

Introduction: Welcome to the Enchanting Lawyer Podcast, the show that walks you step-by-step to improving strategies you can use today to grow your business. We show you how being kind, useful, and, of course, enchanting will bring you more clients and build a thriving community.

Now here's your host from sunny San Diego, Jacob Sapochnick.

Jacob: Hello everybody, this is Jacob Sapochnick with the Enchanting Lawyer Podcast; a podcast about marketing, leadership, and social media strategies. Today, I'm honored to have Michael E. Gerber as a guest on our show. Most of you know Michael Gerber but I still would like to introduce him briefly.

Michael has been known for his work around the E-Myth book and the E-Myth series. He has transformed over 50,000 entrepreneur's lives through helping them develop systems, to duplicate themselves, and grow their businesses. He invented, as he puts it, the McDonald's of small business consulting.

Michael is a true legend of entrepreneurship. Inc Magazine called him the world's number one most small business guru. He started over 40 years ago addressing significant need in the small business market. Businesses owned primarily by people with technical skills but few business skills and no place to go and get meaningful help.

Of the years, Michael's companies have helped tens of thousands of small business owners to successfully transform their businesses into world class operations.

Michael, welcome to our show. I'm so honored to have you here.

Michael: Well, thank you, Jacob. I'm thrilled also at the enormous success you've had in reaching out to literally hundreds of thousands of people for whom your message has meant so much and your openness, your vulnerability, your passion for the work that you do and the access you've given them to a better life has truly been spectacular. I'm thrilled to be here and I'm delighted to be having this conversation with you.

Jacob: Thank you so much, Michael.

I first came to know about you probably about 15 years ago. When I came to the US, my first year in law school, I was here studying. We have in the law library, books about business. One day I was sitting there at the library and I was reading about startups and then this book, white and blue, E-Myth Revisited.

I start reading the book and I didn't really paid too much attention in the beginning. I got some of the concepts and I found it to be pretty logical and I said

“How come there’s nothing like that out there? Everything that you put in that book was so logical.” But I can tell you that the impact of that book ... I read it maybe 100 times since then. Every time that I read it, I find something different and I find something useful that I can use and I still use today in my business.

Why don’t you share with our audience your journey, where you started and how you came about to write the first version of this book, everything that happened since then?

Michael: It’s, in one way, a very simple story. What happened and has happened in my life has been one thing happened then another happened then another happened. In the midst of all that, my imagination is stimulated, inspired. It was stimulated and inspired by a conversation in mid-70s that I was having with a client of my brother-in-law’s advertising agency. My brother-in-law had asked me if I would sit down with this high tech client and figure out why he was having difficulty converting the leads that my brother-in-law’s ad agency was creating for them into sales.

Of course, I didn’t know anything about business. I knew I didn’t know anything about business. I knew I didn’t know anything about advertising. But I did know something about sales because I’ve earned my stripes, you might say, calling on homes, door-to-door, to sell encyclopedias. These obviously had nothing to do with high tech, nothing to do with advertising, nothing to do with the problem that this particular client was experiencing ostensibly.

On the other hand, the only thing I could do was to begin to ask him questions. Because that was open I said, “Well, why not? Let’s see.” I be in the process of asking Bob questions about ... “So tell me about your business. Tell me about your client. Tell me about your customers. Tell me about your sales process. Tell me about your sales people. Tell me about what difficulty you’re having,” and on and on and on.

The more questions I asked, the more I begin to realize that despite my assumption that Bob knew business because he owned one, I was beginning to see something I had never thought before. That, in fact, Bob didn’t know business. He just owned one. Also, at the same time, despite the fact that I believed I didn’t know anything about business, I discovered that I did. I knew that selling is a system.

Now, even as I say that to you and your guests here, understand that’s a very, very, very big thing. Because, in fact, you’ll find in just about every small, medium, large company on the face of this earth that, in fact, selling is relegated to individuals called sales people. To do whatever they do, based on whatever they think they need to do. As oppose to creating a system through which to do it.

So way, way, way back then in the mid '70s ... Yes, I'm talking about the 19 freaking 70s. It's a long time ago. Even though when I say that it's almost like it didn't exist.

Jacob: Right.

Michael: That was true and it's as true today.

The point being that I learn something and I immediately said to Bob, "What you need is a sewing system that you could hand to a relative kid, a junior. Somebody with no experience with your product, with your customer, with business, whatsoever, that they can literally use verbatim. And to the degree you're willing to do that, you'll be able to transform what you're doing into incredibly productive system.

And so Bob challenged me and said, "You know how to do that?" I said, "Well, sure." Of course, you know, "Sure, why not," and I did it. Sales went through the roof. Then I did it a second time with another one of my brother-in-law's advertising clients, and another one, and another one, and another one.

I was capturing something that my brother-in-law didn't understand in the advertising business. In fact, that he wasn't really in the advertising business, it was the business of client acquisition. There's really no real reason to advertise unless you're generating a lead; unless you're generating a response; unless you're generating an interest.

And so the question becomes then how do you do that? That's the business I went in and that's how I began my new company. When I left doing this for my brother-in-law in his advertising agency and began to do this in my first company called the Michael Thomas Corporation, which then became Gerber Business Development Corporation, which then became the E-Myth Academy, which then became E-Myth Worldwide, which now is Michael E. Gerber Companies and the Dreaming Room, and all sorts of things that I do today.

Jacob: This is the history.

You know Michael, one of the things that really fascinated me about the story is that -- and you told me that when we met -- is that you actually started this you're in your late 30's when you came to do this and the success that you had in your actually early and mid 40's.

I think this is important to mention that because a lot of people feel that if they haven't achieved something in a particular age or they compare themselves to other people, they completely give up and they say "What's the point? I'm already in my 40's. Half my life is over. There's no point for me to do anything."

I wanted to get from you is what was your thinking? How do you compare your life before this, your early 30's, and what happened to you afterwards, and what gave you the drive to do what you did.

Michael: Jacob, let's not call it the drive, let's just call it the interest, the curiosity, the passion, the hunger. Essentially, that shows up and I pursued it.

I'd say that it's a function of my creativity which to me is the juice of my life. It's all of our creativity that, in fact, is the driving force behind us and to the degree that creativity is not a truly living part of our life. We're just simply lost to the status quo. We just, in fact, don't give up. We just never really get started.

So it was the creativity, it was this idea that, it was this idea that, it was this idea that. This idea would intrigue me and this would then stimulate me to do something about this idea and then something about that idea. So you might say, and I say this all the time, I was just a wondering Jew, Jacob, looking for the secret. It was just constant innovation, aggravation, going off on the wrong tangent.

Making this mistake, making that mistake because, obviously, as I told you when I will tell anybody and anybody who reads my books, reads my life story in my books, my life was never easy. It was never amazing breakthrough and then everything was fine. I failed a million times in the process. It's just this passion for discovery.

Somebody asked me this morning, "Why do you do what you do, Michael? You don't need to do this anymore. You're 77 years old. Why do you continue to do this?" Well, I continue to do this because I'm alive, Jacob. It's astonishing to me that people don't realize.

What other choice does one have but to continue the search, the meaning of life, the meaning of what I'm doing, the meaning of what I'm creating; the meaning, the meaning, the meaning. It just drives me constantly crazy when I see people have given up the search to simply survive. How can anybody simply give up the search to survive? How could survival be so meaningful when, in fact, it is the butt end of a bad joke?

Jacob: It's really important that you mention it because a lot of our audience who are listening right now, attorneys, professionals, it's a very stressful profession whether you're a doctor, or an attorney, or a CPA, or anybody in the service of helping people. Often I get emails and people say, "You know what, I don't even know why I'm doing this. I'm spending my hours at the office and I don't see the end of it."

You put a point, you know. The passion to continue searching, there's no end. If you find the end now, what's the point to continue? Keeping innovative ideas flowing and getting your passion ignited is really the key. How do you keep the fire burning?

Michael: Just working for a living and survival. That's the bad end of a bad joke.

I don't care if it's profession or non-profession. I don't care if it's high tech or no tech. I don't care if it's an attorney, a doctor, a chiropractor. I don't care who it is and what it is. If, in fact, all you're doing every single day is going in to do it again, do it again, do it again, do it again. I'm saying you missed the point. God said "Let there be light." God didn't say "Let them survive."

Jacob: And true entrepreneurs, they innovative. They continue to excel in their work. They're not just survivors.

Michael: If they're survivors, they're not entrepreneurs.

Jacob: They're not entrepreneurs, exactly.

What do you think is the power of entrepreneurship and how do you see it evolve over the years, if at all?

Michael: Well, I don't believe entrepreneurship has evolved over the years. I believe there's a lot of now interest in the subject of entrepreneurship, primarily academic interest. But the academics have no clue truly what entrepreneurship is. I mean they might teach method, they might teach information, but they don't truly understand the spirit of entrepreneurship.

The spirit of entrepreneurship is what I'm describing right now and it's been alive and well in human being since the beginning of time. The spirit of entrepreneurship is the question. What's missing in this picture? Why am I feeling the way I'm feeling? Why are people missing what they're missing? Why do people struggle so hard? Why isn't there enough water for people to drink in India, in Africa? Why is it that something is mad as what's going on in Nigeria today and what preceded it is happening? That's entrepreneurial.

That's not political. That's not governmental. That's not executive or legislative questions. That is entrepreneurial. That's the meat of an entrepreneur's life -- the continuous search for an answer to a question that probably hasn't been asked in the right way. The fire in the belly.

It's absolutely critical that everyone who's listening to me understands right now. If there is no fire in your belly, you've given up the ghost.

Jacob: These are great concepts but how do we find our entrepreneurial spirit, the drive, if we are not accustomed to think like an entrepreneur?

Michael: Well, we created a way to do that, Jacob, and I hate to do that here because then it sounds like a self-fulfilling prophecy. The only reason I'm here is to promote what we do. We created exactly what's needed to do that. We call it the Dreaming Room. It's a segment of what I call a course for heroes. Essentially, I'm saying we're born to be heroic, every single one of us.

So, see the tragedy that just to suffer the indignity of doing it, doing it, doing it; busy, busy, busy, busy; going to work every day to make a living. That's essentially the whole of it, to make a living. To do that is a tragedy.

I'm saying the course for heroes, what we've created, what enables someone to awaken what I call the entrepreneur within. In truth, the creator within. In really truth, the divine within. To begin to discover the very four most critical components of entrepreneurship and that is the statement "I have a dream, I have a vision, I have a purpose, and I have a mission." I have a dream, a vision, a purpose, and a mission.

When somebody joins us in, of course, for heroes and enters the Dreaming Room over 12 weeks, they begin to discover that taste, that feeling, that movement, that excitement, that beginning discovery of a passion for something they didn't know they were passionate about. That's the beginning of it. As that begins, we then take them through a continuing process I call design, build, launch, and grow.

So you graduate from the dreaming room to join us and design, build, launch, and grow. Design a job, the perfect job for yourself. What's the perfect job for yourself? The one you create yourself. The perfect practice for yourself. The perfect business for yourself. The perfect enterprise for yourself.

So, I don't want to get into details. All I'm saying is it's an evolution, it's a process, it's the awakening of the spirit of the entrepreneur within that essentially enables somebody to begin to experience something internally that has been missing perhaps all of their lives. But in fact has been lauding there on the inside and the outside of them saying you're here for a purpose. It's times stupid to discover it and then it's times stupid to act on it.

The good news is you don't have to quit your job, you don't have to shut your business, you don't have to do anything other the beginning of the process parallel with whatever you're doing today.

Anybody can afford it, everybody can do it, and we do it online on Zoom so that, in fact, if you're in Nigeria, you could be in a dreaming room. If you're in the UK,

you could be in the dreaming room. If you're in Cincinnati, you could be in the dreaming room with a guy from Nigeria, with a guy from the UK, with a woman from Sweden, with somebody from South Africa.

All of us together pursuing this extraordinary, exquisite experience that I'm speaking about at age 77, more passionately than probably most people on this call at age 22. What's missing in this picture? You. That's what wakes up in the dreaming room. You, ladies and gentlemen. You.

Jacob: I can hear your passion, Michael, and I think our listeners are very excited to hear that.

You also have a book that you authored, *Awakening the Entrepreneur Within*. It's on Amazon?

Michael: That's a perfect book for them to read because that's a product of the dreaming room.

I led 59 dreaming rooms myself. Just myself, on a stage, with anywhere from 10 to 60 people in the audience; taking them through a process that I invented while I was doing that. I was looking for the thing that had to happen in those people in that audience. Discovered it, [unclear 00:19:42], created a system through which to do it through dreaming room facilitators. We now have facilitators doing this around the world.

Jacob: So, as a conclusion, some of the experiments you've done in the dreaming room, do you think that real entrepreneurs are born or they can be created?

Michael: We're all born to create. We're all born to discover our purpose in life. We're all born to discover what's missing in this picture. We're all born to ask live questions about what does it mean to be here? You understand?

When you look at the universe -- this is far too big for any of us to really grapple with. But when you look at the universe, when you look at just our galaxy, when you look at our sun and you understand that, in fact, in our galaxy alone there are a billion of those suns. It's incomprehensible. And yet when you look at our galaxy alone, it is only one of a billion galaxies when you begin to get a sense of awe about what in fact we're missing. What we don't see, what we don't understand.

You only then begin to understand the tragedy of making a living, the tragedy of getting through the day, the tragedy of being on food stamps, the tragedy of living in poverty, impoverished from our imagination. Doing stupid stuff when in fact there is this extraordinary, exquisite, amazing universe we're a part of. Where is everybody? How can they possibly give up so easily?

That's why I say "Join me in the dreaming room. Come dream with me. Come dream with my master facilitators. Come dream with people from around the world. Come discover what's missing in this picture and you'll begin to understand for the very first time, perhaps, that you haven't even begun to live. You haven't even begun to live. That's my message to them.

Jacob: This is a very powerful message that everybody can resonate with. Sometimes very difficult for people to accept it because, you know, if your life is hard, you're going through struggles whether you're liking money or it's hard for you at work.

Michael: Oh Jacob, Jacob, Jacob, screw them. It's difficult. Sure it's difficult. So what?

Jacob: People need to change that state of mind.

Michael: Let go of that. Of course it's difficult. So what? I'm not talking about easy. I'm talking about our divine purpose. I'm not talking about, "Well, could you make it easy for me?" No one can make it easy for you anymore than I could make it easy for me. Any more than I could keep myself from failing as many times as I'm failing. I can't do something for you that I can't do for myself.

Jacob: Learning from failure. What is the main thing that you actually took away from the times you failed?

Michael: I've simply learned one thing: I create my way through fear. I do not even think fear. When I'm afraid, I begin to create. I begin to create, I begin to create, I begin to create. I create my way. I discover, I discover. I ask questions, I ask questions. I keep moving, I keep moving. I keep being interested until the day I die and I might die in this call.

Jacob: I hope not.

Michael: It then boom! There he goes.

Jacob: We need your valuable insights.

Michael: Until that very last breath, Jacob, I will never stop. Will never stop until I can't do it any longer. Why? Because I'm alive. Do you understand?

Jacob: Of course.

Michael: It's the only reason -- because I'm alive and you're alive and we're alive. That is what God gave us. If anyone's listening and saying "I don't believe in God," God help you!

Jacob: That's another topic of discussion probably.

Michael: You bet.

Jacob: Michael, when we met, one of the things that I took away from our conversation is you mentioned the book Singularity and we talked about the human factor. How people are less human these days using technology, machines to take away the human factor.

One of the things that I preach here in Enchanting Lawyer, in our podcast, in our blog is you got to be nice, you got to be kind, you got to be human. The human factor cannot go away from business. You see that it's going away and what do you see the future is happening with this?

Michael: I see it's a mix bag. I see that, in fact, the more technology takes hold of our lives and technology does take hold of our lives. You could see people on their smart phones. They can't walk anywhere without holding a phone and playing with their phone and listening to a message on their phone and, and, and. The more the technology disrupts our human lives, the more we begin to believe that, in fact, our lives are inextricably tied to technology and tools. The less likely it is we'll survive as human.

The singularity is the most noxious idea I have ever been presented. That noxious idea is that one day our machines will replace us. That, in fact, evolution is going from being human to being an intelligent machine. And the most brilliant technologists, the most brilliant scientists, actually believe that is a sound principle and a core of our destiny.

I say, to the degree, that is a core of our destiny. We have no destiny -- not as human beings. I say we will then not be able to see the difference between a machine and a man and a woman. As soon as we're incapable of seeing the difference between a machine and a man and a woman, God is dead.

Jacob: You see, technology is various factor right now or you should find a way to use it more effectively.

Michael: I see that how we use technology will determine who we are. How we use technology will determine who we are and it's a huge question. The big problem is because people are unaccustomed or uninterested in living lives in question. They're not up to it. They're not up to that. They'll leave those questions to the people who, in quotes, are smarter than us.

In short, they'll abdicate accountability for their lives by handing off that accountability to others who don't care about our lives. In the hope that those others will take care of us. God help us. God help us. I'll say it one last time, God help us.

That's why I am so committed to awakening the entrepreneur within. Because without that, without that innovation, without that imagination, without that sense of true human meaning, the meaning of our lives. Without the impersonal dream to truly transform the lives of people on Earth, we will never truly understand our reason for being here. That is our reason for being here.

Jacob: Everything we do must have a purpose.

Michael, you're 77 years young right now. What inspires you?

Michael: Just being able to get up every day inspires me, Jacob. What can I tell you? Here I am having this extraordinary conversation with an extraordinary guy, Jacob, and we're talking about meaning, and we're talking about passion, and we're talking about creativity and innovation, and we're talking about our purpose, we're talking about something that has vitality to it. I mean that's an extraordinary gift. That's such a splendid, exciting thing. Imagine being able to get up and do this every day.

Jacob: That's truly a blessing and I can see that.

You've been in the limelight for so many years, has that affected you at all in the way you interact with people or changed the way you've been dealing with your family?

Michael: Well, listen. Talk about how I've been with my family.

I'm a normally screwed up guy is essentially what I'd say. I'm just a normally screwed up guy. I get caught in this passion, I get caught in that passion, I get caught in this path and that path, on this trail and that trail. I'm writing a book and I realize I'm off in the wrong tangent. I have to trash the book and start all over again. I mean it's a constant, constant, constant, constant thing of evolution hopefully as oppose to devolution which is going backward. But forward, backward, forward, backward, and all of that just goes on.

So you got to understand, I don't take myself seriously. I take my life seriously. I take my creativity seriously. And I take the outcome of that seriously. So when I get somebody writes me and says, "Michael, you've changed my life," I take that seriously and the wonder of that. That I could be sitting here at age 77 and have touched somebody in South Africa who writes me an email and says, "I read your book and your book has transform my life but my kids are now grown up and they sleep all day. What do I do about it?"

I'm having a gentleman write me from South Africa, asking me a very personal question. It's an extraordinary thing when you think about it. Do I take myself seriously? No. I take in seriously. I take the people I'm speaking to seriously.

Jacob, you understand, I take you seriously. I take the people who are listening to us right now seriously. I probably take you and them more seriously than you and them take yourselves and that's my calling. If I can, by taking you seriously, in some way change, alter shape somehow the size, the energy of your commitment to what you do then my life has had meaning.

Jacob: This is powerful words. Michael, I think that people that actually have the privilege to get to know you -- and I'm one of them -- I feel this is true. You're taking what you teach. You separate it from your own success and that's why people are drawn to you because they feel there's genuine teachings there and it's not just fluff.

As we come to the end of our podcast, Michael, I wanted you to maybe share one tip that you feel will be very helpful for somebody who is about to embark on becoming an entrepreneur.

Michael: It's very, very, very simple, Jacob. It's the invitation. Come dream with me. Don't think about this. Come dream with me. You have never experienced anything like a course for heroes, the Dreaming Room: design, build, launch, and grow. It is the key to discovering someone in you you have yet to discover. And I'm saying to you, don't think about it. Don't wait to do it. Come dream with me. We'll put you in the dreaming room right away. We'll do that right away. I don't care what your financial circumstances are. We will find a way to do it.

So, you can't use money as an excuse. Money will not cut it. What you can do is simply let go and say, "Yes, Michael Gerber, I believe you. I believe what you just said. I want to experience a course for heroes. I want to experience the dreaming room. I want to go the distance. I want to create something powerful, something great, something that's going to have a profound impact on someone who, in fact, is so hungry for it. Yes, let's do that.

To do that, all you've got to do is email me michael@michaegerber.com. All you need to do is say, "Jacob sent me." That's all you need to do. Say "Jacob sent me" and we'll handle the rest. You got it, Jacob?

Jacob: Very good.

Thank you so much, Michael, for coming on the show. I really appreciate it. It was very valuable.

This is Jacob Sapochnick, enchantinglawyer.com. We welcome your comments. If you have any questions about the show, please email me jacob@enchantinglawyer.com. We look forward to having you on our next podcast.

Thank you and have a great day.

Closing: Thanks for listening. You can find even more resources, including the show notes for this episode, at enchantinglawyer.com. That's www.enchantinglawyer.com.