

Category of One Sustainability Leadership with Don Golden | Transcript

Welcome to Green Building Matters, the original and most popular podcast focused on the green building movement. Your host is Charlie Cichetti, one of the most credentialed experts in the green building industry and one of the few. To be honored as a LEED fellow. Each week, Charlie welcomes a green building professional from around the globe to share their war stories, career advice, and unique insight into how sustainability is shaping the built environment. So settle in, grab a fresh cup of coffee, and get ready to find out why green Building matters.

Welcome to the next episode of the Green Building Matters podcast. Once a week, I get to interview a green building professional somewhere in the world. Sometimes we end up talking about entrepreneurship, but I haven't used this word in a while. A chief impact officer, and so can't wait to unpack. Don, your background, your story, the good work you're doing. I know we are connected through a friend industry. So welcome to the podcast. How are you doing today?

01:00

Don

Glad to be with you and really eager to have this conversation.

01:03

Charlie

Actually, a lot of people don't know the difference between the words eager and anxious, so I could do a whole lecture on that. I can tell between that entrepreneurship, faith, and, of course, the environment, we're going to really hit it off. So take us back. I love to ask my podcast guests, hey, that origin story where'd you grow up? Where'd you end up going to school?

01:21

Don

I'm from Cincinnati, the small town outside of Cincinnati, Ohio. I'm sure I am a guest, and my angle into the built environment is a little bit different than other guests that I've listened to on your show. I'm actually a theologian. My background is in theology and ministry and particularly international relief and development. So I've kind of taken that issue of faith that we should do something good in the world beyond ourselves, and then taking that out. I've spent my whole adult life in the international arena. I've traveled to over 80 countries. I've worked with a couple of the largest, oldest, most established relief and development organizations. And it's really that experience of seeing the limitations of charity, to be honest, how much charity can do, but actually how much it can't do. That led me about five years ago to turn to the economy and to businesses, because the best development that I saw happening around the world was actually economic development. When there's nobody as good as things like buy one, get one, I'm going to buy glasses, give one, or buy a Pair of shoes or give. I can tell you there's nobody in the world sitting there waiting for you to buy one so they can get one. What they're waiting for good jobs, opportunities, a prospect for the future, all the things that you wake up in the morning and strive for. So that has to do with economic development. About five years ago, I made the shift first into impact investing, trying to mobilize funds to go into good businesses that were viable but needed access to capital.

02:58

Don

But then that began to beg all kinds of questions from businesses and investors about what is impact? How can I put my dollars to use? oh, yeah, what about my own business? And so that's actually what got me into impact and sustainability consulting for small and medium businesses.

03:18

Charlie

Love that origin story. You love one of my colleagues, Brian Bollinger, who ran Friends of Refugees here in Atlanta for seven years.

03:27

Don

And I know that name, the small world of this kind of work. So, yeah, I'm sure I know her.

03:33

Charlie

I'm loving this connection. Now he's on my team, doubling down on sustainability. And we're enjoying entrepreneurship too. A lot of people don't realize that a lot of refugees are also climate refugees too. . So we probably could. Absolutely, absolutely. To get placed at a job. It's another thing to help with entrepreneurship. Still a dream to come here, right to the US and do, okay, you've got that background. But then sustainability. Did you have an aha? It's like, hey, whatever I do for the rest of my career, I'm going to have this sustainability thread or tell.

04:01

Don

Use how you got. Actually I came late to this conversation. It was probably a piece about worldview here that's worth discussing because I think how we see the world affects what we do in the world. It affects our behavior. And from the faith perspective, there's like a glitch. There's a false element within a lot of people. A general Christian theology that is what we call evacuation theology that I'm going to. I'm going to salvation is all about dying and going to heaven. Something. It's all about some other place. So what does that mean? That means this place here doesn't actually matter that much. And that's very pervasive even within people who wouldn't say that's what they actually believe. There's a kind of prevailing worldview of escapism that exists within American culture.

04:53

Don

I was very much a part of that until my years working in Africa. I just returned, actually last week from South Africa, I was in a part of north west province where farmers there for years have dealt with the climate and they've farmed and taken care of themselves, but everything has changed. And now they can't access water. And that's just one little story that I began to see over and over and over that our capacity to live well within this one planet is being strained. And this idea of overshoot, I think this year was maybe August 1st, I think was overshoot day. The day that we use all of the available resources, the planet is able to regenerate, we use them all up, and we're now borrowing from the future. That is just.

05:50

Don

If you have any basic theology you have to take care of this creation so if you believe in a Creator, you have to take care of their creation. So I came late to it, but it really hit me between the eyes. And now everything for me is about helping people build impact and sustainability.

06:08

Charlie

Oh, man. Thank you for going there. I've worked on a lot of lead projects, Don, and one of my favorite testimonials, I mean, I've worked thankfully on skyscrapers and stadiums, but it was actually a church here in Atlanta. It's actually a historical church, over 100 years old, the First Congregational Church, UCC. And after we got LEED gold certification on their expansion. Now this is a historically registered building. You can't change the stained glass and the clay tiles and we can't add insulation. And we got to be more energy efficient. And they add on. We did LEED certification. I asked the pastor why did you go for lead certification? You know, you're a non-profit. He said, oh, Charlie, it's easy to protect God's green earth.

06:47

Don

Yeah, there you go. There you go. Okay.

06:50

Charlie

That's right. Sustainability, push, impact. Okay, that word and some of the many titles you have, what does that word mean to you?

06:58

Don

We all make an impact. It's just what kind of impact do we make? And my whole idea, my whole commitment in life has been about change, about impact. And in this shift from working within NGOs and within charities to the real economy if you broke, if you break down the world's economy into 200 parts, all charity of every form, public and private governments, multilaterals, bilaterals, private foundation, all charitable dollars amount to only four parts of that 200. So if you are going to, if we're going to change the world and make it more just More inclusive, more regenerative, more sustainable. We have to change the economy and that means that our businesses has to shift from, to seeing themselves as profitable problem solvers that refuse to profit off of creating more problems.

08:03

Don

So profitable problem solving without profiting from creating more problems. So that's what a business is. A business solves problems for people. It creates impact. So as Chief Impact Officer for Threefold Private Equity, my job is to help each of the businesses in our portfolio, all of which work in the built environment to create what we call intrinsic impact. That means the good that you want to do in the world is not an addendum at the end of the money making process. It is intrinsic to actually how and what the business does. So profitable problem solving, making the design, making the good that you seek for the world, the natural outcome of the business process, that's an impact for us.

08:49

Charlie

That makes a lot of sense to me. So you've shown us the world relief background, the travels you described impact and yeah, tell us a little bit about how you made that jump to the investing and then on Just Capital as well.

09:06

Don

Just Capital Quotient was the sort of the boat that I designed for myself to get out of the charity world and to start consulting. I actually first got more charities to consult for, which I still do some of that. And what I mainly do with charities is help them become more sustainable ecologically and financially. That's why I was just in South Africa. But as I said, I began to find that investors and businesses have a lot of questions about how they can and should be making an impact. And I've really devoted myself to developing a framework to help small and medium businesses become more impactful and sustainable. And one of my key clients has become more than a client. They've brought me on board full time as Chief Impact officer. I have clients outside of Threefold, but within Threefold, a private equity, an evergreen private equity company, that is that they're buying in the long term and seeking to bring value long term to the businesses that they hold. My job with Threefold is to help each of those companies build what we call intrinsic impact. And to do, another little technical phrase we use is competing on impact, that is winning in the market not in spite of doing good, but because of the good that you're doing. Winning in the market because of the good that you're doing and not in spite of it. And I when we get there, I've got a couple great Examples of companies working in the built environment seeking to make a more positive and sustainable impact. And as a result of the model that we follow, becoming more competitive and really starting to see a new angle to how they can win in the market by doing good.

10:55

Charlie

Doing good. The impact there, the investment side, I mean, do you have certain frameworks you've created or every situation is a little different?

11:03

Don

Let me introduce this framework first. It's that perspective shift about profitable problem solving. And this is about overcoming the charity limitation that we typically think of. The kind of the old model is you make money and then the good, the excess money that you make, you can put it into charity and do good. What that means is it really doesn't matter if your company is sustainable or harmful. It doesn't actually matter as long as you have some profits that you want to give to charity. But that is, that's that we have to get better than that. We have to overcome that. So that shift in perspective, the second, the framework that we've created is a multi capitals framework.

11:42

Don

And this is really the key multi capitals framework says, okay, yes, you have financial capital central to the money making endeavor, but there are actually non-financial capitals that you're spending and utilizing in the money making endeavor. And we need to look at those, and we need to look at those thoroughly. And if we do, we might begin to discover new values. So you have human capital, you have people, you have social capital, you have place and you have natural capital, you have planet. So those are the four P's of this framework. Profit, people, place and planet. And when you analyze those deeply, you begin to recognize the actual impact through doing analysis of those capitals. But you also begin to discover untapped value that exists in those capitals.

12:37

Don

So an application of that multi capitals framework is in the paintings and coatings industry. Four of the businesses that I work with directly are in the paintings and coatings business. And when I was first introduced to one of the business owners, I was told he really doesn't like the whole sustainability conversation. He thinks it's political. So the note that came to me was to tell Don to tell Don not to give his

normal sustainability talk track and I'm going to mention his name here so he can, so I can both embarrass him and lift him up. Matt Rolfs and a renovia painting, commercial painting indianapolis. That was the message. Don't give Matt the normal sustainability talk track. That was four years ago.

13:28

Don

Going through this process begins so when it comes to that natural capital quadrant of our framework, I always ask CEOs, what do you like to do when you have a chance to recreate, when you have a chance to chill for some time, what do you like to do? And they always talk about lakes, mountains, beaches. They always talk about the natural environment. Oh, you are an environmentalist. You. Do you want to lessen and cheapen and dirty those things when you die? Is that what you are? Absolutely not. Hell no, that's not what I want to do. Do. All right, so just beginning to look kind of holistically at the business and what his business is doing, we began to look at that and you began to look at coatings. You can look at the materials, the solvents, the pigments, those are actually real issues. But when you look at coatings and painting, one of the major issues is waste, which in a lot of the built environment, it is reducing waste and dealing with unused paint is massive, it takes one, a massive distance in solving the sustainability challenges related to painting. And so as we began to look into that and began to recognize that many of the stakeholders within the painting industry see this as a problem creating tens of thousands of empty buckets, that's a factor. And guess what? If you win the waste challenge in the painting and coatings industry, you are likely to win that industry going forward.

15:03

Don

If you, and if you're a 60 year old business owner in that space, don't worry, there's a 28 year old ready to eat your lunch who thinks about this all the time and who's dreaming up ways to use recycled content paint, to use totes instead of buckets to do all the things to read. And they're going to do it and it's either going to be you or it's going to be them. If you're a company that doesn't think

sustainability matters to you, that's okay because as I said, there's a 28 year old who's going to show you how it does. And he's coming. She or she's coming for you. So Matt, after four years, he is literally leading in, thinking about and applying models for reduction of waste in his industry.

15:54

Don

And it's, I can't go into great detail because this is kind of inside information, but it's placing him in a winning position as he looks to the future of that industry. And that kind of idea of moving from this is a problem to wait A minute. If I can solve that problem, and if I can work with all of the players that share that problem, I begin to secure my position as a leader in a new economy that's emerging, that does reward more impactful and more sustainable solutions. So that model, reframing our perspective, expanding our understanding into a multi capitals framework, and then applying it to our industry to look for innovation, that's what we're doing over and over. And it's really helping us create a category of one leadership for small and medium business. Here's another thing.

16:45

Don

Let's say you're a \$100 million company working in the built environment, you're probably seeking the business of a lot of publicly traded or very large corporations. A lot of them are feeling sustainability pressures and many of their small or small and medium vendors don't speak that language. So if you can show up well versed in what they've committed to, hey, we'd like to be zero waste by 2030. Hey, we'd like to reduce our energy, our carbon output by 2035. If you can come showing how you participate in that concern, that you care about it and that you have a solution for it, that puts you into a we have one friend that says you're sent to whom you sound like.

17:29

Don

And so if you can sound like what matters most to these large corporations, even

though you are a small, medium company, you might find yourself becoming very attractive to those companies who are feeling those pressures. And so Matt Rolfsen has done that and that's been really fascinating to watch his transformation.

17:49

Charlie

What a great testimonial there. And I can tell one of your secrets to success. You can talk the entrepreneur's language. You can really show them not just the way. Or else you're like, let me give you some crystal clear examples here. And that's really cool, man. Let's start today. I like to ask the question, hey, get us up to speed, you're working on a cool project, and what's a day in the life of Don right now?

18:13

Don

One of the things that I've found as a pastor, and this might surprise you, Charlie, but I thought faith would be like a doorway into sustainability and impact. In other words, you have to care about these things, so now let's go do it. And it's all about the technical. But actually what I found is that the inner life of the business leader is where change comes from. So if you're going to move your business to becoming more impactful and more sustainable. Yeah, you've got to be able to see the entrepreneurial rationale, the competing impact, the dollar. And so we spend a lot of time building that the economy is beginning to reward more impactful and sustainable solutions. So we focus on that. But the inner life of the entrepreneur is an element that we.

19:04

Don

I actually spend a lot of time on worldview and mindset issues helping business leaders and probably my specialty in this work is creating space for entrepreneurs to discover what matters most to them. Because discovering what matters most to you is like a superpower. It gives you a little bit more energy even to take on

questions that are like pre market. This idea isn't immediately going to win me some dollars, but I just have a sense that going at my business from this sort of more life giving approach to business, there's just something in it that builds value in my team. It gets people excited. I have one of my clients that I've been working with for years in this whole mindset shift. He has his whole leadership team this week joining what we call the necessity of you, which is a course I take CEOs through. What is the necessity of you? Wake up, grow up and show up. Wake up, grow up and show up, Wake up. Who are you? What do you care about? Even if it's just money, if you break it down, it is never ever just money. There's always relationships, there's always things that you care about. There's always holy indignation, things that make you angry, that you want to deal with. And you know that waking up is what is that for you? And then grow up. What do you need to do to sort of open your mind?

20:27

Don

What kind of training do you have to give? What blockages are in your way to keeping you from your best self? And then showing up is when we bring people into that multi capitals framework and start helping them see where you are in your community, where you are with the environment, where you are with your people. How can improving those also improve the quality of your business so that you become more competitive? A lot of my days are working with CEOs through the necessity of your framework. Wake up, grow up, show up. Which is a lot of fun. It keeps me in my kind of pastoral mind. Then let me give you another project, very specific. When one of our clients is back in the coding space They're a roofing company. And what I found out in working with them is that something like the number two item in American landfill is roof tear offs. It's somewhere like that. Roof tear offs are a major contributor to American landfill. So you think about it, you put on a built up roof, it lasts 20 years. Now you can put on another one, it lasts 20 more years. So with 40 years of value, you tear it off at great cost at a lot of disruption and you carry it and you stick it in the hole where it takes 400,000 years to biodegrade. Okay, that's our current model. That's the prevailing model. So one of our clients, White Hat Industrial in Dayton, Ohio, came up with a

different solution. A fluid applied roofing that uses that old rubber roof as a substrate for a new silicone membrane. And done right now, done poorly, the silicone roofs are terrible if you don't know what you're doing. But done properly and they become a perfect sealant that can last even longer than however long that building is going to last because it can just have occasional upgrades and touch ups. So this client, White Hat has created, I think the game changer in reducing waste in roofing, but also turns the roof white. And I was one recently down in Alabama and the guy, the heat gun and at like 9:30 in the morning, he points at it, the white roof is 87 degrees and the black roof is like already a hundred degrees just at 9:30 in the morning in Alabama. So you turn the roof white, you reduce energy costs and you reduce waste to landfill.

23:02

Don

Now the question is, how does disruption happen in a very static industry that doesn't really want to hear that there's a cheaper way of doing this, that there's a better, more sustainable way of doing that. So working with that team to uncover the resistances people have to this kind of disruptive technology, I'm learning a lot about that. That's a lot of fun. I'm sure you could teach me a lot about how disruption in the built environment space goes, but that's what we're learning and I'm really enjoying that work.

23:33

Charlie

It sounds like you found your zone of genius there, man. Really, really exciting. You know, we're going to ask some more questions, but how can my audience here on the Green Building Matters podcast, thousands of listeners, architects, engineers, contractors, real estate professionals all over the world know how we can help what you're doing? Curious.

23:53

Don

What helps me is helping you when you know, I want to provide services to apply

this framework to help anyone working in the built environment. I I didn't know much about the built environment. It was not my specialty. I knew nothing about paint. I knew that it dried and it was boring to watch paint dry. That's as much as I knew about paint. But working with paint companies, I actually as I said I was in South Africa recently and I because we're working with paint companies and digging into all that it means. I remembered an article that I had read in Scientific, the journal Scientific American about the first archeological evidence of paint being mixed in a cave on the south coast of South Africa. I actually went there and did a tour of 163,000 years humans have been mixing paint. And basically the reason I tell that story is whatever industry you are in, there is a human good to be developed out of it. And when you can find that human good and build on that human good and strengthen and analyze it and to know that it's actually the best way of doing it because we're not always doing it in the best way. A lot of times we've been doing things that are cheap, inexpensive and efficient, but they haven't been healthy. And increasingly the economy is beginning to reward better, more impactful solutions. So what I love to do is work with companies to help them find that category of one leadership where they become the most impactful and sustainable solution in their industry. That's what I love doing. And I think this framework that we have through this multi capital lens helps companies do that.

25:46

Charlie

There is again one and impact we all, I think you reminded me of our circle of influence and our ability to start some impact there. Skip man. Let's look to the future. You know I talk about buildings, green buildings, healthy buildings. Here you are with sustainability, sustainable businesses. But it all nets out to it's better for the planet, exciting down the road. What's coming at us, what are you reading up on?

26:10

Don

My company is called JCQ Just Capital Quotient. And that JC actually is a little bit of a subtle call out to another jc. Jesus Christ. That's the motivator for me. But as

I've gotten into the business world there's another JC and that's Jim Collins. Sometimes I wonder, am I, are we talking about Jesus Christ? Are we talking about Jim Collins? The sort of the model of how you do business. But I actually think that what is coming in the pressures, there are two pressures on the economy that are not going away. And they are the ecological crisis, not just climate change. Climate change is one aspect of the environment. But soil degradation, the excess of plastics, something like 300 million tons of plastics produced every year.

27:06

Don

That's the equivalent 240,000 Olympic swimming pools so overcoming that plastic challenge. But so you have planetary degradation, you have wealth inequality, you've got a lot yet smaller and smaller numbers getting richer and richer. And you've got a massive number of people that just can't get into the economy. And I'm not talking about being communists here. I'm just talking about in the 70s wealth equality existed if you had a factory job. My parents were factory workers. We had a rancher, two cars and went on vacation two for two weeks every year to Myrtle Beach. From factory workers. That does not exist anymore. That's a serious problem. So the pressures of wealth inequality and planetary degradation are not going away. So the business models of the future are going to take on this holistic perspective and begin responding to an economy that's rewarding impact and sustainability. So I'm looking for the next Jim Collins who will really help take this out of the Birkenstock wearing hippie. I care and I'm groovy. To the hard nosed business thinker who's just wanting to win in the market but realizes that the only way to win in the market in an economy under those pressures is to become more impactful and more sustainable.

28:25

Charlie

Sounds like we should write the sequel to Good to Great all about. There you go. Woke up with the sustainability man. I'd co author that with you, Ann. You got such a great feel for it. Where it sounds like you make time to think. I'm just going to go there. I don't think in the busy world we live in, people make enough time to

think. You've said it a couple of times. How do you discipline yourself? Do you go to a certain place, a walk, you got a chair? How do you predict just to think?

28:54

Don

Yeah, very specific. I do two things. I run at least one mile a day, no matter what. Every single day, at least one mile. Never miss a day. And I'm now one year, seven months and a few days without missing a single day. I will try. I once went three years without missing a day. But it's a simple thing. You can do it and then you can build other things around that. And then I have four minutes a day of meditation. At least four minutes a day. I've even gone on retreats But I. There's something about centering yourself and connecting to who you are at your core and learning. It's kind of a muscle, it's sort of like surfing. You can talk about it, but until you get up on the board and feel what it feels like, meditations like that.

29:38

Don

So I just have those two. I just have those two practices that I build around. But fortunately for me, I'm building and part of an environment of other leaders in business that care about this stuff, both the inner work and the external work of sustainability. And I connect with them and get to work with them. In fact, I kind of see my particular contribution to this work as creating space for people who don't normally get to think or think through things or contemplate the connection between contemplation and work.

30:15

Don

I create containers and space for people to do that in the work that I do in my consulting and coaching, and to kind of give them confidence that this is meaningful to them, that there's a resource within that, if it's nurtured, it will help sustain you and give you the creativity that you need to go out there and succeed in the market.

30:38

Charlie

And hopefully what our podcast listeners here are hearing, because what I'm hearing is you don't need hours. You're talking minutes, four minutes a day. Yes. Well, let's build on that. I like to ask about habits, rituals. You said the one mile run, no matter what, sometimes more. And meditation. Any other good habits, rituals that keep you on point?

30:57

Don

I split my time between Baltimore and Western Maryland. We're in a little Airbnb business going out in the foothills of the Appalachians. And there is really nothing that replaces being out in nature. You know, there's something about that. In fact, one of the ways I teach contemplation is by holding up an acorn. And that acorn is actually a picture of perfect contemplation because holding within that acorn is a vision of an oak, which is an amazing thing, which is like a. It's like a person within that person is holding the vision of a successful business, holding a vision of a. Of a family that. That you want to create, a business that you want to create. And so. So the ritual of engaging and put. Getting your hands dirty, working on cutting wood or fishing or just something out in nature, I think is more important than I had given it credence to. And so I've been doing that a lot.

31:59

Charlie

All right, I love it. What would you say is your specialty or gift?

32:03

Don

I just mentioned that, but I'll just say it again. That creates space for others to do the kinds of things that they don't normally have time or feel permission to do. And so, for example, there's seven of us in what we this year call the three the four by 366 challenge. This year is a leap year. And so I challenged six other

leaders to a daily four minute challenge to have your four minutes of meditation every day. And then we're in a little text group and we just how's it going? And it's not like some police or some religious thing. It's just an invitation, encouragement. You all want it, we all want to do it. Let's encourage one another to do it.

32:51

Don

And that I just have a real passion and a heart for that and to get to see people growing and changing. I got a text just two days ago from another client just saying this has unlocked power, an energy that I didn't know that I have. And so that's a. I think that's a kind of gift that I have that I offer and it's one that I feed off at joy, helping others find the space to do the kind of things they wouldn't otherwise do to build themselves up for this work.

33:17

Charlie

I love how you really showed that some of your habits are part of your gift too and your specialty.

33:23

Don

Absolutely. Yeah. And that's the way for everybody.

33:26

Charlie

Yeah. No, it's. But you're really intentional about it. Just a few more questions here. This is fantastic, man. A bucket list. Not everybody has a bucket list, but if you had a couple things on your bucket list. Share Don, what's on the bucket list?

33:40

Don

I'm a traveler. I love to travel. Just got back from South Africa, tacked on a couple of days and in Amsterdam just to enjoy another culture and go to a couple of

museums. But in all my travels, to more than 80 countries, I've never been to China. I've been to Hong Kong a couple times, but I've never been to China proper. And I think given one thing, when you're out of the U.S. You realize how important China is becoming. I think maybe within the bubble of our superpower context, we don't realize how important China is as it approaches our level of economic size. By 2030, they're about to be unbelievably so when I Started in NGO work. Some of our programs working among the world's poor were in China.

34:26

Don

China was one of the poorer countries in the world and we worked there. Now on. Within five years, China's about to be at our level. And I don't want to live my whole life and never go there and see that place and kind of get a sense of what's happening in that rising empire. So that's definitely on my bucket list.

34:44

Charlie

Is China the right country, 81 on the passport. I've been keeping track. You know, that's fantastic. They say everybody has a book in them. Have you ever thought about writing a book? Maybe you have. I'm not sure what that topic is.

34:57

Don

I have written a book called Jesus Wants to Save Christians, which I wrote more than 10 years ago with a friend of mine. That did really well and has been really exciting. Had to. And that was all really about challenging faith to not be comfortable with it. And it was written during the Iraq war. And we're saying this is stupid. This is ridiculous. This is contrary to the way of Christ in the world and all these things. At the time, people thought they were radical. And what now everybody says that was the stupidest thing we ever did. Both sides of the aisle say that was a stupid thing that we got into. But there's always something that we're doing that typically is stupid. And Jesus wants to save Christians is just by, for example, not caring about the environment. How can you be a child of God

and not care about God's world? So that was a book that we wrote. But yeah, I definitely feel one or two more in me and would love to see that happen. As far as maybe recommending a couple other books, two that are really important, kind of from two different sides of the spectrum. Jacobs book *Completing Capitalism*, he started at the Mars Foundation. They're the ones that pioneered this multi capitals framework that we use. It's their language that I pinched about profitable problem solving, that the purpose of business is profitable problem solving, completing capitalism and introducing this multi capitals or mutual value creation that he talks about. Super powerful and important book.

36:33

Don

One of the most important of all that I've read related to sustainability and impacting business. And then on the spiritual side, I'm not a Buddhist, I'm a Christian, but the Buddhist, Thich Nhat Hanh, the late Thich Nhat Hanh, his book *Zen and the Art of Saving the Planet* was just so beautiful and so challenging. On the environment. Really loved that book and highly recommend *Zen and the Art of Saving the Planet*.

36:57

Charlie

Look at this. We got our reading list here. We're going to put your book in our show. Notes of the podcast, those other recommendations, too. Thanks, man. You know, as you kind of look back on your career so far, is there any advice you wish you'd have learned earlier or heard earlier?

37:15

Don

I think that my name is Don Golden and Golden Handcuffs. We often get caught in the way that we make money and we. I've always in mind 57 now, and I've heard dozens and dozens of times that people would like to do different things, but they can't get out of the industry they're in. They're kind of shackled in a particular place. And I just encourage people. This is the whole idea of a necessity for you.

You know, what's in you, what's the passion in you, what burns within you. Because it's going to come out one way or another. It'll come out in alcoholism, it'll come out in irritability. It'll come out in just a dull life.

37:54

Don

So I do, I actually wish that I had made the change from the NGO world a bit earlier, maybe five years earlier, probably just in my career trajectory. And if you have kids in school and college and the mortgage and challenges like that, and the risk. But risk when it's grounded in a sense of who you really are, is revitalizing and energizing. And so I would encourage people to take a reading on their risk portfolio. You know, Adam Smith's famous for saying that capital is a coward. It flees risk. And sometimes if we have enough capital, we can just stay securely behind it. The Bible says that the rich man's wealth is his strong tower. He stands in need of nothing. But when we don't take risks when we're not out there putting some skin in the game to bring about what is ours in the world, life gets a little bit dull. So what's your risk portfolio? That's what I'd encourage people to evaluate.

38:58

Charlie

Risk portfolio. I love that. They say with entrepreneurs it's all about risk tolerance. But lately I've had the Aha Entrepreneur quote. It's really about how comfortable you can get about almost always feeling uncomfortable. I think they're really good, really good at just always being able to handle uncomfortable situations. That leads to risk tolerance.

39:19

Don

But it's kind of, yeah, that's good.

39:21

Charlie

That's good.

39:22

Don

I like that.

39:23

Charlie

Fantastic conversation. In closing, last question. Let's say we have some listeners right now, man, they're getting fired up about your story, your world journey, your impact, your faith driven entrepreneurship maybe, and just what you're doing right now. If someone's just jumping into, let's just call it this, sustainability. Any words of encouragement for someone jumping in right now?

39:46

Don

This is something new and you do need a community. There's the need to encourage one another. Whether we work directly together, whether you join, we have a small investing club which is really cool. Two people in our last meeting said that they thought they viewed this as their church now, like we get together monthly to look at investment opportunities and we take that journey together and kind of look at the whole picture of who we are, what we're trying to do in the world. But yeah, reach out and let's if you're asking these questions, there's a whole group of us doing the same.

40:20

Don

Find me on LinkedIn or come to justcapitalpotion.com and I always do a first call sort of free kind of thing just to meet people and see where they are. And that's how I get new clients. But most of the calls are more just sort of building the network, making new friends, learning myself that actually doing a lot of that, kind of just getting to talk with anyone began to give me a sense of this. Wake up, grow up, show up that people are kind of these sort of people are just like, who am I and what am I about? Others are, yeah, I've kind of figured it out, but I don't know

what to do. And then others are all about doing it and needing to grow it. And so yeah, let's do this. Work together.

41:01

Don

Reach out to me either on LinkedIn or just come to my website@just capital ocean.com and there's a little place that you can reach out to me there and love to meet you and any of your listeners and see if they can be of encouragement to us or us to them or someone in our network that might be related to what they do.

41:23

Charlie

Wake up, grow up, show up. I really, truly am so glad you came on the podcast, man. Thanks for sharing.

41:29

Don

My pleasure, Charlie.

41:30

Charlie

Appreciate what you're doing, some humor and I look forward to hopefully running into you and hanging out. You seem like a person. I love that. Life and hanging out. And so everybody do please connect with Don. Let them know what you think. Reach out. And Don, thank you so much for being on the podcast today.

41:44

Don

Awesome. My pleasure. Thanks for having me.

41:45

Charlie

Charlie thank you for listening to this episode of the Green Building matters podcast@gbs.com Our mission is to advance the Green Building movement through Best in class education and in Remember, you can go to gbes.com podcast for any notes and links that we mentioned in today's episode, and you can actually see the other episodes that have already been recorded with our amazing guests. Please tell your friends about this podcast, tell your colleagues, and if you really enjoyed it, leave a positive review on itunes. Thank you so much and we'll see you on next week's episode.