



Podcast Episode #43 – How to avoid mistakes when building a team - lessons from mentoring 1200+ hardware entrepreneurs, with Alan Clayton of SOSV

RAW TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW

Balint: I'm very glad to have Alan Clayton from SOSV on the podcast. And we're going to talk about the essential human factor in a startup's life. I appreciate, Alan, that we can have this conversation.

Alan: No worries, Balint, it is a pleasure to be here. Lovely to talk to you. And yeah, my favorite subject and hopefully the listeners will be able to get something of value out of this conversation.

Balint: I'm very positive about that that there's going to be value added for sure. Because we had a conversation already before it was at the HAX stand at IFA Berlin in September where you were representing HAX, which belongs to SOSV where you have this fascinating role that I want to learn about more and I would like the listeners to learn more about this. And SOSV is the accelerator, venture capital company for startups, just very short. So we had this conversation at IFA Berlin on the main problems hardware startups face and I thought that it would be excellent to continue this conversation more publicly than at the fair, so via an interview to follow up so we can share some important insights with the listeners, with hardware enthusiasts.

Alan: Great. Yeah. Reported. Okay.

Balint: So I'm looking forward to it. Human factor is crucial, so having a healthy team, because it takes a team to typically build a great product, like Steve Jobs didn't operate alone to build Apple apparently.

Alan: Right. He didn't. That's true.

Balint: And let me start with a story of mine, a very short story is that it happens often I think with all of us that we go to the supermarket and we know exactly what we want to buy a priori before going to the supermarket. Exactly what we want to buy but then we come home, we arrive and then we realize, oops we didn't buy some ingredients like potatoes. So it happens because, to me especially, because my mind is somewhere else. I like using my imagination, fantasizing, thinking about the next thing I want to do or some innovative topics or startup related topics. So the question



comes up automatically, “Why aren't we using some parts of our brain so that we can avoid such issues coming up?”

Alan: Right. So yes, for a long time in my kind of career I have spent my time working in kind of coaching and people development and developing human capabilities and so on in organizations.

So what's interesting about your story of course is that actually that doesn't happen to everybody as we all know and probably some people listening are thinking, “Balint, why don't you just write a list, go in the door, you know where everything is and you just follow the list and then you pay for what you have on the list jot down?”

But you're right, that doesn't happen to everybody. So it's a good way of understanding guess what? Basically we all sort of think slightly differently and as a result of that we act slightly differently and we get different results. And the challenge is to figure out what is the best combination of people in a team, in a startup team for example that's going to generate the best result. How do we find those people? How do we identify their particular preferences and hopefully try and put them together as a collaborative creative committed team?

Balint: Yeah, you mentioned we think differently. Then going back to the analogy with Steve Jobs, “Think different,” comes into my mind. It is interesting that you mentioned this combination of words.

Yeah, I agree that we even as a team in a team we don't use the full capacity and the goal should be making sure that the full capacity as much as possible is used from the team. So can you then talk about the role you play at SOSV? Do I pronounce it actually the right way or is it SOSV?

Alan: Yes, it's kind of SOS Ventures is what we used to call it. My fearless leader who it's named after decided that we would make sure that SOSV so I guess that means it's a bit like KPMG or YC or whoever else has letters just to summarize what they do. But essentially SOSV was founded by a great guy called Sean O'Sullivan, which is why it's called SOS Ventures.

So Sean founded a company called Map Info long time ago, invented street mapping basically before the likes of Google or anybody else did that. And then he also did a number of things. And then about eight years ago started using what is the SOSV fund to invest in startup companies and to do that by running accelerator programs.

So I've been working with Sean for about eight years now. So I'm the person in the company that sort of understands people as opposed to understanding the technology or other aspects of the business. So that's my contribution. And there's a particular tools that I've used over the years, one of which is the one thing we're going to



focus on in this conversation, which is based on the work of a great guy called Ned Herrmann. Ned Herrmann, yes. He was the head of education at General Electric for a good number of years. And his job was to figure out in that organization how to turn the kind of management people that they had in that organization into superstars who would lead the company and create perhaps and successful parts of that business in the future.

So he invented this tool. He set out to put together all the different kinds of psychological studies about how human brains work and how we make decisions and so on together with a lot of scientific research that's around these days. How could you put something some simple easy to understand tool that would allow us all to get a little bit of insight into how do I think, how do I make decisions and what are the consequences of that for my startup, for my ability to communicate and influence other people and how to just put a product pitch and a team together effectively?

Balint: That's really interesting, intriguing topic and I would like to continue this thought soon relating still to your role at SOSV. When are you normally, typically called in to mentor founders?

Alan: Basically, SOSV we run accelerators in four kind of different key areas so we run a software program based in Shanghai, we run a hardware program that you spoke about HAX, which is partly in Shenzhen and partly in San Francisco. We run a biotech program partly here in Europe, in Ireland and partly in San Francisco. And we run a food program out of New York. So my role in all of those programs is similar.

So when the program starts I usually show up at the very earliest possible opportunity and to help using the tools that Herrmann invented which is called Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument (HBDI). So they have an institute is the body that actually makes the test or the assessment available to people and my job is to use that assessment in conjunction with the teams that we've invested in and to help them get some early insight.

Basically, some early insight into their likelihood of success based on their own individual sort of priorities or their own, not skills, that's an interesting thing to point out to people, that this is not a skills assessment. It's basically an assessment that allows people to understand what have become their favorite types of intelligence, that's probably the best way I am describing it. And once you understand what those are and then you can look into the consequences of that which includes things like others knowing that influence the way I build a product, the way I communicate, the way I tell stories, the way I essentially run my team and run my business.

Balint: Yeah. So you've been around then based on the eight years of timeline that you've said that you've been working with SOSV so you've seen quite a lot of com-



panies, founders from the beginning all the way until they had some success on the market.

Alan: Yeah. So in all that time SOSV has invested in something over 500 companies, 500 startup companies I worked obviously with 12 to 1500 startup founders. So I've done this kind of work with each of them either in co-horts and then kind of one-to-one and then in some cases I would follow up after the programs. But my job is to just try and support the teams in the most practical way I can from the beginning as you say right through till either they raise more money from investors or the team is working well so there's no need for someone like me to get involved any more than I need to. I've done this for quite a while. And before I worked for SOSV I did it the same kind of work in actually much larger organizations like Motorola and Unilever and AT&T and so on. So it's something that works no matter the size of the organization but essentially in this particular hardware startup world I've now worked with about 200 hardware startups particularly which is about 600 founders.

Balint: That's a really impressive number.

Alan: It's been busy eight years.

Balint: Actually, how does the assessment unfold? How do you do that? Is it computer based or analog?

Alan: Yeah, it's an online questionnaire. And basically, if you saw the questionnaire and I work with like most of the kind of well-known personality tests if you want to call them that or assessments that people use. And the difference that you'd find with HBDI is that it's a combination of questions. So it's not a string of questions that asks you to predict how would you behave if you went to a friend's party blah-blah-blah. But there are certain questions in that such as a question about "Do you get motion sickness? How do you hold your pen? What were your kind of favorite subjects at school?"

So it's basically a set of different types of questions and that's how you know that the result is not based on just one school of psychology or one scientific area but actually about eight or nine combined. So I mean if anyone's listening and they want to really read up on it Ned Herrmann wrote a book called *The Creative Brain*, I think in the mid-90s at some sometime really and really all the background and everything you could possibly want to know about the tool is really discussed and described in that book. That's the source of the tool and that's the source of the data that I use in SOSV for our startup founders.

Balint: When I read up on this topic more I came across some of the concepts that I read about myself in a book called *Unconscious Branding: How Neuroscience Can Empower and Inspire Marketing*. And there they were describing this three-part sys-



tem of the brain - the limbic system, the reptile and the neocortex, which is the last step of the evolution because it went through evolutionary stages the brain how it developed. So many things, many concepts were not new to me but of course the HBDI concept itself was new. How did these four areas, four big dominant areas of intelligence, preferred areas of intelligence that people exercise as you referred to it at the beginning that was still new and it was really, really great insight. Can you maybe talk more about actually these four areas?

Alan: Yeah. So the start point of this is to realize that basically we're all born with the same repertoire or set of intelligences. So from a scientific point of view, you and I were both born with intuition and logical mathematical intelligence, imagination, spatial types of intelligence and so on. So everybody agrees that there are roughly eight types of intelligence, you can split them down into smaller pieces. But there is a kind of finite set of intelligences that we're all born with.

So some of those are like physically on, say, left side of the brain or right side of the brain. Most people are familiar with what is loosely described as kind of like left-brain thinking which is all kind of fact analysis dealing with the real world, all those kind of things, and people being familiar with what's called right-brain thinking which is really more imagination, intuition sort of musical types of intelligence, basically it's more abstract types of thinking. So those are fairly well understood. So if people can imagine a circle with four quadrants, then two of these quadrants are on the left and two are on the right and those are distinguished as like left brain and right brain.

Then you have the top and the bottom to think about. So as you say in the material that you came across there in the HBDI model the top two quadrants represent kind of conscious sort of conceptual type thinking. So the thinking that we do in this human part of the brain, which is physically the top part of the brain the bit near the neocortex is called. And then in the middle you have this kind of limbic system where the brain deals more with feelings and processes kind of emotions and that kind of information that comes in through our senses.

And then at the bottom of the four quadrants you have physically the bottom of the brain just at the top of the spine really, which is where we unconsciously deal with much more practical immediate urgent issues. So you consider what's called the fight-or-flight response to situations. So if you're out of your home or office right now and something really scary happens, you probably don't stop to do a lot of conscious analytical thinking, you just either run like crazy or you rush up and help somebody who's in danger because your brain gets you to do that using different types of intelligence.

So you build up these four quadrants. So yeah I try to give people a little bit of an idea left versus right, top versus bottom. If you want to kind of a practical analogy,



you start to understand that if people have ever watched Star Trek, which has been around for a long time so I'm betting that quite a few people be familiar.

So in Star Trek you have four major characters. So you have Captain Kirk, he's on a mission basically. So he's the guy in what would be the HBDI the top right hand quadrant. He's using his imagination, he's got a purpose, he's very future thinking and so on. So he's right. And then of course he has his valued team, he has Spock, Doctor Spock. And these people who aren't familiar with the movies or the TV shows, Spock is a more analytical guy basically so he's less likely to be swayed by fairy stories or emotions and so on. He's brilliant at dealing with facts, the data, he is making logical decisions. He's a great part of this. He's the top left hand of the four quadrants that I am a building a picture of here.

And then we have Scotty the engineer and in the movies Scotty literally is the guy downstairs in the engine room. He's a bit like the hardcore programmer in a typical tech startup. He's got his headphones on like I have right now, he's probably listening to some sort of desperately awful music but he's brilliant at looking after the engine on the Star Trek Enterprise. So he knows how the engine works. In fact, he's the only one who knows how that works in detail. He could fix everything. He knows that there's a speed limit where it will become dangerous to go too fast. And so he's the bottom left hand quadrant. Basically his focus on life is how this thing works. He's a very kind of process-focused guy. So in a startup situation this is exactly the kind of person you would want as a project manager. So whereas you have Captain Kirk charting out a kind of future path to go exploring where nobody's ever gone before, Scotty is the guy sitting with the project plan actually trying to make sure that we have enough fuel, we have enough time, the budget is OK, all of those practical things.

And then the fourth of the character that we're missing out is basically in the Star Trek analogy this would be Doctor Bones. Bones the doctor. So Bones the doctor is the most likely guy to worry. If he was part of a startup team, he would be the guy worrying about what the customers think, where do you pick up this product, does it feel nice, is it beautifully designed. When people talk about obviously the iPhone all the time, it's just a thing of beauty. I mean I don't even understand much about how it works but I just have to pick it up and it kind of makes me feel like I want one. So it all has to do with literally what does it feel like a beautifully rounded corners, like a piece of art. So that's the perspective that Bones would bring to the startup if it was working in one. So he's the guy who looks after relationships, warm cooperation, trust, all that kind of slightly abstract messy people stuff.

Balint: I love these examples to illustrate all the four quadrants of the HBDI model. It's great. I think this way we can better remember because anyway we better remember stories.



Alan: Yes. So yeah, I am trying to build Star Trek teams in all our startups.

Balint: It's a good one. It also means as we said it at the beginning that you want to have a team that support each other and complement each other. But automatically the next question comes up, I think also the listeners might think that this could be an issue as well, because if there's a disparate team composition, it can lead to problems. If the people don't understand each other, then it can lead to the microscale or even bigger explosions in the team.

Alan: It certainly can. And so that's why even having any kind of tool, any way to get these ideas onto paper. So you know HBDI is one model, there are others. So that's why at the beginning if we can just get some of these ideas out of people's heads onto bits of paper and discuss them, that's a good start. So firstly, for people to understand that there are these differences and then to figure out how to get the best out of the diversity. You're absolutely right. That's the challenge.

So in a large corporation often people get away with not having to communicate with each other. And so, in a large corporations you have the Finance team, they talk amongst themselves, they never talk to Operations. Operations never talks to Finance. The marketing people, while they're just a bunch of crazy, advertising, mad people just spend money, the salespeople hate the marketing people. And so in a large corporation these little tribes of people can live on their own behind closed doors. In a startup, however, you need all these different people but you need them to work very closely together hour by hour, day by day.

So a couple of things often happen. First of all, at the beginning often particularly in a hardware startup, I mean it's pretty clear to me that you usually begin with smart, imaginative people. So there's usually a Captain Kirk. So obviously one of the founders is likely to have a great idea to think they're on some kind of mission or they have a vision or something really motivating and futuristic that they really want to get on with. So that's always going to be.

The second piece in a hardware startup that's usually there at the beginning is obviously there are going to be some pretty good technical people. So engineers, software/hardware engineers, electronics engineers, very smart people sort of academically in that sense. So those are the two if you think about it from HBDI point of view, so if you have Captain Kirk and you often have Spock and although they're quite different in the early days they probably come from... They may have been on the same university program for example, so they've managed to build a sort of friendship that allows them to work together. The challenge then comes when you start to add other people to the team. And what happens when you have diverse types of thinking in the team obviously is that initially you get a lot of irritation. So people get frustrated,



irritated and people don't really understand why. Because obviously everybody thinks they're right.

So if you have Scotty the engineer, he usually wants to slow things down because he wants to make sure it's right as opposed to Captain Kirk who just wants to get on with the mission. Like he usually wants to make this thing go after. But he doesn't really understand how it works. So those are the kind of problems that you get and often in the very early stages. So what we have to try and do is, firstly, make people aware of those things and secondly, start to give people some kind of scales to help them make sure they get the benefits of the diversity. Hopefully, that kind of makes sense to people.

Balint: Apart from this topic, what other topic do you see as a major issue for startups, especially for hardware startups? Why they might not succeed?

Alan: So the biggest challenge the hardware startups face is really their ability to execute. So one of the most interesting statistics that I like to think about is the fact that somewhere more than 70 percent of crowdfunding campaigns either never happened or happened late. I think something like 10 to 15 percent never happened at all but a ridiculously large percentage are late. And that creates also problems, the most obvious of which is you get unhappy customers and these are your very first customers and these are the last people on the planet that you want as unhappy customers.

And so yes, that's a major concern. And the reason for that is because in the team there is not a lot of basically basic project management, talent if you like, or even if people have the skills, so if we get right back to the beginning of the conversation, we kind of said, "Guess what? We are all blessed with all these intelligences." So it's not true that the startup founders can't manage a project. It's just that they have priorities in their thinking which are elsewhere. So to answer your question, the biggest challenge, the biggest issue is how do we manage a project effectively. How do we keep it on time, keep it on budget, how do we make sure that certifications are all done properly. Basically how do we make sure that the whole project runs efficiently?

Balint: Yeah, that's quite pretty much connected to the human factor.

Alan: It is.

Balint: If you have the right team composition, then these areas are taken care of.

Alan: Yes. So in a very small team where you maybe only got three or four of you in the first place, I guess you don't have a budget and you don't have the luxury of employing a full-time project manager, later on you can kind of afford to do that which is even more reason why in the very early days part of my job is to try and help the orig-



inal founders play that role for themselves. Because I know that everybody is capable of doing it. It's not a lack of ability. It's people's priorities in the way that I think.

Balint: So you make sure that these founders have the capabilities to lead the project themselves?

Alan: Yeah. I mean in simple terms if you imagine that the four characters that I described from Star Trek, basically a good team is going to be made up of those four characters. So if I'm the CEO of a hardware startup company, there's no reason why I couldn't have a little room in my incubator space or co-working space or whatever, maybe go to the lengths of having four chairs in the room, and basically I just need to be disciplined enough to go sit in the different chairs and think about my problems and the things I need to solve and think about my project from each of those different perspectives.

So obviously the crazy inventor is going to have a different solution to the project manager or the project manager is going to have a different solution from sort of the Bones the doctor character or the marketing guy. What's interesting to a startup is that there is no right answer. And the first thing I need to do is figure out what are all my options. And then the second thing I need to do is decide based on what I'm trying to achieve and the deadlines that I have which of those options is best for the business now. So sometimes the crazy inventor option is the best one and sometimes the project manager's option is the best one. Sometimes the marketing perspective is the best one.

Balint: So basically one person can wear many hats.

Alan: Yeah, absolutely. Yeah.

Balint: Basically this way also expanding his skill set because we have a malleable, so we have a flexible mind, right?

Alan: Yeah, I think one of the personal challenges for a CEO or any of the early founders in a company really is to have that flexibility, basically the flexibility to be able to talk to all kinds of different people in those other people's language. If I am the Spock of the enterprise, if I am the totally analytical guy, if that's the only way I know how to discuss issues, if that's the only way I know how to solve problems, then I'm going to run into some problems sooner or later because out there in the big wide world are all those different characters. So I literally need to have the language and the communication skills to be able to persuade everybody that this is a fantastic project, basically.

One of the most fun ways to learn about all this is to have a look at your inbox and God knows we all have a pretty huge inboxes these days, but what you'll notice is



that the way people send e-mails to you is different and these different characters are recognizable in the stuff that you get sent to you. But equally your own character is given away by literally the language that you use and the way you write communication or the way you tell stories or speak to people and so on. So it's a very kind of real kind of skill set that needs to be developed.

Balint: And this principle, the HBDI principle apart from these that we've discussed how can it help startups create a better marketing message, marketing strategy and also connected to this pitch beta to create a more amazing product?

Alan: Yeah. Good question. So part of my job is to obviously help people pitch their business either to customers or investors, or corporate partners or even just amongst themselves. So how do we do that? So how does the model help? Well, it helps in a couple of ways.

First of all, the first thing that you have to do when you're trying to communicate with people is get the idea or the concept of your business across very quickly. So you'll find that people who are strong in imagination if you like so people who are more like Captain Kirk of the crew, these people often talk in metaphors. They're very good at explaining a complicated project in simple terms. So that's probably the place to start. So if you have that this is going back to the picture of people have got in their heads this is the top right hand quadrant where imagination is really strong. So that's probably how you start a pitch by getting people interested. If it takes me five minutes to get you interested, you're lost. But if I can do it in five seconds by just literally in one sentence describing the amazing impact of what we're going to do, that's a good place to start.

The second part of how I use the model for pitch, the second character that you want to play is more like Spock. So having got things rolling with Captain Kirk, then I need to bring Spock in to answer the question "What is it?" So Captain Kirk is all about "Why are we doing this, what is the big vision?" Spock is all about "So tell me exactly what it is." So give me some real high level information. So that's the second part, that's how you use that part of the model. That's number two.

Number three, that's when you need to introduce the equivalent of Scotty the engineer. So the third part of my pitch is probably now I need to describe to people a little bit of how does it work. So we start off with why am I doing this. We then go into what is it exactly. Now we are a little bit of how does it work which is convincing people that I do know what I'm talking about, that I can really build this, that it is really going to happen.

And then the fourth part, so the fourth of our four quadrants is really Bones the doctor kind of quadrant, where this is the bit where I'm probably going to share something of



a personal story about why I'm doing this or I got a customer story to tell people. But the fourth question that needs answering in the pitch process is "Who cares?" or "Why should I care?" So if you think about the four quadrants we talked about constructing a pitch using the model says, "Ok. Start with why am I doing this. Followed it up with what is it anyway. Follow that up with how does it work. And follow that up with why should I care."

Balint: Thank you for this crash course on pitching. I loved it. It's very good.

Alan: It's a good way to get started. I mean there are thousands of people who know how to put pictures together. There's millions of hours of YouTube videos. But at least if you do it this way, the benefit of doing it this way is that you means you got something in your pitch for everybody in the audience and you can expand it beyond that and you can focus on particular bits. But as long as you have those four basic building blocks, you'll probably do a good job.

Balint: Yeah, I will keep that in mind when I for example travel in the elevator and I need to say something important with an impact to somebody to pitch an idea. Because it can be anything. It doesn't have to be even a startup idea. It can be just an idea in a project that you have.

Alan: Absolutely. The first bit is the headline. It's a soundbite or a headline and from there you kind of work through the other pieces.

Balint: Yeah. Yeah. I would love to continue talking about this topic but I would say now we should move on to the ultrafast round of questions. So this would mean that I would ask you four questions, short, and it would be nice to get similarly short answers.

Alan: Brilliant. All right. Let's give it a go.

Balint: The first one is if you could go back in time, we were talking about Star Trek, there it already happened, so we are not diverting, going away from the topic. So if you could go back in time to the time when you were in your 20s, what notes would you give yourself?

Alan: Probably the thing that I would ask myself at 20 to spend a little bit more time looking at or investigating is how money works. That's the thing I think I would definitely say to myself, "OK. You need to think a little bit more about how money works."

Balint: Yeah. As they say, "Physics makes the world go around," but also money pretty much, especially in the business world.

Second question. If you had to name a book, one book, which one had the biggest impact on your career and also your kind of entrepreneurial thinking? Because you



work closely with entrepreneurs so I'm pretty sure that you also developed quite a bit of entrepreneur thinking.

Alan: Yeah. So I have to, this is a kind of honest answer, actually the Bible for me plays a huge part in the way I kind of think about things and go about things. And the other book that has made a huge impact is a book by a guy called Viktor Frankl called....I think it is called *The Meaning of Life*.

Balint: Yes, I love it.

Alan: A pretty well-known book like the first time I read that and now I quote pages from that book because it's an amazing story about a guy who just does amazing things beyond... That have nothing to do with business or making money or anything but much more simple things.

Balint: I think it's definitely a classic book that should be on the wish list of everyone.

Alan: Yeah. *Man's Search for Meaning*, that's what it's called, *Man's Search for Meaning*. Got it. That's my book. Ok.

Balint: Exactly. So the fourth question, the last one. Because you worked with founders and startups with different nationalities represented, what kind of cultural differences would you highlight that you saw as critical and you could see that they overcame those difficulties?

Alan: OK. So interestingly, because I work in all these different places if I was to think about like the three sort of major cultures that I come across a lot, you have like a US type of culture, an American culture, European and kind of like Chinese basically, or Asian. And for me the differences are in China people are incredibly polite and the world revolves around relationships more than anything else. In the US particularly the world revolves around contracts and money, a lot more. So people, that's just an observation, but people in that part of the world busy trying things and failing, and that's ok. I mean I've read that a lot but I generally find that to be a kind of true thing. And in Europe people are much more conservative. We don't invest our money or spend our money quite so readily. So we are almost a little bit in the middle.

But I think the most important thing is this difference between how the kind of Chinese way of thinking relationships come first, contracts come second and in the West contracts come first and relationships come second. So if we try and resolve a problem in the West, we spend a ridiculous amount of money on legal fees. In China, I think they still spend money on legal fees but at the end of the day our relationships are the biggest driving force.



Balint: Yeah. But I think...But because marketing is changing, I think there's more and more importance on relationships first.

Alan: Yeah. I mean things are becoming more global. So yeah people in China are becoming pretty good at invention and design and all the things that we think we are best at in this part of the world and vice versa. So yes, I think you are absolutely right.

Balint: Yeah. One question that I forgot to ask. So the third question is that I'm fascinated about habits and what kind of positive impact it can have on us. So do you have some kind of habit work related or in your personal life?

Alan: So I think it's important and I desperately try to do some kind of exercise some time during the day. For me it's just running because it's cheap, easy and I can do it anywhere. I like to have some kind of like a quiet time in the morning to get thoughts together, just contemplate the meaning of life to remind myself that I'm very lucky even to be alive and very fortunate to have all the things I do in my life. So that sort of usually is a great way to set myself up. And actually I also pay quite a lot of attention to what I eat. So a bit of exercise, some quiet contemplation and nutritionally sound breakfast.

Balint: I think these are also similarly very important for me because I do daily meditations, 15 minutes, that's the minimum, when I wake up just before breakfast most of the time but also sometimes after breakfast if I'm very, very hungry because I'm sensitive to food. If I'm hungry, I want to eat immediately. And also running. I agree. It's one of the beauties of it that you can do it anywhere, almost anywhere.

Alan: Absolutely. Absolutely.

Balint: Yeah. I love very much this interview. I like personally reading about these topics. I have a natural affinity to these topics exploring why people basically do what they do and knowing it because it's the key to enhancing your personal connections, which is one of the most important things in life in general, the relationships you nurture.

And if we become more aware of these topics that we just discussed, I think we can all have more loving and more accepting relationships.

Alan: I think that's absolutely right. We have to remember why are we really doing this. Money helps the world go around as you said earlier on but there are more interesting and more important things to work towards. And building a hardware startup is a tool, is a way to do some of those things, that's pretty exciting.



Balint: Yeah. Before we now depart during this interview just one last question, it's regarding your reachability by the listeners. So how can a listener reach you - by email or social media?

Alan: So actually I am not a great Facebook user but my Twitter account is @thealanclayton, so thealanclayton A-L-A-N C-L-A-Y-T-O-N. Or actually you can just email me alan@sosv.com. Simple.

Balint: Yeah, excellent. I will put it in the show notes so the listeners can check it out. And also some of the things, the links, books that we discussed.

Alan: Perfect.

Balint: Thank you again.

Alan: Okay, Balint. Pleasure.

Balint: Thanks for listening.