

Intro: 00:01

Hi, I'm Rock Thomas, the founder of M1, the tribe of healthy, wealthy and passionate people, also known as fulfillmentaires. You're listening to The I Am Movement podcast where we believe that the words that follow I am, follow you. Join me and the world's greatest thought leaders as we discuss the power of transformation and making success a part of your identity.

Rock Thomas: 00:31

So, welcome to the podcast, The I Am Movement. My name is Rock Thomas, and I am here with a fascinating gentleman who has got a very unique identity. He is a father, a husband, an entrepreneur, an ultra-endurance athlete, and his most recent passion is the 29029, and I'm going to let him explain to you what that number is, but it really has to do with testing your identity and seeing how far you can go in life. So, please, welcome Marc Hodulich to The I Am Podcast.

Marc Hodulich: 01:03

Thanks, Rock. Thanks for having me on here. It's a pleasure to be here.

Rock Thomas: 01:07

So, I grew up on a farm, and I was used to adversity and obstacles, and I learned in life that, if you do what is difficult, life becomes easier. And yet, most people are always looking for what's easy, and then, eventually, difficult shows up, because we were born to grow, is my belief. It looks like you chase difficult. Let's talk a little bit about that.

Marc Hodulich: 01:31

Yeah, it's a great way to set it up. For most of my life, I would say, I've been blessed that life wasn't hard. I have a very close family, grew up middle class, was a pretty decent high school runner and ran track in college, and a lot of that came easy. I certainly challenged myself, but I had a talent, I knew what it was, it was easy to find, and my parents nurtured that. But as I got older, I started to realize that I was not challenging myself as much. And, I like to use the term unsettled. I was just unsettled that some of these things had become easy, and I started thinking about the potential that I was wasting. And it wasn't being wasted from not running track anymore, but it was from not challenging myself enough in my free time with the activities and adventures that I was taking on. And luckily, I've been able to parlay that in the last three to four years of my life, through endurance sport, to then translating that to bringing that type of challenge and benefit that I get from those challenges to others through this 29029 event.

Rock Thomas: 02:30

So, in every part of our life, we have the big pieces; we've got our work, we've got our family, and we've got, you could say, our health or hobbies. How have you divided up your life in those areas?

Marc Hodulich: 02:43

Sure. I think that we all struggle for one thing, and that's balance. And that, when you tend to focus on health and wellness, and if you put a huge endurance event or challenge on the front of you, then maybe your family life struggles, because you're not spending as much time with your loved ones as you're focused on this, or people do that with work. And that I've always tried to figure out finding that right balance, and, for me, being lucky enough to pursue a passion of mine, which is endurance sport, and the benefits you get out of that through a business that is 29029, I've been able to marry a lot of those things and involve my family in the business, have my kids be at the challenge. I've been a, part of my work be an athlete, and being an endurance athlete.

Marc Hodulich: 03:23

And so, that's testing other people's products, which are races and challenges. And so, I've been able to manifest that myself by pursuing something that was important to me, and also finding a way to take something I was very passionate and authentic about, and bring it to other people.

Rock Thomas: 03:36

Okay. So, I feel jealousy coming up for a lot of people, because, so many people are doing what they feel they have to do in order to make a living, and they're playing the one day game; "Someday I'm going to do what I really want when I handle this, or when the kids grow up," et cetera. How were you able to, at a young age, figure out how to combine the two?

Marc Hodulich: 03:58

Yeah. I love that you framed it that way because I made it sound like it was just something that I scraped it up and happened, and it was very far from that case. There's a lot of trial and error, there's a lot of fear and anxiety, and it was a long road to get to where I am, and there's a long road to get to where I want to be, because I am unsettled, and I want to continue to strive for more. I worked as a management consultant. I sold payroll door to door at ADP when I first moved to New York City, I worked at a catering firm at night. I have my own T-shirt company on the side. I've always had the hustle for a long time, continue to try new things to try to find what was going to scratch my entrepreneurial itch, what was going to work, and what was going to bring me passion. And, I always found that you have to make a paycheck. You have to pay bills, you got to take care of your core responsibilities, but it's how you choose to spend your free time that you can choose to find and pursue your passion, which one day may become a job, that may become a career, or you can sit at home and watch Netflix, or you can go out and drink.

Marc Hodulich: 04:52

And I think the thing that I did through my 20s was, I did have this passion and this curiosity around events and around challenges, and so that started with just challenges with my friends, then that turned into a Wall Street event that I created that was a huge charity fundraiser. And that, year one, it was eight of us, year two was 30 of us, year three, it was 100, and then year

four, yes, it was a big success, but that it was not this very clear cut, easy path to getting there. So, what I would want people listening to understand is that there was a lot of trial and error, and I'm 39 now, I don't know, I was 29, I didn't have it all figured out. I had no idea. And I figured out a lot more this year than I did last year, because I'm constantly putting myself in a position where I don't know what the outcome's going to be, and I'm going to work really hard to try to find out that positive outcome.

Rock Thomas: 05:40

So, it's cliché, the daily routine, the morning routines, et cetera, and I know that you're partners with Jesse Eisler, and I read a couple of his books, and I'm a big fan of David Goggins and Charlie Engle and that whole group of people that have given other people, I'll call us regular civilians, the belief that there's a completely other levels of possibility in the human spirit. So, tell me a little bit about what you do to continue to push yourself. Do you have a morning routine, do you have an evening routine? Do you meditate, do you jump out of bed and do 100 pushups, and ... Tell me a little bit about that.

Marc Hodulich: 06:18

I'm probably the most human of all those gentlemen and individuals that you just named. And, I struggle with morning routine. I'm not a morning person. You would think having run college track, having to get up and run at 6:00 AM before class, and we got used to it, I learned to hate it. And so, for me, when I put a big goal on my calendar, it's structuring my day in a way where I know I'm going to get things done. It's certainly easy if you get it done in the morning, but I'm not a morning person. So, I found that I got a lot of my long runs done at night, and I wasn't willing to sacrifice time with my kids, I wasn't willing to sacrifice my work, but that meant that maybe 9:00 or 10 o'clock at night when a lot of people are settling down with a glass of wine, or maybe starting to watch Netflix, I was putting on my running shoes. So, for me, I don't have this beautiful morning routine, I certainly start off my day with the one thing I have to get done that day, and some days, that's the run, someday that may be going to my kids school for lunch with them, and maybe making one of their games. It's not always work-related, but it's that today is a success if I get it done, and that's how I center my day.

Marc Hodulich: 07:18

And sometimes those tasks are big. It can be a four or five-hour task to get done. But I start my day with what is going to make today a success if I get this one thing done, and then I structure the rest of the day around it. And I try to keep, as best as I can, a calendar clear for a few hours for what I would just call deep thought and strategic thoughts. So, it's not meditating, but it's where my most creative ideas come out. That could come out on a walk, that could come out during a coffee, that could come out in the shower, or it could come out when I'm running, but that, I know when I run, that is my time to think and plan, and that, I don't run with the phone, I don't listen to music, and, no disrespect to your listeners, I don't listen to podcasts when I workout. I listen to them in the car, I listen to them when I'm checking emails, but when I run, that is my time think and be active, when I get my creative juices flowing.

Marc Hodulich: 08:07

So, for me, I don't have that perfect routine, and it is something that I'm very human and struggle with, but I do have those bounds of, "This is going to get done today.", and I hold myself accountable to make sure that task, at least, gets done.

Rock Thomas: 08:21

I love it. A lot of great juicy stuff in that. I teach people that, the first thing is, you got to become self-aware if you're going to involve as a human being, and the second piece is, you need to hold yourself accountable, and/or be in an environment where you're held accountable by people that you respect. And when you do those two things, then growth is automatic. I respect the fact that when you run, you allow yourself to go deep in thought. Most people don't have time for that, but you are aligning yourself in a way that works for you. How did you discover that ... I say that the strongest force in human nature is the desire to remain consistent with how we describe ourselves. So, "I am not a morning person," creates a context. And, you run at night. What was the genesis of that?

Rock Thomas: 09:08

Did you have other people you ran within the morning, you're like, "Oh, my energy's just not great."? Did you, at the end of the day, you're like, "My kids are in bed, I feel like running. I got to get this in."? What happened? I just want to break that down a bit.

Marc Hodulich: 09:20

Sure. So, first off, I don't run at night all the time, but, I do structure a lot of my long runs, and I found what I felt was a superpower of doing something when I knew no one else was doing it. There was something about going out at 10 o'clock at night, and putting on a headlamp, and running on a trail and not seeing one other person, but if I did it at 7:00 AM, there'd be 50 or 100 people on the trail. And it started to feel much more empowering to be out there by myself knowing that people were relaxing, and I would smile in the fact that people were kicking up their feet. And, by the way, the opposite is true. You can trick your mind at anything. At 7:00 AM, there's many people working out when everyone else is laid in bed. It doesn't make me any better. It just was an old way of convincing myself what doing was better. It is not better, it's just what works for me made me feel comfortable with it.

Rock Thomas: 10:06

I love it. I love it. And tricking your own brain when you find the ... You break the vault open to how you can inspire and motivate yourself, that's all that matters. It's learning about yourself. So, I love it. I think it's brilliant. Talk to me a little bit about your relationship with Jesse. What's that like? I read his book, Living With A Navy Seal. His wife is an inspiration for a lot of people; pretty dynamic couple. He's done some crazy stuff if you're hanging out with him. The third piece to the element of change, the first one being, creative visualization, the second one is, don't give energy that anything you don't want to grow, and the third one is, hanging around badasses. And, I would put him in that category. So, how's that affected your life?

Marc Hodulich: 10:52

Sure. Yeah. So, a few years ago, I read a quote that I really liked, it resonated with me, which says, play long term games with long term people. And that, for me, Jesse's a long term person. He was someone that I got to know through our kids playing football. I was coaching his son and my son on a flight football team, and we had very similar outlooks on-time efficiency. I would run to practice and my wife would drive the kids because I didn't want to sit in traffic. So, I was like, "Well, if I run four miles, it's faster than driving, because now I'm getting my run done, and I'm commuting." And, he thought that was quite fascinating, and the guy has had a tremendous amount of success, but what resonated most with me is that he was living unsettled. He was constantly putting big things on his calendar that he didn't know if he would finish. And so, being around someone like Jesse who's living and breathing the life that I am as well, I think, continues to challenge and motivate each other.

Marc Hodulich: 11:45

We just ran 100 miles together two weeks ago, and it was something that neither one of us really planned to do. We put in a lot of training, but we held each other accountable to it, and we did it together. And those types of things, when you do together, you get bonded in a much better deeper way, because you really see each other's lows, you see each other's highs, and these style of events, I think, give an opportunity for you to see your best self. Because, you have an opportunity to face failure and to quit time and time again, and when you don't quit, you have an opportunity then to be proud of yourself. And I think, what I've learned most from Jesse and our partnership is that, as you get older, it's much easier to stick to the things that you're good at. It's much harder to try new things and risk failure, but when you risked failure, you get that opportunity to truly grow.

Marc Hodulich: 12:37

And I know that's cliché, but I think it's about being proud of yourself. I don't pat myself on the back all that much, but I'm learning how to play guitar with my son, and when I learn a new chord, it feels really damn good. And, in a way, the things that I do at work, feel good, but they don't feel as good, because I should be able to do them. And, if you learn a new skill late in life, or later in life, or middle in life, or wherever you're at, puts you in that place where you have an opportunity to be proud of yourself, which many people start to miss.

Rock Thomas: 13:05

I think that doing things that are difficult helps build your self-esteem, being able to rely on yourself when you don't know a way, but you find a way, helps you feel confident. So, I agree with all of that, and I think that the body is just a great tool for you to develop the gymnastic muscles in your mind, and push yourself through it. So, I love all of that. I want to ask you a little bit about the unsettled thing, because, for a lot of people, the target for their life is to be happy. And, how do you remain satisfied, or content, or feeling good, while at the same time saying, "I want more."? So, the unsettled piece needs a description.

Marc Hodulich: 13:48

Without a doubt. Look, just like my morning routine, it's something that I work on. You get to talk to a lot of fabulous people, and the thing you'll find out most about me is, I think I'm one of the most self-aware people because I'm willing to admit what I have to work on and what I struggle with. And it's not all easy, and it's not all perfect, and, for me, being unsettled is, there's no greater feeling, for me, almost than the feeling of a finish line, because, my kids are there, my wife is there. It's a culmination of a huge journey, and that finish line is addicting, and you want it. But, you also have to be able to look back and celebrate some accomplishments. And, you have to be able to reflect and be grateful that your family sacrifice time, that you were healthy enough to do it, that you had the time off of work, that the weather was right, whatever it was, you have to be grateful for those things and realize that if you get too caught up in the finish line, or the feeling of that, that you'll become addicted to it like any other vice, and that, that's not going to lead to happiness, because you're constantly chasing something that is fleeting.

Marc Hodulich: 14:47

So, for me, it's just push and pull of, in 2017, I did my first Ironman, the finish line was amazing, in 2018, I did my first 100 miles and it was great, but then, this year, I paced people, I took people to those highs, and that was much more gratifying for me to sacrifice and be part of their crew, stay up through the night, make sure they had the food that they needed, the nutrition, make sure that they were on pace for whatever their goal was. And that, for me, it was saying, "Hey, look, it felt great to do this myself, it honestly felt as good, and with so many individuals, it felt better to help them get there than me to get it myself again." So, I think, part of me being unsettled is wanting to challenge myself, but it's also challenging myself enough to say, "Look, don't just pat yourself on the back, give people an opportunity, or help them get that same feeling that you got." And so, that's where I'm really trying to find that balance, is, yes, every couple years, I feel like it is necessary for me to do one of these challenges, but not do them every month, not do them every six or eight weeks. Find a way to still be in those environments, but support others and help them reach their goals is just as gratifying.

Rock Thomas: 15:52

How much of pushing yourself are you conscious that you're making your children's life easier by setting the bar higher in saying, "Look, this is what's possible.", and they're witnessing that, and therefore, for them, there's a whole world of opportunity, because dad's created possibility? How much of that is a motivating factor for you?

Marc Hodulich: 16:15

Look, I see it both ways, and, not to be argumentative, I mean, in one respect, I think I'm making their lives harder, because I'm in a world where I'm surrounded by people who've done amazing things, and I'm lucky enough to work with an entrepreneur who's exited three companies of publicly traded companies, and he's married to one of the youngest self-made female billionaires. That's inherently then become part of their life. That's not the norm, and that, owning and running a business is hard, working in corporate America is hard, whatever your job is, those things are not easy, and they're not easy for me, but I'm surrounded by, a lot of times, the

best of the best, the best endurance athletes, the best ... And that, that's not normal, and so, I think, what my kids see, it's great for them to be around such positive, such driven people, but it also sets the bar really high.

Marc Hodulich: 17:01

And I think, for me, it's relating it back to ... Last night, we were in the driveway and they're practicing their layups. And, it's celebrating the fact that my youngest hit a layup properly, and that's a win, and let's celebrate the wins, and not put the pressure on him that he's got to end up being an endurance athlete. I was not a professional endurance athlete, I wasn't even that great of a college miler. I just want them to be satisfied with what they do, and I think so much if you talked about self-esteem before, it's a reputation you have with yourself was another quote that I love. And, if you're giving your best in something, and you're not cheating yourself, you're going to have great self-esteem. And so, for me, I found that outlet in endurance sports, I found that outlet in 29029, and I found that outlet supporting others. My nine-year-old, this morning, I had to take him to school early, because he's going to school on Thursday mornings early to help special needs kids. He's caring, he's compassionate, and if that's what he decides to do with his life, he's a huge win. He's giving back more than I could ever hope for.

Marc Hodulich: 17:59

So, I think I'm showing them that you can set the bar high, the goal setting, the discipline. My kids saw me going out and running at night. They see me early in the morning when I really don't want to be running, and I've come in from a run before they've gone to school. They see and notice those things, but I also don't want them to feel like they have to be a runner, or they have to be an entrepreneur. It's moreso following your passion and following what's in your heart, and not being able to express what's in your heart. Too many people, I feel like, are hesitant to show their true emotions, and I'm a guy that wears his emotions on his sleeve in a very positive way. I don't mind showing you that I care, and I don't mind telling you that I care, and that's something I really want my kids to understand that that authenticity is what's lacking in this world, and will help them stand out.

Rock Thomas: 18:40

Beautiful. I love it. In my first book, *The Power Of Your Identity*, I wrote a piece on, if you compare yourself to other people, you'll always feel greater or less than. If you compare yourself to, let's say, Jesus Christ, as an example, not that I'm religious, but just, that's perfect, you're always going to feel like you're coming up short somewhere, or you can compare yourself to people on Jerry Springer. Do you ever see that show?

Marc Hodulich: 19:08

Yes, yes. I'm hesitant to... There were times in college when I watched a lot of Jerry.

Rock Thomas: 19:10

I think we've all seen a bit of it anyway, and you're going to feel good about yourself, "What an idiot." And you'll feel great. I think what you're doing, which I respect and admire, is you're

saying to your kids, "Listen, just compare yourself to yourself, and what do you want to do that's going to make you reach for your best personal self." And I think that's all we can do. And, you're an example of a guy who's pushing yourself to be your best version, and your vehicle might be running, their vehicle might be charity, it might be chess, it could be anything they want, but I think if we can inspire our kids just to constantly get up, grow, and push themselves and celebrate the layup if that's the thing that they didn't quite do yet, then God bless. That's amazing. So, I get it.

Marc Hodulich: 19:56

And to be a good person, right. Sometimes when I do these podcasts, I don't ever want to portray that this has been easy, I've already said that before, but if you'd asked me two years ago when I was creating 29029 with Jesse, I didn't know I'd find this much fulfillment, this much passion, this much joy from it. I hoped I would, and now I'm grateful for that, and I feel like I have a responsibility to nurture it, but you don't always find out what your purpose is early on, and you got to keep working for it if you really want it. So, it's never too late is my feeling, because if you would ask my 29-year-old self, I didn't have things all figured out.

Rock Thomas: 20:31

But you keep on showing up, and you keep on being, what I call, passionately curious, and then the next door is going to lead to something. I think I liked the quote I heard from The Rock, he says that it's nice to be great, but it's great to be nice. And, that human aspect, I think, is a quality that the vulnerability, the transparency, you don't need to put your victories in somebody else's face if you're nice. If you're doing it out of ego, then you're competing again to be better than somebody else, and you're working on the biggest fear we all have is we're not enough, we're not lovable, and we're not worthy, and it's not a competition against other people. It's more of a collaborative affair of, "Hey, I'm going for this, you want to come with me for the run," so to speak, "or for the ride." So let's talk about that, 29029. You talked about how you feel about helping other people achieve some of the highs that you've achieved. Tell us what that's like.

Marc Hodulich: 21:28

When we created this event, it started off as we wanted to be the best endurance event on the planet. We wanted to take everything that was lacking in other endurance events because I really felt like it was community. You went and did this amazing challenge in Ironman, you ran a marathon, you ran 100 miles, and then everyone went their separate ways. And, for me, whenever I did those big challenges, the best part for me was getting together with my family and my crew afterward, and sharing a drink with them talking about the day, but it did feel lacking that, everyone else that I competed with, not against, but for those who I competed with, they all went their separate ways as well. And we wanted to do with 29029 was bringing the community together and say, "Hey, look, for three days, we're going to rent a mountain, you're going to climb it, you're going to take the gondola down, and continue to hike up this mountain and repeat this same lap, again and again, and again, with the ultimate goal, hopefully, climbing 29,029 feet," which is the height of Everest, "but at the end of the event, we're all going to come

together, we're not going to go our separate ways. We're all going to come together." And that's why it's an all-inclusive event.

Marc Hodulich: 22:27

All the meals are eating together because we're part of a family for the weekend. There's no winners, there's neither losers, it's truly you versus you challenge. You put a goal out there, "I'm going to hike for 36 hours, I'm going to get as many summits as possible.", or, "I'm going to get 17 in strat.", or, "I'm going get 15 in Idaho, I'm going to get 13 in Utah.", whatever the different mountains are. But for some people, it's one climb. And we had a gentleman, Adam Jorgensen, last weekend in Vermont, whose goal was to get up the mountain one time. And it took him over five hours, and he did it, but being on the same trail with 250 other people, they all encouraged him. And everyone on that mountain benefited from Adam being on that mountain, him just getting his one summit. And that was a huge win. And because it's not a competition or a race, we've built this immense community around an endurance challenge. And so, for me, standing at the top of the mountain, and high fiving people, and hugging them, I thanked everyone Saturday night, and the event just ended last week in Vermont.

Marc Hodulich: 23:22

I thanked everyone because they were thanking me for cheering them on, for hugging them, for the smiles. My boys are up there, my wife is up there, former participants are up there. They don't realize how much I get from them. And seeing people have pride in themselves, seeing people break through barriers, seeing people be broken, and tired, and hungry, and cold, and want to quit, and yet, them saying to me, "If you're standing up here, I'm going to come up for one more lap." And at 2:00 AM, I'm looking at them, I'm saying, "I'm waiting for you, come up one more time, and I'll see you in an hour and a half." And they don't know that that fuels me for the next 365, just seeing that grace and humanity and courage on display, from people who it would be very easy for them to be settled, as I said, and they're coming out to take on a new challenge, not to be some ultra-endurance athlete, but to find out who they are, when everything's stacked against them. And that's what's, to me, most unique. What I mean stacked against them, I mean, they're tired, they're hungry, they're cold, they want to stop. And there's no amazing reward for keep going. And, it's just your own personal reward.

Marc Hodulich: 24:28

Sure we have medals, and you get a red hat that only finishers get, and those things symbolize way more than just a hat or a medal. So, it's a long answer, but for me, it's such an amazing gift to be able to be the CEO and running an event that you see have such positivity and brings out the best in humanity. And that, to me, is what those 36 hours about our mountain is really seeing how good the majority of people are in this world, and that it comes out in the form of just hiking up a mountain in a small community.

Rock Thomas: 25:00

Okay, this is going to sound really corny, but if there were more people like you, the planet would truly be a better place. Where did you get your values from? How did you decide that you

were going to be somebody who could be so generous and vulnerable? Were your parents amazing? Did you have a mentor that one day influenced you?

Marc Hodulich: 25:20

Sure. Thank you. Look, I'm still very close to my parents. My parents were a huge influence. My sister's an amazingly supportive and great person. I don't think I realized at the time that she was president of her sorority. She went to Alabama, I went to Auburn, there's a huge rivalry there, but he left college numerous times to come back and watch me run. And it wasn't until I went to college where I didn't want to miss a party, and I thought, well, what amazing love and support my sister gave me, and what amazing love and support my parents gave me. And then I happen to marry my wife, Stacy, who I'm just so lucky to have, who's as giving and as compassionate of a person first. And I don't think I've truly appreciated what 29029 was until my wife did it last year. She'd never even done a 10K, and she hiked for 27 straight hours until she finished it. It was her first time she really did something for herself. She wasn't taking care of me, she wasn't taking care of our dog, she wasn't taking care of the home or our two kids, or her parents, or looking for holiday gifts for my parents, she's always putting others first. And this was her first time that, for two to three days, she put everything down, it was all about her.

Marc Hodulich: 26:25

She wasn't supporting me in one of my races, and for me, it was amazing to see that outlet that a lot of times, in our world, the women in our lives are supporting us even when they're working, even when they're an entrepreneur, they still have a lot of these responsibilities at home that the dynamic's wrong, and that this event has been a forum where I've seen the women of the household, and the real leaders come out and get a chance to shine. So, that's really where it's been, and I think, lastly, I've surrounded myself with positive people. The people in my life that are not challenging me, they're not holding me accountable, and are not willing to have a tough conversation with me if I mess up, I'm really open to the criticism. So, I think you want to surround yourself with people that don't just pat you on the back, you want to surround yourself with people who are willing to call you out when you're wrong, and also that are going to be there in the bad times. I'm the friend that is not going to text you, "I'm going to call you", and if I call, it's not going to work. I'm going to be there in person.

Marc Hodulich: 27:25

And, you surround yourself with people who appreciate that and do the same for you, I believe that you're going to start living a life where you want to give more because you get such benefit from it when you see it from both sides.

Rock Thomas: 27:38

Would you agree that the feeling of achieving climbing a mountain is awesome, but the feeling of helping, and guiding, and encouraging, and challenging somebody else to do it that thought they couldn't is even more awesomer?

Marc Hodulich: 27:51

Yes. I don't want to diminish anyone who's completed or will complete 29029, but I will tell you that the feeling I've seen someone do it, and when they didn't think they could do it. Seeing someone grow in front of you is really powerful, and it's really tough to put into words.

Rock Thomas: 28:12

I get it. I am blessed that I get to do that as mostly as a living, as a coach, and a teacher, and a trainer, et cetera, and people say, "Why do you keep on doing? You're financially free, Rock, why don't you just go golfing all the time and do that?" And I go, "Because the greatest high is helping somebody find their next level, and do the thing that they didn't think they could do." It's, like you said, you can't even describe that feeling. It's almost like God, or the universe put that in you as a way for us to help each other and to inspire other people. So, I get it. So, what are you excited about now for the next year or five years?

Marc Hodulich: 28:50

Yeah, it's tough coming away from a weekend where you're just surrounded by all these amazing people who did grow, and I would say there's magic on the mountain, and it just comes out. And, people probably think that's corny, and by the end of the weekend they're, and, for me, it's harnessing that magic for the next year, it's, what type of communications, how can we continue to grow and foster this community? We just announced we're going to another location next year, which is Idaho, which we're excited about. We're going to Sun Valley in June. And launching a new location is exciting, because I know our family is going to grow, and the brand can grow, we can bring this to more people, but it's also what types of things can we do throughout the year to keep harnessing this community and the magic that we have? And so, I was challenging myself and our staff to think about, how can we create more forums whereby we benefit from being around each other? Because those 36 hours of climbing, they're there and they're gone, and I don't expect everyone to come back with us.

Marc Hodulich: 29:51

I hope to come back as a volunteer, I hope to come back to cheer others on, or bring family members, but it's a large commitment of time and of money, and, for me, it's trying to constantly challenge what are we doing as a company whereby we're not just putting on this event on the mountain? Are there things that we can be doing where we take the same mission, vision, and values of helping people get their best self? We can showcase it on the mountain, but are there things that we can do as a brand and as a company that will expand beyond that? So that's really where I'm challenging myself now is, as we looked at ... Don't get me wrong, we go on sale Tuesday, October 29, so, very quickly, we're looking to sell our events for next year, but then I look past that, and I really want to nurture and hold the brand close. I've been part of companies before that I will be hard on myself about trying to grow too fast, and that mystery is sacred and special. It's making sure that we never compromise that experience for profit or for growth.

Marc Hodulich: 30:48

And some of that is to protect the brand, and some of it is because it's self-serving. It feels really good to have that feeling, and I don't want that ever to be lost. And I want to make sure that what people got into 2017, 2018, and 2019, people get in 2050. And that is a big goal of mine in making sure that, that same feeling doesn't get lost, and it's got to be held dear and closely.

Rock Thomas: 31:11

When are you writing your book?

Marc Hodulich: 31:12

Chris Tuff is in my ear about that. I think that is one of those things where you wonder if you have a message that anyone wants to read and that everyone has some level of hesitancy about doing things. And, for me, that is one where I need to be unsettled about, and I need people like you to challenge me and say, "Hey, make that a goal and do that, because you're doing a disservice if you don't." And I think I haven't crossed that threshold yet, but it's certainly something that's in my ear.

Rock Thomas: 31:47

All right. Well, I'm going to challenge you on that, because there's no question in my mind you have a book in you that needs to be out there. I feel your spirit, your soul, and people need more of you, and they need more of this. They need more of an opportunity to go somewhere and belong in an environment that demands the best of them, or the next level of them. We live in a world where it's too easy to turn to Netflix, or to junk food, or to a crappy conversation, but ... I host these events; we have a tribe called the healthy, wealthy, generous people that choose to lead epic lives and don't apologize for being awesome. And when people come to our events, they leave and they go, "Rock, all the people that are at these events are amazing." And I go, "That's true." And some of them are going to leave and they're assholes in the world, because we all have an asshole in us, and we all have greatness in us, but put into a context of on the mountain encouraged, supported, and challenged to climb like that, that part of us comes out.

Rock Thomas: 32:51

Put on the road where you're tired, you're anxious, you're worried about paying your mortgage and somebody cuts you off, and you flip somebody off. We have all of it, but the more that you bathe environments like you've created or I've created, the more people find that part of themselves. And so, there is a book in you for sure, and I'm just waiting for the date so that we can hold you accountable.

Marc Hodulich: 33:15

Okay, sounds good. I couldn't agree more to that, and you talking about the asshole comes out. Jesse and I like to say that our events have a no asshole policy, and yet, I'm sure we have some that you know have challenging home lives or challenging work environments, and the mountain is a refuge for them, and it brings out the best in them. I just hope that when they see their best self, more of their best self in terms of patience, and gratitude, and compassion

comes out in their daily life, because it's something that I constantly have to work on, and that it's easy to be positive when you're in a great environment surrounded by wonderful people. It's much harder to be that same person when you face the challenges at home.

Rock Thomas: 33:55

Yes, however, as you know, if you have more of the references in your brain of experiencing a great community and a great environment when you go back into your hostile environment, you can reference that in your brain, you can trick your brain and go, "You know what? Let me just pretend I'm in that environment. Let me respond in a way that I would respond in my higher self." And when you start to exercise that muscle, you can use it as the universe is a mental gymnastics for your spirit and soul to grow, and you lean on that. Imagine somebody never having a community, only being in a crap community, then they don't have the reference, and it's harder for them to dig it up.

Marc Hodulich: 34:32

And he talking about going and have that mental muscle, and being able to look back on those experiences. I wear a bracelet that says lean in on it. And that came from, a long time ago, running a race, and I was a miler, and the third lap was the most challenging lap because you got tired, but you needed to lean in during that lap and make a move if you were going to try to actually win the race to break the competition. As I got into endurance in sports and things like that, it's easy to back off, but if you lean in, that's where the magic happens where you don't know what's going to happen if you continue to push yourself, you know what happens if you stop. And, for me, in challenging situations, whether it's a conversation I need to have with my wife about our home finances, or whether it's something at work, or whether it's where we're going to get together as a family for the holidays, these things that sometimes create a lot of stress, like, whose house are we going to go to for Thanksgiving.

Marc Hodulich: 35:26

These are real problems that people face that I... And, if you're able to lean into them and understand that with patience, and with compassion, a better answer will happen. It's something I constantly have to work on, but that's why I wear it on my wrist. I don't wear this when I'm running. I wear this when I'm going out to dinner, or when I'm going to work, because I need that reminder that, the person that I am on the mountain or the person that I am on the trails is one of the best versions of myself, and I need to consistently try to find that in my daily life as well.

Rock Thomas: 35:57

A lot of people say being a monk and meditating in the mountains is difficult. Well, try being of the monk mindset in the chaos of New York City when all the shit's going down, and your kids are sick, and you're trying to pay your bills, that's, in my opinion, when it really counts. What's it like when you're going through your day to day, and how are you treating the people you truly love? What are you willing to do to find another part of yourself? So, how can people sign up for this? Where do the people need to go if they want to ... Is it 29029...

Marc Hodulich: 36:31

Yes, it's-

Rock Thomas: 36:31

...everesting.com?

Marc Hodulich: 36:33

It is. Yeah, the number's to 29029, and then everesting, E-V-E-R-E-S-T-I-N-G, everesting.com. And if you just enter 29029 in Google, it'll be the first result, but, I would encourage anyone, if you're even remotely scared, nervous, curious about it, the hardest thing you have to do is sign up and commit. And once you commit, it's my job, and it's my promise to you that we'll do everything we can to get you to that mountain as many times as you're willing to go. And that's what my staff will do, and that's why we include training programs, the coaching calls, and Facebook Lives, and everything, because you become part of a family and a community, and we just want to see you grow and leave and bring those positive vibes back to where you're from.

Rock Thomas: 37:17

So, we have a great audience for you, because, at all of our events, what we encourage is meditation, yoga, four to six hours of doing something like mountain biking or ultimate Frisbee, and playing together, and bonding together, and then we spend the rest of the night masterminding around how to lead epic lives and create wealth and things like that. So, I'm sure you're going to get a lot of traction with this, because this is ... I think it's kind of your people and you're our people. So, I'm interested to see how many people are going to sign up. When is the next event?

Marc Hodulich: 37:50

So, our next event is going to be June 18th through June 21st in Sun Valley, and then, we're August 20th through 23rd just outside of Salt Lake City in Utah, and then we round out the year, October 15th through 18th in Stripe Mountain, Vermont. So, they're nicely spaced apart three different climates and areas of the country for you to go to, but the one constant is, me and our staff, and Jesse, and our new partner, Colin O'Brady, we have amazing people involved in this event that, they're truly authentic and want to see you just grow in front of us and challenge yourself. And, I can promise you that you're going to find a challenge, but that you're going to like what you find on the other side as well.

Rock Thomas: 38:32

Absolutely. Now, they're all beautiful locations. I imagine October 15th in Vermont, there's got to be beautiful fall foliage.

Marc Hodulich: 38:39

It is, and you never know what you're going to get. I don't shy away from it. You can get 60 and sunny, and we also got seven inches of snow overnight the last week. So, in the course of two days, we had three different weather patterns come through, and that, to me, is even a much greater reward for what you're pushing through. So, yeah, they're all beautiful locations. Sun Valley is a destination for a lot of people. Salt Lake's the easiest to get to, with the most consistent weather. So, it's a nice mix, and that's what we consistently look for as we go to different locations, and we want to make sure that we have some variation between our events. People will get a different experience with the weather and the mountain they're experiencing as well.

Rock Thomas: 39:21

So, what is the investment? And I don't say cost, because this is truly an investment in yourself. What do people are going to be expected to invest in themselves?

Marc Hodulich: 39:30

It's 41.95 a person, and we've taken a much different approach to our pricing whereby we wanted to control the entire experience. And therefore, we want it to be very simple, you just commit to signing up, we give you training plans, we give you coaching calls, you're part of a wonderful private Facebook community with speakers like Charlie in there and Collin and Jesse, but then when you come to the event, you stay in luxury glamping tents, all your food and beverages included, all of your swag. Nothing's for sale at the event, and that, to me removes a lot of the anxiety or challenge of doing events, "Where am I going to stay? What am I going to eat? When do I go to the swag 10, and do I buy things before the event? Are they going to sell out of my size?" So, it's all taken care of for you, and that's really so we can have a very curated experience where you're just focused on your challenge, and then meeting and interacting with other people. And that, a lot of people say, "Why don't you put us up in luxury hotels and do stuff like that?" Because that's what you're used to. And this is sharing a tent with someone.

Marc Hodulich: 40:31

And maybe you're sharing a tent with two friends, but you're not in your own hotel room, and then when you're in these tents, you end up using the common spaces much more. They're great tents. It's still a tent. And so, if it's cold at night, you're going to end up being in the lodge, or you can end up hiking more, and that's where the true bonds are made. And Colin, in our events I love, asked everyone at the end of event, "Raise your hand if you made a new friend this weekend." And every single person raises their hand. And that is not just going to be a friend that maybe you text once or twice, these are people that you can share an experience that very few other people can understand, and that builds a bond that will last in a very, very, very long time. So, that is one of the most gratifying pieces of the experience.

Rock Thomas: 41:17

Okay. So, one of the things I like to do toward the end of the call, and I feel like we could talk all day, is to get people to give me a bit of a description of who they are by saying, "I am ..." And I

know you're grateful for your family, and you take risks, and you like to get the most out of life. I'd like to challenge you to add in there, "I am an author." What do you think?

Marc Hodulich: 41:38

Okay. Yeah, I like being challenged, and I don't like backing down from a challenge, especially if I think it's going to benefit me, my family, and a broader community. So, I will be adding, "I am an author."

Rock Thomas: 41:53

Okay. Very cool. And, a question for you, if somebody has some sort of an injury, or they feel like they got bad knees or something like that, what is your recommendation to them?

Marc Hodulich: 42:08

First thing I'd say is, reach out and call us, and talk to us. We'll have you talk to one of our coaches. We're never going to try to convince someone to do this event if it's wrong for them, but let's see if your fears, your challenges are things that would prevent you from doing the event. And in some cases, that's been true. We've had to tell people, "Look, we'll happily recommend you to other events we think would be great for you." And they won't be events that we run. We just want the best for people, but a lot of times, we've had amputees climb with us, we've had a lot of people with challenges, and it's mainly us trying to foster an environment where everyone feels welcome. So, the thing I would say is, there's ... When you fill out a lead form on our website, I'll ask if you want to have a phone call, and you're going to talk to one of my former college teammates, the best man at my wedding, my best friend, Matt Burrell.

Marc Hodulich: 42:55

We have one guy, and he takes 25 phone calls a day, and he's going to tell you everything you want to know about the event. If he's not available, you'll talk to me. And, we'll give you the most honest answer about, if this is something for you or not, but it's really for everyone that just sees this as something where they don't know if they can do, that means you should sign up. That's what I get most fired up about is, people taking on the unknown, and this provides an unbelievable opportunity to take on the unknown.

Rock Thomas: 43:27

How many people you're expecting at your next event.

Marc Hodulich: 43:29

So, we've sold out every event since inception at 250 people. So, we cap it at that. We feel like that's just the right number. It's like a medium-size wedding that you get to spend three days and you're just ... The middle part is a little bit more challenging than watching people take their vows. We do ... The Thursday of the event, we have wonderful speakers, as you mentioned Charlie Engle before, spoke, and Colin O'Brady speaks, and my partner, Jesse, speaks, I'll speak. We have people speak, get you really ready for the event, then you have 36 hours of an endurance challenge, and Saturday night, we have a big party, and then we have a brunch on

Sunday and you leave. And, you leave, but you're connected from those three days. And that's really why we limit the amount of participants, is that, it does feel like a true community becomes a community because it's not too large.

Rock Thomas: 44:16

That's awesome. That's awesome. Hey, man, this has been a blast. Really, really enjoyed this conversation. I want to encourage other people that, if you have somewhere in your identity, "I am not a runner, I'm not a hiker," et cetera, maybe it's time to add in, "I am a runner, I am a hiker.", and to take on this event, and to shift your identity, because the words that follow "I am" follow you. You will never outgrow your self-image. So, it's really important for people to now add some words and start to romance this new part of themselves until they get comfortable with it, familiar with it, love it, and then get addicted to growing. So, final statement, how would you describe yourself today?

Marc Hodulich: 44:59

I'm authentic. That's what I kept thinking as you were talking, is that I'm authentic, and I'm authentic to the fact that how much I love my kids, how much I love my parents, how much I love my wife, and how much I love what I do. And that authenticity will just ... You'll feel it when you come and do our events. You'll feel it when you climb 29029, and I hope when you come into my presence that you feel like I'm helping make you a better person, because that's what I want.

Rock Thomas: 45:27

That's amazing. That's awesome. So, thank you so much, Marc, for joining us today, and I want to remind, again, the listeners that, the way that you define yourself is what is going to determine how you show up. So, add some new jazzy words to the description of yourself, dare to be great, and all of the rewards go to the man in the arena, not the critic up in the stands. The average person has somebody else's name on their back. It's time for you to wear your name on the front with pride, and to climb the next mountain of your life, whatever it is, but certainly, you've got somebody that, if you're going to hang around with Marc, you're going to become a better version of yourself. So Marc, thank you so much.

Marc Hodulich: 46:06

Thank you, Rock.

Outro: 46:08

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