**RedZone Podcast Episode 49: The Power of Being Agile, Cheap, Flexible, and Resource Constrained in an Exponential World – with Enrique Rubio**

Enrique: The nature of the problems that we are dealing with right now is so complex that you cannot solve them from just one perspective. You need a lot of people. You need a lot of skills. You need a lot of talents, so that means that you need better ways, more collaboration, more designed thinking, more curiosity and creativity to solve those problems from a variety of perspectives and not just one mindset, so to speak.

Bill: Who's the philosopher that said, "We're not going to solve problems from the same level of thinking that created them"?

Enrique: Oh, Einstein.

Bill: Yeah, Einstein.

Bill: [00:01:00] You are talking about one of my favorite quotes. If you read my article [inaudible 00:00:43] I talk a lot about that quote because I interviewed someone a few months ago for my [book 00:00:49] and this person said that we are still trying to solve the same problems that we had 50 years ago. Now these problems have maybe a different face, but the nature of those problems is the same, so we are still trying to solve the problems with the same level of thinking that we had when we created them which is exactly what Albert Einstein said.

What is it that we need right now to solve more complex problems? Collaboration, we need to bring people from diverse backgrounds. We need to bring people from diverse expertise, but we have to tell them that they need to be curious around the nature of those problems and around potential solutions.

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Bill: As we're talking, a couple of things that you're really passionate about and I'm really interested in because I'm not as well-versed in this area as designed thinking. Maybe if you could give me an example or a story of how designed thinking is used in your world to solve a complex problem, I would really like to understand what designed thinking is from your point of view and then also the story of how it was used to potentially solve a complex problem if you could.

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Enrique: Well, talking about design thinking to solve complex problems, I got an example about that. I recently interviewed someone from Denver. They have a fantastic organization working with designed thinking and the public of private [inaudible 00:06:10], so they went to the Michigan government and they were trying to solve one problem that they had which is the forms to help people that were trying to get some help from the government because they were unemployed. These forms had about sixty something pages and that was creating a lot of work not only for the people requesting help but also for the public employees trying to help these people.

[00:07:00] They started analyzing with the designed thinking. They started first seeing how people were experiencing the problems that they were having, so how people were requesting help and how public employees were receiving and experiencing the problem. Once they understood that, they were able to design a number of solutions. To experiment with those solutions, they had to leave aside some of the things they thought are the beginning of the project and they started seeing that some of the solutions that they were implementing weren't working, that they needed to do some tricks to that solution but once they understood the problem, they experimented with a particular solution. They were able to scale that solution to another level to propose it to the Michigan government, so they went from sixty something pages of a form to less than six pages in the form, in a new for that is much easier to use for people, for customers, for public employees. It's cheaper for the government because it's saving them literally millions of hours.

[00:08:00] Designed thinking helps you ... The first step in designed thinking is having empathy around the problems that people have. Many organizations and many people try to solve problems revolving around the processes that they have in place or the financial [inaudible 00:08:05] of the organization or the business model of the organization and they overlook the fact that the ones experiencing the problem are people at the end of the day. Designed thinking shifts the mindset from revolving around processes or things to revolving around people, to revolving around how people experience problems. That is empathy. You need to have a lot of empathy to use designed thinking.

[00:09:00] Once you start seeing a particular community, so to speak, or a particular target of the population that is experiencing a problem and you understand very well how they are experiencing that problem, you can then go to a new stage in the designed thinking process. That new stage is creating potential solutions, potential alternatives. You might have a group of people, like I said at the beginning, based on collaboration and on diverse groups and on curiosity and creativity, you bring a lot of people together to the table to think how to solve that problem that you already understand.

There might be, I don't know, let's say a hundred type of solutions on the table, so you apply certain methodologies to those solutions and you say, "From a hundred, we only have 5 solutions right now," and then you decide what to do with those solutions. If it's cheap to do, you can experiment and by experimenting what I mean is taking a little sector, a little piece of the entire population that is experiencing the problem and applying one of those solutions to them and observing how people are reacting to that particular solution.

[00:10:00] When you do that, when you do that experimentation process, it gives you information on whether you're initial assumptions about that solution are true or not. Let's say that at the beginning of the ... Let's go back to this example of Denver and this group of people working in there with designed thinking.

If you design a form that has 10 pages and you think that that's the best form, you give it to people and when you observe people, they have no idea how to use that form but your initial assumption was "The form is very clear so people will know how to use it," but they don't so you have to switch some things around because your initial assumption is not been proven right, proven correct. You need to go back to the design table and say, "You know what? This 10-pages form is not providing the type of answer that we need for people to have so we need to redesign it and we need to go back to the field and experiment with it again."

[00:11:00] There might be a point when you get to that 10 pages or 6-pages form in the case of this particular project, you give it to people and you observe how they use it and you see them using it and you understand that they know how to use it, that it's a smooth process for them that is taking, I don't know, an hour versus three or four hours that it used to take before and you say, "You know what? Now that form is working well," so you decided to scale that solution as the next step.  
Designed thinking is a very clear process of defining a problem, bringing people to the table in order to analyze potential solutions, picking some of those solutions using some methodologies and experimenting with them. That experimentation process will give you some information. It will tell you, "10 pages is too much. 6 pages is all right. 5 questions is too much. You need to redefine those questions into just 2 or 3 questions," and once you experiment, you decide whether to scale the solution because it works pretty well or you decide whether to [inaudible 00:11:48] to another area because the initial solution was not what you thought it was going to be.

[00:12:00] I have another example of that. I interviewed someone, a fascinating woman. She created a company called "One Earth Designs." They created a solar oven for people in the Himalayas and how it worked for her, she went to the Himalayas and she lived among nomads for a long time. One of the things that she observed was that people didn't have enough fuel to build fireplaces or something for their food. On top of that, since they were nomads, they could not move around the kitchens or the stoves that the government was providing them because they were really heavy.

[00:13:00] She said, "We need to do something about it," so she created, with an engineer she created a solar oven. She gave it to them, to the people, to the nomads. They were experimenting with the first prototype of that oven. It was still too heavy. It was not too sturdy. It was going away with the wind, so she decided to go back to the design table to redo it again and then she went back to the people. She gave it another experiment, another prototype. She kept going back and forth between people and design table. Then she found the perfect solar oven and now she's selling it and she's doing pretty well.

That's another example of designed thinking applied to a compelling social problem. This is in the Himalayas, so she understood the problem. She designed several solutions. She experimented together with people, going back to the design table when it was needed and then she said, "This is the final solution. This is the one that is working. Let's scale it and let's make it bigger and let's make it better or let's try to reach more people because our assumptions and our design has proven to work well."

[00:14:00] That's a little bit of how designed thinking works and why I think the best advantage of using this tool in the real world is that it allows you to collaborate. It allows you to understand the way that people are experiencing or experimenting some problems in their communities, in their countries, in their lives and how you can design small experiments that are cheap. Usually, they are very cheap and you can go out to experiment to you those prototypes and experiment with them and then come back to the design table to redo whatever is necessary to be redone.

Bill: It's really interesting that you talk about cheap experiments. I really appreciate the examples you gave because it was interesting. One was a public sector example and the other one was really a kind of bootstrap entrepreneur in the concept of innovation at the edge with using exponential thinking. This concept of cheap experimentation, are you finding that it's more successful in smaller entrepreneurial spaces or are also is it being, can be applied in the public sector?

Enrique: [00:15:00] Absolutely, I think ... Not only do I think that, but I have experienced it myself. I had [set up 00:15:00] and we decided at the beginning to invest all this money and try to go as big as possible developing all this modules for our platform. Then when we put it out there for people to use, people didn't even understand what it was for. My mistake was trying to develop something too big at the same time, using a lot of time and a lot of money into something that I didn't know whether people wanted it or needed it at all.  
[00:16:00] The advantage of cheap experimentation and quick turnarounds in this process is that it gives you quick information. It gives information really very fast. If you design something that's cheap and it's small and you put it out there and people kind of want it and they're trying to understand how it works but they don't really know how it works, you can go back to the design table, tweak it a little bit and go out again to the field. Then you start in that back and forth process that allows you to in a very cheap way, in a very fast way, incorporate the way that people want to experience and want to use the products or services you are designing for them.

It's cheap because again you don't need to invest a lot of money in those type of solutions. It is great because you go back and forth with people. It is human-center design because you don't dump solutions and services on people. You work with them in designing those solutions because their feedback is fundamental for you to design the service or products that you need.

Bill: [00:17:00] Sorry to interrupt you, Enrique. This is a lot of fun talking about just because what I really like hearing ... I have so many questions, but remind me to ask you. I want to cover this social entrepreneurship in a moment because I'm just a flat out entrepreneur myself, but every single product that we've ever launched both intra-preneur, the innovation within my own company and forming new businesses has always come by testing whether somebody wanted it or and whether someone ... Would it had to be changed? Would it had to be tweaked? I really love this concept of rapid iteration that you gave early on with the woman in the Himalayas with the over example and even yourself you mentioned experience in developing software and you've developed more of a bigger framework. I bet you've learned a lot from that experience, didn't you?

Enrique: Yeah, absolutely. Talking about the social sector which is one of the areas where I think there's a lot of value to be added in terms of how you design solutions or social problems. One thing that is going on is that many non-profits and big organizations, foundations, they are taking a lot of time to design the type of projects that they want to implement in a particular community.

[00:18:00] What happens is that there's a lot of heavy, heavy strategic design at the beginning and once you start implementing that project, you notice that there are things that are not as you expected them to be, but since you invested so much time at the beginning, you don't want to switch things around throughout the implementation of the project because you say, "You know what? I want to go forward with what I think is my planning process. I'm going to switch around because people are not responding the way we want to this particular solution or this particular product or service."

By doing heavy and strategic design at the very onset of, after you discover a social problem, you are thinking that people don't change. You are thinking that the way people experience a solution won't change and that is a very heavy and very expensive mistake. What's needed is a more flexible approach. Actually, that's what Salim Ismail says in the exponential organization books. He said, "Get rid of those 5 year strategic plans that you have in your company. You need to start experimenting in a much faster way," and that is exactly what I'm proposing for the social sector using designed thinking.

[00:19:00] The unique to do your strategies, by unique to do them in a way that they are fed by the information you are getting from the environment, from the information you're getting from people rather than implementing something that you heavily design at the beginning but is not responding to the way or in the way you want it to respond. That is a switch in the mindset to be honest and it's heavy because there are so many people used to heavy planning at the beginning, heavy design at the beginning and then once they go through the process and they get to the end, when they are going to measure the outcomes, they see outcomes that are no exactly what they expect them to be. They are either lower in the impact, lower in the type of outputs or the quality of the outputs or in the way people are using those outputs.

[00:20:00] The problem in there is that if you don't switch it around or [inaudible 00:19:43] or a scale throughout the life of a project, your initial assumptions, you basically you are making the mistake of thinking that people will be reactive in the same way throughout the life of this project. You need to be flexible and that's why this new approach to solving problems is so critical.

Bill: Yeah, I love that. Another little story would be, a gentleman that I got my black belt in Taekwondo with him and he was an older man. At the time, I think I may have been 32 and he was probably significantly older at that point, but he had just sold his company for three hundred and fifty million dollars and he said to me, we were talking about business plans and such because I was not that far into my own company at that point. He said that the day he put together a business plan and he goes, "And the day I walked out of that business plan meeting, I tore it up." He goes, "I ripped it apart."

There was a certain thinking, process that the business plan provided but then once he was out, it was in the field. It was more rapid iteration to figure out what the customer needed and wanted. Of course, that's a commercial example, but it was an interesting approach that I had never forgot that.

[00:21:00] What is a social entrepreneur? I appreciate you spending a lot of time talking about designed thinking because I really wanted to hear your definition but then I also hear this word "social entrepreneur" and I would love to get your opinion about what that means in your world and to yourself.

Enrique: A social entrepreneur is someone who is trying to solve compelling social problems in the world. It's an entrepreneur because it's trying to do something in a different way, adding value in a different way, in a more innovative and creative way than has been done before, that the thinking process is geared toward solving compelling social problems.

There is a fine line between what is a social problem right now and what is the basis problem right now. If you think about companies like Uber or AirBnB, you might think, "Were they solving social problems?" We might consider those as social problems, but a social entrepreneur is more focused on the type of problems that we think as making people having a hard time in their lives, a hardship in their lives.

[00:22:00] For example, property, lack of access to a location, lack of access to water, diversity and an inclusion. Those environmental issues don't solve the type of problems to are which social entrepreneurs are gearing their energy and their creativity and their power, their brain power to work on.

Bill: Okay, so like poverty education, energy, water, thing of that nature?

Enrique: Correct. Yes, correct. For example, let me give you an example of what is a social entrepreneur. There is this guy, I don't remember his name, in one country in Africa. I'm sorry that it's slipping away right now, but this guy, his community didn't have energy, electric energy so he [set 00:22:39] a rating and he collected a lot of recycling materials and he created himself a windmill, not these big windmills that we are used to seeing everywhere, no. He created a windmill with recycling materials.

[00:23:00] With that windmill, he's now been able to help people charge their mobile phones in this community in one country in Africa that I can't remember right now. He's solved a problem, social problem which was the lack of energy in that community in a very innovation and creative way. He's a social entrepreneur. He used his energy, his curiosity. He's creating power to solve one problem that his community was experiencing and actually he was invited to our Ted Talk to talk about that experience. Like him, there are many other people around the world.

[00:24:00] There's this other guy that I've been meaning to interview. He lives in Malaysia. He created a company that it's a company solving a social problem, but it's access to water. Somehow, he created a system to collect water from the rain because there's a lot of rain in this area and the system purifies the water and provides [any 00:23:49] water to the community, to people in there. He solved a social problem in an innovative and creative way. Those are the type of guys that are social entrepreneurs, using their brain power again, curious, creativity, innovation to solve compelling social issues. Designed thinking, exponential organization type of thinking is very very much critical and I'd say a great way for them to apply their knowledge into solving problems.

[00:25:00] It's very interesting. For example, this woman that I told you that lived among the nomads in the Himalayas, she didn't know anything about designed thinking but just by her own nature, I'd say by her ingenuity, she was able to design that solution in a process that pretty much is the same designed thinking. What I'm saying here is that very often, we find social entrepreneurs not knowing what designed thinking or exponential organizations or what lean thinking processes are but they are doing it in that way just because that's a way they can do it because they don't have any money to implement heavy strategic planning or expensive solutions. They have a little bit of resources, just a few resources available.

Bill: Yeah, I think this is a really important point you bring up about the kind of limited resources. I find even today, 15, 16 years into my company, there's a mindset of when you didn't have a lot how you approached a problem versus when you have a few dollars to spare. By the way, the gentleman's name is William Kamkwamba, the one who built the windmills that did the Ted Talks. I'll link that up on the show notes page at the end.

Yeah, it's really interesting, this lean thinking that you're referring to because that woman didn't have a lot of resources. However, she made it happen with that limited abilities. Have you read the book "Abundance" by any chance?

Enrique: No, I haven't.

Bill: [00:26:00] It's written by Diamandis and Steven Kotler and it talks about a ... It's an interesting world we're in. We actually have tremendous resources and we have this world of abundance. They actually have energy now that you can put a little nuclear reactors that are the size of a refrigerator and you can plop them down in a village and nobody has to manage it and maintain it. It lights up. You can turn on 10,000 light bulbs. This issue is how do we get these technologies into these places and apply these concepts you're referring to? In a world of abundance, how do we get abundance to the people that need it the most?

Enrique: Yeah. Yeah. That's really interesting. I think having abundance of everything has two sides. It's on the one side, you know that once you found a solution for a problem, you have enough resources to scale that solution to solve the problem for many people at the same time and not just for a few people. That's the positive side.

[00:27:00] The other side of abundance is that usually we get lost in finding the best solution because we have so much of everything that if something doesn't work, we quickly move to something else but using a lot of resources. If we were able instead to experiment with cheaper solutions in a faster way without using a lot of resources, I think the impact and the pressure on our brain capacity to create a good solution with little money is higher than if you had a lot of resources for that solution and you have money to waste, so to speak.

[00:28:00] Let me say an example of this. I don't know if you know about the case of the Apollo 13, forty years ago when something happened out there out of the orbit of the earth. I remember watching the movie which is one of my favorite movies, Apollo 13. A group of engineers came. They had a problem in the shuttle out in the space and the problem was that they were not being able to purify the carbon dioxide that they were creating inside this aircraft, so engineers on earth came with all these materials that were the only materials that the astronauts had available out there and they put them on the table. A group of 10 engineers, they said to themselves, "We need to create a purifier only with these things because these are the only things that people have available out there."

What I'm try to say here is that if we could think about ways to designing a solution knowing that there's abundance but at the same time, not all the people have these capacity to have access to all these resources, we would be able to scale and sustain those solutions in the longer term.

[00:29:00] If you come to a continent or to a country, a very poor country and you come with a solution that is very expensive to implement, maybe you will solve a problem for one year, but in the long term it won't be sustainable because the people in there won't have the capacity to pay for that solution. Now if go to them with a solution that is cheap with the resources they have available in their own environment and you tell them, you work with them in designing the solution and you use the few resources that they have available in that environment, it will be much easier for them to scale it and sustain it in the long term because what they need is available to them.

I don't know if that makes sense. Those are the two sides of this abundance thinking, I would say.

Bill: I think it makes a ton of sense. Essentially what you're saying is as much as possible in this designed thinking process is using the resources that are available locally to them to craft the system so the solution's needed for that particular environment.

Enrique: You have to develop those skills and you have to try to use the resources that you have locally as much as you can because what happens is that we have experienced this over the past 40 or 50 years of social and economic development. Many rich countries and rich organizations go to poor countries with poor NGO's and they try to implement solutions that work in the rich country and they work in the poor country but only for a short period of time.

[00:30:00] The reason that happened is that people locally don't have needed skills or the resources to make that solution sustainable in the long term, so if we are able to transfer capacities, transfer knowledge to those communities but at the same time work with the resources they have available, in my opinion I think we can make the solutions more sustainable in time rather than a one-time solution to a long term problem. I think that's a little bit of the two sides of this coin.

Bill: That's very interesting. When you think about solving or creating sort of the managerial structure for the future, do you see an end to ... How do you see managerial oversight coming into play over the next couple years? Do you see that ending? Are you seeing ... I know there's sort of a movement to have less managers and more independent teams and approaches to doing work. What are your thoughts on that?

[00:31:00]  
Enrique: That's a great question. I think that just by the fact that the nature of the problems that we are experiencing right now is more complex than it has ever been before, the need for more collaboration and diversity and teamwork is higher than ever.

What happened, let's say 50 years ago, 60 years ago in the peak of the oil boom and the industry boom in the United States for example, just a few people had the knowledge of the things that needed to be done. There were a lot of workers that were actually implementing something, but there were a few people that had the knowledge on how to solve those problems. These people had a lot of knowledge because there were not much knowledge created by them. There was a lot but not as much as we have now.

[00:32:00] What happened today is that we are creating so much information. We are creating so much knowledge. The nature of the problems is increasing in complexity at a fast pace that just one person cannot know how to solve a problem and cannot know, wouldn't be able to know how to manage resources in order to solve that problem without the brain power that comes from collaboration and teamwork.

What I think is going to happen in the future is that we are going to see flatter organizations, less hierarchies in the organizations. We might be able to see hopefully, I think, less managerial oversight in the organization and more teamwork. What's going to happen, at least as I see it is that in a team within a company, we are going to see people having more accountabilities based on their talents and their skills and yes, there will be leadership based on your accountabilities but that the approach to managerial oversight where people have to report to just one person, I think that's going to disappear.

[00:33:00] I think that what's going to happen is that everyone within a team will have to report to that team, entirely to that team and not just to one person. I think that it's breaking a little bit with the approach of having people reporting to just one person, trying to get feedback from that person how to solve a problem. Again, that won't be able to happen anymore because that one person that we call the manager today, I think that his or her expertise is increasing over time just because the nature of the problems is more complex now.

That person needs to be involved more in the team. As they are involved more in a team, their role as a manager will be increasingly disappearing whereas their role as team member will be increasingly becoming more evident. It's this sort of flattening of organizations and teams working together in solving problems where accountability is on the team and not just on one person.

[00:34:00] I think that's hopefully ... I don't know if that's going to happen in the next 2 years, I don't think so but I think in the future, more and more organizations will be moving toward a design, an organization design that revolves around teams rather than hierarchies and [heavy 00:34:11] structures.

Bill: Yeah. I think it's interesting, the whole model that may emerge and shift over time because I know in one of your blog posts, I was reading that the world of economic forum listing the ten critical skills that we needed in the workforce in 2020. I think it's surprising. We'll link this up on our show notes page for everybody, but I imagine there was a lot of people involved in coming up with this list but complex problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, people management, coordinating with others, emotional intelligence, judgment and decision-making, service orientation, negotiation and cognitive flexibility.

[00:35:00] You said earlier in your blog, there's 1400 days until 2020, so it's not a lot of time that people are supposed to get all these skills. What do you think is the most, out of that top 10 if we follow Pareto's principle of 20% of those skills will get you 80% of the way there, what do you think of the top two?

Enrique: You know what? It's funny but I think the one that is the top one is not in that list. I think the one that I consider most important is curiosity. It's not just me. Actually Michael Dell, the Dell Incorporated Company and CEO, he said that for him the most important skill that CEO's need to have in the future is curiosity.

What happens is that, I also wrote something about those 10 skills that the world economic forum is listing versus what curiosity means against those 10 skills, but actually it's not against. It's, they work together. If you don't have curiosity, it's very difficult to be creative because to be creative, you need to be asking questions and to be asking questions, you need to be curious.

[00:36:00] In order to promote problem solving, like the nature of very complex problems in the world right now, you need to be curious because what happens is sometimes we see only the tip of the iceberg. There's a lot behind the surface that we are not seeing and the only way to unveil that information that is hiding in there is by asking question. That is again curiosity. All those skills somehow have an answer or have something to do with curiosity, so I think that curiosity is the most important skill in the future.  
[00:37:00] Now, to be curious, you need to be allowed to ask questions. That's why I think ... I'm going to go back a little to connect that to this concept of the end of managerial oversight. If you're not allowed to ask questions in a team because the manager of that team is afraid that you will unveil that he or she doesn't know the answer to that question, then you won't be want to be curious because your manager will eventually punish you because you're asking the question for which he or she doesn't have the answer.

In more flat teams where you have this ability to ask questions, I think it's more evident. It's easier because people in there, they don't have all the knowledge to solve a particular problem. They don't have all the answers to solve a particular problem, neither they have all the information that they need to have to solve those problems. They need to ask the questions that help them understand what the problems are and the nature of those problems.

That's why I think that in the next 4 or 5 years, we need to allow people to ask questions. We need to allow people to be curious because in my opinion, that will be the only way to remain relevant for the future because right now, Bill, there are thousands of people doing exactly the same thing that you and I are doing.

[00:38:00] If I want to stay relevant for the future, I need to ask the questions that they are not asking. I care about the solutions that they are implementing today, but those solutions might be dead in the next 5 years. What I care about is my capacity or our capacity to ask the type of questions that over and over again will allow us to remain relevant for the future.

Just a note on that, it's expected that in the next 5 years, there will be around 3.5 billion people coming out of poverty and engrossing the list of, or engrossing the number of people in the middle class so we are going to have around 5 billion people in middle class and all of them will be accessing information. They will be accessing knowledge. Some of them will not be entrepreneurs but a lot of them will be, so a lot of them will be focusing on finding answers to solutions and some others, the curious ones, will be focused on asking the type of questions that will help them forecast what's going to happen in the future.

[00:39:00] I think there's a, there's not even a fine line in there. There's a heavy line between those two groups of people, the ones who will be able to ask questions and allow to ask questions and the ones who will be just focused on solving something today without thinking whether that's going to be sustainable or not in the future.

Bill: Where did you develop your ability to ask questions? Did you have a mentor growing up that taught you that? Is there particular books that you've read that asked you, not asked you but taught you how to ask questions? How does someone develop that capability?

Enrique: I think just by not being afraid of asking questions. I think that what happens very often is we fear to be ridiculed by asking a question for which we don't have the answer. You know why that happened? Because in our current world, we still value expertise and knowledge more than we value ignorance. This is to me one of the heavy lines of all the things that I write.

[00:40:00] I'm not talking about the type of ignorance that makes you be a bigot or discriminating against anyone, not that type of ignorance. I'm talking about the lack of answers to tough questions. Since we are afraid of being ridiculed, asking a question in a team and not having the answer to that question, many people decide not to ask it because they don't want their bosses to tell them, "Hey, I hire you to have the answer to those questions. How come you come to the team asking that question? I want you to have the answer," and that is the wrong type of message.

We want to tell people, "Come to this table and ask all the questions that you want. It doesn't matter if you don't have the answer. We will be there together, but we want you to ask the type of questions that nobody else is asking right now because in one of those questions, we might find the entrepreneurial type of thing that we want to do in the future, the new innovations, the new discovery, the new invention or the new thing that will be a hit for the future."

[00:41:00] I think just by not being afraid, I would say that the most important thing here. By not being afraid of asking questions, you will be able to develop your curiosity and your questioning skills. It's just going out there and saying, "You know what? I don't care if people see me as an ignorant or they see me as the one who asks questions that there's no answer for." It doesn't matter. Just go and ask those questions because at least one of them will have the seed for the new innovation for the future.

I think it's all about getting rid of that fear that we all have and that we were all, it was all instilled in us when we were growing up, when our parents were saying, "Oh, don't ask that question or I don't have the answer for those questions," or teachers in the school were saying, "I'm the teacher and I'm the one who has the answers so you can't ask any questions that is not within what I am going to be able to answer."

We need to get to break that cultural background and look forward without fear of asking questions.

[00:42:00]  
Bill:  
I think that your message on curiosity is very unique and I really like it. The piece that you link it to fear I think is important for people to understand. Was growing up in Venezuela ... did you say you grew up in Venezuela?

Enrique: Yes.

Bill: Did growing up in Venezuela have a strong influence in shaping your motivation and your concept of the world or was there something deeper? Was there a mentor in Venezuela that helped shape your opinions and your thoughts?

Enrique: I think there were a few mentors in my life. Now that I'm grown up and an adult, I look back at my life and I say, "Well, I wish I had somebody 50 years ago telling me this or telling me that." I didn't so you build that knowledge and those skills later in your life, but at least you work on that.

[00:43:00] Yeah, I had a few mentors and I think growing up in a developing country dealing with so many problems at so many levels definitely shapes the way you see the world. One thing that I, always I advised people, but always recently I didn't see the world this way before but I see this way now is just be open-minded to everything that is happening to you.

Once in my life, I was fired from a job and I hated it. I was really really mad, but what happened after that was amazing in my life. I got a scholarship to come to the United States and then I got a job in the United States. If I hadn't been fired off that job, I would be back there still probably not being able to ask all the questions that I ask today so that firing me happened for one reason.

[00:44:00] Little [ways 00:43:42] are we able to see the reasoning things, the rationale behind things at the moment that those things are happening. The important thing is to be open-minded because to me, everything that happens in our lives has a reason and sooner or later that reason will surface and we will be able to understand why that happened to us and the value of that something in our lives.

In Venezuela, there were many things that I had to deal with. My family didn't have money. It's a very complicated economic and probably the [inaudible 00:44:17] situation down there now and when I was down there as well, so all those things taught me something and those things made me the person that I am now. The advice I gain is "Be open-minded to valuing everything that happens to your life."

Again, if you are in love with your girlfriend or your boyfriend and they come back to you and say, "Oh, I want to break up with you," you're going to be heartbroken for a year or for months and you won't understand why that happened. Now maybe, 2, 3, 4, 5 years down the road, you will say, "Wow, I'm glad that that happened to me because the reason for that to happen to me is this, right now." Now you understand it.

[00:45:00] That's a thing, one of the best advice I have learned in my life that I think is valuable, I will say.

Bill: Just knowing how challenging it is for the folks that I know that do move back and forth or do visit family back and forth from Venezuela in my local community and knowing how challenging it is, I imagine that would have a big impact in someones life. Being open-minded is a great message. I wanted to thank you for the impact that you're having on the world, Enrique, and just teaching my audience about designed thinking, about how to solve complex problems using designed thinking, a little bit about social entrepreneurship and curiosity and the relationship between fear and curiosity and being open-minded. You've given us some great food for thinking today and I appreciate you for that.

Enrique: Thank you. Thank you so much for the invite. It was my pleasure.

BIll: Absolutely and hopefully, we can do a round two of this at some point in the future, Enrique.

Enrique: Sounds great.

[00:46:00]  
Bill:  
Thank you, sir. Have a good day.

Enrique: Thank you, Bill. You too. Thank you so much.