



Stanford eCorner

Focus on Impact, Not Money

Lyndon Rive, *Solar City*

October 28, 2015

Video URL: <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/videos/3589/Focus-on-Impact-Not-Money>

In conversation with DFJ Founding Partner Tim Draper, SolarCity Co-Founder and CEO Lyndon Rive describes how the drive to help humanity and Earth connects him with his fellow South African and cousin, Elon Musk. "At the end of the day, if the only outcome is financial, that gets old," Rive says. "You want something that can get you more motivated."



Transcript

OK, so you are a very close cousin to Elon Musk, and your brother also grew up in the family, apparently. And so your mothers were twins, right? Yeah. So what was it in this family? I mean, this is amazing, what you guys have accomplished. And is it like-- did they say, Lyndon, you have to save the world? You have to-- the world's getting too hot. We need solar energy. Or did she just sort of let you run free and hopefully-- The environmental thing came up way later. We were brought up in South Africa. The country still doesn't do recycling, just to put in perspective. So there's no-- maybe they're just starting now-- but environmental is not a big focus, or at least it wasn't when I was growing up. That happened as we got older.

And I'm not sure if it just happened that we wanted to solve the problem. But before SolarCity, we had a software business. And nothing wrong with software-- great, great software companies out there-- but when you're in the grind, back to the "Kung Fu Fighting"-- every morning, you're waking up and just get into the grind, and you just work, work, work. At the end of the day, if the only outcome is financial, that gets old. And you want something that get you more motivated, because otherwise you don't work as hard, you don't push yourself as hard. And so finding a job where you can actually have a financial reward, but also have an environmental reward, or a different award-- something that helps humanity-- that's exciting. Because you can get up, feel passionate about it, and it's a double win.