



Stanford eCorner

A True Mission is Timeless

Ron Gutman, *HealthTap*

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Ron Gutman, founder and CEO of HealthTap, describes how entrepreneurs will always find inspiration in a mission that revolves around improving people's lives. A serial technology entrepreneur and inventor, Gutman also explains the importance of working with individuals who aren't just up for the journey, but will actually enjoy it.



Transcript

Being mission-driven is awesome. It doesn't matter what you do when you wake up in the morning. And you know that you do something that is meaningful. It gives you amazing amount of energy. And if you decide to be an entrepreneur, how many people around the room want to be an entrepreneur at one point in their career? Or participated - fair, fair. I'm back home, that's great. And so if you want to be an entrepreneur, you're going to take on yourself journeys that will be challenging because if it was easy to do the thing that you want to do probably many other people are already doing it, it's probably solved and there's not much to do then. So you're going to take on yourself a challenge, a really hard and important challenge. And when you do that and you do it day after day, after day, you are definitely going to wake up some mornings and ask yourself why am I doing this, right? This is really challenging, right? I wanted to go from here to here, I had this like great idea, it was fantastic, I talked to some people, it was amazing, I thought it's going to just take a few weeks or a few months and it was going to work exactly that I wanted to work but then you go there and things are not working exactly the way you wanted to work. And it happens again and again and again and again.

One that is really difficult to all the most successful entrepreneurs that I met in my career was they would tell you that they got way more nos than yeses at any given point in time. You got nos when you go and try to raise money, you get nos when you try to hire the best people, you get nos when you try to partner with like these big partners but your idea is so great, why won't everyone invested in? Why won't anyone partner with it? Anyone would join you, anyone. It's like it's just such an amazing idea, it will change the world like this. But then you start doing it and you realize that you know there are hurdles there. And when they happen, the one thing that never gets old is the mission, is really believing in what you do and wanted to accomplish something that is actually very, very meaningful, very meaningful to you, but even better, very, very meaningful for the world. Because when you do something that matters to a lot of people and you know that what you will do will actually make a huge impact in the world, it will keep you going every single day. And it never gets old. When you are there to measurably prolong the life expectancy of humankind and you believe that you will do it eventually even when it's hard, you just know that it's going to be hard. It's okay. You just acknowledge it and the most successful people I met in my life were the ones that understood and acknowledged the journey and embraced it.

When I hire people, I tell them that we are here to conquer Everest and it's very - it's great to say, right, like I mean how cool is that? I mean we are conquering this amazing challenge and we're going to make it happen and it's so romantic and everything and you know what people tend to forget when they say okay, I'm going to go climb Everest is that when you get to the middle of the mountain, it can be - and it becomes kind of cold and kind of steep and kind of slippery, right? I mean it's like it's Everest and when I talk with people and I explain to them that I tell them what I am looking for is not for people that will endure the journey, I am looking for people that will enjoy the journey, that love the challenges, that embrace the challenges, that have a mission that they know that they want to get to the summit, right, because we want to get there, we want to make it

happen but most importantly, enjoy the journey to getting there. So, if you have a mission, it will keep you going on the way to the summit but if you understand the journey, you will enjoy the journey.