

FINDING BRAVE

with Kathy Caprino

Transcript

Finding Brave Episode #15

How To Achieve Phenomenal Success and Impact The World Before Age 30, with Jared Kleinert

Kathy Caprino: Hello, everyone. This is Kathy Caprino, and welcome to my podcast *Finding Brave*. I've created this show for everyone who longs to create something bold and brave in their life. To rise up, speak up, and stand up for who they are, and to reach their highest and biggest visions. Each week, I'll be speaking with inspiring guests from all walks of business, leadership, entertainment, the creative arts, and the entrepreneurial world. They'll be sharing their intimate stories of Finding Brave and offer their best strategies for building your most rewarding, joyful, and meaningful life, business, and career.

Hello, everybody. Welcome to *Finding Brave*. This is Kathy Caprino, once again. We are finally, I think, over the four nor'easters here that hit us. It's nice, it's warm. Woohoo. Maybe spring is really coming. I hope so. I hope where you are it's beautiful. I hope you're ready for some brave, for some youthful brave. I'll tell you what that means in a minute. Today I'm so excited to have as our guest, Jared Kleinert. Jared, thank you for being here, from Atlanta.

Jared Kleinert: Yeah. Thanks for having me.

Kathy Caprino: Oh, pleasure. Pleasure. All right, everybody, I really want to read Jared's bio, because it's going to knock you out, but also what he has to say about his life and how he's done what he's done is going to knock you out, too, and inspire you, I'm sure, beyond belief. Let me tell you about him.

Jared Kleinert is an entrepreneur, TED and keynote speaker, and award-winning author who has been named *USA Today's* Most Connected Millennial... wow... after spending years identifying and connecting hundreds of the world's smartest and most talented millennials. His first book, *2 Billion Under 20*, was voted number one entrepreneurship book of 2015 by the Axiom Business Book Awards. His latest book, *3 billion under 30*, was released in January 2017, profiling 75 Avengers-esque individuals who have collectively started companies worth billions of dollars and reached hundreds of millions of people each month through their work.

In addition to his research and keynote speaking business, Jared, along with his team, partners with number one *New York Times* bestselling authors, Fortune 500 executives, major keynote speakers, Emmy Award-winning journalists, seven-figure business owners... and the list goes on... who lead their businesses and positively impact the world with their thought leadership.

Wow. And there is even more to read about Jared. Where would they go?
3billionunder30.com, Jared, that's the best place for you?

Jared Kleinert: Yeah. I will even give out my cell phone number at the end of this interview, and my email, so if you find value out of this conversation, please let me know.

Kathy Caprino: How wonderful. Your phone will be ringing off the hook.

Jared Kleinert: I hope so.

Kathy Caprino: Everybody knows, who listens to this, that I love to tell stories about... all sorts of stories, but... about how I meet my wonderful guests. Jared, I want to tell this story. Can I?

Jared Kleinert: No. I'm just kidding.

Kathy Caprino: All right, well, tough. It's my show.

I think it was a year ago, I heard from you about a really exciting project, Luminate, which is, I understand, soon to be launching.

Jared Kleinert: Or maybe even out by the time you listen to this.

Kathy Caprino: Oh, yeah. Maybe. I'm so jazzed. I am hoping to be a contributor for Luminate. I love Kristen and Seth's mission for this. We'll link to that and you'll see more about it. That's how I heard of Jared, and we got on each other's radar. I want to tell you how this worked, because there's lessons for it, for everybody.

Jared was in the city a few weeks ago, and had reached out and said, "Hey, do you want to have coffee?" To me, that's the best kind of connection, because I didn't feel there was an agenda in it. You know, sure, we're there to connect, and understand what we're doing, and see how we can help each other, but... I get a lot of these requests, Jared, and I can't do them all, but yours was a definite. We meet and we talk for about a half hour.

Jared Kleinert: I appreciate that.

Kathy Caprino: Oh, yeah. My pleasure. I appreciate our meeting.

We talk about everything we're going through in our lives, and what we're envisioning, and maybe some bumps. I want to tell everyone this: you gave me two tips that were so good that I raced home and executed them. Both of them have generated some pretty amazing things. Jared, what I want to say to you is that... I said to you, after you offered me those tips, and I thought they were so good and so smart, I said, "Jared, how old are you?" You said—

Jared Kleinert: 22 at the moment.

Kathy Caprino: 22. I looked at you. I have a daughter, 23, and a son, 20, and here's what occurred to me. This is why I'm telling the story. So often, in society, in culture, in writing, in thought leadership, we talk about age as kind of the necessary requirement for brilliance, for impact, for making a positive difference, for having a vision. Just talking to you, at your amazing age of 22, and your incredible tips ... and I'm featuring, you know, bestselling whoevers in *Forbes* ... What I just want to say to everybody is: age is not a precursor or a requisite for doing amazing things in the world, and helping people at the highest level. What do you think about that, Jared?

Jared Kleinert: Yeah. I'm very fortunate to have learned from my peers. I have gone out of my way to make it so that my peers are these people in their teens, 20s, early 30s, who are sort of disrupting their industries, who are making a positive impact, and are actively changing the world. Like, truly changing the world, in the way that sentence was supposed to mean, and not how Silicon Valley has sort of made it the calling card of every business that exists. These are people that I study in my content and feature in my works. If I had a copy of *3 Billion Under 30* in my hand, these are people that are, like, writing *New York Times* bestselling books. They're building successful businesses. They are becoming, or are, professional athletes. They're producing feature films. You would think, and most people need, an entire career to accomplish this, or need an entire lifetime to accomplish this. That was certainly true for past generations, but now we live in a world where this can happen in a matter of years, or even months, for the craziest of the examples I have studied.

As a young person, the door is open to any possibility, really, unless you're trying to become a doctor, or you're trying to become a lawyer. There's still certain paths that require you to put in more time than others to get the same outcomes, I would say.

Kathy Caprino: Right.

Jared Kleinert: It has nothing to do with hard work. Everyone works hard. That's a prerequisite, I would think. There's just more opportunity to be exponentially successful, unlike ever before. As a young person, capitalizing on that can put you in a position where you can run a business at 22, or have books. Even if you're already in a career, or you've put decades into a current life path, you can change that path, and—

Kathy Caprino: Right.

Jared Kleinert: —make the next two or three years of your life as effective and productive as possible. If you're a 100-year-old company, you can still have records for marketing campaigns being broken, or sort of shift how the company is growing in a matter of years. A lot of my work has centered around top-performing millennials. It used to be just to showcase, like, "Oh, these are cool, young people changing the world." Now it's become this bigger conversation of, "Well, why can't we all tap into this knowledge, and these tips and tricks?"

Kathy Caprino: Oh, Jared, I love it. Let's just stand back a little bit and let's be real here. Because I have

kids your age, I have been in the world of young, young, young people, right?

Jared Kleinert: Right.

Kathy Caprino: And how they grow, and they're influenced. Just like we look at any huge success. Not everyone on the planet can have it, because there are certain traits and certain behaviors and mindsets that are necessary. If we can adopt those, we'll have a greater chance of success, but can I understand, what do you think has given you the perspective, or what has paved the pathway for you to do this?

Jared Kleinert: Yeah.

Kathy Caprino: One of those things is you haven't bought into what everyone says that we need, a four-year college education. What formed you that made you believe in yourself enough to do this?

Jared Kleinert: Yeah. As I mentioned over coffee, I'm not shy about the fact that I feel fortunate to have come from a family of entrepreneurs. A lot of the exposure to what business looks like, and what successful businesses could provide, in terms of lifestyle. Those were all around me at a young age. I'm also very grateful for the fact that I was not handed anything, and that I wasn't entitled to any successes in my family. My parents themselves are very entrepreneurial, but had two businesses that failed when I was a baby. There was no business to take over. There was not even savings, necessarily, that was going to be passed down. They were very, relatively middle-class. This is, again, a great setup, because I now have ambition, and I want to achieve what, maybe, my grandparents have achieved in starting very successful businesses, or aunts and uncles have achieved, in terms of creating their own little legacies.

I come from this really cool setup. I tried to start my first business at 15, like every 15 year old does. Like every 15 year old that tries to start a business, I failed miserably. I made every mistake you can think of, from not having enough capital to not knowing who my competition was. What I was working on doesn't even matter, but the real learning lesson, or the real thing that is important to share is that I made the mistake of getting a really terrible mentor. Between 15 and 16 years old, I spent about six months total learning from this guy who spent time in prison for a securities fraud on Wall Street.

Kathy Caprino: Ah. You knew that, or you did not know that?

Jared Kleinert: I knew this, basically, six months in. Hanging out with this guy on an almost daily basis, working in his office, meeting people that he introduced me to, even to the point where I was making decisions on what developers to hire based on who he told me to hire. He had no expertise, not to mention he didn't have integrity. One snippet of the lack of expertise is: I was building a tech company, and he had me creating a website off of Joomla, which is a very, very, very outdated programming language, whereas I could be building on WordPress, or today, you can build on Squarespace, or Wix, or something like that. Or you can just get someone who knows Ruby on Rails, or whatever.

Kathy Caprino: Lesson number one there is what?

Jared Kleinert: Lesson number one: Choose really good mentors. Because of this negative mentor experience, I then sought out much more positive mentors, and at 16 I read an article in *Forbes* called *The Most Connected Man You Don't Know in Silicon Valley*. Reading that article is where my story really begins, because I, partly because I had a negative mentor experience, I reached out to this gentleman who I read about who was very well connected, very well respected in the tech industry. I offered to work unpaid in exchange for his mentorship, over the course of an email, and then a call. I spent two years working at his company.

Kathy Caprino: Let me understand something, Jared. I want to break this down, for my own son who is looking for internships, and other people.

Jared Kleinert: Sure.

Kathy Caprino: Austin Belcak, I think is how to pronounce it, I interviewed him as well. He is very young and has incredible ideas about how to be of value to a person or a company that is way out of your reach, like Google or Twitter. In your mind, did you say to yourself, "I don't care what this guy has, I can be of value." Did you say that to yourself?

Jared Kleinert: Probably not consciously, but I, that was probably what was subconsciously going through my mind. I approached it looking to offer him value, and make it all about him and his company. Even the initial email, the phone call, was, "Hey, I want to give you my time. I want to work for you for free. This is what you're going to get. This is what I'll get from it, too," but it's all about him.

Kathy Caprino: What was he going to get? What did you say?

Jared Kleinert: Basically, at 16, all I have to offer is time.

Kathy Caprino: Yeah. "I've got some enthusiasm."

Jared Kleinert: Yeah. Basically. The good thing about offering free work is that you can set the bar pretty low, or there's no expectations, so the bar is low. If someone offered me free work, and they made it so that I didn't really have to give them a lot of time or energy in training them, or I didn't really have to do much input, and I could just get stuff from them, even any modicum of success is like, "Oh my God, this is amazing."

Kathy Caprino: Right.

Jared Kleinert: "This person has so much ambition." That's basically what happened. He was like, "Sure, kid. Feel free to—"

Kathy Caprino: Wow. That says a lot about him.

Jared Kleinert: Yeah. He's really good about doing the same thing to other people, so, if he asked me what I was really interested in. At the time, I was interested in education technology. Edtech. He actually got me another unpaid internship at a very reputable Edtech startup. I found myself, at 16, working unpaid for two VC-backed startups in Silicon Valley, all from South Florida.

That's where my story really begins. They ended up connecting me to other people in Silicon Valley, a lot of the investors and advisors for these companies, over the next year. I dropped one of the internships to focus on David's company, the guy I read about in *Forbes*. I ended up going from unpaid intern to paid team member.

Kathy Caprino: Wow.

Jared Kleinert: The first ten employees of this startup. They were in the employee engagement and culture management space, so while I didn't care about that at 16, I ended up finding it fascinating, and it really ties into how the business world works. Now I have employees, so I have to make sure that they stay engaged and perform.

Kathy Caprino: Can I extract a lesson from that as well, Jared?

Jared Kleinert: Yeah.

Kathy Caprino: Yeah. Not every job we get is going to be perfectly derived from our ideal vision, but every job you get will teach you something.

Jared Kleinert: Bam.

Kathy Caprino: Nothing is lost, right?

Jared Kleinert: I'm just going to print out your quotes and put it all over my office.

Kathy Caprino: That's sweet. I should do the same for your quotes. All right. So you learned from that, and then it went on and on, and they connected you. All right.

Jared Kleinert: Yeah. There's a bunch of sidetracks that we can take there, along the time I spent working at this company, 15Five. David introduced me to the work of the Thiel Foundation, which was started by PayPal co-founder Peter Thiel, who is a very interesting political figure right now, and also a figure in the tech world. He also had this very interesting and controversial education initiative. He was basically paying kids to drop out of school and build businesses instead. I never received one of these fellowships that he offers, but I was in that community very early on.

As early as 17, I was going to, I went to a conference that the Thiel Foundation hosted, and for the first time in my life, I was surrounded by hundreds of like-minded young people. Teenagers building businesses, having millions of downloads on their apps. Some people were even in the science realm, figuring out how to mine asteroids, or crazy stuff. Way beyond my pay grade and my IQ.

While I was working for 15Five I'm starting build my network. I found my tribe. I saw a need to share more of these stories, because why should it be confined to just that community? I ended up teaming up with another young entrepreneur I met in this community. Her name is Stacey Ferreira. Her story, real quick, is that she had raised \$1 million from Richard Branson at 18 for a company that she started with her brother and a third co-founder. They sold the company at 20, which, I basically met her when she was 19 and I was 17, or, she was between two and three years older than me. We created this

book called *2 billion under 20*. Took stories from the group of young entrepreneurs we met, but then also started reaching out to other exceptional young people who were stand-up comedians, who had lost 170 pounds and saved their life, who were on *So You Think You Can Dance?* Just a very wide range of people.

Kathy Caprino: Let me understand this. Did you think, "Let me go get a deal," or did you say, "We're going to write this and publish this and if someone wants it, fine?"

Jared Kleinert: I had learned my lesson from the first story I told you. We actually sought out mentorship from a wide range of bestselling authors, speakers, community organizers, and tried to figure out what was going to be best. We ended up debating it for a while, to self-publish, traditionally publish. The reason for traditionally publishing was that I felt, and Stacey agreed, that we had, basically, hundreds of people who had bought into this vision for this book and the larger movement behind it. It's an anthology model. We had, like, 75 contributors. We had, like, 300 people send in their stories to be considered for the book, with a bunch of other people who had made recommendations. We ended up picking our favorite 75. At some point in this process, we determined that we wanted to get a publisher and get that sort of stamp of social proof that we can give to all of the book contributors. That's why we went the traditional publishing route.

We ended up getting a book deal with St. Martin's Press. If I'm not the youngest signed business author in St. Martin's and Macmillan history, then I'm probably one of the five youngest in their, like, 175 year history.

Kathy Caprino: I used to copy write for them.

Jared Kleinert: Yeah?

Kathy Caprino: As a freelancer. I love St. Martin's Press. How exciting.

Jared Kleinert: Yeah. They gave us a shot. We went with it, and the rest is history. The book was great. I absolutely loved that model of book creation, so I made another book, *3 Billion Under 30*, in that same vein. I self-published the second one, as you know. That's been an interesting experiment, too. That took me from the startup world to this weird speaker/author/consultant turn that I've been on for almost five years now.

Kathy Caprino: Yeah. Tell us about that. You help people engage with audiences, build their reach, right? Tell us ...

Jared Kleinert: Yeah. As I was leaving 15Five, well, there was a point when I was 18 that I was considering leaving 15Five, because I also decided to not go to college right away.

Kathy Caprino: I want to talk about that. I—

Jared Kleinert: Yeah. I'll lay the foundation for you. I was 18. I basically decided that I wanted to take a gap year from school, see if I could build a business, get into a better school than what I got into. There were multiple reasons for wanting to take a gap year. Part of taking the gap year, with my family, meant I needed to be financially independent, both from a personal

desire, and my family was like, "You need to financially independent."

Kathy Caprino: Independent. You'd have to—

Jared Kleinert: Yeah. Independent.

Kathy Caprino: —take care of yourself.

Jared Kleinert: Yep.

Kathy Caprino: Wow.

Jared Kleinert: In order to do that, I needed a pay raise at 15Five. They weren't, we weren't coming to an agreed upon set of terms, so I started looking elsewhere. I didn't want to just pick up any sort of job. I didn't really even want a job. I had the book going on, and other stuff, and I just like working for myself. I'm an entrepreneur at heart. I sent another cold email, similar to the one that I wrote to David at 16, but this time I had more skills behind me, and I had more awareness as to who I wanted to learn from. I wanted to continue learning how to become a great networker and build relationships. I wanted to learn how to sell a ton of books, because I had this book coming out in a year. The book came out when I was 19. Eighteen when we signed the deal, and I'm thinking about this next career move, quote unquote.

As far as experiences, I had this employee engagement and culture management experience, that, like, B2B world. I had done marketing and sales at 15Five. Those were my experiences. My resume, if you will. I had made a list of people that I wanted to reach out to that fit certain criteria. One, have sold a lot of books in the past so I can learn how to do the same. Two, were in the employee engagement world, have some sort of B2B stuff. Three, who were networking and relationship building experiences. Who are super-connectors, if you will. I made a short list of 10 or 15 people. There was, like, Adam Grant, and Jim Collins, and whatever. Keith Ferrazzi was at the top of my list. He was the one who got back to me the quickest when I cold e-mailed all 10 of them, or 15 of those people.

I ended up doing a month of free work, again, for Keith Ferrazzi. He wrote *Never Eat Alone*, and, sort of one of the top corporate thought leaders out there. He had me come to work for him, sort of as an employee, but because we signed an employment agreement where I was a 1099 contractor, I realized that Keith was my client, and I just ran with that. In order to pay the bills from 18 through 19, and then when I took a second gap year from school, 19 to 20, and in ongoing fashion until my books became their own business, I was running a marketing consulting firm, helping thought leaders, helping authors, helping speakers, small businesses, to market their services. At the beginning, it was like, I helped Keith, and now everyone who likes Keith would probably want to hire me, as well. Then I also actually built real skills and strategies and stuff like that and was building my personal brand all the while. Not only talking the talk, but walking the walk and using my own personal brand as a nice test lab.

Kathy Caprino: I've got two questions here.

Jared Kleinert: Sure.

Kathy Caprino: For everyone listening ...

Jared Kleinert: I got a little long-winded, but ...

Kathy Caprino: No, I love it. When you're talking to Keith, or someone at that illustrious level, if you had to say the one thing that they're looking for, that are going to make them say, "Oh, what the hell, let's work with this kid, " what do you think they're looking for?

Jared Kleinert: Again, I was just intentional about reaching out. I don't know if it's one thing. I definitely made the conversation all about him, again. Before I ever reached out, I was considering, "What projects does he have going on that I can publicly see?" It looked like *Never Eat Alone*, expanded and updated, was coming out soon. That's the free project I did, was to help him promote that book relaunch. I came to the table saying, "Here's the podcast I think I can get you on. Here's the press outlets I think I can get you in," And on and on.

Even before that, I did all the intentional thinking to reason why Keith was on my hit list of people to reach out to. I thought of what I was skilled at, what experiences I had. I thought of my goals and who I wanted to learn to from. Those are things you can articulate in any sort of reach-out to an influencer, to a potential employer, to clients, even. You can be intentional about the clients you want. That can go in the very small part of your email that's all about you, or sort of the "Why" behind reaching out to them. Making it stupid simple for them to say, "Yes," is sort of ... Or making it about them, is probably the best way to go.

Kathy Caprino: Can I pull out another lesson and see if you would agree?

Jared Kleinert: Yeah.

Kathy Caprino: In order to do what you did, you had to be able to have a lens, at age 15 or 16—

Jared Kleinert: This was 18.

Kathy Caprino: 18. You had to have a lens of, "Here is what I have done, and here's how to talk about it, and here's how to expand it to you, and here are five new ideas about you." I think, when I look at the vast majority of people who are 20, and— Can I tell you? People who are 50 can't do this. I have people who are 50 who don't know what their skills are, Jared. You should teach a workshop on exactly that.

Jared Kleinert: I appreciate that.

Kathy Caprino: You already have 52 times, I bet, right?

Jared Kleinert: No, it's not that I have, although that stuff does get included in keynotes and whatnot. That's where the value of mentors comes in to play. All of this stuff is what David taught me, from 15Five.

Kathy Caprino: Yeah.

Jared Kleinert: I can trace 80% or 90% of my network back to David Hassell. I can trace—

Kathy Caprino: You mean he sat you down and said, "Look, buddy, here's the 20 things you're doing. Talk about it this way." Would he be that hands-on with you?

Jared Kleinert: Like that. Yeah. There was an inflection point where I was going from unpaid intern to team member, or paid team member, and he sat me down, virtually, and asked me to do a set of assessments, and basically find what he calls, "Your zone of genius."

Kathy Caprino: Yeah.

Jared Kleinert: I had to do a passions inventory. Figure out what I enjoy, what I'm passionate about, what I want to learn more about. I had to do a skills inventory. I had to figure out what I would articulate I'm good at, but then I also emailed 10 to 20 peers, mentor-type figures, family members, things like that, and asked them, "Hey, what do you think I'm good at?" And also, "What do you think I suck at?" In addition to that, he had me take StrengthsFinder 2.0, that book/assessment. He also had me take the Kolbe A Index. K-O-L-B-E. Kolbe A Index. Then he had me take a positive psychology assessment from the University of Pennsylvania, which is actually free. I think if you Google, "Authentic happiness from University of Pennsylvania," They have all these questionnaires. I took the VIA Survey of Character Strengths Assessment.

Kathy Caprino: Is that what he asks all of his teammates to do, or was he trying to help you learn more about yourself in ways that you wouldn't—

Jared Kleinert: Yeah, I think he had me do certain things, but I believe that all of his employees have to do certain assessments and things like that. They take that science and integrate it into their product, because they're, at the end of the day, 15Five exists to create better teams at work. To have more effective teams, because that impacts all of our lives, personally and professionally. It was especially good to learn from someone whose entire work product and world and company does this stuff for their team members. I'm very fortunate on that regard, but, yeah, David, as a mentor, sat me down, had me do all these things. That gave me a ton of clarity.

Kathy Caprino: Holy cow.

Jared Kleinert: Yeah. Priceless stuff.

Kathy Caprino: More questions. For anyone listening who is more my age, and they have kids your age, or people your age who are weighing, "Should I skip college right now?" What would you say to them? When is it the right thing? When is it not the right thing, maybe?

Jared Kleinert: I advocate being intentional about major life decisions. With something like college, where do you live, what kind of work do you do? These are all really big things. There's no right or wrong answer, because the world is changing at an exponential speed, and there may be factors for you that are different than they were for me, and on and on. I didn't approach it in a way where I was like, "I'm going to go to college, or not go to college." I said, "I'm going to take one gap year from school, and that gives me the ability to go back

if I fail miserably. If I succeed, then I have options to go back, to maybe take another gap year, or not go." I gave myself options. I would always default to optionality. Having a lot of doors available to you. I set that up for myself, and I thought intentionally about how I want to use a gap year, once I decided that that was what I was going to do.

I almost wrote another book on this, which ended up not happening. I think I sent you the proposal for it. I almost wrote a book called The Gap Year Experiment about what I did, but I basically made a curriculum for myself and set up all of these experiments where I wanted to see if I can improve my health, improve my financial situation, improve how I learn, improve my lifestyle, relationships, all of that, during my gap year. You don't have to go this crazy if you're doing a gap year from school or from life or in between jobs. Again, I was intentional about what I wanted to do with that time, and at least what I wanted to experience and experiment with.

For you, it might be, you know, "I've been in a career path for 20 years, and I really have this business that I want to try." Make it intentional that you want to give yourself six months and \$10,000 to see if that business could be successful. Or, "Hey, I'm struggling with losing weight." What about giving yourself one month and \$100 to try out that new gym and go every day, or take a new diet and try that? Stick to it. I think there's a level of intentionality that most people miss.

Kathy Caprino: Okay.

Jared Kleinert: It's not so black and white. Part of being intentional is finding that gray area that works for you.

Kathy Caprino: The way you answered that, I know you're amazing at giving counsel. Can I tell you why? A lot of expert gurus out there want to just say, "Do what I did, and you will be successful," And that is BS, because who you are, Jared, is not the same as who I am, or anyone else. But what you framed it as is, "How about this? I can't tell you, 'go to school,' or not, but create an intentional pathway for what you want —"

Jared Kleinert: Right.

Kathy Caprino: "—and put in milestones for it. Don't make it 10 years."

Jared Kleinert: Yeah.

Kathy Caprino: I mean, if you want to learn, get moving, right?

Jared Kleinert: I have personal beliefs. I don't think college is a very good idea for most people, but I think it's more valuable that you take away from this conversation the idea of giving yourself optionality, or—

Kathy Caprino: Right. That's what I mean.

Jared Kleinert: —having more intentionality. Those things are, at the end of the day, what's most important from this conversation.

Kathy Caprino: So true. All right. I would love you to come back, because we're almost at the end of our time, but can you do this for us, Jared? You're an exceptional human being. Who wouldn't want to sit in a room with you, in your meeting of the minds, and learn from you? What can we offer either the 20 year old, the 40 year old, the 50 year old, anyone who wants to be more in this world? To say more, to do more, to make an impact. What are three tips, from your amazing experience so far, that you would offer?

Jared Kleinert: My latest book, *3 Billion Under 30*, sort of studies this. If you want to achieve exponential success and have world-changing impact in record time, quote unquote, what do you do? That was sort of the underlying question, that I didn't necessarily pose to all 75 of our book contributors, but that's sort of what I was looking for as I interpreted all of their stories. We had 75 contributors to *3 Billion Under 30* that range from the founder of WordPress, and Duolingo, so companies that are worth billions of dollars, to a two-time CrossFit Games champion, to major social media influencers like Jake Paul, to the youngest elected state senator in the country. Again, a very wide range of different people, even a Syrian Civil War refugee. We have people that have experienced cancer and rape and sexual assault and have overcome those things. Amazing individuals that I look to as sort of peer mentors. You don't need to just have traditional mentors. You can have peers that you learn from just as much.

When I was looking at their stories, to make a long story short, I think there is a three-step process that we could use, to oversimplify things. First is to set yourself up for exponential success and basically experiment. By definition of what exponential and linear is, you're not going to have exponential success if you don't do something slightly different than everyone else. That was actually a part of the rationale for me not to go to college. I was like, "If I go to college, I'm going to be conditioned to think like everyone else that goes to college, or act in the same way. If I do this experiment, and I don't go to college, how will my thinking, my resume, or career path, all be affected?" In a business setting, something like WordPress, that powers one third of the internet, and the company that owns WordPress is a billion-dollar entity.

WordPress was created as an open-sourced content platform, which just means that you could change the code if you wanted to, as a consumer, as opposed to Apple where that's closed, and you have to accept their terms and conditions, or not use their product. That was an experiment. Most content management software systems were not open source when Matt Mullenweg created WordPress. That experiment was him setting himself up for exponential success.

Kathy Caprino: Gotcha. Trying something different. Being different.

Jared Kleinert: Yep. If everyone's writing a *Forbes* column, and no one is writing a *Forbes* column and then also making 60-second videos for Instagram about their articles. If you set up that little experiment for 30 days and do that, the downside is pretty minimal. It might just be a few hours of your time. You can always drop that and go back to just writing articles. The upside might be you might get half a million, or a million followers on Instagram, and have a whole new audience to bring into your business or monetize. That's the way all of these book contributors are thinking about it. You want to set yourself up for exponential success by doing these micro experiments, or just trying to think of what you can do

slightly differently, or radically differently than everyone else in your industry, how you're doing things.

Two, is that they sort of build their own audience along the way. All of these book contributors, whether it's someone like me, who built a network that I can then use to disperse ideas. I have an exponential idea, and it works. Now what do I do? I've got to tell people about it. I built that through having a personal network. Other people, like yourself, have built audiences through media, and through content. Some people, again, like yourself, have podcasts where they build an audience, and they build their own distribution channels or networks. Some people have YouTube channels. Some people grow a lot of followers on social media. Some people grow impressive email lists. All of our book contributors, or a vast majority, built some sort of distribution channel for their ideas.

Kathy Caprino: Wow.

Jared Kleinert: Whether it was just their personal network, or it was a bigger following in a digital age and era. They could take ideas and share it, when they were good ideas.

Kathy Caprino: Can I say something about that?

Jared Kleinert: Sure.

Kathy Caprino: My editor at Berrett-Koehler, of my first book, *Breakdown, Breakthrough*, ten years ago, said, "You never— " Johanna Vondeling. She said, "You never want to launch into a vacuum." I'll never forget those words.

Jared Kleinert: Yeah.

Kathy Caprino: When you don't understand that, you're going to get crushed, because you have this beautiful idea, and it's crickets. All right?

Jared Kleinert: I mean, from an existential threat point of view, I think our problems in the world are growing exponentially as our opportunities do. Imagine a world in which we were having exponential success and advances in medicine, and then no one was sharing those ideas.

Kathy Caprino: Right.

Jared Kleinert: Or someone, like, entrepreneurs found something that can make them a lot of money, and completely change how they lead their life, and then they didn't share that. There's a real reason to share those ideas. It also can lead to profitability, right? If you have a book launch—

Kathy Caprino: Right. It's not all altruistic.

Jared Kleinert: Yeah. If you have good ideas, typically you productize it, or make it a service, and then you can sell it. You need a network to share that through. Lots of reasons for— Number one, setting yourself up for exponential success. Two, building a distribution network for your ideas.

Three, is to out-collaborate the competition. In a world where a lot of Gen-Xers, and boomers, and, people in general are very mean-minded, and their favorite radio station is WII FM. "What's in it for me?" I thought you'd like that one.

Kathy Caprino: Oh my God. I love it.

Jared Kleinert: It's actually powerful to start cross-pollinating your distribution network with other peoples' distribution networks, and build a bigger pop collectively. You see social media influencers doing this really well, where they'll appear on each other's channels, and do stuff together. You see this with a lot of people in the online marketing space, sort of like joint venture opportunities, and promote each other in online courses, and stuff like that. Yeah. This is an example of that.

Kathy Caprino: Look at what your books—

Jared Kleinert: Yeah. My books are the ultimate example.

Kathy Caprino: The ultimate. Let me find inspiring people who inspired me, and let me share their stories. I did the same for *Breakdown, Breakthrough*. I thought I had all the answers, and then I realized, "What? I don't have any of the answers. Why don't I talk to people who have answers?"

Jared Kleinert: *3 Billion Under 30* is really me doing all three of these things. I set up an experiment to be exponentially successful in publishing a book by doing the self-published route. I ended up not just even putting a book on Amazon, but I printed 10,000 hardcovers. Sold books through my website only for the first year, and only recently went on Amazon. I went very rogue, and worst case scenario is I don't ever do a book like this again. I go back to the traditional publishing model. Best case scenario is I've found a way that I could sell books that are way more profitable, and reach the right readers, and make a positive impact. I'm probably somewhere in the middle right now, but I'm figuring it out.

I've been building my own distribution network for ideas by building an email list. I've attempted a YouTube series before, and things like that. Really, it's my network that is my thing that I've built, and that distribution idea. I out-collaborated the competition. Every other business author wants to interview 10, 20, maybe even 50 experts, and sort of create a book that way. My book is me just passing the mic to the all of the people that I wanted to interview, quote unquote. All 376 pages of the book are everyone else's writing that I just edited and curated and made readable. I didn't actually change the content. I didn't tell them what to write. I just gave them some basic parameters and they all shared their stories. That makes this book, and both books, bigger than myself. It had marketing benefits to it, as well, because a lot of people felt they had ownership, or had some skin in the game when it came time to promote the book.

Kathy Caprino: I want to share, if I can, that's what *Forbes* is for me. Most of my *Forbes* posts are interviews. My most viral post ever, 7.7 million views, is Dr. Tim Elmore, who is on the podcast, about seven crippling parenting behaviors that keep children from growing into leaders. I can tell you all this: it's such a great joy when you're able to amplify someone else's voice who the world needs to hear. The piece of you that you can be proud of is that you curated that.

Jared Kleinert: Yeah.

Kathy Caprino: You chose that person. In Tim's case, he didn't need me to amplify his voice. He's got an amazing nonprofit. For many of these people, maybe their story would never be published.

Jared Kleinert: Yeah. I get joy out of that. There's a lot of people whose stories in the book you've heard of, but maybe haven't heard this side of it.

Kathy Caprino: Yeah.

Jared Kleinert: Matt Mullenweg is pretty big. He doesn't need my help. Katrin Davidsdottir, who is the CrossFit Games champ, she has a million followers on Instagram. She doesn't need my help.

Kathy Caprino: Right.

Jared Kleinert: Jake Paul has over 25 or 30 million total social media followers. Also doesn't need my help. Yeah, there are some people in the book who you wouldn't have heard their story, and I value that diversity. I didn't just pick people who are super popular. I didn't make all 75 people those. I picked Aziz Diab, who is our last contributor that appears. He escaped the Syrian Civil War and lives in Germany. There's a whole book on success. His story basically comes down to, "Hey, I'm alive, therefore I'm successful."

Kathy Caprino: Wow. What a great way to end that book.

Jared Kleinert: No one would hear his story, really, if we didn't amplify it. Putting it next to all of these other people who have bigger audiences allows his story to better be told.

Kathy Caprino: I'm so glad you included that. Oh, Jared. We could go on forever. I've gotten so many great— Thank goodness there's transcripts for each of these, folks. There will be a transcript link at the bottom. Read it. Read it. Listen to it. Jared, where can people learn more? Where can they take part in all of your stuff, read your books? Where do they go?

Jared Kleinert: You can just go to 3billionunder30.com. It's the number 3, the word billion, the word under, the number 30, .com.

Kathy Caprino: Yeah.

Jared Kleinert: You can just email me. Jared@3billionunder30.com. You can text me. 646-846-7200.

Kathy Caprino: Here come 20,000 new interns for you, Jared.

Jared Kleinert: You'd be surprised. No one texts me or emails me.

Kathy Caprino: I'll text you.

Jared Kleinert: The people that do, some people don't listen to everything I just said. A lot of —

Kathy Caprino: They don't do it.

Jared Kleinert: They don't do it the right away.

Kathy Caprino: Come on, folks. Snap out of it and listen to Jared.

Jared Kleinert: I'm saying this is you listening, here. Sometimes I talk a lot about networking, and relationship building, on different podcasts, and at different talks. I'll give them an entire template for how I cold email influencers, and then they don't use that same template on me.

Kathy Caprino: Maybe they're listening to point number two. Do it differently.

Jared Kleinert: Right.

Kathy Caprino: Let's give them the benefit of the doubt. Maybe they're trying to be rogue. Oh, Jared.

Jared Kleinert: You're much nicer than I am.

Kathy Caprino: What are you gonna do?

Jared Kleinert: Those are the best places to reach me.

Kathy Caprino: Come again. We learned so much from you, Jared.

Jared Kleinert: Yeah.

Kathy Caprino: It's just so darn inspiring. Thank you for joining.

Jared Kleinert: Yeah. Thank you for having me. Thanks for giving me this distribution channel to share my ideas. We are out-collaborating the competition.

Kathy Caprino: Yes, we are. I hope to see you this summer and partake in a few of your programs. Let me know how I can help in any way, Jared. Thank you.

Jared Kleinert: Absolutely.

Kathy Caprino: I'll see you soon. Everybody, I hope, if this hasn't given you a brave boost, I don't know what. You are amazing. You are talented. You are gifted. The world needs you, but first you've got to figure out how to be of use. I hope this helps you. Let us hear. Jared and I would love to hear. Go on my Facebook page, [Finding Brave Today](#), and tell us. Ask your

questions. Be specific. Use this information. I hope this helps you find brave. We will see you next week. Thanks again, Jared. See you soon.

Jared Kleinert: Thank you for having me.

Kathy Caprino: Any time. Bye, everyone.

Thanks so much for joining us today, and please don't forget to check out findingbrave.org for more programs, resources, and tips. Tune in next time for your weekly dose of *Finding Brave*.