Hey there restaurant pros. It's Dave Scott Peterson Welcome to Episode 59 of the restaurant prosperity formula. I have been coaching restaurant owners since 2003. And the restaurant prosperity formula is based on what the most successful restaurant owners I've worked with to on a daily basis to achieve their success. The basic premise of the formula centers around cheeping prosperity, Freedom your restaurant and the financial freedom you deserve. To achieve prosperity you have to follow a very specific formula made up of leadership systems training, accountability, and taking action. Now I want to tell you about our guest today on all my mastery plus members, Avery word who is the CEO of Little Italy pizza in groveport, Ohio. He went from burning the candle at both ends, working his pizza oven every Thursday to Sunday, open to close to never being on the schedule, working from home walking into the restaurant only when he has a manager meeting or when he wants to. He has a fully capable restaurant management team that is helping him explode his sales service and profitability. His fiancee is growing their catering division for added revenue and they're expanding the brand to a new location just a few blocks down to support all this growth. Want to learn more about his journey and how you can have the same success well, you want to listen in to find out. I want to welcome every word to our show today. But first a word from our sponsor. This episode is being brought to you by repeat returns. If you're a restaurant owner of a medium to high volume, independent restaurant, multi unit or franchise operator, and you're looking for a proven and realistic solution. To attract, grow and retain customers, then you need to visit repeat returns. Repeat returns is a modern marketing platform created by a restaurant owner for restaurant owners. It studies each customer's habits and patterns predicts the most profitable outcome for your restaurant every single day and deploys a marketing to make that happen. You'll never lift a finger to see if repeat returns is right for you. Visit repeat returns.com forward slash DSP. Avery, I want to thank you so much for taking time to talk to me today. I'm excited to have you. Welcome my friend.

Thanks for having me. I'm excited to talk about my journey with you.

Well, I'm even more excited because it's pretty cool. So do me a favor tell people a little bit name of your restaurant where you're located a little history about it because if I'm not mistaken it was it says old as I am like I was born in 1966 and I think you started as a grocery store. So you've got a long history there. So why don't you tell us a little bit about naming a restaurant and where you are and a little bit about that?

Yeah, so my name is Avery Ward. I'm the owner operator of Little Italy pizza and growth board Ohio. Family owned and operated. We've been there since 1979 as a pizza shop, and 1960 My grandpa decided to get into the grocery business and he was working as a manager a produce manager for another grocery store in Columbus always wanted to own his own place. He was traveling through town and got to talking with the owner and by the end of a four hour conversation he was offered divided place and so he walked literally went across the street same day, took out $18,000 and purchased it which is pretty awesome taking risks and took action that's kind of crazy to think about but they purchased the grocery store did that for about 17 years. And purchased the pizza shop down the street. And it was doing so well in that little tiny building that they had that they decided to close down the grocery store because they were seeing decline in sales because the the big grocery store had came into town down the road. So they decided to move the pizza shop into that grocery store is building and it's been there ever since. And 43 years this year, and we are growing at the end of this year. We're moving once again we've outgrown our building and we're moving into a brand new construction about 5200 square feet with a full front of house program and larger kitchen and all that so that's a little bit about the business a little bit about me. were trapped retail for about five and a half years and grew through the corporate ladder of retail and decided that it really wasn't the career path for me. And my at the time that was having some health issues and we seen a decline in business. And it was really just paying the bills and so I decided to leave apple and what I was thinking was my career and come back into the restaurant with a goal of growing it and implementing technology into the restaurant. And so we

didn't that wasn't a straight path for you necessarily. I mean, for the most part, technology was easy because that's where that's your background. But you really worked a lot on marketing and truly trying to get more butts in seats. Talk a little bit about kind of where your sales were and the growth because you did an incredible job growing that company when you came back what was that kind of financial or should say sales growth. What did that look like?

So when I started in 2018, our record year was 2016 which was 520,000 for a year. And that was the most in sales they had ever done. And so when I came back I knew that there was a lost opportunity. This is all before the pandemic and everything, too as a team. I realized that there was a lost opportunity with online ordering. The point of sale that was being used was archaic. And so we weren't getting orders half the time. They would constantly have to go and reboot the server that was up in the cloud. It was just a mess. And so we weren't running efficiently. So I knew we had to change that. And we weren't reaching our potential amount of customers. They we had a good loyal customer base, but it was slowly dwindling because of this either the service that was being provided or the product that was being provided. And so I knew that I had to really hunker down and make sure that first and foremost we're providing a consistent product every single time. Kind of a Funny Story with that is my dad and grandma are both very Italian a little bit of this little bit of that tasted, you know, add a little more. So I had to get the recipes together. And I knew that I had to start there. If I wanted my team to be able to make the things correctly. They had to know how to do that. And so I started with that. And it was very hard working with my dad alongside of him. Because at the time he was still in there and getting the recipes out of his head and on paper and have actual measurements was next to impossible. I'm like okay, Dad, let's go ahead and make a batch of pizza sauce and he do it and All right, stop. Let me get the measurement on that on that salt. He's like, Well, I don't know the thread amount of salt. I gotta make it and then tasted later. Like okay, so then I ended up buying a little scale that was electronic scale that hooked up to my phone and I put that underneath of the bowl that he was making the sauce and I said okay, did that go ahead and make it and he put the salt in and I record what that was. He put the pepper and hit records you know, tear tear tear, and I got all those measurements and then he made it and then he added something else and then I wrote down what that measurement was and added to the first one. So it literally took me hiding a scale underneath the thing to know what it was because I tried it on a regular scale and he's like, Oh, no, yeah, yeah, yeah, I can't do that. It's not gonna work, you know. And so that's that's what I had to go through just to get our recipes and I did it. With everything. And so you know, just to think of where I started to where and now it's crazy. But as far as the marketing side of things go, I realized we weren't reaching our full potential customers. So I got our consistency down first. And then I started with I knew a lot about technology, right so I had a really good website built. I did that long before I came back. I was working at Apple and I had done the website. I knew that we had to get to our customer information. It was very critical to have that. And so I started a email blast like campaign collecting emails from our website sign up, and you know, there was no offers on it. We just bought email and to be on our list, you know, and then I turned that into doing a text program. And then I turned that into capturing our online orders, email addresses coming from those and they got a new point of sale and then that led me to play up in America's best restaurants. I was utilizing Facebook and its full potential to capture customers information, emails, phone numbers first and last name, all that stuff and kind of put that whole marketing on autopilot to where they're handling it. I no longer had to do it because I was spending a lot of time doing it. And then I did mail marketing I started that where you know everybody's like don't send out mailers it's not worth it. And I had really good success we had typically we sent out about 10,000 In the beginning we did about 10,000 addresses, and a week we would see anywhere between 100 to 150 coupons come in and when I say coupons I mean like $2 off your online order and all my coupons push online ordering. That's really what they are all all four of the coupons. There's five coupons but four of them are all online Oh race and then I have one coupon on there that's like phone or dine in order. But we always try and push people to online ordering because it saves us the labor over the phone and it also makes sure the order is always accurate because if the customer is doing it, you know they're putting their order in the way they want. And there's no option for one of my teenage staff to mess up punching in the topping around or something like that. And so it allows our staff to focus more on the fulfillment of the order and and making sure that we take a little bit extra time to make sure that it's right all the time.

And so you started 500 Where did you end up before we met you would have made a big jump from 500 to what?

Yes, and today's 18 Well, 2016 it was 550 I think 2018 When I came back we closed at 750 2019 We closed at 980 I think 2020 We did 1.2 2021 We did 1.4 And this year we are on track to do 2.2

And it's absolutely amazing. Now with that said there was a point in time describe before we met described where you were as far as a restaurant operator that's still in the business you trying to get now not only the marketing, but the operations in order what was life like for you and that was right at the beginning of the pandemic or in it I'm trying to remember.

So it had been going for multiple years where you know, in 2018 I grew the business I was growing the business I was continuing to grow the business. And through that we really phased out my dad working in there. My dad was raised very much so if you don't do it yourself, it's not going to get done right. Or that he has to see every step of the process. So and So. I had been kind of instilled a lot of those values where I was kind of in that mindset that I have to do it. I have to be there just because that's the way I was raised. You know, growing up, we didn't take all but two vacations my entire childhood. And because that's because dad was always working, you know, and so he seen a lot of that growth and he was there for it to where he was we got him down to this working one shift a week and then those shifts where he was working the one that had to be there. He was just messing so much stuff up because his health and his his brain issues and things like that where he couldn't really do it the way that he did. So he was just getting really frustrated with himself and and causing some issues among the other staff and stuff. And so we finally got him to a point where he was comfortable stepping away. And, you know, really letting me handle the operations of the business all on my own. And then it got to a point where it was like okay, that you know it's time for you to like fully retire means on paper and let me buy you out. And that was a very long and apprehensive process and it was multiple difficult conversations. To get him to understand that it was fully in his best interest to you know, relinquish his shares of the business. You know, so it was it was a difficult time in my view. During all of that i Grandma had also just passed away which was his mom, who, you know, operating the business with him so there was a lot of family history and emotions tied to that whole process but it kind of looking back. It was all for the better. He's much happier, way less stressed out. He took on you know so much stress even while I was operating it numbers were great. We weren't growing we were making money. He just always worried can i Are we going to be able to afford that electric bill this month? Yeah, to add like, do that like Yeah, it's like 1% Nothing's Good, good. Like, don't even worry about it. But that's just the way he was he operated the business worrying that is he going to be able to afford the next bill. Can I make it do you know they operate to pay their bills, really. And so that's just kind of the way he had always done. It. Because what he always did and so, you know, every month he's worried about making that food vendor bill or the electric bill, the water bill. And so, you know, it went from him always worrying to now knowing everything's taken care of. He's taken care of you know, I make sure everything's good. And it's been a lot less stressful for him.

So what about for you, though? What were what were some of the challenges going on that you started to seek help? For the operational side of things. That's how we met, but what was it? What were some of the challenges that you're like oh, my gosh, this has got to change.

So when I got with math lab, I started watching some of his videos about marketing. And I led me on a video that you did with him where it talked about kind of just making change in your business and implementing systems and things like that. And so that led me down a whole funnel of your videos and I watched a lot of them even, you know at your old company videos. I was I was digging in and I always felt like I was just right on the cusp of knowing Madden in and out and then I never got it like Damn. You know, I always wanted it I couldn't figure out okay, I take I know what I need to do. But how do I do? It was always the question I was left with. And there was one video and you know, I'll never forget it. It was one where you talked about the plunger. Now looking back and working with you for over a year now or actually not even a year yet coming up on a year. I've heard you say it so many times. But you know, there was that one video that I watched and it really just hit home where you said that you tell your employees don't call me I'm taking the day off finally and then they call you at the end of the shift as they're cleaning the bathrooms down like hey, we can't find the plunger and that actually it happened. I was at Gino just a breaking point of where we grew so much. We made all this growth. We've made all this change. We were doing well and customers were happy. But it was at a cost and the cost was me almost doing what my dad did. And mind you I had three days off a week. I always had three days off a week. That was my thing. When I came back. I wanted to make sure that it really they weren't days off but I worked from home two of those days. And then my third day, I actually had off. And so you know my two days at home, I would do the schedule. I would do payroll I would do our tax stuff, QuickBooks, all that stuff. And then you know have the one day off. And so there was one week where I told them I was like Do not call me. It's Tuesday like it has my day off. I'm actually not working from home today. Please don't call me. Like if you have what you need to know to figure it out if you can't figure it out, and it can wait let's just let it wait and I'll deal with it tomorrow. And they called me that night and asked me where the plunger was and that was kind of my breaking point like okay, well I really need to do something and and I seen that video a couple of days later and I was like wow, yeah, that that really happened. And so you know, there's always that breaking point we talked about in our one video that we did a becoming richer restaurant operator, whatever it was, and I had mentioned that that there's always that one thing that happens in somebody's operation where they realize okay, we need to make a change. And that was mine. I knew that if I kept doing it the way that I was doing it, and I knew that I wasn't done growing. I knew that I wanted to get bigger. And you know, back then, like I said we did 1.6 And now to think we're doing over 2 million that would not that growth would not have been possible without the changes that we've made. You know, and so thinking about how did I do it? I don't know how I did it. But now looking back, you know I don't work at all in the restaurant. I'm not scheduled ever any shifts. But thinking to that I worked open and close from Thursday to Sunday. I delivered pizzas on Sundays like I was just so stuck in I had to be on the schedule, because we didn't have enough people or this or that I always let something keep me there.

But you were you were just emulating what you were taught from your grandparents to your father. You know, I'm a lifer in the industry and I watched my my parents my mother and stepfather and our value was how hard we worked. How many hours we put in like you weren't valuable if you didn't work 80 hours a week if you couldn't go oh shit, I'm tired. Holy crap. And in the same time, if you followed along the same suit of what they did, and that's being the superhero of the restaurant, I can answer every question, which means nobody thinks they ask you every question and you answer every question, you fix everything. And that kind of puts you in a position where even even if you had the three days out of the restaurant one day off, which is still spectacular for many restaurant owners. The fact is you're a prisoner because without you it doesn't work. Would you say that's an accurate assessment to say that's kind of where you came from?

Yeah. 100% And you know, up until when I fully bought my dad I was struggling with that because he kind of always had that mindset that Oh, Avery he calls me darling. That's right. No, no, no, you're not the adult and you're not there. Like it's not gonna work. Like I just don't know how you're doing this and blah, blah, blah. Like you know, you really need to really think about that you really need to be there. And so, you know, he really struggled with that to like seeing me make the change, and still not believe that it's for the right direction or we're headed in the right direction.

Well, I'm gonna talk about that in a little bit because I Met Your Dad in Vegas when I was speaking at the restaurant and bar Expo. We all went out and had cocktails together and I'll talk about how he bragged about you later. With that said, do me a favor. So what had you tried before we met? Like what were the things that you you searched out or tried to put in place? Did you work with another company did you look out was do you think software is going to fix something? Did you bring in a consultant to do anything? Or was it just kind of doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result?

Well, I guess I kind of would have to back out because I before I worked for Apple, I mean, I grew up in the restaurant, like literally four years old. I was making pizzas. There's pictures of it. Like we would go to trade shows and my dad I went to every trade show that ever existed and you know there got to a point I remember when I was like 10 years old, it started to be a thing where no kids allowed. And we'd get there and they're like, no kid, no, you know, you got to be 16 or 18 whatever it was to go beyond the door. And my dad would always look at the people. Do you know Gary Coleman? This is he runs the fucking place. And so, you know, I've always I've always been ingrained in the business and so you know, growing up, my grandma lived right next door. So during the summer time, and after school, I was at my grandma's house and in which was kind of like the office. her living room was like the office for the restaurant, and my dad would be working. And I always just, I ate it up, like learning how to grow it and how it worked. I'm talking about 10 years old. I created our handbook for the restaurant of like policies and procedures when I was 10. And I'm not exaggerating, like I could go back on Google Drive and pull up the data when it was started. I was 10 years old, doing this stuff and so I you know, started way back when I'm getting like just policy is and how to request time off and vacation policies and paid time off policies and you know, and fireable offenses and things that could be caught. I mean, just consuming all this information on the internet and plopping it into manuals. And then, when I was 14, I started managing the store. And you know, that was difficult. I had employees under me that were had been with my dad for at the time. 1520 years. And having this 14 year old kid telling you what you can and can't do is difficult for me and them. But, you know, being the passionate about technology before I worked at Apple, I got a scheduling software on I tried to change our point of sale and started taping over the payroll side of things. I mean, there was all those things that I was changing. And then when I came back from working at Apple into the restaurant, I really had a good understanding of how everything operates because I grew up in it. And I had a good understanding of what we needed to change as far as a you know, consistency perspective or to grow sales or to treat customers right because I had learned that in my time with Apple. They have really excellent customer service and training on how you take care of your people and also I knew from an operational standpoint of how I wanted my staff to feel when they come to work and how I want them to be treated and what it takes to have a staff that's onboard. So yeah, that answer that question.

Yeah, I mean, you, you, you consume information you execute that's one of the things that I love about cheese you take action we talked about restaurant prosperity formula, like there is no let me think about it. It's just frickin your fire ready setting all figured let's do it and then if it screws up a little bit, I'm gonna fix it. We're gonna make this work which is incredibly empowering. When you look at yourself as an entrepreneur. And, you know, while you didn't take the initial risk of starting the business, that was the generations before you. The truth of the matter is often kids of business owners come in I call them reluctant entrepreneurs. They don't understand risk. They don't understand what it took to make the business go. But because you actually were in the muck at four years old and you had the passion for it. You came in as a true entrepreneur, wanting to say that it's time for you to retire Let me buy you out. That's risky. That's that's casting the safety net away. That's doing all the things that say I've got this, and I can handle it, which is amazing. And so the fact of the matter is, you put all this stuff together, but there had to been something missing. Talk a little bit about what made you what was the decision to go with me? Yeah, I get that you saw the video and you understood that Hey, where's the frickin plunger you go? Ah, you gotta be kidding me. Where's the plunger? You know, by the way, I know that example because that's happens in every restaurant. It happened for me as a manager is like a you got to be kidding me. It's three o'clock in the morning and you don't know where the frickin plunger is right? But with that said, what was it that kind of said, Okay, I'm gonna go with the SP we're gonna make I'm gonna make this change. What was that? What was the true event look like for that?

Well, I think leading up to it, it was I knew that there had to be in a better way to operate it. You know? Looking at the larger concepts that exist. The McDonald's the Wendy's the all the large chains. Even the look at the NATOs pizza. They're very popular in Columbus. They started here in Ohio and Columbus, and which is actually funny. I've always looked to them as a inspiration of mine and kind of the leaders that I look up to Tom grody, Jane grody, they're just amazing people. And I've, luckily over the last two years, in 2020, I got to meet all of them. And that was really awesome for me to be able to meet my kind of my idols in this industry, but it's, you know, you have all these large companies that have just grown so much, and their owners become less and less and less and less involved. And I knew, Okay, we only have one location, but I knew I I'm never satisfied with what I have. So I knew I wasn't ever going to be satisfied with one and then when I have to, I'm probably not gonna be satisfied with two, or when I have the largest space and I'm gonna be satisfied with the larger space. So I knew that, you know, I'm never going to be just content with what I have. And I always want to grow and so in order to grow, I knew that I have to be less involved and then have to figure out to get people to understand how I want things done, and be able to hold them accountable correctly, because that's kind of what I struggled with. I had the stuff in place to tell them. I had checklist I had policies, but keeping them held accountable to it. Or me in the moment remembering that I have that and go point to that didn't exist. It was just so easy for me to go. Oh, yeah. How do I clean out? Oh, yeah, that's how you do it here. Come with me. I'll grab the California get you the solution. Spray it on, scrub it off, wipe it down, hit it with Polish, you know, just easier for me to do that versus Oh, it's it's in that Bible over there, go grab it page, whatever. Read through it. You know, it didn't exist. It existed but it didn't exist for me to tell them to do that. Right and so I kind of had to, I knew that I had probably 40% or maybe 50% of the formula done or started, but it wasn't in place and it wasn't being utilized.

It's kind of missing that cause so you're in search of how do I connect all these dots and make it that it's not requiring me to be the glue, that everything happens through me? That's not accurate?

Yeah, yeah. And watching the videos and always feeling like I got that. What I need to do to put in place what I need to do to make it work. That information was there and I just didn't know how to do

it. Just out of curiosity, what was the decision like what did it feel like to make the decision? Was there a lot of fear behind it? A lot of oh my gosh, what am I doing or was there just like this is going to I'm going to make sure this makes a change in my business. What did that feel like? Because that's it's a big investment to come in in the coaching program and to say I'm an invest not only find the financial part, but the time and the culture change in my business, because I promise you that there's going to be people who leave you because you're going to implement these systems. What did it feel like? What What was it like as an entrepreneur to make that kind of decision?

I do remember I didn't even hesitate. I you know I said yes right away and led me to actually a couple of weeks ago I looked back you know on your website I had to fill out this

and I was like, I knew I got copy. I sent an email copy of that somewhere and I looked back on of my answers and it was really cool through that, but I filled that out at like 3am One night after finishing. You know what I needed to do, I did payroll and categorize QuickBooks. I was up and took a shower and gotten there and it was like 3am And mind you I'd started the day at like, probably 745 Eight o'clock in the morning and worked all day, got home worked all night, and then I was gonna wake up at probably eight or nine o'clock we'll do it again. And I was laying there just knowing that there's got to be a better way to do this. And so I finally clicked the link of one your videos and filled out the whole form and you're on the call and I really didn't think twice about

it that what I heard from your other members that you've done the podcast with and the videos that you have posted about just the information was there and I knew it could make a substantial amount of change. It was just doing it.

Very cool. What were a couple, maybe one two of the very first changes that you implemented in the program that you started to go Holy shit, this is this is changing my life. This is changing my business. What were a couple of those first early on things that gave you that Aha

well I know you have a checklist and I had I had a checklist for say, of what the station should be like when it's closing time. But was it followed now? Do we look over it now? And so I had the core part of it them but like you said they sucked. And so you know, I had the first thing we had built the first checklist was the rescue. And this was still when I was working in the restaurant. I was closing down a Thursday night. And we had this brand new hire it was their first day and when we had employees typically start they always clean the bathroom. So every shift and we always had a team member go in there with him for 2530 minutes and show them how to do the one and then they a team member watches and do the other one and make sure it's done right and by the time the new team members are done doing the second one there's probably like other things that they missed and we have to rego over it I know you missed this you missed this you missed it. It's kind of like this corner again you check this out all this stuff in there. So that first shift where we finished the the checklist for the bathrooms. I told one of my managers the time said Hey, watch this, I think I mean I feel good about this checklist and if I think this is right, I should be able to hand this iPad to them. They're gonna go in there without any training and be able to do that bathroom. And so I did I handed it to that new hire who still works with with me to this day is very good. Want to go ahead and go in there and take care of the bathrooms. And she started from the top down and I said come get me when you're done. So she came back about 20 minutes later, both bathrooms done immaculate. It's always white soaps were checked. Paper towels were refilled, you know both things that toilet paper were in the hallway. The corners of the walls didn't have any gunk in the corners. I mean, just all the things that I always checked for. It was all immaculate and I was like wow, this this right here can make some substantial change in our business. And so we build out the list for every station opening Monday closing the miscellaneous tasks, we have close to 3000 tasks that are checked off a week. And they do it and I think we're at about a 98 and a half to a 99% completion.

That's amazing. So it's truly learning you could impose your will without being there by setting your standard your system your process your way. It's crazy because we talk about I always talk about it's restaurant one on one and it's cash controls and checklists before all the big systems because they're the foundation of is their accountability. Am I creating a culture where the details matter that close to open culture? It really does work right? I mean, starting off with checklists, setting yourself up for people saying here's my expectations. It does make it easier to operate your business. Yes.

Yeah, it's a constant. I tell the managers this. It's a constant living breathing list. It's always changing. It's always adapting. We're always editing it. There's always something that I'm finding it's like us said to go through the restaurant and find all the things that just absolutely piss you off and I still to this day, it doesn't make me as mad and and work because it's a bunch of little things but I still to this day find those things that it's always the corners of the room that talk to the ceiling. There's always something and so I just go right on our little manager checklist that for job revisions, and I pop it on it

and then, the next year that Kayden works, it's updated in job and so you know, it's constantly adapting and changing and our ship leads and our team members also contribute to the list like hey, we brought this new product and we got to make sure we put on there that we take down the container for the buffalo sauce for pizzas and send it back to dish every night. Okay, you know, so we're always changing things and making sure we're adapting the list to fit that so they're always accurately I told game that said Yeah, buddy. We're gonna get right because that new store that whole list is fine time over again.

So were there any unexpected shifts and changes in your life or business from being a part of the program that just kind of caught you off guard go I didn't expect that.

Yeah, I mean, so I would say that, you know, our culture at the time, and, you know, you say you're always working on it, and we truly are. There's always things that are coming up and we're always trying to figure out how we can address it and make sure it doesn't happen again. I would say at the time, my management team that I had, wasn't really truly holding people accountable. And there was no organization for me to understand that if I gave them a responsibility, that I was getting verification that it's done, and having a list for me to be able to ensure that things are getting checked off. Something that came from the program that you didn't even teach. Is that really what you're asking because if that's the question, I would say that it's a song. I got that from one of the group coaching call that was recommended by think Mary. She was like I'd much prefer this over Monday or something like that, but that really has made substantial change to where we host all of our meetings on it. Our manager meetings all of our agenda is on there and managers can contribute to the agenda and what they want to talk about, they can put all their things on there. And then we can create like follow up sub tasks of everything that needs to happen. So if they bring up like this employee's performance when you look at it, boom, all the managers see it and then I create subtasks report on Monday how they did the next shift is when they report on Wednesday, how they did report on Sunday, how they did and then I get notified as soon as the manager checks it off and adds a comment or, you know, I go in the restaurant and I noticed something that is out of place. I pop it right on there and tell the manager to fix it with a picture and then they go back and take care of it so that I would say that would be the one thing that came out of the program that I wasn't expecting to.

That's that constant communication. And for those people that don't know Asana is a project management kind of, I guess, business software as well as an assister. Or a different company called monday.com. These are strong powerful things because you not only can put your tasks in there, you can put subtasks and all the steps go in there, but you can see that somebody read it what it does, is it it takes away that email chain. Oh, I didn't see the email bullshit. You got an app on your phone. There it says and oh by the way, I can see you logged in and saw it at 622 last night and you didn't do shit about it. Like it's this level of accountability, but more importantly, consistent clear communication, that everybody who's ever part of that board or that project can see be a part of, and it is amazing is that constant communication from weekly manager meetings to, hey, are these tasks getting done? What's beautiful about it is you tie that in with your checklists, the asana projects with your managers. It's you're holding people accountable. You're being clear on your expectations. You're being clear on what you want. Done however you want it done by when how well you want it done. But without getting the 800 text messages randomly. Everything's in one little app that everybody's a part of it and you know, when you go in, you can communicate that's powerful, which makes you the leader your restaurant needs. Your you're leading the process instead of doing the process. Right.

And it's funny, yeah, it's 100%. Right. And it's funny because there's some things that are coming out of Asana that I didn't realize would and that is like the search feature that we changed. Like the way we count down the drawer and everything and I did give them the number for the account number they need to write down the deposit slip. And so one of the managers I posted in the text thing, but that that manager had put a task on there to tell him what the account number is. And then now they can just search that like one thing they're looking for and then the information is there for them.

That's fantastic. So let me go back to where I Met Your Dad. Okay. So we're in Las Vegas. I speak at the noun was the bar nightclub show now it's the bar and restaurant Expo. Fantastic show anybody who's in the gotta bar at all or serves alcohol and has a restaurant, you really need to go to the show. They probably have some of the best education their best speakers that that go there and you're gonna learn a lot and there's a lot of fun to have as well. With that said, we go out and we have some drinks together. Some other members, you your dad, I just met your dad for the first time and I remember him pulling me aside and going. I don't know what you did with him. But whatever it is, it's amazing. The change and I looked at you and I said no ain't me. It was him. He did all the work. But I think it was interesting to watch the generational shift of have to do everything have to do everything to my son who doesn't work in the restaurant anymore. Who's increased sales and profitability, like your food costs alone has made a huge change. And because you're controlling everything, putting people on a budget, having recipe cards and taking inventories and all these steps that go in to say, hey, I can manage my number, but I thought it was pretty amazing. So do me a favor. Talk about what life is truly like right now that your dad would pull me aside and go Holy shit. I don't know what happened but this is amazing.

Yeah, I mean, so we I fully off the schedule. I don't work in the store at all. I'm not scheduling any shifts at all. The only thing that I have to go in Florida is our weekly manager meeting Fridays at three o'clock. Other than that, I'm pretty much fully open. That has given me the ability to work on our new project, which is that new store that I had mentioned. Without this program, there's absolutely no way in hell that would even be a thought of mind to go into that. Were a possibility and probably was a thought but it wouldn't have been a possibility. So I've been able to work on that. And I can really work from home and work strategically on the business decisions and hold the managers accountable without having to focus on all the orders that are coming on the screen and make all the food that's coming to the kitchen or work the oven or take deliveries. So I've been able to really build a team that I can hold accountable that takes care of my guests that I know that they can get and my guests that I can monitor the success of the business or where our shortfalls are and, and make change and be able to kind of make really proactive decisions on how we're going to operate versus when I was working the lines it was like oh, that's my complaint. Okay, let's react, you know, now I can kind of sit back and watch a lot of that. So and so, you know, I have more time at home, more time to be able to spend with family. I'm not missing those events on the weekends where, you know, my side of the family is like hey, let's go for a drive to the Amish country this weekend. Yeah, it's fucking Saturday. Why are you even asking? So now I mean, what are they really do those things and go to my niece's soccer games and all that stuff that was never an option before?

Well, we talked about it in the group that you don't have a second chance on events being present in life seeing you know a nice go through confirmation or see a nephew hit the ball out or your kids when you have your own and like or even being present when you actually pulled yourself away and going out to dinner with friends and family and being pulled away because your cell phone rang coming back to the restaurant. You're not your restaurant but the restaurant you were in and realize the whole tables food has been finished but yours is ice cold because you had been outside so long on the phone. Like you can't get those times back. And so what has that done for your personal life, your relationships being present now, instead of following suit and saying, Hey, I'm gonna like my grandparents. I'm like my dad, I'm just in the restaurant. This is it. My whole life is being in these four walls, while you're still the restaurant owner and you're still involved on a daily basis. By not being there and being able to have freedom from the business. What does that done for your personal relationship?

It's definitely transformed. I think there's still some work to be done of me being so reactive and may need something at a moment's and typically, I'm right on it. Because the amount of me is is substantially less like 5% of what it was. It's very small. But the moment that's there, I'm on and, you know, a lot of times personal relationship wise, that's kind of a frustration of like up on your phone again. So there's still some work to be done there. But it's night and day. It really is and being able to be involved and not miss those those things that happen in life and be able to you know, not say no and not be tied and in the locked and chains of having to be there and thinking that I have to be there. I think this program, what I've gotten the most out of it is the mindset change. And you know, you've said that's taken me a little it took me a little while to get there, but once I did, it was like I'm like switch and it really was it was like, you know, being able to think proactively and have the tools to be able to hold people accountable and have the tools and know really our numbers and know exactly how we're doing know exactly all the information that there is to know from cost of goods to what our paper supplies number is and what it should be in my budget and how we need to make change where the waste is. And there's just so many things that have had come into place that allows me to do that. But now that I am able to do that, we are far more successful now than we were a year ago. From you know, you asked earlier like how does it affect the bottom line or what makes my dad feel a lot better? And that is you know, I've been able to take on all those debts and still make way more money than we were back then. You know, right now we're 24% net. And before we were at 13 That is amazing. So you know, we had these great volumes and you know, you say sales cure all ills and they truly do we were making money. But was it life changing money? No. It was really making money to pay myself what I was really worried because I was in there all the time. You know, so it's crazy, really.

And you've made that change in under a year. And that's the amazing part. You said you know you and I've had personal conversations to fool people in you pulled in this like the mindset change. I can remember you in the beginning there was like, there were cement shoes. It was like I buy into it. I don't quite buy at all and that was the attitude wasn't there. The mood was still a little bit low because there was just beatings coming at you all the time. And then there just was this change and I think it was the checklist time and like all of a sudden is like shit, this is changing. It does work and then it was like the ball you push to the top of the hill and it just started rolling your implementer you started asking more of your implementer you brought on a second manager that we could help with things and like it just steamrolled. It is amazing. The changes made like i i wouldn't say you're a typical member like you are you're a frickin superstar dude, while everybody makes change, you have just absolutely hit it out of the park and I couldn't be more excited for you and your future and the brand new place that you're moving to. Just so people know as we're listening. It's a major expansion adding ice cream and a full bar and like it is a big frickin decision you've made. But I know you're gonna knock it out of the park. Look what you've done in the space you have that you're you can't even handle the business for all intents and purposes. Without that online ordering that you had done. There's no way you're you're the small restaurant you have right now can even handle it. So it's been a joy to watch.

Let me work on top of each other our buildings 90 100 square feet.

That's just crazy. That's crazy. But with that said, let me ask you this. I kind of already know the answer because I'm gonna I'm gonna share a little bit. You're a unique restaurant owner you match a lot of the people I work with with not only the growth mindset growth mindset, but wanting to help others. Even somebody in your own local market who is technically a competitor, because you recommended somebody to me and literally the as the time we're recording this. Yesterday, they signed up you actually have somebody in your town or restaurant that you thought about buying and didn't you help them and said you need to be a part of this and make change. So what would you tell somebody who's thinking about Gosh, should I put my name in and have that first phone call? Should I even sign up or even think about this? What would you tell somebody about are signing up for this program?

You know what's interesting is learning this industry and pizza it's pizza it's really personal. There's a lot of people that have their certain tastes and there's a lot of way you can make it. But I would say that even if they are my competitor or in the same market, I don't really consider them I see them as a competitor. I know what I'm good at. I know what they're good at and as long as they're literally not across the street with the same product as me I don't see him as competition. So you know, those guys you're talking about? I was at a pizza show with him a couple of weeks ago and we just got to talk and they are we're really in all about some of the things that I was talking about. It's kind of interesting to me because looking back on it I love to look back from where we came from and talk about where we are now. I love to do it with my managers quite often of like, Wow, guys, like just one month ago we weren't watching out for this and now it's like, it's just part of our culture like our employees take care of that now. But I love to look back on the change. And oftentimes I don't think that we've made a substantial amount of change even though we really have it doesn't seem like we have it doesn't seem like it's been a lot of work to do it and just feel good. But so I was talking with them and they were really in awe and it almost felt like I was trying to sell them. I don't get anything from it, but I truly want to see people be successful. You know, I truly want these connections in my life that I'm worth something to them and they're worth something to me and we can help each other out. They do a lot of things fantastically. I have no idea about like I'm getting into the ice cream but they sell close to 800,000 a year and fucking ice cream. I have no idea how to sell ice cream and so you know, there's things that I can get from them that I probably will ask at a later point in time that they do really well. But I know that there are so many operators out there. There's another example of plates I've been talking with her she's an older lady, and met her through one of my vendors at shows and she struggles her husband passed away like 10 years ago and she was left this business that she did with him. She's grown she has a growth mindset like she can make change. She moved out of her small building and have this huge shop like from 900 square feet to like 2400 square feet pizza shot. It's huge, brand new brand new kitchen. Amazing blows me away at the amount that she's put into this place. But she's just a prisoner. She's stuck with her, her hands tied behind her back and I feel terrible. Like I know this key to success. I want to be able to share that with people like there is a way that you can make change in your business. And so while they don't get anything for the referral, I think it's imperative for our industry to be able to make the change to be able to not only have their staff that's in their environment, feel like they're a part of something better. And it's not just that in high school job food service, which I hate hearing that. I just want to see it turn into something better than it is. And so, I think it all starts with a lot of this stuff that you teach and so I'm really passionate about sharing that with people and getting people to understand that you know that what you're going through now isn't isn't neat. It doesn't need to be that way you know you can change it.

So people get involved because you can make the change. And I I can appreciate that because one of the things we talk about when people sign up when you sign up anybody I go with the investment you make with me financially, culture wise timewise it's not about me, it's about you. I simply provide you the information, the kick in the pants, and the right systems are put in place, as well as the support group. Right, other restaurant owners and their implementers on a weekly basis sharing and all of a sudden, you realize you're not alone, and that you can see people ahead of you the progress they made. That's a little bit motivating. And you want to be a part of that. I just think restaurant owners like you are not average. And so I want to make sure people understand why you would recommend coming into my program. It's not for everybody. You've got to have a growth mindset. You've got to believe you can get it done. You've got to have the volumes to make the investment. But more importantly, you got to want it so bad that it ain't about I'm gonna buy a magic pill because Would you agree with this one statement I always make I suck I create work like Have We not put on more systems and more work in your restaurant?

Yeah, there's a lot of responsibility and work that comes with it. But the two that I recommended I knew they'd be a good fit because they made so many changes to date and a short amount of time and the way they talk about it and you know everything I knew that they are very much so capable of making the changes to change our life. And so yeah, you're right. It's not. It's not a magic pill. It's not going to fix everything there is work involved. But if you put in the effort and you are willing to change the way you do things and be able to realize that you know, if you put in the work and you're willing to accept that your answer isn't the right one. Then you can make a substantial difference in your life, your business, your bottom line, your bank account. It's you know, you say life changing money in it. It truly is like you know all the debts that I've taken on I'm not even worried about like, you know, we're talking $1.2 million and one $800,000 in your pocket, you know what I mean? It's like you got a budget, you know, you can handle it. Yeah, yeah, yeah, no, I know. I'm confident in what we're doing. I'm confident for what we provide. I'm confident in our staff, you know,

let me ask you this. I really appreciate you taking the time to share and if anybody's listening to so they're not motivated to want to make change in their business after listening to you. They were sleeping. What haven't we covered? Is there anything else you want to share with people an idea or a thought a something before we go

you know, I would say whether or not they go with your program, whether or not they even watch your videos. Just think about how, what small things can you do today, that's going to change or tomorrow or next week, next month next year. That could be something as simple as a different way that you count out your bars or whatever your issues are in your operation that you find to be frustrating. Think about or trying to find out what you can do to change that one thing that will set you up for more success tomorrow and prevent that from being a problem for you because I think all too often I've been there myself plenty of times I just keep doing the same thing over and over again getting more and more pissed off about it. And it's possible to fix it it's possible to stop it it's possible to change it and so you know that would be my one thing and then my other thing would be to do that it requires you to take action and make change and so you know we've slot but I truly believe in that that like those people that are willing to make a difference in their life or they want a difference in their life, what's holding them back. And what's holding them back from making the change what's holding them back from make the difference and we've got to figure out how do we stop letting that hold you back?

That is awesome. I couldn't agree with you anymore. Avery my friend I'm so thankful for you doing this for me today. I can't wait to talk to you again a year from now and record what changes you've made because I can't wait for this. This Taj Mahal new restaurant opened up because I think you're gonna slay it my friend. Thank you so much.

You gotta come down to the grand opening. I'm gonna force you to come down.

alright. It's very possible. It is very possible. Thanks, brother. He that was an awesome episode. I want to thank you for taking the time to take action on building a better, more prosperous restaurant. Before you go. I want to give you these three thoughts. One by combining leadership and taking action with systems and training being checked by accountability. You are on your way to creating prosperity for you and your restaurant to have something I need from you.

Please leave a review on Apple podcast Spotify or wherever you happen to listen to podcast by leaving us a review other restaurant pros seeking out this information are able to find it. I read the reviews and hearing how this information has benefited you. does wonders for me. And three if you find any of the discussions helpful share them, the more restaurant pros who have access to them, the better we become as an industry. For more restaurant resources or to get in contact with me. Connect with me at David Scott peters.com Be passionate about what you're doing. Be persistent, but more importantly become better and help everyone around you become better and your restaurant is going to kick some ass.