paths of like cholesterol is gone, this is gone, that's like just absolutely gone.

Marcus Arredondo: 19:04

Okay, as soon as you come back, or just incrementally over the course of several times.

Ricky Patel: 19:10

Extremely fast, extremely fast, extremely fast. So, workouts, improving, focus, meditation, cleansing Like I can handle a lot more work. I've got rid of all the junk, all the noise, right. So imagine your computer system that you have. Imagine every day. You're just adding, adding, adding all this noise in there, and what that is for us is what are people saying, what are people thinking? What do I have to do? What is upsetting All that noise? It just stays there and you go in and vacuuming it out and you literally get to take all the beautiful things that you've experienced in life, all the knowledge, wisdom, everything else, and go forward. So how has this helped out with my children? How has this helped out with my now X, y? How's this helped out with all of those things?

Ricky Patel: 19:51

Okay, so my children my youngest daughter had a very, very traumatic birth, very traumatic. I thought I was going to lose her and my ex wife in one go. Okay, and until she was five years old, there just was a disconnect between the two of us. Okay, and for me, like my two daughters in my life, like I'm always around them, but my youngest one was a little bit like shy, like little, whatever. You know, she was always mama's girl, and what everyone will say is it's fine, eventually they come around and kids are mama's girls. That's what they will say.

Ricky Patel: 20:25

And then I had a vision that probably my 12th ayahuasca tree uh, experience, um, where I was in my condo in Puerto Rico and this actually happened, okay, and I'm playing with her and I remember her looking at me and saying hey, papa, would you ever let anything happen to me? And when that happened it was like immediately, like no, what are you talking about? Never let anything happen. And and then we just continued playing, but it went to the end, it paused, it went into her vision looking at me, and she looked at me and said you're a liar. Like screamed inside of her and so you could imagine the shock

waves off this, right. So at that point I'm like I don't. I don't know why she would ever say that Like I have such a good father. And bang, I go into the delivery room and I'm able to see inside the womb the trauma that's happening, with oxygen started cutting off, okay, and how she felt that no one was there to help her. So what did that do? It allowed for me to realize this thing had to happen, and it also allows you to communicate. You've been meditating for a long time, so there's all these theories about time as something that we've created, but it's all happening at the same time so you can actually go back and have these things.

Ricky Patel: 21:33

I got back a week later and the relationship I have with my daughter is completely different, not from anything that I'm doing, but more so for her now Now she's, but more so for her now now she's papa. This papa, I did this. I did it. Like it's changed, but there's. There's no way I could figure out the trauma that she experienced in there, right with my ex-wife. This is extremely important.

Ricky Patel: 21:52

We start dating when we're teens, and so teens, 20s, 30s, up to 40 and I was in a relationship because I thought if I left the relationship, it would have been a fail, and I've always tried to have this checklist Sure, I've done this, I've done this, I've done this. All these things Anyone that looks at me knows oh, success, success. And to have a divorce, it would eradicate everything in my mind, right, yeah, it would make everything seem like, oh, big failure. And so I stayed in it. And it was just one of those things where I was like, look we'll, every year we'll do this like celebration of an anniversary and everyone thanks us, and then we continue living these like all quasi parallel lives as two independent people. Right, and what I learned in ayahuasca was it walked me through.

Ricky Patel: 22:39

The darkest part of this is what it looks like on forward. This is what people say, this is how we feel, like it's you seeing it and seeing how scary this is. And then it goes to this place of this and it says, okay, this is where you guys get to. And I remember coming home and having the most difficult conversation and I'm big on having difficult conversations. I remember having this difficult conversation with my ex, who was my wife, and saying, look, this is what's happening, I don't know if this can work out. And so we decided let's try and figure things out, see how it works. And it got to the point where we realized let's go ahead and separate All very amicable, extremely amicable. But the biggest concern we had was how do we tell the kids? That was the big spear.

Ricky Patel: 23:22

Sure, as a parent is, I cannot leave my corner because of my kids, my kids, my kids, right, and the kids never saw us fighting and arguing. It's just the relationship just didn't. We were two people, that we would have ended up living our life for everyone else just to say that we were married, but we would have never experienced like true love. Does that make sense? Sure, so I went back to Ayahuasca like four months later and I was like, listen, I need, I need some advice on this. And you know how I got the advice.

Ricky Patel: 23:46

I sat down in Ayahuasca with the souls of my children and we spoke and I was like what can I say and do? So you understand? And they gave me the exact verbiage to use where to go, where to sit with them,

how to? They told me this. Listen to this. They said you and mommy sit downstairs in the movie theater. Okay, bring us down. The youngest one will sit with mommy, the oldest one will sit with you. And you're going to say mommy and daddy were best friends. We fell in love, we got engaged, we got married and we had one beautiful girl. Then we had a second beautiful girl, and what we missed is going back to being friends. And so what we want to do is we want to try going back to being friends again. Those are the words I would pick by them. This wasn't like my genius idea and we said it and they had a few questions.

Ricky Patel: 24:32

Smooth transition and I went from being in a relationship that was not happening to getting back one of my best friends. And I have this incredible relationship with my ex, who's just. She is one of the greatest people in the world, but if it weren't for ayahuasca, I would still be stuck. Sure, what does everyone think? What does everyone? And you take it all in and you've lost this life. We only have one chance at this. We only have that one chance at this life, right?

Marcus Arredondo: 24:56

So yeah, that's a through line here which is expanding that consciousness where you're able to meet, in this case, your daughters, where they are in a lot more sincere a place than if you're trying to put a square peg into a round hole right, absolutely.

Marcus Arredondo: 25:14

Putting your message in the way you want to say it to the other person. How has this impacted your business life? How do you see that playing out? You and I have been a partner on a deal, a brick and mortar investment, and you know we've gone through ups and downs and I know you've got I mean I hesitate to even list them all, but you've got hotels, you've got barbershops, you've got restaurants, you've got a surf inn. You have a lot of activity. I'm just curious how you take this and integrate this into your decision-making processes to mitigate against risk, to accelerate productivity, create synergies. How do you incorporate this, or does it even play into?

Ricky Patel: 26:02

it. It does majorly, majorly. So one of the things that it has also done is it's allowed me to walk away from businesses that I was in. I was doing all the work. I was doing it because I felt that I needed to A lot of the stuff that I kept putting on my back. Once again, I was like, okay, if I don't do this, then my partner is going to feel a certain way and I just started realizing that some of the partnerships were not mutually beneficial. So it allowed me to take a step back from that. And then it created this thing where it allowed for me, anytime that business was proposed to me, for me to have a lot more patience and not think, oh my God, if I don't get into this, I'm going to lose all this opportunity, and by having that, I have missed out on deals that went south and I've been involved in deals that I enjoy and are doing well no-transcript.

Ricky Patel: 27:01

That one deal I missed. That did so well. I can't do that again and I cannot sell this thing too early, because that would have been worth. It changed that whole aspect, so it gives a lot of clarity when you're going in there. One of my biggest fears of going to ayahuasca was what if I come back and I'm this really momed out, relaxed person and I've lost my edge.

Ricky Patel: 27:17

Remember, I'm still a trial lawyer. As a litigator, one of the big things is you have to be sharp, you know. I mean some of the cases that I handle, I can't go in there and just be like, hey brother, every like you, you have to go in there with the ax. The biggest thing about it is it's made me sharper on this end, but it's also made me much softer in the place. I need to be Right. So the people who need that side are getting a lot more warmth and comfort, and then the people who need to shop. So it's nicely compartmentalized, like all of these things, and it's because of noise gun I'm not living my life every day now based on, like the strings, the strings are gone.

Marcus Arredondo: 27:56

Yeah, this is resonating so much with me, man, because on a couple of different fronts, ron, I'll just say in construction, I'll give credit to my wife for teaching me this but there's a project management triangle where there are three factors that typically impact decisions, and you can typically have two out of the three, and that is budget, time and quality. And in some form or another, it can be interpreted in other, different ways, but I also find that that applies to most of my stresses in life. But I also find that that applies to most of my stresses in life, and the most specific and repetitive source of stress is the lack of time. It's that pressure, and a lot of that pressure to the second point is actually coming from the noise right, and you're sort of tapping in. You're alluding to this idea and it sounds so. You know, I really enjoy the way you're describing this because it's so practical, it's very concrete in its application. So we're not talking about beating drums in the forest right and taking some crazy trip. We're actually talking about functional components to living a more extraordinary life, and the one thing that I keep going back to, that you reiterate over and over is sort of coming back to yourself, right, and I'm going to go off on a tangent for a second here.

Marcus Arredondo: 29:13

But there's an idea in meditation, right, where, loosely termed, it's watching the watcher, which is, if you're sitting in silence, you'll observe a thought, come forward, but by virtue of identifying that there is a thought, there is also an observer observing that thought. But if you observe that there's an observer observing the thought, you can continue going back so that there's an observer observing the observer, add on, add on infinitum, until it goes to the heart of, technically, who we are. And I sort of look at this again. Thank you for bearing with me. I'm indulging for a little bit.

Marcus Arredondo: 29:48

But you end up getting to a point where in some ways we're just vessels right that are tapped into, and I'll use another example. A fungus forest will start to defend against a virus that's approaching on one side by having the other side prep. They're communicating. There is a consciousness through the soil. Trees have similar behaviors. Through that nature there is something that can be accessed. But I have found the way to that path the removal of outside noise. Question for you is how have you identified, like, what has surprised you about who you are and I want to transition that into your litigation practice. I want to hear a little bit more about that, but I want to hear more about Ricky and who he is now from where he was.

Ricky Patel: 30:40

Yeah, ricky today is different than Ricky four plus years ago. When I first started, I was good. The past uh version of me was so incredibly focused on making sure that I walk this fine line. So everyone that's looking realizes, oh, he's doing so good he's, he's not making mistakes, he's not like the amount of pressure of living a life trying to make sure that no one can say anything. It's impossible, not even a problem. It's impossible to live a life like that. You're always going to find squirting and so forth. Where I'm at now is I'm a happy version, like a very happy version. Before, when I used to laugh and around people and smile so forth. It was me forcing it. Now I've gone back to the, the laughing where your stomach is hurting and you have to leave the room because you're like I have to breathe, right. All that has come about because of one main secret and that is the. It's the trilogy, and I'll explain what the trilogy is. Okay.

Ricky Patel: 31:38

Whenever you lose harmony, that means you go through day and people get depressed, anxiety, stress, all these types of things happening. There's really one root to it is the trilogy I explained. So that's the mind, body and soul. Okay, those three things. Um, we're always, uh, excluding one or two of these things, just like the triumph we explained, okay. So let me give you an example. A person that's smoking a cigarette okay, all right, they're helping their mind, okay. But the body is screaming out hey, you're killing me and I do all these things for you. Okay, all right. Then there's the, the vegan, who is eating, you know, this strict meal every day, so that we keep the body completely happy, and the mind is saying I'm missing out on some of these experiences. Sometimes I want to have some cake.

Marcus Arredondo: 32:20

Sometimes I want to have this.

Ricky Patel: 32:22

I'm missing on that, right. And then both of those are there, and then the soul. The soul is saying you're so busy in the weeds office that we have we've prevents ourselves from stopping and looking at the beautiful nature of the world, right? So I'll give you an example and I want you to answer this. If right now, you and I, Elon Musk, takes us to Mars that he's recreated, okay, and we go up there and there are these like blue trees and like these animals floating around and like all this stuff happening, you and I could be in awe, like, oh my gosh, did you see that? Did you check this out? Okay, the fact of the matter is, when you actually go out and you take a moment to walk in the woods okay, and I purchased this beautiful land where I used the preservation of bees and so forth, and I walked that land what I do is I'll go to any plant and I'll look at just the leaf and I think to myself this is insane, like, and the soul is getting everything it needs out of it because we're slowing down, stopping for a second, okay, and enjoying all the stuff that's been created for us.

Ricky Patel: 33:21

One of the beautiful ways to satisfy all three of them is yoga. Okay, yoga, your body's getting what it needs, the mind's like all right, I'm relaxed, and I feel rejuvenated. And the soul saying would slow down just a bit. Sure, the fast paced light of running around I'm going to make more money. Okay, that's not satisfying. Uh, the body is not satisfying soul, the mind beat. So the key to it is finding out for you, how do I create a relationship between these three? And the way how I do it is, it's a negotiation. So I say, my mind says to the body listen, I have a sweet tooth, I'm going to have a little bit of cheesecake. I know you don't love it, but tomorrow morning I'm doing a cold plunge, I'm doing infrared sauna, I'm working out. Are we good? Yes, we're good. And then after that nighttime, hey, we'll do some yoga and we'll go for a walk,

just a nice walk. You'd be surprised. A nice walk can satisfy all three. But the time that those three are not talking to each other, the harmony is thrown off. And when that harmony is thrown off, you're press, anxiety, stress, because one of the things are fade. Does that make sense? So I'm explaining this and most people are watching this again and say, ah, that's difficult.

Ricky Patel: 34:30

Ayahuasca threw me in there and said it connected it all. So now I can't drink alcohol, though After my first Ayahuasca experience I tried to have a sip of champagne and my stomach went like this. So I waited. I was like, ah, maybe something else. A month later I had an old fashion. I took a sip and my stomach, and the reason for it was now that the mind and the body told me and so the body is saying back to the mind like, hey, get this out of them, right.

Ricky Patel: 34:54

And the sad thing of it is I don't think there's anything wrong with drinking. I think that if you have a cup of glass of wine, you have a beautiful dinner, you go out. Yeah, it's fun, it's exciting, it's all in moderation. But I can't even do that anymore. I used to, uh, back in the days, enjoy the scotch, the cigars with the friends. I had one smoke, one uh puff of a cigar, uh, when we had this, this incredible event for our friends, and I felt like I was suffocating. So what has happened now is this trilogy is connected up, where now you're able to actually talk to each other instead of one thing being silent and you're not getting it and saying hey, we really don't love that as much. Okay, what can I do to make it so? I just want you to think about that too. For ayahuasca.

Marcus Arredondo: 35:33

Well, that's not the first time I've heard a story like that, not just with alcohol, but with other addictions, right, I mean, I've heard about people that just come back from having an ayahuasca trip and OCD just vanishing, where you know that need to behave in a certain way just doesn't make sense. They would have to decide to behave that way rather than it being implanted in them. I'm going to detour, you know this is, I think, a through line that'll probably come out elsewhere. But I would be remiss without at least bringing up the BP oil spill, because I wasn't an acquaintance of you at that point.

Marcus Arredondo: 36:08

I certainly was aware of the events taking place. I did not know except from talking to you. Which I'd like for you to talk about is the injunction. But the first thing I want to ask is you were 27 years old and you have to be thinking, dude. I mean, you're 27,. Like you got 3,500 companies and people that are all sort of relying on you. Now I would suggest there was probably a strong case, you know, for anybody who arrived. But that's a strong responsibility, a huge amount of accountability to lead that process. First question and then I'll let you run with it but was there ever a what the fuck moment where you just said am I in over my skis and how did you navigate that?

Ricky Patel: 36:53

Yeah, yeah. So that feeling occurred to me from the beginning to the end, every day. There was never a time during that case that I ever felt like, okay, I've got this. How long was it during that case that I ever felt like, okay, I've got this? How long was it? It was okay, six years, six years. But here's the important part of this okay, a lot of stars aligned, Sure, okay, I know I'm a hard worker, I believe I'm intelligent, but a

lot of stars aligned. What I mean by that is we had the right administration at that time. Okay, so the administration was environmentally friendly. So what ended up happening was Exxon Valdez. That happened 20 years ago.

Ricky Patel: 37:32

People did get paid off 20, 25 years and got pennies on the dollar. So the president decided we're going to go ahead and put \$20 billion in escrow Okay, so that we can make payments and in exchange, that will allow BP to keep their leases alive. That was the biggest mistake BP has ever made since inception, because there was a 1963 rule that stated that if there was an oil spill, they were responsible for \$75 million. Up to. Okay, they spent over \$60 billion. Okay, massive, massive difference there.

Ricky Patel: 38:07

So how did that help us out? Because I didn't have money. I had no money, zero. I graduated from law school \$150,000 of student loan debt.

Ricky Patel: 38:17

The economy had collapsed. We started the law firm not because we wanted to. We opened it up because there was nothing else to do. We could not find a job. We couldn't wave the white flag. So myself and my best friend, we put \$500 in each, which even putting that in was difficult, and we were working out of his mom's house taking on every case possible, right, and we could eventually get to how we even got that case.

Ricky Patel: 38:39

But I will tell you this when that case came in, the reason that we were able to handle it was if we had to litigate against the fifth largest company in the world at that time. We've got buried. We've got buried. The law firm they had Kirkland Ellis. They pretty much had them on a retainer for \$250 million a year. They would have buried us. Why were we successful? Because we were able to get in the beginning, before it turns to a class action, where it was a portal where we would create the methodology of the damages and we were getting paid. So bp paid us to build a ferns, go back and fight them for the class action. That's how we were strong because by the time, okay, so let's go through this.

Ricky Patel: 39:17

Let's say you're my client, you're one of the hotel donors. Okay, uh, this is uh a month after the oil spill. You say my business is struggling, no one's coming out here, the oils come to the shore, and so I put a model together. I would measure the past five years worth of your calculations on AERs, your revenues and so forth, and compare it to the aberration of what happened after the spill. And then I started looking at patterns of where people were trapped. Okay, so we use what's called a star report, which shows us the patterns of where people are trapped and all of a sudden, instead of this inverse of people going to the Gulf Coast, florida, texas and all these other areas, they started going to areas like Myrtle Beach, south Carolina, other areas. So we created this methodology off that, by submitting that into that \$20 billion fund, they were able to give us the delta. So they said hey, by the way, marcus has lost \$350.

Marcus Arredondo: 40:08

Here's 250 000 provides with additional information okay, I see every time.

Ricky Patel: 40:10

Yes, so that was the payments that were coming in the beginning, before the case was filed exactly, yeah, and what we did was we at my car was 26, I was 27.

Ricky Patel: 40:20

Our biggest fear was that we heard about all these lawyers that built these monstrous firms and they lost it because they went outside buying the cars, the planes and this and that and we started living this life and we lost it.

Ricky Patel: 40:31

So we were so afraid of this Marcus you're probably going to laugh at this, but we rented our places and I remember we we lease an Audi A4 base model and we both shared it, and so if he was going on a date and I had to take my wife to get groceries, we have to figure out what to do. And this was at a time where there was seven figures coming in weekly and we were still so afraid of this and that was the key to our success was because we took the money that came in from that far, and now we had enough money turned to a case that, when the big firms started going against us, we had enough capital to hire the best people, open up five offices and push back with all of our debt. So we became the biggest out there in hospitality, which required them to, as they say, cut the snake's head off in order to stop the suffering right. So they just had to deal with us in order to deal with this massive pocket.

Marcus Arredondo: 41:22

I want to take a pause right there. So you went from being an attorney to actually being a business owner. So you're having to hire people, you're having to orchestrate them, you're having to sign leases. You're having to travel to all of these offices. You're having to usher a strategy on utilizing those manpower. You're having to figure out a way to make sure that you're getting the billable hours correctly. You're making sure that people aren't doing unethical things. It goes on and on and on. You got to build payroll. You got to hire an HR person. Now how do you do this while you're drinking out of a fire hose, trying to take on Goliath?

Ricky Patel: 41:58

Yeah, yeah, wow. I wish I could take that line that you had and used it to explain exactly what happened, because you nailed it. We had no idea what we were doing, no idea. What we knew was we had the ability to get these clients and we knew that. We understood the takes, but besides that, when we start hiring attorneys and so forth, we were the youngest ones in the firm, yeah, so there was a lot of like resentment. There was a lot of issues with how we structure.

Marcus Arredondo: 42:22

Who are these guys?

Ricky Patel: 42:23

Yeah, and on top of that, it was like this person got boned. So that person's upset. How do we structure our offices, how do we do payments, how do we do payroll, how do we offer healthcare, All of these things that you could imagine. We kept going through and then eventually we had an implosion and so my partner decided to hire I forget the name of the company that came down. It's a consulting firm that dealt with, like Microsoft and all these people, all these companies where what they do is they come and they get all the teams together in one place and they start mapping out okay, marcus, you are not allowed to go to West for any of these. You're only allowed to go to Ricky for this. You're only allowed to go to this person for this. And they scheduled you everyone's path. Everyone now had a road.

Ricky Patel: 43:04

The second thing they did was at these times, you are not to disturb the partners, you are not to disturb the attorneys. At these times, no phone calls at this time to these people. And it allowed for us to do legal work in these partners without people. Bang, bang. It was always bang, bang, bang, bang bang. The doors would not stop the secretary assistant, the fair legal, another, like it was so much that you were, you were being reactive, and so I remember when, when the person that came by from this company came and literally cracked the whip, it was on like a Friday and on Monday it was like harmony. It was like this beautiful orchestrated, like feeling that everyone knew where they're supposed to go, what they're supposed to do, how they're supposed to do it, they're supposed to do it, and it really just worked out extremely well.

Marcus Arredondo: 43:47

So I want to ask the question about where you got the business and how you sort of got that. But before, I'm just curious how did you align incentive-driven performances? I mean because what I find fascinating about this and a lot of successful entrepreneurs, in my opinion is they get reps, they get a lot of reps, they get a lot of reps fast, so they sort of get immediate feedback. It's a little like a standup comment working on stuff you know in front of a live audience. You know whether it works or not, rather than having to write it, put it into a book, let people come back. I'm curious how did you figure out what works? Because attorneys aren't generally known for low egos.

Ricky Patel: 44:30

Right, yeah, and that's a great point that we had there. Number one we had to make sure that myself my partner, were doing two different things. I dealt with the clients, I dealt with the legal strategy. My partner dealt with making sure that all the operations, everything was running well. I couldn't do what I did without him and he couldn't do it vice versa. Right, so we had two different sectors that we were at. Number two is the side of like managing all these things.

Ricky Patel: 44:50

We had to come in there very humbled, but at the same time, this was the time to have all. Every staff member in the firm had to understand that if myself and my partner want, we will do your job. And we showed them that. They saw the amount that we were working. They saw that we weren't flaunting. They saw that we were the last ones to leave. We were always working. And so what happened was they knew if we do not do our job, ricky or Wes would do our job. And there were times where if someone was off, someone didn't show up, something happened. We would just go pick it up. There wasn't ever an issue with it. So by showing people that you not only understand what they're doing, but you can do their job as

well as they can. It does create a respect factor, and that's how we were able to neutralize our age factor compared to the experience of some of our attorneys that were 50, 60 years old. Yeah, are you?

Marcus Arredondo: 45:40

guys still friends, you and your partner years old? Yeah, are you guys still friends, you and your partner?

Ricky Patel: 45:44

Yeah, he's. Listen, wes is. Wes is my brother. Like the battles that we went to together were just epic.

Ricky Patel: 45:50

And I'll tell you this we had this conversation when we first started law firm. I mean, we were like, look, if we make a little bit of money, you know, what is it you want, what is it I want? And my big thing was I wanted to start sharing, you know and and, and. What that meant was if I'd give a couple bucks here, there. I think it was concerning big his was. He lost everyone his dad, his grandparents, his sister. It was just him and his mama. Everyone else passed away and he's. He just said, listen, I just want a family. You know what he did? He's got a whole slew of kids. He's got five kids, um and uh, and, and he's the, he's the sixth kid and he's now building a golf course by Augusta. He was just in Golf Digest last week and he's doing what he loves to do and it's beautiful to see it because that's who he's been. He's been true to himself since when we first started and in 2016, we stopped our firm.

Marcus Arredondo: 46:46

So I was actually curious about how did you get the business? How did you start sourcing? I mean, that is a huge windfall and I'm sure you weren't the only attorney sort of fishing in those waters.

Ricky Patel: 47:01

Yeah, so that was the other thing too. When you're that young and you have these cases coming in, every law firm tries to take them from. They try to swindle you, they try to extort you, they try to convince you that you're my experience enough. Uh, they try to make some deal with you where you'll you'll make money on these cases if you do it. And then when none of that works, they start going to the other side to put pressure on Sure. So how did I get these cases?

Ricky Patel: 47:23

So we graduated from law school, we started our own law firm. We were both making I want to say it was maybe \$200 to \$600 a month each, so barely enough to cover a couple meals. A little on our student loans we both had significant student loans, and then I'll try and shorten this part as much as possible. But there was an event in Washington DC and it was a Hotel Owners Association event and my ex's father invited me to go with him because he had two free tickets to go up there. I had never been to DC, so I joined along with him.

Ricky Patel: 47:59

When I was over there I ran into a gentleman by the name of Dave Ehrenberg. Dave Ehrenberg, still a very dear friend was running for attorney general of the state of Florida. So I started talking to him. I was

appointed to the board of advisors for my law school and that was pretty much the only thing I had going for me. I was playing to my strength, which was just that one thing. And the reason I was added to the board of advisors was because they wanted a younger member, because the board was getting old and they wanted someone to add a little bit of energy. That was solely the reason, mark, because there was no, I couldn't write a check, I couldn't do anything else.

Ricky Patel: 48:34

So I'm talking to this guy, Dave Ehrenberg, and I'm like hey, you're running for attorney general, I'm on the board of advisors at the law school in Miami, and what can I help with? And so he's like oh, why don't you guys do a fundraiser? So I was like yeah, whatever you need. And so I called my partner. I was like you won't believe who I'm here with. I'm here with Aaron Bird. He's running for attorney general. And he's like yeah, I know who he is. And I was like well, we got to do a fundraiser. And he's like great guy, he probably just wants us to introduce him. He was like no, no, it's a fund raiser. Like if we don't do this now, he'll probably have our bar licenses taken. We'll probably never be able to practice.

Ricky Patel: 49:13

And as we were young, so in our mind we're like, oh shit, what have we got into? Like what have I agreed to do? And how's this gonna backfire? And so he's like dude, just call him up, ask him how much. And so I called back. He's like even if you raise like \$7,000, it'll be fine. And I'm thinking we don't have \$7,000 to our names. Like what are we going to do here? So I go back and we're like, listen, we're going to call everyone.

Ricky Patel: 49:43

And we called and we had so many people showed up. The chairs of the Democrat National Convention that were in Miami showed up and they were like what is this? Yeah, like who's hosting this event? Right, and the guy's name that was in charge his name was Chris Kortch. Okay, really, really big political fundraiser and his son, Andrew Kortch, who was heavily involved in politics at the time. So I meet them. They're like Andrew's like hey, why don't you come by my house this weekend and let's meet up and talk and something. These are great contexts. I'm probably just making, I think, nothing of it.

Ricky Patel: 50:18

We had a great event, raised the money and I realized I'm never going to host one of these again, right, so I go to Andrew's house, okay, and it's this humongous house. You go inside and they've got people working there and he's got this like buffet of food out there and stuff I think there's going to be a part. And he tells me oh, it's just for us, I didn't know what you want to eat, whatever else. Right, so I'm eating no-transcript this food. I was like I need, I need you to understand. I, I can't, I can't do it. I know what that means now. And he's like look, you just have to raise a hundred thousand dollars and I'll introduce you to the president. I was like I know what you're saying and I truly believe that you're trying to help me out, but those numbers don't mean anything to me at all. It's impossible. And he's like yeah, he's like look, here's the thing, this is what it costs for dinner. I'm looking at this piece of paper. It's like 15 grand for this, 30 grand of dinner with the president, stuff. And I'm joking, right, I didn't realize. You don't pay for the dead food, it's the accidents.

Ricky Patel: 51:47

This was a whole period of time where I'm completely out of my woodwork. My parents were refugees. Like no one had money here. They worked in dry cleaners and gas stations and transmission shops. So there was nothing like I should not be in this position that I was in, right.

Ricky Patel: 52:00

So I decided to do this for some weird reason, and I called up all those hotel owners I met in DC and I was like, hey, man, do you want to be the president? I called and called and called and eventually I think I raised like \$43,000, \$44,000, okay, and so I called Andrew. I was like, hey, listen, here's all the numbers \$44,000 I raised. And he's like, oh, I'm a little disappointed. I thought that you raised at least \$100,000. And I was like, dude, I'm sorry, this is all I could have done. He's like all right, send me a social security and driver's license. And so I was. I'm about to get. Imagine if someone asked me for that today. So I said my social security driver's license, thinking that I did a complete failure.

Ricky Patel: 52:45

I have no idea what's called the adrian arch center in in miami and I go up this room, I enter, I'm the only one in there, but there's like four bartenders, there's a lobster station, there's food. There's all stuff. It's not like maybe this is like you know what you get if you raise some money. And so I'm in there, I start eating. I have one plate, I have two plates, I have three.

Ricky Patel: 53:06

And like make it out, a half is gone. I'm best friends with the bartenders, we're eating, we're oyster shooters and everything else, and all of a sudden the door slab open, secret service comes in there and I'm holding like a fucking plate in my hand and I'm thinking to myself oh my God, am I in the wrong room? Okay. And so Barack Obama walks in. He's got all of his team, everyone else and Andrew, Chris and all these guys there, and Andrew's like Mr President, I want to introduce you to the youngest member of your national finance committee. And so I'm looking around. I was like where's he at? I thought it was just me. And Andrew's like get over here, stop, get over here. And so I walk over there. I'm pale, pale white.

Ricky Patel: 53:48

At this point I put my dish away I had food, whatever and Barack Obama's talking to me for a good I don't know three minutes, four minutes, which felt like a lifetime. I still don't understand what's going on. And so the guy that's with me is like yeah, you know, Ricky, he raised 1.4 something million dollars. And I'm thinking my head like oh no, oh no, I'm in trouble. Like I know, I didn't know, I know exactly how it is. It wasn't that. So the president congratulates me, puts his pin thing on and I meet some people, we get some photos and it's like it was like hanging out with just the president he's group inside this room that I destroyed his food, right. And so he tells me, Andrew tells me he's like look, he's like I don't know what it is, but I put all of the money that was raised under your name. And he's like I don't know what it was, but hopefully it does something Right. And so these pictures of me with the president and now it's with the president every six weeks, okay. Pictures of me with the president, and now I was with the president every six weeks, okay, in BC or Miami, all these pictures started going viral in the hotel owners association called Asian American Hotel Owners Association, which represents 60% of all the hotels in America, and they're all Indian with the last name Patel. Sure, sure, now, I wasn't lucky enough to be part of that club, but I will tell you I played the name right. And so when the oil spill happened, they had already reached out to me to represent them in other match now, because of the contact with the

president. And so that was the moment where I jumped off the cliff and we would build a plane. It was a BP. We were already off the cliff. Okay, all these hotels and all the business that they would send to us.

Ricky Patel: 55:23

And so when that happened, there were five hotel owners that came to us and they're like look, the Wholesale Bill has destroyed us. How can you help us out? And typically what we were doing before was we tried to be the cheapest out there. So if someone was charging \$6,000 per DUI, we would do it for \$2,000. And this was the one time where we're like no, we're going to offer competitive rates now that are not the cheapest, but they're in line with what the big boys charge. And so we're like, look, this is what we'll do. We'll charge you 33% plus cost of contingency, and we'll go out and we'll raise.

Ricky Patel: 55:52

And so in my mind it was we'll get 10,000 for each of these five guys. Okay, and uh, that puts like 3,300 bucks in our pocket each. It's great money for us. Okay, we now have money to keep, you know, building and so forth. They agreed to it. And I want to say, within a week I get a call at like 6 am, 7 am, from Wes and I remember I was asleep, I remember my face being in the pillow and he was saying hey, did you check the trust account? And I was like, listen, this is my time to sleep, because we work around the clock Sure, and so I worked that all night. And because we work around the clock Sure, and so I worked that all night, and then he would take up and then he would work, and then we were it was nonstop because we realized that we had something. Our goal was we could probably make 15, 16,000 bucks off these five guys.

Ricky Patel: 56:35

Right, sure, sure he's like go look at it and call me back and he says it just like that. I'm mad. Phone it was like 25 bucks or something. We paid that. We paid like I was very prudent with this right and I looked and there was like 500 and something thousand dollars. And I called him. I was like holy shit. I was like what happened?

Ricky Patel: 56:53

He's like I just got off the phone bp, it's a partial payment for one client and I remember saw I just had tears like you could have like soaked my shirt right and I was like listen, we can't just send this check to the client on louisiana, let's fly out there and like give it to him, yeah. And so we call him up and this guy thinks 10 000 is coming and that we we made three grand. So he invites that 20 of these buddies off a debit. Okay, all hotel orders. So we go to this thai place in louisiana and halfway through we give these check, which which was \$300,000 after our fees were taken. He looked at it like he got clear in-house check. He went and he showed all of the guys. The next day one of the other four people received. Then they started telling their friends. We jumped from five to ten, spread like wildfire from there.

Ricky Patel: 57:44

There's a pivotal point. Here's a pivotal point when we reached 100 hotels, we were one of the bigger players. At that point, okay, now, remember this, you would get it paid every week. Okay, at this point, there were high, six, low, seven figures coming weekly. Okay, uh, and we get called to dc to meet up with a guy named ken feinberg, um, who thought he was just going to write like a \$100 million check and be done with us or whatever else. So, remember, we went, I picked up beautiful jackets and suits and all this

stuff, and we walked into his office. His office is up, though. Have you been to BC? Have you been to the Willard before, where it overlooks the White House? This conference room overlooks the White House house, which is the craziest thing I still have seen. So we're saying they're drinking our water, we're in the best of spirits.

Ricky Patel: 58:30

This guy comes in there and he's like who the are you guys? And in my mind, immediately, I don't know if you've ever had that feeling where you're like oh, this isn't gonna be how it thought it's gonna be. Yeah, it's about to be completely opposite. And he's like like are you guys real lawyers? He's like these hotels are sham. They're not even real. This is fraud. Do you know what can happen? And so we're actually bleeding this. Then I'm thinking wait, I went to the hotel. I met the clients at the hotel, we went through the damage models, like, of course. He's like what am I thinking? Like, why? It's like are you guys real lawyers? And this is a part, so I have the, the, my biography ran. This is the part that people love the most is, though, I started reaching for my wallet to pull my bar card out, and as I did that, he's like what is this amateur? And. And he throws his pencil. Okay, and the pencil, the rubber bar, it hits the bottom of the table and ricochets and whacks me on my head, it bounces off, and so I'm completely shocked. Now I'm like do I show him, like, my bar license? He just threw something at me, like I don't know what's happened here, right? Anyways, we end up walking out of the hotel between our legs, completely feel defeated, like, okay, this is a redundant, okay.

Ricky Patel: 59:51

And the next day we get a call from a hotel owner in Tampa who represented a Caucasian hotel owner, who called my partner and said hey, I just want to make sure you guys don't be peace-stuck. I want to make sure that my hotel, my client's, getting a fair offer. We realized that they were paying him more on a different multiplier than they were paying all final tellers. And so Wes calls up this guy, ken Fimer, and says we need to meet right now. And the guy and this guy's like you guys haven't had enough he's like Wes is like we need to meet right now. So he's like all right, I'm in Louisiana at the Windsor Court Hotel hotel, so we decided that we could meet him over there.

Ricky Patel: 1:00:26

Two days after, what we did was we called the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, martin Luther King's Conference, and we told them hey, there's discrimination going on. They're paying out these people more than us, so forth. They brought 400 ministers and people from the church and everyone else to his hotel and everyone locked arms. And we're saying we shall overcome. Okay. So imagine, elevator opens up, he comes downstairs myself and wes are locked arms with these guys and he says I'm calling the police and one of the ministers is like call them, please. We'd love to them. Call the media too, okay.

Ricky Patel: 1:00:59

And so ken says to us look, he goes up, he calls the phone. He's like this is ridiculous. I'll let one of you guys come up there, and so Wes is like we'll bring 20. And he's like, no, you'll bring three of you. And so we end up bringing 10 of us upstairs to his room, to his bedroom. We walk inside of his bedroom and this guy's sitting there. He put in a chair and I remember this. He had these shiny black shoes with shoelaces and I remember just looking being like man. This is like one scary guy. He's got really clean shoes and he looks at us and every one of the 10 people are screaming and shouting. And I'm looking at his hands and his hands are not shaking. He's not phased at all at all.

Ricky Patel: 1:01:37

This is the guy after um 9-11 everything else they placed him. Congress places him to make sure people don't get paid up and to prevent coming back. That's his whole job. He looks at us and everyone's screaming yeah, you're throwing the baby out of the bathwater. After all the screaming, he's like is everyone finished?

Ricky Patel: 1:01:56

And so we're like, I guess, and everyone's yelling for like 15 minutes, right, and he's like he said one of the smartest things I still have heard to this day. And he says like he said one of the smartest things I still have heard to this day and he says look, I'm not saying that racial discrimination did not occur. It's like what I'm saying is, if it did occur, we will find out and we will fix it immediately. And so we're looking at each other like how do we respond to that? What do we say to that? Right? And then he says the key words, which is the big reason why I'm here today. He says you and Wes will no longer be working with the facility for your payments. You will now be working directly with me and my team for your payments. It will not take you two weeks for your processing. There'll be 24 hours.

Ricky Patel: 1:02:38

Okay, so we left there. Our chip was for all the hotel owners and the hotel owner association convention started in Vegas the next week. We went up there. They had everyone's checks that we can be on. But our big key compared to everyone else, was we're not dealing with the facility, we're dealing directly with the source. That's where we jumped. At that time we had probably 500 to 600. From 500 to 600, we jumped to 2,000. And all of these, the average payment was around 250,000 amounts of payment.

Ricky Patel: 1:03:08

Right, but we were able to take that one moment and roll. We were able to take that moment and just run with it and make sure people understood hey, the class action is about to start, so you may need to get as much money as possible before that class restructures things up and before that class restructures things up. And so we got them in. And then, when the class action started up, we were involved in the structuring of hospitality and tourism. But while we were doing that, municipalities and government agencies started signing us up also. So how did we get it? You've got to story of how we got it, but how we kept it was the most important part of it. That's how we got to the 3500 is by showing, and Texas was excluded. But we had so much data with just our hotel owners that we were able to create the whole model, all the way from Houston down to McAllen, Texas, of the damage model, of what happened in this anomaly of 2010 compared to the other years. And so Texas got included because of our data.

Marcus Arredondo: 1:04:01

That's incredible man. That's incredible man. What do you think is the best quality or aspect of living for lack of a better word to focus on to get this level of achievement? If you were to give advice to somebody younger, maybe your daughters even what do you think you'd focus on most that has had the biggest outcome for you?

Ricky Patel: 1:04:30

Yeah, so there's a few things right. Number one is from a very young age, I've always believed in the law of attraction, which meant that I always focused on where do I want to be, okay, and I saw the joy in where I was going to be when this happens, the feel I'm going to have, and so forth number one. Number two I would tell them to do things differently than I did. I speak about this to law students all the time. Just because I did it doesn't mean it was the right way.

Ricky Patel: 1:04:52

I burned out 2016,. I was completely burned out. I couldn't put sentences together. We had four class actions by that time. So you don't have to go 100. Go 80, because that 80 will last a lot longer, and that 20% put it towards things that allow your brain to rest, your body to receive what it needs to nutrition, meditation, mindfulness. If you invest that 20%, that 80% will not burn out, whereas when I went 100%, eventually it was too much, and then my body, my mind, were like, hey, we need a break. That's why we ended up leaving Puerto Rico.

Marcus Arredondo: 1:05:29

Okay, so you had mentioned a little bit about your trajectory, getting involved, with in over your skis, but really, you know, pushing your forward as a leveraging point in sort of creating a mess and figuring out how to figure it out, and you know that is a leveraging point. I think that's the only way anybody gets ahead. So in doing that, I think one thing you mentioned was you know, you're you sort of harped on your involvement in your law school. How do you market yourself? It seems like at every point within your story you're taking something that you've achieved before and sort of pushing it beyond. There's a couple of layers here that I would prefer that you address in addition to whatever you'd like. But the first is have you ever faced discomfort putting yourself in that role or sort of showcasing yourself? And then, secondly, how do you defend against privacy, especially now in social media, in that marketing effort?

Ricky Patel: 1:06:34

Okay, I love that question. Let me try and combine that. I'm a firm, firm believer in boundaries like really, really so. Okay, and people who are watching this that follow me on social media, they're going to be shocked to learn something. But I created this boundary of. It's very, very difficult to get to me, and all the information that I wish to provide I provide on social media and so on social media, I provide information on different areas that allow people to keep up with my life, okay, Um, and I try and keep it as authentic as possible.

Ricky Patel: 1:07:11

The reason that that is so important is the moment that people are not able to see your name in some capacity, you fall off the list of the person that you will call if there's something needed. Okay, so what I will do is I will typically do something funny. Okay, so what I will do is I will typically do something funny. Okay, I love. I love taking like little jokes that at both the Republicans and Democrats, and I do this so people are confused. They're like is he a Republican? Wait, is he a Democrat? Wait, no, he just went after Biden. No, he just went after Trump, and it keeps things light and fun. Does that make sense? And the goal is to show people look, you're pretty too much emphasis on this. Let me go ahead and have some fun with it, but what I'm actually doing is, if the name is resonating and people are looking forward to getting away from all these social media pages that are so extreme that it brings you down and going to mine and seeing something about something charitable, something fun with the kids, something that I'm having fun with, some new toys I've purchased, or just something about a joke or something is

lighthearted. So I want my page to be a place where people come. They get a little laugh, they get something out of it, but the most important thing is my name up there and you will be shocked at how much has happened.

Ricky Patel: 1:08:17

So I started making jokes about a year and a half ago about the PPP loan and people that were buying Lamborghinis, and we're making jokes PPP loan and people that were buying Lamborghinis and we're making jokes. And we've been able to bring in millions and millions of dollars worth of work for my firm now just handling white collar criminal work and the great part about it. That was never the goal, okay, but when the cases started coming in, I went to my partner who was up for attorney general. You know, aikman's a very prominent firm. It was up for attorney general and I said, hey, I've got all these cases, but I want you to now teach me white collar. So it's like a masterclass hands on and case they're coming in.

Ricky Patel: 1:08:56

So why did that happen? Because people in the back of their mind are thinking who do I know that can? Oh, ricky, I just saw a post on it and so it automatically clings. That is so important because some of my friends from law school that graduate they're not on social media and their whole thing is that I don't have time for it and so forth. I respect that because they freed up more time by not being on social media. Social media can be addictive if you don't control it. But what has happened is you have missed out on this opportunity where your name is always at the top of the list when something happens, and that's very, very important.

Ricky Patel: 1:09:31

Now, how do I keep this boundary? The boundary is very, very important. Number one I don't allow people very close to me, and what I mean by that is I have multiple layers. So there's probably about six people who are in my real circle and Marcus, we've talked before, and I know a dear friend that you have in that, and these are the people that you share the ups, the downs, the lefts, right but the most important thing about this is this is the one group that I can share anything good that's happening in my life, okay. Why that's important is because they never take it as someone that's bragging, someone that's pushing to show off or anything else. It is genuinely, within our group, someone that's happy.

Ricky Patel: 1:10:12

And, without diverting real quick, marcus, I'm going to tell you there's one word that I'm going to say to you that I hope resonates to you, and that's called mudita M-U-D-I-T-A. Okay, it's a Swahili word, so that's where my parents, my grandparents, my great-grandparents also asked this. They all spoke Swahili. Okay, why that word is important is, let's say, you called me up and your business was failing. Okay, I could sympathize with that failure. I could empathize with that. There's a word in English for when something bad has happened to someone. I can relate to it, but there's no word in English for when you call and say, hey, this great thing just happened, that I have a word for that. Say, I feel this way.

Ricky Patel: 1:10:50

What Mudita says is that if I can only celebrate my wins or my joys, it's finite, okay. But if you have a win and you become the number one podcaster in the world, and Mudita means that I take in your joy and say, oh my gosh, my dear friend Marcus just did this, I feel that same feeling for him it's infinite, right. And

so that small group, that's the first layer, that group of six okay, I call that my mudita group and that group right there we share the small things. Oh, my baby just did this, and one of our dear friends sends pictures of these kids off and we did walking steps and so forth. The other one hey, the market did really well. The other one we just opened up a business and for us it's never a why are they doing this? And I'm not Mudita.

Ricky Patel: 1:11:40

Like we get to, we have a win now for us because of that circle. Then outside of that circle is a group of very, very close friends and these are people that we work with, we keep in touch with, we go out at dinners with, we have jokes, we share those things. You know, if they need something, we're there for each other. And then the group outside of that are the ones that feel that they're in the group earlier, but they're the ones that get limited amounts of time. They're there. Usually. The phone calls are shorter. When you see each other, you get along. And then outside of that is the people who get social media that truly feel that they're your friends, but they are really encapsulated in what you are putting out.

Ricky Patel: 1:12:15

So the foundry is very, very tight. And why is that tight? It's not because I'm paranoid or nervous or anything like that, but what happens is you need a place where you feel completely free. Think about this, Marcus. Think about in your life where you can truly be 100% free. And this goes back to ayahuasca also. Right, you clog so much inside, so much. Oh, I can't say this, I don't want to say it. If I say this, I'm going to be judged. Who do I speak with? Maybe I can't even tell my therapist this because of this. All these things stir up, right, but you have to have a place where you do feel free, and that's the thing that allows you to kind of stabilize. So that's how I create these boundaries, that's how I use social media to go ahead and allow myself to be out there without being truly out there.

Marcus Arredondo: 1:12:58

Let's reverse the question on boundaries. How do you limit, sort of, your intake of social media? When you said control it, and I'm going to ask a random question, which may or may not apply, but I was thinking about something you said prior about, as a result of ayahuasca, finding yourself a little bit more free will what sort of methodology and I would imagine it applies to the social media what question can we ask ourselves? What advice would you give as a determinant on keeping us honest? Is this something that I want to engage with? What mechanism would you suggest using that would be effective at sort of checking ourselves before we get into the vortex of either overly engaged in social media or overly listening to the voices that aren't ours?

Ricky Patel: 1:13:48

Yeah, what a beautiful way. So it's almost like brainwashing mechanisms that occur right, and brainwashing can be a good thing, it can be a bad thing. It just depends on what is happening right. So if you're being washed and removing stuff that really wasn't helping out, that's great. But if it's doing things to influence you in a way where it takes away from your true essence, okay so and impact your value.

Ricky Patel: 1:14:07

So what I did for the longest time was I added a follower here. I had follow here, follow, follow, follow, follow. And then I realized about four years ago that my entire feed was based on luxury goods, watches,

this and vacations and uber, luxury vacations and so forth. And so I'm one of those people who I enjoy nice things. I enjoy beautiful things, right, I really do. But I found out after a while that, no matter what I had, I was feeling as though, oh wait, I don't have the newest. This, this thing's so rare I can't get my hands on it, I can't. And I was buying and buying, and buying, and it made it so. My dopamine receptors were being impacted every time something was coming up there, and about four years ago, when I first went to ayahuasca, I came back First. I just shut social media off, completely, shut it off, okay, for probably about three months.

Ricky Patel: 1:14:59

And when I got back, I went through my feed, okay, and I said which one of these makes me feel less than which one of these helps me become more true to the essence of who Ricky Patel is? And I went and I deleted every single one of those luxury sites, all of them, anything that showed, hey, look at this guy, he's living this life. Look at this. I got rid of all of that and, all of a sudden, what I realized was I was using less time, I was also spending less and I was also appreciating more of what I have. So you've got to go on. You have to go through and be honest with yourself and say what does this make me feel like? Does this make me a better person? By looking at you know one person somewhere in the world that had the most expensive watch in the world, and now I feel like, hey, the thing I just bought isn't worth anything like whatever, and I'm giving obviously silly backles up there. But by removing these things on there, guess what I'm left with every time I now open up social media, it's not, and and I'm not big believer in just following people also. Okay, there's certain people you know in that ring, so the first ring and second ring that I actually follow. Besides that, most other people um, it shows I'm falling, but I'm not really following them. And it's not because I have anything against them, but what happened is you get spiraled into the life of all these other people. So what do I have? I have probably about 20 people that I actually follow and keep up with. These are people that are very dear to me, that I want to be able to keep up with their families and see how people are growing, and so forth. Right New things that they're doing. But besides that, everything is based on health. Okay, what can I do to improve my health? And these are people with metric and so forth.

Ricky Patel: 1:16:41

Here's another little funny thing that I've taken on. It is every single month for the past 10 years. The first day of the month, I decide what is something new I'm going to learn. So the past two years it's been baking and cooking, and so I have all these great channels that show me how to bake, and so I'll bake like sourdough, fresh stuff. So I'm like the old grandma inside.

Ricky Patel: 1:17:01

But then I'm speaking with people who are like-minded. And guess what we're doing? We're sharing ideas that are good for the soul, right? This isn't gossiping about hey, did you see this person? None of that. But because I curated what I'm following, I now have pushed away everything else. It doesn't matter. And number three is I got rid of the news. Here's the reason why, marcus. If anything that is of importance happens in the world, I guarantee that group that you have the first small group, someone sending a text hey, did you see this? Have you read this? You will get the important things. The important things will come to you because you're a smart, intelligent person that surround yourself with good people. You will get that. But the moment that you keep that news inside, it once again changes your mindset, and that takes away from who Marcus is. It takes away from who the essence of you are, right.

Marcus Arredondo: 1:17:52

I think that's the most important takeaway, but I think there's work entailed in actually finding what your essence is. It is I think that sounds a lot more simple than it really is. Yeah, that's work.

Marcus Arredondo: 1:18:02

It's a lot, so we could talk about that forever, but I want to switch subjects to something that you mentioned a little bit earlier, and I'm super fascinated by this because I am a product of an immigrant family. A number of my most successful and most immediate close friends in that first circle you're referencing are as well, and I think there's just a common thread among many, if not all of them, and I'm not sure if gratitude is outright the fundamental, but there's a sense of wanting to earn a place and I'm just curious if you have any insight or comment on your family not only being immigrants but refugees and then finding your way to the US. How has that impacted, if at all? You know how you pursue business and life in general?

Ricky Patel: 1:18:56

Yeah, it has. It's impacted everything. So here's a reason why, when we moved to the United States, my parents Well, give us some background of your family.

Marcus Arredondo: 1:19:07

Where did you, where did uh, where did they come from?

Ricky Patel: 1:19:09

so, um, if you go back five generations, it's india, okay. And then in india, um, during colonization, if you spoke english and you had some type of education, they brought you to africa to help with building the railroad system. Okay, so that's where my great, great grandparents were in india um in gujarat okay so that's in the west.

Ricky Patel: 1:19:31

I've got another follow-up question on gujarat, by the way, I'm gonna get to that usually when you hear someone with the last name patel, they're from gujarat and patel just translates to farmer, right? So they went to africa. Uh, my great great grandparents decided decided to start importing textiles and building infrastructure, and they did extremely well in Uganda. Uganda became very prosperous. They helped build roads, infrastructure, buildings, businesses. They did a phenomenal job and built an immense amount of wealth. And my great-grandparents and my grandparents would tell us stories, as you know, two, three, four, five year old, about how, overnight, edm came in and took everything within 24 hours and they were exiled. They had to move to england and started with nothing you're talking about. They had an empire in uganda and left. Something didn't sit right about that. I couldn't understand why, if you are building prosperity for a nation, why they would expel you.

Ricky Patel: 1:20:34

And so later in life, I started researching this in depth and I started finding out things that people would not otherwise wish to look at. You know, sometimes if you have a nice fairytale story, you like kind of keep it in that way. An example would be imagine if your family owned Hugo Boss. You wouldn't want to know that

they were involved with Nazis, right? You would just like to go ahead and say no, we just have great clothing line. What I ended up finding out was that our families were paying people way under wages. The treatment was horrific. They weren't providing anything charitable. They were not doing anything in the political world. It was literally like they had refused to assimilate. This is our money. We keep making it. How do we keep making more and more and more. And they were given multiple opportunities, multiple opportunities to help, to make sure to do the right thing, and so forth. And when that failed is when it was the breaking point of which the military came in and things were taken away. Was that the right thing? I'm not sure. But how has that impacted me? That's impacted me because I have now learned that the purpose of life is not just to amass wealth at the detriment of others. You really can do great things without it being a zero-sum game, right?

Ricky Patel: 1:21:44

So when my parents went to the United States, the funny thing is we moved here as African-Americans because my parents had African citizenship and there was a visa lottery in 1995. This was back, you know, newspaper era, and if you were of African descent, you were able to get an expedited visa lottery to the United States to get your green card and my dad was like we still have these African passports. And so he applied and this was the moment, you know, the 90s were the time where America was like the promised land. It really was the promised land, yeah. And so we moved to North Carolina.

Ricky Patel: 1:22:20

My parents worked at that time in a gas station. I remember my dad had an Aerostar van I don't know if you know what that is. It was like a Ford Aerostar van and it was like an old van and we had an apartment and the apartment had no furniture, and my dad didn't tell us why, but we had beds. So there was beds for myself, my brother, my sister and my parents, but there was no couches, no table, nothing like that at all. The only thing that was in there was a keyboard like an electrical keyboard, right, because as a child I didn't have many toys, but I had like a little like a little tiny keyboard and I messed with it so much that I learned how to play music by ear with it, but I never had anything else. So when we moved there, my dad actually bought this like really nice big keyboard, and so our family dinners and everything else was spent sitting on the floor in our living room, sharing meals, conversations. When we finished I would play some music.

Ricky Patel: 1:23:15

It was some of the happiest moments and I will tell you this when I look back now, I understand the struggle that my parents had with how do we provide, how do we do it, how do we build and so forth. And that's not it. We lived like that. This went on for a few months after my dad was able to get furniture and so forth. But the reason I bring that up is that helped me to realize that the happiness that we experience was truly from great conversations, experiencing each other, sharing stories, laughing together and going from there, I decided that I've always wanted to be a lawyer. I think I shared with you, Marcus. My mom has on her wall a piece of paper from when I was eight years old that expressed wanting to be a lawyer. Wants to fight for justice. I couldn't even spell these things correctly and there was something inside of me. I'm not a firm believer on destiny, but I am a firm believer that when something is so important to you, that the universe does conspire to help you.

Ricky Patel: 1:24:12

So, going through all this process, being an immigrant, I knew I was the underdog. What did that mean I could not show up to the same meeting, the same classroom, any place, looking less than because I felt I was not serving. I was not part of the system where people families have gone through colleges and so forth. So when I went to law school, I would like to say that most of my peers were well off. They were showing up in the Porsche and the family said law firms and everything else. I didn't have that.

Ricky Patel: 1:24:42

So there were two things I could do. Number one is put my head down and just study very hard, or I could play the game, and the game that I decided to play was I would go to a store by the name of Zara I'm not broken as Zara. It's like a clothing store and certain times during the year they would have these massive sales like 40% off, 25% off, whatever it is and I would go in and I would pick up a suit that looked good and I would wear those suits to school and people associated me as the guy that was referenced. So, even though others were wearing jeans, sweatshirts and so forth, I would wear the suit to class.

Ricky Patel: 1:25:21

No one knew why, but it automatically allowed me to feel I deserve to be here and sometimes, just by feeling like that, it gives you the confidence to continue to moving without studying and thinking. Are they looking at me? What are they thinking? So, yeah, it did, it pushed me. It pushed me majorly going through there. I think that kind of answers your question of how it initially, like you know, gave me the ability to. You know how they say that you can't that hustle, that fire. It didn't. Either you have it or you don't. As an immigrant, as most immigrants, we have it enough. It's just about how big we're going to allow that thing to get to.

Marcus Arredondo: 1:25:53

Yeah, Well, I think a little bit of that has to be nurture, not just nature, in terms of your surroundings, and I might get some flack for this, but I have a large contingency, at least relative to many others of Gujarati friends, and almost all of them share a very strong trait of somewhere between shamelessness and, you know, without the lack of self-awareness, right, and they are fearless, but I don't want to discount it because that not to suggest they don't have fear, but they seem to there's an element of just usurping the opportunity, whether it's given to them or not. Do you have any comment on that? Because I feel like there's a cultural mechanism about that part of India that is enterprising, that is supportive of businesses and communities, supporting each other's businesses as well, right, yeah, and so it is to the benefit of us.

Ricky Patel: 1:26:59

it is all to the detriment of us, and I want to explain both of those. The benefit is we are pushed so hard, we are never good enough. There's no situation where uh you.

Ricky Patel: 1:27:08

You come back home, uh, graduating at valedictorian of a school, and my parents were like, hey, okay, what are you doing next? Like it's always right, what's next? What's next everything? It's never a let's sit down, let's celebrate this, let's, let's go through. It's always. They're looking at their life and they are trying to vicariously live through the next generation. And how is that going to happen?

Ricky Patel: 1:27:28

If my child was able to succeed like this, I can tell my peers it was worth me working at a gas station or dry cleaners or doing what it is. Because my child has it, I can wear my child's alma mater. You know what I'm saying? Sure. So the pro of it is that you've been placed in this position where you're being stress-tested over and over and over and over again, to the point where it's second nature. So when you are in college, when you are going through these facets of business and so forth, you're not in an uncomfortable position because that's where you have been.

Ricky Patel: 1:27:58

Here's the con of it is that you've been pulled so tightly on the string that you start forgetting what it is that we are here on this planet to do, and that part of that is the happiness factor, right, um, oftentimes you'll see people, uh, who are doing things that they are not happy with, for example, uh, people who are doctors or dentists and so forth, and, and it provides this, um, it provides this this way for the parent to feel like my child is accomplished, because I call them from a young age. You have to go and become a doctor, you've got to become a dentist, you've got to do this, and so they'll hit the highest level there and and they will continue to excel. But you will notice that that happiness factor is not always there. Okay, so they sacrifice happiness in order of the greater good of what everyone else feels and thinks my parents, their friends, their colleagues and there is a Gujarati saying, which is? It translates to what will people say, okay, and so that part of it.

Ricky Patel: 1:28:59

Always, if something happens, it's always like oh, my gosh, what will people say? What will people say? And that result then, if we look at statistics once again, of divorce rates in the Indian community, it's almost unheard of. It's almost unheard of, and so when you look at that, people are thinking, wow, these people are very, very happy. That's not the case. It's the fact that matters. I'd rather live like this throughout my whole life and make sure that no one would think. What will people think? Okay?

Marcus Arredondo: 1:29:24

Just to clarify they're unheard of in how high their success rate is.

Ricky Patel: 1:29:28

Yeah, okay, so you're talking a fraction of a fraction of what the national divorce rate is. Right, right right.

Ricky Patel: 1:29:35

To even think of it. My point behind it. Those are the pros and cons, right? The pro is that you are actually being pushed. The con is that you've now been confined. You can't step outside that box without being scrutinized as being an Indian who has done something outside the box, even become an attorney. That was great. But why are you not in the medical field? Yeah, why are you not in? You get what I'm saying Exactly.

Marcus Arredondo: 1:29:59

I hear you. Yeah Well, is it enough that your law school named its entrance after you?

Ricky Patel: 1:30:05

at this point, for your family, Listen, I will tell you this my parents are very liberal. I had the anomaly I ended up with the greatest parents on earth and I didn't realize that until very recently. I have the greatest parents ever and they've given me the flexibility to do as I want, how I want, when I want. And the only thing they told me is there's no safety net. So it's not that we don't want to provide, we just had so, um, we will give you food, we will give you shelter and we'll give you love. We will give you those three things, which those are, that's 90 of what parents should be doing.

Ricky Patel: 1:30:38

You don't think, but you don't realize that. You don't realize that as you're growing up until you hit a mature stage. So for my, my parents, my mom how about this? My mom, if I tell her I ate breakfast, oh my God, I'm so proud To this day. My mom, she's an angel. My dad, he doesn't have the emotional intelligence to express that, but he now has changed. Since I went to Iowa, my dad has changed. He's now he won't get off the phone with that thing. I love you and and let me pick you up, let me make dinner, let's do like, and, and it's very much changing right, but that's not the common theme. Usually Indian parents are very, very conservative, okay, and and they they raise children almost in a very militaristic style. Okay, um, you have this respect for me. We're not friends, I'm your parent and that's the way it goes. But yeah, when the law school did the naming, they were very proud and every few years they'll go there and they'll take a picture on their all that stuff.

Marcus Arredondo: 1:31:38

Let's go to the other side of the coin. How do you deal with failure? What failures have you encountered that have been meaningful? I mean, I think of the situations, the successes and failures I've had, and it's I'm a materially different person before and after, right, there's just the DNA makeup became very different. I think of you and the BP success and the burnout. You faced different challenges. You became sort of a different person. But what about when things didn't go well?

Ricky Patel: 1:32:06

Yeah, and when they don't go well, you forget everything that has ever done well. Okay, I'm going to give you a few examples. Simultaneously to the BP oil spill, we had two class factions that were signed up, and those class factions were against Wyndham Hotels and Choice Hotels. I had it was like a captive audience that I had with the hotel owners, and the hotel owners wanted to sue these brands, and so when we got involved in it, we had these great cases, absolutely incredible cases.

Marcus Arredondo: 1:32:37

Can I just clarify for the audience in those cases those are the management companies running the property that your clients own. So they own the building and those companies are putting a flag and running it through their point system, checking people in, putting it through their accounts and taking their fees and then paying the owner.

Ricky Patel: 1:32:56

That's exactly right. Yeah, thank you for clarifying that. Yeah, they're the franchisees I represent. So I represent the hotel owners and then the umbrella, which is a franchise, is Wyndham and Choice Hotel.

And so I had this great case and the thing that I had was I had the law in my favor, I had the client, I had the ability to fund the cases. So to me it was this is slam dunk. What I did not have was experience. What I mean by experience is not the legal experience, it's about the real world experience that you cannot buy, it's just something that you have to go through.

Ricky Patel: 1:33:31

So what ended up happening was, when we started getting really close to getting class certification, the franchisors said, hey, these clients that you have this one didn't change the thing that we asked them for years for this one. We gave them a break, but we're going to go ahead and increase it to where it needs to. This one over here there's looked at the indoor corridor. We let them go with it, but we need the outdoor corridor. And they went through contractually and found out all the things that they could go and do, like a tip list, and say, hey, you didn't do this, you didn't do it, and they started hitting them and it wasn't considered retaliation because it was within the contractual confines. So I couldn't say you're not allowed to do it when we are suing them for breach of contract. Okay, and so what happened? There was, bit by bit, they knocked out plaintiffs one by one, by one by one. They all got knocked out.

Ricky Patel: 1:34:22

And I remember when that case failed failed. I remember just thinking to myself like man, how did that happen? To me everything has been going right, like I've been on this like incredible rocket, and so when something like happened, you're not looking at the fact that, like this one thing has gone wrong, but look at all these things that are still going right. You know you really take it in, and I was too young to understand that this is a part of the rodeo. This is just how it goes. You will. For every major success, you will have failures, and the goal is to be up at the end of it so you can have the ups and downs. The goal is just at the end of it, not to be below right, to be net positive, and the BP oil spill was. If that was 100% of what was happening, the Wyndham and Choice was probably a quarter of a percent, if that makes sense. So it was so trivial, but to me it was emotional. It was my ego, it was my identity, it was all the same.

Marcus Arredondo: 1:35:23

It's all you can think about.

Ricky Patel: 1:35:24

Everything, and I've had plenty of these types of things I've had, you know, with the barbershops. We have the spot barbershop, which anyone in South Florida knows. Right, we have 32 locations now. It is the premier barbershop, like amazing. What most people don't know is we started a sister company, okay, which was the most beautiful women's salon you could imagine. It was called blows and roses and it was like two hair dryers, like this. The whole entire thing looked like a barbie shop, okay.

Ricky Patel: 1:35:53

And so our marketing um for um, the spot barbershop was god is good. Well, in blows and roses we put god is, and then in signature, a woman, and so we were referring to it as like a nice catch on, like the powerful woman. It wasn't like a religious connotation, right, sure. So we opened up the first day we get sued by Guns N' Roses for infringement upon their trademark, and so we're like we do have like two blow drives in there, and so we have to change a little bit of that. And then we had people that were literally protesting the brand, saying it was sacrilegious, and how could we say that God's a woman? And the

media was showing up and so forth. So that was another one of those things where it was like, okay, yep, we made a mistake and that one failed. It was one location it failed. If we had named it something different and we had named it something different, okay, and we had changed just a few things about it from the beginning, I think that it would have been up and running.

Ricky Patel: 1:36:51

But those are failures that people don't really know about, and there are plenty of failures. These are a few of them. How do I deal with it? How I dealt with it when I was in my 20s, it would absolutely ruin weeks and weeks and weeks. How do I deal with failures now? Failures still happen.

Ricky Patel: 1:37:05

Today. I give myself I call it a grieving period, and that is for 24 hours. You can feel bad for yourself, you can whine, eat some ice cream, watch some junk on Netflix, feel so bad for yourself, but at this time, in 24 hours, you tie in your shoelaces and you get back at it and it allows you to process, it allows your nervous system to go through, it allows your brain and everything else, but it prevents this from seeping over into everything. And also there are people who, like, try to stop that and say, look, I've got to look at the bright side. No, no, no listen, that whole theory of just looking at the bright side. What it does is it keeps adding things subconsciously that you're not removing. But if you allow yourself to go through this process and say I'm giving myself this much time, you actually can get over it and then get back to where you need to. You've given yourself that time right. Just be gentle on yourself.

Marcus Arredondo: 1:37:56

How do you deal with that relative to your identity? I mean, what is your perspective on identity?

Ricky Patel: 1:38:00

Yeah, so that's a great one. So most people, if I introduce you to my colleagues and you, you said hey, so you know, tell me a little bit about yourself. Oh, I'm an attorney, I'm a hotel owner, I'm at this or that. Okay, the moment that your identity is associated or attached to something here. If something within the circle is not going as you want, this fails. Okay. So the way how I look at myself is what is my identity? My identity is a person who is trying to live a healthy and happy life and do good things. Good things is so open-ended. By putting those three things out there, we can have multiple conversations in those, but with those three things, it prevents me from being linked to any tangible thing, anything that's out of my control. These are three things I can control that allows for it to relate to who I am.

Marcus Arredondo: 1:38:49

So how do you, you know? You've demonstrated this with flying colors, right. But how do you respond to people who uh, this is adjacent to identity that think the only way to succeed is to do one thing and to do it great, when you know, in actuality, you know you have different interests, you've got different business interests, you've got successes and failures, but it seems like those reps have benefited you, they've inured to the benefit of those projects over the long run. How do you, you know? I just imagine an older person giving sage advice, saying listen, kid, you really need to stick to one thing. What's your response to that now?

Ricky Patel: 1:39:30

Yeah, I'm trying to think of the old adage and maybe you can correct me on it, but there was an adage about the jack of all trades, jack of all trades, master of none.

Marcus Arredondo: 1:39:38

That was seen as something possible.

Ricky Patel: 1:39:39

Jack of all trades, master of none. And so the full quote goes on. After that, however, the master of it was along the lines of the jack of all trade is the master of none. But then it said, however, it's still better than being the master of one. Okay, so the whole purpose of that was if you're one dimensional, you better be the greatest, greatest. Greatest at that, because now you have all your eggs in one place, all of them. If you're saying that is in law, you better be the best damn lawyer possible. Okay, because the moment things aren't going well in that field, you're in in trouble.

Ricky Patel: 1:40:22

For me, I've always felt like I'm on a treadmill. Ok, I've only got so much time before. I've got 30 minutes on this treadmill. That's my life. Ok, that's how I look at it. What can I get done within that time? I cannot get stuck in one pocket. So throughout my day is actually very, very strictly timed. Also, that allows me to do all these things and we can get to time management, all stuff, which is also critical. I believe that by going into areas that I do not understand, it allows, for you know, a lot more. It allows for brain plasticity in a way where I can start taking on more than a person that is only confined to this box. Okay, you can put me in almost any arena and I will figure it out. I will use all the tools, I will speak to people and I'll make sure that I ask the questions that most people aren't thinking about. Until I'm able to get it, the best way to actually understand any of this is to jump into it. I'll give you an example of this one, one example that always resonates when we're talking about not knowing anything about anything.

Ricky Patel: 1:41:22

I built my house in Coral Gables, Florida, and one night, when my oldest daughter was six months old, I would come downstairs and get her milk. So I came downstairs and I'm sitting around and I see wires hanging all throughout the property, and so when we're building, there was one for smoke detector, one for our speakers going in, one for the motion detector system, one for the carbon system and all this stuff everywhere, and so I was like what, why do I have all this junk everywhere? And so I started writing in the middle of the night and I was like we need something that can do all of this. So I started talking to my friends at Quailcom and all these things. And I was like, listen, someone's got to create this. Everyone's like, if you're thinking about it, someone else has done it. Ricky, stop, go to the law, don't do it, don't, don't, don't. And they kept doing that. So you know what I did.

Ricky Patel: 1:42:05

I realized I'm going to go ahead and try to get a patent on this. My downside is the cost and time that I put into it, but my upside is the amount I'm going to learn about creating a device working on a patent. Doing all of that, I hired the patent law firm in Miami that actually did Remember when the iPhone had the fingerprint to open it. So they actually did the patent for that. So I went, I used YouTube to learn about the

engineering, about the mirrors, the magnets, how it works, how to put this whole thing together, and I was like, look, it was fun doing it.

Ricky Patel: 1:42:40

I submitted it and I went back to practicing law and a year and a half later I got the United States patent to this device. Okay, why is that important? And now it's got like Amazon Elect and all the crazy stuff in there. But the fact, and that plaque still hangs, like on my wall as one of those things where it's like I had no idea what I was doing. But the enjoyment in getting involved in that you realize your downside is so capped by your upside you're able to learn about these incredible things and that goes to like. We mentioned building a factory. I didn't know anything about building a factory, but how are you supposed to learn that unless you actually go in?

Marcus Arredondo: 1:43:13

right, are you talking about Flow the Fort?

Ricky Patel: 1:43:18

device, the Fort device, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Marcus Arredondo: 1:43:21

So tell me, let's just use a minute here because I am curious. I don't know much about it, so tell us a little bit more about Fort.

Ricky Patel: 1:43:26

Fort device is super cool. Number one it's sexy. It's super, super beautiful. It took me about two years to go ahead and create a device, and so the way how it works is it's like a beautifully squared you know what? The nest devices, the smoke detector. It looks similar in shape to that, um, but the way how it works is, um, it's got motion sensors built into so you no longer have those ugly motion sensors in the corners of the room. Okay, uh, why I wanted those motion centers is imagine you're listening to music. So right now in your room you've got music playing. When you leave the room, the music's still playing. So I wanted the music to kind of follow you around, based on motion sensors. Okay, the second thing is I'm a light sleeper. When I wake up, if I hit the light breeze of the restroom, I'm up, I'm finished. So I want something yeah.

Ricky Patel: 1:44:06

So the moment I start walking, the motion sensors slowly turn a little ambient light and it knows where I'm going. So the ambient light follow the motion, okay. The next part about it was using Amazon Alexa. So that I could remember, this was in 2017. Before Now, you're like okay, ai and everything else. This was before that, so now you can go through. Hey, amazon Alexa, play this, play that whatever the music is. Your security system, instead of being in one corner, now protects everywhere because of permanent issues. You have to have a smoke detector. So I started creating all this stuff and I was like how do I produce the content of this? So it looks great. And so I went to all these marketing companies and everyone was charging a hundred to two hundred thousand dollars to create this video and so forth. And, uh, the same people that helped us with designing the barbershops in columbia columbia, not like

columbia, south carolina they did the entire video. You have to see this video. It is out of control. They had it's pretty dope.

Ricky Patel: 1:45:01

I'm looking at the website right now, it's pretty amazing and so they had her walking through, they tested it and they showed all the stuff and everything else. And I want to say the whole entire video cost me like four thousand bucks for the whole soup to nuts. There's also a part, marcus, where you have to understand that you have reached your limit. So I did everything that I could. I got the, I created the videos, I put it to the public. That way the patent is valid. You have to make sure that-

Marcus Arredondo: 1:45:26

Are you?

Ricky Patel: 1:45:26

manufacturing it at this point? No, no. And so here's the reason why you have to understand risk also. Okay, it's fun to learn all this stuff, but manufacturing electronic devices at this scale is something that a company that this is all they do should be doing. So it's also understanding what are your limits.

Ricky Patel: 1:45:45

Right the same in law, like in law, I can practice in almost any area, but I will not touch tax law. Okay, tax law is one of those things that's so complex that you get involved that there's a malpractice case, but then there are cases like criminal law cases. So my first criminal law case I ever had was one of the most publicized criminal cases, representing Dalvin Cook. That was something I understood, because you need to know the functionality of law in order to understand what happened there, right? So it is about knowing within your scope of what is too much. Manufacturing this device would have taken up my entire life. Yeah, it would have taken up everything to have done that. So I have have a patent right now and it's just sitting there and it's looking pretty.

Marcus Arredondo: 1:46:27

But you still get royalties. You've got claim on that technology and to the extent.

Ricky Patel: 1:46:33

So most of these smoke detectors that you know out there that are using Wi-Fi frequency, they owe me royalties for using my patent. Almost half of them, I would say probably 90% of them.

Marcus Arredondo: 1:46:45

That's fascinating. I think I want to talk about something that you had mentioned earlier in a second, which is agency the ability to sort of drop in, ask the right questions and identify where there might be an opportunity, use your resources and your own chutzpah to sort of move it forward. But before we do that, you had a record scratch. Just a second ago we got to talk about Galvin Cook, so I want you to give the audience some backstory on what happened, how you got involved, and then the case itself.

Ricky Patel: 1:47:13

Yeah, galvin Cook's case was really interesting. And what happened was before Galvin Cook, Jameis Winston was our quarterback Heisman winner, nfl pro bowler now, and he got in trouble with the law and they hired counsel in Tallahassee and there was a whole mess up there. And so Dalvin Cook the following year was up with a Heisman one of the highest rated collegiate football players in modern day history. And when this happens, a dear friend of mine called me and says listen, we need to find an attorney that can help Dalvin, but we want someone from Miami, we don't want anyone local in Tallahassee.

Ricky Patel: 1:47:53

Now I went to Florida State, so for me I was like, oh, I'd love to hear what's happening. You know it gives me, you know, some inside information on what's going to happen with my team, that I'm a diehard seminal, so I was like I get him on the phone. So, um, dalvin's agent, dalvin truck, dalvin's grandmother and dalvin's uh, father who passed away, they all, they all got on the phone and, um, dalvin rarely says anything, okay, and um, so, as I'm talking, by the way, why did they want somebody from miami?

Ricky Patel: 1:48:22

uh, because they wanted someone that they could trust, because dalvin's family's from miami, they want someone that they could trust that's outside of powhatan, right, so they could visit them and so forth. So, anyways, he gives me the whole story and I'm thinking I don't know this, this doesn't sound great, you know, and if he actually hit a woman or whatever it was, I don't want to be anywhere close to this. And so, right as I'm going to get off the phone, I was like, look, I'll find someone for you. Dalvin speaks up, and I'm a firm believer in everyone's life there's always a pivotal moment that something could have gone one direction or another. Everyone has. This was Dalvin. Okay, and whether he'll admit it or not, this part right here changed the course of his direction. He said he's like I just want to say where they're saying all that happened. There's cameras everywhere. If you're able to go and find those cameras, you'll see I never touched that woman. And I was like, oh shit, he definitely didn't do it. That changes things. That changed everything. Like you're telling me to go find the cameras.

Ricky Patel: 1:49:15

And so I was like listen, how about this? I'll handle this case. And so they were like what's your experience? And? And so they were like what's your experience? And I was like, yeah, I don't have experience in this matter. And they were like, okay, so how are you going to handle this? And they're like look at the news, like this is everywhere, like we need someone that can take care of it.

Ricky Patel: 1:49:30

And I was like, all right, let me explain what I'm going to do. I am a class action lawyer number one and I had the resources. And I'm looking the screen right now and I see um, the prosecutor is on the news with the two victims saying that he believes this story. And I was like this is what I'm gonna do. I'm gonna get involved and the first thing I'm gonna do is I'm gonna sue both of them, both those girls up there who stayed in this for defamation, and that way, I'm gonna shut them up first, okay. Number two is I'm going to go ahead and get as many investigators and everyone I know in so we can put this entire matter together and we'll be able to show exactly what happened and then we'll move forward. And so they're like, ok, fine, we're going to take the risk on that.

Ricky Patel: 1:50:12

So they agreed to hiring us and the agent said listen, you're going to get a call from ESPN in 30 seconds, 30 minutes. Ok, do not go over more than a minute or two minutes. I think that the the ESPN guy was Adam Schaefer. I believe he's like all you're going to say is Dalvin didn't do this. We're going to show that he is an innocent man and he will be back on the field and we're going to work with you, know the government, go ahead and and resolve. That's it. Ricky, knocking on the door. I've done hundreds of interviews with you. I was on the news all the time with BP right, this was in 2015, so still in. I've escalated my ability to deal with the media since I was 27.

Ricky Patel: 1:51:00

So, now I'm thinking like you don't have to tell me that, I know what I'm doing. So I get a call from ESPN. I get off the phone 45 minutes later. I'm like maybe I may have said it a little bit more than I probably should have said. I was like I'll be fine, I go home. I just had this feeling in my stomach. You probably shouldn't have said certain things, but I'm sure I'll be fine.

Ricky Patel: 1:51:23

Okay, so I go to sleep and I wake up the next morning and it was the most text messages to this day I've ever had in my life. I had like 400 people oh my gosh. And I was like oh shit. So I'm rubbing my eyes and I had people that went to Florida State with me from 2003. They're like, dear God, please say it with me from 2003. Now like dear god, please tell me, this isn't you and they'll paste.

Ricky Patel: 1:51:45

And so I clicked the espn app and the first article that popped up said dalvin cook did not touch woman, but attorney come. Attorney responds swinging. Until I was like, well, that's a hell of a subject line. And I start reading it and it goes into how it's like we are not settling this case. The prof judas run. We're going out to everyone, anyone that's involved. We will sue you, we're taking it down. I'm looking, it was like 16 missed calls from the agent, and so I just listened to one of the voicemails and it was like you, mother, I called you. The goal was to settle this out, to get it resolved, whatever else right. And so at this point I was like, okay, I'm calling my partner and he's like, listen, good luck, it's gonna win you. You have to win now, like everyone's talking about this, you know.

Ricky Patel: 1:52:31

And so I put some serious resources behind this, like marcus serious resources. I had a private plane that was taking me back and forth to tallallahassee from Miami. I had investigators. I found out the people that were witnesses, found out the stories that they were trying to set him up, everything. Then I asked for a speedy trial, and trial was one of those things. I don't get to go to trial as much anymore, but back then I was in court, I was in trial, enjoying it, and so we got the case. We went in there and, um, fast forward. We got a unanimous not guilty verdict. But that case right there. You could make a netflix documentary when we were doing oswald dear, which is like the, the, the picking off, uh, the jury in that panel, the prosecutor's daughter was in their dead pillow. Okay, they had. No, no, no.

Ricky Patel: 1:53:23

This is what, the night before our trial started, someone sent a tweet out saying it was Dalvin Cook at something twittercom, and it said hey, florida State Demons, I'm so sorry, I should have never done this. And it spread virally, and so it got back to me and so I was like wait, how could this happen at this time? And so I sent it over to this new paper I think it was like warchantcom, one of these and they put it out there and said this was not Dalvin Cook. And we got an anonymous tip that someone from the state attorney's office actually created the tweet. Think about who would blow up again, wow. So I present this in the beginning of the trial the judge loses his entire mind, okay, and grant sanction to get the state of florida for what they had done.

Ricky Patel: 1:54:07

So when I'm telling you that there was like like mishap after mishap after mishap on this, um, luckily we were able to, you know, get around what they're sitting. If he had just had a public defender, they would have set him up. It would have been an easy setup, and this was. There was a lot of political stuff going on in the background. The new head coach that came in wouldn't allow the prosecutor to go on the field like Bobby Bowden the old coach did, and all of this resulted in Deb going after his students.

Ricky Patel: 1:54:35

250,000 people watched that trial live and the one thing I knew I knew the facts, I knew the law, I knew how to handle trial. So I went in there prepared, but you know, when we talk about things going wrong, I was doing the opening statement. This is when the whole room is filled with media, everyone and I walk up and there's a beautiful picture that you'll be able to find where I go to the jury and I say ladies and gentlemen of the jury, and as I turn, like this, one of the flash photographers hit me with a flash and I remember I got blinded and I forgot my opening statement. Oh geez, and so what?

Marcus Arredondo: 1:55:12

I did was.

Ricky Patel: 1:55:13

I went quiet and I knew one of two things is going to happen this is going to be an embarrassment, or you make it seem purposeful. And so I kind of put my head down and I just shook my head and I went back out and they thought it was like an emotional pause and I was lucky. I would like get back into it. But these are things you have to be able to like jump, you've got out, yeah, quickly, quickly, without showing people there's something wrong. You see what I'm saying? Sure, but the deal I made with Dalvin, which people don't know Dalvin could not afford to pay for my legal services, okay, and I couldn't do the services for free because if I did back then it was a violation of the NCAA. So I made a deal with him. I said listen, I'm going to take this case when I win this case. I was on the board of the Nicholas Children's Hospital before I became the chairman. When I win this Christmas time, I need one hour from you to go and meet with all of our children, sign basketballs, footballs, everything else. So he shook my hand. After we won, we met at the Miami Children's now Nicholas Children's Hospital. It was Miami Children's. We meet up there. He spent three hours. I'd purchased, I think, 400 basketball football. He didn't just sign them, he played basketball with them. He plays football with them. He hung out with them for three hours.

Ricky Patel: 1:56:28

After that was done, I shook his hand and I called him back. He wouldn't hear from me ever again. The reason I did that is oftentimes attorneys like to associate themselves with these clients because it's a great reminder of them off the case that you had. But you have to flip the other side and say what is it that you remind that person of? Yeah, and so I have to tell myself you've got to wish this man luck and be done with it. Yeah, and he went on. He had a great career, uh, in in the nfl and and, uh, and he did his part. He showed up to the hospital when he did his part.

Marcus Arredondo: 1:57:00

Yeah that's a great story. Talk a little little bit about your charity work, because I think that's important. That's a through line in what you've done. I know that there's at least two others that you're a big part of and had founded. I'm wondering, if any, does it have to do with your children's books?

Ricky Patel: 1:57:19

Yeah, the children's books came after. Here's what happened. Books yeah, the children's books came after. Here's what happened. Okay, in 2010, when we started making money with the BP oil spill, the one thing I wanted to do was I wanted to make sure number one that I was saving. So what we did was we created trust for our family, which I couldn't account the money in the trust, we had some money for expense and so forth, and then I wanted to start allocating money to a charity.

Ricky Patel: 1:57:41

I looked around everywhere and I realized that giving back to children was important. To this day, people don't understand why, because no one in my family had any childhood illnesses. It's not like I had children that was sick or anything else. It's just things like. All the other things I looked at were usually the result of human behavior or what we do or situations we're placed in. You know, the homeless, the elderly. There's a lot of factors, but children are the ones that really cannot help what happens to them.

Ricky Patel: 1:58:10

So I got involved with the Miami Children's Hospital at a very early stage of my career 2010. And I wanted to be hands-on, in addition to writing checks. So we'll go there, we'll provide items, we start doing events and all these great things until 2016, when the hurricane devastated Haiti, and so when that happened there's a whole entire story on this, but the fast forward to it is I had friends and family because I decided to send items to Haiti. I had friends and family because I decided to send items to haiti. I had friends and family on social media. I use social media a con for for charitable work. The reason for it is people like yourself would not know how to give right in certain areas, and then you see and you're like, oh, I trust ricky, I know them, he'll be able to get these items over to gateway. Yeah, yeah, yeah. And so friends and families start driving over from Texas and everywhere else bringing all these items, and we had containers worth of items, and so I thought to myself if I send this stuff to Haiti and it gets stolen, it's going to be tragic. It's going to be one of those things that we look back and say we really should have done more to help with this part, right? So I decided I'm going to go over there. So I partnered up with an individual, pastor Jome, who is like a brother to me Haitian and he started a small orphanage over there with his mom back when she was a kid, and they kept doing this, taking care of children and so forth, and I was like, let's go there, let's take all the items. I flew to Haiti and it changed my car life.

Ricky Patel: 1:59:50

Okay, this was in the midst of like full-on chaos. I had a class action in india, we were finishing the bp oil spill, I had a class action dealing with the koreans on an electronics company, and so, in addition to that, I'm now in haiti, where my partner is like you cannot, cannot go there. He's like you will get kidnapped, like the security protocols. And everyone, literally everyone, except my ex-wife, were like you cannot go. She was the only one that was like be safe, Like you figure out the protocol, be safe when you're going out there. But if this is something that you're being called to do, go going out there, but if this is something that you're being called to do, go.

Ricky Patel: 2:00:25

So we went out there and I remember the second day, we were at this one house where the kids were, and so I was like I'll rent this house and I'll rent the house next door, so we'll combine them so we can have 42 children.

Ricky Patel: 2:00:34

I'll bring on 10 staff chefs, cooks, security and so forth to help out maintaining this place. These are literally my children, so I have to figure out exactly how to do it. And I remember the second morning they were banging on our garage door. We opened it up and there was a pickup truck that backed in and they dumped out three children. Okay, it was the first time I've ever seen children without what looked like a soul or it was like yellow eyes, there was nothing going on and they'd been thrown in the back of a truck like old wood. Okay, and so my team and I had the greatest team ever. I could not do any of this stuff, by the way, without my team. They've been loyal to me for over 15 years in the world. Okay, my team immediately wants these kids and I was trying to stop them.

Ricky Patel: 2:01:25

I was like you don't know if they have disease, you don't know what they have right now and what we may do is we may spread this to our other children, let me get doctors in, and so forth. So my team's like, fine, let's wait, okay. So I turn around, I'm speaking with the pastor, with speak with someone else to go get a team's coming with medical. I turn around, the kids are gone. These three kids are gone. My team is like whatever, like we'll say whatever ricky needs to hear. And they cooked them, they were bathing them, they were holding them, they're doing all this. So I was like all right, look, I still have to get them checked out, but let them do what they want. No sign of like these kids like it was just like clear eye and if I don't know what happened to them. So doctors come in, they check them out, everything else, thank god, everything was fine. There wasn't, there wasn't any diseases or anything else, just malnutrition, all these other things. And what they had done was for nine hours they drove from one part of the island over and left it in the sun, in the back, and these were people that didn't have parents and that was a church that drove them over and said if you can't take care of them, we'll leave them outside, oh my God. So we're going through all this stuff, and that night was the one night. So every month we do a birthday party. So we can't do a birthday party for every child, it's just impossible to do. So we do a birthday party once a month and that's for everyone. Okay, we do a big happy birthday. We found one place that makes ice cream Obviously there's no refrigerators, and so that's all there. And we were able to capture on video the first time that these three girls tried ice cream, tried something cold and tried something with sugar all three of those things at one time. And let me tell you something that moment I will remember for the last breath that I take, because their eyes closed when they opened up. They'll smile, and so, from that point on, it was this is our place now.

Ricky Patel: 2:02:59

And so we were out there every six to eight weeks, providing resources, food, education, everything that we could, and that resulted in us creating my foundation called it's for the Kid. It's for the Kid. My family foundation, ricky Patel Foundation funds it, but we have six full-time board members. 100 cents on the dollar goes direct to each of the calls. What that means is if you say hey, ricky, I really want to help out with your project deal with foster kids. There's no place where you just write a check. That means that now you help us to buy items for the bags, the actual bags and so forth. There's no wastage, there's no office spaces, there's none of that and yet the cost that we do have for storage and insurance and all that stuff that's all paid for privately okay, by myself, but we started doing that and the amount of children if you ever go to our website, you're talking hundreds of thousands of children that was impacted.

Ricky Patel: 2:03:49

Now, like we have a board meeting every Tuesday and this is also important. This is something that people can learn in business. Whenever you have a board and the board meets up once every three, four months and so forth, you have this phase like this where everyone's excited when they leave and then they get back to life and they go. I've made this a point for the past decade my board, no matter where we are in the world, at 5 pm on Tuesday, which is why we were cut off during our last meeting we jump on there. It doesn't matter if there's nothing to discuss, we jump on there, and it has kept us as a tight-knit group and we are perpetually finding ways to improve. That has kept us from never, ever, ever, having to remove or have someone leave when our group is together. They've been together from the beginning and we accomplish great things. We've been able to accomplish stuff in the foster care space, in the children from orphanages would take care. We've dealt with issues with you know when, George Floyd, when, when the, the murder occurred in 2020, when there was the black lives matter and the blue life matter. All stuff I don't get involved in debate. Debates are for your ego. What I, what I like to get involved in is in is who is being impacted and how can we help.

Ricky Patel: 2:05:04

And we realized the amount of children that are being impacted in underserved communities due to either police brutality and so forth, and I realized no police officer wakes up and says today I'm going to go and be a bad person. That's not what happens. The thing that happens is there's not communication. Police officers have a fear of what happens in communities. The communities have fear of the police officer, so we create bridge the gap. I received the Martin Luther King award for this um.

Ricky Patel: 2:05:29

This allowed through our charity. We provide police officers with items every single week for them to go into underserved communities and just pass them out so they're no longer it's the police, it's like, oh, there's ow, they're blob, this blob, and they now start to get to know each other, right. So these are probably like. This is probably like 1% of what the foundation does, but this is my legacy, like this is truly my legacy is finding unique, create ways with brilliant people to give back, make changes. We can't fix everything, but it allows us to make changes and that's true changes and that's true it's for the kids. And then Nick was children, hopped well with the chairmock, which I learned a tremendous amount about things that I like and think that we can do better. And, as of this year, I'm now with the Make-A-Wish Foundation board, which I'm extremely excited about because of the great work, once again, that Make-A-Wish does.

Marcus Arredondo: 2:06:16

How do you determine? I want to this is amazing, but we're coming up on time and I want to make sure we touch on another subject or two but how do you determine what projects to get into in the philanthropy world, I mean within your foundation? It sounds like you're sort of ad hoc. In what you are finding, there's obviously consistency, but what are the principles behind determining what you get involved with?

Ricky Patel: 2:06:40

The last Tuesday of every month, anyone can get on Zoom with my board. They have 15 minutes to pitch to me under our Pitch Perfect project ways to help children, what they need resources, health assistance, whatever it may be. When they pitch it to us, my group looks at it and says what is the core? Number one does it impact children, okay. Number two is this something that we can help? And number three what is the app? Is this something that we can help? And number three what is the app? Okay, and from there we have no red cape. There's no, you know, entities that are preventing us. We literally make the decision and within 48 hours we deploy and help out however we can. So that's the core. It's our group. I trust all of that group with this. If I'm not there, any one of my group now can tell you what Ricky would think or what Ricky would do, yeah that's amazing.

Marcus Arredondo: 2:07:23

So something that you've demonstrated throughout, which is I wanted to go back to, which is agency, and I define agency as effectively, you know, somebody of high agency can be dropped in any location and identify a way to get out of it, to get home, to get resources, whatever it is. And I sort of want to talk about Puerto Rico, because I know that you've called that home for some time. You identified some opportunities and have done a lot of work on behalf of the government there, so I wanted to give you sort of free reign here to talk about Puerto Rico and what it means to you and what you've done there.

Ricky Patel: 2:07:54

Yeah, so number one. Puerto Rico is probably the only place I can say that always felt like home. It still feels like home. I have deep, deep, deep love for that place. And how could I get to Puerto Rico's crazy? We were finishing a class action lawsuit which, after we settled it and this was a very successful class action the electronics manufacturer had actually prevented me from not only saying the two letters that make their company name, but also from writing those two letters on any possible location. A very, very, very prominent Korean company that is known worldwide and we had an extremely successful class action.

Ricky Patel: 2:08:33

While I was in the middle of that, we were wrapping up BP also and my partner messages me on a weekend. He's like, hey, he sends out this flyer for something called Dorado Beach. Dorado Beach, ritz-carlton, missouri, and I was like, are you going on vacation there? And he's like, hey, they have this great program for tax incentives and so forth for us. He's like, I'm going to go check it out. And I'm like, okay, great, I'm not thinking anything. I'm so deep in, like what, we're closed out two classes, like it was just a, an absolute, like it was some of the best times I had, that at that time it looked like a shit show, like we were just in so many directions.

Ricky Patel: 2:09:06

I was in our houston office so I was staying out there working over there, okay. And um, so he goes out there and he calls him. He's like, hey, I need you to get over here next weekend. And so I was like, dude, I cannot, I don't have time for vacation. He's like, no, no, I you to. So he asked me and my ex-wife to go over there. We fly over there most beautiful place. And I was like, yeah, this is great vacation stuff.

Ricky Patel: 2:09:26

And I was like, listen, he spoke with the government officials and the department treasury over there and they said if we brought our wealth to Puerto Rico and maintained our residence, that we lived there for half the year, we would pay 0%, 0% capital gains, dividends and interest Zero. Okay, so there's no taxes that we would be paying on that. Any new money that we made from the United States that we brought over, we would pay like 4% on it was the service. So, for example, if I had a marketing company in the United States and I was in Puerto Rico and I was doing all the marketing for Puerto Rico, for the United States, that money that came in, we will pay 4% on. This was, back then, okay. And so I was like okay, what are you thinking? He's like, well, we've got all this money that come in, let's go ahead and bring it over there and let's stop, you know. And um, and so I was like this is radical, like really radical, and we both thought about it. We're like the two directions we can keep our foot on the pedal. Wake up. We can be 80 years old. We would have built the greatest law from anyone's ever seen. Or? Number two is we? We actually do what you're saying. You want to have the big family. I'm burned out fully. I want to say within 45 days, we had moved to Puerto Rico. Okay, we moved out there. We knew nothing about anything. I mean nothing. We couldn't figure out anything.

Ricky Patel: 2:10:46

Puerto Rico, everything moves at a snail's pace and I was able to finally get healthy again. I was on the beach every day, doing yoga and meditation and eating right, and I was able to get rid of a lot of the junk. That happened before. The office in Miami was still running for a bit by itself. To wrap things up, that was in 2016, but 2017 is when Hurricane Maria destroyed the island. It was the most powerful hurricane in over 200 years. When that happened, I remember telling my partner. I was like do not tell anyone that we can help flee. We're finally enjoying this place. Everything's going well at this time.

Ricky Patel: 2:11:29

So when the hurricane destroyed the island, people who were on our decree were told that we're not allowed to stay in Puerto Rico because of the devastation, but we're not allowed to go back to the United States. And so the United States Department of Treasury gave us this note that said hey, for the next six months you can live anywhere except outside, like anywhere outside of the United States. So if you want to go to Puerto Rico, you can, but you cannot be here, otherwise you're decreed to do that. So we moved to Italy, we moved to Florence. So I'm in Florence and I'm telling my partner please do not tell anyone, we can help. I said we're fine, we're fine.

Ricky Patel: 2:12:05

A couple of weeks later he calls me up and he's like listen, I just met with the governor, they want to meet with us. And I'm like oh, this is where it starts. And I remember I flew into Puerto Rico, we made a little cafe and they were like look, we need some help. These insurance companies are denying all these claims. And so initially I was like, okay, that's fine, what we'll do is I'll go, I'll meet with the insurance companies, we'll schedule meetings for them and explain to them this is what's going to happen. So I remember walking into meetings and I was pounding my chest Listen, let's do the right thing. Just pay

them out. I understand you can't pay \$100,000, but pay them out. I understand you can't pay a hundred cents on dollar, but pay them out. Give an offer, don't just deny it. I was like, if not, we're going to have to file bad faith against you, we'll get statutory fee. And I'm just like and they're like you do whatever you want, this isn't the mainland, this isn't the United States mainland like whatever you want to do.

Ricky Patel: 2:12:53

So I go back. We had built our law firm in Puerto Rico now and the reason for that law firm in Puerto Rico was to handle all the other matters. We still had the NFL concussion case and all these other cases. So they were managing all this stuff from Puerto Rico. And I was like listen, this is what we're going to do, we're going to file this, we're going to file this, we're going to file this. And I've never seen a group start shaking as much as they did and they were like, mr, we have a problem because we have billions of dollars worth of government entities that we're representing right now and I can't go back to go and be like, hey, did you guys know this? Did you guys know that it's the law? I was like this is what we're going to do so.

Marcus Arredondo: 2:13:33

Let me just ask a quick question on this. So they're not governed by federal law? It wasn't federal law.

Ricky Patel: 2:13:39

Okay.

Ricky Patel: 2:13:40

So what we're dealing with is we're dealing with state law for what's happening with the insurance company. Okay, okay, yeah. And so each state has their own statutory fee laws and so forth, and that allows them to mandate what happens with bad faith and statutory fees and so forth. Okay, so I would say, this is how I'm going to stay safe At this point. Remember how we're talking about when things fall apart. If this happened to me in my 20s, I would have gone into a bunker and you would have never seen me again. This would have been horrific.

Ricky Patel: 2:14:06

And so I went through a couple of days of saying what are we going to do here? And so I was like this is what I'm going to do. I'm going to write bad faith and statutory fee laws and then I'm going to submit it to our colleagues in Congress and when it's denied, I can go to the government officials say look, this was my plan. We tried to do this, we tried to do this, we tried this, but this didn't work. And at least it shows that there was a plan in place, okay. And so, as I'm walking in there, I'm listening to a podcast and it was talking about in 2016, donald Trump that kept saying fake news, fake news, fake news, fake news. And I was like you know what? We may actually be able to use something here.

Ricky Patel: 2:14:45

And so what I did was I turned around, I did turn it in, I did turn the bill over to our friends in Congress. We had this local radio station and I spoke to them. I was like listen, this is what I want you to do. There is a law that is about to be passed, but it is going to be shut down in the next few days because lobbyists have fled Puerto Rico from the insurance companies and they paid off all these people to not pass it. I was like

it's horrific what's happened. So they went and they shared this and it just spread and everyone's talking about it.

Ricky Patel: 2:15:14

And so when I showed up three days later the congressman I'd love to mention his name, but let's just keep it generic for right now the congressman I sit with him and I was like hey, listen, here's the bill. He's like close the door. Very much in this suspicion. He's like look, I know there are people saying that this happened. I want to let you know that they haven't paid me up. And then he's like but down the hall. Blah, blah, blah, they've been paid off. Now how do I know that's not true? Because the lobbyists have no idea. There were no lobbyists, no one was involved, okay, but everyone's pointing fingers.

Ricky Patel: 2:15:47

And so if you look at the voting, it went and it was completely 100% voted in our favor, unless there was, like, people that were not present for voting. Okay, so we got that whole thing passed, because people are so afraid that if they vote against it, that the people of Puerto Rico are going to look at this and say, hey, you got paid off. So we got it put through before lobbies got in. The law got approved and instead of it being used retroactively, because you can't pass a law and then say, okay, now we're going to apply it.

Ricky Patel: 2:16:17

In the past, the way that I had it written was starting today, no harm, no foul for what happened in the past at all, but starting today, there's 60 days for you to go ahead and make a determination on the insurance claim, and so if you don't do that now in the next 68, then you will be substituted to the new fact-taker saturation laws that have been placed. Bad dates and statutory fee laws have been placed, and so that was our fun little. That was our way of leaving Puerto Rico, by giving something back and doing something that was good and so forever. Now, anytime that there's bad dates and statutory fee, it will be something due to us saying thank you to the island that we care deeply about. That's great.

Marcus Arredondo: 2:16:58

All right, I'll end this with two questions. Well, one I'm always interested in what other entrepreneurs' days are like, so what's like an ideal sort of baseline day for you? How do you structure your days?

Ricky Patel: 2:17:26

doesn't work for everyone, right. When I wake up until about 10 am, there's nothing scheduled for business. Everything is health, okay. So that includes working out, that includes cold plunges, that includes saunas, that includes infrared therapy. It includes anything and everything focused on my health. After I get done with that, I have about 30 minutes to make sure that I'm getting adequate protein, nutrition and so forth in. Okay, but from 12 on till probably six, I have everything scheduled back to back to back.

Ricky Patel: 2:17:51

I have two assistants. I can't do any of this stuff without them. I have one from my law firm and I have the other one, that is my executive assistant. My executive assistant handles all the things that a person can handle without having to make decisions like I would make. So, for example, anything with automation,

things that have to get done, errands, corporate, whatever it is. She works with my corporate attorney on my stuff, she works with my accountant, she works with my bookkeepers, all that stuff. It saves me a tremendous amount of time.

Ricky Patel: 2:18:18

So when I'm working, I make sure that I'm not messing around at all between that time. So the key to it is number one is making sure that you calendar out a week in advance, okay, making sure that those pockets of time that you're working, you are not screwing around, that you are actually working, don't mess around, and that way you can get a lot done. Remember, there's about 30 companies that I have. I have the law firm, I have my foundation, I've got the kid. I'm in an amazing relationship. There's all these things that are out there where it's like, if I don't pocket things correctly, one of them is going to fail. And it goes back to what we said in the beginning about harmony. If you don't have these things in place, something falls off and it can throw you off balance.

Marcus Arredondo: 2:19:03

Yeah, that's great. Last question how are you measuring success now?

Ricky Patel: 2:19:07

In happiness. In happiness, yeah, absolutely yeah. That's probably the best way to put this is I'm measuring success in happiness. How much of my day am I spending doing things that not only am I enjoying and are productive, but also bring me happiness? That is truly it, and this is something that you will hear from people as they get older. Okay, the ones that are stuck in the confinement of the box of I need to create things outside of myself. Eventually, there's only so much that these dopamine receptors can keep up with, right, and then you start like falling down.

Marcus Arredondo: 2:19:44

Yeah, thanks so much, ricky. This has been amazing. Appreciate it Awesome. Thank you.