

Braden Wallake 00:00

If books you've written, I didn't get a chance to check them out, like what made you want to start putting in? What were the other books? Like?

Jacob Morgan 00:06

Yes, I wrote a book on employee experience or read a book on the future of work. And my most recent book was called the future leader, where he interviewed 140 CEOs. And the next book, which is coming out in mid next year is called the vulnerable leader. And I interviewed already 100 of the Fortune 500 CEOs on there from a lot of big companies. And vulnerability is a really big topic that comes up. But it's also a really hard topic for a lot of leaders. Because sometimes, so give you a little bit of context how this came about. So I was writing a chapter in the book. And one of the chapters was around what happens if you think you're being vulnerable, but other people don't perceive it that way? And like, what do you do? And I was like, I wonder if there any, like good stories out there of people, you know, where that's happened. And then literally, right at that time, I saw this article pop up, and I'm like, What the hell? He's like, Oh, this is like exactly what's happening. So I reached out. And I mean, I have a lot of other questions on vulnerability for you, too. But I just thought it was very strong.

Braden Wallake 01:12

Yeah, that is, like Google was listening.

Jacob Morgan 01:15

I didn't know. I know. I saw a push record on that camera too. And then so we can do a few things with this. I was gonna release it as a podcast and then include some of your story in the book and, you know, get the word out as much as we can.

Braden Wallake 01:32

However, you want to use it. That's fine with me. Okay, cool.

Jacob Morgan 01:35

So let me make sure I get your name and title and all that sort of stuff. Right. So the right way to see your last name is Braden, right?

Braden Wallake 01:44

First Name Braden. Yeah, yes.

Jacob Morgan 01:46

And what's the right what is your last name? Wallach Wallach. Okay. And I have co hyper social and CEO of hypersphere.

Braden Wallake 01:55

That's right. Okay, cool. Yeah, mostly.

Jacob Morgan 01:59

Yeah. Okay, cool. Well, then I'll jump right in, and we'll just have a fun conversation.

Braden Wallake 02:06

I didn't know what camera you're using. Because I always think that my camera looks great. And now I think that my camera looks like crap compared to yours. So it said

Jacob Morgan 02:14

DSLR camera. My brother's really into like film and photography. So he he told me which camera to buy.

Braden Wallake 02:22

Okay, I'm using a mirrorless. So I'm either more or less than DSLR to

Jacob Morgan 02:28

Sony A seven s three.

Braden Wallake 02:31

Yes. Okay. I know. I know the camera. Makes sense. Mine's like a Sony Alpha 6000. So like much older?

Jacob Morgan 02:38

Oh, yeah. My brothers would be cannabis.

Braden Wallake 02:41

Oh, just curious.

Jacob Morgan 02:42

Are you cool? I'll jump right into the questions I have for you. Sure. You can see and hear me okay. Right. All right, cool. Hey, everyone. Welcome to another episode of leading the future of work. Braden, thank you for joining me today. Thanks for having me. I'm excited. Yeah, so I'm really curious on a lot of different themes. But before we get into some of the vulnerability stuff, one of the things that I haven't really heard you talk too much about is just kind of your background. So before we talk about the things that have been happening to you over the past few weeks, tell us a little bit about you, your businesses, how did you get involved with what you're doing?

Braden Wallake 03:24

Yeah. So I come from my parents divorced when I was young, and my both of them remarried and I ended up that kind of ended up on two different tracks one is the very much go to school get a good job work your way up the corporate ladder, that kind of thing the other parents are very entrepreneurial, they've owned golf courses and businesses and real estate so I've kind of had both in my brain for a long time so when I go to high school went to college several different times dropped out several different times because I just couldn't I couldn't stay stay with it. My dad who was our general side was always like you know start your own business or your business get in real estate and real estate so ended up with a whole bunch different jobs to kept getting so bored with all of them because they were

just like manual work like jobs and I was like, okay, cool. Well, let's pay the bills but like this isn't very fun. So my last job that I had was at a bank as a teller I was actually just talking about this they I had some back pain from like, I don't know I tried to jump into a bush when I was a kid and I jumped over the bush and kind of like compressed my back had like back pain ever since. So working as the as the teller they kind of told me that I kind of told me that my boss has told me that I wasn't allowed to sit while customers were up there like I could sit when the customers weren't there but the desk was kind of short like I'm six one the desk was like good for like, I don't know five foot eight people who kind of like hunched over and I would leave work so many days like in tears I was in such pain. And I was and I would tell them they're like you still got to stand up and the customer is a hero like okay, this makes no sense like that doesn't make me do my job it's not like I'm wearing like, you know anything that has like swear words on it like you're telling me like the customers percent Should have me is more important than like the pain that I'm in. Because I was like, alright, that's the last job that I'm ever working. let anybody tell me how much I valued as a person, which they were basically telling I've valued very, very little. So then I started on the entrepreneur track. At first, I was just hustling, I was buying and selling cell phones on Craigslist, found ones that were underpriced, or people were just trying to sell them quickly because they needed to, I don't know, whatever reason they needed to get the cash so I buy him and then sell them like same day, I think at 100 bucks, like profit a day and I was like in cash, and I was just hustling through. And it was it was great. And I was like, well I'm working like an hour a day. I'm just sitting here like at home hanging out and then I'm just going to go meet somebody by their phone make sure it all checks out. It's all good to go and I'm gonna go list it make it a better listing, put more effort into it and resell it and it was so fun sounds like the first real stab of like owning my own business, I guess or like do my own hustle profits I would say then I got into kind of some sales careers like I'm from like a from there I wanted like b2b sales. I was doing sales for Aflac sales like commercial construction as well and residential construction. Started doing door to door knocking started doing some cold calling was great. I made a lot of money doing that, which is fine. Then I started the old hyper social got into Instagram marketing ended up like spending all the money that I made from sales. Kind of blowing through it like idiot, got my car repossessed? I bought an Audi for like whatever reason I thought it was a baller bought an Audi got that repossessed got kicked out of my apartment and started like we all have a schedule like my last 150 bucks. Out of like a Kia Sportage like a 9095 Kia Sportage that was like in terrible, terrible shape. I ended up getting an offer from a hotel in Dominican actually to come stay for free in exchange for marketing services, like just helping them with their marketing, which is really cool. And I was like, yeah, so me and my dog up in laughs spent the whole year doing that actually, like two months in Dominican and four months in Ecuador, four months in Costa Rica and like, wow, I went to Nicaragua. Yes, it was pretty awesome. So like it goes through he goes in an Airbnb on the beach, like from our front door to being in the water was like 32nd Walk across the beach. And so did that didn't pay rent for the entire year, just you know, help people with their marketing their Instagram and that kind of stuff. While I was doing that, I realized I couldn't do the cold calling wasn't growing hyper social immediately how I wanted it to so I got into LinkedIn. I was like, Okay, let me take some of the things I knew from my old sales careers. Let's apply it towards selling what I have here, because I couldn't cold call people from Costa Rica number in the US because they're my clients were in like expectable to answer. So got into LinkedIn started doing that. Fast forward, almost, I swear. Fast forward a couple of years Instagram paint their algorithm, I started doing it most of my clients were like, I don't know, fashion bloggers and stuff like that. And I'm like, not fashion person or Blogger, either guys, so you know, t shirt and shorts kind of guy. So my girlfriend graduated

from Ohio State got a Master's, I said, Hey, we're gonna get a van. Already a full time we're gonna switch out hyper social operates, we're going to help others do their LinkedIn, you know, with their b2b side, and we bought a van. We've been living it for the last two and a half years, we're getting ready to sell it now. We've limited it full time. But that's two and a half years traveling throughout the US and Mexico. And wow, that's the background of where we got to today.

Jacob Morgan 08:16

It's crazy. So from what I recall reading, you have your you have like, what, 15 or 17 employees. Hyper social was it right? That's right. And then 18 now Yeah, okay. And it sounds like what what happened kind of the the pandemic made things a little tough for you guys, right.

Braden Wallake 08:38

The pandemic overall was for business. It was good. Okay. Grateful for in any way. But because people had could do less in person selling and less knocking on doors like it made them maybe, and more zoom calls. One, it made it easier for us to meet with people because we're doing selling via zoom. Now, two people realize they couldn't just use the same methods. People weren't answering their phones nearly enough, you know, nearly as much during COVID For cold calling people were trying to see what things they could do. So actually, on the business side, when COVID hit it first, we lost like a few clients like right when I hit all the clients have pulled back their budget. But then the influx of clients or people who like figured it out from there, like it was our like business boom, because we got

Jacob Morgan 09:20

it. So what happened a few weeks ago, it sounded like, from from what I gather online, you had to let go of a couple employees, right?

Braden Wallake 09:29

That's right. Yeah. So we grew hyper social with kind of monthly managed services, similar way to a lot of agencies operate, you know, 500 to 1000 bucks a month is how we were growing. But for like, scaling side, we were putting a lot of money into addition hiring additional people, you know, where I wanted to kind of take care of the team that we had, like want to make sure that they were taking care of making sure that they were making plenty of money and we were giving them the benefits all the stuff they needed. So I was like, I reposition that We did it where it was kind of more doing a larger upfront deal with our clients were but then we were basically teaching them how to do what we would do monthly, and then hand it off to them after that. Okay, but with a lot of the clients that we're working with, it wasn't selling enough so that then they were just basically paying us for like software at that point. And so then our human costs, were doesn't necessarily have to have like a start and an end date with clients, we could take on several, and then it would, then it would end and it would still make some like recurring, smaller recurring from there. But it just didn't take that well. So then, you know, revenue could have gone backwards. And I kept like, sticking with that, like, I know, we're gonna really close deals on this, I know, it's gonna be worth it. Eventually, we decided to switch back, but the revenue at that point, and we were just closing up those deals that decided that these positions weren't necessary now for where we got that.

Jacob Morgan 10:47

Okay. And then so you had to let go some employees and you know, people who are not familiar with the story, I guess, the way that I read about it online is you had to go through layoffs, and you're like, Oh, two or three people, right. And you ended up putting a picture of yourself, you were very emotional about going through these layoffs. And you put a picture of yourself in tears on LinkedIn, which I'm sure you had no idea what would happen after it's happened. And then all of a sudden, it gets picked up in like every meter, every major media publication, everyone's talking about it. It goes over LinkedIn, you get 1000s 1000s, I think last time I looked at had around 11,000 comments from people around the world. And it was nuts. Like I was even walking my dog the other day, and I saw my neighbor, Jerry. And I was like, Hey, did you hear about this on? LinkedIn, he's like, Yo, we have popped up on my feed that that CEO, like, literally, everybody's heard about this. My mother in law who's visiting us, from Savannah, Georgia. She was in the kitchen the other day, and she's like, Jacob, did you read this article in The New York Times about the CEO that put up and I'm like, Oh, my God, it to me, it was the equivalent of remember, a couple years ago, somebody was doing an interview and their kids like walked into a live interview in the background. And that became like a viral video. This to me was like, equivalent of that of how quickly and how much it spread. And the fascinating thing is, I was going through the comments, it seemed like, a lot of people were very, um, you get some ridiculously angry comments on that post. So what were you thinking? Like, as you were seeing this, and people were talking about you, it must have been pretty upsetting for people to say, Oh, he's a narcissist. He wants people to pity him. He's a victim, like what was going through your mind when you basically saw the world trash talking you?

Braden Wallake 12:48

Yeah. So the one thing I will say is that, the whatever, when nobody, none of the news articles can see it, what no one else can see is the amount of messages I got in my inbox that were like, straight to me. And those were 99.9% Positive supporting, thank you for this. Glad you did that. So there was that these like getting me through it at the beginning. So the first one, I made the post and I'm sitting here like the rest of the evening, watching it get viral or and at first, there's a couple of trolls that I was putting a lot of time with one of the comments at the beginning and I was like, Okay, there's a lot going on. But the next day, when all of like the really the hate, I feel like the hate really started next day, or excuse me, um, I kind of just sat there and, and but I knew that what I posted came from, with good intentions. Like, I'm always a big believer, like, you can do the wrong thing, based on good intentions. And I think that that's still better than doing the right thing based on bad intentions. So like, I know, my intentions were pure. I knew the posts came from my heart, I knew that I wasn't trying to be narcissistic, I knew I wasn't trying to off the you know, put down what the employees that I liked, or feeling, I would start saying that my stuff was more than likes, I knew all this stuff was false. So I think that's what got me through is like, sure people can say what they want about me. I know that they're making judgment based on how much text that was in one picture. And they think they know, they know everything about me already. And they don't and just chatting with my with the one of the boys that like go about after a yo he had seen it and like he was like he made his own post of like, I only want to work for people who work like Braden, or you know, have a copy like, right and like that's how I want to work with leeches like that. And then just talking to my employees and watching them like, go through the comments like I got it with my marketing manager, Lizzy and she was just going to call and she's like, this is making me so mad. And I was like, that's what matters more to me than what random people from what wherever

they are. Whatever they do are making about me. Yeah, so honestly, none of the none of the negativity has affected me at all, like my self esteem or way I would change things or anything.

Jacob Morgan 14:54

Well, that's awesome. I mean, I'm really glad to hear that because, you know, in the world of social it's very easy for neg activity like, really bring people down? Well, let's start a little bit with how you were feeling when you put that up. So I mentioned before I hit record that I'm working on a book on vulnerability and leadership. And I'm really interested in a lot of like the psychology behind it, and how people perceive vulnerability versus how the person being vulnerable is experiencing it. So let's talk a little bit about you. What was going on in your mind how you were feeling? Why did you decide to put up that picture of yourself crying and writing that emotional post about having to let somebody go?

Braden Wallake 15:33

Yeah. So at the beginning of COVID, so my mom owns a sports and fitness for kids business. So she or she and our employees go around to different preschools, and they'll do different like soccer and football and stuff. So she had to lay off her entire staff. Oh, wow, she ended up on antidepressants because of how, because there was nothing all the principles closed when COVID COVID hit hard, it's all appraisal report, she had no business. So she had a low, every single one of employees go she end up going on antidepressants because of that. So when I was sitting here, so I was sitting there at my desk, after I so I let go, one of the employees, Emily, my girlfriend, business partner, she had a one on one conversation with the other employee based on who was working, whatever relationships were with them. So we just kind of like, cried together for a second. And like we wanted to use it as like motivation like never have to do this again, like we never wanted to let an employee go because of hyper social or because of leadership. Like it should be if we're letting employees go, oh, it should be because they're not a fit for us. So they're not performing like that. So we want to let people go. So I was sitting there, back down on my desk sat there, like just thinking about what's next for the employees and like how much like that's up turning their lives. And like, these are employees that worked with me for two years. And we've worked, we've been on many calls together, one of them we visited on our way back home, we stopped in and we basically parked our van in his driveway and worked with him for a couple days, we got to meet his wife at the meet his kids. And just thinking about like what was next for them started like sobbing at that point. finally calmed down a little bit. Just wanted to get I'm very personally like to get my emotions out there. Because I think like for leadership, like it leaves clarity of thought, because I've seen a lot coming from the Midwest Center for Ohio, there's a lot of like, we're almost like taught to be passive aggressive to be polite. Like we're taught to like, bottle our emotions up. So we can be polite to people, but I've seen that destroy relationships. And I've been passive aggressive before. And I've watched it like it made me build resentment towards people. And I've watched that happen. So when I started, like just releasing my emotions, like get that sadness out, let it let it be gone. Now I can make a lot better decisions going forward. Yeah. So very much on believer of that. Thought about all the layoffs that were going on recently, all the big layoffs, you know, where people are very upset. And when they're letting go 900 1500 employees at once, we realize there's probably a lot of small businesses, like myself, like my mom, who are letting go of employees that they do care about. And it's not just getting on a zoom call with 900 people, you can't see all their faces and you don't know their families and that kind of stuff. Like there are a lot of small businesses like us who we wouldn't be where we are without these employees. Well, I thought I would put myself as vulnerable out there, not as a pity party.

But for all the other people who are going through this or might have to go through it or have been through it realize, like, you're not alone in this. Like it's not you. And then CEOs and companies and they do not know their employees, like I'm willing to be vulnerable so you can feel less alone and decisions and the pain that you're going through.

Jacob Morgan 18:37

One of the things that I found passing, so obviously, this was a very vulnerable experience for you. And I can imagine, yeah, I mean, I didn't hear about the context of your mom before, that's obviously not mentioned in any of the articles. I'm sure a lot of people just wrote things just on their perceptions of you that actually speaking to you, which, you know, Curse of social media, right? So, I'm trying to imagine, right, I mean, here you are, you're in a very vulnerable state, you're very upset, you're having to let go of somebody who you know you've worked with for a couple of years. And your intention is to put something out online to kind of be supportive or to lend support to other people who are having to go through this. So you're feeling vulnerable, you want to show that vulnerability with others to kind of create that connection, let people know that, you know, they're not the only ones going through this. And all of a sudden, you get these crazy angry comments of like, you're a narcissist. I mean, I don't even know if people can go on to your LinkedIn page to see just all the like insane things that people were saying. Some of them were just pretty. I don't know what's a nice way to put it there. They were just rude and mean and just hurtful comments. So what was going through your mind as you're seeing like, wait a minute, here I am trying to be vulnerable, but people are not that vulnerability is not connecting with other people. What was going through your mind when you saw that there was this big gap between and how you were feeling and how people were actually responding or taking it. You know, they were misinterpreting how you were actually feeling? Yeah,

Braden Wallake 20:10

um, I think a lot of people have a lot of, like I think COVID has, and all of the sitting, being at home and being without others and was having a very divisive, everything nowadays, it's like everything seems to be you're either left or your right, you're either here or you're there. There's no middle. So I kind of just like and I listened to, I like listen to Joe Rogan's, but their podcast, but you know, he talks quite a bit about this divisiveness as well and quite a bit of of it, and he's very much a middle person. But people either think he's too liberal or things like, that's how I've always been, too, because my parents are very left one side of them. And their parents are very, right. I've always been very in the middle. But I've always still kind of seen when I tried to have discussions that like, it's really tough, because even though I'm in the middle, they think I'm way too far away from them. So as I'm seeing this happen, I realize that there's a lot of pain going on in the world, and I'm sure there's people who have been let go by people. And I think there's also a lot of, I guess, bullshit on social where people are pretending to be what they're not like, we live in a fake it until you make it world. And that's the, I guess, the other side of social of like, you're trying to pretend to be something that you're not. So then I guess, when people put something out that it's hard to watch, it's difficult to know whether their intentions were true or not. So I tried to look at it from their side and say, Okay, if I saw a random person crying, I'm on LinkedIn, and I saw that he had the CEO title. What would be do? I think he would be being honest about letting go those employees? Yeah, maybe, maybe not. For the wrong audience. It didn't connect for a lot of people who are in leadership positions who have been through it, it connected with a 100%. So I think that's it was just trying to look at it from both sides without assuming too much from there. So I don't I

don't know what they've been through recently, I don't know if they've been laid off. I don't know if they're, you know, what's going on it. So I just kind of assume that they're probably hurting too.

Jacob Morgan 22:22

So that's it, that's actually really interesting. Because, you know, a lot of times people are vulnerable, whether in a work setting or with somebody else. And you know, it doesn't always go well. You know, most of the times it does, and people won't use it against you, they're not going to betray you, they're not going to try to hurt you with it. But sometimes vulnerability doesn't go according to plan, such as in your case, or it doesn't resonate, or it doesn't connect with other people. And oftentimes, the immediate response to that is, well, I'm never going to be vulnerable again. But it sounds like in your situation, when you saw that this was happening, instead of getting defensive about it, you were kind of a little bit more empathetic about it. And just, you know, I would feel that way too, if somebody random posted this, or they must be going through a tough time. So I love that approach. Because it's not easy to do that. Right? Most people probably myself included, would have been like, you know, f you like the hell with you. And you have this very different approach to it, which I love. You mentioned something interesting, which was the it resonated with a lot of leaders, but maybe not so much with non leaders and organizations. Is that right?

Braden Wallake 23:32

Yeah, I think people who have never been in that those shoes, have no idea what the, what the emotions are on that side, they may have felt the emotions on being laid off or being fired. Or, you know, they may have been in that spot, but they haven't been in the shoes of somebody could have to let other people go.

Jacob Morgan 23:50

Oh, yeah, that would make sense. So the leaders were more supportive and people who are non leaders were, it seems like one of the ones leaving some of those angry comments. Okay, and so how did you get into that mindset of like, practicing the empathy instead of getting upset, and all these angry comments that you were that you were getting from everyone?

Braden Wallake 24:19

I always been very empathetic. Like, it's kind of how I build my relationships is understand what they're going through. So I guess it's kind of an innate nature there. And at first, I was a bit more defensive, and I was explaining, like, how people accuse me of like, oh, you're still taking home millions while you're letting these employees go? And I'm like, Ah, no, I've like I've cut like, cut my salary. Like, that was the first thing I did, like, you know, I did. So I was defensive on that side. Not necessarily, like attacking anybody. Yeah, just like, you know, defending myself. And then the comments just like, I guess, kind of just overflowed. And I was like, Okay, I mean, there's a common Steve here, so something isn't connecting the dots the right way. So I assumed it was my lack of writing skills in the post itself, or some lack of clarity on the way that I was explaining things that kind of put it out there. So I don't know if there was a turning point on it. I know that when my employees were talking about it to me with me that they were just like, I just felt like it was just you like, those people who know me way more. So I guess it was just like, almost ignored the others. And then like, eventually, it just like, got to the point, I was just like, replying, like, sarcastically, still wasn't attacking or anything from biting me. It

was like, Yep, you got me all figured out like things. Yeah, it was funny, because I don't know if there was a turning point or like an exact moment. Okay. Yeah,

Jacob Morgan 25:49

I was looking through some of the comments, and you see some comments on there that are like, I commend you for sharing this, thank you for having such a big heart. And other people literally right below that, that are saying this is manipulative. You know, this is what LinkedIn has become. And, you know, so I'm kind of really interested in kind of getting back to the psychology of like getting in your head a little bit. Did you feel like you needed to correct people's perceptions and justify how you were feeling? Or did you kind of accept that this just became out of control? And that, you know, what people want to think is what people want to think. And you know what the truth is, and you're just going to move on.

Braden Wallake 26:31

If the numbers had been lower, if I had less comments and less views, but it was, you know, let's say a lot of it's 11,000 comments, and maybe I had 100 comments, or 110 comments like 1% of that, and people were and it was the same thing of like, people leaving negative things. So I think at the beginning, I was very defensive on it, because I'm like, okay, only a few people are seeing this, and they're having a negative reaction. Once. The next morning, I woke up, and it was at 3 million. And then I went out at 3 million impressions. And then I watched it go up like to like four and a half, and I received like, 2000 connection requests overnight, I realized that thing was way bigger, and that there was a lot it was reaching audiences that I never, never expected it to. Right. I was sharing on my LinkedIn connections. That was the call sharing it with was not not the whole public. And that's what I was like, Yeah, okay. Like, there's gonna be there's 8 billion people in the world. Yeah. 11,000 comments. So even if half of those are bad, or somebody's representatives about that's still such a tiny percent of the overall population.

Jacob Morgan 27:36

Yeah. So what do you do when you're vulnerable? It doesn't,

Braden Wallake 27:39

I think that's what they did was when the numbers started really increasing. Okay,

Jacob Morgan 27:43

so what what do you do then when you're vulnerable, and doesn't connect with other people? You know, because I don't know if this has ever happened to you before, I'm sure it's happened to a lot of people who are gonna read the book, or who might watch or listen to this. So when you're vulnerable, and it doesn't get, you know, people don't perceive that vulnerability, and they kind of twist it a little bit. What do you do?

Braden Wallake 28:09

It's a good question. If it's a smaller setting of people that like, you already trust, and like and know and respect, and like, you know that they love you, and you know, that you love them, like, and you care for them. I think it's worth continuing that conversation, like to figure out why they didn't take it the right

way, or why wasn't, wasn't called the right way. Like, I think those are the normally if it was me, and one other person I was trying to be vulnerable with, and then they didn't think it the right way. Like I would try to understand the source of it. For something on this scale. It's a lot tougher. Yeah. Right. Like, it's hard to know what, how every single different person perceive it, like, I can't go have conversations with all of them at once. And, or separately, I still got to run a business too. So I got to take care of the employees, the people who are actually helping me build the business and people who are our customers, like those people I needed to go spend more time with and less time on the people on on social media, so but in smaller settings, people you care about, yeah, understanding why it was perceived differently, and then ask them how they you know how they would have handled it?

Jacob Morgan 29:15

Well, you actually bring up a pretty interesting point, which is being vulnerable with people that you already have a relationship with, versus being vulnerable with people that you don't have a relationship with. Because that's one of the things that at least I'm exploring in the book. That's one of the things that a lot of people are trying to figure out inside their organizations, right? Who can you be vulnerable with? How do you start introducing vulnerability inside your company? Any thoughts on that? Is it different for you when it's strangers versus not because you kind of just went out there and shared something very personal that you might typically expect to share with a small group of people but with the world. So

Braden Wallake 30:01

internally, we started taking some personality tests. We, Emily girlfriend she listened to or she read the book. Oh, shoot, what is his name? Oh, gosh, I'm blanking. Try to book those personality tests in the book we took it talked about a strengths and weaknesses. And I wanted people to understand God what I am so upset principles, that's the book Sorry, I'm excited principles. So she was reading that about how an open culture kind of helped them and transparent culture helps their company grow. And kind of how it helped their relationships. So we took the personality test, I realized on the personality test, like I'm either like a 99% of something or like a 1%. Like, I'm not really like a middle ground. And I wanted people to understand that like, where I do fall short, as a leader, I don't want to fall short. But there is like some, like psychological and like personality reasoning behind it, and not that I'm trying to, like try to make excuses, but where people can now start to say, hey, how do I use Braden, and what he can do for his strengths? And maybe and not, do not have him do things that are like towards his weaknesses? So we did this entire thing as a company. And now we were able to work better more collaboratively, in terms of saying, Okay, let Braden be creative. Don't give him like a task to like, email somebody or like do this or do like those, like those, like monotonous tasks, don't get those two Braden, you know, have him figure out stuff having to be creative, like, and then but the same thing with our whole team, I would figure it out that other people were, you know, better at being orchestrated, or implementers, or, you know, whatever it is that they are. And now when we do projects together, or we have stuff going on, we say, hey, let's use your skills to your advantage to better position you in a better light. So I think vulnerability is less like, Hey, I'm just weak at this, like, feel bad for me. And more like, hey, like, I struggle with this. And of course, I don't want to just say, hey, here's the things I stink at, like,

Jacob Morgan 31:58

you know,

Braden Wallake 32:01

here I am, like, I'm never going to try to improve that. Like, I'm always trying to improve those things. But I'm also a fantastic human and a fantastic leader. And in person on these days, if you give me these, you're gonna be so much happier working with me than you are if you give me these. So I think that's really where it started to stem from, is to say, like, if we can share the things like you're gonna feel less bad about, like, the things you don't complete, like, I'm really bad at tests, I've just like, I think the I was 1% on like task completion, just like giving me a to do list and going through it, not my thing, collaborating and working with others way up there on my thing. So I just like, had this thing of like, I feel like I'm letting my team down. But maybe if they understood where it came from, they would understand that I'm not letting them down on purpose, and they would actually see me in a better light. And then we could see all of our employees in a better light, oh, my god, we're giving you stuff that you're not built to do. Like, let's give yourself that you're built to do. I think that's where the vulnerability got shared, like, and we really started with it. And I was like, oh, okay, like now people can understand. And so when I went to, I guess, public with it, was just stemming from lots of real conversations that I've been having a lot more recently with employees and with even friends and things like that. So people that know me, and think that I'm great for with the things that I'm great at. And sure I forgot flaws, too. But you know, that's humans.

Jacob Morgan 33:20

So did you learn anything specific about vulnerability after this experience? For example, did you learn like, what to share with who to share things privately? Or, for example? Are you never going to post anything like this on LinkedIn again?

Braden Wallake 33:38

did not learn that? I don't know if I'll add the visual component to it. But what being in the world that we live in, we like these, these underdog stories, right? We like the underdog that beats the great championship team. And, you know, the people who are anticipated to win or what like these rags to riches stories, you know, people who were broke, and they were now they're rich, and they want to hear once they're there. But I truly believe that, like, there's so many people who aren't here yet, and sure that you need to have those people as like motivation and like inspiration to be able to, like, see what they've got. They went through that to get you there. But what about all these people who are still here, you know, who feel like they're the only ones here, everybody else has already made it. So by sharing that, I feel like we get to be more togetherness and help drive each other forward. So I think that's one piece of the vulnerability that I shared is how many people were actually going through similar situations and that like how grateful they were for this vulnerability, whether it was you know them supporting me or whether they were like, Yeah, I'm gonna have to let go somebody tomorrow. I think the Yeah, I think that's where I will take posts in the future just less visual, but still, like I still think is important to share the the downsides. Social media is very good at showing you the highlights of life. We all are trying to get a better marriage and a better travel than you do and better house a better car, like I want you to see all the best parts. But it's just one snapshot of a moment in a single day, comparatively to seeing the real journey of what people are going through on a daily basis.

Jacob Morgan 35:18

So why why do it right? I mean, so for example, inside of organizations, a lot of leaders that I've been interviewing a lot of CEOs, they believe in being vulnerable as a way to create trust and connection amongst their teams get people to work closer together to be able to solve problems. Why be vulnerable with a broader group of people, most of whom you don't know?

Braden Wallake 35:42

Why? I think one, it's important for me to see corporate leaders, corporate, literally not a corporate company at all, but corporate leaders, that they're not all just millionaires profiting off the backs of others. I think that was one thing that I wanted people to see is that not every single leader is this money, first, power, greed, hungry person. And probably most aren't right? Most leaders are not that way there. They kept like, like money shore, but they also like people and like, that's why they got into leadership is because they wanted to be working with others, they wanted to help lead others in terms of the wow, they can help them. That was piece number one. And then the other piece was definitely the idol want leaders who feel like they're alone in their journey, I don't want people to just owning your business. It's hard. It's really hard. And leading people is hard and trying to make everybody happy, is hard. And you will just never be able to do it even inside of your own company like, and I'd say, most decisions we make like our employees happy. I'm sure there's plenty of ones we're like, oh, that didn't go off with the employees as well, as you know, our employees really wanted to didn't go out with this team as well as we wanted. So. But I think it's important to know that we don't we're not we don't all have it just figured out there's no like, I'm sure that I mean, it's plenty of CEO playbooks. There's plenty of you know, books like this one on, you know, vulnerabilities in leadership. And we're, there's no like, I don't know, we're all We're normal people too. And I want other business owners to like, know that, like, there, you got this, like, it's gonna be tough, and you're gonna cry, and you're gonna go through some shit, and you're gonna have your ups and your downs, but like, you have to keep going.

Jacob Morgan 37:40

Yeah, which is, I think it's important. So it is kind of still creating a little bit of that community trust connection with other people out there. So what do you do when it doesn't go? Well, as in this case? So what advice do you have for other people out there? You were vulnerable? It didn't get received in the way that probably you had intended, or the way that you had hoped? How do you mentally just say, you know, like, why did you just, for example, decide I'm never going to be vulnerable? Again? Like, I'm just going to shut down? Never talking about anything personal, never going to share anything again. Why didn't that go through your mind?

Braden Wallake 38:26

One, the conversations that were the actual healthy conversations that were created, there are plenty of comments in that thread of people trying to understand and ask questions. And when I actually where to answer those questions are all your work, how to answer those questions. You could see people actually being willing to say, Oh, I wasn't, I was wrong. I see it better now. So I think that was a big piece is short, there are there was the left, left to right, hit us. And that in this there was this side. And there was that slide that were very divisive on that, right. But then there were conversations that were actually started on people who actually were just like, I don't really know where this came from, but I'm curious to know the answer. And when I explained it to them, then they're like, Okay, I've had I've had many people who two of the biggest people who made the invitation posts, I guess, both

reached out to me directly, and said, like, I didn't even delete them. So was that but they apologized for the post. And after seeing more of my posts, they were like, Okay, you were actually we're being genuine, more, you were being genuine. So those conversations that were happening were extremely healthy. So I think that's what did it for me is okay, this sparks something somewhere. There's a reason this upsetted so many people. I don't know what it was, it's probably because there's not enough vulnerability and leadership. Yeah, in a public light. And now there's a time and place for vulnerability for sure. Not every single vulnerable thing needs to always be shared on social for sure, but you can share some of it, you know. Thanks. sure that taking care of your heart to write Yeah, like protecting that piece. But this sparks something from all sides of business, people who are employed people who are employing others, small business owners, CEOs, news places like this sparked a conversation. And that says, like, I feel like we need more of that, if this is if this post itself that I was creating, innocently, no idea is gonna go viral. And many people have accused me of knowing it's gonna go viral, which I think they think I'm way smarter than I am. But if this was such a big deal, something is up. And I don't know where the disconnect is now, of what it is. But there needs to be more of this, because this post was, should not have been as big as it was.

Jacob Morgan 40:48

So for other people than it sounds like if they're vulnerable, and it doesn't go according to plan, you know, usually it's not going to be in a big, open setting, like social media could be inside of a company where somebody says something, and maybe somebody uses it against them. It sounds like the important thing there is just to focus on what you learned and not to let that be kind of a defining moment that shuts you down and kind of changes your character, your personality.

Braden Wallake 41:12

Absolutely. I think just for this instance, especially, and I've always been a person who's able to laugh at himself, that like, I heard, I was washing my hands. And I was just like, like, two days after the post, and I was like, still getting so many comments on it. I was just thinking about it. And I just like could not do anything but laugh at the ridiculousness that that post this post had become? And it's almost like, how do we want to laugh how people are feeling and not that we want to laugh at it being taken raw, but just laughing at like life is serendipitous, you can do your best. And people and but we only can communicate as best as our communication skills allow us. So if you communicate your vulnerability, and it doesn't come off the right way. Is it the vulnerability itself? Is it what you're gonna getting? Or is it how you communicated? Or how you phrased it? Or how like that has, like kind of laughing about that serendipity of life? And like keeping a head on your shoulders? I think is I think it's important.

Jacob Morgan 42:08

Do you think people are very quick to judge? Because it seems like the context here is very important. And, you know, again, I'm trying to relate this back to a corporate environment, because most people when they're going to be vulnerable inside their companies, you know, they're not going to post about it on LinkedIn, they're going to say they made a mistake at work, or they're going to ask for help or talk about a personal challenge. But it seems like the best way to do this is you need to do it, you need to have context around who you're sharing with. Right? I mean, I think one of the things that we learn from your example is that when people don't have context, when you're sharing something vulnerable, like people have no idea who you are, it's kind of like going to them at a cocktail party and be like, hey, oh,

my God, I'm having like these terrible problems with my wife. And people are gonna be like, who are you? So having? It seems like having that rapport, knowing who you're being vulnerable with? Knowing what you're sharing? And having that intent and context is important, as opposed to just showing up to work? And like you said, being vulnerable with everybody.

Braden Wallake 43:08

Exactly. Yeah, absolutely. I mean, having that rapport is huge. People understanding that, whatever you're sharing, if they understand that you're a good person, like and that you're not like, scamming them through it, like in your employees, like if you've hired people, even if it's a giant team, join your company for a reason. Like they believe in your vision as a leader, for a reason. They didn't they join one for the paycheck, but they, they've got options of places that they can be employed. They could go take a job at a similar company with different values than the ones that you're gonna be happy with. They're there because they believe in what you're what you're doing. So I think, knowing that, in that context, and that relationship, that should make things a lot easier, like your employees don't hate you. They wouldn't work for you.

Jacob Morgan 44:00

Yeah. And it sounds like if, if it is used against you, maybe you should be thinking about being a part of a different company.

Braden Wallake 44:07

Yeah, very much. So like companies and people should be aligned, like people who are a part of companies should be aligned with what the company is doing to.

Jacob Morgan 44:16

Yeah. Okay, so last kind of, like 1015 minutes, one of the things I really like to do is kind of focus on specific action items for people. So looking at some specific action items for people who are wanting to be vulnerable inside of their organizations. What advice do you have on how can you share your emotion? How can you share vulnerability in a way where it it does connect instead of alienate those around you? Any any thoughts on that?

Braden Wallake 44:47

Yes. One, an easy thing to do in the workplace is to feel annoyed with an employee or annoy Buteyko worker or a manager or a boss, or, you know, if you're in leadership position, this manager, that person is easy to bring that to just the other executives and kind of complain, I guess, or gossip or whatever. And just like, it's really easy to do that, like, yeah, instead of having that direct conversation of like, Dude, this is where like, maybe you let me down or like, were not doing something right, like getting direct, as quickly as you possibly can. And understanding where the if so like, if an employee is not performing, understanding why they're not performing, if you're trying to have that tough conversation, which is like, dude, like, I'm really stressed about like, where we're at, as you know, you and where you are, for example, but like having that direct conversation will make people understand that like, you are, again, coming from a good place, so like, the faster you can start these conversations better. And start with a smaller group start with the people but but less vulnerability about others, like eliminating the vulnerability aspect of like, like, Oh, I'm so frustrated with this person or that person. Like, that's not a

good communication tactic. So like making sure that you're talking to the right people who need to be talked with about this, or, and then that you have your trusted group, whether you're a small business owner, or you're a corporate, you know, you've got your corporate other executives that you can talk to, but that should be, again, less about other, you know, other people and more about, like, what's the company going to do about it? And what's the steps to go from there? So I think the quicker you start the conversations, the easier they'll get as you go,

Jacob Morgan 46:35

okay. And then suggestions for people out there who are vulnerable at work. And it doesn't go well. What's the right way to kind of think about it to not shut down and to be able to keep being vulnerable and trying again?

Braden Wallake 46:52

Yeah, and there's a book, I haven't read it, but one of our, our sales, our Chief Sales Officer, he's been reading it is called, like working with idiots. And it's like, what it's about, like working with people who just don't work and operate, understand the same way that you do, and about how you work typically. So it's very focused on like the disc profiles, the eyes and the esses. And like that kind of stuff, and how how we all do receive information differently, how we all process information differently, how we all work is different. Like, if you're doing things and they're not being taken Well, I do think that the disconnect is in the personalities or how it's being communicated, versus what's actually being communicated. So if we can get to those sources, you can understand how to better work. So I'm, I'm a high di, if I can understand how to better work with an SC or you know, a CI or sorry, Dc, then I can understand why where that hole is. So for example, my girlfriend, business partner, she is on all the the personality tests that we did, because of principles, everything that I was decide on, she has that site on. So we've always kind of clashed, because I'm the I'm the forest and she's the she sees the trees, and she can't see the forest. So we've clashed on that. Well, if I actually just like figuring out how we each work, and how we each communicate, and how we deal with situations differently, makes it so like, if she's stressed, is that something that I've said too, like if I make an announcement to the team, and like I didn't even maybe tell her that I was gonna make that announcement. And she's I started to stress. Just talking about it afterwards, I gotta understand where she where she came from. Understand that not everybody works the same way that you do. Not everybody sees the vision that you have, or the what's going on there. So getting to the source of the communication, and the where the communication is going wrong. is important. And I think the other side is, so if you're being vulnerable as a leader, and it's not being taken well, do you think that you set up the same environment for your team to be vulnerable with the leadership? And if they don't feel like they have a safe place to be vulnerable? Do they feel like you should have the right to be vulnerable to like, it has to be a two way street? It can't just be okay, great. We want vulnerable leaders. And that's it. Now, if we don't want to build leaders, we need vulnerable employees, we need vulnerable, everybody needs to be transparency across the company. And he's you need to your employees need to come to you and say, Hey, I'm really struggling with this. And I need help without them having to worry about if you're going to get angry with them, or fire them or any of that kind of stuff. And that's where it needs to be it needs to be a two way street. Not just you being vulnerable with them.

Jacob Morgan 49:35

Who decides if you're vulnerable or not?

Braden Wallake 49:40

I think gosh, it's a huge question.

Jacob Morgan 49:45

Because the quick answer and I realized it was way bigger. Yeah, it's that's one of the challenges right because is it up to you? It's how people perceive like you could feel a again going back to this theme, right? I mean, you felt vulnerable. You thought you were being vulnerable, but a lot of people thought Aren't you we're not. So who, you know, who decides whether someone is vulnerable.

Braden Wallake 50:07

So as long as you're not a psychopath, like, as long as you know, as long as I'm sorry, sociopath, or not sociopath, and like you do have like an intrinsic look on yourself and understand that you are flawed. If you're doing things and you're being vulnerable of if somebody could take that and hurt you with it. That's where it stems from it stems from like, here, yeah, like in your heart, like in your, in your soul, I guess, if you know that you are being vulnerable, and that people are 20 going to use that information to like, actually, like, hurt you. With that information. You know, you're being vulnerable, not up to the receiver of a message to tell you how true or not that you're being. As long as you know that you're doing it like that there's more conversations to be had about how it was received and things like that.

Jacob Morgan 51:01

Ah, okay, I like that. Because that's one of the things that I've been trying to figure out to write is who, if, because if you think you're being vulnerable, and if people around you say, No, you're not, you're just being manipulative, who's right. But it sounds like you, if you, it seems like you can't fake it, and you can't lie to other people, ultimately, only, you know, if you're truly being being vulnerable, based on how you're feeling.

Braden Wallake 51:24

Exactly. If people tell you you're not then then there's something missing. There's something not connecting the dots there. And maybe, maybe you've just like, for example, the LinkedIn post, I've shared some vulnerable things. And I've done them a lot on Facebook before. Some things, they are even like that a lot of business connections on Facebook, too. But I've shared some more vulnerable things there. The last couple of years have been like, good for business, you know, up until this point, like things have been going good. So I haven't shared that much like vulnerable side, because I haven't felt that side of things like, Oh, I'm worried about this, I'm worried about that. So in a one off situation, I can see how it could be perceived as manipulative, because you're not used to that person communicating that way. But the again, the faster you start those conversations and the faster you get to vulnerable and start being vulnerable, all the time, and not being used, like constantly like crying to you, your employees, of course, but helping them understand where your struggles and your strengths are, they're going to understand that any other vulnerability that's being shared is from a good place.

Jacob Morgan 52:25

So that actually brings interesting point is what what does a vulnerability even mean to you? Like when you you know, being a vulnerable leader? What does that mean? How would you explain that?

Braden Wallake 52:34

Yeah, I think it means your willingness to know your flaws and fears, being able to put them out because we all do not. Like it's harder to look intrinsically and say I stink at this, or I stink at that, like, and so like, I'm a disorganized person. And I don't like when people call me disorganized, like, or messy. Or, like even too emotional. Like, that's one thing that I have, like, if I lay people, you know, and and see my emotions, and they tell me that I'm too emotional about it. Like, that can hurt my feelings, right? Especially if it's people that I know and care about or like have a solid like standing relationship with. It's like, that's to me is the what actually being vulnerable is, is putting your fears or your flaws out there. And expecting people to understand that's what makes you you, and not that that's what makes you suck, I guess.

Jacob Morgan 53:35

Good way to think about it. I like that. All right, and maybe one, one or last two questions for you. Do you think that people in general are just too cynical and quick to judge

Braden Wallake 53:53

I think it's become more and more of a trend. Because of everybody just being at home and like how we've perceived, how we've dealt with COVID and all of the situations since COVID has been a lot more time with just us and our family that we live with and maybe a couple of friends like we've been very isolated so like learning the world and learning one we've been watching a lot of news which is very very divisive on its own social media. All the algorithms are really gross like they want you on their platform like I think LinkedIn algorithm from what I know of them and I don't know the inside workings but from its people want you to stay on their platform. That's why Facebook and like that, that whole algorithm thing there so Sorry, I lost my train of thought.

Jacob Morgan 54:52

Oh, I was asking people if you think people are just too cynical and quick, cynical.

Braden Wallake 54:58

Yeah, I think that There is an element of that. But I think we've become more and more that way. It's kind of like the why you're so angry in traffic, is because you don't know the person in the car next to you. You don't you didn't see what they've like, did they cut you off? Because they stink at driving? Probably not? Or do they cut you off because they just quickly made one mistake, and they will yell at them. And we call them whatever names that we say, because we don't know that person inside. So I think as we've gotten less and less face to face connections, and less and less together, and understanding and experiencing humans on all the time basis, that's made us less empathetic and less understanding of other people.

Jacob Morgan 55:43

I like that analogy of somebody cutting you off, because you like you're you're right. I mean, the default is to get very angry and upset. But maybe they're in a rush to pick up there kids or some of the you

know, they have to go to the hospital. And we're just very quick to judge based on the action without having the context around it, which is, you know, Tim,

Braden Wallake 56:04

and the like the people who come up, come behind you and you're in the fast lane, you're already going five miles per hour over the speed limit, people come up right behind you, and tailgate. And then we've I've seen lots of people do it to me because I drive way too fast, then they just start slowing down. And we have no idea is, is my mom is my mom in the hospital. And I I don't know how much longer she has left. And I'm just trying to get to her and say goodbye. Like, you've no idea you assumed I'm just being an asshole. And I'm just driving way too fast and writing you way too close, when I could actually have something going on in my life that you do not know. And you could be preventing me because you assume something, you could be preventing me from being able to say goodbye to my mom. I'm fine. But like as an example.

Jacob Morgan 56:41

Yeah, what seems like in general, we need to give each other more of a break. We're very, it seems like we're very quick to, to get upset without kind of knowing the background of what's going on. So this, I think is probably another very important lesson for everybody out there just to give people a break. If you see somebody trying to be vulnerable, it's not going well. Or if you're trying to be vulnerable. It's not going well give yourself a break. give other people a break.

Braden Wallake 57:06

Maybe aspects of life. Yeah, yeah, that's huge for me, like I think that's, again, why the comments didn't bother me that much. Because I do think that from my point of view, and why people are very against. I love people who are like, you want to go to Russia? Like Isn't it scary over there. Like, you know, people don't like Americans and like things like that. And I'm like, no, like, for the most part, like 90%, the population doesn't care. We're all just trying to get through life and be happy. And we don't really care where people come from, like, we're all just doing the things, the best that we can based on the information that we have. And I think that's no matter whether you're being vulnerable, whether you're doing it as long as you're doing things with good intentions, and UFC while other people are doing trying to get through life and try to you know, I always try to be happy. Everyone's trying to you know, get through and have a comfortable life and not be whatever they you know, they don't want to be, I guess like everything like comment, I don't wanna be racist, or we don't want to be like, nobody wants to be the like, if you're have those things in your mind, it's because of where you come from, it's because you've got a different background or like that, like, we could be a lot more understanding and all things that we're all just generally, for the most part the population is good. And people individuals are good people.

Jacob Morgan 58:19

Yeah. And last question for us, where can people start? So you want to be a vulnerable leader, you want to start introducing this at work? Obviously, you're not going to just show up to work tomorrow and be like, Hey, everyone, guess what, like I am, you know, I just made this big mistake, or I don't know how to do this. So how can you start being vulnerable, introducing this to your team's your companies in a way that creates connection and trust?

Braden Wallake 58:47

Yeah, um, I do think that personality tests was a really good thing for us. I can I can find it and send it to you. Afterwards, I can remember what it's called. I think you can also start with allowing people to criticize the decisions that you're making. Like if you allow people to say, hey, I don't really feel like we need to have this Monday meeting, like, and you can like get their polls without them feeling they're going to receive backlash for it. Like you allow people to tell you how you can improve. That'll be a good start. Because now it's not just saying, Hey, here's all the things I suck at. You can say, hey, what do you think like, how have I disappointed you? Or how can I be better at this, like starting to ask those questions, I think is a healthy thing. And that personality tests really understanding. So we kind of worked on like building baseball cards is kind of what they did in the book is like, here's, if you want my help, here's the things I excel at, here's the things I need to improve on. And just by understanding everybody else better, I think will allow like the vulnerability will naturally the transparency will kind of naturally happen from that point to

Jacob Morgan 59:57

you know, I think it's good advice. Well, those rollin questions I had for you any last parting words of wisdom or lessons learn from everything that happened to you, I, I'm amazed by your positive attitude of not letting this kind of deter you or or shred your confidence. I don't know if you have any tips on how to do that, because I've talked to even a lot of CEOs I've interviewed, when they've had their vulnerabilities used against them, it destroys their confidence it you know, it hurts them psychologically. But for you, you seem to have been able to channel that use that an important use it as an important lesson to keep going forward. So if you have any tips and suggestions on how to do that.

Braden Wallake 1:00:40

Yeah, I think number one is the if you do react, if you don't like when people are saying those things about you. Again, back to Joe Rogan, he always tells like his guests like, you should not be reading the comments on your social posts, if you're starting to get no one's start to see that hate coming in. Stop reading it, like that's the stuff that eats you up, you could see 99 Like, I've seen it, like a, let's say, a high school or college girl, she posts a selfie, and she gets 99 comments telling her that she's beautiful, and one person tells her she's ugly, she sits on that one comment, if you start to get stuff like that, stop reading it. One, if it's people that you like trust or respect, start to understand the source, like the more people that that can give you an opinion, the more differing opinions that you're going to get. So if you have, for example, I don't know how I think about 70 million people have seen that post. That's a lot of different people from a lot of different walks of life, there's a lot of standing like more people you have, the bigger the room is, the more that that differentiators and one of the opinions are going to vary. And then if you can look and say the you're being vulnerable, and you understand that people who aren't taking it wrong, or that are taking it wrong. They shouldn't have, again, it's not a they're not necessarily think badly of you, they may or may have rash decision. But you can give them the opportunity to actually like get to know you further. Like and see, like I offered so many people who left angry comments, I said, let's hop on a zoom, like, let's hop on a one on one. And you tell me whether you think I was being real or not afterwards, none of them took that. Nobody took it except for one guy who was like trying to figure out my address and things like that, like I wasn't gonna get on his suit with it. But that kind of aversive but nobody else. So I left that offer to actually wanted to get to know the real

me. And if people aren't wanting to get to know the real you? How can their opinion of you matter? How can How can their opinion matter?

Jacob Morgan 1:02:39

Yeah, that's really interesting. I didn't know that. So you offered people to get on Zoom calls with you and they. So they, they would rather just be angry about something than to actually get to the truth of it. That's, that's amazing.

Braden Wallake 1:02:57

Lots of times when I have people who some lady asked me how many hairs are So the comment was, Oh, boo boo, who was on the new, like, how many? By the way, how many black employees do you have? And I answered, and I was like, okay, swimming, I'm a white male. A lot of our team is white. But we have got a spa answered. And I said we've also had like some other minorities represented here, too. And there was no response back. It's like people just assume the worst, if you prove them wrong, because nobody wants to be like, it's hard to admit you've been wrong. I've had a lot of people who have done that there's so many people who are just like, Oh, here's a chance. No, I'd rather just be right. Because that helps your confidence like that helps your ego instead of being be able to be proven wrong, they would rather just be right. So yeah, definitely didn't happen in a lot of different scenarios. And the Zoom calls was was a part of it, too.

Jacob Morgan 1:03:50

Yeah. It's fascinating. Yeah. So it seems like understanding people's ego. There's a lot that goes into like the vulnerability piece besides just Is it going well? Is it not going well, like understanding who understand the egos understanding if people actually want to get to know you? I suppose that's when people should be upset. If people genuinely want to get to know you, and it didn't get perceived the right way, then it's worth trying to find out well, what did I do? But if it doesn't get perceived the right way, and those people have no interest in knowing you and going deeper into that, then that's a sign that you should not be vulnerable with them anymore. You should not worry about building a relationship with them because they have no interest in it.

Braden Wallake 1:04:29

Yeah, and oftentimes, they're insecure of their own things as well. So oftentimes, what they see in you is pushing a button or a past trauma or something that's happened in their life that they're they've now projected what they think you're saying or whatever, because they've been hurt by something similar or they've had a similar experience that wasn't as genuine or, you know, you weren't being as real as you were. I think that's the, the real take from there. Are to

Jacob Morgan 1:05:01

and love that. Well, Braden, I know we've been talking for around an hour, I really appreciate your time and your insights. Why don't you let people know? Where can they go to learn more about with you or connect with you? Maybe they even want to work with you. So anything that you want to mention for people to check out?

Braden Wallake 1:05:16

Yeah, sure. If you want to work with us, you can head to go hyper social.com. If you want to connect with me, personally, head to my LinkedIn, Brian Wallach, just search me I'm the only one so it won't be too hard to find. If you really just want to find me easily just Google the crying CEO. And I promise I'll be the first result there on Google or any other news, you can add the link to my LinkedIn. So it really does not take much effort to find and connect with me at this point.

Jacob Morgan 1:05:41

I love that because even though you've earned the nickname crying CEO, it seems like you wear it as a badge of honor, I see that you even post articles that are written about you, you post funny memes and gifts that people make about you and you've really embraced it with a positive attitude. So I like that you've been able to turn this into something positive. So kudos to you. And I hope a lot of people can learn from that. Thank you. Thanks so much. All right. And thanks, everyone for tuning in my guest again, Braden Wallach, make sure to check out his LinkedIn. You can read the posts that originally drew all this attention and see all those crazy comments. You can connect with them there and also check out his company website. I'll see all of you next week. All right, that was great. Let me push stop record