

TIFFANY SAUDER & GARY BRACKETT

SAUDER: Hi everyone. I'm really excited to sit down with Gary Brackett. He's a bit of a legend here in Indianapolis. He played for the Indianapolis Colts and has a really fascinating story of someone who has sort of never been a person they bet on, but always ended up on top. He was a walk-on at Rutgers. He was an undrafted free agent in the NFL. And now he's continuing on in his own career as a restaurateur, starting to get into a movie, and published a book, and continues to push incredibly hard in spite of already creating a lot of success. So, I'm excited to dig into his bold story.

SAUDER: Gary, when I read your story about being a walk-on at Rutgers, undrafted free agent, going through a lifetime of hardship when you were in your rookie season, did you always know that you had so much grit? Did you always know that that was in you?

BRACKETT: I think growing up in a family of five, being the youngest of four boys, you kind of develop that grit, right? Growing up, anything that I wanted I kind of had to fight for. And I remember back in the day, like my mom would go school shopping, and it was like, "No, this is like y'all's school clothes, this is not yours in particular." Like we shared clothes. So it was just like if you wanted to wear something first, you had to like duke it out. So somebody just growing up in that type of environment, it just made you tough, man. It made me really appreciate everything that I get, and I know with hard work, you know, anything is possible.

SAUDER: And there's an interesting dichotomy in being around you as a person, where you actually come across as pretty lighthearted and jovial, like "Yeah, like this is no big deal." But

there's been a lot of big deals actually in your life. And so again, is that just your DNA? Or how have you learned to be influenced by the things that you've experienced but in so many ways not be defined by it? You sort of seem to roll through it.

BRACKETT: So it's funny, because some people, they meet professional athletes or higher-profile individuals and think they should have some type of aura about them, like, "Hey, excuse me—" but I'm like, "No, let's have a conversation." And I've always been open like that. And I think one moment changed my life. I had a lot of moments that changed my life, but this one in particular. I was in Philadelphia and I went to a play at the Merriam Theater in high school. So I took my girlfriend to the play and like so we used to go to I think it was Macy's back in the day and like buy a sweater and don't take the tag out and then come back. I had one of those sweaters on, like didn't want to get it messed up. But I'm there and in Philadelphia people have got on mink coats, they've got on nice shoes, and we're outside and then it's like this homeless person and he's asking, "Let me get some money. Lend me some money." And I'm like, "Hey, I'm broke. This is my last I had to come in here," but a lot of people are, "Man, get out of here. You saw these people dressed up nicely, man. Get out of here, you old bum." So the show had like a religious undertone and then at the end of the show, the guy was doing his monologue and he looked at the crowd and he's like, "Jesus, is that you? Is that you?" So all the lights come down, and then a spotlight comes and here comes this homeless guy that was outside, walks across the stage, and I was just like—and you could just see people's mouths just wide open. And then the whole you don't know when he's coming back, what he's going to look like, so I just had the mentality early on like I treat a janitor like I do the CEO. I never know, you know, when our lord and savior is coming back and what form he's going to take. And it

does me no good to be like, “Oh man, I thought you were nobody so I treated you like this.” So I treat everyone the same way.

SAUDER: When you were young, as a kid, did you dream of having influence and being someone who would be able to impact other people and had financial means to be able to accelerate your own ideas and other people’s? Was that something you dreamed of, with having sort of this position of significance, so to speak, what other people would see externally as significant?

BRACKETT: So, I didn’t dream of that. I dreamed of playing in the NFL, and make it to the NFL, right? And the thing that we would always say, like “I want to buy my mamma a house.” So I dreamed of that, but I didn’t really dream about, you know, the aftereffects of everything else that comes along with that and the resources and the access that I would have granted. So I still, you know, appreciate it and don’t take it for granted, right? Because I know a lot of people don’t have the opportunity to be involved in some pretty awesome things or experiences, right? Our YPO group is a perfect example, where we get some pretty great experiences and access, and that’s something I don’t take for granted.

SAUDER: So it seems to me as well like access, you can look at it two ways. One is about the places and the glitter and the fame that you get to brush against. The other is to focus on the people you get to meet, understanding their character and who they are. It seems to me that the people have always been a more magnetic part of that story for you.

BRACKETT: Yeah, I tell people—a lot of people ask me—I'm from New Jersey. They ask me why did I stay in Indianapolis? And I think for me it was the social capital. It was the fact that I could pick up a phone and probably get a meeting with anyone in the state, from the governor to the CEO of any company. I had that type of access. And it's something that I've done, right? And I pick up the phone and I talk to a lot of different individuals, have some great eye-opening conversations. So, like you said, it's just the people part of me that really drives me and kind of makes me want to succeed and kind of help pay it forward and kind of reach back and lift the others up.

SAUDER: When you were even like a teenager, would your group of friends have said that about you, that you were the guy who got everybody together or the life of the party? Were you people-centered then, too? Or have you learned that?

BRACKETT: I think playing football—and I had an unfair advantage, so at a very young age, I used to get beat up by my brothers playing football, being the youngest of four boys.

SAUDER: That's an unfair advantage.

BRACKETT: But then after a while, I get tough. So I'm in sixth grade playing high school football games. So then with sixth graders, it's just like, "Come on, man, I just tackled the star running back in the backyard." So for me, I always felt privileged when I played against people my age, like man, let me take the leadership. Since I'm one of the better kids out here, let me show you how. And I think for me what was great was that playing different sports, because at football I really excelled, but at basketball I was just okay. And I learned to be a better leader in

football because at basketball I was just okay. So if you're in basketball and I'm 5'10" and I'm the power forward and I'm facing someone 6'6", it's unrealistic. Like I'm going to block his shot. Like, really? How? But then in football there's so many unfair advantages and then, you know, Chalk Talk, and as a CEO it's like, "Well, this what you're supposed to do, like (inaudible), we're just going to force them to buy it, right?" No, it doesn't happen like that. There's going to be adversity. So now, I was able to understand the adversity and then understand like, "Look man, maybe you can't knock the guy on his back, but just give me two seconds. Can you give me two seconds?" Because everyone thinks people have this infinite ability to maximize their potential. They do, but if they can maximize *their* potential, and their potential might not be what you need, but it's all they have. And in sports in general, there's no one else coming in, right? Especially high school, like he's the left tackle, but there's no other people, so we had to deal with what he could do. So my thing has always been: How do I maximize everyone's individual potential?

SAUDER: When you think about yourself as a young kid laying in bed, dreaming of getting to the NFL, the road there was probably not as you would have designed it as a young boy. But yet somehow, even in the journey of having success in the NFL, you had the foresight to see past it, knowing at some point this was going to end. And it's not a culture I'm close to, but the things you read about it are that these young guys come in, they achieve their dream, and a couple things happen. One is they spend a lot of their money there and so there's nothing afterwards. Or they don't understand that at some point your body is not going to be able to take you to 75 years old inside of this game, and so being thoughtful about what that next act looks like so that you can still feel a sense of contribution and being part of something and see yourself as bigger than a football player. Was that natural for you? Did your parents impress that

on you as part of your journey? I'd love to hear that, because it seems to be graceful as an outsider watching you go through that.

BRACKETT: I think for me, I always had what was called like walk-on mentality. So I wasn't a recruited athlete at college. I had to walk on and earn my scholarship. I wasn't a draft pick in the NFL. I was a free agent so I had to earn it. So for me, I really didn't take it for granted that I was there. And so many people think of it as their right to be in the NFL and play. And I've always thought of it as a privilege. And I knew from day one that the NFL is there not for long. So I knew every off-season it was my mission to do some type of internship to kind of educate myself on what I wanted to do next. So then when I was finished with the game, I would be prepared to have a lasting impact and try to transition successfully because I was prepared.

SAUDER: So how do you think about that, again, outside perspective, you have a chance to elevate your kids' starting point in life. How do you think about threading through their spirit and their perspective this idea of this is not a right, this is a privilege? What are things that you and Regan think about with that? My guess is your kids aren't wearing sweaters they have to return to Macy's.

BRACKETT: No, not at all.

SAUDER: But there's something to that sense that I think has really informed your character today. Obviously, you don't need to recreate that thing for your kids, but how do you and Regan think about getting that sense of perspective? I think that's a challenge as kids grow up around means and wealth that's materially different than maybe their parents' was.

BRACKETT: Yeah, so we struggle with that. I can remember taking my daughter home when she was five years old, and we went to my hometown, Glassboro, New Jersey, and I purchased the house that we grew up in. It's a four bedroom, two bathroom, probably 2,000 square feet, upstairs, downstairs, no basement. And she was like, "Daddy, why doesn't everyone have a bathroom in their room?" And I was like, "Baby girl, everyone isn't fortunate enough to have a bathroom. There's a lot of people who struggle day by day." So I really just think it's exposure. I think it's exposing them to different situations and, again with that same mentality that we're no better than them, it's just different, they grew up different than us. So that's why we should appreciate what we have because there's people that have a lot less and there's people that have more, but it's not about them. We're running our own individual races about what we have and what type of stores we are of our fortune.

SAUDER: Do you get them involved in community service and do things like that as a family?

BRACKETT: Yeah, my daughter Georgia, the youngest one, she's four years old so she's not in kindergarten yet. So my wife and I have our Impact Foundation. So we went out to the hospitals and we stocked the lockers. So every Christmas we go in with video games, hats, coloring books, just in several hospitals around the city, and she was able to tag along and kind of see. And downtown at Riley, we were able to do some cookies and some activities, and she was there participating. So kind of bring them along. So it's exciting to see, because sometimes they see me on TV or something and they're like, "Dad," but they don't get it. So now, for me, just bringing them along so they can understand who we are and what we do for the community.

SAUDER: I want to transition into what your days look like now. You transitioned from the NFL into becoming a restaurateur, starting to franchise. What kind of connected you to restaurants? There's a bajillion things that you could do. The world is a bit your oyster at that point because you have a vantage point and a lot of people wanting your name and your brand and access. What was the gravitational pull to this for you?

BRACKETT: My first job was as a dish boy. I worked as a dish boy in this restaurant for about 10 months. And dish boys are typically people who rotate very frequently, right? So after the third or fourth month, I'm the senior dish man, so that made me in charge. So there's three of us back there and I'm controlling the stuff. So one time Paul was the cook, he came out and said, "Hey, Gary, we've got a situation in the back and I need you to clean it up." When we go in there, there's throw-up all over the place. So I'm like, alright, cool, what would a leader do? So I go back to the backroom, "Hey guys, we have a situation we've all got to clean up." So I go out there, give them the equipment, tell them how I wanted it done. "Let's first throw some powder on it, let's throw some rags, let's clean it up first. Then I'll get the mop bucket ready for you guys, come in here, we mop it up." So they did all the work and then I kind of ran them the equipment. Then we cleaned it up. And by working together as a team, three of us, we got it done a lot faster and then I was able to clean it up, 30 minutes, 40 minutes. I went to Paul, "Hey, Paul, it's all done. You want to check it out?" He looked at me like, "How'd you do that?" I was like, "Man, we just worked together." And then, you know, just delegate it. And I think I learned a very valuable lesson of delegation and teamwork. And I've always been fascinated about the restaurant industry. And when I was finished playing, I wanted a way to monetize my brand; people knew me and they like me, but how can I make revenue off of that? And restaurants were a great place. And franchise in particular, while Stacked Pickle wasn't a franchise when I

purchased it, I've always had the idea to turn it into a franchise because of the model of how simple it is. And there's really a playbook. It's something that I've been doing my whole life, like, hey, how do you do X? Alright, turn to page 7 and it explains it for you. So just making it as turnkey as possible.

SAUDER: When you think about 10 years from now there being a Stacked Pickle in key neighborhoods like there are in Indianapolis today, what do you hope that the Stacked Pickle does for that community? As you think about the brand of the Stacked Pickle outside of just the food, how do you think about the brand? How do you think about the way it fits into communities? And as you envision the perfect franchisee or the perfect place, how do you tell that story to yourself?

BRACKETT: Yeah, it's funny. I think 10 years from now, obviously it could be in different neighborhoods. Really, the anchor in that neighborhood, that hangout where after little Johnny's game you want to go hang out with everyone else, you've got to come out to the Stacked Pickle. And then that's that one. And then the other one is like the community service, like each one of our restaurants has relationships with the schools in their districts. So we have a bunch of Dine to Donate programs where they come in on a day or two and we give back a portion of our income to that school to help support them. And then jobs. The hospitality industry in itself employs up to 12 or 13% of the U.S. population. I think that will always be there. And I think some of our servers and bartenders make a pretty good living. It's a lot above minimum wage and I think it's a good living for someone and a great opportunity. I have over 500 employees and I'm thankful, and I don't take for granted the impact that I have on those people's lives.

SAUDER: What about your personal brand do you want to come through in the Stacked Pickle brand? I picture them like Venn diagrams. They're separate for sure, but there's probably a part of those that overlap, where as the owner you want it to embody a piece of who you are. What are the pieces of that? Being in marketing, we think a lot about what the brand story is. And I tend to believe that brands have to have the heart of a founder somewhere and that the threads of their personality comes through in the way that it looks, it feels, the service experience, etc.

BRACKETT: Yeah, I think our mission is we want to passionately serve everyone. We want your day to be better from having come to the Stacked Pickle. And that's the legendary service that we aim for and we strive for, and you're having a conversation and someone greets you at your table and kind of makes you smile. And I think that type of place will always be successful. Because right now, there's just so much competition in the restaurant space. So what makes you different? Yeah, your food is good and everything else, but what type of connection or user experience do I have? And if we have a lot of happy servers and managers greeting tables, being the life of the party, we talked about the Oz moment when everything is perfect and someone is greeting you at the front door and your order is coming out and your server is right behind them. And so that moment. So we're just trying to create a lot more of those moments within our restaurants.

SAUDER: As you think about bringing the outside brand kind of inside, and I think of that as the internal brand of that culture, and the 500 people that you lead and, by extension, the franchisees that you start to bring into that sort of family, what's important to you from a culture perspective? While probably culture has been something you've built for a long time through the lens of teams and being a leader on football teams, we don't necessarily use—I guess you

could probably use the culture of the locker room—but how you think about that and the stuff that you've learned in a team setting, you know, what you think is really critical to building a winning team in the business setting.

BRACKETT: So I think restaurants is the ultimate team sport, and everyone has to work together in order for you to be successful. So for me, really just want to have our employees engaged, want to communicate to them. Now, with the whole millennial generation, they want to know why. So telling them the why behind why we do things and then giving them feedback. I think before, you would get feedback yearly. Well, most people don't stay in a job a year anymore, so now they don't even know how they did before they left you, had an opportunity to challenge you or to get some more information. So that's something that I really think heavily on. And the last thing is just training. There's this quote that says the CEO goes to the CFO like, "Hey, we need to train our team." And the CFO says, "That's going to be expensive." And it's like, "What if we train them and they leave?" And the CEO says, "What if we don't train them and they stay?" So it's like one of those conundrums, like whether you do it or not, it's going to affect you. So for me, it was just like I want to be proactive, I want to pay it forward, I want our employees to be better from having worked at the Stacked Pickle.

SAUDER: Do you find that you have to figure out how to scale yourself? Like in Indianapolis, in particular, I would imagine I served in college, I was able to work at a restaurant that Gary Brackett owned that I might be able to interact with you; that would be a really big deal to me. And so feeling a sense of how do you scale yourself and how do you think about the fact that you have a unique impact in your presence and how you spread yourself and how you think

about what gets your time? Because like you coming up and being like, “Hey, I really appreciate you doing that,” is like a \$100 bill falling in their pocket.

BRACKETT: Yeah, but it’s challenging. And I think a place where I failed at Georgia Reese’s was design. My youngest daughter’s name is Georgia Reese and all my buddies were like, “Hey, are you going to be there?” So I tried to make it all about me, I’m there and I’m greeting tables and everything, but that was exhausting. And it wasn’t a successful business model because, you’re right, I don’t scale. And Friday or Saturday night, I’ve been working 70 hours already this week, I can’t stay with you till 12:00 in the morning at the restaurant listening to music. So it was one of those challenges that I had to face head on and figure out like, okay, what’s best for me? And it’s this whole idea of addition by subtraction. So many times we look at our lives and think when we’re not getting our desired result that we need to add more things to it, when really we probably need to take some things away. So that’s a tough decision that you have to make is that addition by subtraction, but what would I subtract from my life that would add value to it?

SAUDER: Was it hard from an ego perspective to close those Georgia Reese’s? I feel like that would be a really personal thing. Your daughter’s name is on it, it’s somewhat connected to your roots as a person.

BRACKETT: For sure. It was extremely difficult, and really I probably did it a few months too late. But the challenge was that we could not put together the product in the way that I envisioned it. And I think it was going to do much more harm to my brand than good by not consistently showing up. And then you add that on with the other issues of crime and people

coming in, leaving out on \$500 tabs and stuff like that. You know, all money is not good money. Because if even I could have put money behind it to break even and make a little bit of money, but then there's this whole idea of opportunity costs, like by chasing this, how are you going to scale Stacked Pickle? And I had to really look at the numbers, so my decisions are based on the numbers. So when I look at the cost-benefit analysis of spending time getting Georgia Reese's to where I wanted it versus taking Stacked Pickle to 10 units, and 50 units in five years, I mean I just looked at the numbers from that perspective, and Stacked Pickle just won out.

SAUDER: Were you able to admit it to yourself, or did somebody have to say, "Gary, you've got to take a look at this." Because I think that's a big evolution point as a leader when you can see something you don't want to see yourself. Like I have to tell myself this story is not what I want it to be.

BRACKETT: No, so the one thing I've always prided myself by is having an emotional IQ. So I've always looked at things very analytical and looked at the numbers behind stuff. And when I was looking at it, I was just like, man, this doesn't—and then just took an inventory of my week and where I was spending my time and my resources. I was like, man, this doesn't make a lot of sense. I'm like burning the candle at both ends, trying to do this, be here at these times and then be home with my family. And it was just like, man, something has to suffer. One thing about money, I feel like, is that you can always get it back. But I feel like some of those relationships with my kids growing up and things like that, those things I didn't want to give up. So those are things that I really feel strong about. And I feel like by scaling that back—because the Stacked Pickle, why my brain is weaved into the culture and the fabric is it's not about Gary, it's not Gary Brackett's Stacked Pickle. So people aren't at Stacked People saying, "When is

Gary coming in?” So it’s like the whole Jimmy Buffett thing. I remember being in Jamaica, it was like, “Jimmy Buffett, where is he?” And then people are like, “Oh, he just left.” So I tell my employees to tell everyone I just left because we want people coming back. But it’s not about me; it’s about the brand. And I think Stacked Pickle scales, and Gary Brackett doesn’t. So it’s humbling, but then it’s like that’s why my name is not plastered all over the place. Our brand is that we have good food, great service, great value proposition, and that’s why we’re successful. And I’m a bonus to that; I’m just not the main entrée.

SAUDER: I think it speaks to how confident you are as a person, that you don’t need that sort of public understanding that you are Stacked Pickle, and be able to say, “No, I’m good. I can be in the public and I can have influence over things I really care about, but that’s not going to be the thing that feeds my soul; it’s my kids, it’s my wife.” I really respect that because fame, I have to imagine it can be intoxicating.

BRACKETT: Yeah, no, it is. There’s been plenty of songs about it. But I think for me, I’ve always been able to separate who I am and what I do. And I think when people get in trouble is when what they do becomes who they are, and then if that’s no longer there, then they’re in an identity crisis. But if I’m all these things without my job, without my career or without my business, if that was to leave for whatever reason then I’m still going to be okay. So I’ve always had the ability to separate the two and really spend a lot more time on who I am than what I do.

SAUDER: Did that come from your parents? Or did you just know that; was that intuitive to you?

BRACKETT: My parents were just servant leaders. My dad was a retired Vietnam vet. He had several complications and surgeries. He never graduated high school, but he had a PhD in common sense, it was just genius. And my mom was a registered nurse in (inaudible), so she was just as kind as could be. So my whole family was just about servant leadership, and they would literally give up their last so someone else could have something. So it was just amazing kind of seeing that growing up. But I look at the time, it's probably the happiest I've been in my whole life, when I was the brokest I've been. So then this whole thing: Does money make you happy? Well, yeah, it does, we get to buy nice things. But when now I look back to the core, like when I was at my happiest, it was when I was a kid. I didn't have any worries. We made something to eat, hot dogs and hamburgers on the grill. So it was those simple things that kind of really bring me to a place where I'm extremely grateful and have that joy. So for now, I don't have those things. Like I still did a lot and I'm still secure and grounded on who I am without having to be defined.

SAUDER: What are the things you find yourself either telling your kids most often or reminding yourself of, like lessons your mom and dad taught you? And what are the records in your mind?

BRACKETT: I think one thing is they would always say, "Lazy people work the hardest." That was because you had to do it two or three times before you got it right. So people always thinking about taking shortcuts out, but really if you do it right the first time then you'll be good. So then it's the whole idea of how you do anything is how you should do everything. So it's the whole idea of have a purpose, stand for something. If you're going to commit to something and stand for something, do it to the best of your ability or don't do it at all.

SAUDER: That's awesome. I'm going to remember those. That's fantastic. If you could go back to your 23- or 24-year-old self and give yourself some advice that you think would be meaningful to you today, what would you tell yourself?

BRACKETT: It's funny. So 23 and 24 I'm in the NFL, and I'm 37 now. And I would get angry, like Marvin Harrison was in his 30s when I was in and I was like, man, he doesn't hang with us. But my 37-year-old self wouldn't have hung out with my 23- or 24-year-old self. So, it'd just be like, "Slow down, young fella." And it's like you want to do everything and take on the world and buy everything, and none of that stuff matters. It's perspective. I remember every Tuesday I'm out buying the newest thing, and every jewelry that came, I had to have it. Whereas now, I literally have shoes that I've never worn before. And it's like for what? So it was really perspective of less is more, really, you know, less of material things and more relationships.

SAUDER: Do you spend time going back and talking to young players and kind of being that full-circle picture for them?

BRACKETT: Yeah, I'm actually going out to Vegas on Sunday to talk to the former players and current players, but also once a year, David Thornton, my good friend, and I go into the Colts complex and I talk to them about my successes and also failures and just try to give them a perspective on what matters and what doesn't.

SAUDER: What do you think your superpower is, as a person, sort of that thread that you see throughout the successes in your life?

BRACKETT: That's a good question. There's one quote I kind of live by: Hard work beats talent, and talent doesn't work hard. And one thing that I've always been is extremely hardworking. I have the ability to wake up at like 5:00, get on the computer at 6:00, knock out something, 8:00 still going, and then 8:00 or 10:00 at night and I'm like a second wind, like I'm still going. I'm on the computer knocking something out. Where it's funny, and one of my boys, because even if I didn't play football I think I would've been successful because of that drive. And I always just challenge him, he'll be like "Man, I need some money." I'm like, "Man, how many jobs you working?" "Like 40 hours a week?" I'm like, "40 hours a week! I do that by Wednesday." So then he broke down and he was like, "Man, everyone doesn't have your work ethic. Everyone doesn't have your drive. Like I tried to go from 6:00 a.m. to 12:00 at night and I was in the hospital due to exhaustion. Like literally." And for me, I just take it for granted that you just have this motor, same thing I had in football where I'm just going and going and going. And I think that's really my superpower because if I want something, I'm going to go get it.

SAUDER: I would also reflect back to you that I think you have an infectious energy about you, I'm like yeah! Yeah, like let's be great, let's go do that, that would be amazing! And I feel like that's probably just part of your DNA as much as anything, but there's something that spreads from that energy, too, that's really powerful.

BRACKETT: I appreciate that.

SAUDER: So what's next for Gary?

BRACKETT: Oh man, so what's next is we talked about the book, we turned it into a movie. So there's a promotional trailer that we shot out in L.A. so just to kind of garner some interest and now I'm ready for them to kind of get that project done. So hopefully that gets done. And then I think the next phase of our Stacked Pickle business, I just signed up with this development company to franchise and take us nationwide, even international. It's funny, I had a two-hour conversation with someone from Australia two days ago, and it's just amazing, right? And you never know who's watching. And we post on LinkedIn and social media and some people watch the numbers. But this guy called, "Hey, I see you guys religiously posting, having like one picture," but he wants to buy 20 units in Australia. So I think that's going to be my next project, is really scaling Stacked Pickle. Like I say I want 50 stores in five years. I know it's going to require a lot of work, so now I'm just reverse engineering how do I get there? What does that look like? What type of infrastructure do I have? What type of leader do I have to be? Because a lot of people I think kid themselves by thinking the person they are today is going to be the person they need to be to fulfill their dreams, and it's not.

SAUDER: There's another nugget.

BRACKETT: There's a lot of hard work that you have to develop, another skillset, some more ability to learn. So this whole thing for me is just being a lifelong learner and just hungry for knowledge and hungry to see how far I can take it. In my speeches, I always say, like who is your role model? And I'm just like, "Me in five years, me in 10 years." Because in my mind I'm chasing this person of this greatness of what I could be and what I could become, and it's exhilarating. But I know in order to get there, I'm not going to be able to take weekends off, I'm not going to be able to not read that book, not be engaged, not be connected, not go to that

conference. So all these things are a byproduct of who I'm chasing and who I want to become. And like I said, I've never been afraid of hard work.

SAUDER: There's like this incredible duality when you talk about that, in that you have the self-confidence to be able to see and walk into what you know you can become, and yet to still see yourself as an unfinished product. That is really unique to not have the sort of maniacal view of yourself to be like I can do everything. You have the confidence to know I can step into things but this sort of self-perception that keeps you hungry really in the face of a lot of success. Because there's a lot of reasons why you could not be pushing as hard and everybody would say, "Yeah, that makes sense. That totally makes sense that you spend three months in Florida or wherever." But it doesn't make sense to you. That's not congruent with the DNA of who you are, and that's just really cool.

BRACKETT: I appreciate that. Obviously, I lost my parents at a very young age, 23 and 24, and also my brother. And the one thing that helped me process it all and kind of deal with that grief is I told myself: The way you honor the dead is how you live your life. And I always tell myself, if my brother had the ability and opportunity to do this thing, would he be sitting down right now? If my mom had the ability to have one of her kids be in ballet and do this and play the piano, would she do that? Or would she say, "Daddy's going to be tired on Sunday. I know you really want to dance, but I'm not taking you." So I kind of live my life thinking like, man, I don't know if tomorrow is promised. And if you flash (inaudible), I'm like alright, man, I can really just look up and just be like I'm ready, like I gave life everything I had.

SAUDER: That's really cool. So how do you guys stay connected as a little family; you and your wife and your three kids? Because you have a lot of people and things pulling for your time and your attention. How do you guys stay centered together?

BRACKETT: We're big movie watchers. So Coco is a great movie. It's amazing.

SAUDER: I think your 23-year-old self might also make fun of that.

BRACKETT: Oh yeah, for sure. For sure. Yeah, so we watch a lot of movies. We try to eat dinner together as a family, pray together a lot, go to church together, and really support one another. So every time one of the kids are playing a sport of something, there's the option to stay home or get up at 8:00 and travel across Carmel to go to the game. And now they're getting to a point where they want to go. And then we made this whole little competition of who's going to have the best day today. So they're all kind of competitive. And it's not always about points or goals or something like that; or just as a teammate? Like were you a great teammate? Did you cheer when you didn't have the ball? Did you show up? Were you engaged? And that stuff matters. We try to teach them all that stuff.

SAUDER: Cool. Well, thank you so much. This has been awesome. I learned a lot and it's really inspiring to see someone move through so many goals with such power and such confidence and yet such humility. And I think that's something I'm taking away from this conversation. So thanks, Gary.

BRACKETT: No, thank you.

(END INTERVIEW)