



Transcript

Episode 074

**“The one with Anthony Melchiorri
from Hotel Impossible”**

Dean: I'm Dean Jackson. He's Joe Polish. And this is the I Love Marketing podcast.

Hey, everybody! It's Dean Jackson. Welcome to the I Love Marketing podcast. No Joe Polish today, but we have an incredible guest with us this week.

If you've been watching, we've been talking about Hotel Impossible, on The Travel Channel. And this week, our guest is Anthony Melchiorri, who is the host of Hotel Impossible. And we're going to talk all about client experience architecture. And we're going to talk about some of the things that he's learned in the hotel business that apply to any business.

We had a great conversation, and I think you're going to really going to enjoy this show. So here we go. Anthony, where in the world are you today?

Anthony: I am driving to a meeting. I'm actually going to a breakfast meeting with the president of The Travel Channel, Laureen Ong.

Dean: Oh, that's awesome. So are you in New York then?

Anthony: I'm in New York. I just got back from our last show. We have 13 shows to do; we just finished our last show.

Dean: Oh, that's great. So you're home for a while?

Anthony: Hopefully, we'll get a second season.

Dean: Yeah, that's it. When will you find out?

Anthony: We'll know soon.

Dean: That's great. It's been such a great show. I've been a fan right from the very beginning, and we've been talking about it, actually a lot, on I Love Marketing. We've been talking about you since the beginning. I read about you the day that your show premiered, and I reached out to you right away because I knew that you

were some who had a point of view and an approach that really kind of resonated with what we talk about at I Love Marketing.

I've seen every episode of the show, and I've been describing you as my favorite customer experience architect, because it seems like that's a big part of what you do, when you go into a hotel.

Anthony: Well, yes, do you see last night's episode, in Nashville?

Dean: I haven't yet. I'm in Toronto, right now. We don't get The Travel Channel, so I've been downloading them on iTunes, and I just saw that it showed up on iTunes. So, I'm seen every episode up until the last one I saw was the one from Branson.

Anthony: Okay, great, so why don't you get Travel channel?

Dean: I'm not sure why our cable provider up here doesn't have it.

Anthony: Well, we got to fix that, don't we?

Dean: Yes, we do. Absolutely.

Anthony: Well, you called me a customer service architect. A guest service architect, I should say. The last thing I think about is the guest, because it's the only reason I do what I do is the guest. So, I concentrate on the details, I focus on the ownership, I focus on the bedding, I focus on the carpet, I focus on the feeling, the smell, the greeting. I focus on everything.

The last thing I focus on is the guest, because if I focus on everything, the guest is going to have an incredible experience. If the first thing I think about is the guest and the first thing I look at is the guest, and think, "What would the guest want? What would the guest want?" what I say is, "What is the right thing for this hotel? What is the right thing for the employee? What is the right thing for us? How do we make money? How do we do what we do, and then make it an incredible guest experience?"

So, what happens so many times I go in, "Well, the guest likes this." Well, yeah, the guest likes that, but if you do that, you're going to go out of business. If

the guest likes that, but somebody's going to have to work overtime to provide that, yes, we want to do that. We want to change the furniture. Absolutely, the guest would love new furniture, but then we're not going to have any money to put uniforms on the employee. And the guest, the first thing they see is the employee. I just had that conversation not 24 hours ago, with an owner.

So, we, as business people, whether you're in marketing, sales, hotels, restaurants, doctor's office, focus on what you do well, and then tell everybody how well you do it, and then the guest will have a positive experience.

Dean: It's kind of interesting, because that's a really kind of important distinction, in terms of focusing on the guest experience, within the framework of what you are, what you can actually provide. And there is totally a difference between being a 3-star hotel and being a 5-star hotel, and accepting and knowing that, and working within the framework of what you really do.

Anthony: I had an owner ask me "Should I provide free continental breakfast? My competition's doing it." I said, "100%." I said, "But just not now." And they're like "Why?" I said, "You don't have an engineering department. Let's start with your engineering department, then we'll work our way up to breakfast."

So, we all want to keep up with the Jones's. I focus on the basics. And then, once I get to the basics, then I will annihilate my competition. But, if I can't deal with the basics, if you're playing baseball, you're playing Yankee stadium, the greatest field in the world, and you're batting 400, if you don't uniform on, a Yankee uniform on, they won't let you play.

Dean: Right.

Anthony: You've got to put the uniform on, man. And that's kind of what I find when people want to get to the next level. You haven't been able to play the game yet, and you want to take the field against the competition.

Plus, we owe it to our employees to give them the basics. You've seen the show. There's not a lot that I do that is taking what I've learned from a business

perspective, and really applying it. What I've learned, I learned in kindergarten. Show up on time, look people in the eye, keep it clean, pay attention, and be the best person you can be everyday. I get past that, and then I can show you everything that's in my toolkit.

And that's what I'm having a little frustration about, is that we can't even get to first base, and we're trying to hit a homerun.

Dean: Right. And that's interesting, because so many times people – and I can imagine it's the same with hotel owners – just think “Well, if you could just do some magic marketing and get our occupancy rates up, everything would be fine.”

Anthony: Well, that's exactly what happened. I won't tell you what show, but I just finished a show, and literally this was the conversation. “So, Mr. Smith, what's your biggest problem?” “Marketing.” I said, “Really? Here's the star report. You're 78%, your competition's 56%.” You have no problem with marketing. Everybody knows you're here. Okay? Your rate is \$40 lower than your competition. Okay? \$40 lower than your competition. So, is it marketing, or is it a Business 101 to set your rates appropriately to your demand and to your location? What is it? It has nothing to do with marketing.”

“And then, why is your rate \$40 lower than everybody? It's because your hotel is abysmal. It is terrible. It's not clean; it's not being run well. You're losing focus. You're concentrating on things you shouldn't be concentrating on. So, is it marketing? No, it's not marketing.”

“Now, once I give you back your hotel,” and we did some amazing stuff, “you're going to do what?” He said, “Well, I'm going to market it.” I said, “Yeah, but what are you going to do first?”

I took pictures 20 times, until he kept on repeating it to me. And then once you do pictures, then you're going to start marketing.

Again, am I that smart? Am I smarter than the next guy to be able to figure that out? No. We want to win the championship without putting in the work.

When we look at, whether it'd be Lebron James, or Derek Jeeter, or whoever we look at as our heroes, we don't see the work. When's the last time you saw Derek Jeeter get up in the morning at 5:00, and hit the treadmill, and be at the field 2 hours before everybody else? You don't see that.

In the hotel business, that's what you've got to do. You've got to get in the gym before everybody else.

Dean: I gotcha. That's something. Sometimes, it's amazing to me that sometimes people, and I imagine it's for all business owners, but I've noticed it so in every episode of your show, one of the things that you do immediately is you do the approach to the hotel, and immediately, there's no attention to the details on the way up.

I remember right from the very first episode, when you were out on Long Island, and you going into that beautiful resort. They had a beautiful view. But then you drive up, and the paint is chipping, there's nobody out front, it's unclear where to go, and you're really just kind of experiencing it through the eyes of a guest, of somebody coming up there.

It's so easy for a business owner to do that, but often we get so caught up in the day-to-day, looking from the inside out, instead of looking from the outside in.

Anthony: Because what you do is you're marketing as a world class resort, your marketing it as, "Oh, look at these views," but you're forgetting what's important. And what's important is the details. It's the first thing a guest sees.

Like right now, I'm driving to a meeting with the president of The Travel Channel. Do you have any idea what I'm wearing? What do you think I look like, right now?

Dean: Well, I bet, right now, that you have a nice suit on, with a tie, freshly-shaved head, sparkly smile.

Anthony: That's exactly what I look like. Why? Because that is exactly the image. That's who I am. That's what people expect. If I showed up, today, less than that, people

will then say, “Let me move on to someone else that talks about marketing. Let me move on to someone else that talks about those. Let me move on to someone else, because this guy can’t get his own house in order. He can’t wear a tie; he can’t wear a suit. He’s going to see the president of The Travel Channel.” She’s going to look me in the face and go, “Anthony...” She’s not going to say anything, but she’s going to say, “Oh, I thought he was sharper than that.”

I go to the __ (11:31) or I go up to Corpus Christi, __ (11:36) is a great hotel. It really is, and they’ve really repositioned it. But you go to other hotels that are maybe not getting it, and you see the front office, where you see the peeling paint, and you’re like “What’s going on? This is a bait-and-switch. It’s not what I saw.”

Well, the views are still there, so you’re like “Okay, this is a beautiful view. Wow, my room looks right over the ocean. So, alright, I’m going to accept it. I’m going to accept mediocrity.”

And that’s what we have done as a culture, not only on television. But, this morning, or yesterday, when you were out and about in your day, I guarantee you, if you think about all the experiences that you had, you experienced service that was less than.

I was on Jet Blue last night. Okay, I typically don’t call out a provider, but I’m going to call him out, because I was on Jet Blue last night, and the gentlemen literally, he’s about 6’3”, he was one of the stewards, and he literally threw my peanuts at me, didn’t say “Hello,” “Goodbye,” or “Thank you,” or “You’re welcome” the entire 3-hour flight.

Dean: Wow.

Anthony: And I said to myself, “I am going to avoid Jet Blue at all costs, from now on, if I can, because that just pissed me off. All you had to do was say, “Hello,” or smile and say, “How can I help you?” And I’m infuriated. It’s like, “What does it take to do that?” And I’ve been flying Jet Blue since the day they were born, and I flew 103 flights, one year, on Jet Blue, and I’m trying to avoid Jet Blue.

Dean: I guess. Wow. We did an episode all about client experiences like that, and it was just that. We went through a day and talked about the great experiences and the less-than-great experiences. You're surrounded by it all the time.

As a matter of fact, the day that I reached out to you, the day I read about you in the New York Post, I was in Times Square, at the Marriott Marquis, and right across from there there's a restaurant, I think it's called Junior's Deli.

Anthony: Yes, Junior's.

Dean: Well, I'll tell you, Anthony, that was, bar none, the single best, single diner experience that I've ever had. I walked in. They recognized immediately that I was by myself. There were people in the lobby there, waiting for tables, and the lady looked right at me, and said, "If you'd like to eat at the bar, you're more than welcome."

So, I just walked right up there. They greeted me right away, took my order. And when my order was going, "Sir, would you like a newspaper to read?" and she gave me the newspaper that I read about you. And then, they brought my food. And along with my food, they brought me the bill, right there. And it was just like a perfect experience.

And it doesn't take a lot to really execute on something like that, but it takes just the vision. Somebody had to have the leadership and the vision for that to actually happen, because I've gone through and that same thing happens each time I go there. So, it's not just serendipity that I had a great experience. Somebody had architected that experience for me.

Anthony: Well, there are 3 things that are going on. One, they don't have to be nice to there, because that restaurant, is literally the epicenter of Times Square, and they could literally throw the food at you and they will still make a lot of money, because it's one of the greatest locations in the country.

And every time I go in there, I have the same experience you do. Matter of fact, I didn't want to go because the Times Square tourist traps. I told my wife and

my kids, they wanted to go when we were in Times Square, I was like “You know what? I don’t want to go.”

Junior’s was born; they’re famous for cheesecake on Flatbush Avenue. Their first location is on Flatbush Avenue, in Brooklyn.

If you’re from Brooklyn and you grew up in Brooklyn, you know Junior’s cheesecake as well as you know your first name. And they opened in Times Square. I was like, “This is going to be ridiculous.” And it was so good, I go back every chance I can. As a matter of fact, I may actually go there today, because I’m going to be in the area, and it’s just a great experience.

Number 2, the reason that’s a great experience is because, you’re right, there’s an architect that says, “This is important. Customer service is important.”

But most important is, “I’m not that smart of an architect.” But their parents, if they did a good job, raised these people correctly, whether they’re 20 years old or 80 years old, and they’re going to be appropriate, look me in the eye, shake my hand and be nice to me, and anticipate, anticipate, anticipate my needs.

Dean: There you go.

Anthony: 3 times I’m going to say it, because it’s important. They anticipated you were going to need a newspaper. They anticipated you were in a rush when they gave you the check. And that’s what we don’t do. But their parents taught them that.

I am a true believer in spending time interviewing. Eric, over at the Waldorf Astoria, spends all his time interviewing and exit interviewing people, because he has 1,200 employees and that’s where he spends his time, because that’s why he runs a great hotel.

To give an example, we just did a show, and they needed a front desk agent, for many reasons. I don’t know what I’m going to do when I get down there. I have no idea what I’m going to do.

So, I get down there, and I say, “Okay, we need a front desk agent.” So, I tell one of the producers, “Put an ad in the paper or put an ad on the Internet. We need a front desk agent.” And they’re like, “Well, we can’t do that. We don’t have time.” I say, “Please do it.”

They do it. They go through 200, 300 resumes, all horrible. They get 2. First guy that comes up to me, I was like “Oh, my God, this guy’s not going to work out. Great guy, but you know, just completely not the right person.”

Second person, no hotel experience, have no idea why my producer would have called this person in. Well, I do, because I always tell them I don’t always need experience. But, she worked in a Chinese restaurant. She was a busser, she was a waitress, never ever worked in a hotel. You can tell she was a young girl, because she’s still in college, a young lady.

She sits down, she’s poised, she looked me in the eyes, she shook my hand, she got the job. Done. She has no hotel experience. And not only was she done, the owner looked at me and said, “She can really help me. She is really talented.”

That’s it. That’s it.

Now, I could have hired 20 other people, and I would have never been able to train them, because the second I train them the wheels fall off as soon as I turn away.

This young lady, I tell her “Can you please, when you hand a guest a pen, please don’t put it on the desk. Hand it to them in their hand.” I tell her that once, it’s done. Okay? But I can’t tell her how to smile. I can’t tell her how to anticipate.

People say, “You can teach how to anticipate.” No, you can’t. You can’t. I don’t care what anybody says, you can’t. You’ve either got it, or you don’t got it. You can’t teach anybody to say, “Hey, you need a newspaper?” Because what you do is you can teach that person “Do you need a newspaper?” but all of a sudden that person’s got 4 people with them, they’re busy, you can see they’re very busy, and

that person comes up right in the middle of the conversation, “You need a newspaper?” “No, I don’t need a newspaper.” Okay?

Dean: Yeah, exactly. Not when they’re talking to somebody, right. Yeah.

Anthony: I’ve seen that so many times. “No, no, I don’t need a newspaper. Thank you very much.”

I was training some staff earlier in my career, and Doubletree does the cookies, and we were listening to a tape of this speaker, and he was telling, on the tape, about his experience of the Doubletree Hotel. But his key didn’t work, and it happens to all of us. So, it’s 4, 5, 6 times back to the desk, in the middle of the night. And finally, he’s just frustrated, and an agent senses his frustration. The agent looks at him, and pulls a cookie from behind the desk, and says, “Would you like a cookie?” He goes “No, I just want my F’ing key.”

Dean: Right, right. Exactly.

Anthony: So, to me, either you’ve got it or you don’t got it. And so I’m going to give you a great uniform, a great place to work, I’m going to motivate you, I’m going to hug you, I’m going to kiss you, I’m going to give you anything you need, I’m going to thank you every single day. I’m going to do everything I can for you, and you’ll have to figure it out, because I’m not there. I’m going to give you the tools, but if you don’t have half a brain and you can’t anticipate, there’s nothing I can do, because we’ve all tried. We’ve all tried. We’ve all begged employees, “Why can’t you do this? You’re a great person. Why can’t you do this?” And if they don’t have it, they don’t have it.

I can’t dunk a basketball. Just can’t do it. Unless you give me a ladder, I can’t dunk a basketball.

Dean: Right. Exactly. You got to work with what you’ve got.

Anthony: So, when you say marketing, when you say, “I Love Marketing,” when you talk about marketing, marketing is toilet paper. Marketing is a clean toilet bowl.

Marketing is a haircut on an employee. Marketing is a bed. Marketing isn't just a picture on the Internet, on top of Google. Marketing starts with the color socks you wear, with the suit that you wear in the morning, because everything is important.

I once heard someone told me, "Everybody's a boss watcher." I never forgot that, as long as I've lived. It's the only thing I've learned from this gentlemen, because everything else he did was terrible.

But he said, "Everybody's a boss watcher." And he's right, because I watched him, and I watched him do everything the wrong way, because I was watching him. So, everybody's an employee watcher. When you walk into a hotel, everybody's watching everything.

Dean: Yeah, that's, it's funny because when we talked about the core element things, we were talking about how the Weston Hotel, I've stayed in a few different Westons, and noticed that they're focus has been on the bed, the heavenly bed, creating that great sleep experience and the dual showerheads with the curved rod. So, focusing on the core experience. The bed is great. The shower is great. It's not about spending a lot of money to make those kind of things happen, it's really about focusing on what's really important, it seems like.

Anthony: It's paying attention and getting away from yourself, and really understanding what the guest wants, and anticipate.

I was the asset manager. I was the first vice president of asset manager for Tishman, and I was fortunate enough to be the asset manager over the Weston Hotel in Time Square. The double showerhead was great. The funny thing about that is once everybody was talking about conservation, they go, "Wow, that pours out double the amount of water." So, now they went back and refocused on what do we do with the showerheads, because we're wasting a lot of water and we're spending a lot of money."

They really tried to anticipate the guests' needs, and really tried to elevate the experience. The bed, the same way, it's like the bed's stupid. You were the first

person to come out with this great bed, and now everybody, whether it be a 2-star hotel or 5-star hotel, has the bed.

And one thing that they did predominately well, is I'm sitting, Sunday morning, about 7 years ago, I'm reading the *New York Times*, as I often do, as my wife's reading *The Daily News*, and all of a sudden, I read an article about the Weston's smell, about their scent. And I was like "Wow, the hotel has a scent? That's amazing! That's the first time I've read about that." And out of the paper fell the sample scent. It's probably an advertorial.

I never forgot it. I was like, "Wow!" It immediately just makes me want to stay there. This is before I worked there.

And then, I was actually at Nickelodeon Hotel, at the time. I was the vice president, traveling back and forth to Nickelodeon, and that's why I did 103 on Jet Blue that year.

So, as soon as I got that, I found out whom they used to develop the scent. I found the person. She came to my office, in Orlando, and there was the scent of popcorn in the theater within a week, there was a scent of chocolate in my office, because I love chocolate, there was a scent of the pool that we did. There were like 5 or 6 scents as you walked around the property.

And it really ties you to the brand. The Weston smell's in my bathroom of my home, because I love that smell.

Dean: That's amazing.

Anthony: That's it. When you think of your childhood, there's a smell or scent, whether you went to camp, your school. There's a scent you have. So, that's just another way, the senses tie you into that experience.

So, the Weston does it very well. I was very fortunate to meet the people that came up with those concepts.

How would you think those people show up when they're in a meeting? This young lady, who's the creative marketer, she showed up exactly the way I thought a creative marketer should show up. She was well dressed, but she was a little funky.

Hold on one second. I'm sorry about that.

Dean: No problem.

Anthony: So, they showed up the way I expected them to show up. And that's marketing. When they did the \$10,000 martini at the Algonquin, Karla Cagariley, who now runs Karla Caravelli PR agency, helped me come up with that idea, and it repositioned the Algonquin.

Dean: I wanted to ask you about the Algonquin, because I know that's been one of your crowning achievements kind of thing, turning around the Algonquin. I understand you shut it down, when you first moved in, for a month. What was your thought process, the approach going forward? Did they know that that was what you were going to recommend, or did you show up and say "Okay, guys, here's what we're going to do. We're going to shut it down for a month"?

Anthony: Well, you're the first person to ask me that question in a very long time, and I'm really glad you asked it. I'm going to answer it.

Before I answer it, I've got to tell you, when I shut it down, after it was approved to shut down, Mike Lyons, who was the bell captain for 40 years, he just retired 2 years ago, came over to me, as we shut down, and put his arm around me. And I said, "You heard we're shutting it down?" He said, "World war II couldn't shut it down." He said, "World Trade Center couldn't shut it down, 9/11 couldn't shut it down, the recession couldn't shut it down. Anthony Melchiorri shut it down; kneel down."

Then he looks at me and he goes, "Hope you get it back open," and he walked away. And he scared the living daylights out of me.

Dean: Wow!

Anthony: And the greatest thing he did was scare me, because for 28 days all I did was get it opened.

Dean: Right. Yeah. Exactly.

Anthony: So what happened was Miller Global, the greatest ownership group of hotels in the country, was going to renovate it. We have 2 elevators. And you can tie this into marketing. We have 2 elevators at the Algonquin, including the service elevator.

So, I talked to the employees and I say, “Look, we’re thinking about renovating the hotel. You’ve been here for 30 years, 20 years, 40 years. Tell me about the experiences over the years of renovating.”

And every single one of them told me it was a nightmare, and every single renovation always got extended and cost a lot of money, because it just took longer. And the elevators were a problem, because you have one elevator for the guests, one elevator for construction, and one elevator for the employees of the hotel, and it was just a nightmare.

So, if you do it, you just can’t do it with 2 elevators, because the construction team needs one, and then the other half of the hotel that’s not being constructed needs it, and it just doesn’t work.” I said, “Okay.”

So I was thinking about it, thinking about it, thinking about it. I’m in the Home Depot parking lot in Brooklyn, with my wife, and she’s looking at me, she says, “What’s the matter?” I said, “I’m thinking.” And I call Kevin Engelhardt, who’s the go-to person at Miller Global, and I said, “I want to shut down the building.” And he goes, “What building?” I go, “The Algonquin” He goes, “You can’t.”

And I went about an hour of why I have to. And he said, “Okay, put together cash flows. Put together 3 cash flows: one closing the restaurants only, one closing the hotel, one closing just parts of the hotel.” I said, “Okay.”

So, I spent probably 2 days, 48 hours, doing cash loans. Miller Global, Dave Johnstone, Jimmy Miller, Mickey Miller flew into New York, and I did a presentation. And I never showed them one of my ideas was to shut down the building. Kevin and I decided not to do that.

So, as we're talking, they say, "Okay. Let's do this one." And I said, "Yeah, that works, but if we have any delays, this is how much it's going to cost." "Oh, my God, what are we going to do?"

I say, "Well, my third option is to shut down the building." And they all looked at me like I was out of my mind. It cost less money to shut down the building for 28 days, than it did if we waited 2 weeks of an extension. They shut down the building. So, that's how we did that.

Dean: Isn't that amazing? I've been a big observer of stuff like that. Are you familiar with Gamal Aziz?

Anthony: I can't hear you.

Dean: He's the general manager of the MGM in Las Vegas?

Anthony: You know what's so funny? I just had a consultation with the food and beverage director at the MGM, through email, last night. But no, I'm not familiar with him.

Dean: Well, Gamal Aziz, he was at the Bellagio, I think, and came over as the general manager of the MGM, and there's big article. This was probably in 2006, and it's really stuck with me because the guts and the foresight that he has, this approach, has really kind of stuck with me in everything that I did.

But he takes a really different approach to improving things. He breaks down all the elements of the hotel. So, he looked at the restaurants, the casinos, the guest rooms, the shows, and he looks at it from a perspective of "What is the very best thing that we could do here?" Like they had a nice restaurant that was doing a lot of volume; I think it was doing about \$4-million a year in revenue. And he knew

that, in Las Vegas, if they had a celebrity chef, a really high-end restaurant, that they could be doing at least twice that amount.

So, he went into the board, I guess, and got permission to tear out the most successful restaurant in the hotel and bring in a celebrity chef. They created Nobhill, and that restaurant now is doing \$10-million, to \$12-million a year.

But he looks at all of these elements, and his approach is “If we’re not doing this, we’re losing \$4-million a year because we’ve got this \$4-million restaurant, as opposed to this celebrity restaurant.” Same thing he did with the show; they had a show called FX there. It was doing \$28-million a year. Tore out the theater, partnered with Cirque du Soleil, brought in a killer show, and they do over \$100-million a year now.

Anthony: Yeah. And you know what? That is the way you think. What happens is people that don’t have the money think that way, then get themselves in all kinds of trouble, because, “If I just have something better, I could make more money,” and they wind up going out of business because they threw all their money into the idea, and they don’t have a good idea to pay off.

So, that’s wonderful, and that thinking is exactly the thing when I was at the Algonquin. I knew Miller Global could afford to shut it down for 28 days, simply because they had money.

So, if I went into Vegas, I would think the same way he thinks. If he came into the Algonquin, he would think the same way I think, because what we think about is how do we get the most money, how do we get the best experience? 100%, that’s the way you’re supposed to think.

The problem, this is a problem, in only 20% of hotels in this country are non-branded hotels. So, a guy who owns a non-branded hotel that’s struggling goes to Vegas, sees all this glitz and glamour, comes back to his hotel, and screws it up because like, “Oh, I want to be that.” Well, you’re not that, man. You’re never going to be that, so stop being that. Be who you are.

Dean: Right.

Anthony: There's one hotel you saw, like Branson, Missouri, in the pool area we were playing bingo.

Dean: Yeah. I remember that.

Anthony: Right? It was like bingo, man. I mean I'm in Branson, Missouri. The kids are running around, the parents are running around all day. They come to the pool, it's one of those great little games that brings a family together, that they can do together.

So, she says, "I want to do bingo at the pool." I was like "That's kind of corny," I said to myself. But they played bingo. It works for this kind of hotel.

So, whether you're the Bellagio or whether you're Algonquin, whether a hotel in Branson, Missouri, be who you are. Bingo works there. You know? Bingo works in Branson.

Pulling out a \$4-million restaurant and putting in a \$12-million restaurant works in Vegas. Putting a martini on the rocks in Algonquin works.

My brand of managing these kinds of hotels works. If I go to the Waldorf Astoria, it still works, but I have to just change what I'm talking about. I'm not talking about bingo, I'm talking about something else.

So, don't try to slap stuff on that doesn't work. The building has got to speak to you. And when I was at the Algonquin, the building spoke to me. That's why Dorothy Parker and the Roundtable, all this history, no one was talking about this history. We did an off-Broadway play of Dorothy Parker and the Roundtable called "Talk of the Town." People thought I was out of my mind.

I brought a production into the Oak Room every Sunday and Monday night, of Talk of the Town. It ran for 4 years. I did a radio show called Talk of the Town. Some of my guests were Kurt Vonnegut, Linda Ellerbee, Bill Bonanno, the son of

the Godfather, who was the person that was depicted in Godfather. His father, Joe Bonanno, was the Godfather.

So, I had all these people at a table. That's what the Algonquin was back 100 years ago. Everybody just came in, no matter who you were, no matter if you were a crime boss, no matter if you were Kurt Vonnegut, no matter if you were Linda Ellerbee. Everybody just talked, man. We just talked. That's what we did. So that's what I did at the Algonquin.

A couple weeks ago, I'm having lunch with Eric Walden at the Waldorf, and I have to get this because you talked about that guy being a professional __ (36:04) restaurant. I'm talking to Eric, just recently, and I start, "What do you do to evaluate your performance. You're doing this at the Waldorf. What do you do for you to keep doing?" And he said, "Anthony, I bring in a company, and they do shopping for me. They shop the hotel, and make sure the service is appropriate." "Oh, okay, everybody does that in big hotels." And he said, "Yeah, but I do something different." He said, "I have 2 marks. It's called A+ or F, that's it. A+ or F. That's it. It's either A+ or it's an F." It was like he punched me in the chest, knocked me off the chair.

Dean: Wow.

Anthony: It was like "Exactly."

Dean: I get that, immediately.

Anthony: __ (36:51) never put it into words. And he said, "My boy, let me tell you something." He said, "Everybody really __ (36:58) thought I was crazy. It was a fight. It was an uphill battle to evaluate A+ for that, or F." He said, "But that's what it is. It's either the best or it's not the best." And it just blew me away.

So, if you have a Branson, Missouri hotel, if you have the MGM, or you have the Algonquin, is it the best, or is it not the best? Meaning, the Algonquin may not be the best in the world, but is the best hotel that it can be?

Like, I'm wearing a really nice tie. Is it the nicest suit and the nicest tie? Well, it's kind of my best. I'm proud of this, buying this suit. I like it. You know? It's the best I could do, period. It's my A+. It may not be somebody else's A+.

Be the best the hotel can be. A+ or F.

So, everything I evaluate, even on the crew now, they're all saying it. "Well, we're doing something. We're in a scene. The scene is like, 'Is that an A+ or an F?'" They go, "That was an F." I said, "So, the next time we've got to do better."

A+ or F? We think like that as a culture, we think like that as a marketer, we think like that as a general manager, and you can't lose. You can't lose.

Dean: That's profound.

Anthony: Once you allow mediocrity to sink in...

I was talking to somebody, and they were talking about photography, and betting, and how you get the best shot. If you go, and I want you to do this after the phone call, go to Staybridge Suites, Times Square. The email for the URL is StayTimesSquare.com.

Dean: Okay.

Anthony: I worked at that hotel. I was the vice president. I obsessed, obsessed over the pictures. My director of marketing, Patricia, who's now director of marketing over at the Millennium, myself, a bed designer, and a photographer obsessed over the details.

If you tell me that bed, when you look at that bed on StayTimesSquare.com, isn't the best picture of a bed on the Internet, in New York City, I'll give you \$10. We obsessed over it. We did. It took us 24 hours to take 6 pictures. We obsessed over it, because a million people a year are going to look at that picture.

Dean: Right. Yeah.

Anthony: So, that picture's an A+.

Dean: Right. That is such a profound thought, you know? And it kind of ties back to what you're saying, like be who you are. But in the things that you are going to do, make sure that you're doing them at an A+ level, and don't do things that you can't be an A+ at.

Anthony: Like when you contacted me, you said, "Will you be on the show?" I said, "Yes." All of a sudden, my schedule got in the way and I said, "But I'll be on, I'll be on, I'll be on," and we kept on going back and forth. And it's taken a while, but I'm on.

And then at 8:00 this morning, I was on, and I said, "I need another 20 minutes, because I'm running late." And I said, "Give me 8:20." 8:20 I was on. Okay? I lived up to what I said I would do.

Dean: Absolutely.

Anthony: That's what we want. All of a sudden, you got me when the show was just starting, and I was busy in my own life, and I was busy with my own business, but I didn't have that the demands of a show.

Once the show aired and everybody saw the show, and I'm going to be on the Today Show on Thursday, all of a sudden things like that are coming my way. You're doing all this preparation, and you're doing a million things, but I gave my word. I'm not going back on my word. Even my PR person called. I love her. She goes, "Are you sure you want to do this?" It's like, "He doesn't have a tremendous audience, and this is going to take some time." I said, "Of course, I'm going to do this." I said, "I'm going to do this, and I'm going to do it again next year, if he wants to do it. Of course I'm going to do it. Why wouldn't I do it?"

But, when I do it, I want to make sure I give you what you want. I don't want to do it in 10 minutes, when I don't have the time to do it.

So Eric Walden really instilled that in me. And we've talked probably once or twice a year, for the last 12 years. We always have lunch or drinks or dinner, and I always learn something. And I learned I'm not as good as I thought I was, because

I don't think everything I do is an A+. And it's got to be A+, or somebody's going to do better and I'm going to lose out to them.

Dean: That is so great. And I really appreciate you taking the time to come on and share with us. I think the stuff that you advocate and the things that you've shared even on this call, are just tremendous value. I think every business owner is going to be really thrilled with all the things that we've been able to talk about.

Anthony: Well, my pleasure. If I can say one thing before we leave? Do you mind if I say one more thing?

Dean: Yeah, I'd love you to.

Anthony: Every business owner, whether you're in a hotel business or any other owner, look at it through your guest's eyes.

When I was at the Plaza Hotel, it was 1991, I think, and I was the front office manager, I remember we had a lot of complaints, and my boss spent most of his time just responding to complaints. This was before Internet and email, and TripAdvisor. He would spend a lot of time just writing letters to guests.

And I said to myself, "Wouldn't it be great if we prevented the freaking problems? Wouldn't that be fantastic?"

Dean: No, I agree with you.

Anthony: Wouldn't it be fantastic? Because if I can prevent the problems, I don't have to do anything all day, but talk to my guests. And that's what I do. I don't really do that much all day, except talk to my guests.

So, I saw it through the eyes of a child. When you go to the Plaza Hotel, and that child pushes that revolving door, and she read the Eloise books, or she saw the Home Alone II movie, and she pushes that revolving door, she expects music, she expects gold confetti, and she expects Eloise to be jumping all over the building.

Dean: Yeah, yeah.

Anthony: So, when the child walks through revolving doors, they don't necessarily care about the most comfortable bed or if the toilet bowl's clean. But they want to know where Eloise was. And that we didn't have a tour, and there were books, and Eloise ____ (43:20), that stayed with me. And when Randy did that, it was like "Of course, that makes sense."

So, every single time somebody puts the hand on your door to open up your door, that's potentially the first time they've ever done that. So, that experience has got to be real. And if you're not passionate about making that first experience the greatest experience, then you shouldn't be in business. You should go behind the curtain and do something else.

I am passionate. When you see the show last night, of the Fiddler's Inn, I wished you could take the 40 hours that we shoot, and see all 40 hours. Because when you take 40 hours and it comes down to 42 minutes. You would see some of the great things that happened at the Fiddler's Inn and, really, truly, how we re-branded the hotel. We re-branded it.

They're competing against the Marriotts and the Hiltons of the world, literally surrounding their hotel, and they forgot they were at the Fiddler's Inn. You were the first hotel in Nashville, you're across from the Grand Ole Opry, you've got the best location, Dude, you're the Fiddler's Inn. Believe it. Do you believe it? Do you believe it?

So, that's what that was about. At the end, when I left, one of the things that I implemented was if you can play the fiddle, you get 10% off your room. So I asked one of the construction guys. There's a fiddle on the wall. We have 2 fiddles on the wall, and you can take them off them wall. And I said, to the construction people, I said, "Hey," Chris Rogers construction, I said, "can any of you guys or girls play the fiddle?" And one guy, there were about 6 people who tried to play, and none of them could play.

But on the show, you see the one guy that could play. He pulls the fiddle down, and this man had everybody slapping their knee. So, then the shot of us

leaving was us all listening to music in the Fiddler's Inn, while somebody was playing the fiddle.

Dean: Wow. That's so good.

Anthony: That's what you do at the Fiddler's Inn, man.

Dean: Yeah. Right. That's groovy.

Anthony: It's not the about the mint on your pillow at the Fiddler's Inn. It's can you play the fiddle? If you do, you get 10% off.

That's what it's about. It's about being who you are. And you know, the greatest gift the Travel Channel gave to me, when I wrote the show and I brought it to them, Brian Leonard, who's the vice president, said, "When there's a camera and there's Anthony in the room, if that camera's off, I'm going to kill somebody." He said, "Put the camera on, and just him be Anthony."

People say, "Anthony, you're always on this time crunch, and it seems like fabricated." Even my wife said it to me last night, and it pissed me off. We're sitting there watching the Fiddler's Inn together, and she says, "Oh, here it goes again. The construction job's not going to get done. We all know it's going to get done." I said, "Really?" I said, "Watch the next scene."

So, the next scene is me, at 2:00 in the morning, getting dressed, coming into the lobby, thinking, having a panic attack that it's not going to get done, and I see 30 people working, at 2:00 in the morning, and they're all Chris' family. I'm like "What happened?" He goes, "You know, you scared me. You're right, I don't think we're going to get it done. So, I got my family." Blanch, the designer, did not sleep for 2 days.

Dean: I always feel sorry for poor Blanch, every time I watch the show.

Anthony: Well, you know what? Don't feel sorry for poor Blanch, because poor Blanch's got more balls than both me and you together. She's the toughest person, so she can

stand up for herself. She's a great designer. She's a great designer. And she's tough. She's tough.

But poor Blanch, like you say, she didn't sleep for 2 days. And Chris Rogers didn't sleep for 3 days. He started to smell. I was like, "Dude, you stink!"

So, I'm having a panic attack. I'm about to throw up, every show, and people say, "Oh, we know it's going to get done." I say, "Congratulations. Because you know something I don't know."

We just did a show in Daytona, it rained for 4 days. We painted the outside of the building, and it rained for 4 days, and we're only there for 4 days.

Dean: Oh no.

Anthony: And it's literally, it washed us out. It destroyed our paint job, you know?

Dean: Oh no. Yes.

Anthony: So know you'll see on the show, weather we got. If it rained for 4 days and you're painting outside, and your paint job's ruined on the last day, and the building's on 3 acres. I'll let you think if we got done or not. Sometimes, stuff doesn't get done, and there's nothing I can do about it.

So, if you ever ask me a question of what pisses me off the most, it's when people say, "Well, you know you're going to get it done. So why do you do it? Why do you have that timeframe, when we all know it's going to get done?" Because the only people that know it's going to get done is the audience, because I have no idea if it's going to get done.

Dean: Right. You always pull it off, which is cool.

Anthony: There's been a lot of tension for that reason. Between me and the director, and Blanch, behind the scenes, it's crazy. People are nuts.

Dean: People may start to smell, yes. I just thought of something. Maybe you should have the scents of Hotel Impossible.

Anthony: Yes, but it's, I invite people down to the set when we're able to do that; because if you saw the stress level, what Blanch has to go through to create these unbelievable designs in the timeframe she has, and how hard she works, and the director, and the camera men, and how hard these people work, no one's ever, ever done. I think the hotel charter said, "Who's the idiot that thought they could turn around the hotel in 4 days? I've got to see this." And then the next article was "Wow! That idiot is actually doing it!" Well, I'm the idiot, and the team's doing it. You know? It's like we're doing it.

And one of the things I don't want people to take away from this show, some shows, most of them are transformational in the sense of that I gave you the tools. In a hotel, you know better than anyone, you've got to carry it. It's not like in a restaurant; this is the menu, this is the design, that's the chef. It's difficult, it's hard to execute everyday, but those are the elements.

In a hotel, the elements are everything. So, everyday, you've got to do everything well. So, I'm going to give you the blueprint for the top 4 or 5 things you're doing wrong. But not only are you going to do those 4 or 5 things right, you've got to do everything right. And it's difficult. It's a business that really, a lot of investors get into, and within 24 hours they're out, because they're like, "I can't do this."

Dean: Well, if anything, you realize, from watching the show, I was amazed by a couple of things. Number one, these are all sort of independent or family-run hotels. You always have this sense of hotels being big, corporate things. But you're really tapped in to like the hotelier, the family business. And the ones that seem to really turn it around are when you're able to re-ignite the passion of somebody who is really standing behind everything.

Anthony: I'm going to tell you an insider that I haven't told anybody. And there's one hotel person, I won't even call them a hotelier, but one person in the season, he said something to me as we were leaving, and I told him, I said, "Sell the hotel." I won't tell you what he said to me. He said "Why?" I said, "Because, that is the most

asinine thing anyone's ever said to me. You don't care about the hotel." And he looked at me, and goes "You know what? You're right." And he may sell the hotel.

Now, that's not good TV, but I turned around the hotel and I did my job. But if it's not in your heart, it's not in your heart.

What we do, for 25 years, is I made sure there wasn't pubic hair on the floor. I made sure that your drink was cold. I made sure that my staff smiled. And I made sure that if there were a grenade in the middle of the room, I'd jump on it before the guests saw it, or even before the employees saw it.

That's my job. And if you don't like doing that, when you send men and women into a war zone and people say, "You know, I feel so bad for them." I'm like, "You know what? I feel horrible for them. They should have all the resources they need. But I don't feel bad for them, I feel bad for their families, because that's what they want to do. They're passionate about it. They want to serve this country."

I was in the Air Force for 5 years. I'm not all as brave as a lot of these people, but I have a passion for wanting to serve my country. I have a passion for wanting to do this job, and now I have a passion for this show, because a lot of hospitality kids are calling me up.

I gave a hospitality kid, the other day, he sent me an email, and he said, "I don't know if this is going to get you, but I'm doing a paper on Anthony Melchiorri, and I had these 2 questions for him, if you can get them to him and have him call me, or have him email me back, or if you can email me back with the answers, I'd appreciate it."

So, I emailed him back, and said "This is my cell number, call me." So, he calls me up, and the guy's freaking out. He's like "I can't believe you're calling!" And I'm like, "Why?" He goes "You called me in 5 minutes. You let me call you in 5 minutes." I was like, "I've never had anybody want to do a paper on me before. So, I'm just in awe as you are of me."

I'm like "Why would you want to do a paper on me? So, to me, I'm passionate about the hospitality. A guy that wants to go into the hospitality business, I'm passionate about that, and I'm passionate about what is it about me that you want to write about."

So, if you don't want to do this and it doesn't come out of your body naturally...

People say, "I market. I Love Marketing." I love that name, I Love Marketing. What's the keyword in I Love Marketing?

Dean: Love. Yeah, love. You're absolutely right. I think, as an observer, that's the thing that immediately comes across with you, is that you are absolutely passionate about it. And you show up at a hotel and, every single episode, you're more passionate, often, than the owners about the hotel and the experience. It's fascinating. It's contagious, is what it is. It's compelling to be around people like that.

Anthony: Well, thank you. And you know, the reason that the passion comes off and I'm able to do it is because I really do have an amazing director, an amazing team. We have a great designer. I get a lot of the credit. I really do. Like when I run hotels, I get all the credit.

Of course, I'm a part of it, because I'm the guy sitting in the hot seat. But I'm just a small part of it. It's really the team.

At the end of the shoot, because it was our last show of the 13 shows, the director spent his own money, his own time, and he surprised me with this. He got all the cast, the entire crew, he got my glasses, glasses that look like mine, and everybody wore a suit and tie. It's 11:00 at night, we're exhausted, we just finished a shoot, we've been rained on for 4 days, and they surprised me in the middle of the lobby with 20 Anthonys. Everybody was in bald hats, and they all made fun of me. They were all mocking what I was doing.

And one of the things that came through, and I was laughing, I have it on video, I was laughing so loud, and one of the things that the director did was, I'd

start a scene and he'd want me to do something, and I say this with love, I'd say, "Hey, director boy. I'm not doing that." He's like "Why?" I was like "Because that doesn't make sense for the hotel business." He says, "Yeah, but that works." And I was like "Director boy, I'm not doing that. I'm not doing it. Not doing it. You know what? I ain't doing it!" And I walked out.

And then he did that. And he was like, and we're all laughing, because everybody knows I'm never going to do anything for a show. I'm never going to do anything for a show that is a hotelier will say is bullshit.

Dean: Right. I gotcha.

Anthony: It's funny. I love that they did that, because it showed that they have a sense of humor, I have a sense of humor, but it also showed the most important element: that I'm not doing anything just because it's easier, or just because.

We painted the outside of the building in Florida, when it could rain any minute, and everybody said, "Well, we can't do that because of the rain and we might not get it done." I was like, "It's Hotel Impossible. The number one problem with this hotel is, when I pull up, it looks like a brothel or a bodega. And I don't care what I do on the outside; if I don't paint this hotel, it's a 1-star hotel and it always will be a 1-star hotel."

And they said, "But it may not get done." I said, "Then we'll film it. We'll film not getting it done. It's called reality." It's a reality show. I put the reality back in reality TV.

Dean: I can't wait to see that episode now. That's great. That's awesome. There are so many lessons, I recommend for everybody to go to iTunes.com, and you can download all the episodes. There are lessons in every single episode, and everything is transferable, no matter what kind of business people are in.

Anthony: It comes down to it's A+ or F, which I love. But I've said this, and it's true. You either give a shit, or you don't give a shit.

Dean: Right on.

Anthony: That's it. That's it. If you don't, that's okay. I always say, don't get aggravated easily.

Dean: There's nothing you can do. Yeah.

Anthony: Look, if the employee's not working, it's just not a right fit, don't get mad, don't yell, don't scream at people. And one of the thing you'll see on my show, you'll never see me yell at an employee. And it's not because I don't yell at people on TV, it's because I don't yell at people, period, unless you're an owner. An owner, I'll rip your face off, because you're here to hire me to turnaround your hotel.

I have no problem going toe-to-toe with you in real life, or on TV. No problem. But, I really would like any employee to come out and say I've yelled at them. I've been intense. It may have seemed like maybe I yelled, but I'd never yell, because there's no reason to yell.

If the employee's not working, and you've given them 3, or 4, or 5 chances, promote them to customer. Once they're a customer, they can come back as many times as they want, but they just can't work there.

Dean: Promote them to customer. That's funny. You know what, though? The way that you interact with the housekeeping staff and with the engineering staff, it's always with love, the way that you're approaching them.

Anthony: You know why? Because the owner sometimes is "Well, housekeeper doesn't do her job." Have you cleaned 14 rooms in a day? Have you gone home at 4:00 in the afternoon and had to cook for your kids, and clean the house, and do everything you do, and make \$9 an hour, and still be at the poverty level? Have you ever felt what that feels like?

When I was a kid, I was on food stamps. I know what that feels like. Okay? So, if you don't know what that feels like, you're not going to have empathy with

these people. You know what it feels like to clean 14 rooms? If you don't, then shut up.

Dean: Right.

Anthony: Go clean a damn room. If you cleaned the room and you cleaned 14 rooms, and you've done it for 5 days in a row, as an owner, if a owner comes up to me and says "Anthony, I worked in housekeeping for a week and I cleaned 14 rooms," then you know what? I'm not going to question you when you get in the housekeeper's face. I'm not. Because then even in just 5 days, you get it. You know what they go through.

It pisses me off to no end, that when an investor – who now is a hotel owner – says, "Housekeeper's not doing a good job," but they don't have toilet paper. They don't understand the concept of 3 pars. "Okay, I need 3 pars of linen." "Why?" "Because one's got to be one the bed, one's got to be in the laundry, and one's got to be on the shelf getting ready to get on the bed. And if you don't have it, you can't function."

"Really?" "Yeah. And if you've worked in freaking housekeeping for 5 minutes, you would know that.

Before you're a pilot, you've got to learn, in the simulator, how to fly a plane. They don't just give you a plane, after taking you, and after you sign your name, and saying "Okay, you passed the test. Here you go, go fly the plane."

I truly believe that every hotelier should have to work in every single department before they're allowed to own a hotel.

Dean: Yeah. That's fascinating, because than they get the real experience. Right?

Anthony: Absolutely. Think of it this way. You go into a restaurant in New York City, there's an A, B, or C in the window. A means great, B means not so great, C means you're stuck. Okay? You go into a hotel, I don't know if they took a rag from the toilet bowl and put it in the glass, and cleaned the glass with it, now, I'm going to put my

mouth where somebody put their ass. I don't know. Right? There's no system. There's no letter system.

Why don't we have a letter system in the hotel business? A, B, or C, why? Why don't we have a letter system for owners? You're potentially giving keys to employee's that don't have background checks, that potentially could open the door in the middle of the night and kill me. Why? Why don't they have a rating on that hotel? Why? I want to know why?

Dean: That's interesting. Yeah.

Anthony: This isn't a joke. What we do is serious.

Dean: No, I understand that.

Anthony: I'm not saying to you.

Dean: No, no.

Anthony: I did a show that's coming up. It's a Montana show. I want you to send me an email after the Montana show, and I want you to have me on, after the Montana show. I'm going to tell you a story that's going to blow your brains out.

Dean: Okay.

Anthony: Okay? Because I'm not going to tell you until after the show. And why? Why? The story's about a policy that I didn't implement; and because I didn't implement it... I'll tell you the story after the show airs.

Dean: Okay. Perfect. That's what you call a cliffhanger. Keep us coming back. So now, that means you have to come back, so we can close the loop on that.

Anthony: Yeah. The only way you're going to get loop closed is I have to tell you the story, because you won't see it.

Dean: Perfect. I love it.

Anthony: It'll literally blow your brains out, when they tell you one little policy or one little thing I didn't do, how it could have wound up being really tragic.

Our hotel, the business, we had the safety of people in our hands. You saw the La Jolla episode, where I open up the shoot. You know, I open up the shoot, and a little kid could fall down there.

When I was in the Algonquin, we had linen chutes all over the property. And I remember, I got my entire executive team, and my entire security team to this one laundry shoot, and I lost my mind. I didn't yell, but I lost my mind, saying why that's unacceptable. And they were like "Well, the lock's breaking."

I said, "Today, before anybody goes home, every single laundry shoot in this building will be secure, or no one's going home," because it's only going to take a second for a kid to be screwing around and fall into that laundry shoot, and potentially die." I said, "So, no one goes home until they're fixed, period, end of story. We have the resources, we have the manpower. Fix the damn laundry chutes. There are 25 acres and 15 buildings, that's a lot of laundry chutes. If you don't fix them, you ain't going home. And if you do go home, you ain't coming back."

Dean: Wow.

Anthony: With safety, it's serious.

So, again, I know the show's I Love Marketing, I know it's all about marketing. Marketing comes down to everything. It's not about putting up billboards.

Dean: That's exactly right.

Anthony: It's not about putting a billboard in Times Square. It's not about saying "Junior's restaurant is the middle of Times Square." It's about Junior's anticipating your needs, giving you that newspaper.

That newspaper, that one little thing, that person giving you a newspaper made you tell me that story. Now, I'm going to tell everybody that story.

I, because that person didn't say thank you when they gave me my peanuts last night, just told as many people as listening, that that disappointed me last night, to the point where I'm actually using their name, because I typically don't do that. I've made almost a code, where if I have a bad experience, to talk about...

Dean: Yeah, just give them a break. I understand. Yeah. But if it's something that blatant, it deserves it.

Anthony: I've seen it coming with Jet Blue, that service is getting worse and worse. And last night, I almost said something, and I'm not that person. I really am not. When I'm going about my life, I try just to just stay under the radar, do my job, and go from point A to point B. But I almost said, "Dude, I did not pee in your cheerios last night. Why are you being mean?"

Dean: Oh, that's so funny. You know I was just thinking that server at Junior's, if they haven't given me that newspaper that morning, I wouldn't have read about Anthony, and I wouldn't have reached out right away to you, before the show even aired, and we might not even be here.

Anthony: See? Passion changes everything.

Dean: It really does, absolutely. Well, Anthony, I really appreciate your time. You've been very generous, and everything that you've shared is just phenomenal. I really appreciate it. I think our listeners are going to listen to this episode again and again. It's going to be one of their favorites. I can tell already.

Anthony: Well, thank you. It's my pleasure. And, actually, the timing is perfect, because I'm about 2 minutes from getting out of the car. So, I'm glad we had this opportunity, and I'm glad I was in the situation where I can give you complete attention because I love what you're doing. I appreciate it. I appreciate you reaching out to me. Reach out to me in the future. And, like I said, after the Billings, Montana episode, call me and I'll tell you an inside story.

Dean: Yeah. We have to hear all about that. I really appreciate it. Well, you have a great day, Anthony.

Anthony: My pleasure, thanks.