Welcome to the Event Brew, where event professionals from different backgrounds talk about the latest, most controversial, and interesting topics dominating the minds of the industry right now. This is a candid conversation, the likes of which can only otherwise be found late at night in host hotel lobby bars during industry conferences. So relax and drop in on what event pros really say when no one else is around.

This show is brought to you by Endless Events, the event AV company that tells you how it really is. Now, let's brew something up.

Will Curran:

Hey, how's it going everybody? Welcome to Event Brew. This is Will Curran from Endless Events.

Nick Borelli: Hi, this is Nick Borelli from Borelli Strategies.

Dustin Westling: Hey team, this is Dustin Westling with One West events.

Thuy Diep:

And I'm Thuy Diep with PRA Business Events L.A.

Will Curran:

Awesome, well welcome everybody to our newest podcast called Event Brew. We're really excited to be doing this episode, and to be doing this whole entire show. There's literally so much to talk about. We have so much, literally, to dive into.

Will Curran:

But we wanted to do a first episode where we explain a little bit about what is Event Brew, and why this podcast is totally different than any other events industry podcast out there. Also a chance for you to get to know us as hosts, and then we're hoping we can get into... a little bit into the meat and talk about one of our first topics as well.

Will Curran:

So, starting off with what is Event Brew, and why is this different than the other two podcasts that Endless currently produces, called The Icons or Event Tech Podcast? So, instead of me explaining it, because I feel like... We have this crazy idea we came up with. I want to let these guys kind of explain what they think Event Brew is all about. So, maybe starting off with Nick. Do you want to kind of explain, maybe in one sentence, what Event Brew is?

Nick Borelli:

Yeah. My favorite conversations for the 20 years I've been in the events industry are not the ones that happen on stage. They're not the ones that happen in any kind of official capacity.

They're the conversations with a bunch of different people sitting around a table talking about what's real, and what's their point of view, and I'm just excited to potentially have the opportunity to share these amazing conversations that I've been a part of with more people that would benefit from them than simply just the four people that happen to be maybe sitting across from each other at any hotel lobby.

Will Curran:

I love the lobby analogy too, that's one of my favorite things. Thuy, what about you? What's your one sentence description of what Event Brew's all about?

Thuy Diep: I just want to spill the tea with my fellow colleagues, and have to go live recording it.

Will Curran: I hope that in a year, that's still a thing, fingers crossed.

Nick Borelli: Spilling the tea?

Will Curran: Yeah, yeah.

Dustin Westling: I think it's here to stay.

Nick Borelli: I think so too.

Will Curran: I definitely think so too. Dustin, what about you? What's your one sentence explanation?

Dustin Westling:

Yeah, I'm with Nick. I think that when we gather and when we organize independently, and come together, that's when the best work and the best ideas are, so this is kind of like the industry debrief. Yeah.

Will Curran:

I love it. And one of my favorite analogies for this show is... Actually, Nick, I think you're the one who came up with this when I was first telling you about this idea. You called it the View for the events industry.

Will Curran:

The idea that we're going to talk about controversial stuff here.

Nick Borelli: I mean, yeah-

Dustin Westling: So which one of us is Whoopi?

Nick Borelli: Yeah... huh. I don't know, I like Whoopi, so whatever.

Will Curran: Nick's definitely Whoopi.

Dustin Westling: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Nick Borelli:

I generally listen for her to say things, and I'm kind of on her camp most of the time. But yeah, I just like the idea of... There's so many podcasts about... with authority figures talking about, you know, from their specific pulpit, about what is the right thing to do, or what is great information from a factual standpoint? I think that stuff's awesome, but I think also sometimes I just want editorial. You know, I just want to hear a different point of view than maybe I get to hear otherwise. But mostly from a place of... you know, from humility. Like, this is just one person or four people's opinions or ideas behind that, without the pretense of talking at people.

Will Curran: Yeah, I like that, I like that a lot.

Will Curran:

Well, I think what's interesting about the format that we talked a lot about too, is that we're definitely trying to stay away from the traditional interview-interviewee format too, if I've got that right. Is that right, guys?

Dustin Westling: I hope so.

Nick Borelli: There's a lot of those. There's a new one every day. So.

Will Curran:

It's like, we've literally... we have... there's so many of the like, "Oh yeah, this person's been on this show, they say the same things, they tell their story." It's ironic, because that's why I started

at EventIcons. But we started realizing that everyone's craving to hear somebody stand up and say "This is what I think!" And almost have a debate format around it a little bit too, right?

Nick Borelli:

In the interviews sometimes, you get a little bit of that, and it's really exciting and then they go back to kind of, "All right, I've got to steer this home, as far as talking about what I do, or about whatever position I'm in, or whatever." But every once in a while, some random question will come up that you'll get the real interesting truth from someone who's being interviewed. But, I mean, I was interviewed twice this week, and I can tell you that there's probably a 30% difference between one versus the other.

Nick Borelli:

I'm bored of it. I don't want to hear me anymore from that standpoint.

Thuy Diep:

Absolutely, Nick. It's really about being vulnerable, and being real with each other. I think a lot of times when we are putting on our career hats, going to all these events, we have a certain voice, and it needs to maintain a sense of professionalism. I love the fact that we are all agreeing to say, "Here's how we feel. We may be experts in this topic, we may not. We may feel passionate about something, or, you know what, I have no idea what we are talking about." But being able to have that sense, and being able to be so real, I think that will hopefully get the audience to say, "Us too. Hey, we're also in the same boat."

Dustin Westling:

I love that Thuy. I think that if we can use this platform to spark conversation and everybody can take away from this, that you can tear topics apart and you can voice your opinion. This... Our industry is just full of so many really amazing talented people, and let's inspire to start ripping the Band-Aid off things.

Will Curran:

Is anybody here really passionate about something in the events industry that you consider yourself not only not an expert in, but like, very... in the middle. Like, medium to lower, but you're still super passionate about?

Nick Borelli: I'll give-

Thuy Diep: I'll chime in.

Will Curran: Yeah, I want to hear it. This is good. Thuy Diep: I'll do it!

Will Curran: Yeah, yeah!

Thuy Diep:

I'm passionate about the issue of stress and how we... our mindset when it comes to just being able to have that mental health awareness. Especially from my own personal experience, and I'm really passionate about supplier-partner relationships, and that partnership where everyone's collaborating, from the client to vendors to just everyone involved. I'm a huge cheerleader, if you want to say, for just working all together in a harmonious way. Those are I would say my top two things.

Will Curran: That's interesting.

Will Curran:

I would say mine definitely... The area that I don't know a ton about but I'm really passionate about and want to see the future is... What does this actually look like for the benefit of the attendees too? And the idea that a lot of times when we're planning, it feels like we're planning for ourselves in some ways.

Dustin Westling: Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Nick Borelli: Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Will Curran:

And a lot of times I'm wondering what the future of events is going to look like, not from a AR/VR or you know, a like, "Oh hey, we're going to have faster Wi-Fi at events." But really like, what does this future of events going to look like for the attendee themselves. Like, are they going to be like, "Look, I have to have couches! I want to sit on couches." Is that going to be a requirement for events in the future. You know, things like that I think... really passionate about that. I don't really know a ton about, but I want to learn way more about too.

Will Curran: Why does it actually matter?

Nick Borelli:

I mean, for me, it's behavioral science. I'm really passionate that I believe that's where our industry is going, at the highest level. Events, to me, exist to create behavioral change. And, investing in understanding of human behavior is, to me... Here I have the biggest distance.

Nick Borelli: Sorry my Tamagotchi needs to be fed.

Nick Borelli: The... Because I'm in 1993.

Dustin Westling: That's not okay.

Nick Borelli: That's a real thing. Yeah, it's not a business call. It's my Tamagotchi.

Thuy Diep: Oh my goodness. That is throwback, Nick.

Nick Borelli:

Yeah, yeah. I love that stuff. I love pop culture nonsense. And grinding games.

Nick Borelli:

Yeah, I mean, I feel like I am below a student level in that, but I'm super excited and I've been just devouring books on behavioral science, because I feel like it's where we're at. You know, that, to me, is the event industry future. It's how do I understand people and how do I move people in the direction that I want them to? But I'm an idiot in it, I mean-

Dustin Westling: I think-

Dustin Westling:

I think that, you know, my passions in this industry have really evolved over the last ten years of my business. And where I am right now and the thing I'm most passionate about is being a part of a movement within our industry where people are really starting to recognize the impact that we have on communities, the impact we have on business, the impact that we have on people. And all through live experience, and I feel like we're all starting to find our superpower and yeah, it's a really awesome time to be a part of this industry, regardless of what part of it you work in. So, yeah, I'm super stoked to continue to watch the superpowers grow.

Nick Borelli:

I don't think there's ever been a... I was just going to add... But I don't think there's ever been a time in the events industry where there's been a better opportunity to kind of create your own lane too. And that's kind of exciting to me.

Dustin Westling: One hundred percent.

Will Curran:

Speaking of lanes, and kind of... I think giving everyone an idea, too, of what we do in the industry, I think is important probably for everyone to understand us as hosts, and kind of where our point of view is coming at for the industry. Do we want to kind of go around real quick and just maybe explain a little bit about maybe what we've done in the industry and what we do today?

Nick Borelli:

Yeah, I mean. I... This is Nick. I feel like I maybe don't have to say that, I don't know. We'll work that out over time. Hopefully people will know each other's voices.

Nick Borelli:

But yeah, I mean, started in events when I was 14 years old. My dad was HR at this manufacturing group and they had this 1000-person picnic every year at this venue and my dad had enough clout to get me a job washing dishes. You know it's a lot of real huge clout right?

Nick Borelli:

And said at 14 I was going to do that for this picnic catering company that did like ten or twenty thousand people on a given Saturday, and I eventually worked there full time and started being client-facing, within 6 months because I didn't sound like a complete idiot, which is a lot when you're 14. Like, that's really the only barrier.

Nick Borelli:

And then I incrementally moved up within F&B over the course of 15 years with no college. I never went to college. I had a side hustle where I worked for a marketing agency designing websites. Something I just taught myself, because I'm just into nerdy pursuits, and that was the internet... was before everyone was on it, and it was just hardcore nerds only in the 90s. And over time I eventually merged the two things that I was into, the side hustle, and the job in events. And found a way into what I do now which is marketing consulting for events and event companies. That's it.

Will Curran: Thuy, do you want to go next?

Thuy Diep:

Oh, goodness. So I probably realized I love events when I was a professional cheerleader doing all the event planning portion of it on the side, helping out with our president. And I thought I wanted to go into public relations. I went to college for it, and then I realized I was doing way too much writing and I loved the actual creating and designing aspect of it, which then realized, I need to actually go into hospitality conference management.

Thuy Diep:

So I started... I actually then went to Las Vegas, attended the school... the School of Hospitality. TISOH? And from there, all of the instructors, the teachers, were event professionals. So I had people like Michele Polci, who taught me catering, and she's director of catering for all of Caesars property, just... things like that. So my network as a student, I was already being exposed to NACE, ILEA, MPI, and I started getting involved from there. My first industry job, I like to say was actually Champagne Creative Group. I was an account executive there when I was actually still a student. I also was with MGM Grand Garden Arenas, I did all their special events, which basically meant I was an usher and went to all the concerts and events for free. I got paid to watch concerts.

Thuy Diep: But it was great because I got to get-

Will Curran: Wow.

Thuy Diep:

... to know the security team and the lighting, and I was so intrigued by back of house. And from there, I knew I wanted to put the puzzle together, versus being one piece of that puzzle. So then that's when I joined PRA in Las Vegas for three years of my career. Then actually went to Europe for the summer after that, which we'll go into details, I'm sure, about in the later podcast episode. Then I'm here in L.A. now with the same company, with PRA Business Events.

Thuy Diep: What about you, Dustin?

Nick Borelli: Dustin started off as a cheerleader too, so that's pretty cool. I wanted that.

Dustin Westling: I was just going to say I had the exact same path.

Dustin Westling: The only difference is that I'm still a cheerleader.

Nick Borelli:

Right.

Dustin Westling: And I can't do the flips anymore, but I've-

Thuy Diep: For hockey, though, right?

Dustin Westling: Got a mean... Yeah exactly.

Dustin Westling:

Yeah, I've spent my entire working adult life in this industry. So I stared as a banquet server while I was in high school, and I always had a fascination for human interaction and how powerful it is when people come together and from a 15 year old until now, I still kind of share the same fascination for it and I look at events whether I'm a part of them or not a part of them. I love to take them apart and I love to see how they work and the impact that they have.

Dustin Westling:

So I've done everything from hotels and convention centers to public attractions and high-end private retreats. I, 10 yeas ago, bought a very small, local décor company through a weird connection and it was just good timing and something I thought I could do as a side hustle. And, 10 years later, it's the company that I run now, which is a design and production firm here in Calgary, in Canada. If I didn't mention that, I'm the fellow Canadian on the podcast. I've got a wicked team of designers and project managers. We execute over 400 projects a year across Canada.

Dustin Westling:

And yeah, everyday I feel so grateful to be a part of this business and this community.

Will Curran:

Oh yeah. Well, I talk way too much, so instead, I'll share a link for everybody's episodes down below, that's Event Icons where you can hear my story.

Will Curran:

But to give everybody a background, I started a DJ. DJ-ing backyard parties in high school. Then we threw massive dance parties with DJs and big productions. Then I realized 99% of my revenue was not coming from DJ-ing, but prom production, and I like production a lot, so I stopped being a DJ and started focusing on production. Then eventually I realized that AV companies suck and that they really could be done better. So I basically started focusing on AV and event production. So basically from DJ to AV is the background story of mine in one sentence. So feel free to make fun of me for being a DJ. Thuy Diep: What was your DJ name?

Dustin Westling: Do you have the police sounds?

Nick Borelli: Oh yeah.

Will Curran:

Oh, gosh, yes. I've had a couple DJ names. I feel like I'm the guy who has different aliases for different projects, you know?

Will Curran: My first DJ name was DJ Pip. P-I-P.

Dustin Westling: Pip!

Will Curran:

And if you actually Google or YouTube search for it, you can find videos of me in high school, spinning dark drum and bass...

Nick Borelli: Oh no.

Will Curran: ... on YouTube first came out, when there was a 10-minute limit on the videos.

Will Curran: Yeah. If you're ready for a trip, that's a good one.

Will Curran:

I did that for a while, doing drum and bass. And then when I got into high school... Or when I was getting older and starting to do more of the backyard parties, and you know, 60th anniversary and all those things like that, I switched to DJ Will. Because that's what everyone just ended up calling me anyways. Because they don't care what your DJ name is. They just take your first name, and put DJ in front of it.

Will Curran: DJ Will!

Will Curran:

And then when I became a video DJ in college and was really throwing those massive high school and college events, with rager parties, I was DJ Will See. S-E-E, because my last name starts with C. And also I was video DJ, so you saw. You see?

Will Curran:

Well, I'm going to stop talking for the rest of this episode.

Thuy Diep: Well I was going to say, so Will told us his DJ name. Nick, Dustin, what would your DJ name be?

Dustin Westling: Oh.

Nick Borelli: I had one. I was a radio DJ for 6 years.

Will Curran: And what was your name?

Nick Borelli: In eighth grade. On... DJ Zero. And I can't remember why.

Will Curran: With a Z or with an X?

Nick Borelli: Oh, that would have been great, but we weren't doing that then. So, it was just spelled out.

Nick Borelli: It was something to tag, on walls too. I think it was probably... I just had a really good tag at that point.

Dustin Westling: So there's a bunch of freight trains, running around America, with DJ Zero on them?

Nick Borelli:

Yeah, I don't know. I don't know if I was definitely using the DJ aspect of it in that bit. But, yeah, there's probably, certainly, alleyways in Erie Pennsylvania, that have that still somewhere.

Will Curran: I'm just imagining your DJ drop. It's like, "DJ Zero. He'll be your hero." Thuy Diep: That was actually pretty good.

Nick Borelli: It's good for rhyming.

Dustin Westling: That's pretty good.

Nick Borelli: Yeah. I told you guys I was real DJ. I wasn't making that up. Dustin what about you. What would be your DJ name?

Dustin Westling: Oh, shit. What would be my DJ name?

Nick Borelli: That's not necessarily going to be a great DJ name.

Dustin Westling:

Yeah, it might be a little long. I don't know. A good friend of mine, Jennifer Bergman, calls me Darkwing. And I assume she's meaning it as some sort of an endearing statement, but I think it might have to do with my sarcastic, dark personality, so I'm going to go with DJ Darkwing.

Nick Borelli: That's great. There's a lot of-

Will Curran: Wait, Dustin, you're sarcastic?

Dustin Westling: Mm-mm (negative). Nope. I have a black belt in sarcasm.

Will Curran: Watch out. Watch out.

Dustin Westling: It gets me in trouble all the time.

Nick Borelli: Yeah, the drier it is, the more painful it can be on other people.

Dustin Westling:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Will Curran: This is true. It's just like a black belt.

Dustin Westling: Yeah. I live to make people uncomfortable with my sarcasm.

Will Curran: So, get ready audience. He's coming for you.

Will Curran: Wait, I have to know Thuy's though. Because Thuy had the question, so she obviously's been saving up her DJ name for like ever.

Thuy Diep:

So, any question... crazy questions like that, I usually always have... I'm definitely the one with exit strategies, and plans and I'm... so I will ask all those quirky questions, and yes I do have a DJ name. It would be DJ Too Diep. I'd be playing deep house and trance music and then throw them with that trap music. It would be an underground rave-

Will Curran: What? So you're like the-

Thuy Diep: Somewhere in an L.A. warehouse. Yes. That would be all about..

Nick Borelli: So you have business strategy for it, not just a name. That's great.

Thuy Diep: I am a...

Dustin Westling: So you have not put any thought to this.

Thuy Diep: At a special rate, promo code, Event Brew.

Will Curran: There you go. There you go. There's a checkout.

Thuy Diep:

I had to put a plug. I had to put a plug in.

Will Curran: Yeah.

Thuy Diep: You can get all 4 of us, you guys. For even a heavier special rate.

Nick Borelli: That's true.

Nick Borelli: Probably cheaper if I'm not in it.

Nick Borelli: Or- or- yeah.

Will Curran:

You're the DJ member that everyone just doesn't want to show up at the show? They're like, "We like everybody else but not Nick." Yeah.

Dustin Westling: The more of us you invite the cheaper it is.

Will Curran: Yeah, exactly.

Will Curran:

Bulk discount, bulk discount. I'm also just imagining deep house and trance and everyone's really vibing really hard, and then all of a sudden it's just like trap, like braow, broaouw br br bup . Or like... I guess that's more like dubstep than anything. But. Trap's a little crazy.

Thuy Diep:

Oh... I love those dirty beats. I will listen to... If you want to get me dancing, just start playing some trap, and I go solo...

Nick Borelli: And then future bass. Just like the intro of the podcast.

Dustin Westling: I was going to say. I think when you need to rethink the intro music.

Will Curran:

We'll put some more aggressive trap house. Not trap on there.

Nick Borelli:

As I'm listening to the new Bon Iver album. I don't want to make everyone like... cry, so let's take me out of this.

Nick Borelli: Like, sad bastard music is my go-to.

Will Curran: All right, so we try to pivot this back into something relevant to Event Brew.

Nick Borelli: Sure.

Will Curran: Someone take us somewhere else, other than Nick crying.

Nick Borelli: Yeah, that's a great place to get out of.

Dustin Westling: You're in a safe place, Nick-

Will Curran: Okay so-

Nick Borelli: Sorry?

Will Curran: I was going to say-

Will Curran: You're in a safe place.

Dustin Westling: You're in a safe place, Nick. Let it out.

Nick Borelli: No, yeah. I'm fine with crying. It's no big deal.

Nick Borelli:

But so yeah, Dustin had a question that we were talking about before the show about what fills everybody's life up outside of work. And, you know, kind of passion based. Because I feel like all of us could probably make more money doing almost anything else, so, if it's not passion, like, what are we doing?

Nick Borelli: Probably have all... All of us probably have that in common?

Nick Borelli:

So yeah, I'm super curious what you guys are passionate about outside of the industry.

Will Curran:

Thuy.

Thuy Diep:

Oh goodness, well. I think everyone's... A lot of people who are listening might say, "What life outside of work?" I would say I... Definitely my physical health. So, really into yoga and you know, doing meditation. Breath work is the goal right now. I don't know if anyone knows this, I don't know if I should even say it, but it's actually a goal of mine to compete in pole fitness. I'm not a stripper, but pole fitness is an actual thing. It's actually in the trials for the Olympics, and so I would love to compete in pole fitness, so we'll see if I get back into that, if I make time.

Thuy Diep:

I have this thing called a bed, that I just love to take naps in and watch Netflix when I make time for it. So that's... I think it's so crazy, because we, as event professionals, one of our perks, is going to all these events you know seeing and feeling and being part of these amazing experiences. A lot of times that's what quote unquote normal people outside our industry do for fun, so that's what it's a thing to do as part of our jobs. So, I'm the opposite, when it's a Friday night and I have no plans. I do absolutely nothing. I'll order Postmates and just veg and just watch TV. That would probably be what would fill my limited amount of time outside of work.

Thuy Diep: What about you, Will?

Will Curran:

So, I'm definitely super nerdy about technology. I'm obviously really into computers and everything that touches tech, so I spend a lot of time just watching reviews on everything that's coming out at any given moment.

Will Curran:

That's generally what I'm doing a lot of time. I'm also really.... Most people don't know that I'm really into home automation, which is obviously like a subset of tech. So I love making my lights turn on when I walk into rooms. And when I say certain commands, my house does crazy things

for me and you know things like that. Everyone always walks into my apartment like, "Ooh, look at all the lights and stuff." So I'm really into that. And that's what I definitely work on when I'm not working.

Will Curran:

I also really am into escape rooms as well. And I took Nick to do his first-

Nick Borelli: Yeah

Will Curran: That was your first ever escape room, right Nick?

Nick Borelli:

Yeah yeah. A proper one. I've done some ones that are in events, but I wouldn't call them real ones. It was, like, one challenge.

Will Curran:

Yeah, so he got to see the intense side of Will. That working so hard to escape. I take it very seriously. I think I've done close to 75 rooms now or something like that?

Will Curran:

And what other crazy stuff? I listen to a lot of music. I also watch a ton of movies. So every Thursday, I see every movie that comes out. So last night was Ready or Not, and it was fantastic.

Thuy Diep: Will, do you have the AMC A-List?

Will Curran:

I do, yeah. I used to... I was like one of the first MoviePass people too. Until we realized that it was probably going to go out of business soon so we bailed before they lost all of our credit card information, this last week. So yeah. So yeah. Huge in A-List. I utilize it a hundred percent, whenever I can.

Will Curran: So if you guys ever want to go see a movie, you've got a movie buddy.

Will Curran: Yeah. Dustin what about you?

Dustin Westling:

My life has been full with my new puppy. I got a dog about 10 months ago and he is... He's a shepherd cross. He's from a rescue... animal rescue foundation here in Calgary. And when I went to go pick him up, he was at a foster home, and there was him and his sister were there. And walk in the door and the girl... The young girl in the foster home was holding this cute little shepherd puppy and I was like, "Oh it's so cute!" And she's like, "No, this is Cuddles." And she moves, and behind her is her brother, holding this big chunk of a puppy and he's like, "This one's yours. His name's Chunkers." And he was a very large puppy. And he's grown... He's 10 months old and 90 pounds and he is a beast of a dog but very sweet.

Dustin Westling:

So he has definitely changed the way I live. It is... it's a really... It's really great to have him. I live in Calgary, Alberta, so, we are right on the outskirts of the rocky mountains, so I get to take a lot of time to go out to the mountains, do a lot of hiking. It's kind of like Thuy says, we're inundated by events that fill us up and stimulate us every day and every waking moment is a hustle in this industry, so I take every opportunity I can to get to a no-cell zone and climb a mountain and spend some time out in nature.

Will Curran:

I think we should do a whole episode on how do event professionals have pets. Like, how is it even possible for you to have a dog with how busy you are. It's crazy.

Dustin Westling: Well, I bring him to work, so one of the-

Will Curran: Well, that helps.

Dustin Westling:

So he comes to work, and fortunately my team is just as excited about him as I am, so I put him in the front door and everybody takes over. And everybody has their thing that they do with him and they feed him a Costco-sized bag of tenderloin treats a week. So yes, he's very well taken care of. And at the end of the day, I strap him in and off we go.

Thuy Diep:

I've been going on five years trying to get Australian shepherds, and I want two of them. But even in Vegas when I was living there, I even had... The house I leased even had a doggie door with a gated back yard. I still could not get it because I just travel too much and work too much. So Dustin, hold me accountable for 2020. Puppies in 2020.

Dustin Westling: Done. Done. I'm going to send you one.

Thuy Diep:

And even talking about puppies. What about... I am so curious how people have families and kids because-

Dustin Westling: Oh my god.

Thuy Diep: I always say-

Nick Borelli: I have both.

Thuy Diep: You know, like-

Nick Borelli: Oh yeah.

Thuy Diep:

If I don't feed myself, I'm okay. I can go grab something. But if you don't feed your two year old, they'll die. Like, they're actual people. And they can't take care of themselves. So how... That is actually... We should bring someone on. And just, that would be a whole topic. Like, how do you have all these responsibilities and the never ending career?

Nick Borelli: I've got a couple.

Will Curran: Nick's like, "I have kids!"

Nick Borelli:

I mean, besides my Tamagotchi. I have a five-year-old named Roman, who's a human, and I have a one-year-old girl named Iris, who's also a human, and I have an 18-year-old cat, so I think I've proven that I-

Will Curran: Eighteen.

Nick Borelli: I've been able to sustainably keep an animal alive longer than it's supposed to.

Thuy Diep: Teach us your ways, Nick. Nick Borelli: Yeah, well. I mean-

Will Curran:

18 years. Technically only 18 years, is how far you've made it, so...

Nick Borelli:

I just have to replicate that again two more times and then I'm out. You know. I will not have a third kid. Trust me. Medical science is great. So that's taken care of. But yeah, I mean it's... I will say that, I think how most people talk about events is how I talked about events for the first, maybe, 15 years of me being in it, and I'm in a completely different place than I think many of you guys are, and most of the industry. So that makes a difference.

Nick Borelli:

I mean, I travel a lot, I guess. I don't feel like I travel that much, but people tell me I do. But if I'm not, I work Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, about 8 hours a day, in my house. That's it. That's all I do.

Nick Borelli:

So it's a... I'm not on job sites. I know what load-in is. I know what load in... or out is. I don't participate in them. Nor do I actually attend a lot of the events that I work on. So I work in a strategy position where I'm working on audience growth and I'm managing ad campaigns and I'm writing copy and I'm coming up with organizing principles of events and it's kind of the esoteric aspect of the events industry, and it couldn't be less hands on.

Nick Borelli:

I worked super hands on, I worked seven days a week for 10 years straight. I worked seven days a week and I ended up having back surgery, bad knees. I had an anxiety attack. I had a lot of stuff. And I put myself in a position where I could change that. And be in the position I'm in now, where I get to hang out with my family a lot. Like, a lot more than most people do. Even outside of the industry. Like, most people, you know, just straight up.

Nick Borelli:

Because that's what I value. But it's not... I don't think... I think now we're finally in a position where there's a route for people to find that lane, if that's what they really value. But I'm way behind on a lot of stuff that you guys are further ahead. Like, I would love to know more about the technology stuff that Will knows. Or, I don't hang out with anybody outside of my family, which is fine, but that's... he's... gets to hang out with his friends. Nor do I have the enclave in Ohio, the cool mountains that Dustin does. And I certainly have no ability to say that I have any command over my body or breathing like Thuy does. So I have a ton to learn in a lot of those different areas, but in the one, I had a specific goal that I wanted and I've a very great balance.

Dustin Westling:

Maybe we'll get Thuy to walk us through breathing exercises at the end of every podcast.

Nick Borelli:

For sure.

Will Curran:

I mean, sometimes I feel like we're going to have such an intense debate sometimes, we might need some... Like, "All right guys. Everyone breathe in. Breathe out."

Nick Borelli: Put your leg over your head and breathe.

Thuy Diep:

It's honestly the most L.A. thing ever, you guys. I'm honestly paying for very expensive naps, is what I'm doing. But an hour of napping on your phone... It's incredible... The breath. And I go into hippy mode. I'm definitely, you know... I'm from North Hampton Massachusetts. If anyone knows that area. It's kind of like Austin Texas, or Portland. And I... We can totally do that, but I will send you a bill. And I am not certified. Just putting that on the record.

Will Curran: Basically we're getting crappy service, and we're paying for it.

Thuy Diep: Yes, absolutely.

Nick Borelli: Sending people a bill and not being qualified is such an event industry thing to do, so you're-

Will Curran: Oh yes. Oh that was awesome.

Dustin Westling: Shots fired.

Nick Borelli: So you might as well join in. You're in plenty of company.

Will Curran: But that's the culture.

Nick Borelli:

I was going to say that's... I think that probably in the deficit of event professionals' lives, it's probably the biggest area where improvement needs to happen is... Honestly, I've had conversations with people about it and they don't... They kind of intellectually get it, but they don't actually do it. If you tell them, it's good for your clients for you to be healthy, they go, "Oh, okay. Well, now I'm listening." Because they're such giving trees, and they just didn't read the end of that book where that tree dies.

Will Curran:

We're still talking about unqualified people...

Nick Borelli: No, about wellness. I was trying to get out of that as quick as I could.

Will Curran:

No, I was trying to bring us back into that topic. I mean that's probably going to end up being a topic for this show for sure, but I'm not sure if we want to dive into it right now and you know do it. I mean, Dustin says, shots fired, but I think we need shots fired like all the time on this show.

Dustin Westling: It sounds like Bambi just died, Nick. Way to go.

Nick Borelli: Yeah, sorry.

Will Curran: No, Bambi's mom and Bambi. Together.

Nick Borelli: They're all dead. D-d-dead deer. But my cat's still alive, so that's good.

Will Curran: That's true, but it's 18. I mean 19... [Euhh... 00:35:13].

Nick Borelli:

I would say, we would be remiss to sometimes not point this out, because as I look around my eyes are always inundated with as much clutter as humanly possible. I also own 40,000 comic books and about four or five thousand action figures that I'm looking at currently, all at once.

Nick Borelli:

That's been with me for 30 years, and I can... I had a podcast for a number of years about that stuff. And I'm much more of an authority figure in that space, than I am probably in anything else.

Thuy Diep:

Wait, Nick. Do you actually play with the figures and read the comics, or are you the person who has it all sealed up?

Nick Borelli:

Oh, I'm not a sealed-up guy. I do read all the comics. There's a 100 books that I read monthly. For the last... I've been buying at that almost exact volume since maybe 99. But the action figures are all out. They're all kind of in different sections and my son has the ability to come up here and grab what he wants. Like a library, and then they come back up. Because I don't care about their value? I just like them aesthetically.

Nick Borelli:

But yeah, if you're... all the things you're supposed to do for an office, about minimalism? To be able to keep you focused? I couldn't see someone breaking that worse than I do.

Will Curran:

Definitely check out an EventIcons episode because that's a video podcast, and you can see Nick's collection. It's pretty intense. And people all the time comment on all my Funko Pops that I had in the background. And Nick's, by far, crushes me.

Nick Borelli:

Like, I don't have that many Funko Pops. But I probably have about a 100. But I don't try to get Funko Pops. They just kind of happen every once in a while. But other things. Like, there was a collection of this series called Marvel Legends. I sold like 800 of them, and you wouldn't even know that they were gone. They just took up that space pretty quickly.

Thuy Diep: You know you can get those of yourself now?

Nick Borelli: I have, yeah, I have-

Thuy Diep: I have zero, so.

Nick Borelli: Yeah. I have a couple 3D statues of myself. Which I have to pay extra. Because it's me. [crosstalk 00:37:27]

Dustin Westling: Good Lord, they're on the front lawn. Marble.

Nick Borelli:

Yeah!

Dustin Westling:

I think we know what Nick's office looks like. I know what Will's office looks like. Thuy, where are you sitting. What's around you right now?

Thuy Diep:

Well, I have organized chaos right now, because being a designer, and being creative, I know where things are, but I try to keep everything pretty much to a minimal. I... Number one rule for me is I don't keep tchotchkes, unless I really like it. So when you're going to all those events or supplier partners, you know when they gift you things. I'm sorry, I don't keep your post-its, or pens. I have a dedicated... I'm very particular with my pens. So when I'm looking around, let me see. I have these two plants that a friend gave me that I have to remind myself to water or else I'll kill them.

Dustin Westling: Water bottles?

Thuy Diep:

So actually I have 2 plants. That's my responsibility. I have my favorite painting that I won at a silent auction, that we actually donated to Surge for... It's actually the most iconic event that I ever designed. It was with the ILEA Vegas chapter. Was our first Surge Foundation charity, and we donated 28,000 dollars and they... We had a live painter, and he actually painted me on stage when I was speaking, and of course, being me, I'm like, "I need to have it!"

Dustin Westling: That's cool.

Thuy Diep:

And we... It sold for 1000 dollars. What else do I have in here. I basically have everything in boxes. Like, if I were to be able to pack up and get out, if I were to get laid off, or anything of that sorts. So I still need to design-

Dustin Westling: I was going to say leave the country, but you made it all morbid.

Thuy Diep: Yeah, so I'm seriously looking around-

Thuy Diep: Oh, and of course, I have my brew. Can we talk about what everyone's drinking, by the way?

Will Curran:

Oh, yeah, yeah, we didn't talk about the format, but-

Thuy Diep: Yeah, Dustin, what is-

Will Curran: I think we should talk about Dustin's desk, and then can we circle back to the point of the brew?

Thuy Diep: Yeah! Dustin, what does your office look like? A lot of Canadian flags.

Dustin Westling: A lot of Canadian flags. I've got some maple syrup.

Nick Borelli: Cowboy boots...

Dustin Westling:

I've got my cowboy boots. No, I am in the most ridiculous space. I am in an all-white office, with a white desk, and a chair, and there's not a single other thing in this office. Not by design. It's just a new office. So, yes. As we go along, we will continue to add things to this room, and I will keep you updated. But it is the most stark, hospital-looking thing right now.

Will Curran: I'm going to send you color. Just like, send you a bucket of paint.

Nick Borelli: Yeah, do you want to couple hundred Ninja Turtles or something, I have, like-

Dustin Westling: You know, what, I don't.

Nick Borelli: ... Tons of doubles...

Dustin Westling: No, I'm good. You're both... Both your collections of toys make me anxious.

Nick Borelli:

Dust collecting. Yeah, I agree. I imagine the anxiety that people would have sitting in this space for more than five minutes would be... So, it's... The second floor is this stuff and I would say, I don't know, five times a year, my wife comes up here and it's not good. It's... She's just like-

Dustin Westling: I was just going to ask what does your wife think of all the stuff.

Nick Borelli: "It's just terrible." Just like, pretend it doesn't exist. Yeah.

Will Curran: Yeah. Speaking of what fill you up. Transitions.

Dustin Westling: Good transitions.

Thuy Diep: It is now rated R.

Nick Borelli:

I was like, "Where are you going with this... oh no, the drinks. Got it." The drinks. Yeah. We all went there.

Will Curran: We have to put that explicit category on the iTunes. All of a sudden.

Nick Borelli: Implicit.

Will Curran:

Yeah, so I forgot to talk about... Oh yeah. Implicit. The format of the Event Brew and kind of the concept that we had about all of us drinking a brew as part of the show. And that was kind of like a concept that we had is this idea that everyone has their own brew, and every time you listen to us, we're all going to have our own brew and we'll talk about it at the beginning of the show, so that way you know what we're drinking. But the good thing is brew can be many things.

Will Curran:

But, maybe if we go around real quick and everyone talk about what they think their go-to brew is that they're going to be drinking the most when they're on this show. And maybe whoever wants to go first, or I can go. Whatever you guys want to do.

Dustin Westling: Go for it Will.

Nick Borelli: Go for it.

Will Curran:

Oh, well, for me, I'm really into tea. So I love tea. So, I have a feeling I will be drinking a lot of... I have this... Well, we'll be drinking in the morning, primarily, so it'll probably be chai. Lots of chai lattes probably, but secondarily, it'll probably be this Lady Earl Gray that I love a lot as well. That's why, if... A year from now, if I guess what I'm going to be drinking the most, that's probably going to be it. What about you, Dustin?

Dustin Westling:

Well, it's... We record at 8 o'clock in the morning, so it's not quite time for a nice cold lager. It's close, but not quite, so I'm going to prepare-

Will Curran: One more hour-

Dustin Westling:

... One more hour. Listen. We're a little bit late today, so I might crack one before this is over. So I'm going to prepare myself to be ridiculed by everybody I know. I am drinking Skinny Girl half-caf Keurig pods. It is the only half-caf coffee and it is Skinny Girl brand and that is my go-to brew.

Thuy Diep: Oh gosh. So right now, I am drinking-

Will Curran: Thuy what about you.

Thuy Diep:

Leftover green juice. It's like a kale... It's like the most L.A. thing. I got it after my hot yoga class, so I'm just trying to finish that up, and I have this huge canteen of water I try to drink... I don't... What's... your body-weight worth of water? So I'm constantly... yeah.

Will Curran: That's like 2 liters. A body weight?

Dustin Westling: A body weight.

Thuy Diep:

I think it all depends... I'm a creative, so it all depends on what my mood is. I guess what the topic is going to be... Where we're at. So, Will knows, I am also a huge tea drinker. We had a heart to heart the first time we met at ILEA Live in Minneapolis, and so there's going to be a lot

of green tea and honey in my future, but I want to keep everyone on their toes, I'm going to keep myself on my toes, and just T-B-D.

Will Curran: Send you a skinny lady half-caf latte?

Dustin Westling: Skinny Girl...

Will Curran: Skinny Girl half-caf.

Thuy Diep: I will not be drinking that. Dustin bought all of those.

Dustin Westling: I did. I did.

Dustin Westling: Listen. Up here in the Great North, you've got to get it when you can. You never know when the supply will run out.

Will Curran: Turns out they discontinued it because it gives you cancer, but Dustin's still drinking it.

Dustin Westling: Doesn't matter. I'll take it.

Will Curran: All right, Nick. What about you?

Nick Borelli: Yeah, we'll pivot into cancer, and say that I'd probably drink a lot of energy drinks.

Nick Borelli: Which I assume is-

Dustin Westling: Oh God, nick, no.

Nick Borelli:

Bottled versions of that. Yeah. I don't make a lot of the healthy decisions. Although I'm... Hopefully by the end of the year, I'll be doing more of that. Because I've integrated some few things in there that's not completely terrible. But yeah, I'm currently drinking a mango energy drink smoothie. So it's a sugar-free red bull and mango and yogurt. You know, that's a good breakfast, right?

Dustin Westling: How many energy drinks do you drink a day?

Nick Borelli:

I'm nowhere near where I used to be. I probably have at least one a day for sure. I do what I have to do and then... I have an alarm clock of kids, so probably sleep like four or five hours a night-

Dustin Westling: Nick. Jesus. Thuy, can you help Nick out please?

Nick Borelli: Yeah. For sure. There's some giant-

Will Curran: Needs meditation.

Nick Borelli:

Giant deficits there for sure. But... you know, having a good time with it. Yeah, it's... I kind of go back and forth between that and water. So I probably drink... I have a 32 ounce thing of water I probably drink two of those a day and have an energy drink and a coffee and that's pretty much it. But the energy drink's probably not great.

Will Curran:

We'll get you off of there. I think we'll make it an Event Brew season one goal, to get Nick drinking not energy drinks.

Dustin Westling: Green tea and honey.

Nick Borelli: Yeah, coffee or... yeah.

Will Curran: Not even green tea. Matcha. He's going to be drinking matcha.

Dustin Westling: Matcha. Nick Borelli: Not Monster Rehab Raspberry Tea and Energy. That's the tea I'm having probably later.

Thuy Diep: Is it gluten free?

Dustin Westling: Oh God. We need to get you to be a little more L.A.

Thuy Diep: Is it organic and gluten-free?

Nick Borelli: Yeah, I'm in the Midwest. It's... Is it gluten-free?

Nick Borelli: No. It's... No, there's nothing impossible about this drink. It's very possible. Super possible.

Nick Borelli:

But yeah, more often than not, if I'm drinking alcohol, it's... I have a very specific regimen of straight whiskey and a glass of water. So it's Islay single malt scotch, water back.

Will Curran: Wait, water back? What is... does that mean also water too?

Nick Borelli: Yeah. Two glasses.

Will Curran: Two glasses of water, means water back.

Nick Borelli: No, I'm sorry. One glass for the whiskey... Whiskey in a glass. One glass for the water.

Will Curran: Why don't you just say "And a water"?

Nick Borelli: Maximum class. It's just a drinking term, I guess.

Will Curran: Oh, interesting.

Thuy Diep: Yeah, well, it's a drinking term

Nick Borelli: Just like, neat, you know. Why don't you say no ice? And you're like, well, it's...

Nick Borelli:

Because there's a refinery in civilization and you know, some people embrace it and other people... drink monster energy drinks and listen to ICP or whatever I assume most Monster energy drinkers do.

Dustin Westling: Will's a DJ, not a bartender.

Nick Borelli:

Yeah, I was a bartender. So I definitely know a little bit more about that than I need to. Most of the time I go to bars and I'm like... I look at what they have and it's like a sports bar and if I say what kind of Islay region single malts do you have and then I'll just get spit on, so, I... you know...

Dustin Westling: Yeah, I'd spit on you.

Nick Borelli:

Yeah, yeah, so I just go look myself and then tell them the bottles that have the most dust on it is what I would like.

Dustin Westling: Ooh. Interesting.

Will Curran:

By the way, I feel like if we opened up a club or a bar, I'd be the DJ, Nick would be the bartender, Thuy, Dustin what you... your roles be?

Dustin Westling: Thuy would be on the pole.

Thuy Diep: No, you guys you can be dancers and be on the pole.

Will Curran: Oh, so it's strip club now. Thuy Diep: But yes, I would be on the pole.

Will Curran: No!

Dustin Westling: It's in the Olympics guys, come on.

Will Curran: All right. Thuy's entertainment. Dustin, what about you? You'd be like the bouncer.

Dustin Westling:

Yeah, I'd probably be... I'd probably be the manager. I'd be like, in a stuffy suit and a bad silk tie and arguing with people about their food not being cold.

Thuy Diep: Dustin would definitely not be a security. He would definitely be this VIP in the booth.

Will Curran: Giving people ten percent off.

Thuy Diep: I feel like security would be like, "Sorry, sorry." You can go. Go ahead."

Nick Borelli: Okay.

Dustin Westling: Sorry, sorry, sorry.

Will Curran: You guys are absolutely outrageous.

Will Curran:

Well, I think we kind of ran out of a little bit of time to do a full topic, but luckily we have other episodes coming out immediately upon publishing this, so if you want, our next episode we'll definitely be diving a lot more into one single topic, or maybe multiple topics, on there and you'll actually get to see us debate a little bit. But I feel like this was a really good getting to know you episode. Do you guys agree?

Dustin Westling: Totally. Thuy Diep: Words of affirmation, Will.

Nick Borelli: I validate you.

Will Curran: Thanks, guys. I just want words of affirmation, every time we end an episode.

Will Curran: Well, with that being said. Are you guys are all good... Everyone's good to wrap up? Everybody feel good?

Nick Borelli: Yeah!

Dustin Westling: I feel great.

Will Curran: Any last-minute words of wisdom? Well, cool.

Will Curran: Well, hey, why don't we do this? This'll be a kind of cool ending to the show.

Will Curran:

Why don't we all say what's the thing that we look to accomplish and that we're excited about for this show. You look back on this episode, you listen to yourself a year from now, what do you want to say to yourself?

Nick Borelli: I'll go.

Will Curran: Is that a weird question?

Nick Borelli:

No, no, I think we get the gist of it. I want to change some behaviors based on growth that I have from the conversations.

Dustin Westling:

I'm a big fan of Brené Brown and vulnerability, and I definitely want to take down some walls and have some real conversations and get rid of all of the other chatter that goes through one's mind about what you can say and what you can't say and make this a really honest and productive place.

Thuy Diep: I love that Dustin.

Thuy Diep:

Basically on the same line with Nick and Dustin. Just leaving... Being us and being able to freely express ourself that we leave a positive impact on this industry and really stir things up. Ha ha, get it, Event Brew?

Thuy Diep:

And just be able to have the audience relate to us. I think we just have this front a lot of times. That we have to maintain this perfect image, and you know, we always... We're just so busy, and we're so stressed, and we're so all of this, but to really talk about it, and share our voices with the rest of the industry is really... I mean, I think that's incredible. So.

Thuy Diep:

Yeah, that's what I would love. Is for everyone to say what does Event Brew think and being able to connect and engage with us, you know, on and offline. When we do see each other face to face, or after they listen to our episodes.

Will Curran:

Awesome. And I think if I have one goal that I hope that we get to in a year from now, is that I want the industry to be always wondering when something happens in the industry, "I wonder what the guys at Event Brew are going to say?"

Will Curran:

And I think that would be really, really exciting to kind of be able to lead some kind of conversations and bigger topics like that we have all talked about, for sure. So.

Will Curran:

Wow. Okay so we... big goals ahead. Lots to do, but it's time to wrap up our first ever episode.

Will Curran:

Can you guys believe it's like ... We've been here talking for like an hour already?

Nick Borelli: Yeah... I can believe it.

Will Curran:

Like, yeah, I can see the timer at the top.

Dustin Westling: I can see the timer.

Will Curran:

Well, that means we probably should wrap up as we go along. I do want to give a huge thank you to Nick, Thuy, and Dustin for being awesome hosts and volunteering to be a part of this amazing podcast. And all the excitement in the future that we have ahead of us.

Thuy Diep: Oh it's on!

Nick Borelli: I'm excited to get into something that people don't agree on, so we can see-

Dustin Westling: Yeah!

Nick Borelli: Good ideas can smash against other good ideas.

Dustin Westling: Oh it's on.

Will Curran: I feel like you were about to say, "Well, no, Will, I disagree with you, like, no. Like, you're not welcome."

Nick Borelli: Oh, we can start...

Nick Borelli: We'll wait until episode two to be able to do that to you.

Thuy Diep: We all love each other right now until episode two

Nick Borelli: Yeah, remember that.

Nick Borelli: Remember when we were all just really happy and talked to each other.

Will Curran:

Yeah, yeah. Those were the days. Well, with that being said, this is time for me to roll down our closing script.

Will Curran:

For everybody who is listening, we hope you guys really enjoy this first episode to get to know us a little bit more, and get to dive deep into us as hosts for this, but we do have a lot of big plans and a lot of amazing topics.

Will Curran:

Literally looking at the topic list ahead, it is crazy the stuff that we're going to cover in this short period of time and I'm really excited for it. However, if you are listening to us on your favorite podcasting platforms, make sure that you do head over to eventbrew.com. That's the best place to go to get all the transcriptions, the notes, the links to anything that we mention, for example, all the previous interviews that we've done with all the hosts, so then that way you can get to know them a little bit better. All that sort of stuff. Also, we will give you exclusive invites to our Facebook and LinkedIn groups. Just head over to eventbrew.com and get all that stuff. All that jazz.

Will Curran:

If you are listening to us, anywhere, you can always make sure you can find us anywhere. We're on every major podcasting platform iTunes, Pocket Casts, Google Play. Every single place, and what we would really, really appreciate is, especially if you're listening to us first episode ever, is that you rate and review us on your favorite podcasting platforms. It helps us out a ton in getting discoverability for people to find us and also for us to get feedback from you guys. We want to know what you like, what you dislike, everything like that about this show. We really, really want to hear it.

Will Curran:

And if you ever do ever want to contact us, other than leaving us a review to let us know feedback, ideas, you know, let us know we're doing a good job, because we aren't sure what the reaction is going to be to this show, you can always contact us using the hashtag eventbrew, or you can also send us an email to eventbrew@helloendless.com and that actually goes to all of us, so we'll actually see all those emails, and we'll be able to help you out or answer a question or just you know send you a waving emoji or whatever you'd like to do as well.

Will Curran:

Also, send us your topic ideas. Things that you wish we would cover. We would love to hear everything from you guys as well.

Will Curran:

So, with that being said, I think this is our sign-off. So thank you everybody for listening and we'll see you guys next time on Event Brew.

Thanks again for listening to Event Brew. Be sure to rate and review us on your favorite podcasting app. Also be sure to head to eventbrew.com and leave us a comment about this week's episode. See you next time on Event Brew.