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Oral History Conversation with Patrick Rust

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PATRICK RUST (VITRO)

with Bryan Rodriguez, Draysen Wilson, Emily Evans, and Madison Span

Madi: So first question: What was your childhood like? Were there specific childhood experiences that connect to some of the things you most enjoy with your work?

Patrick: Uhm...Yeah I think childhood, I think childhood was super important for me. I grew up with four older brothers so it's kind of unique being the youngest of five, especially when it's all boys. It was...I was 10 years younger than my oldest, and then I was eight, six, and four [years younger] from the rest of them. But I think what that meant for me was: I was the first one where my mom was a working Mom and not a stay-at-home Mom. So what that meant for me was I had a lot of babysitters, I had a lot of...my brothers were kinda the ones that took care of me for the most part, especially during summers and, you know, it's just kinda chaos when you're in that big of a family. So that led me to being a little bit more...I guess, I don't want to say not outgoing but a little bit more introspective, a little more observant, a little bit more independent in a lot of ways I think just because, you know, my—I don't want to make it sound bad like my parents weren't around 'cause they definitely were, but there was definitely a lot more time than maybe my brothers had...that maybe some people have, like, without them there. So for me because of the four-older-brother situation, you know, you kinda have to watch, like, what you do, what you say...like, you know, when I get beat up. So I ended up kind of being a little bit more of an observant person, just in kind of watching those relationships, in navigating that kind of family dynamic and even like with whether it's babysitters or friends and family that I was...I would, you know, go over and basically like the only day care every single day, just kind of being a little more observant. And I think in my career in in Vitro—and I don't know if it has to do with my favorite things that I enjoy the most but I do tend to be—and what I kind of tell people that are younger, that come, you know, that I'm mentoring or that come beneath me that you really...you need to like kind of observe and kind of keep your mouth shut and kind of learn and then figure out when it's the right time to say what want to say to produce whatever desired result you want is.

But another thing I think my childhood, like, I started working at a relatively young age—I think I was 14 or 15 when I started like my first job. My first job was delivering furniture to businesses, like office ventures, like desks and cubicles and filing cabinets or what not. And then after that I went and worked at a lumberyard where my dad worked and actually where two of my brothers work now, in obviously like sales roles and stuff like that. But it kinda gets you...having that upbringing gets you kind of connected to I guess a different world, like especially for people like, you know, a lot of people that go to USD and that are in my situation...I went to private school my whole life; we're privileged, pretty privileged, but being able to kind of see, you know, people that are very working-class and that are, you know...people I worked with were, you know, relatively struggling day-to-day, like hourly wage, you know, everything like that, and it's very valuable I think in my job to know. Most of the people that we advertise to are working class people for the most part. Not all of our products that we sell or that we advertise are premium. So being able, like, to kind of recall those experiences and

connect with, like, more of like, the true you know, middle and working class rather than like upper-middle-class, which is generally like where I grew up is...is valuable, I guess, is enjoyable. I just enjoy kind of being able to I guess get on people's level and like from a psychological standpoint and kind of provides them something that, you know, emotionally they might be looking for, which is what we aim to do with advertising is...is, you know, hopefully our products provide an actual benefit that leads to an emotional benefit.

So I guess those are some of...when I think about how I grew up and what's helped me, you know, get to this certain point and that, those are a couple of things that I think were very helpful. I also think, you know, in advertising especially, you work such interesting and sometimes long hours that relationships are super important. So a lot of people that I've worked with are some of my best friends and you're with each other so often, and you know, for such a long period of time—at times, you know, you could be working around the clock or on the weekends with the same people, kind of in the same room trying to figure out the same problem, that I have not...just because I think my family dynamic, I ended up being a lot closer to my friends than I was really with my family...so to put, which is, you know, it's not a great thing but it has kind of, I think, helped me be able to form some of...or feel really comfortable forming relationships with people that, like, just I guess generally easier, and with kind of a wider group of people I guess, which a lot of people...It seems in the professional world and as you grow older, like, some people tend to get more narrow in their definition of who they want to be around, whereas for me I think it's always been like relatively wide, like even with the kids that weren't so cool in class when I was younger. Like, I still can find something about them that, you know, was alright. And that's kind of how I take the job as well: you can't have a narrow view, you gotta think positively about people you're working with, or you know, if you get to being too negative, it's gonna show up in the work. So I don't know...hopefully that helped answer that.

Bryan: So you said you worked in...your second job was kind of in sales. Do you feel like sales is kind of bigger?

Patrick: No that was...so not my second job was in sales. My family that works for that company now—they're in sales. So that was just clarifying that. But I did work in sales for a bit. I worked in...I worked for a company that was here—I don't even know if it exists anymore—but it's called Z-57, and they sold real estate websites to real estate agents. And it was like cold calling—calling calling calling calling...

Madi: How was that?

Patrick: It sucked! 200 calls a day sometimes.

Madi: Oh my gosh!

Patrick: Sometimes if you were killing it, you would have, like, 30 calls in a day. But it was a super valuable experience. I can't even remember why it was so valuable but it was like...I remember just—I think it was valuable for a couple of reasons. Really when you have a crappy job it just gives you perspective. And I've had...I've had a few crappy jobs. I worked on campus at the Torero Grill, which doesn't even exist anymore, but I did when I was here. But it was essentially like the fast-food place, did pizza and burritos and burgers. That was kind of a crappy job. Z-57 was a crappy job. And it kind of...it motivates you, it gives you perspective

about what you don't want to do, where you don't wanna end up. And I think sales is just such a valuable skill to have. And that place was like the boiler room, or whatever that movie was. It was like...I felt like I was ripping people off, and I talked to my boss about it so many times. And he's like: "No we're not...no we're not." And I was like: "That's bullshit!" ...But yeah it gives you perspective: in sales, you're always selling always selling yourself; you're always, you know, in just everyday relationships, you're kind of selling. Us, at Vitro, we sell all the time. Like, we sell our ideas; it is part of it: you have to give them a reason to buy, you have to constantly be asking for, you know, the sales, stuff like that, they teach you and in these weird, like, sales organizations. Uhm it kind of just...it's everywhere. You don't realize it but sales is like pretty much everything. So...so yeah.

Bryan: Do you find yourself enjoying it, or what is it that you like, what draws you to a company like Vitro?

Patrick: So I was originally...when I got here, I wanted to be in psychology. But then I took economics as my pre-[ceptorial]...as like, my first class—whatever the...I can't remember what it was called—but so I've always been drawn to psychology, like what drives people and getting into, like, their heads and being able to get into somebody else's shoes and understand that. But I also realize that when I started taking business classes, that I really liked just business and economics, and I've always had a strong math background. So I think that's what...it's kind of like bridging of like what I was really good and what I was really interested in, which was psychology. So advertising is really the...the intersection of like business and psychology and art. So where I live is a little bit more in the kind of—technically, I'm in between the business and the psychological side because I'm in like strategy right now—that's what I do. But I'm a very...I'm one of the more creative people that isn't in the creative department. But so that intersection of...

Bryan: Sorry what do you mean by that?

Patrick: Well ad agencies have creative departments. So creative people in an agency usually have a[n] art background. So they're visual designer[s] or visual artists, or they are writing, like they're a writer...

Bryan: So really like the brains...

Patrick: I don't have...I don't have either backgrounds in that. What I do you have is I've always been in...I've always been, like the...they used to call me in college, like in our little group we lived with, I was the party planner. We all had jobs: one person was the cleaning person, one person was like—uhm, what did Ben do? I can't even...Ben was the cook—and I was the party planner. So I was always the one who came up...or I would have to come up with something to do every single weekend—find the party or throw the party. Or even going back to high school—like, I was kind of the person who planned whatever we were doing. So that gave me, like...I've always had a creative background of how, what we can do, like, what...that sort of thing. But technically that's not my job. But it leads me to be able to like kind of think and plan and be...Lending more to like understanding the psychology of things, I think, just helps you be more smart creative, which is where I kind of sit at times within like projects and stuff like that.

Dray: That kind of stems from your childhood: you observe stuff so much that you're kind of just sitting back and looking at it...so that's awesome.

Bryan: What do you mean by smart creative?

Patrick: So in advertising you tend to have people within the creative department who...they really view themselves as artists—like, traditional artists. So they want to create good art. But that doesn't always come from a place of understanding what is gonna work necessarily. So the way I think about it—in advertising, you need to produce a desired emotion...It's a scientific fact that people's decisions are governed by emotion, not rationality...

Bryan: And that's the psychology coming out?

Patrick: Yeah this is like, this isn't coming from like...I didn't study psychology. I dropped...I didn't...I wasn't a psychology major but I am like really interested...I've always been interested in that, and so I read a lot about it. And in my industry you have to do a lot of research and stuff to, like, support your ideas and why they're smart. But—we need to produce a desired emotion. So if your idea sometimes can be so complicated or sometimes so...so artistic—and going back to like middle America, that middle America's not gonna get it, not even...And that's not, you know, dogging middle America; that could be a top, you know, a businessman might not get it. It's so conceptual and so out there. You know, you go to like a modern art museum—like, 95% of us walk in there and like: "What the hell is this? I don't even know what this is." Because modern art is strange. So you can't...so you have certain people in advertising that are creative for creative sake. So they really are just creating something that's very artistic and maybe appeals to them, and is gonna be...it might get them famous, or, you know—in advertising, in the creative department they talk about their books a lot, and your book is essentially your portfolio of work. So people produce stuff for their books, which is, they say, kind of creative for creative sake—just to kind of have in your portfolio so when you go to your next job you could be like: "Look at this.". But smart creative, you know: it might be a simpler idea, it might not get the headlines because it's so artistic or it's so well written or, you know, flowery or whatever it might be. You know, it's not poetic, but it produces the desired results, which is, at the end...Like, what we're contracted to do is usually produce business results—like, you know, increase *y or stock price or something like that. So that's what I mean by that, essentially.

Madi: So...in class we discussed the importance of building a diversified team, particularly for fostering creativity. Could you walk us through the behind-the-scenes process of how you collaborated with your team in developing the LA Marathon commercial? And what kind of social impact were you aiming for, and how would you assess the impact you actually made?

Patrick: Well LA marathon...so you're talking about the city lights? I wasn't a feature for that but let me try and...

Bryan: Is there a different one that...?

Madi and Emily: Yeah

Dray: Maybe one of your favorite projects you've done.

Patrick: Yeah yeah yeah, uhm...So the creative process...so I guess, like, the advertising problem—I'd just start there and then maybe I'll think about a project that I can point to—but it starts with strategy. Strategy, and that's like: you...you pull insights about the consumer, you pull insights about the business, you pull insights about the culture that's going on right now within, like, the audience you're trying to reach especially or the area that you're at. And you look for the intersection of how does the product or the business answer the consumers' insight, or the consumer need, and within the context of culture, see...essentially look for the intersection of that, but you have to look for something unique because most brands out there are the exact same so you have to tease something out that's unique that gives yourself, that gives your brand like a position that's, you know, strong and differentiated, you know, something that stands for something. That's kind of where it starts. And then essentially you...you brief a creative team. So creative teams are—like I said, they usually come from an art background and we usually get about, you know, there's different tiers, like, you have your...essentially people's boss, it's like your director level and then you'll have four or five teams that work on it. And essentially, usually, the first round of ideas, everyone comes together in one room. They kinda put stuff up on the wall, like a projector, and you essentially take it apart. It's kinda gnarly—like, if you bring an idea [and] you think it's the greatest thing in the world, you know, the first thing that can happen is the strategist, which would be someone like me, is like: "That's not...that's not a strategy." If it's not a strategy, it's basically dead. Then you've got your creative director, who can just say: "That's not good. I don't like it. It's dead." But what usually happens is...and the way that I like to be—some people are like killers of all ideas; they'll just be like, you know: "We got an air of pretension." And they'll be like: "Uh I don't like that."

I like to look for something in it that I like, you know. The worst thing for, if I'm giving creative feedback, is if I don't comment on it. If I don't comment on it, it's because I can't find anything I like in it really or I can't find anything that bothers me. Either way that just means it's gonna be bland, it's probably bland. But I think where the creative process in an agency works the best is when you try to find something interesting in it that you can tease out, that you can then use, you know, with all the other ideas that are gonna get approved. So like for first round you might have, like, ten ideas, twelve ideas, and all of these could become, you know, the end, like, TV commercial plus whatever other, you know, ads you're gonna put out there, communications you'll put out there. So if you can find little nuggets in things that you like, that, you know—"I love this over here. I didn't like this so much but there's something in there that we could use me...maybe we can use it over here and so you try and end up teasing out things that are interesting, and try to be positive in it, like a more positive approach. And then our ideas kinda just get...get called down.

I think a good...I think a good example—it's actually not even a campaign that's live though...Ah...uhm...I can still...I'll still talk about it. But we're working with a tire brand—uhm, this all ought to be live by the time this sees the light of day, but this tire brand we work on—they've never done, like, mass consumer advertising so they do things that are targeted towards a niche, that is, like, off-road people, or like street racers, or like people who go to these crazy car shows. Uhm, that's what they've always done just because they thought they just see themselves as this enthusiasts' brand so these people that, they see themselves as a brand for that. Starting with, you know, looking in the research, we found out that, like, there's a lot of reasons: first of all, that they aren't a premium tire, they're really middle-of-the-road kind of every person tire, they have different premium models, whatever. But we started there and we said: "Well something's not right here, like, we...and their growth has been curved because of this small audience. So we went in with this strategy of: how do we sell the fact that they need to start talking to everybody because they're really not a premium tire, and they're missing out

on 95% of the tire market. So we went in with...you go in with a creative, like a business strategy first, which we sold them on, which was—"you need to start doing mass media, like TV and stuff like that". They pretty much bought that, which was the first time in five years that we've been able to sell that idea or that strategy, and then we...then we came out and wrote a document which was basically, kinda your creative strategy of, you know, what makes this brand, this tire unique. And out of that document there is a few different insights that were interesting. But the one that the creative directors thought was most interesting and I think we all agreed on was: people don't settle for a lot of shit, but for some reason, even though tires—if you buy new tires you can tell...like, it changes the car, the feel of the drive—but tires, even though they're very important, like, people settle all the time. They'll just say: "I'll get whatever I had before or I'll just get whatever is cheapest, or I'll get whatever." They don't even think twice about it. So we went—and the creatives came up with a great idea, they came out with twelve ideas...we went back and we said: "Okay we think five of them are really interesting and these are the reasons why." We ended up with one idea, which is like: "you wouldn't settle for X, Y, and Z..." We made like, you know, comparisons or metaphors to other things—like, you know, a supermodel on the red carpet wouldn't wear like tennis shoes with her gown or whatever or yada yada...so, you know, why do you settle for your tires? So just to get people thinking like, you know: "I'm not the type of person that settles for something, like, why do...why is this one choice, like, the thing I'm just, like, choosing a throw-away tire for. That's way we...that's kinda like the process that produces, like, an idea like that, I guess. Hopefully that's answering the question.

But uhm...but yeah, it's not the ASICs idea. Those ideas though—you probably saw a lot of ASICs ideas if you checked out their website—those were trying to get, really, ASICs sponsored the New York City and the LA Marathon, and they have for a while...For a number of years ASICs was the number one running shoe and they're really known for their long distance and their comfort so they wanted to kind of own that space. So what ASICs tried to do for years within the marathon—and Vitro won a lot of awards for these—was, they're trying to basically make you really understand a marathon and, you know, an elite marathoner like the actual, like, not skill but I guess talent and physical ability that that takes so there is a few...so the ASICs, the LA lights was one thing they did. That was to get people to see from the hills or wherever they were at, like, the sheer scale of the marathon itself. And you'll see: "Whew shit that one's way over there and that one's...and then there's one, like, right by me. Like, that is way...that's like in Santa Monica and I'm in Pasadena, or something like that. The year before that, they set up a treadmill and the treadmill was sent to Ryan Hall's marathon pace. And they brought it out on a truck and they hooked people up through a ring and they said: "How far...or how long can you run at Ryan Hall's marathon pace? What he runs at 26 miles, how long can you even run at that pace?" And people would go do it and people would make it, like, 10 seconds or like, you know, a couple people made it a minute or two. But he's running at a 5.20- or like a 5-minute mile pace, which most people can't even run. So they did that, and then they did another one in New York that...they went down into the subway station, popular subway station, and they turned the whole wall into a video board—and I say 'they', like, I was working there at the time; I wasn't this project so...so give credit where credit's due—but they set up this whole wall and the whole wall was a video of Ryan Hall, same guy, just running down it at his mile pace. And you know, a bunch of people would go in there, and there was messaging that said, you know, "Try and keep pace with Ryan Hall." So people would, like, sprint and try and keep up with him and so that won awards. Treadmill won awards. So that was like a really unique strategy and insight—like, people don't understand the true ability it takes to do this.

Bryan: In terms of, like, posts...is there any—knowing creativity where you kind of, to [use] your coined term 'smart creativity', how do you go about that? And how do you stay positive—like, 'that sounds like a really good theme'—or not shoot down ideas too much. But within a team or within an organization, how do you really stay innovative, stay creative, you know, and really kind of attract new creative minds and...

Patrick: For me—and you know, people have theories that the top thousand people on average would probably give you a different answer—for me, it's about starting with a blank slate. I mean, when you are in this industry for a while—and I have not even been in it...I think I've been in it for seven years, seven years, yeah—you have so many memories and so many things and so many experiences and so many brands you've worked on. I've worked on probably forty brands and, like, 150 campaigns or more so it's really hard to get a project and not compare it to something, and not to start at where you might have left off last campaign. To really just be, like, to really get rid of all that, push it all aside, I think, is the most important thing. And you know, it happens every...I've probably had...I know I had at least one meeting today where everyone got the project and they were like: "Oh it's just like this. Oh it's just like this old brand we had." And it's like, the brief that we get, yes, was very similar, but...and okay, we can talk about how it's just like this for now but let's make sure we start with a blank slate and build from the ground up. So as far as coming up, as far as constantly innovating, I think that is...that to me is the key, I guess. And you know, you have to have...it's so hard today especially because technologies are just evolving all time. Like, I looked...I looked on...I opened up Facebook today and Facebook has stores now. Like, that didn't exist yesterday.

Bryan: And they own Instagram.

Patrick: Now they own Instagram and I know 'cause I'm on Facebook. And that's like a small thing. But it's like you have to stay on top of every single technology. Uhm and so it is super hard to be able to hire specialists. You have to be constantly curious, you got to be...yeah, being constantly curious is a big one.

Bryan: How do you handle pursuing a certain job or task or venture with a company and then realizing, you know, after watching the campaign and contributing resources and time, that, you know, it turns out you didn't get the results you wanted? How do you handle that? How do you go about it? What makes you wake up the next day and say: "You know what...I'm gonna..."

Patrick: I think, uhm, when, I guess yours kinda...you just have to learn I think. When you have a lot...when you have a campaign that actually goes live, the worst thing that you can do in advertising...Because everyone in advertising and marketing on the client side knows that, like, it's an imperfect science...like, it's...you're always kind of gambling so there's always an understanding that, like, this could flop or this could fail. You test it. You always...you test most things, especially if you're gonna put a lot of money behind it. But most people accept the fact that you need at least learn something...you learn that it's kind of success. So the worst thing that can happen—and this is going on with one of our clients—we...it's not going that well. Like, the result aren't there. Now we still think that our work...you work with...you end up working with different agencies so you'll have, like, one client and they'll have an agency, like, that runs media and they'll have us that does creative and strategy and then they'll have a person here and a person there. What makes this one bad is that their media agency isn't learning anything. They built their campaign so that there was an inability to learn. So...so

that's when you feel like you're kind of screwed a little bit. But as long as you learn then you're fine. When you get into a position where you're in a new business pitch and so you go fly somewhere, you present your ideas, it's very much like, you know, your...if any of you watch 'Mad Men' it's very much like those meetings that they have in that show. And if you don't succeed you have to get feedback and you just have to evolve and think about where you might have succeeded. But in advertising you're up against, I mean, it's almost like the sports industry—you're up against other agencies that are very good as well and sometimes you put your best work out there and you get beat and by someone who put their best work out there too.

Madi: So how do you stay motivated when you don't get those results?

Patrick: Aaahm...I don't know. I've always kind of been motivated, just in general, to like...for me it's like advertising's very, I guess, competitive-focused. And once again, probably growing up, you know, four older brothers, you know, we...we were very very competitive and so it's kind of always been part of my my DNA. And I guess...I guess that's kind of just it. I mean in what we...there's always something more that you want to do, like, in advertising that doesn't get sold, because clients never buy all your ideas. So there's just a natural drive in this industry, like, I don't think anyone could get in this industry if they didn't just have that drive to, like, do the next and be the first to do something, or win the awards or whatever that was. So I do think it's just...there's a level of just like you got to be competitive. And advertising is, like, it's not that easy of an industry—like, there's a lot of people that you...that come in to the agency and they're relatively, you know, usually junior but you can get senior people like this, where you can see that they just don't have the drive. Like, you can just tell, where it's like: "Well that person is either gonna be kind of mediocre at this or they're gonna be gone in a year or two." And they usually are because that...I feel like it...it has to be something innate, I guess. I don't know if that helps, but...

Emily: So do you have specific people in your life who have served as role models or inspirations for some of your ideas or projects? And could you share those experiences and interactions you've had with them that connect to your venture or particular aspects of it?

Bryan: Or any books you've read...

Patrick: (Sigh)...Role models. Sorry that was a long one.

Madi: That's okay.

Patrick: I guess that there's...I guess there's a lot. I mean...I think...at our agency, and I think for me and many other people, you know, John Vitro, who's the founder of the agency, is a role model, just because he...he just went out on his own at one point and was just like: "I don't want to live in LA anymore", and came down here and just freelanced and then eventually got so much work that he had to, like, bring another person on, and another and another another and then that's how the agency formed. So it took like...I mean it took a pretty good leap of faith. he worked for a very famous agency called Chiat/Day and was one of the original, like, ten people that worked at that agency, which is kind of a big deal. He's definitely a name that's known within the advertising community. So to kind of leave and just kinda do his own thing is pretty, I think, inspiring.

I think...a lot of people have served as role models. I think...uhm...when I was growing up, my middle brother Sean was definitely, probably the most influential person in my life at the time. Uhm I don't really, I don't really know why. I guess his personality's the most...was at least the most similar to mine in terms of just, he was like a little bit goofier and a little bit more outgoing, which I am. And...and I saw, like, know his friendships and relationships and they kind of inspired me to be kind of that person who was kind of friends with everyone, I guess, which, you know, probably led to a lot of my personal developments, I guess. So [he's] also a person that wanted to be in psychology and...and was a relatively creative person.

I think in...in the job, I would say there's so many people that could, like, become role models and inspirational from time to time because you just get...you just get impressed all the time—like, people are really smart, you know. We've hired and I've worked with a lot of people who have a lot more experience and a lot, you know, better than me at this job. And so for me that's always something that I look at and I'd say I want to be there, I want...I always try and take something from them, you know, even on like a meeting to meeting basis. But, you know, obviously I've learned a ton from people so I don't know...there's a couple of specific people. When I worked for Mindshare in Portland I worked on Nike. And Nike is, like, one of the most famous advertising accounts that exist and the level of people that I worked with on that were just like super smart. And that's a brand that just like...it's probably the most...I mean let's just tie around that as a brand. Like, that's the most kind of inspirational role model-like brand, even. And the people that you work with, I mean, they know who they are so much that they...they just know who they are and they know what they're gonna do and they don't settle for, like, they don't settle for getting on people's level—like, they see themselves as here and they don't even look at the people that they see are below, that they think are below them. Like, they just flew...just for the hell of it, they just took their new AirMax shoe on Sunday and they put in a, like, an air balloon—oh sorry a weather balloon—and they flew it up the stratosphere and then dropped it and then filmed it. Like, why? It's because that shoe is...apparently the lightest shoe that's ever been made and they wanted to demonstrate weightlessness and what not. But they just do things that are cool because they know who they are.

That's something that...that brand inspires me because there's so much in this, in advertising, where you look at what other people are doing and you use that as like a, almost, like, a benchmark or, like, a temperature check or, like, inspiration or, like, a sign of what you should be doing. And I think in my own job I try and be...I try and, like, combine that—like, I could pull. You know, I could rinse and repeat, like, certain things that I do. Or I could...I could look at what other agencies are doing and other people that are doing something in my specific role and take their templates or take their processes or ways of thinking. I can replace where, or at least my mentality is, I don't see why anyone does better than I could do it, essentially. And that's kind of how Nike thinks. And I think I've always been like that—like, I remember kids that used to cheat off, like, other kids in class and I'm like: "well why would I...I don't think that that dude's any smarter than I am so why would I cheat on his test or her test." I think that's kind of...that's an inspirational brand and experience my life. And I...I worked with some of the smartest people I've ever worked with when I worked on Nike. Uhm, so yeah...

Bryan: What are you most passionate about? Is there anything that you find most exciting or driving or just motivational?

Patrick: Uuuuhm...

Bryan: And how...in a team dynamic as well?

Patrick: Yeah...I think...I mean there's plenty of things I'm passionate about. Food. Music. Uhm. But I think it's...I think it's just kind of...I don't know. I think doing new things, and like...

Bryan: 'Cause it seems like there's always like a new challenge.

Patrick: Yeah. I think that...it's new challenges, it's new experiences, it's new thing. Like, I'm obsessed with new. I'm obsessed with, like, randomizing, and, like...like, take for example, like music—let's just go there for second—a lot of people, they hear a new track, they get obsessed with it, they play that shit, like, all the time. I have, like, very curated, like, five thousand song library that I just listen to on shuffle all the time. And it's not new...not all of it is new, but it's relatively new and so I'm...I just want to do something new. And I just...I don't see the need to, like, I want to challenge myself to come up with a new thing, to not pull from—like I was saying—like, not pull from someone else's way of thinking or to emulate this or emulate that but to do my own new thing that is, like, unique to me, I guess? So I don't know. It's a really good question...some of it is hard.

Dray: Kinda going off of that: individuals tend to learn more from their failures, more so than their successes. This is the last one here. Can you tell us more about a time a time that you failed, but how you've reacted and bounced back from it, to kind of create that uniqueness that you were just discussing?

Patrick: Yeah...I mean...(long sigh). There's a lot of failures. Like, you could fail at your job, like, almost every single day—like, you don't win a new business pitch, you don't sell an idea. Like, that sort of stuff happens all the time. Uhm, I think like...I think the...the most, I guess, impactful failures would be with, like, personal relationships. So I mean I...I've had failed, like, personal relationships or endeavors—whether it's, you know, going after a girl for a really long time and just never ending up with her or losing a best friend, like, for whatever reasons. And I think it kinda gets back to the observant thing, but it's just like...you gotta like step outside. One thing that's super important in my life is to kind of...uhm, it goes back to psychology—as, like, self-diagnosis is super important and knowing, like, your own psychological issues and being able to, like, identify those and realize that like...like if you fail in a relationship or if you fail on a thing and you're really upset and it's like you can't think about anything else and just realizing that, like, taking a step, looking at yourself, and realizing that this is because of, you know, whatever your self-diagnosis is, and then assessing it from that outside perspective, I guess.

So we talk about at Vitro...we talk about empathy a lot—like, our process starts with empathy and being able to, like, step outside and get somewhere else. I think that's where, you know, in my bigger bigger failures...they've probably been...I would consider my bigger failures relationship-based, is able to, like, step outside, look at, like, really what's happening from an outside perspective, and trying to, like, trying to do it that way and then just realizing that, like...I think one of my biggest breakthroughs of realization was like: you cannot control people whatever you...whatever you want to do or however, however much you want something to happen or however well you think you're doing it or whatever it is, like, at the end of the day you can put your best foot forward, you can be the ultimately best version of yourself, and you still will fail, because, like, you cannot control other people. And that's in relationships, that's in

your job—like, you know, there are certain times when you might come up with the best idea in the whole world and you tell it to the creative director and he doesn't like it. And you can tell that it's not that he doesn't like it; it's just that it wasn't his idea. And for personal reasons or for selfish reasons, you know...yada yada. That's why it's not happening. And that's their own issue. And yes, just to be able to like kind of see that and be like: "Okay I'm, you know, doing the best that I can do." It's just you can't get past another person. You can't control that person no matter how you tried...or no matter how hard you tried and bend them—like, to your will or whatever you want them to be doing. And you need to, you know, once again getting back to empathy: you need to be able to understand why that person is, what place are they in that they, you know, won't accept that idea.

So that's kind of the way that I try and look at it, I guess. And that can go across a number of different failures at different—whether it's in your personal life or whether it's in your job life. But it's really funny: the...one of the girls that was one of my mentors and definitely an inspirational person is a girl that works at Vitro still. She's one of the ones that hired me. And she has a sign on her desk that says: "It's not my fault that you're stupid." Which is, obviously, like, kind of funny, and like maybe rude. But to a certain extent, especially in advertising, your clients...a lot of clients are failed advertising people. Or they didn't, you know, they started young, they didn't maybe grow as fast as they want or to get to where they wanted to be so they went to the client side. So a lot of times, they're not gonna conceptually get what you are selling them. They're just not gonna get it and it's not that they're stupid. It's like—that's a rude way of putting it—but you do need to understand that, you know, sometimes you gotta just wash your hands and be like: "Okay I need to move on....that person is the block here. It's not an issue with me." So yeah...hopefully...let's hope I'm answering your questions.

Madi: They're great.

Dray: We're actually out of time right now. Like, we've gone over time.

Madi: Yeah I know we've actually gone through everything.

Emily: Yeah.

Dray: Yeah thank you so much. That was really insightful.

Patrick: Cool.

— End of Transcription —