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You can't be on a date with your wife and simultaneously closing a deal. You may be physically present, but you're immensely present. And so when you say yes to one thing, you are saying no to an infinite amount of other things. And so entrepreneurship, I will tell you, and I won't sugarcoat it, it is going to require sacrifice. It is going to pull you away from your kids.

It is going to pull you away from your physical. You're not going to have an eight pack, be a millionaire, date your wife three days a week, coach your kids little league, run a seven figure or eight figure real estate investing business, be the pastor of your church, be on the HOA or board of directors of whatever. You cannot do all of these things. It is absolutely impossible. And so I won't sugarcoat this, but what I will tell you is my number one core value is keep the most important thing, the most important thing.

And this is as applicable in your business as it is outside of your business.

CORWYN:
Great morning, guys. Welcome to another fabulous episode of Exit Strategies Radio Show. Hey, I'm your host, Corwin J. Melette, broker and owner of Exit Realty Low Country Group, and beautiful North Charleston, South Carolina.

Hey, if this is your first time listening to this show, you, sir, ma'am, are in for a treat because our mission is very simple. That is to empower our community through financial literacy and real estate education, guys. Hey, we're a legacy building. I want you to put the hashtag on it when you do it too. Hey, got to give a shout out to those who listened to us faithfully.

Pastor Vanderbilt Evans Sr., that guy will jack me up if I'm putting that senior on his name. He tried to correct me and say he wouldn't, but he act like he ain't done it before. His wonderful bride, Ms. Sandra Evans, thank you all so much for listening.

The McKellers of the Q family, thank you all for tuning in here locally. My people out in Hollywood, my mom out there in my folks in Mullins and Merritt, thank you all so much. My family there, the Troy family there, thank you guys for tuning in and listening. You know I love you and I cannot say or express that enough. Guys, look here, today we are talking about it.

Look here, I'm probably talking to one of you right now. Do you have to quit your job, become a full-time investor, or take huge financial risks to build wealth through real estate? That is the question that we're going to answer today. Social media makes it seem like everyone, it's funny, makes it seem like everybody's flipping house and buying dozens of properties and becoming financially free like overnight, like everybody's instantly get rich. But what if the smartest path to wealth is actually slower, more intentional, and more realistic? Hey, look, today we got the answer to those questions and we have the plan and the planner in the house. So guys, look, one of the biggest misconceptions about real estate investing is that it's only for people with lots of money, with unlimited time, or a high tolerance for risk.

But today's conversation is about something much more practical. It's about helping everyday working professionals understand that building wealth isn't about making one big move. It's about making smart decisions consistently over time because legacy, guys, and we talk about this and say this often, it isn't built overnight, it's built one wise decision at a time. So today we're taking and talking about our financial discipline, investing while working full-time, understanding risk, creating systems that simplify building wealth that can last for generations. So today's guest is none other.

And look here, I had to laugh because I said, look, man, your last name. It is Keith Gillispie. He's the founder of REI Automated, a company that helps real estate investors replace chaos, whoo, it's crazy out here, with systems that create freedom. As an active investor, entrepreneur, and coach, Keith has helped hundreds of investors streamline their businesses, close more deals, and build long-term wealth through practical systems and automation. He's my kind of guy.

What makes Keith's perspective especially valuable is that he doesn't promote shortcuts to overnight success. Instead, he teaches real-world strategies that everyday working people and families can use to invest responsibly while balancing their careers and personal lives. So if you all would, let's not give him the slow clap. Let's make it fast and welcome Keith Gillispie to the show. Keith, how are you doing?

KEITH:
Oh, and I am better all the time, brother.

Thank you so much for having me on the show today.

CORWYN:
I love it. So look, before we get into this conversation, for our listeners, guys, this is why this matters. Many people believe that they have to choose between their career and investing and that building wealth through real estate requires taking huge financial risks. This conversation is meant to challenge that belief because real estate investing isn't about chasing trends.

It's about creating a long-term plan, managing risks wisely, and making consistent decisions that build financial security and a lasting legacy. So Keith, again, thank you so much for taking time out of your busy schedule for today's show. If you don't mind, tell our listeners how level who you are, what you do, but I want you to answer a question in this, which is why so many people believe that real estate investing is not for them.

KEITH:
Easy. All right.

Well, I got started in real estate investing in 2016. And at the time I was active duty in the United States Marine Corps. So I have the biggest excuse of anybody of why real estate investing should not be for me. So if you have any excuse, you can go ahead and crumple it up and throw it behind you because it's not going to serve you or your future. So my story is a long one.

I won't go into it, but I was overseas. I came back home and my wife surprised me that she was pregnant and I had missed those crucial trimesters. She's going through the pregnancy. Fortunately, I was there for the birth of my daughter in 2016. I left to go back overseas.

I came back 2017. Lo and behold, she surprised me with number two. We're pregnant. I didn't know it. And she kept those as a surprise.

She wanted to tell me in person. She recorded both of them. Those videos can be found on YouTube. Surprise, you're a daddy and surprise, you're a daddy number two. That was a pivotal moment in my career because for the next several years, I went overseas many times.

Actually, I was active duty for eight years. I went overseas 13 times during those eight years. So I was constantly gone. And my kids here were being raised without a father. Every time I'd come home, my wife had to reintroduce me to my children, which will break any man.

That makes us sad to not have our son or our daughter come running up. Daddy was like, instead, who is this strange man that I don't know or don't see or don't love? However, that was even more impactful to me because my dad died when I was eight years old. And so from eight to 18, I was raised without a father. And here I am looking at my children, seeing them be raised without a father as well, except I don't have the excuse of being dead. I'm alive and I'm well and I'm choosing to live this lifestyle.

And so for me, there was no excuse and there was no, oh, this real estate investing thing can't work out. I actually had to come home to father my children and be a husband for my wife. And so it needed to work out for me. I didn't really care about any excuses. And the cool thing is I was choosing to live that lifestyle so I could choose to live a different lifestyle.

And I made it happen. And again, the Marine Corps is not a W2. It's not a nine to five where you can punch in and punch out. You're bringing home work with you. You're doing long weekends.

You're going overseas and additional duties and extended stays and everything like this. And you volunteered, right? You volunteered to do it. You signed the blank check and now you're being voluntold to go do these things. So whether you like it or not, you're going to do it. And I needed to make that happen.

And so that's really what I'm all about is finding people who need to escape their W2, but I don't recommend it in the beginning. It's very stressful. And so set yourself up for success. For me, it took four and a half years. For most of our clients, it'll take them one to two years because we've really streamlined these systems and a lot of automations indicative of our name, REI Automated.

We've so many automations, so much software, so much good business principles that we've been able to scale and become very efficient, very effective through my own time, my own experience.

SPEAKER 3:
We're going to take a quick break. When we come back, Keith will continue talking about mindset, balance, and what it really takes to build wealth through real estate. Stay with us.

CORWYN:
So Keith, I'd be remiss if I did not say first opportunity, thank you for your service. I know a lot of Marines and retired in the vocabulary attachment. It is elsewhere. It is never the two.

It's never a Marine that's retired or a retired Marine. Those two things never go up once always. So again, thank you. I know there's so many people listening that probably said that immediately as well. So I want to make sure we address those misconceptions and stuff because one, social media really distorts people's.

.. I mean, it distorts people. So matter of fact, I do want you to touch on that, but I also want you to kind of tie that in to this question as well, which is about the mindset. Investing overall, how much is it about your mindset and what is social media doing that distorts that?

KEITH:
Well, to be really, I'm going to be very transparent with you and your listeners.

If you see me on social media, it's not even me. I lead a social media team and I've got three ladies and one guy who helped me with social media because I believe that these black phones take us away from all of the love between us and our family members. We have one TV, it doesn't get used. We have one phone, each me and my wife, obviously, and that's it. We have no video games.

We don't promote watching TV or anything like that. So I hate social media, frankly. I think that it's destroying relationships at a faster rate than anything else is these days. However, here's what I will tell you. It is a necessary evil and you need to learn how to be a creator, but not a consumer.

What I do, I heard this about a year ago and it's absolutely brilliant because sometimes I'll post something, I do from time to time, I will really spend some time manually posting on social media. And then what I would do is I'd find myself coming back to the comments to see if people liked what I had to say. And you know what? There's a lot of freaking haters who will come and troll you and say nasty, hateful comments. And that got me really discouraged. And I get all up in my feels and I get really ticked off.

And I'm here to tell you, there's one phrase that you need to remember besides the one that I just told you, which is become a creator, but not a consumer. You need to have a mentality of post and ghost. You need to post your thing on social media and then you need to get the heck off of it. You do not need to be consuming the lies and the maybe not flat out lies, but the skewed visions that people are showing you of their life. Because as a business owner, like I had a lawsuit last year, two years ago, I had a big business breakup between me and my partner.

This month, I was short on payroll on the first of the month. There's going to be some ups and downs in your career and people don't share that stuff. People do not share that stuff on social media. And I'm here to tell you, every single entrepreneur, every single last one, you cannot find one person who has not failed to make payroll on the first of the month, who has not gotten in a lawsuit if they've been in business for more than 10 years. There are things that will happen.

And so that's the first thing. And the second thing, I'll go back to the mindset. Here's what I'll say is your bank account is never going to exceed the level of your mind. So if your mindset is here, that is the limit that your bank account and your business will ever reach. It is impossible for it to exceed it.

CORWYN:
Look here, Keith, I just had to take the glasses off. If y'all watching this video, I'd take glasses off and clean up because I had to see that. I had to see that clearly. Like, wait a minute. That is so true.

That is so true. And thank you for sharing that because it really is. And we talk a lot on this show about mindset. So one thing I heard you say, Keith, and feel free to take this, use it or whatever, is you really want to be a chef. If you think about it, you know, it's very rare that you see chefs eat a lot.

They taste. So they taste and they get enough of the palate. Then obviously the body's got to be good. But they cook way more than what they eat in theory. So you want to be a content creator, like you said, versus a mass consumer.

So you want to create in masses, but not in the other way. So that's a takeaway for me as well in what you just said. So what do you give? I mean, you've done this. You had to think, one, man, look at your why, man, look here. If it wasn't for the fact that we was quote-unquote on national TV with YouTube and all that stuff, I probably would have broke down in tears because what you said, man, literally is a heart, is a gut punch, a punch in the heart.

But what advice do you give to people on how to balance it? Because you had to figure it out. You had a why big enough to carry you. That's something I'm huge on. Signing can start with why. But how do you advise people on balancing family, career and getting in?

KEITH:
Here's my thought process on it.

And I won't say that I'm right. I won't say that I have this figured out. I feel like the more I figure out, the more I realize I don't know. However, here's what I do believe is a universal truth. If you think about a person who's on a tightrope, everyone has seen at least a picture of what I'm about to talk about.

You have a cliff over here, you have a cliff over here and you have a huge ravine with a tightrope stretched across it. And you have a guy who walks that tightrope and he has a big stick. You imagining what I have right here? Yeah, yeah, yeah. Uh-huh. So, he's balancing this and he's trying to get from point A to point B.

He has to move to get there. When you see that guy balancing, how would you describe his body? Is it static or is it dynamic?

CORWYN:
Definitely, it's fluid.

KEITH:
He moves and changes and shifts. He's moving. The whole entire time, there's not one second that he's not moving.

Sometimes he's leaning to the left and his right leg is out. And other times he's the opposite and that pole is way over here. The actual definition of balance is not this image that we have in our brain where everything is even. That is actually not the definition of balance. If we were to even look up a Webster's definition, unless we're talking about a balance of scales, that's the only definition where you have something over here like gold and something over here like whatever else you're selling and they balance out.

But when it comes to quote-unquote work-life balance, there's always movement. And so, I want everybody, especially an entrepreneur, to throw out the idea that you're going to have this perfect work-life balance. And I'm here to tell you it is going to take sacrifice. And here is how I'll prove it to you. You and I, Corwin, have said yes to each other on this time slot.

And that means that we said no to our wives. That means that we said no to our workout or our meal or restroom or a call or a business or a deal or whatever. When you say yes to one thing, you say no to an infinite amount of other things. And so, when you say yes to your business, you are saying no to your family. For that moment, you cannot be in two places at once.

Try it. Next time you're with your wife, take a business call and look at her face.

CORWYN:
Oh, you ain't looking. You ain't talking to me. Go ahead.

You ain't talking to me. I'm sorry. Say it again. Go ahead.

KEITH:
You can't be doing both of those things.

You can't be on a date with your wife and simultaneously closing a deal. You may be physically present, but you're immensely present. And so, when you say yes to one thing, you are saying no to an infinite amount of other things. And so, entrepreneurship, I will tell you, and I won't sugarcoat it, it is going to require sacrifice. It is going to pull you away from your kids.

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And this is as applicable in your business as it is outside of your business. And I don't mean to come onto your podcast and get all preachy, but you did tell me that there was a couple of radio talk shows here that were... I believe that if you do not have your life right with God and Him being number one and accepting Jesus Christ as your God, the Lord of your life, the Lord means the one in charge.

If He's not the one in charge, then no matter how hard you try, no matter what you do, your life isn't going to fall into place. It is going to fall into pieces. And so, I think that's the most important thing that you need to understand. And a lot of people figure that out later on in life because they lose their salvation in order to get money. And only after they receive money and find that it doesn't quench the thirst and fill the void that they were looking for the entire time, do they end up turning back to God.

And so, I'll leave that as the outside of your business, but then also inside of your business, let's talk about most important thing is revenue. We have to put revenue in first position. Without revenue, our business ceases to exist. It ceases to continue blessing the lives of our customers or our clients and their lineage, their children. We're never going to make a meaningful impact on those people's lives if our business ceases to exist and our business needs revenue.

Therefore, we need to be good salesmen and good stewards of the things that God has blessed us with. And also, the last thing that I'll leave you with is when you go after the money, revenue in first position, remember, keep the most important thing, the most important thing. And so, if you are losing your marriage, you might want to have a shift in your priorities. If you're losing your physical health, I'm here to tell you, I know a lot of people, my mentor is a billionaire. I know a lot of very, very wealthy people, decamillionaire, centamillionaires, and billionaires, and all of them, a hundred percent of them, when their body is ailing, will give up an unlimited amount of money to get their health back.

And if you lose your spouse, if you lose your children, if you lose those relationships and that love that you have, what is it all for? You're giving up something of lesser priority, something that's second, keep it in second position. So, keep the most important thing, the most important thing. You need to balance, but just realize that balance is actually a fluid shift of time, energy, and focus.

CORWYN:
But you touched on something, and I'm not going to hover here, Keith, but I want to acknowledge it because this is mindset at times that we have, and we take it from scripture. We take scripture that says, you know, money is the root of all evil.

And then in turn, we apply that to anyone who has money, they're evil. That's not what it means. It means that you prioritize that above everything else you put it before God. So, I don't want to hover there, but I want to take that and pull that out because what you said there is fundamental, that you got to keep that alignment, and you have to be where you're supposed to be. I'm very, at least I think I'm very good.

People say, there ain't no way he puts his phone down. I do. I leave my, I put my, I turn my phone face down and I leave it. I walk away from it. I don't care because where I am, I want to focus on being present.

That's a learned behavior now, because I promise you, I was not always that way. Thank you for saying that, but let's get over into REI automated. Let's talk about one, what your company does, because you guys help people build these processes and stuff. But what are some of the processes that investors should have, but also how does automation help them to focus on quote unquote, the higher value decisions?

SPEAKER 3:
That's going to do it for part one of our conversation with Keith Gillispie, but we're not done yet. Join us for part two, as we dive into REI automated systems automation and building a smarter real estate business. We'll see you there.