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SPEAKERS

Edroy Odem, Nick Reed, Scot McKay



Edroy Odem 00:05

From the mist and shrouded mountaintop fortress that is x&y Communications Headquarters. You're listening to the World famous mountaintop podcast. And now here's your host Scot McKay.



Scot McKay 00:17

How's it going? Gentlemen? Welcome again to yet another episode of the world famous mountaintop Podcast. I am your host Scot McKay at Scot McKay on both Twitter and clubhouse real Scot McKay on Instagram, the URL where you can find all things related to mountaintop podcast is, as always mountaintop podcast.com and I invite you to join us on the Facebook group, gentlemen, it's all like minded men. We're having a good time out there. It's not a whole lot of agony and conversations about oh my god, my wife, you know, bumming me out, you will be treated to an uplifting and at times, very funny conversation when you join us on Facebook at the mountain top summit. With me today is a new friend of mine. He hails from just north of here about 60 or 70 miles up i 35, up in Austin, Texas, the capital of Jay Haas. He is with the Americans for Prosperity foundation. And his name is Nick Reed. Nick, welcome to the show.



Nick Reed 01:11

Thanks for having me, Scott.



Scot McKay 01:12

Yeah, man, glad you're here. The topic does your is one that we've I don't know, kind of addressed. tangentially on this show several times. But you know, it might be a little bit overdue for us to be doing an entire episode on it. And that's how to talk to people who disagree with you. Now, you and I were talking offline before we clicked record on this show, about potential titles like how to agree to disagree, or how to persuade people to your way of thinking. And in your mind, both of those perspective titles kind of missed the mark, because for you and your organization, it's all about helping people deal with disagreements, which of course, you know, there's never been a more important time to discuss that here in the United States, where it seems like everybody is so divided. So tell us a little bit more about your mission with Americans for Prosperity foundation.



Nick Reed 02:12

Well, mostly what I do and have done for the past few years is work with activists or aspiring leaders to know how to make a difference beyond just voting and paying your taxes, which is kind of the the limits of people's knowledge of what to do if they want to create some kind of change. And everybody has something that they care about that they want to see change. Well, in order to do that, you usually have to work with people, often people that you disagree with, in order to create that change. But just in general in life, too. And right now, people can't even talk to each other, much less work together. So it's an issue that's come up that we've created a capability around, and it's something I engage in almost exclusively now.



Scot McKay 02:57

Well, let me go ahead and get your first person take on why it seems that most people are having such a hard time compromising or coming to some sort of agreement with each other. I know, obviously, it has a lot to do with the political climate in the tough times of 2020. And going forward into this year. Of course, nothing's really changed. But I'd like to hear your take on why that seems so tough for people nowadays.



Nick Reed 03:21

Well, it's tough for a few different reasons. One, because when you talk about things, always from the political perspective, it's everybody disagrees. You're talking in isms, you're talking in abstractions, and you're talking about things that a supranational macro

economic level that's very complicated and confusing. So when you talk to somebody about that exact same thing, in terms of your personal values, in a more a political way of phrasing it, most people agree about how to treat each other and get along. It's just when you get into that complicated language. And that's, that's one way, then there's the psychology of it. And that's, that's another rabbit hole.



Scot McKay 04:02

Yeah, well, I'd like to go down that rabbit hole, because certainly people are disagreeing. And I can maybe see this conversation a couple of ways with a couple of thoughts on the subject. First thing to me is, as I talked about, in the preamble to the show a couple weeks ago, people aren't doing as much socialization in the real world, and they're being forced to get on or you know, they're being relegated to social media during lockdown. And then the social media companies show you the kind of posts they want you to see. And it's easy for us to believe that everybody has been polarized. And if you're not thinking the right thing, you need to be re educated until you do. And of course, it seems like there's half the population who is all on board with that, cheering it on, and others who are rebelling against it vigorously because well, they don't think the same way. Meanwhile, everybody wants to be a part of something bigger than themselves. They want to feel like they fit in somewhere. And I think a lot of people are looking to have that psychosocial itch scratched, if you will, rather than simply thinking out of the box and thinking for themselves. I know for my part, Nick, anytime I can see both sides of a conversation and perhaps see good things happening on both sides of the political aisle, I get accused of being confused. And I need to figure things out. I mean, what side are you going to be on? You can't be on both sides. You know, you're some kind of idiot, you know, famously, you're an idiot, why? Oh, you are right. I mean, and, you know, on top of all that kind of as a metal layer is this lack of self awareness, that people are really falling into this trap of being told what to do, people are confronted with so many headlines, that's all they read, they just don't have the cycles to start digging into everything. So when they see things that tickle their proverbial fancy relative to where their core beliefs already are, and that support it, you know, that's what they run with. And everybody else is just wrong, or evil, or racist, or a terrorist, or stupid or a communist, you know, let's be bipartisan here. You know, how do we unravel such a bird's nest and even talk to each other anymore neck? Well,



Nick Reed 06:11

I think first of all, we have to recognize part of the innocent nature of it, the brain likes to conserve calories. And in evolutionary psychology, what you see is, once the brain has learned something, it kind of works with a snapshot of it rather than the same thing. Like,

if every single time that you wanted to talk to your wife or your girlfriend, you had to act like you're meeting them again, for the very first time, like 51st days, it would be extremely exhausting to your brain. So your brain takes a little snapshot of somebody and then which we call labeling, and then it interacts more with that label of that image instead of the ever changing, ever growing dynamic universe that's in front of you. And so part of it is part of it as innocent labeling just happens between people, and we interact with our images rather than with each other. But part of it's not so innocent. You know, actually, there is an element of dehumanization, that happens when you're dealing with an image instead of a person. You know, people today don't want their kids to grow up and marry somebody who voted for the other guy, people unfriending each other on Facebook, if they support ideas that they disagree with legislators refuse to sign on to good legislation, if it's introduced by somebody of the opposing party, it's not just dividing our country, it's dividing our dinner tables with us and our spouse and our friends and our family. And the thing is, it's not just the problem is not that people disagree, actually, it's something different. The problem is that people think that the person they disagree with is actually a bad person is evil is lazy is stupid for thinking different. You hit the nail on the head, Scott, that's called dehumanization, or objectification, or something else. And part of it is natural labeling, but part of it also is like something else, something that we actually have to confront today. I wouldn't say for the first time, but for the first time in this form.



Scot McKay 08:11

Well, first of all, it's comforting to know that I'm not the only one who would find a movie like 51st dates, or say Groundhog Day exhausting. Oh, those two movies are beloved other people. But man, it is exhausting to see the same thing happen over and over and over again without any different resolution. And you know, kind of on that note, it seems like there are a lot of people who just won't let the whole election cycle go. I mean, they're already on to the 2022 and 2024 election cycle. And these people just look like they're picking a fight because they like to be contrary. And to me that's equally exhausting. I just don't know how so many people can be looking for adversarial conversations. It just doesn't seem healthy to me. yet. It's not. No, it just isn't. And yet, that seems like all that Twitter and Facebook want to show me Are people just being belligerent towards each other on purpose, looking for reasons to disagree, looking to pick a fight. And everything you talked about just now, Nick really, really resonates with me. I remember I was saying to my wife the other day, remember back when we were kids, and we were learning about these great human tragedies that have happened, like certainly the Armenian Genocide, certainly Nazi Germany, even Rwanda, the Rwandan genocide in more recent history, we would sit there and go, how could human beings ever get to this point? And now not to be inflammatory? I'll probably get emails from people rolling their eyes saying, you know,

that's a little too much. But one can actually psychologically reconcile how we got there seeing the political climate nowadays. I mean, there are people who want the other side dead. I mean, just this morning, someone who's a prominent person. politician died of COVID. And the first 10 tweets I saw on Twitter were good writtens he deserved it. And I just I mean, to me, that's appalling. And I, I can't imagine that our country is headed in that direction. But indeed in our little microcosmic world of the United States, we're missing the fact that other guys are listening to this podcast in places like UK and the Middle East and even the Pacific Rim going, yep, same things going here. It just seems like there's this global movement towards being so polarized and vilifying other sides because of their political belief. And along with that, what is going on here with this tendency nowadays, to beatify one's political views as if that's all that matters? In terms of deciding whether someone's a good or a bad person? It seems like we've had more depth than that in the past before we assert value judgments on other people, you know, what, say you?

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Nick Reed 10:51

Yeah, we have become home Oh, politicus, or how much economic is we are no longer Homo sapiens, we've we've degenerated down to a sophisticated cro-magnon, one dimensional human being, and people blame the media, because the media only shows every problem and issue of human existence through the background lens of politics and government. Here's the problem, you know, what the government should do is, or here's the problem, you know, what the government shouldn't do is, it's always politics, whether you're watching CNN, or you're watching Fox or any other, but the media is not the problem, what's happening inside of the institution of media is the same thing happening inside of the psyche of every other human being man and woman on this planet right now. And that is, we have learned to solve our problem of human existence of human separation, through joining the team through conformity, and through attacking the enemy. So, okay, if you will allow me, let me explain kind of the developmental psychology of this. When a human being is born, right, we're the most helpless creature on the face of the earth. I mean, compared to any other species, when a bug is born, it can take off in the air fly right away, there's nothing that has to learn or do first, all of its life is present and fixed through its heredity and genetics. When a deer is born, it can basically walk within minutes, but when a human being is born, it's not like that at all, we're completely helpless. It's because we are born fundamentally differently than any other being, and that is with magnitudes more degrees of freedom. And we grow into freedom, we relate to our world for freedom. And rather than passively we interact with women, with men with others actively, it's an open ended book, we choose how we show up. But here's the problem, you actually have to, you have to grow into that. And you have to learn how to relate to the world in a new way, it doesn't just happen for you, as a human being, you actually have to actively do it. So when you're born, when anybody's born, you're born into

dependency on Mom, mom is food, water, shelter, everything, then you learn to walk into crawl and to take care of yourself. And eventually you become more independent. Well, now you have to relate to the world in a new way, in the same way that our entire species is out has had to learn to relate to the world in a new way, relative to the old way, every individual is on the same journey in this sense, and has to do it. So if you don't, right, you are faced with this alienation from the rest of the world if you don't feel connected and related to it. And that alienation can drive you that separation anxiety to do all kinds of things that to get rid of it, but doesn't really fix the problem. One of those is trying to get rid of the other. Okay, and this is like think about the old form of slavery, or the Spanish Inquisition and the missions and heretics, hunts and all that stuff that used to go on back in the day, the gross form of it. Well, if you get rid of the other person, then there's no conflict because there's no them. There's only you. Problem solved, right? Wrong. You never get rid of the other. Well, then there's the inverse of that, too. I'm just gonna get rid of myself. I'll go and join the team. I'll go and join the party. Right? And then there's no me there's only that. So problem solved, right? Wrong. You never get rid of yourself. And even though today we have more of like an intellectualized game of domination. It's the same game that's happening, and it's a temporary escape because you always need a greater conformity or a greater domination of the other in order to get the same effect. You never get rid of the other and you never get rid of yourself and so you get more and more polarized until there really isn't any fix anymore. You build a tolerance to like a drug. And here we are. Here we are sitting here at the height of polarization where there's no question big enough that you can join and there's there's no enemy image that you can make of the other side. That's that's big enough either to get the same effect. We have to face each other now. And that's the the crux that we stand at is where do we go when what we've been doing since the beginning of time isn't working?



Scot McKay 15:22

Well indeed, in today's postmodern world, you know, this isn't an original thought on my part, but I've never heard it exactly coined as I'm about to express it. But indeed, in today's worlds, yesterday's religious arguments are now today's political arguments. Yes, that may be a function of secular humanism, or whatever. But you know what, I can even extrapolate on that basic concept. Look at the all star game in the NBA and the NHL, it used to be East versus West. Now, it's, we're just gonna draft the best players on both sides, like a pickup basketball game. And we're just going to all watch great players. It used to be in the old days, that New Yorkers were divided over whether I'm a Dodgers fan, and Brooklyn or I'm a Yankees fan in the Bronx. Then the Mets came along and threw a wrench in that works. And of course, if you're in Boston, and you're a Red Sox fan, you got to be this horrible person. It's weird how even that shift is taking place. And we've had, and we had a guest on this show before actually, who was a former professional

basketball player. And we were talking about how Michael Jordan really is the first guy in team sports in the United States, who bridged that gap of I'm going to root for this guy, even though I don't root for his team. And nowadays, you have the rise of you know, the LeBron James and indeed, the Tom Brady's who just won his seventh Super Bowl at the time, we're recording this. And as a lifelong Baltimore sports fan, I can't stand the Patriots. But I found myself rooting for Brady in the most recent Super Bowl just because that's how my psychology works. You know, I just wasn't anti Brady, because he was a patriot for so long. I just didn't want to see the Chiefs win two years in a row. You know, that was basically how it happened. So even in something as provincial as like sports, I don't know, you can call it the globalization of our culture, or, you know, certainly the broadening of the number of people who have, you know, somewhat direct influence over us. And of course, that was the promise of social media, everybody would have their own media outlet, everybody would be their own media outlet, as it were. I don't know. It's kind of muddy things up so that everybody thinks they're an authority on something, everybody thinks that everybody else will be theoretically influenced by their own opinion. I mean, people have. I mean, I don't know, let me put it this way. I just think people lack sober judgment, in terms of how much influence they're gonna have by arguing with people over Twitter. And with the secular humanization. And everything turning political. Here we are. And nobody agrees. And everybody thinks they're going to change somebody else's mind when really, nobody's going to change anybody's mind. And if they do, what I hear you saying, Nick, is, it's all pretty disingenuous at its core, it is even worse,

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Nick Reed 18:07

but out of it can come something really beautiful to it, we just have to take an active role in it. It is in itself a crisis. But it's also kind of an opportunity, like to thinking about social media. So everybody, you know, rags, oh, social media is so, so bad, because of the nature of it, you know, and it does all these things to us. Well, what do the algorithms actually do? If you're scrolling up and down on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, anything? And you come across a video and you watch more of this cat video than any other video? What do you think YouTube or social media is going to show you more of more cat videos? Well, it's the same thing in politics is the same thing that's happening for every single person across every single social media channel. It shows you more things to keep you engaged. And those things are the things that it sees you are the most interested and engaged in. Well, passively. We have an echo chamber, we have news and people and the posts that we've shown we're interested in previously, that are being shown to us on a daily basis, all the time. But it doesn't have to be that way. We can take an active role in what we're interested in, but who in the world is going and trying to Google things that they're not interested in. It's just the way that it is. Social media is not polarizing us directly is polarizing us indirectly, by only showing us things we're interested in and we only being

interested in one side of the coin, it's very easy to depolarize by simply getting interested in what other people think, you know, we actually need diversity of ideas in order to grow in order to have innovation. If you're just sitting there with yourself in a room looking at the wall, I mean, you're going to come up with very few or even few good ideas compared If you're being introduced to the challenge of entire teams of people and entrepreneurs who who can challenge those ideas and come up with a way out of the box thinking that you never even thought was, was possible. There's a interestingly, barely even connected study that was done that showed when people guess how many jelly beans are in a jar, and individual is extremely inaccurate. But when you average the guesses of hundreds upon hundreds of people, It's uncanny how spot on that number becomes, there's something about it that says we need different people's perspectives in order to get more near to the truth. And right now we're living in this story, where it seems like other people's perspectives are a threat to our own. There can't be too We can't hold this tension of opposites, whether that's between man and woman, or whether that's between Democrats and Republicans, or whether there's between any of the divides that we we just can't seem to bridge and feel threatened by. And yet that polarization in nature is the source of all creativity. It's where all life comes from, is the birds and the bees, my friend. And so we have to change our story. We have to be able to look at people who think differently as an opportunity. I mean, my God, what a boring and lonely world it would be to be in a world full of only people just like me who know everything I know and think everything. I think it's like, Hey, you know what? Oh, yeah, you do know what, hey, let me tell you something. Now, there's no point you already know, what a terrible world What would I have to bring to the table anymore? I don't have a clue.



Scot McKay 21:40

We know what you're talking about, brings several very interesting concepts to mind. The first of which is a single party state. It's a totalitarian state, by definition. So there are a lot of people out there who say I want to get rid of this other political party. All of them are terrible. Get rid of them. Well, when you're left with one party, basically, you're North Korea, you're the DPRK you know, welcome to a totalitarian state, because where everybody thinks a certain way. First of all, just like you said before, Nick, they don't think a certain way, those people are still gonna be there, even if they're re educated. And they will tell you they believe a certain way. Really, it's either that they've been brainwashed or they're just lying to you. There's never one train of thought. Now, after generations in North Korea, having visited North Korea myself, I was left looking at my wife going these people really believe this. But I think that's decades, scores of years of being fed one party line and not knowing anything else. The other thing that you brought up is this idea of diversity, diversity of thought. Some would call it identity politics, some would call it simply social justice. But this idea of saying, Okay, I need more women, more people of

different sexual orientations. black folks, brown folks, white folks, because in diversity is our strength. I agree with that. I think everybody who's coming from a different societal position, a different cultural position, can come together and greatly increase not only our level of creativity, but our level of productivity. The problem is, when it still distills back down to politics, regardless, you know, when a Candace Owens is no longer diverse, because her politics are different than Kamala Harris's, you know, that, that seems not to match up. When you hold up to the light with this idea that we need more racial diversity, we need more diversity of all sorts so that we're more creative, because if you don't agree with me hook, line and sinker, well, then wait a minute, that's not the kind of diversity we want it around here. And I think that is quite possibly where the disconnect is, in everything you've just been talking about. Am I onto something there? Absolutely. You've seen



Nick Reed 23:58

the scene from the matrix where Agent Smith says Me, me more me and he just starts creating these clones of himself all throughout the matrix. Right? That's, that's the story. They've just touched on that deep, archetypal myth that we're carrying that we think sameness is what we're looking for, when in reality, it would be extremely boring, and we need novelty, we need difference. We need polarization, we just need to learn a healthy way of relating to others.



Scot McKay 24:29

And then we start vilifying people who are different than us if it's convenient and quote unquote, allowed to do so which we've talked about on this show. Whereas if there are people who are different than us, and think differently than us, as long as it's on the list of allowed ways to disagree, we can celebrate that and it just seems so ironic on one level, and it seems like such bs on another level, it's like how did we get here? I guess that brings us to the central point of this entire topic on Nick, which is how do we end racked with these people who don't think the way we do who don't have the same mindset. Don't agree on the same talking points we do or even operate on the same psychological wavelength we do. Do we avoid them? Do we just not get in the middle of it? I mean, obviously, that's a free speech issue at that point, isn't it? How do we do this?



Nick Reed 25:19

I'm gonna give you a couple different tips that people can use to pretty much depolarize. Any conversation? The first concept is people over politics. Simple enough. But let me

explain. Isn't it true that you can win an argument but you can lose the person? Scott 100%? Isn't it also true the opposite that you can you can win a person, even if, regardless of whether or not you won or lost an argument? That's true. One of the things that I think we forget, when we are talking about the issues that we care about is relationship matters. And the context in which it's coming is completely different. If say, it's a person, it's your best friend, or it's your life partner that you've spent so many years with who you've built this recognized and consistent pattern of trusting that everything that you say and do can and will be used for you rather than against you. If there's no relationship, you might want to spend a little time trying to win the person and build a relationship before you start trying to convert to a political ideology, or even speaking in those kind of polarized terms. And this isn't any kind of, of escapism or avoiding the situation. It's just recognizing the basic principle that the level of trust and relationship is directly proportional to the level of openness to a person's ideas, to different ideas.



Scot McKay 26:43

Here's the thing. However, since we're not actually interacting in person all that much lately, and a lot of this is over email, or texts, if not on social media, there is a certain level of escapism that is available to people and I see a lot of people who are taking a hit and run approach to really damaging relationships with people say someone doesn't like what you thought, and they just destroy you over email or social media. And you say to them, Well, you know, I'd like to have a dialogue with you more human. Can you call me on the phone? Or can we take this offline, and they just refuse to do it. Because they're more about destroying you and being right than they are even doing anything to help the relationship along. Just recently, someone was very, very angry and unsourced to me and even disrespectful. But because I'm trying to be a better man around here, I did find something in their criticism of me that I think was well founded. And my willingness was to get on the phone with them and apologize for my part in that they can exactly what you said, I may lose the argument, but I would win over the person again, because I'm just one of those people who doesn't like to go to sleep with an open rift between myself and someone else. It's just not how I'm wired. I'm not one of these people that goes looking to pick political fights, because I find it fun. I don't like that Discord. And this person would have none of it. They just dumped on me, and greatly prefer to keep that opinion, without it having any rebuttal from my side. And I'm not sure to this day, whether it was about them, being afraid of me, countering them and not and then not having anything to say to that, or that they just didn't care, too. But all I know, is it sure as hell didn't happen. And I think that's very, very unfortunate that people can do this hit and run job because what happens is, in a short snippet, you know, we have very brief attention spans nowadays, don't worry, though, used to be 140 characters. I mean, I guess Twitter did is a little bit of a favor might be a double edged sword, if you think about it, but go into 280

characters, someone can tweet something, and 280 characters. And people who would disagree with that opinion, or who are initially put off by that opinion, are filling in the gaps about that person's entire character and their imagination. Like they decide everything else this person must believe or not believe or how horrible a person they're imagining the other guy to be. And all they've gotten was 280 characters, I find that this short sightedness runs rampant and that doesn't really make it. It isn't really conducive to the task of let's figuring out where each other is, and perhaps finding ways to grow from our disagreement with each other. It just seems like people don't have that self awareness, let alone the wherewithal or the desire to even want to go there anymore. And it may hark back to the short attention span. What do you think

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Nick Reed 29:41

this is where I think social media actually does fall short? I don't think that it is an environment that is conducive to us being the kind of man that we want to be. in general. Here's what I mean. So recently, here in our small community, wherever Everybody knows everybody, we talk to each other in person. We also have a Facebook group, but things like hey, found somebody keys, or Hey, who's open for babysitting this Friday night. But new people come into the community, and they're not necessarily connected to the community on a personal level. So they use the Facebook group like people traditionally use social media for for ranting for venting for being vitriolic, and trolling and all these other things. And somebody trolled my wife, getting very, you know, nasty, and all this stuff. But once we have built the relationship with this person, that doesn't happen, it's only when somebody comes in and doesn't have the relationships, you see, there's a difference between a community and a network. And when you have a loose network, like social media, where there's no natural social consequences for your actions, the incentives disappear. And it becomes extremely difficult to be able to be the kind of person you want to be. If I act like a jerk to somebody, and I have to see them tomorrow, it's a little bit harder to act like a jerk to somebody that I'm never going to see again, like in a giant metropolitan area, or a giant virtual one like social media.



Scot McKay 31:14

Yeah, the anonymity of the internet makes people a lot more brazen in terms of how they, they talk to each other. But I have to disagree with you a little bit. I've seen it happen right before my very eyes where two people I know, or have known for decades, who have also known each other for decades, get crosswise in the middle of a social media discussion, and they never want to talk to each other again, they're like, well, I'm blocking you, I'm blocking you fine. And it's just it's so heartbreaking to watch. So I would contend that even

people who do know each other very well in real life, once they allow themselves to get into a tussle online that online disagreement can break the real world relationship, absolute more fragile than it would have been had it been in real life. Absolutely.

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Nick Reed 31:59

Well, that's because it was a relationship that actually had real natural social consequences. If you act unfriendly, you're going to lose friends. And it's just that much easier to do it when you have the anonymity, or you have an environment where you don't get to interact with a person and connect to their humanity. You know, I mean, they say 90% of communication is body language, right? nonverbal? Well. That's where texting and Twitter crushed us. Absolutely. It's so it's so hard to connect to people's humanity through through a tiny fraction of a snapshot of the universe that they are.



Scot McKay 32:33

Yeah, well, let's go back to the central tenet of this show, because I'm still not hearing how to talk to people. Okay, I agree with you. Okay. It seems like we've laid out a whole smorgasbord of reasons why people are disagreeing, and or the psychosocial elements have led to that. But now, where do we go from here? Nick is the year 2021. And people are divided, the whole nation is divided, the whole world is divided. It seems like social media wasn't a fad. masks and social distancing may turn out to be the new normal. nobody's talking about an end in sight there. Do we just avoid all these people who are unreasonable and try to look for reasons somewhere and let all those other people stew in their own juice or something? Or, you know, how can we proact here?

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Nick Reed 33:16

Well, let me introduce two, three more ideas for people. Okay. The first one is policy versus politics. So right now, people will not work with people if they're part of the opposing team or party. That's the primary criteria. But isn't it true that if you were to look long enough with any individual that you would find some point of agreement? Well, there's 1000s upon 1000s of issues and policies out there and problems that you can be engaging in in order to make the world a better place that are connected to your life in some way? What if you could align with people who align with you on some issue and advance some policy or have a conversation about that, rather than focusing on the 99% things you disagree with, and you can't move forward with them on? This is what Frederick Douglass talked about when he said, I will unite with anybody to do right and nobody to do wrong. And you may say, Oh, well, we disagree about what's right and wrong. But where are you

agree about what's right. That's where you continue to unite. And right now the stalemate that we have is holding people back. We could be advancing causes in all different areas all the time. If people could unite around the issues that they agree about. That's one, too. We need to start having bottom up versus top down conversations. You know, nobody is complaining and criticizing you for what you're going to walk out the door and do Scott to alleviate homelessness or to make the environment better, but everybody's disagreeing about what we should vote that the president should do, or the president Should tax and make everybody else do a one size fits all solution. That's what we're arguing about, we need to shift the conversation. And once you shift it to what I'm going to do, that's a completely different conversation, then it comes down out of the supranational macro, economic, and top down level. And then it becomes something that you can actually appreciate about somebody, but also a lot less threatening, because you're not going to be forcing me to do it to you, I walked into this classroom, and I remember doing this workshop, the workshop was called change the world. And I said, All right, everybody say, we're going to change the world, get into groups. And I want you to identify one thing you want to see change in the world more than anything else. And then I want you to outline the best plan you can think of to make it happen. Well, they got in the groups, and they were all done in about five minutes. So I said, Wow, solve the world's problems. Great. Come on up. Let's hear it. One by one, they would come up and present. And they would say, well, we think that poverty is a big issue and what we think that the president should do is done, or we think that homelessness is a big issue. And you know, what the mayor should do is that the DA, and by the end of that class, I realized not a single person had identified one thing they were going to walk out the door and actually do and it's very disempowering. We have this top down way of thinking and problem solving. That ultimately means everybody's sitting around talking about what the president should do, and nobody is doing anything. And this is a major obstacle. And it's a major barrier to being able to talk to people that you disagree with about things. So bring it down, talk from the bottom up, what are you going to do, even if it's a tiny thing to get the ball rolling about the issues you care about?



36:46

I promise



Nick Reed 36:47

you to change your conversation.



Scot McKay 36:49

It's so true people scapegoat the guy who's the farthest up the food chain, if there was a president of the world, it would be their fault, not Donald Trump's or Joe Biden's it's so true, absolutely. So true. And yet, most of our problems are our own problems, caused by our own doing our own bad decision making, perhaps accident of circumstance in many ways. I'm not going to blame people who've been abused by their parents for their own abuse or anything like that. But you know, it's amazing how people who are least likely to take personal responsibility for anything often happened to be the most likely to blame someone else really far up the food chain for their problems.



37:31

Yes,



Scot McKay 37:31

I was talking to someone. And again, this is in the realm of the kind of conversation nobody would dare to have on political Twitter right now, to the effect that what's going to surprise people is even after Trump's out of office, and Biden's in office, out there in the real world, your life is still pretty much gonna be 98% the same. You may pay different taxes, you may be subject to a different rule or regulation there your free speech may feel limited, but really, honestly, your daily life isn't going to be that dramatically affected by who's president. Really. And people go yes, it is because of this, this and this. How is this this and this affecting your daily life? What does it matter about me It matters that, you know, people out in Portland, Oregon are rioting? Well, for those people in Portland, Oregon, maybe they should think about whether they should be riding or not, and how that's affecting the people around them. But still, what does that have to do with the guy farthest up the food chain? Visa v? How you're living your daily life right now? And really, people don't have an answer for that. It's just, that's how our minds get loaded with these extraneous arguments that we're told we should care more about. And they really don't matter. I mean, I don't want to sound cold and heartless, obviously, there are situations going on in this world that are worthy causes for us to address. And if we're passionate about them, yes. Go from the bottom up instead of the top down. How am I personally going to go make a difference? What group do I believe in enough to walk side by side with and battle to make the world a better place, but simply throwing rocks at stars and blaming someone else high up the food chain, because of our lot in life is not productive? And yet it seems like what a lot of people do. And again, I think it's wonderful that you're saying go talk to people, you know, in terms of you and I not something more systemic

and societal and weigh up the food chain. But I still am left perhaps cynically, Nick thinking there's some people I should just avoid, you know, there's some alcoholic folks who've fallen off the wagon. There's some people out there who just want to pick a fight. And it seems like those people and their arguments are being shown to me on social media, a lot more than they are in real life. And every day is a battle to avoid these confrontations knowing that if I try to find a level of agreement, you know it takes two to tango. And they're just not having it.



Nick Reed 40:01

Well, there's nothing we can do about that, you know, every person is their own person, we don't have any control over other people's choices.



Scot McKay 40:08

And again, that's a bottom up conversation right there. I mean, I can't change what other people on MOS are thinking, I can only really concern myself with myself. Yeah, in that regard,



Nick Reed 40:19

and what a weight it is to take onto our shoulders, what's completely out of our hands, like what other people do. And then once you release that off of your shoulders, you have all the energy and attention and focus you need in order to take care of what is in your hand. And that's about being the kind of man that you want to be rewriting your own story, and inspiring other people to do the equivalent



Scot McKay 40:44

for them. And that brings us to women, a lot of guys are waiting with bated breath to hear how we're going to talk about women we disagree with or women who are disagreeable in general. And the first thing that comes to my neck is if there's a woman you're not going to get along with and you're not going to connect with her, but you think she's hot. We got to get out of our own heads. We got to get out of this poverty mindset where we're thinking not a whole lot of women are going to be attracted to us, we better take whatever we can get. And instead of trying to force a square peg into a round hole, proverbially trying to get a woman who's going to be fundamentally disagreeable to agree with this, find a woman who's sexy to you, who you have actually something in common with. And that starts with being brave enough, some would say crazy enough to

assert Who the hell you are, and what you believe, even in your online profile and your first missives to women online, and when you meet them, in real life, don't be afraid of the man you are certainly don't try to water down who you are hoping that, you know, you can assuage things. And even if she's disagreeable, the two of you're still going to get along, you know, look for the woman who is one of you who's on your team. And that doesn't mean two people can't get together and persuade each other about things like pastimes, or even political beliefs for that matter, although that seems exceedingly rare, the capability to do that people are so entrenched. But fundamentally, Nick, I think a lot of guys have been led to believe women are just going to be disagreeable. They're offended by men in general, they're offended by our heterosexuality. Anytime we show any interest in a woman romantically we're liable to get a me to post written about us or not just get our hand slapped or get arrested or something. And I think a lot of it is fo outrage, you know, you got the whole men going their own way movement that says, oh, all women are horrible. They're all out to get us. And I don't think there's any room for reconciliation, as if that would necessarily even need to happen between men and women who are designed to be together. But again, I don't think there's any room for reconciliation there, let alone cooperation, when we come with these kind of preconceived notions that women are negative, and they're just not going to like us and even talking to a woman is like traipsing into a live minefield.

N

Nick Reed 43:03

Right? Right. Exactly. Exactly. I mean, if you're walking out there, and you're looking at all the women, or you're swiping left and right, looking through all of your available options in terms of, I wonder if that I wonder if that woman is a Republican, or I wonder if that woman is a democrat and thinks just like me, you're going to be very limited in your pool, because that kind of thinking doesn't stop with the party. It keeps going, where if this person agrees with me on this issue, or that issue, or what if this person doesn't, doesn't think just like me on that, and then who are you left with? Ultimately, if you follow that road to the end, you're left with yourself alone. And that is no kind of place to be as a man, we got to be able to be tolerant of other people and recognize that people are different people think different for different reasons. And people grow and change. My wife I met who's from Sweden, over in Italy, was a full fledged socialist people say, well, what's that, like now that you're married? I say, Well, she takes half my paycheck, but great benefits. We have a great relationship. And we've come to grow together and learn about each other and why we think the way that we think and changed our minds on lots of different things. You know, I wouldn't close the door so quickly on on people, and I wouldn't definitely wouldn't think about people in terms of politics.



Scot McKay 44:16

Yeah, for sure. And yet, there's a little bit of a dichotomy going on, in this highly saturated, and indeed, at the same time, superficial world of online dating and apps, you know, which we're forced to talk about more often than ever before, because of the COVID thing continuing and persisting. But if you try to cast a wide net and saying, I don't really care what kind of woman you're like, as long as you can fog a mirror, that's not going to be interesting to any women, because they're not going to have any touchstone of connectivity with you. So on one level, yeah, we have to differentiate ourselves and write to women we think we're gonna get along with but on the other side of the coin, I talked to a lot of men Nick, who are afraid to say something that would be theoretically controversial, because there are Expecting hate mail from women saying, oh, you're the worst type of patriarchal jerky guy. And I'd say to those guys, let them write. You know, first of all, most women won't deign to write a guy who they're not interested in anyway. Okay, especially considering how saturated the arm if you can't get women who are interested potentially write you back, then I think you're overblowing the possibility of angry women writing it. But that said, Who cares? They're not the kind of women you want to date. Anyway, a lot of guys are trying to avoid offending women who are easily offended. And my first comeback to them is always Are you trying to attract women are easily offended? And they're like, No, I said, well, then stop writing your profile for them. Right for the women who you actually want to attract? Yes, I do think we need to be well, to quotes a political talking point. We need to be a lot more tolerant. But I think a lot of people preach tolerance as long as it's tolerant to people who think the same way I do, right. Yeah. So yeah, there's a balance there, as there is with all things well, our time is run out. But I want to go ahead and point you to where you can find out more about Americans for Prosperity foundation. And that's by going to a special URL that I've set up for you, which is mountain top podcast.com, front slash Nick. And there, you can find out more about this movement to help people communicate more clearly, and to learn to talk to other people who disagree, because hey, in a world where we're all homogeneous in this manner, it would be a boring place and indeed a totalitarian place, right. And I'm also going to put a link to Nick Reed's book on my Amazon influencer page, and you'll be able to see his book, return to gnosis there, and you'll be able to read the inside liner notes on Amazon and tell what that book is about. Thank you so much for joining us today, Nick, for what is absolutely an essential conversation. And we've given these guys a lot to think about and hopefully act on. Thank you so much. My pleasure. Thanks



Nick Reed 46:57

for having me on, Scott.



Scot McKay 46:59

Yeah, man. and gentlemen, I invite you to go to Matt stop podcast.com click on the red button in the upper right hand corner and talk to me for 25 minutes about where you are right now, where you want to be with women. Hey, look, we're already in the second month of 2021. Where are you at? What are you doing? Are you getting better with women? Or is it more of the same? Don't let what happened in 2020 get you down. This is a new year. The new normal does not have to be dictated to you you can take control you can take ownership. take personal responsibility and start writing your own rules. Start writing your own path to greatness with women, in your career and in other places of your life. Also, talk to me for free on the phone for 25 minutes, hey, I guarantee results in advance I guarantee you'll emerge from that conversation with something you can use today to get on the right track. And if you haven't seen what our sponsors origin in Maine, and heroes Soper up to lately they have some new things that are going to make you a better man origin will get you all natural and powerful supplements that will make you your healthiest self. And of course, I can't talk enough about their genes. The Origin jeans are the absolute best jeans I've ever worn. They will get you to pair for a special price all you have to do is add the code Mountain 10 at checkout and get you some Meanwhile, over at heroes soap each bar is soap last darn near a month well worth the money, no parabens, nothing that's going to affect you negatively in terms of your health or your T levels. Plus you're going to smell great and the women will love you that's all there for you also when you visit mountain top podcast.com and you can also use the code Mountain 10 with the guys when you make your purchase from heroes soap and with that until I talk to you again next time on the next episode. This is Scott McKay from x&y communications in San Antonio Texas. Be good out there.



Edroy Odem 49:00

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