

Peter Margaritis: Hey, welcome back everybody, and first and foremost, Happy New Year to everyone. Actually, this is when it's being played on January 4. It's actually December 9. It's almost getting closer to Ho-Ho-Ho day. And because of that, do I have a gift for my audience. Oh man! The band is back together. Brian Comerford, Nick Lowe. God, I keep pronouncing your last day wrong! Lozano? Is that it?

Nick Lozano: That correct. Got it man. I know who I am. It's okay.

Peter Margaritis: After how many years we know each other, and I can still love your last name. And Roxanne Kaufman Elliott. Welcome back guys.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: Thanks, Peter. Thanks for having me here.

Brian Comerford: Yeah, it's great to be here.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: Take you off the rails and other time around here.

Peter Margaritis: Something about that third rail. I need to really stay away from, and I have a feeling it's going to happen today.

Nick Lozano: You're talking about rail in the bar right. Is that what's your talking about? Third rail in the bar?

Brian Comerford: With a name like Margaritis, of course.

Peter Margaritis: We already addressed this earlier in the podcast that we appeared. the Live podcast for you guys. It's pronounced Margaritis. There's something about the Greeks, the Greeks, just make you sick. Hepatitis, gingivitis, laryngitis. I'll just make you sick, right?

Brian Comerford: Peter, if you're entitled to flubbing Nick's last name, I'm entitled the flubbing yours.

Peter Margaritis: Absolutely. Level A. So, maybe we can get this thing kicked off and go down this conversation we wanted to have. And see how long we can stay in the bumper rails. Who knows if we kind of veer off and chasing rabbits sound squirrels or something. That, that's all right, as well. But we've been talking about from a leadership perspective and dealing with this year that everybody just wants to get away from. 2020. And there's a lot of adjectives, four letter adjectives, you can put in front of 2020. But what experiences have we been dealing with. I mean, this has taken us really out of our normality. And it's not just us. It's globally. And from a leadership perspective, as leaders, we have to be cognizant of those issues as well as how are they affecting my people? Just think back on March 15th. We'll just use us that date. All of a sudden everybody had to leave the office and go work from home. There's a train wreck that happened almost immediately.

Peter Margaritis: Oh, by the way, schools were closed. So now, well in my household, I have one full-time employee. New full-time employee, who's working in my old office, my wife. I have another part-time, full-time employee my 20 year old son. He's around the house all the time because of virtual. And I've put them on warnings. I've tried to fire them because they haven't been doing their jobs, and no, they don't leave the house. So, I want to ask the three of you. What experiences have you experienced... no to be redundant redundant...through this year that you can share with the audience because we still have a little bit more time with this according to the scientists. We still have more time with this. Excuse me. And how are you advising others when we run up against these roadblocks? I'll be a gentleman, and we'll go. Ladies first. Roxanne.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: Aww, well, thank you, Peter. And thank you again for having us. This is always great. So, I'm going to start with your first with your first comment, Peter. What have I experienced? So, I'm going to go right back to the very beginning, and then we were probably four or five weeks into this thing. And I've worked from home for a very, very long time. But not like this. I mean going to my clients is where I get the energy. Working with them with the people with the groups in their facilities. And that was, that was not there anymore. So instead of stepping back and thinking about how I spent my time before, I just started filling the time that I was usually driving to the client, whether it was 20 minutes or an hour and a half or whatever the time that mentally I was doing different things. I filled it with work. So. that's more time to coach. That's more time to have meetings. And I did that with everything. And the days got longer, and the time in front of a screen doing this one dimensional work got longer and longer without thinking about it without really getting it conscious appreciation.

Roxanne Kaufmann: So, about four to five weeks into it, I was walking downstairs and I sat on the stairway and burst into tears. I was crying and I go what in the world is wrong with me. It was total exhaustion from doing this and not having all of those other things that we do every day that we don't even think about we're doing. We get up and run the office. We go down and get a cup of coffee and we say hi to some friends or colleagues that we've met. We go out, we run out. We get lunch. None of that was happening. And it just built up and built up and built up. And that was the moment where I sat down and said okay if this is happening to me it's happening to all of us in one way or another. So, how can I talk to my people about it. And that's when I started opening conversations and workshops and everything else with asking them, this one question around three things. How are you doing, mentally...what's going on here in your head? What's going on here in your heart. This is the emotional piece. And what's happening to your bodies?

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: I'm going to kick it over to you guys and say, Okay, where are you, we can go down each one of those as much as you want but it's been hilarious. It's been tragic. It's been heartwarming and everything in between the stories that we've all shared.

Brian Comerford: Yeah, well said, Roxanne. You know, I resonate with everything that you just brought up, and I think just asking a simple question.

Brian Comerford: Like, how are you? To start a conversation. that in itself has been, I think, a force multiplier for just continuing to engage relationships. Particularly when just as you say, we don't have the interpersonal contact. You don't get the same energy revitalization off of interacting with a cluster of electrons on your screen that you do sitting right across from someone, right? Or being able to give them a hug or handshake, things that are so traditional and in our culture that may go the way of the dinosaur here pretty quickly, you know, considering what we've had to live through.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: Well, it's a completely different energy. This is energy sucking when you're in a room with people's energy giving because you have the exchange. We don't even realize it's happening. But we are all fields of energy that's all we are... is energy encased in this physical form and that has impact, negative, positive, and neutral. And when we're this way, now we have to learn how to engage in that differently. So, that we can create a connection with people that we feel when we can't share in the energy field.

Peter Margaritis: Nick you want to take it?

Nick Lozano: Yeah, sure. So, for me, the beginning of this... you know, we're not gonna even say what it is... of 2020. Right? Unless you like Dr. Evil right. It's just this whole thing for me, it was just go go go right being an IT professionally was a matter of just turning things around so that people could even just work at home. So you know, for me, and probably a lot of IT leaders in the beginning it was probably just enabling their staff to work from home and you were just so busy doing with that dealing with that that you didn't have time to stop and think about what was actually going on. For me, you know, I've always kind of been big on emotional intelligence. So, I've always reached out to my people to see how they're doing, and one thing I've noticed through this whole thing is it's more important now than it ever was before. For me, you know, I work from home, but you know I have a wife. I have a child. So, I still have some human interaction, some connection with other people. So, I don't know how people feel if they're, you know, in their early 20s. They live in an apartment by themselves, and they have no connection. Those are the people, you know, I go more out of my way to say, 'Hey, how are you doing? How's life treating you? Is there anything I can do for you?'

Nick Lozano: Because one thing I've learned over time is that fear is relative to each person, right? I'm not afraid of the pandemic, or what's going on, or the future. I'm not doom and gloom on it, but it doesn't necessarily mean that the person next to me isn't afraid or has the same views me. It could be the complete opposite way. And some of that's just being more empathetic to other people's emotions and letting them know that, Hey, you know, it's okay to be scared. It's okay to be angry. It's okay to have all these emotions and don't bottle them up and you know. Feel them. They're real emotions. Don't bottle them up and hold them in. So, I think, for me, a big thing, you know, just going through this whole thing is empathy. And Brian, I would say, you know, you said the thing about we probably won't have handshakes or hugs again, I don't know about that. I'm, you know, a pretty positive guy. This isn't the first pandemic that human beings or humankind's have gone through, you know.

Nick Lozano: There was a Spanish flu in the early 1900s, and I'm sure all those practices stopped, but people forget things very quickly and move on with their daily lives and go back to normal. And we see that in different jurisdictions now across the world. There are some states here in the United States like Florida who close for two weeks and everything's back to normal. They don't do any measures or anything like that, then there's other states like New York City where everything's locked down. So, it's all relative to where you are.

Peter Margaritis: A friend who moved back to Australia, and he's not still quarantine for two weeks in the hotel. He and his daughter. And he's going, 'This is great!' We got a suite. I think the government's paying for this we get, you know, I DoorDash. They deliver food all the time, but after that two week period, they leave the hotel and they don't have to wear a mask. And he's talked to some friends who have moved back to Australia, even coming to visit. And they go, when you first walk out, and you're not required to wear a mask and you're looking around at people who aren't wearing masks. It's a little creepy at first. It takes a little time to begin to reestablish yourself and accept that as normal. Y

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: Yeah.

Brian Comerford: It's interesting, Thailand is the same way. Right. They've only had 60 deaths in the country. They've had under 3000 recorded infections, and they have managed things very tightly from travelers in and out of the country from quarantining anyone who's coming in exactly that way so that they can continue things as normal. So that you know, I think kind of back to Roxanne's point about, you know, what have been some of the most impactful issues in this year. For me, it, it is the compounded effect of all of these stressors. And particularly when I have seen it drive such polarization between people, You know, we started out this year with an Impeachment, and political polarization is something that's always sort of expected. I mean, I think we've seen it really double down on in the last four years or so, but you know polarization around things like health issues. I don't know if anyone really expected to see that coming, and then led to some very awkward and disheartening conversations for me personally. Particularly given how much work I do around medical data and with medical benefits, you know, for organizations. And so, you know, that kind of polarization, I think is something where Roxanne you asked the question about the head and the heart. Yeah, and Nick brought up, you know, the need for empathy, I would add to that, there's a sense of decency that feels like it has really gone out the window with the way people have been willing to interact with each other and not have the kind of emotional intelligence sets required for empathy or interacting with people from where they are.

Peter Margaritis: Empathy. I've heard we hear the definition of me putting yourself in somebody else's shoes, but that's really not true. Empathy is understanding what that first person is feeling in their shoes. And we don't do that very well. Understand how somebody is feeling it. So, as you say, then you've got polarization, then you get social injustice and everything that's been piled on into one year, it does mess with the head, the heart and the body of Covid19. The 19 stands for the minimum amount of weight you're going to gain during this pandemic.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: True, you know, I love what you said. And that's so true. And I see it within the corporations that I work with. You know, there. It's the same thing. It's, how do you and I feel, I really feel not sorry for but I empathize with the leaders in organizations with the messaging, with making it fair, with trying to be, you know, across the board with everybody about do you come in? Do you stay home? When do you do one? When do you do it the other, you know, how do we deal with all these things going on and still maintain the organization? It's tragic to see how many small businesses have gone. Have had to shut their doors and through all of this. So, how do we cope with all of that too? And you see that. I mean, you know, when in today's speakers organization, Peter and I belong to that. Some of our some of our colleagues and dear friends have had to completely change, you know, flip their lives around this thing. I mean, they make a living, getting in, you know, large groups of people and talking. Well, we don't do that anymore.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: And you know, that's just one small microcosm of how this is impacting everybody. So, you know, from certainly from my perspective, it's How can we help people to be aware of what's happening? Look at it very consciously and very purposefully and say, What can I be doing differently now to help myself remain whole and healthy physically, mentally, emotionally, and those around me. There's just so many aspects to this, and Peter, you had said that the scientists are determining when this will go away. There for a while I thought it was the politicians.

Peter Margaritis: They're still trying,

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: They are. They're still trying to tell us.

Peter Margaritis: They're still to tell us how this is all going to play out but no you listen to the experts. I'm not big on data. That was little sarcasm there because... I mean, you look at data....

Brian Comerford: It's hard to tell these days, you know.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: It is! Isn't it? Oh man.

Brian Comerford: Heard about this thing called gravity. I'm really uncertain about it though.

Peter Margaritis: Right.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: I don't want it to hold me down.

Peter Margaritis: I want to be uplifted and gravity's just not doing it right now.

Peter Margaritis: And it only took us about 20 maybe 15 minutes to get a little bit off the rails there. That's a long time for us.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: I think that's a record. And you're going to. Peter, are you going to ask us all about MacGyvering at some point, too?

Peter Margaritis: No, no, you're the MacGyver Queen. Seriously, gentlemen. She is the MacGyver queen, because as now she's doing all for coaching calls at home. Now you say, I'm standing up, I got the windows desk risers. Roxanne thought it was a really cool idea. You tell the story better than I can, because you live it.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: I needed to get something like Peter has, like you guys have. I'm sure that good go up and down, or at least get the monitor up to eye level because when I do Workshops, I have to move, you know. Just like I do in person. You guys have been there. You've all been doing it. So, I do it exactly the same way. I just do it this way. So, I had to get something that was eye level. I went through three different of these movable things that go up and down mechanical electron all this stuff. And they're all too big. And they're all too heavy, and they're all too chunky. And quite frankly, they're just ugly. Can't do, I can't do. I can't look at ugly. And do what I do. So, I sent them all back. I was sitting here thinking, one day, what do I have, what can I do to get things to get this thing up? So, this camera is all the way up to my almost five foot- four frame. And I went downstairs into my kitchen and I started running around within the cupboards, and I found a bread basket. Big round bread basket about this high. I went, 'Okay well that's pretty sturdy and what else? What else?' And then I pulled out a lobster pot and I put the lobster pot upside down on top of the bread basket. And you know what, bam, right there. Five foot 3.25 inches.

Brian Comerford: It was meant to be.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: I love it. So, go ahead.

Brian Comerford: Put some little lacy doilies or something over it so that you can have the pretty factor.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: Aww, thank you. No, the basket is kind of pretty itself, and I love the lobster pot. Makes me think of good clam bakes, lobster bakes. So, that was cool. So, what I've done is I incorporate that now and all my session. So, when we're talking about brain, heart body. I'll say, well guys, what do you do, and you know we all had this at home thing as Peter was talking about. You're thrust into this environment. What have you been doing, you know, they all think this is a bookcase behind me. You guys know it's not. It's a beaded curtain. So, I thought, so I have this thing. So, I took a picture of what I look at what I'm seeing when I'm talking to my folks, and I show them... I do a slight short slide deck and I show them. The monitor on top of the lobster pot, on top of the bread basket with all the wires and stuff behind it with the computer and the connections and everything and they love it. And just go MacGyver stuff. Go figure it out.

Peter Margaritis: But you make a good point. If you think about it. How you guys been creative because we've had downtime?

Nick Lozano: Oh, yeah.

Peter Margaritis: And, you know, there's always a silver lining in a dark cloud. And I think that silver lining is the ability to actually sit, think and be creative. So, what have you guys done?

Nick Lozano: I think for me, you know, when I started working from home, my wife was already teleworking and in a few days a week. So, if I had to telework, you know, I normally just had my laptop and I sat down on, you know, the dining room table, but as a pandemic went on and I noticed that things... that this was going to be a longer situation than normal was like, okay, I need to fix this. I need a desk, because I can't sit hunched over on a laptop on my dining room table anymore. So, I'm in my guest room right now, slash studio. I guess you'd call it and my **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**wife's like, you got the little corner over here where I'm sitting right now. So, I'm looking around trying to find a desk that fits perfectly. I can't find anything I want. I'm like, you know what, I'm just going to build it. I'm tired of this. So, I went and I bought a live slab edge of walnut, cut it, you know, put legs on it and everything. And made a, you know, an end table, coffee table for my wife. Put that downstairs. So now, I've got to a point where I've built my own shelves. I've got floating shelves made out of cedar up here. I've got I've got my mic up here on a boom arm. So, I've made myself a little studio and it's kind of been a creative outlet too. To be able to work with my hands and get away from a computer screen. Right, so like when I do that stuff. Like I don't listen to anything. It's just downtime to work with my hands and think from a cognitive level and not have anything else going on. Just kind of being in the moment.

Brian Comerford: Ronan janitor, woodworker.

Nick Lozano: You got that too. You know, I'm starting to get people on LinkedIn are starting to call me Ronan. It's really funny.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: That is so cool.

Peter Margaritis: That is cool. Working with your hands. I mean, I work with my hands. I can screw up all of Maker's Mark. That's my work, but just sharing. How about you, Brian?

Brian Comerford: So, uh, you know, I make music, and I write poetry, and I take photographs and manipulate them using computer technology. So I wrote a book. It's, you know, I've written a few books of poetry and I wrote a new book of poetry. And with it, every poem comes with an image. So, so that was one of my projects that kind of like what Nick was saying, even though, you know, a lot of that time was still spent in front of the screen. I can print out the paper. I can do all the edits. You know, in a tactile way so that kind of helped me break from some screen time but it's also a different part of your brain that's working when you're working with something creative or artistic.

Brian Comerford. And so, you know, for me, that has been just a terrific outlet to be able to, you know, go in a different direction. Just like, you know, changing gears from where you're thinking from a working perspective as you're working from home. You've got all the additional noise and distractions from whether it's, you know, politics, social justice, pandemic, you know, all those things. You've got whatever is going on in your household, which may include like me being a part time tutor for your school from home child. And so, you know, just having I think Nick said it really well having something that gives you that creative reset for your mental framing. I think that's been really critical, it's as important as physical exercise, I think.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: I agree. Totally agree.

Peter Margaritis: I think it goes back to your point, Roxanne, you know, linear, linear, linear, linear. We get the other side over here, we need to tap into. And in all honesty. That's why I have that guitar there. I don't play. I want to play. I really want to learn how to play the guitar, but I don't play. But sometimes what I'm trying to get out of my analytical, accountant brain over to the to the other side, I just picked that thing up just start strumming it, and just a sound coming off that guitar kind of frees that up. It's like a toll gate. Okay. You can go in there and play for a while to help me get those creative juices going.

Brian Comerford: You know, if you added a Pete Townsend windmill, it would give you some cardio too.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: He's talking about the COVID-19.

Peter Margaritis: Macy's called asked me if I'd be in the parade.

Brian Comerford: What about you, Peter? What's a beyond just strumming the guitar? Have you had projects that you've actually involved yourself in so that you could kind of break away from all the noise?

Peter Margaritis: Yes. One, I redesigned my whole business plan. I've done that. Always trying to experiment with the podcast. And actually, I am starting my next book. But I decided to do it a little bit differently. So, my podcast is now... was for the first hundred or was one a week interviewing people. Then I went to every other week to give a break. Now I'm back to every, week, but my two out of the four just me doing a Solo Cast, as I call them. Me talking about, you know....this is how I'm gonna write my next book. I'm going to Solo Cast it. And I've actually the first I think next week, is when I pitch the idea of writing the book through my podcast. So now, I'm asking my audience. There's two titles I'm working with. Which one do you like? And by the way, if you want to be in the book, send me some stories around the conversations that we're having. And I'm really interested to see if anybody, one listens. Two, actually will submit some ideas for the next book.

Nick Lozano: That's a great idea. Peter, and I'm going to tell you something. So, a good friend of mine who I met on LinkedIn, Trey Richie. He micro podcats every single day.

Nick Lozano: He's been doing it for like a year and a half, but they're like one, two minutes. And he actually lost his job because of the pandemic. It was a school software business, and basically everything, you know, got shut down because there was no demand for it. But I actually got this week that is literally what he did. He wrote this book right here, unemployed, just based off this podcast. You know, and it's just him most time he talks about a topic for two or three minutes and he took all his thoughts and ideas and just put it down in this book and produced this all himself, this hardcover book. It's really nice. But that's, that's a great idea. This is called, *You got it now. Go get it* by Troy Richie. Looking forward to reading that one, but it's a great idea. It's been interesting to me that, you know, through this pandemic that some people have gone through so much adversity. But then some people have shined through it. Right and Troy's a great example. You know, he lost his job. But then he took it another route. He's like, you know what, I have free time. I can write this book. I can work on my own brand. I can make myself better because of this. So, at the same time, you know, it's brought people closer together. So, it's very interesting.

Brian Comerford: It's interesting.

Peter Margaritis: Yeah. Thank you for the advertisement for Troy. I appreciate that.

Nick Lozano: Well, you know, it was just really odd that you said that I just don't have to put that in there. It's sitting right here. It's sitting right there next to me and it's my next book to read. He just sent it to me. So, when you said it was like, oh, that's exactly what he's doing. What he did.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: So, I just noticed that now two out of the four of us are Zen Archers, Peter and Brian. The arrows are slinging.

Peter Margaritis: I've had a good teacher.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: Yes, you did. You certainly have.

Peter Margaritis: So, Roxanne, what have you done besides rebuild a standing desk?

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: My Creative Side? Oh gosh, that's. Well, I'm taking the class. What's been interesting for me, quite frankly, guys, is I think just by the nature of the work that I do and business model that's evolved over the years, this has been I think probably the busiest year that I've had since I started my business 2005. It has been non-stop since the beginning of the year. Not just when all this started with the pandemic, but that just that made it even more intense. So, you know, I don't even. So, I haven't been doing much creatively, which is a problem. And I realized that. I am a great journaler, though. I journal a lot. I probably have 25 journals sitting over there. Some of them are full. Some of them are half full. It's just depending upon where I am in my head at the time. And there's books in there too, guys. There's books in there.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: I don't quite know how to make that happen, but yeah. One of the great things, and Brian and Nick we talked about this from our first podcast when you invited me to join you, was doing voiceovers. And that was going to be big on my calendar this year to start doing that and to do audios of my book and I'm writing another book and developing a product to launch next year. And that's going to require video and audio. But I've been so busy. I seriously have not even been able to make the time to do it so. So where do you go from here?

Peter Margaritis: Excuse me. Yeah. Who's the VoiceOver on the podcast. my podcast.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: Oh, that's right! I am Peter's VoiceOver.

Peter Margaritis: And who did my commercial because you wanted to get some radio!

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: Me too. So, I have done it.

Brian Comerford: Awesome

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: I've got part of that goal accomplished because of you guys. Thank you, Peter. And you're right.

Brian Comerford: Well, it takes a village.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: It does. Oh my god. Does it ever. Seriously.

Brian Comerford: You know, I think it's interesting that both, you know, what Nick and Roxanne both just said, for many people that I've interacted with I've actually heard them say something similar, where this has been the busiest year in my life. This has been the most lucrative year in my life. This has been the most creative read my life. The most productive here in my life. So, there has certainly been a faction of people who have taken it as, you know, an opportunity to be transformational in some way, from whatever path they had been on previously or just adding to, you know, some of the things that were on their bucket list. And you know the forced cloistering is one of those factors that help them actually have the initiative to get things done.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: You know, Brian. It's so true. And it was it's been so interesting because one of the things that happened was, well, we're all designing our studios and where we work and all of that and as professional speakers. For Peter too, there's certain certifications like get as a virtual presenters and all these things. So, I've talking about this to some of my clients that I've had for a long time. This is this is opportunity. So, a couple of them have said, well, Rox, you know, could you come in and like teach us how to do that. So, I put together these short little series of live sessions that I do with them. I have the slide deck. So, it you know, you know, I'm not very technical or very savvy there. But you put it all together, and you show people look you got to get yourself into this. You've got to get your personality. how you

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: That's how you engage with people. And you start talking about presenting, meeting and engaging virtually in those three areas that we started out with, Peter, when we started our talk today. How are you engaging them mentally, emotionally and physically to keep them here with you? So yeah, it's so all kinds of opportunities and things spin off other things. If you've got your head opened up to it.

Peter Margaritis: I had a client call me and say, 'Could you work with my three regional sales people? They need to do virtual presentations better. They do these lunch and learns for others in the construction business or for architects. And I said, 'Absolutely love to do that.', So, it's like three people, two hours each. And the first person...it's always tough being first. And after his presentation was about 15 minutes, I started asking them questions like, so what monitor were you looking at? Why you are walking through your own in the virtual background that you had. He goes, 'You were watching me?' I said, yeah, because I thought that was watching the slides. I went, Why would I want to watch the slides you sell the product? Just because everybody else out there that's how they're doing their presentations. These PowerPoint. mind numbing presentations. It's you that sells, Right? And, we worked with....he took the brunt of the hit. And the second person had you talking about, you know, my bad internet connection on your life podcast. She's really hard time and but learn from that and learned about backgrounds and how to engage and then the last person so he'd set through two of these. And at one point I asked the CEO to ask him a question that to answer a question completely wrong just literally wrong. I want to see how you reacted, and what he did he went, 'Does anybody else have a question?' And I went, you have to be prepared for those, but you cannot just diss them. You have to acknowledge that's not quite the right answer. It's just somebody has to have it. And it was such an eye opening thing, but it's something that we kind of all take for granted but we forget. Other people as we started out were thrown into this. How many have you looked up at this past year?

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: Oh my gosh...

Nick Lozano: That horrible Dell. Dell laptops, where it's the up knows camera shot. Yeah. I know exactly what you're talking about.

Peter Margaritis: Or they're in a car taking a Zoom call with a video on and the phone is in their lap.

Brian Comerford: Yeah.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliot: Yeah.

Nick Lozano: So, I will tell you one thing, I think, like, and we're talking about these virtual presentations, and I always bring this up is that everyone who's doing virtual presentation should probably look at what the video game industry is doing and live streamers are doing on Twitch because they are doing custom overlays and different things to interact with their audience. They're giving that virtual experience already. They're kind of ahead of the game.

Nick Lozano: And it's not necessarily that, you know, that the video game people are doing things that business people need to do 100% but look at the ways they engage with their audience. The way they build the layouts for their videos to get people engaged from watch because they will have people watching them for three and four hours, and interacting with them back and forth. So, if you check out something like Twitch, the Just Chatting Section or the talk shows and podcasts. You can see how people are building real time live audience interactions with, you know, people virtually. It's not that you need to mimic everything exactly, but you could pick up one or two things of how they do it. Maybe how they lay across your screen. Where they put their camera. Learning about some of these other tools to kind of up your game be ahead of the curve of the rest of the speaking and business professionals. You'll be miles ahead of everybody. If you start looking at that stuff now. That's just my two cents on that.

Peter Margaritis: Thank you very much for that. I've heard of Twitch. I have a twitch every now and then, but it's from more than that.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: Is that from the arrows?

Peter Margaritis: I have a question for you guys. And I'm looking for this, the software. Do you happen to watch sports center with Scott Van Pelt?

Brian Comerford: (Buzzer noise)

Nick Lozano: Tell me what you're talking about what you're thinking here.

Peter Margaritis: He's got an iPad on his desk and he's got either little quotes or something. But he plays this small soundbite when somebody says something that he thinks would be nice add on. Little bit of an interactive tool. And I've seen sort of these little buttons on his iPad is like, you know, Zen Archery, Zen Archery Zen Archery, something like that. I can't figure out what that is.

Nick Lozano: I'll tell you exactly what that is, Peter. That is a stream deck. That is from the gaming world. So, if you check out twitch. That is how people. So, there's this tool called open broadcasting studio or software. I can't remember it, but they call it OBS. Free, doesn't cost anything. And you can use it as a virtual camera. What people do is they get specific apps and they can set up, push buttons to do different things like maybe a GIF flies across the screen or the sound of an arrow goes by what the clicks that. It's kind of taking that broadcast studio quality and giving it to the power on your desktop. And then, like I said, what you just brought up there. Those that's things that video gamers have been doing for years. And that's why I kind of recommend to your listeners to go that way. And at least just explore and see what people are doing in that world because that, you know, the video gamers are always, you know, four or five years ahead of the wave that's going to come.

Peter Margaritis: And 30 years younger.

Nick Lozano: Not necessarily. You'll be surprised. Um, there are older gamers there. Or there's people who just talk on Twitch and get thousands of people who watch them. It's just a different world. Different things are going on and it's ahead of the curve, in my opinion. Like if you want to see where anything is going with live streaming, that's where you want to look.

Peter Margaritis: You notice when he said old he looked directly at me.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: He did.

Brian Comerford: I did notice that.

Nick Lozano: I'm looking at a camera which is right here. Like I'm gonna get my stream deck out and I'm just gonna get a GIF going across the screen. But that's what you're looking at. It's El Gato Stream Deck, I think. There's a bunch of companies that make them. So just look them up.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: Yeah, yeah. That is so cool.

Peter Margaritis: So, anybody else want to chime in. I mean, we've got about maybe five-seven more minutes left, and they want to add on anything?

Brian Comerford: Well, we haven't talked a lot about the body part. Right? We talked about the head, the heart. We talked about, you know, some of the ways that we've tried to break, you know, some of the patterns that have forced the disruption on us. I can tell you from a body perspective, like you, Peter. I've kind of, you know, had this cyclical depending on what my schedule has been like I've either been really good. I had a juice fast. Did that for 15 days that was awesome. Yeah, I learned how to Zumba and had been watching videos of Zumba classes so that's been good cardio. I've taken up doing yoga, and have, you know, now a select few online yoga instructors. I like to follow their routines. But it's also, you know, it's one of those things that, like having, having a kid, you know, doing remote schooling. It's hard because you end up being the de facto tutor whenever there's a question that comes up. So, for me, it's been a challenge, trying to maintain a schedule around kind of all these other things that have been evolving. So, so from a physical perspective, I'm kind of curious what each of you have been.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: I think my experience has been very much like yours, Brian. Although I don't have kids in the house anymore, it's just keeping a routine go and doing it consistently. Because when everything blows up every day... I know this is true for a lot of folks... when you when you finally leave your bedroom, bathroom, closet, attic, garage, bathroom, whatever it is you're working from... when you finally walk out at the end of the day, and you look at the clock and you've been doing this for 12 to 14 hours, and you really haven't moved more than five or 10 minutes in that time to get up actually move around, except for the necessary things. That gets bad. That starts to have an impact and I'm guilty of that. That's happened.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: So, I've tried really, really hard to stay consistent with walking and stretching and I do my own kind of modified yoga stuff, and walking outside. And now that it's cold in Ohio. It's a problem. It's stressful to get it all together to go do it. And then it's just a whole different thing. So yeah, it's a challenge. It's a challenge to stay consistent with anything.

Nick Lozano: Yeah, for me, you know, I, I have a home gym in my garage. I have 300 pounds of weights and a squat rack, pull up bar, everything. Before this whole thing started, so I was good from that perspective. I think for me it was a switching my routine. I was always a wake up early in the morning, five in the morning, get a workout in. Because, you've got a kid to take care of, you've got to get ready to go to work, gotta travel get all that. And what I found is when I did it in the morning. I got done. I was just sitting for longer periods of time. Because the workout was done. I didn't have anything to do. So, what I actually have done over time as I switched my workouts, middle of the day to force myself to have to get up and move. So, I have done that, and that has worked pretty well for me. I still do miss working out early in the morning. So maybe I'll switch where I do weights in the afternoon and run in the morning or run in the afternoon do weights in the morning or something like that. But I've tried to mix some type of physical exercise in the middle of my day. And I actually scheduled that on my calendar so that people can't invade my time, and block off time on me on my time to work out where that's just time, you know, for me to get some type of physical activity in.

Peter Margaritis: You need to get an Apple Watch. It tells you when to stand.

Nick Lozano: I've got a Garmin. It tells me. It says move. Move you lazy bum.

Brian Comerford: Peter? How many bottles of Maker's Mark does it take to open to break a sweat?

Nick Lozano: Wow. Well at least one. Oh no, that's champagne. Yeah.

Peter Margaritis: Absolutely. It takes a lot, actually. I built up my guns just open bottles of Makers Mark, because things are all waxed in there. Take an extra pull! So, I've got weights in here, so I can get that top right off there! Did I just do a Jack Kramer?

Nick Lozano: Yes, you did.

Roxanne Kauffman Elliot: Yeah, you did.

Peter Margaritis: Wow. Thank you for asking, Brian. I really appreciate that.

Brian Comerford: I'm here to help.

Peter Margaritis: Actually, I love to bike. And in the summer, I was like up to about 25 miles one day, and I put in 100 some odd miles and for the week. But as Roxanne and said, I live....She lives in way up. It was snow, a lot of snow and cold in Cleveland. I'm in the balmy Columbus, Ohio.

Nick Lozano: The balmy.

Peter Margaritis: It's a whopping 45 degrees right now and it's warm, but I brought my bike inside. However, this weekend. It's supposed to be warm here to take off its trainer and I'm just gonna ride like a crazy man. But I have to get up in the morning and do it early, Nick. If I don't do it then, I have all great intentions of doing it at lunch. And just rolling right into work. I just tuck and roll, tuck and roll, tuck and roll, put the fires out.

Nick Lozano: I get it, because when I when I used to do a lot of triathlons. A lot of it's like block structured training. You got to get it done. So, the way I would always trick myself is, like, it's okay. We're just going to do this for 15 minutes. Put your shoes on. If you don't feel like doing it. We're going to do this for 15 minutes and then we'll stop. And then normally once I get a groove after 15 minutes, I don't want to stop because I'm already moving. So that's something I've always done with myself to force myself to move.

Nick Lozano: He's holding up the bottles....

Peter Margaritis: I can't take these three off in less than 30 seconds.

Nick Lozano: Okay, we're gonna start a timer. Get the timer going, Brian.

Peter Margaritis: But these are limited edition bottles so I won't open these, but I must say, I'm really thirsty.. 15.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: And before. So you can use those as weights too?

Peter Margaritis: I can do curls with them.

Nick Lozano: You just miss them like the beer hat, you know, or like you just...

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: That's it, yeah exactly. Do they have bourbon hats?

Nick Lozano: There you go.

Peter Margaritis: That would just be silly! Think how drunk you could get with a bourbon hat.

Nick Lozano: Man.

Peter Margaritis: It's like a filter, like a funnel coming in!

Brian Comerford: If it had a pacing mechanism in it, you know, you might be able to wear that all week long.

Peter Margaritis: Like a regulator they put on the bottom.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: Oh man, that's brilliant. Let's get started on it! Oh Yeah!

Peter Margaritis: There goes my liver for 2021. Guys. It's been an absolute blast. How can people find the three of you? Ladies first..

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: Oh Geez. Best way to reach me is really through email. That's best and the email is our rkaufman@prolaureate.com. That's the best way, send me a note and I'd be glad to. I'll get back to you as quickly as I can.

Peter Margaritis: Brian

Brian Comerford: For me, It's LinkedIn.

Peter Margaritis: LinkedIn.

Peter Margaritis: C-o-m-e-r-f-o-r-d.

Brian Comerford: F as in Frank

Peter Margaritis: F as in Frank. F as in Kaufman.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: A lot of time. I get a lot of time I get. Oh, it's Kausman. Kaus. It's F, one f, two F's. Well, we all have name issues.

Peter Margaritis: I thought you said the K was silent, it's Offman. And Nick?

Nick Lozano: You can find me on LinkedIn. Just Nick Lozano on LinkedIn.

Peter Margaritis: Perfect, thank you guys always great to see you. We have to figure out once we all get vaccinated, and we can mingle and mangle again. We need to at least find a time to be live.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: Yeah.

Peter Margaritis: The four of us. And see how long it takes for the security people to show up.

Nick Lozano: I say we just...can we just rent a theater and charge people to watch us talk.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: Let's do it. That's a great idea. I love that.

Peter Margaritis: Yeah, Yeah.

Nick Lozano: I'll come to Ohio. If we do that.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: Okay. All right.

Brian Comerford: Me too.

Peter Margaritis: We could do that now currently because we have a colleague in our Ohio chapter of NSA who works in the theater and they could hold socially distanced 30 people in their theater.

Nick Lozano: Please do it.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: It's 200 are actually thinking about doing a speaker showcase there in March.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: Oh, cool. We just talked to him yesterday about it. It's a great theater. He's a tech guy. So yes, we could actually do that. And they're looking for ways to use that theater differently, if we could get you guys here, it would, that would be a riot just conversations with and give us a name. Give us a brand.

Nick Lozano: I run a whole live stream called Conversations with Interesting People. That has no agenda and I never, I never plan any of it. That's actually what I was doing this morning, so I say we just do that and will stream it. We will do it. We will do it in person and people can come watch us. And we will also stream it as well too. Be live on LinkedIn and Twitch. At the same time, and YouTube. I'll take questions as well to you and Brian will DJ the intro.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: Yes, yes.

Brian Comerford: And we'll kick it off with hugs and finished with Maker's Mark. That's my recommendation.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: Oh my god.

Nick Lozano: We just started with Maker's Mark and make it interesting.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: Keep the Hugs coming.

Brian Comerford: That's right!

Peter Margaritis: Absolutely.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: We'll call it the Zen conversation.

Peter Margaritis: Conversations Zen. Well guys, thank you all very much. Have a very happy holiday season. Be safe, be happy and best to your families and looking forward to seeing you guys getting together on the other side of 2020.

Brian Comerford: Thanks so much, Peter. Great to see you.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: Yeah. Thanks Peter.

Nick Lozano: Happy Holidays, everybody.

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: You too, Nick, Brian. Great to see you guys take good care and we're going to do this thing. I'm excited. We're going to do this thing.

Nick Lozano: Do it. I will drive to Ohio.

Peter Margaritis: You're in DC. Right?

Nick Lozano: I'm in DC. I'm not very far. Yeah, less than 10 hours so

Roxanne Kaufman Elliott: Yeah yeah Cool. Okay.

Peter Margaritis: Alright guys.